

• COMING OUT
• GLORIA STEINEM INTERVIEW
• INADEQUATE DAY CARE

JANUARY 1984

VOL. 1, NO. 10

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HERizons

THE MANITOBA WOMEN'S NEWS MAGAZINE



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Co-op Bookstore

Deter's Confectionery (The Pas)

Home-Made Music

Liberation Books

Mary Scorer Books

Northern Options for Women (Thompson)

Prairie Sky Books

McNally-Robinson Booksellers

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Women's Employment Counselling Service

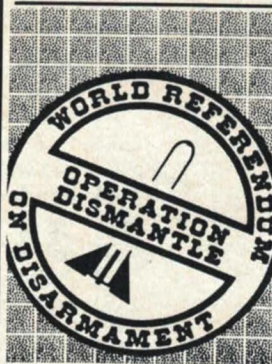
YW.C.A. Resource Centre

and through many other organizations

The aim of this magazine is to provide an alternative means of communication with a feminist perspective in order to stimulate, to inform, to effect change, and to unify women's strengths, serving as a forum for the women of Manitoba.

HERIZONS is currently operating out of 125 Osborne St. S., Winnipeg. For further information, call 477-1730. Views expressed in this publication are those of the writer and do not necessarily reflect HERIZONS policy. Submissions are welcome. Editing rights are reserved and submissions does not guarantee publication. A self-addressed stamped envelope will ensure that submissions will be returned to the writer. Published 12 times a year. Price \$15.00 per year.

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MANITOBA

Take Another LOOK



Manitoba offers more than you ever imagined.
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Travel Manitoba, Dept. 3500, Legislative Building,
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TRAVEL 
MANITOBA

Calendar

DECEMBER

17 CHRISTMAS SOCIAL at Ms Purdy's Women's Club Inc. at 8 p.m. Tickets available at MACSW Office 942-2000 or call Ms Purdy's at 942-8212. Admission \$3.50 (members) \$5 (non-members).

31 NEW YEAR'S EVE SOCIAL at Ms Purdy's Women's Club Inc. at 8 p.m. Ticket information same as above.

JANUARY

12 REAL WOMEN ARE: truckers, dentists, machinists, electricians. Film and panel discussion of women sharing their personal experiences in non-traditional fields to explore alternative occupations. Thursday at 7:30-9:30 p.m., Room 5, 810 Waterford Avenue (Free admission, childcare provided). Sponsored by the Fort Garry Women's Resource Centre 475-1986.

14 WEN-DO WORKSHOP for girls 10-13 years of age. This self-defense course will take place Saturday and Sunday at a cost of \$15 and is led by Manuella Dias. Location is Brandon and billeting is available for girls from other communities. Sponsored by G.A.P. (Girls Are People) and MACSW. For details contact Brandon MACSW Office 725-2955.

22 OPENING — ONE WOMAN EXHIBITION of feminist art by Sharron Zenith Corne at Gallery 111, School of Art, University of Manitoba on Sunday from 2 to 4:30 p.m.

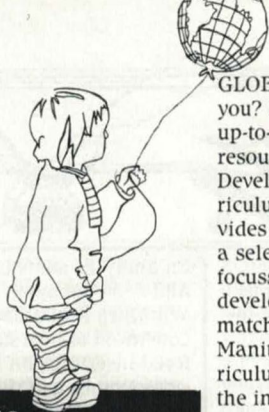
25 CELEBRATIONS '84 — Theme: *George Orwell's 1984* at the University of Manitoba, January 25-27. "Should prostitution remain a criminal offence" is topic of a panel including Jillian Riddington on Friday 9-11:30 a.m. in the Multi-Purpose Room, University Centre.

25 NEW LESBIAN SUPPORT GROUP — Meeting for the first time on Thursday, at 7 p.m. at MACSW Office, 224-388 Donald St. For information 942-2000.

FEBRUARY

3 TEN DAYS FOR WORLD DEVELOPMENT 1984 is planning activities for February 3 to 13. For details and information call Margaret Knott 452-6488.

9 HAVE YOU SEEN YOURSELF ON TV? Exploring the use of psychological and sexual themes in advertising with the film "Killing Us Softly" and a representative of the Media Monitoring Committee to discuss these issues. Thursday at 7:30-9:30 p.m., Room 5, 810 Waterford Avenue (Free admission, childcare provided). Sponsored by the Fort Garry Women's Resource Centre 475-1986.



Bulletins

NEW PUBLICATION

HOW(ever) a periodical edited by women poets interested in the exploration of language as part of female experience and the re-invention of formal poetic structures as a direct extension of the feminist commitment to change. *HOW(ever)* will focus on experimentalist poem texts (both original and reprints). The editors see as their guides such writers as Gertrude Stein, Dorothy Richardson, Virginia Woolf, Mina Loy, H.D., Marianne Moore. The first series of four issues will be available by subscription at \$5 (US).

HOW(ever), c/o Frances Jaffer, 871 Corbett, San Francisco, CA 94117; editorial correspondence: Kathleen Fraser, 554 Jersey St., San Francisco, CA 94114.

THE WIDOWS' CONSULTATION CENTRE

Losing a loved one is not only a time of personal loss, but of preparation for a new life. If you've lost your partner, we would like to help. We offer: visitation service; support and counselling; information and referral; a widow's kit; preparation for widowhood; trained staff.

If you need us or would like to be a volunteer, call the Widows' Consultation Centre in the Women's Resource Centre at the YWCA, Colony and Ellice 943-0381.

RISEN FROM THE ASHES

The Toronto Women's Bookstore Lives! Much community support, fundraising events and donations have enabled the Toronto Women's Bookstore to open its doors again. Guttled on July 29th by a fire set by arsonist(s) who also left anti-choice messages, this valuable community resource will now be located at 73 Harbord Avenue (at Spadina), very close to their old location.

GLOBAL ISSUES of concern to you? Don't know where to find up-to-date and suitable resources? Contact A.I.D.E.'s Development Education Curriculum Index. This index provides teachers and parents with a selected list of audio-visuals focussing on international development issues, and are matched unit by unit to the Manitoba Social Studies curriculum (Grades 1-12). Copies of the index are available from A.I.D.E., Curriculum Index, 418 Wardlaw Avenue, Winnipeg R3L 0L9.

TOTS TAKE-OUT-TOY SERVICE

is a lending library for children with all types of disabilities. Over 400 items that will provide intriguing and challenging learning experiences. TOTS membership fee is \$2 a year per family and referral is accepted from doctors, therapists, teachers, social agencies, etc. TOTS is a volunteer community service project operated and funded by the Altrusa Club of Winnipeg and is located at the Society for Crippled Children and Adults of Manitoba, Parent Lounge, 825 Sherbrook St. 786-5601; Ext. 296 or 297. Hours of operation — open on Tuesday only 10 a.m. - Noon and 1 - 3:30 p.m.

LESBIAN ARCHIVES

to open early in 1984 near Kenora, Ontario, Canada. It is a proud statement to lesbians, their friends and families about themselves — inspiring stories, survival techniques, role models, culture, customs and contributions to society at large. The goals are to preserve, honour and share the herstory of gay women and to make it accessible to both rural and urban lesbians. The organizers appeal to lesbians EVERYWHERE to donate material and financial support. Donors should categorize their material as 1) open; 2) restricted access (specify); or 3) no access for a specified time period. In the case of photographs and other unpublished material which identifies individuals, donors should obtain the permission of these individuals before sending it to us. For more information contact: Doreen Worden or Isabel Andrews, R.R. #2, Kenora, Ont. P9N 3W8 (807) 548-4325 or Erin Cole, L.A.W.R., P.O. Box 147, Winnipeg R2M 4A5 (204) 256-7740. Make cheques payable to L.A.W.R. (Archives).

PLAY CARE

offers casual service plus education. Play Care is a short-term child care facility available to University of Manitoba staff and students. The service is designed to help parents, staff or visitors who require child care for less than a whole day from time to time. The program includes lots of play time, elementary science projects, art projects, stories and other activities.

The fee is \$2 per hour and reservation is made a day in advance (same day service is sometimes available). For information call Lorie Hamilton 269-9824.

ONE WOMAN EXHIBITION

of feminist art by Sharron Zenith Corne at Gallery III, School of Art, University of Manitoba from January 22 to February 9, 1984. The opening will take place at the School of Art on Sunday, January 22 from 2 to 4:30 p.m. This is one of the few opportunities in Manitoba to see feminist art at a mainstream institution, also available will be a catalogue with a feminist orientation.

Sharron has worked since 1975 as a lobbyist to encourage public cultural institutions to rectify the underrepresentation of women artists.

WOMANFILM/WOMANART

in conjunction with the Women's Festival Collective '84 of Toronto invites contributors and collaborators in the *Feminist Eros Festival*. The tentative dates will be March/April. We invite women artists to explore the theme of feminist Eros and produce it in original music, poetry, theatre, performance art, dance, and feminist art theory. We also invite women artists, coordinators and producers to be involved in the process of realizing this event. We urge artists to search their own meaning of Eros — to give voice and image to woman through an expression of Eros that is feminist.

Interested artists should send texts and/or descriptions of work to the Coordinator, Women's Festival Collective '84 c/o Womanfilm/Womanart, 201 Spadina Rd., Toronto M4C 4Y1. Deadline for submissions January 1, 1984. Women interested in joining the Festival collective call Women-film/Womanart (416) 926-0015.

WOMEN AND THE LAW

The National Association is a non-profit organization dedicated to law reform and public education with a feminist perspective. These are crucial times of women. It is imperative that women continue to have input in the public decision-making process which so profoundly affects our lives. You can help by donating to the trust fund for research and education (all donations tax deductible) or by becoming a member of the Association.

Your contributions will help us establish a *Women and the Law Journal* to summarize decisions affecting women with commentaries and analyses; continue research and lobbying efforts on behalf of vital issues; monitor the enforcement of the Constitution, ensure government compliance with Section 15 of the Charter of Rights. For more information contact The National Association of Women and the Law, 124 O'Connor Street, Suite 305, Ottawa K1P 5M9.

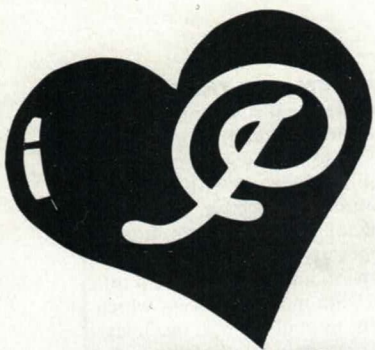
HOMEMAKERS CONFERENCE

is tentatively scheduled for February '84 by the Sudbury Women's Centre/Centre des femmes de Sudbury. If you have ideas for guest speakers, activities, workshops, resource people, or want to help organize this conference call or write Sheila at the centre, 38 Beech Street, West, Sudbury, Ontario P3C 1Z9 Telephone (705) 673-1916.

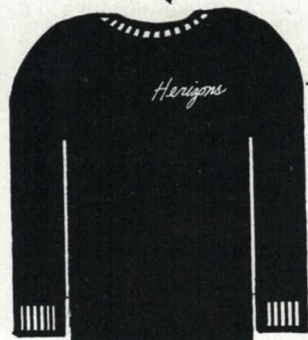
HERizons is offering a classified ad service for our readers.

Ads cost \$5 for a maximum of 5 lines (about 20 words). Business rates \$20 for 5 lines. Payment must be submitted with wording for ad. Deadlines are the 7th of each month. Send in your ad and cheque, or drop by to:

Classified Dept.
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Letters.



Dear Editor:

Your magazine has given us the impression that you are interested in both informing Manitoba women and also representing the views of the Manitoba women. Your article on abortion in your first publication was written so as to imply that the views expressed represented that of all intelligent, independent and informed women. We are lead to believe that those opposing abortion are either male, religious fanatics or poor simple ill-informed women.

As members of the Catholics' Women's League you will probably assume us to either be the religious fanatics or simple women. Sorry to disappoint you but we are neither of those.

We resent this implication from your magazine. The respect for life in our society has diminished to frightening proportions. The new life created at point of conception in a female human is not a bunch of unrecognizable cells but a human being. It is a person then, it is a person at 3 months, at 6 months, and at 9 months. It is human as it is delivered from a human body. It deserves our utmost respect and care at every stage of its development from unrecognizable to recognizable, from dependent to independent, from childhood to old age. If we do not soon begin to respect all stages of human development we will soon have no human life to respect.

God gave us life and we should leave it to God to take it also.

Yours sincerely,

Lilian M. Lane

Corresponding Secretary
St. Vital Roman Catholic
Parish

Dear Herizons:

Thank you very much for your review of our work, *Confronting the Stereotypes*, Volume I and Volume II. We feel it should be pointed out that these publications developed because of commitments of the women's movement and not because of bureaucratic initiative.

In the early 1970's, a group developed at Women's Place concerned with sexism in the schools. This group, Women for Nonsexist Education, developed

an analysis, some expertise, and some lobbying skills. The Winnipeg School Division was convinced to hire staff who offered inservices on bias and stereotyping and the Department of Education contracted with us to buy *Confronting the Stereotypes, Volume I*.

Most, if not all, positive changes which have affected women come about because women have joined together and pressured for change. Progressive change is rarely offered, almost always won.

As a final comment: our experience with both the bureaucracy and the school system suggests that parents who order these books from the Department of Education and encourage the schools to use them assist feminist women in the educational system and add an important element to the change process. Change can and does occur; our obligation is to add our voice to those who notice and care.

In sisterhood,

Linda Taylor, Ellen Kruger,
Roslyn Silversides

Dear Editor:

In response to your article "Flashdance", I disagree with your opinion. I have seen Flashdance and you say she slept with her boss like she was doing it to get a raise or something like that. But it is not like you make it out to be. She was in love with him and he was in love with her. But on thing I must agree with, is such good dancers would be in a better place than Malby's Bar.

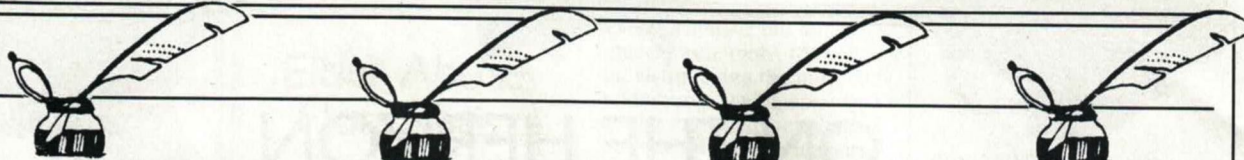
V. Dyck

a 13 year old reader

Dear Editors:

I wish to commend the staff of HERizons for a very informative magazine, long overdue for Manitoba women.

I would like to offer a suggestion however. I am one of a small minority of women in Manitoba, a *farm woman*. While any issue which affects many women affects me as well, I must say that there are issues which affect farm women which could be addressed and should be addressed by a magazine such as yours.



especially if you wish the development of understanding of issues affecting all women. The economy, the limitations and restrictions afforded farm women, ownership of property, pensions, constitutional rights are only a few. A look at the area of 'farming' from a feminist perspective. These are all issues which could be researched and become an important part of a magazine like HERIZONS.

A solidarity of sisterhood can only be built by expanding all of our 'herizons' to understand the problems and challenges of the minorities within our group.

If I can be of help in a further discussion of this matter please feel free to contact me.

In solidarity for all women
Darlene Henderson

Dear Madams:

I just finished reading the November issue of HERIZONS. I feel...confused. What began as a well-written, thought-provoking magazine, became a progressively hostile verbal abuse against men.

For me the turning point came upon reading the article entitled "Femerotica". The discussion was vague and rambling. I began to wonder just how many bottles of wine had been consumed over the course of that one evening. Eroticism to me is a sensuality and spirit form deep within each of us which is exchanged or shared with a partner of either sex. The exclusion of men and their *contribution* to erotica in this article is blatantly obvious and detrimental to the article's credibility.

The cartoon depicting marriage as a trap; the fiction story set in "The Land of Men"; and the piece of poetry entitled "Ode to a Boor" are all examples of anti-men literature from this issue. When are women going to take responsibility for their own destiny? If marriage is a trap, then it is set by *two*, a man and a woman. In reference to the poem, if men are guilty of ridiculous expectations and boorish behaviour, then women are just as guilty of perpetrating these expectations by their appeasive servitude. My point

is that some women are just as guilty as some men for their shabby treatment and *visa-versa*. Mutual decision-making and shared responsibilities which abound in today's relationships should ripen into healthy, happy marriages with realistic expectations in our future. "Ode to a Boor" was outdated before the ink dried!

As a young, vibrant, independent woman, I will not lay all "women's problems" at the feet of men. I *am* concerned with "women's" issues (who says they are only women's issues? Men are now becoming involved in feminism in a very positive manner). I am glad to see a magazine such as HERIZONS on the newstands. However, one should stick to facts, open-minded opinions and fair journalism. Anti-men literature sticks in my throat, frankly.

Yours Sincerely
Doreen MacDonald

Editor:

A hearty congratulations is due to Ms Penni Mitchell for her superb article on pornography (HERIZONS, November, 85.) Never before has this issue been spelt out to me with such force and clarity. In the eyes of most thinking people (men and women alike for Playboy, Hustler and the like cheapens all of society) pornography, without a sliver of doubt, is the single most degrading issue facing the feminist movement today. It must be terminated!

Unfortunately, this termination will only be the result of long and expensive legal battles. Pornography is a totally unacceptable form of media that must be fought within the system and only within the system. I am specifically referring to the Wimmens Fire Brigade of British Columbia and their recent fire bombing of the Red Hot Video outlet. I can sincerely empathize with their cause but I cannot bring myself to condone their methods. Terrorism, regardless of the banner, is a dangerous and violent form of coercion.

If this activity continues it is only a question of time before an innocent bystander is

seriously maimed or killed. Aside from providing a vent for frustration the bombing of the Red Hot Video outlet accomplished nothing.

Sincerely,
Michael Bennett

Dear Editors:

We do not normally enter into public debate concerning circumstances leading to staff resignations or terminations. However, since there are several inaccurate statements attributed to Ms Yvonne House regarding the School of Social Work, in the article "Yvonne House: Our Children Are Our Own!", we wish to correct some of them.

First of all, Ms House was not the only Indian Instructor hired. Two of the four staff were Indian, one of them being the Coordinator in charge of the program.

Secondly, our differences with Ms House were not ideological; rather they arose from her non-performance of instruction duties contractually agreed to between us.

The School has a strong commitment to assisting Native groups in achieving their goals of social service education in support of eventual autonomy from the present child welfare system. We are involved in working with many Native constituencies with a high degree of flexibility and responsiveness regarding their needs and requests and will continue to develop our programs on this basis.

Finally, I would urge your writers to research their stories somewhat better. You have many supporters in the social work community; but your credibility suffers when you do not check out your stories.

Sincerely,
Addie Penner,
Director
School of Social Work
University of Manitoba

Dear HERIZONS,

As a feminist, a fine arts graduate, an artist, the mother of a twelve year old daughter, and the wife of a fellow artist, may I say that rather than finding the article on FemErotica inspiring, enlightening, refreshing or even well written,

I found most of it, instead to be a meandering hodge podge of self-conscious, self-indulgent, insulting, anti-woman and anti-male nonsense.

The selection of absurd and over-worn comments such as Dworkin's thesis that sexual intercourse is rape unless initiated by the female and such immature and incredibly simplistic comments as the contention that men think sex and then they think penis and then they've got to put it somewhere, make me wonder as to the author's maturity and intelligence in dealing with matters of human sexuality.

As to Barbara Hammer's filming of her own engorged genitalia as she masturbated, I found that at best trivial and tacky, at it's worst irrelevant and absurd.

Why do so many women like this writer swallow everything that the feminist extremists write, say and do without any sign of individual thought or criticism on their own part? Why does discretion, good taste, humour, warmth and understanding of the *whole* human condition, male and female have to be dismissed for the sake of this sort of tiresome, vulva gazing feminism?

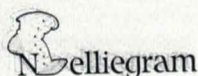
I could and would overlook the general "male-bashing" air that pervades this magazine for the sake of informative, good journalism on women's issues. After all, a zealous group of women with the marvellous opportunity of finally getting a chance to *say* something can be forgiven for getting a little carried away, but for heaven's sake use *some* discretion and common sense!

Sincerely
Margaret Buffie Macfarlane

Letters and responses welcome from readers. Send to

Herizons
125 Osborne
Winnipeg.
R3L 1Y4

ON THE HERIZON



HALT DIET PILL ADS — Faced with prosecution, the largest manufacturer of over-the-counter diet pills, Thompson Medical Company, Inc., has agreed to stop advertisements that mislead consumers as to the safety and effectiveness of the company's appetite-control products. To avoid further litigation by the California Attorney General's office, Thompson agreed to drop exaggerated weight loss claims and pay \$140,000 fines. They will also no longer falsely claim that *Dexatrim*, *Control*, *Prolamine*, *Appedrine* and other diet pills were: 1) "proven safe in years of clinical testing" unless it discloses that the drug should not be used by any consumer suffering from high blood pressure, heart disease, thyroid or kidney disease; 2) "endorsed as safe and effective by a U.S. Government advisory panel";



and 3) is free of stimulants. The Food and Drug Administration will re-examine whether currently marketed dosages are safe and the Federal Trade Commission has placed all advertisers of diet pills (including the drug phenylpropanolamine) on notice that substantiation of safety and efficacy claims will be required and that disclosures stating that one has to eat less in order to lose weight must be included in all future ads.

National Women's Health Network

Wanted: Agents of Social Change

Feeling that your activist integrity is getting you nowhere? Afraid you'll have to quit school next year if you don't get that job you and six thousand other students applied for?

Despond no more. You might just qualify for a bursary from the Joyce Andres Memorial Fund. Supported by the Canadian Federation of Students, the Joyce Fund was started in 1979 by Joyce's friends, who along with her, were active in the student movement. As a tribute to the feminist, activist and student organizer, the Joyce Fund was established to honour Joyce's social contribution and to foster the values that characterized her life, by helping students who shared her vision.

While on a holiday in Europe, Joyce Andres died in a road accident when she was 26.

The object of the Fund is to award bursaries of up to \$500 to students in a post-secondary institution, who are in financial need and can demonstrate a commitment to a more accessible and equitable system of higher education. "Applicants who are also active in their community, in social justice issues/women's groups/the student press, will be favoured," an information brochure states.

For more information on either donating to, or applying to the Joyce Fund, write to: The Joyce Fund, 78-8763 Ash Grove Crescent, Burnaby, B.C. V5A 4B8 or call (604) 421-5046.

Parents For Peace

A new Toronto-based organization feels that it is a mistake for parents not to talk to their children about nuclear war. Parents for Peace maintains that children are aware of the danger of nuclear war without their parents uttering a word about it, because they hear it discussed on TV and radio.

Susan Goldberg, a research psychologist at Toronto's Hospital for Sick Children, says having their parents tell them not to worry about it makes it even more frightening for the children.

It is necessary for children to be intelligently aware of the danger of nuclear war and be resolved to saving the planet. A big part of this, the organization says, is having parents who are actively working for nuclear

disarmament. This helps children feel less helpless about the nuclear threat.

Children involved in peace marches can feel they are not alone and can even make it into a fun occasion. Parents for Peace have even organized potluck dinners in their neighborhoods where parents and older children get together and discuss the issue. The organization also advocates putting peace on the agenda of parent-teacher meetings, in child-based community and library programs and in daycares. They use speakers, information kits, films and pamphlets to make speaking about the unspeakable easier to do.

Parents for Peace can be contacted at P.O. Box 611, Station P, Toronto M5S 2Y4.





Elder Abuse Flourishes

The former chairperson of a legislative committee on family violence told a workshop on abuse of the elderly that the bias of police and the judicial system serve as stumbling blocks to prosecuting abusers of elderly people.

The National Clearinghouse on Family Violence defines "elder abuse" as any act of commission or omission which results in harm to an elderly person. Abuse includes assault, rough handling, gross neglect and withholding food, personal and hygienic care or medical care. Psychosocial abuse includes confinement, isolation, lack of attention, verbal and emotional abuse or intimidation. Abuse of elders extends to financial abuse as well, and includes withholding money, theft or the misuse of funds.

Adult children or the spouses of adult children are usually the abusers of older people, who are dependent on the family for care and support. Like children or women who are abused, they must often rely on their abuser to provide shelter and a means to live. Their oppression within the family continues to be at least indirectly condoned by a system which offers little recourse for abused people.

The Manitoba Association on Gerontology and the Manitoba Council on Aging recently completed a study on elder abuse which reported that two thirds of the abused were women in the 80-84 age bracket who lived with a family member for 10 or more years. The study

revealed that six out of ten abusers were male; the son of the victim being the most common abuser. Daughters were the second most frequent abusers, and one third of the abusers were over 60 years old.

The most common form of abuse (gleaned from 400 cases) was financial abuse, followed by psychosocial and physical abuse. Incidents included withholding pension or social insurance funds or theft, verbal/emotional abuse, isolation, physical assault and denying food or personal care. Cases of over medication and gross neglect were also reported.

One of the more surprising aspects to this crime is the inaction taken on the part of social workers, public health nurses, police and doctors. Ninety-nine per cent of the professionals who documented the cases had no set directives for handling cases of elder abuse. No legal or official action was taken in three quarters of the cases, although the abuse had been documented in the victims' files.

The study recommended mandatory reporting of elder abuse by those working with the victims, the establishment of a central registry and more flexible trustee arrangements for protecting the finances of the elderly.

The report is entitled *Protection of the Elderly: A study of Elder Abuse* by Donna Shell. Written for an academic audience, it is available from the National Clearinghouse on Family Violence or from the Manitoba Association on Gerontology, 320 Sherbrook Street, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3B 2W6.

by Penni Mitchell



PRIVATIZED BATTERING — By March '84, the B.C. government plans to contract the Vancouver Transition House out to a private organization; present employees have received termination notices. The shelter opened its doors in December of 1973 as a direct response to the needs of battered women and children in the community.

Since January of '83, over 1,000 women and children were refused their request for accommodation due to lack of space, despite present estimates that one out of ten women in a relationship with a man is battered and homicide statistics show that approximately 60 percent of all female victims were killed in the family context.

Within the last 10 years, 25 other houses have opened in B.C. Many experience problems due to lack of funding, inadequate facilities and understaffing. Funding is insecure as well as inconsistent. Due to staff shortages, it is extremely difficult for these private transition houses to offer ongoing public education, childcare or follow-up programs which Vancouver Transition House provides. The experience of the other houses in the province demonstrate that if privatization occurs, the nature and quality of the service will change.

Many other services being threatened for battered women and children included: Legal Services, Medical Services, Emergency Homemakers, Mother's Help Program, Human Rights Commission, Child Abuse Team, Family Support Workers, Emergency Services, Immigrant Services, Mosaic, G.A.I.N., Status of Women, Women's Health Collective, Post Partum Counselling and Project Parent.

Letters opposing the privatization of Vancouver Transition House and the cuts in social services can be sent to the Minister of Human Resources, Hon. Grace McCarthy, or Premier Bill Bennett, Parliament Buildings, 506 Government St., Victoria.

Kinesis



NDP Report from The Task Force on Older Women in Canada



COMMON-LAW VICTORY — for women, says Jane Robertson upon the outcome of a two and a half year legal battle with her common-law husband, D'Arcy. She was granted \$32,000 by the Court of Queen's Bench in Grande Prairie, Alberta. The amount represents the value set by the justice on 50 per cent of the real property (including land, buildings, machinery, livestock, etc.) acquired during

the couple's 11 year relationship.

Susan Grattan, the lawyer who represented Jane, said the facts of this case are very much like those in the 1973 case of Irene Murdoch, without the benefit of a marriage certificate. She thinks this is the first time an Alberta woman has been awarded a 50 per cent settlement to a suit involving farm property brought against a common-law husband. Jane Robertson warned women to ex-

pect that their husbands will fight them all the way, and that there will be a lot of hard feelings. She said she's still pretty shaken by the experience. But she encouraged other women who find themselves in similar situations to take the risk because "it was worth the whole thing. We do have the same rights as a legally married woman; we do the same work and deserve the same benefits."

Linda Fontaine/Webspinner

CHOICE NEWS UPDATE

Department of Health Reveals Malady

(by staff)

Health Minister Larry Desjardins reaffirmed the malady of his department's stand on reproductive choice last month when he gave \$50,000 to the Grey Nuns to set up an anti-abortion, anti-birth control "family health clinic" in St. Boniface. Pro-choice supporters say that by funding the clinic, the government is reiterating its anti-choice stand on the issue of women's reproductive health rights.

Ironically, \$50,000 is roughly the amount Dr. Henry Morgen-

taler offered to sell his Corydon Avenue Clinic to the province for, but Desjardins refused to acknowledge the need for a reproductive health clinic and turned down the offer.

The thrust of the Grey Nuns' clinic will be to "promote pregnancy" in the words of Board Chairman Justice Joseph O'Sullivan. The clinic will not give out information on contraceptives or abortion, but the Grey Nuns maintain the clinic will teach responsible family planning.

Legal Battles Continue

(by the Publicity Committee of the Reproductive Choice Coalition)

A constitutional challenge to Canada's abortion laws will be heard in Winnipeg courts the week of January 16. The challenge will try to show that section 251 of the Criminal Code violates women's rights as outlined in the new Canadian Charter of Rights.

The constitutional challenge parallels a similar suit launched by the Coalition For Reproductive Choice last summer. That suit argues that Section 251 violates a woman's right to life, liberty and security of the person, and her right to privacy and due process. The two legal groups expect to be working closely together.

★ ★ ★

The Morgentaler Clinic is staying open to meet general health care needs. Four doctors and several nurses are volunteering their time at the clinic. Hours vary but evening appointments are often available.

The clinic can meet all your primary health care needs: blood tests, Pap smears, general check-ups and other procedures. Services are covered by the Manitoba Health Services Commission and are free. Using the clinic is an excellent way to show your support. Phone 477-1887.

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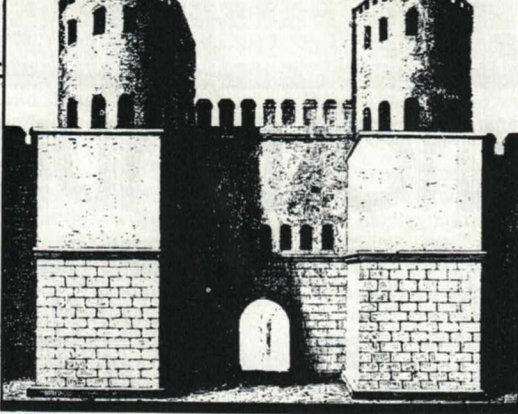
A Canadian judge has finally recognized the degradation of women as a factor in judging obscenity. A York County Court judge ruled in October that violence and sexual violence involving women will not be tolerated in the rapidly growing home video industry. In finding 11 out of 24 videotapes obscene, he exercised, for the first time, a Criminal Code prohibition against the depiction of cruelty and violence.

Judge Stephen Borins also made the distinction between scenes of sexual explicitness, which he said the community would tolerate, and sexual dehumanizing or degrading, which is unacceptable and exploitive.

In many films women are portrayed as experiencing pleasure from pain. Watching them, the judge noted, was one of the most distasteful tasks he had endured on the bench.

★ ★ ★

Meanwhile in Ottawa, all hope is not lost. The Commons subcommittee set up to study pornography in broadcasting (after MP Lynn McDonald's private members' bill was referred to it) has been given a shot in the arm. Originally expected to fizzle out at the end of the last sitting of the House, the subcommittee is now going to continue into the new session and will report back to Communications Minister Francis Fox. The subcommittee, made up of representatives from all three political parties, will call expert witnesses, including representatives from the Canadian Coalition Against Media Pornography and Media Watch to testify on the effects of pornography on the airwaves. While the subcommittee likely won't come up with any earth-shattering recommendations, the fact that opposition members are afforded input at the policy stage is less likely to mean a defeat of the recommendation in the House. An aid to McDonald surmised that the Liberals may even make a half-hearted attempt to come up with regulations on the broadcasting of pornography now that the issue has become politically expedient.



Men's Homes and Their Castles

—by Penni Mitchell

The entrenchment of property rights in the constitution may have serious repercussions for women, according to the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women and several provincial advisory councils.

In its amended format, section 7 of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms would read: Everyone has the right to life, liberty, security of the person and the enjoyment of property and the right not to be deprived thereof except in accordance with the principles of fundamental justice.

Depending on how a property rights clause were interpreted in the courts, women could lose legal ground in the areas of family law, pensions, rent control, occupational health and safety and other crucial areas.

If the Canadian Advisory Council's research is correct and banks, corporations, real estate boards and pit and quarry owners are backing the entrenchment, women may well have reason to urge against the entrenchment of property rights. Many women now fear that the right to "the enjoyment of property" may be used in court to supercede other rights, such as a woman's right to half the marital property (if it's in his name), her stake in his pension credits (which could be legally defined as his property), her right to apply for exclusive possession of the house if her husband beats her (presumably he couldn't enjoy the house if he weren't living there). A similar rationale can be applied to rent controls (it interferes with my right to enjoy my property and contract freely), or an argument against giving farmers more rights against foreclosures (it would interfere with the banks' right to property in the debenture under which money was loaned to the farmer).

Although property rights

sound innocent enough, the Advisory Council report states the organization "is concerned that the proposed addition of property rights to the Charter will have grave consequences to the rights women have already achieved and will severely impair their opportunity to achieve equality."

Noting that women in Canada own a very small proportion of the land, CACSW points out that in addition to real property, the provision would include any right a person may have under a contract, including the right to contract freely for all provisions. So what might women come up against when a corporation challenges affirmative action in court as an infringement of their right to contract freely, or when the same argument is made against the imposition of minimum wage on employees?

In the United States, the right to property guaranteed in the Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments has been used to strike down minimum wage and child labour laws in the past, although the amendments' interpretation has narrowed some over the years.

The inclusion of property rights may also make politicians reluctant to ensure minority rights are protected, lest they be on public record suggesting that someone's enjoyment of property may be impaired.

While the thought has been entertained that the entrenchment of property rights could benefit women under the theory of "new property" there is no precedent or other historical interpretation to suggest that property rights would be anything but limited to traditional concepts of property (land, rights under contract, debentures, etc.).

"Moreover," according to the CACSW document, "the rights to social assistance, welfare,

worker's compensation, occupational health and so on, are better protected by women advocating a broader interpretation of the words "security of the person" in section 7 of the Charter.

CACSW warns that even though the rights ensured women would have to be challenged at the Supreme Court level under the property rights guarantee, women would be forced to protect existing legislation, rather than to move forward to make even better laws.

"It sounds so good, so innocent, so non-controversial, and yet the consequences for women will be grave," the report cautions.

Clare F. Beckton, Associate Professor of Law at Dalhousie Law School, echoes many of the concerns raised by the Canadian Advisory Council and concludes that "entrenchment of property rights in the Charter at this time would be premature."

"It would be dangerous to women to agree to an amendment of section 7 to include property rights," she notes in a brief prepared for CACSW "until it becomes clear how the courts will interpret section 7."

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MONEY IS NEEDED to support the Coalition's legal work, educational and public awareness activities. The legal bill, especially, is expected to grow considerably within the next few months. Donations should be sent to Coalition fundraiser Nancy Martens. Our mailing address is Box 51, Station L, Winnipeg. Phone Nancy at 772-0887.

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BETTER ACTIVE TODAY, THAN RADIOACTIVE TOMORROW — The U.S. Federal authorities have stockpiled 71,000 pounds of opium for critical civilian use, and have recently requested 59,000 additional pounds. The Pentagon has asked the National Funeral Directors' Association of the United States to prepare to handle mass burials; the president of the Association has asked for a training course in embalming radioactive corpses. One thing is certain — unburied, buried, incinerated or vapourized, the dead will continue to be radioactive — forever.

Northern Woman's Journal

NATO MANEUVERS — U.S. soldiers rehearsed mass burials of battlefield casualties in graves dug by bulldozers at NATO maneuvers in central Europe. "The job of burying people, especially a lot of people, is a job no one wants to think about. That's what makes it necessary to go through the exercise so that people will know what to do — God forbid — should it happen again as it has in the past," said Lt. Col. Jim Lawson, Fifth Corps

spokesperson. Lawson said the exercise should not make Germans feel nervous. "We have Germans working with us right here and they're not nervous," he said.

Associated Press

NUCLEAR REFERENDUM (WINNIPEG) — A resounding victory. The 76.9 percent (154,686) of Winnipeggers who voted in the October municipal elections said YES to nuclear disarmament. Val Klassen of the Winnipeg Coordinating Committee on Disarmament (WCCD) worked on the referendum campaign and feels the result has been "encouraging for local peace movement organizers. This large majority vote supports our efforts and reaffirms our goals." She is grateful to the many City Council members who helped get information to their constituents.

Though this vote is not legally binding, says Klassen, it is important for people and legislators to understand this is a majority movement and the WCCD will be requesting City Council to send a formal letter to Ottawa informing the Canadian government of the results.

KNOW NUKES



"Not much of a Nuclear Free Zone though, is it?"

The next step for the local peace movement is to have Winnipeg officially declared a Nuclear Weapons Free Zone (like Vancouver). Klassen expects opposition lobbied by local industry involved in weapons production and possibly the railways who would be unable to ship nuclear components through the zone.

The WCCD will also be involved in the upcoming national peace caravan and in January begins amassing signatures on a petition the cross-country caravan will take to Ottawa in the summer. They want to involve people from rural Manitoba communities. Many of these communities also held the disarmament referendum, but since these municipalities are not required to give their results to a central registry, information on the outcome of the vote is hard to come by, said Klassen.

when they talk with local people on the links between the northern Saskatchewan uranium mining and the eventual end use of this uranium to arm the Cruise missile. A member, Kate from the Greenham Common peace camp in England joined them for a few weeks, demonstrating solidarity between peace camps throughout the world.

Vye Bouvier, a Metis journalist from Ile a la Crosse shared information regarding the unextinguished aboriginal title to the land which is now the bombing range. During negotiations in the early '50s many people were not familiar with the English language and were not aware that they were signing the use of this land away forever. Now due to the poor economic climate of the north, people affected by the existence of the bombing range are forced to work in the uranium mines.

Close to 3,000 people in eight communities in northern Saskatchewan have lost their rights to hunt, fish, and trap on this land. Jets frequently fly over rooftops in some communities and bombs are exploded, causing the ground to shake and windows to rattle. Defoliants have been used to destroy vegetation in certain areas of the weapons range. The Women's Peace Camp supports the aboriginal rights to the land now being used as an air weapons range and believes



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KIPICHISICHAKANISIK (Cree) — Cole Bay, Sask. An ongoing Women's Peace Camp has been established along the Primrose Lake Air Weapons Range (a 3 million acre tract of land in Alberta and Saskatchewan) where testing of the US cruise missile is to begin in January of '84. The Women Gathering to Stop the Cruise camp began in August and is remaining active until at least January. The women are doing weekly slide shows with discussions in Cole Bay and the surrounding towns

this land should be used to support and retain life, not as a testing ground for weapons of destruction.

The Peace Camp has been able to continue with the support of the Cole Bay community. With winter coming the women could use cold weather gear, insulation materials, stationery, stamps. People wishing to join or support the Peace Camp can donate, write articles, offer suggestions, or just write your support to: Women's Peace Camp, General Delivery, Cole Bay, Saskatchewan, Canada S0M 0M0 (306) 829-4400.

**Les and Monica
from Cole Bay**



TARGET OF HARDELL — In the 70s, the nuclear acceptance campaign launched by the nuclear industry reported back that women lacked nuclear enthusiasm. Quickly, the industry began to deliver a made-for-woman message by the newly formed Nuclear Energy Women (NEW). Affiliated with the powerful industry lobby, Atomic Industrial Forum (AIF), NEW developed many different approaches to reach women from all walks of life.

A 20 minute slide show *Women and Energy: The Vital Link* promotes the following ideas:

- Women are lucky to live in a world of virtually unlimited freedom, "limited only by our own imagination and drive". Because this freedom is supported by the present system of energy production, women owe it to themselves and the country to support nuclear power and not risk social upheaval by joining politically dangerous environmentalists.
- Shifts in energy production to solar, soft-paths, or conservation will hit women especially hard (touching on women's reasonable fear, since some non-feminist environmentalists expect women to sacrifice more). "And you may even end up doing your wash by hand — in cold water. Have you ever tried to wash things by slamming them against a flat rock? It's tough on clothes, murder on dishes. Instead of appliances wearing out, we will."
- The slide show depicts industry-produced radiation as being no hazard to the public. Reporting "no serious

injury" to citizen or worker and an "enviable safety record".

— Nuclear waste is manageable. A slide of an outstretched hand displaying three aspirin is narrated with "supplying all the electrical needs of the average American home for a year only produces one twenty-fifth of one ounce of high-level waste — about the same as three aspirin tablets."

— Women must overcome their unfounded fears and criticisms or their future will be grim marked by shortages, blackouts, unemployment and urban unrest. "The future of nuclear energy is the future of womankind. Without it we become nothing. With it we become whatever we wish to be."

Other NEW strategies to reverse the "weaknesses in women's knowledge about nuclear power" include: Girl Scouts energy badges; career booklets "Working with the Atom"; outreach to anti-nuclear church women, young mothers via the PTA, Cable TV, literature in doctors offices, films such as "Radiation...Naturally." NEW also conducts yearly energy tours for women leaders to learn how "benign" nuclear waste management can be.

Those concerned with occupational/environmental health and public safety should carefully observe and counter these nuclear promotions. Open debate and public examination of energy, environmental, and health issues must be preserved.

**Lin Nelson
National Women's
Health Network**



REACTOR FODDER — Changes in radiation standards for women set by the Atomic Energy Control Board will enable women to take jobs inside nuclear reactors that were previously off limits.

The annual 5-rem limit will apply for both sexes under the new regulations. Wages in maintenance and technical jobs range from \$9 to \$20 per hour. Ontario Hydro officials already concede that there is the potential for numerous law suits as these women's pregnancies might be adversely affected by radiation.

Coincidentally, these changes in employment practices are happening at a time when Ontario Hydro's Pickering station

suffers serious damage due to pressure tube embrittlement. Hydro officials feared from the first that it might be a generic problem affecting Candu pressure tubes generally. These coolant tubes in all Candu reactors may have to be replaced at exorbitant financial costs. Re-tubing would put each reactor out of commission for at least a year and, according to the Porter Commission, would pose the single greatest occupational health hazard encountered in the nuclear industry.

In doing this re-tubing, Hydro's skilled workers (presently mostly men) would quickly receive their total permitted radiation exposure of 5-rem per year and would have to be transferred to non-radiation work. Is Ontario Hydro really interested in hiring more women or are they concerned about protecting their skilled male labour force? Already the utility is amassing statistical evidence to prove in any future court appearance that cigarette smoke or the urban environment are com-



paratively as dangerous as radiation in producing miscarriages or birth defects. Rosemary Petrovich, a technical safety supervisor for Hydro, confidently explains, "It's sort of like a paternity suit — you can't prove it was you who did it, but you can prove it wasn't."

**Globe & Mail
Nuclear Free Press**

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Sexual Harassment Conference

The hidden problem of sexual harassment on campus was examined at the University of Manitoba's Womyn's Centre conference, November 4-5.

Sexual harassment is described as a manifestation of power relationships and an ultimate reminder of women's fundamental status in society as a sex object; a method of control to perpetuate the subordination of female labour within a patriarchy.

"As long as you have some people with very much power and some people with very little power the situation is ripe for harassment. Sexual harassment is related to rape in the sense that both are expressions of male hostility towards women" said Jo-Ann Kolmes, a member of the Edmonton based Alliance Against Sexual Harassment.

The problem affects women on campus at all levels: students, faculty and support staff alike. A University of Calgary survey in 1981 revealed that over 40 per cent of students had experienced verbal and nonverbal sexually inappropriate behaviour such as vulgar comments, leers and cat-calls. Physical harassment was reported by 13 per cent of the undergraduates and 10 per cent of graduate students.

Lacking an effective structure to deal with sexual harassment in the workplace, many women find that the only way to get out of the situation is to leave. "Sexual harassment has not been given the credit it is no doubt

due in its contribution towards the high turnover rate in women's jobs", Kolmes said. A Canadian Human Rights Commission survey in March '83 showed that 31 per cent of those who had experienced sexual harassment were transferred, changed jobs or quit because of it. The effects of sexual harassment on women's paycheques and their health make it "women's most dangerous occupational hazard", according to a Thunder Bay Committee on Sexual Harassment.

Harassment in the workplace and on campus can be disastrous to a woman's career. Ms Holmes discussed guidelines for dealing with the situation. It is important to find a definition of sexual harassment which is not unduly restrictive of normal communication. Education on the issue is an important aspect of such a mechanism. At the same time, women must see that a committee,

dealing with their complaints, is effective and fair to counteract the stress they undergo.

The University of Manitoba Students Union is conducting a survey of 800 women and 200 men on campus to determine the extent of sexual harassment on campus. Thelma Lussier, chairperson of the President's Advisory Council for Women is pushing for a policy to deal with incidents that occur on campus. The Womyn's Centre staff members will continue to focus attention on the problem and the Psychological Service Centre continues to counsel abuse victims.

Kate Harrington, a Womyn's Centre staff member, was disappointed at the low attendance, but she felt there was a better awareness of sexual harassment and increased communication between campus organizations as a result of the conference.

Women Protest Bride Burning

While the deaths of soldiers and civilians are reported on the front pages of daily papers around the world, the systematic murdering of brides in India continues daily as the war against women in that country rages on.

Authorities in India say 260 young women died last year in New Delhi from being burned to death — after their families failed to produce dowries rich enough to satisfy the husband and his family. The spokesperson for a women's organization

in India says at least two cases a day are reported.

Women organizing against the "custom" of bride burning recently protested the decision of a judge who freed the mother-in-law and two brothers-in-law of a nine-month pregnant woman of murder charges, after another judge had sentenced them to death in December 1980. The in-laws were convicted of murdering her because they failed to get the dowry they wanted. The judge at the November '83 trial

said the evidence against those convicted was inconclusive.

Women's groups are speaking out and demanding the courts to play a role in charging the murderers of brides, but the practice continues daily. Women protested outside the courtroom where the overruling took place. The Saheli organization stated their condemnation of the judge, "which appears to justify the demands made on the girl's parents as an accepted custom."

Free the Five

(B.C.) Julie Belmas and Ann Hansen, along with co-defendants Gerry Hannah, Doug Stewart and Brent Taylor (the Vancouver Five) have been facing a first set of charges (weapons possession, car theft, robbery) since September 6th in a New Westminster court, under direct indictment by the Crown. In a series of pre-trial motions, the defense succeeded in convincing the judge that actions by the police, the crown and the media ("trial by media") seriously jeopardised the Five's right to a fair trial.

As a result, Justice Martin Toy issued a complete media ban on court proceedings and has expressed his intent to impose a total media ban on the whole sequence of five separate trials (including verdicts) that the Five are facing, to preserve the independent judgement of future jurors. The media, wanting to cash-in on the coverage (possibly detrimental to the defendants), have opposed the ban.

The judge's ruling, if upheld, would thwart the Crown's intent to criminalise the Five and depoliticise their alleged actions, as would happen with a series of five separate trials, with criminal charges coming first, and the opinion of the jurors for each subsequent trial being influenced by snowballing press coverage.

Justice Toy also allowed the defense to thoroughly question prospective jurors. It took the questioning of 179 persons before the complement of 12 jurors could be picked. "During this questioning, the judge became disturbed at the extent of existing prejudice from the publicity surrounding our arrests 8 months earlier" commented one of the defendants.

The videotape "Trial by Media" is available in Winnipeg from the Idea Centre (475-4159). Financial contributions to the defense of the Five can be sent to Acct. # 91740-1, CCEC Credit Union, 205 E. Pender, Vancouver V5T 1J7. Letters can be written to any of the Five at Oakalla Prison, Drawer "O", Burnaby, B.C. V5H 3N4.

by Michele Pujol

AURORA HOUSE

by Patricia Rawson

(THE PAS) — Aurora House, a northern Manitoba shelter for battered women and children, opened in early December. The shelter, operated by The Pas Committee for Women in Crisis Inc., was late opening due to refurbishing delays.

The committee originated in 1980 to provide immediate shelter, support and follow-up support for battered women and children, a seriously overdue service. Services are offered to residents from The Pas, The Pas Reserve, Big Eddy and Umperville Settlements, Cormorant, Wanless, Cranberry Portage, Moose Lake, Grand Rapids, Easterville, Snow Lake, and Pelican Rapids. A 24-hour crisis line has been set up in the administrative offices, situated in a downtown office building separate from the shelter.

Aurora House provides accommodation for 20 women and children. As well, two counselling rooms and a play room are located in the house.

A staff of 15, including one child care worker and three full-time administrators operate the shelter, office and crisis line. The eleven counsellors work rotating 24 hour shifts. On-going training is provided for all staff as well as volunteers.

The volunteer training program has been well established. Judy Box, Executive Director, explains the five-week program. "The first week is orientation", then the next four are dedicated to battery, rape, incest, child abuse and drug counselling.

Judy adds that the centre offers "evening and weekend training so each volunteer is given an opportunity to go to it".

Resources for long term support have still not been secured by the community. Judy says that after the women leave the shelter, "we educate and help them in any area we can". But, she adds that the after-support services are limited "in places like The Pas where (permanent) housing is not available." The shelter is available to women for 10 to 14 days and although it offers drop-in counselling as a followup service, the women are often left with virtually no place to go. The staff and volunteers devote much energy towards alternatives so the women are not forced to return to the battering situation. Many women choose to go to out-of-town transition centres.

The need for a transition centre, in a town plagued with a housing shortage, is very evident. The crisis centre is working towards setting up a transition centre, but public and financial support is crucial.

A one-year Canada Community Development Project Program grant has provided money for wages and some operating costs. Furniture and household supplies are donated by area residents and volunteers are essential in providing their time. Since the need and service having already been established, energy that should be spent on abused women and children, is needlessly being wasted on applying for on-going funding.

Vasectomies Knot Harmful

The National Institute of Child Health and Human Development has found that vasectomies do not lead to heart disease, contradicting a study released in 1981 that showed vasectomies increased the risk of artery disease in monkeys.

A spokesperson for the Institute said that the original study got an unwarranted amount of publicity, adding that a recent study revealed there was no difference in a study between vasectomized men and men who had not had the operation.

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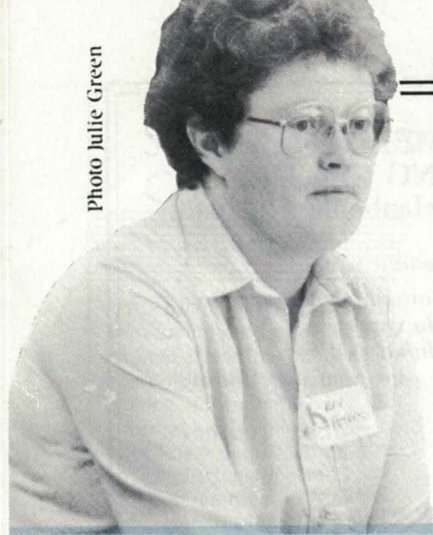
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Bev Peters of the Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women (MACSW) addressing the role of feminism in rural areas.

Rural Conference in Minnedosa: A Weekend for Women

by Tanya Lester

Woodmore singer Karen Howe captured the feeling of "A Weekend for Women" when she sang about women gathering together to sing, cry, feast, and give.

The fall conference organized by the Brandon chapter of The Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women (MACSW), The Minnedosa Women's Institute Study Group and The Manitoba Committee on Wife Abuse (MCWA) brought Manitoba women together in Minnedosa to celebrate the joys and sorrows of being women.

The exchange of ideas began during the Saturday workshops. A description of the "Feminism and its Place in Rural Communities" workshop provides a sampling of what went on. In the workshop, Vera Menzies, a panelist from Crystal City, talked about growing into a feminist. When she was first married, Vera's husband automatically did his share of the housework. But when guests were expected, Vera told him not to help. She worried about what the neighbours would think if they saw her husband doing 'women's work'. Now, Vera believes "feminism does begin in the home". She had four sons and each helped with the housework. Two of them have married feminists.

At 49, Vera, who had worked as a nurse before marriage, again took up a career in the public health field. Six years ago, she helped form a women's support group in Crystal City. The group adheres to only three rules: no gossip, no kids, no lunch.

But, it was not until MACSW's Bev Peters called Vera to ask her to sit on the panel that she came to an important realization. "I suddenly realized," she said. "I've been a closet feminist all my life."

The "closet feminist" term was used by many of the women throughout the weekend. It seems if a feminist 'comes out', in rural Manitoba, she stands a good chance of being isolated and stereotyped. Some of the negative qualities associated with people's perceptions of a feminist were identified as: man-hating, family-hating, unreasonable, extremist, bitchy, and humourless.

But when we broke into groups to discuss what a feminist is, it became apparent that feminism is difficult to live in isolation because it is so rooted in giving and sharing. For example, some of the women's definitions for feminism included: "interested in women's issues, people-person, concerned with sexist stereotyping, concerned with social reform, concerned with sharing and supporting other women" and "uses anger constructively".

So in order to fulfill ourselves as feminists, we have to try to overcome the barriers which isolate us from the rest of society. By focusing on the question of "How to get through", several solutions were suggested by the end of the workshop. Through "personal influence" was one suggestion. For instance, one woman said her sons are encouraged to bake cakes and her

daughters are encouraged to drive the tractors.

Another suggestion was to maintain personal integrity which might mean refusing to laugh at sexist jokes. Or, to remain open to "discussion on a one-to-one basis" with anyone who seems interested in finding out more about feminism.

Individual "resistance" was also seen as being very valuable. One woman had phoned the local carnival organizer and protested the carnival queen contest. The male organizer said he had never realized before that the contest

was degrading to women. She had started him thinking.

Other women mentioned forming support groups. In a group, for example, women can talk about the fears related to coming out and saying, 'I'm a feminist'.

Group action was another suggested solution. The Birtle support group, for instance, showed the anti-pornography *Not a Love Story* film and, as a result, one man in the community cancelled his subscription to *Playboy*.

Others said that feminists can share their beliefs by being role models. Taking a non-traditional job or role might mean running for public office or sitting on a board.

The singing and feasting part of the weekend began on Saturday night. After supper, Glenboro author Helen Levi contributed to the celebration by reading excerpts from two of her books.



The author says that some of her neighbours think she's "weird" because she is a writer. But "as women do more and more strange things", her own work has become more acceptable to the people around her. On the second day, there was an emotional workshop led by Manitoba Committee on Wife Abuse (MCWA) members. We talked about physical and psychological abuse. In the morning, we realized how spiritually isolated from other women we often are; even from our own mothers and daughters. We were urged to join together in strength and work together against the society which batters us.

Kim Bagar, from MCWA, stressed the importance of advocacy groups in supporting battered women and helping them wade through the red tape of the legal system. In Dauphin, Gimli, Carmen, Morden, Eriksdale, and other towns, crisis centres have been established to help abused women.

These centers are also "opening up people's eyes" to the problem of wife abuse by presenting films, speakers, and workshops on the subject. Bagar said MCWA will provide resource people to support those who want to work on educationals or become part of an advocacy group. She also mentioned the MCWA's toll-free crisis phone number, which will not be recorded on a woman's phone bill. The crisis line is set up to help women who are being abused. The number is 1-800-362-3344.

I think all of us left with the feeling that we had learned more about the problems faced by women in a sexist world. We went away with renewed strength to go out and change that world.

Maureen Schwanke of Miniota and Joyce Harrison of Winnipegosis on "The Problems of Rural Women".

Northern Conference~Change: Chance or Choice?

by Elaine Martyn

"Change: Chance or Choice?" was the theme for the second annual Northern Options for Women (N.O.W.) conference held in Thompson on October 22 and 23. It attracted women from throughout the north — Churchill, Flin Flon, Pukatawagan...and speakers from as far away as Ottawa and Regina. The 155 delegates enjoyed informative presentations, animated discussion, and light-hearted humour. They were encouraged by speakers and one another to question their habits, plans, and remember their right to determine their own future.

'Financial Planning for Women' offered information in all areas of financial management. As pointed out by Jeanette Fraser, panel moderator, many women are ill-prepared to handle financial matters until they are met by the "3-D realities: Desertion, Divorce, and Death". She pointed out a few startling statistics from the "Poverty Report" prepared by the National Council of Welfare: One in six Canadian women live in poverty; most Canadian women will become poor at some point in their lives, most often from circumstances beyond their control. With facts like these in mind, it is necessary that women budget, plan, and save for their own future.

Cathy Danyluk, a Thompson real estate agent who is an industry leader in Manitoba reminded women, "You don't need a spouse to get a house." Single women are the fastest growing segment of the real estate market. These include young career-minded professionals, single parents, older singles, and groups of singles who pool resources to buy. She has found women are generally more sophisticated in their first house purchase than men. Perhaps this is because they are willing to ask questions, reveal their lack of knowledge, and learn. Women buy homes for comfort, security, and as a business investment. The purpose determines the type of dwelling selected. The good news is "If you've done your homework, the decision you make will be made by both your head and your heart. And that's why women make good investors."

The second major panel

presentation focused on patients' rights and personal health information. Panelists



Karen Howe, singer & songwriter addressed the conference. Photo by Jan Robson.

included a nurse presently employed by the Manitoba Association of Rights and Liberties (MARL), a hospital administrator, and a pharmacist. As noted by Lillian Thomas of the Patients' Rights Group of MARL, there is no legal basis for access to records. Rather it is determined by arbitrary decisions of institutions and doctors who, in fact, 'own' the records.

Luba Shepartycky, a Thompson pharmacist, believes patients must learn to demand their rights from all health care workers. However, she also pointed out, "The only information that is beneficial is information that is understood." If a patient does not receive the information desired, she must ask and if denied seek another professional." Thomas, from MARL actively supported this point: "You have to become an educated consumer."

Debbie Thom, a worker at Thompson Crisis Centre, presented a program entitled, "It's Just Your Nerves" which focused on awareness of how drugs and alcohol affect women, and the need for the development of special support programs to help women solve abuse problems. The problems and solutions are often quite different for men and women.

Wendy Land, representing the Coalition for Reproductive Choice, explained the group's philosophical base.

"Abortion is not a resolvable issue. With all the information available on both sides, it is impossible to determine absolutely what is right or wrong.

Therefore it is essential that the individual choose."

The native women's health panel included four speakers: Marie Ballantyne, Thompson Awasis Child Caring Agency;



Bonnie Johnson, Regina Health Sharing, addressing conference. Photo by Jan Robson.

Fjola Thickfoot, Thompson Northern Nursing Program; Millie Stonechild of Winnipeg; and Jean Goodwill from Ottawa. Each woman reiterated the need to integrate traditional and modern medicine, and the need to train more native nurses to work with native people.

The Sunday morning sessions once again focused on health.

The opening speech by Bonnie Johnson of Regina Health Sharing, stressed the need for our health system to become more health conscious instead of focusing only on disease treatment. She stated, "The wellness concept needs equal time and money. The minister of disease doesn't really know what we are talking about." The remaining sessions focused on a woman's responsibility to maintain her own health through fitness, as introduced by Grace Selby of the Thompson Recreation Department, and by breast self-examination introduced by a film during a presentation on breast cancer by Debbie Clavitt, a public health nurse in Lynn Lake.

An evening concert with Karen Howe brought inspiration and joy through her entertainment. Her words affirm the value of every person; those who are different simply came from a "different cookie cutter". To all she recommends, "Give the gift of life love brings"; but one of her final songs was addressed to the theme of the conference and the women present: "You've come a long way lady...You've played second fiddle long enough, Now play first violin."

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On the evening of November 19 former world class speed skater Sylvia Burka-Lovell was duly recognized for her athletic prowess and contribution to provincial sport with her formal induction into the fledgling Manitoba Sports Hall of Fame. That same evening, eight others received the identical honor, bringing to 41 the number of Manitobans inaugurated into the Hall for individual achievement in its four years of existence. Of these 41, no fewer than 38 are male. Sylvia Burka-Lovell, joining in company former springboard diver Judy Moss and curling administrator Joan Whalley, is only the third woman so honored by this province's athletic community.

The Manitoba Sports Hall of Fame was incorporated in 1980 to recognize individuals and athletic teams who have brought credit and distinction to themselves, their sport, and to the province, either as competitors or behind-the-scenes builders. Any sports governing body or private citizen is eligible to submit nominations for induction into the Hall to the appointed selection committee, which then elects about ten honorees annually for the fall ceremony.

The Hall's Chairperson of the Board of Directors, Jim Trifunov, explains that inductees are selected in accordance with precise criteria; for what they have accomplished, and not "on the basis of sex." The Sports Hall does not favour a policy that would ensure so many women and only so many men are honored each year.

Trifunov says each year, to date, the male nominees far

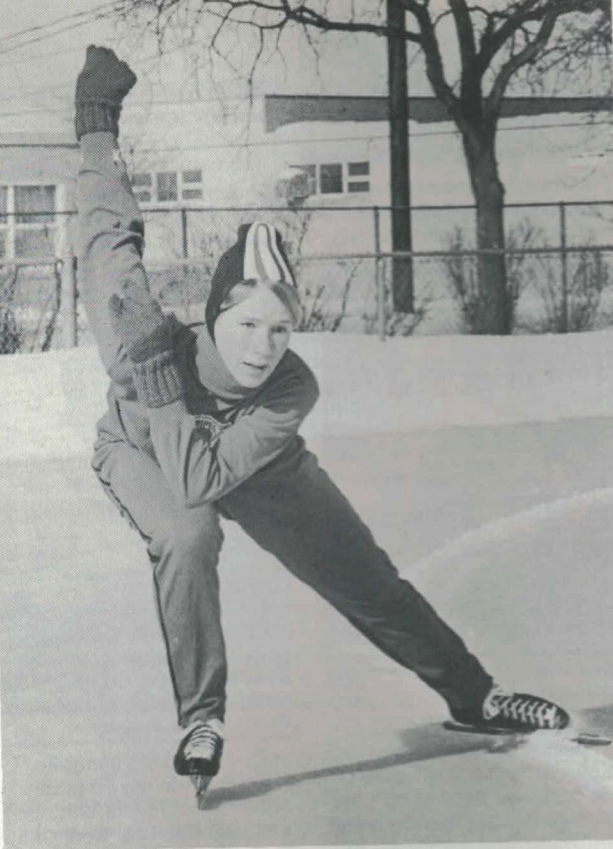


PHOTO BY GERRY CAIRNS

Burka Skates into Hall of Fame

by Sharon Chisvin

outnumber the female ones, and explains that to his knowledge, this is clearly a consequence of traditionally there being fewer sports in which women were encouraged and eligible to participate. Stemming from that, logically, there are fewer accomplished female athletes, he concludes. Supporting such reasoning is, as example, the fact that Cana-

dian men first participated in the Olympic Games in 1904, while a Canadian women's contingent was not sent to compete until 20 years later.

But this argument, valid in its own right as an explanation rather than as an excuse for minimal female representation in the Hall, forfeits much of its credibility with the disclosure that of the ten persons sitting

on the selection committee, only one is a woman.

Ida McKay is decidedly "neutral" about her exclusive status, and says she does not think she was appointed as a "token" woman, although jokes in that vein have been made by her committee peers.

Both Trifunov and McKay concede they never considered the female representation, or lack of it, in the Manitoba Hall as a potentially contentious issue, but add that concern about it can be easily remedied simply by increasing the number of female nominees submitted to the selection committee annually.

It might be as simple as that: a concerted campaign by women's rights advocates to research, then nominate women candidates for the Sports Hall of Fame. The specific criteria for inductees is available through the Hall's office at the Manitoba Sports Federation, and nominations are accepted year round. There are many names from which to choose, and they are accessible. Last year, the provincial Department of Education completed a Curriculum Sports Series on Manitoba women, and compiled a list of over 30 prominent female athletes who, excluding the few who still compete, meet all of the induction requirements.

Getting more women inducted into the Manitoba Sports Hall of Fame is only the first step in a much greater challenge: the challenge to have competitive athletics, with its tests of limitless endurance and strivings for perfection, recognized as much a woman's domain as it is a man's.



Belliegram

BELOW THE POVERTY LINE — Sole support parents make up a larger and larger percentage of Canadian welfare recipients and are having to live 40 to 50 per cent below the poverty level. After rent and food are paid there is nothing left to cover the cost of clothing, school supplies, shoes and boots, non-prescription drugs, transportation and so on. These allowance levels are insufficient for the healthy functioning of any family.

Social assistance recipients are further victimized when they get turned away from banks when they try to cash their cheques. To meet an obvious need Money Mart, a new business that will cash cheques hassle-free — but at a price, has set up store fronts in Vancouver, Burnaby, Surrey, Calgary, Winnipeg, Halifax, Toronto and Regina in the last two years. The clincher is the fee — six percent of government cheques like welfare, unemployment and family benefits to three per

cent of repeat payroll cheques.

Gayle Lebens of the Regent Park Residents Association suspects many people use the service despite the fee. "People often get cheques early that they can't cash right away at the bank. There's not enough money for people to live on so by the time they get their cheque they're in a tight financial situation. It's an exploitive situation."

**Family Benefits Work
Group Newsletter**

HOT TUBS — Pregnant women should refrain from soaking in hot tubs, a University of Washington researcher says. Mary Ann Sedgwick Harvey of the university's School of Medicine found that after as little as 19 minutes in a 106°F, internal temperatures reached 102°F, a temperature that can be hazardous to the central nervous system in a developing fetus. Harvey says that a study of unexplained birth defects found several instances of malformation in children of women who had remained in hot tubs for 45 minutes to an hour.

hersay



Canadian women score on their own

Until recently, Canadian newspapers regularly featured accounts of young girls who aspired to play ice hockey in a boys' league; less for the desire to play with the boys, than for the opportunity to play organized hockey. One of two fates inevitably awaited these ingenious athletes: with a pat on the pads they were told to run home because, after all, hockey was a rough sport designed for boys only; or, on a rare occasion, their talent would be recognized as so exceptional that they would be permitted to join the team, provided, of course, they could pass as 'one of the boys.'

Such items appear infrequently now, because women no longer need male teams for the chance to make hockey headlines. Finally, more than 100 years after the game's invention, Canadian women are lacing their skates, donning their face masks, and taking slapshots against other women in organized and competitive hockey games. Last year, 20,000 women crossed the blue line on hundreds of teams, in dozens of leagues across the country. Canada's national sport has finally become just that — a sport in which all Canadians, regardless of sex, now actively participate.

At the University of Manitoba, 15 women's teams are expected to participate in intramural hockey this year, while the city's senior women's league, flourishing for more than a decade already, anticipates it

will meet its capacity registration of 21 players (19 plus two goalies) on each of its seven existing teams in the upcoming season.

Only one of these teams is coached by a woman, while only one of the league referees is a woman, but coordinator Elaine Lower is confident that within a few years, more women will acquire the necessary skills and will step forward to assume these supervisory roles. At present, few women in the city are qualified to coach and referee hockey, she says.

The women's league abides by all the 'boys' rules, Lower adds. The game has not been revised to be easier for women. Some of the teams have played against and triumphed over male teams in exhibition matches, yet Lower maintains most of the women participate in the league only because they enjoy the skate and the game, and not because they are determined to prove themselves as capable as men in a traditionally male-dominated/women-excluded activity.

That may not be their stated intent, but in playing the sport once deemed "not suitable for the gentle sex," and in playing it well, these women are proving just that. Why not acknowledge it?

For further information contact Elaine Lower at 888-9104 or the Manitoba Amateur Hockey Association at 775-0334.

by Sharon Chisvin

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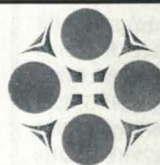
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The Manitoba Child Care Association (MCCA) undertook a survey in October of 1982 with the goal of providing a child care profile across the province. It seems appropriate that the final analysis of this survey occurred in October of 1983, just as the new Day Care Standards regulations come into effect for Manitoba. The results of this survey range from the expected to the surprising, with an underlying theme of parental burnout present through most of the 150 questions answered.

Originally it was hoped that the study would be a random population survey of parents with children under the age of twelve who needed child care. Unfortunately, a lack of staff and money to implement this narrowed the survey to include only people who were already using licensed group care. A total of 303 parents and 247 staff were interviewed. Each parental interview included questions regarding the current care arrangement, previous care arrangements, awareness of centre activities, level of parental involvement at the centre, general attitudes and opinions, areas of satisfaction and dissatisfaction and demographic information.

Children of the parents surveyed were, for the most part, receiving care for five days each week and 66 per cent of these children were between the ages of three and six years. A prevailing message revealed by the survey indicated that parents

illustration: Joanne Johnson





illustration: norma hall

felt limited in their choice of day cares and uninvolved in their children's activities at these centres. Considering the need for day care arises out of the need for parents to work, it is no surprise that parents' search for adequate care is restricted, with only seventeen of the parents having visited one other centre before placing their child in care. Their further involvement in centres as volunteers is almost non-existent. Seventy per cent of the parents had volunteered no time at all to the centre in the month preceding their interview. Washing day care laundry, baking and participating in fundraising activities are some of the ways parents can contribute to the operation of centres, but these activities can become overwhelming when combined with the demands of a full-time job and family needs.

Parents' needs for additional care for their children outside of the centre ranged from two hours per week to an alarming high of forty hours per week. Eight out of ten children spent three to five waking hours with their parents each day, but parents indicated that this was not necessarily quality time since housework, shopping and other things intruded. Nonetheless, 67 per cent of the parents were satisfied with the amount of time spent with children. Several assumptions could be drawn about this particular point. It could be assumed that parents did not want to enhance their relationships with their kids for selfish reasons or that parents resolve themselves to thinking that five hours a day was a fair piece of time when all things are considered. A bath takes about one-half hour and a meal an additional hour and should the parents wish some time for themselves, to get dressed for example, it occurs at the expense of time with the child(ren).

Sixty-four per cent of the children placed in day care had been in one other care arrangement before starting at their centre, the most prevalent of these arrangements being sitter care outside of the child's home. This type of care also appeared to be quite unsatisfactory, with a termination rate of 48 per cent within six months. The highest termination rate (68 per cent) occurred with sitter care inside the child's home. The lowest termination rate occurred in a licensed preschool centre. Preschool centres also had the lowest rate of parental dissatisfaction. Most centre arrangements were terminated when the need for care no longer existed or the parents moved. On the other hand, babysitter situations changed frequently, with the most noted cases of abuse and neglect.

Since day care availability accommodates only one out of ten preschool-age children requiring care, many children remain in these situations. The opportunity for infants to be cared for in a licensed facility is even more dismal, with present

nesses, and are forced to work when they are ill. This area in particular is one in which employers will have to assume some responsibility, since the expense of a sick children's service would probably cost between \$30 to \$40 per day and therefore be

although 12 per cent did not know whether the staff used physical punishment to discipline their child. One in five parents wanted staff to spend more time teaching intellectual or school-related skills. Seventy-two per cent of the parents

illustration: norma hall



facilities meeting only one per cent of the demand. Although 67 per cent of parents felt a child under the age of two was best cared for at home, 75 per cent agreed that there is a need for more licensed infant care spaces. MaryBeth Kom from MCCA commented, "...if you call the day care office for an infant care space in a licensed family home care provider's home, you get one when the child is eight years old..." Survey respondents felt that there should be six months paid maternity/paternity leave for parents.

The survey also dealt with the difficult issue of deciding what to do when a child is ill. Most parents wanted to be with their sick child and half these parents missed work to do so. 41 per cent had a sitter or relative stay with their child. Of the parents who missed work, half were docked a day's pay by their employer. A large number of parents expressed a need for a system to care for sick children. Parents very often use up their own sick time to accommodate their children's ill-

nesses, and are forced to work when they are ill.

When questions pertaining to workplace day cares and employer contributions for child care were asked, 71 per cent of parents agreed that large employers should provide on-site day care, with 55 per cent agreeing that businesses should subsidise child care expenses. Kom added a relevant point around the concept of on-site day cares saying, "...if you talk about a polluting industry parents are not likely to want to place their child in that environment..." There are of course many alternatives to be developed surrounding employer involvement. When compared to the expense accounts of executives and various other benefits enjoyed by a select few corporate individuals, day care services are more in demand and in the long run more beneficial to the employer.

On the topics of nutrition, punishment and activities most parents were satisfied with the policies and programs. Three-quarters of the parents agreed that physical punishment should not occur.

had received no evaluation of their preschool child in the past year, although 90 per cent of the parents had contact with the day care staff at least two times each week. Urban parents of school age children had even less frequent contact with staff. Parents appeared to be happy with this situation, 91 per cent feeling that their relationship with the staff and director was satisfactory.

Policies on sexism were not discussed and there are no centres which have integrated a philosophy on this issue. Child care courses do include sections on sexism, but obviously these are not given enough emphasis to carry through to the day care environment. Parents felt that the most beneficial aspects of a day care environment were the learning and socialising experiences their children had. The majority of parents believed that their children received enough personal attention from the staff. Kom says, "We find increasingly parents are asking more of their child's centre in terms of enrichment and educational stimulation...parents are asking for more staff training and would be willing to pay more if centre staff had more training."

The physical environments of centres were often described as dim, crowded, not suitable for children or unsafe. Parents wanted the centres to be larger, on ground floors instead of church basements, they want newer, brighter spaces which offer more outdoor equipment. Day cares are now required to feed children nutritional foods as determined by a trained nutritionist, but Kom says, "There are centres that are serving nutritionally inadequate lunches, simply to be able to offer a hot lunch. I assume cheese and a hot

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vegetable soup would be more cost efficient than noodles and white bread...if centres can't afford a hot lunch they are better off to advise parents on nutrition." Twenty-five per cent of the parents did not know the policy on foods, but tended to



agree with what their day cares served, regardless of the menu. Again, this is another area which must be given closer attention, since some children receive most of their daily nutritional requirements while at day care.

Before school and after school programs were discussed. Presently these programs accommodate only one per cent of the children requiring this type of care. Parents who cannot get their children in these programs use a myriad of alternatives, and reluctantly some parents are forced to leave their children unsupervised during these times. An overwhelming 95 per cent of parents disagreed that children between the ages of six and nine years were old enough to care for themselves. Sixty-three per cent agreed that the public school system should provide before and after school programs.

Parents who do not work regular nine-to-five work days face additional barriers of not being able to find licensed evening and night child care centres. Seventy-two per cent of survey respondents felt there should be a system to provide for this type of care. It would be interesting to interview parents who use this kind of care, on the number of quality hours per day they are able to spend with their children.

Quite clearly, there are just too many areas that need improvement in our present day care system for the parents alone to be expected to coordinate and police activities and policies. Government day care coordinators do visit centres twice a year in an effort to assess quality of programs, but this too can be criticised since the visits are pre-planned and do not necessarily address the concerns of parents. Day care coordinators can not hand out money to

improve facilities or free up more of the parent's time to be with their children. These concerns will have to be met jointly by our government and employers. Kom feels one positive step towards evaluating the day care system would be to "examine the validity of including day care services under the Department of Education rather than Corrections and Community Services." Parents felt that "unused schools should be used for day care centres" and one insightful parent suggested that "M.L.A.'s should spend time working at the centres."

Kom was most struck by the lack of parental education involved in their search for adequate day care arrangements. She said, "I only spoke with one parent out of 303 who said she had spent days in different centres and felt really happy about her choice because she spent a couple of hours in each centre and picked one that she was happy with and she knew the arrangement was going to last." Kom added, "This isn't the case for the rest of the parents, they are just assuming that licensed care is going to be more stable, more consistent and they don't look beyond that. Now if that's because they are on the rebound from disastrous sitter arrangements I can understand it, but there is the definite need for education." When parents were asked if they wanted a central referral agency and if they would have used it and think it would be helpful for other parents, 97 per cent said yes.

The average child care worker makes approximately \$10,000 a year; so expecting these people, most of whom are women, to do more political lobbying is again placing the responsibility to improve childcare situations on those already taxed by it. Both parents and workers must of course be vocal and clear about their needs, but the struggle for adequate day care should be bolstered with input from the rest of society.

Kom says: "Unless parents are willing to take the time to become far more involved, begin supporting their directors and staff in efforts to upgrade, and until all the stakeholders in the child care system unite and begin to lobby government for increased funding to the licensed child care system, I believe the licensed centres which parents value so highly may no longer be available to them at all."

"The way in which we perceive the working parent and the quality of care given to their children is a priority to all those interested in advancing the emotional and physical welfare of people."



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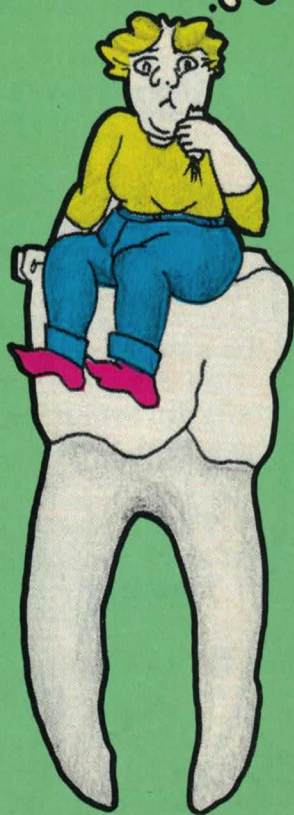
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illustration: carol alder



T

eeth.

Hers are in poor shape, she knows it. And it's no wonder, given all the times in her life she's eaten sweets and not brushed. Even once when she was sixteen and had moved away from home Colleen hid under the covers in her bed sitting room and ate cookies. Giggling to herself, alone except for a transistor radio—also under the covers—she fell asleep and then got nightmares from the sugar. Today there are fillings in most of the biting surfaces of her teeth.

In recent years Colleen goes to dentists regularly, but only for cleanings; although they take x-rays and tell her she has numerous new cavities she never returns for the next visit. She doesn't want to hear about it. Now, since she's moved so often in her adult life, there must be half a dozen dentists across Canada with x-rays of Colleen's mouth languishing in their filing cabinets.

She lays a lot of the blame for her rotten teeth at the door of heredity: all those toothless or false-toothed ancestors. And at the door of the travelling dental hygienists she remembers visiting their country schoolhouse. Giving the children toothbrushes they said, "All right now, don't brush across; brush up and down, up and down." The kids had stared at each other, blushing at this private act performed in public, and the hygienist took her toothbrushes back and packed up. Never a word uttered about cleaning up those biting surfaces, where some of the deepest cavities occur.

Sweets...Colleen remembers running into the fields with her sisters and brothers, leafing through the corn down the long slope to the highway. New neighbours had opened a junk store in their garage down there. Junk *Food*, that is: chocolates, jujubes, licorice, gum. The family's name was Sterling. They were town people, thin and grey-looking in comparison with the rosy stoutness of Colleen's family. Her sister renamed the parents 'Stringy' and nicknamed their shy son 'Stringbean', or, sometimes, 'Bindertwine'. On their way home from the Stringys' the children crouched illicitly in a sunny, roofless room made by stomping on a patch of corn and ate their sweets.

Colleen lay reading on her new waterbed. She consumes vast quantities of books which she then lines up along the

walls of her apartment. Cheap paperbacks she means to take to the exchange and always forgets about fill the trunk of her car. She reads westerns, science fiction, nurse romances, Tolstoy's longer works and his shorter. But only novels, with plots to sink your teeth in. When Colleen can't sleep she'll read all night and then nap all day at her desk.

She loves to lie on that waterbed. It was a gift to herself in lieu of a trip to Europe she and Karen had planned. All sorts of difficulties had arisen about travelling: Karen doubted that Colleen was ready to undergo its exertions, and Colleen balked at the amount of money Europe would drain from her savings. The trip had slowly, tactfully dematerialized.

Tonight the waterbed's sloshing roll did not calm Colleen. It must be the caffeine; she'd had a second cup of coffee at breaktime this morning and now, well after midnight, she was stark, staring awake. Remembering that bananas and milk are said to be relaxing foods, she got up and headed for the kitchen.

**"You're
supposed
to eat a
banana
in a
particular
way..."**

Under her feet the floors were utterly silent, and she appreciated that. In her last apartment, three stories higher in this same building, the wooden floor turned into an orchestra of squeaks, cracks and clicks whenever she crossed it. An hour later it would still snap occasionally as it settled back to normal, like a person's joints after a visit to the chiropractor. But down here in the basement the floors are mute stone under wall-to-wall carpeting.

Scanning the kitchen, Colleen saw nothing to eat except bananas. She tore

one off the bunch. As a joke, Karen had read aloud from an etiquette book at work today. According to Emily Post, she said, you're supposed to eat a banana in a particular way: peel it, lay it down on a plate. Take a knife and slice the banana into little rounds, which you then eat with a fork. Stupid Emily Post! Colleen ate her banana as a normal person would, that is, in picturesque chimpanzee fashion. But this one didn't taste right; sweet black-tasting liquid seeped like poison over her gums. Overripe—disgusting. There must be something better somewhere.

She opened the refrigerator, averting her eyes from the cartoon stuck on the door. It showed an obese woman in a fancy restaurant ordering a fried hotdog with ketchup and cheez-whiz. Karen had given it to Colleen with the suggestion that she stick it on the fridge; maybe it would help shut down her appetite. Colleen followed her instructions, but only to be nice. Anyway, since when did she have a problem with her weight? And if she did, what business was it of Karen's? Since then she avoided going to lunch with Karen and spoke to her less and less.

The refrigerator was bare except for sauces, condiments, a carrot. Colleen washed the carrot. Depressing. She was starved; she wanted to go to the hamburger place over on the highway, but she hadn't been able to afford car insurance this winter and it was too late at night to be out walking. Instead she got back on the bed, moving slowly to avoid its heaving away from her.

The carrot was a tough old root. Halfway through eating it, as a kind of finishing touch to the hopelessness of Colleen's craving for food, a bit of carrot wedged painfully into a hole in her back tooth.

That small dental crater was formed one Sunday night about three months ago as Colleen was flossing her teeth. Some people, especially if they're real aficionados, can floss anywhere; camping or at the office, in an elevator or on the bus to work. Colleen's supervisor, a recent convert to flossing, practised it in the staff lounge at breaktime. But Colleen couldn't perform the operation without a mirror. That Sunday night, looking into her own reflected gaze—half foolish gaping, half unintentional amazement—she had felt self-conscious. When you live alone and

a short story by claudia frei

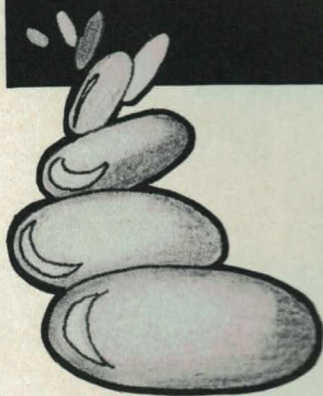
haven't been outside all weekend your eyes begin to starve for human contact. And if your own eyes in the mirror are the only contact you have—well, it's like being at a party and getting stuck talking with your twin sister. Colleen felt secretly sheepish, disloyal. As she tugged to get it out from between two back teeth, the floss came loose suddenly and with it something that pinged against the mirror and fell into the sink. She picked up the filling. Awestruck, her tongue crept over to her left rear molar to probe the deep gap there.

Colleen would have preferred to ignore the gap or simply treat it as a new playground for her tongue, but in the following months food kept getting poked into it, wedging the tooth away from its neighbour and causing infections. That bit of carrot was the last straw; now she rolled on the waterbed, groaning, and could neither sleep nor read for the rest of the night. In the morning, she decided, she would make an appointment with the dentist.

Winter in the suburb. The cold was brittle. Colleen walked at the edge of a broad, sidewalkless street, hobbling tensely because of the ice-glazed pavement and wishing she could afford to drive her car.

The flat, barren expanse of the playground she crossed was empty; children seemed to use it only rarely, as a long shortcut from certain places to certain other places, as though they were afraid of getting lost in its whiteness. Whenever Colleen crosses it—lately, on her way to the shopping plaza—her mind empties at some point and she remembers a story she once read: It is Christmas Eve. A person wandering alone over a snow-covered plain accidentally finds the baby Jesus, blue with cold, lying in the snow. The traveller picks up Jesus and takes a bite out of his halo. It tastes like stale marzipan, a bite of his arm like dry bread. He puts Jesus back in the snow and keeps walking. An absurd and depressing story, thinks Colleen, yet

"He pulled dental floss through the grey sheet, chopping it into her frozen gums."



it invariably occurs to her in the middle of the schoolyard's emptiness.

Arriving early for her appointment, she wandered around the shopping mall, looking into stores that had just opened. On impulse she stepped into a travel agency and took a seat. A woman swivelled away from a computer terminal to answer Colleen's questions. England? Quite expensive. Cheaper to fly to Amsterdam. But then you have to pay the Channel crossing anyway. Cheaper to leave from Toronto. But then you have to pay extra for the flight from Winnipeg...Just as I'd figured it out before, thought Colleen. No matter what, it all comes to the same thing. It adds up; it isn't worth it. The woman handed her an itinerary. Colleen thanked her and said she would think about it, although she had no desire or intention of going anywhere now that she had her new bed.

You don't expect a suburban shopping mall to have a human dental staff in it; you expect some sort of coin-operated dentist. But no. Doctor Bronsteen turned out to be alive and even considerate. He was young, and explained things as he went along. His assistant Lucie remembered Colleen from the time she'd come in to get her teeth cleaned. She asked if Colleen's hair wasn't long, though, that time. Colleen said no, she didn't think so—or had it? Maybe it had. A rubber bib was tied around her neck. The chair whined softly and reclined.

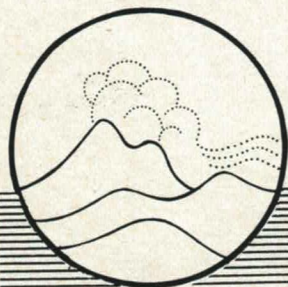
Dr. Bronsteen gave Colleen a needle in the lower gum. He left the room and returned. When she said that yes, she could still feel tingling in her tongue, he gave her another needle.

Still the freezing wouldn't take. It's the fright, thought Colleen. Adrenaline battling novocaine, each drug coursing through her gums. A river battle. Bronsteen grew slightly peevisish; he had two other patients going. Giving her a third needle he left again and Lucie, smiling, fetched a magazine for her to read.

The freezing may have been too much. A minute later Colleen felt it in her fingertips, down in her feet. She stared in fright at the photograph of a crystal blue-eyed star and let the magazine drop. Think about something else—

Bronsteen returned. He did not inquire into the state of Colleen's mouth but began asking Lucie for necessary tools. Sometimes Lucie took the initiative—prod? standard? clamp?—and he grunted softly in reply. They hooked a tube under Colleen's tongue, where it gurgled and sucked saliva. Something was clamped to her back teeth. As he fitted the modern lightweight gear, Bronsteen explained that this cavity was deep and serious.

"Uhh," Colleen mumbled, understanding. There was nothing for it but to fill the cavity in whatever manner was necessary.



**Cold, eh?
Get away!**

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But when Bronsteen lay a thin sheet of grey elasticky material over her mouth, pushing it concave in the middle, the cloud of fright in her head darkened considerably.

"We'll have to get out the rest of the old filling," said Bronsteen. "This will keep particles from going down." He pulled dental floss through the grey sheet, chopping it into her frozen gums. She shut her eyes and waited for the salty yellow sap-taste of blood.

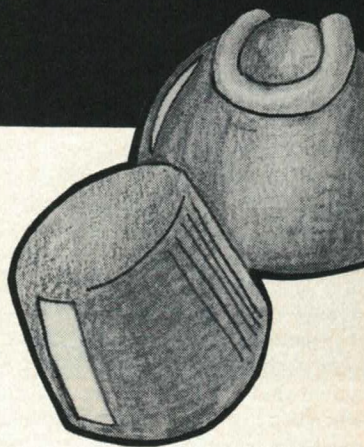
Hearing Bronsteen's next words Colleen giggled uncontrollably through her prostrate lips. Had he really asked Lucie for a slide projector? She snorted, blushed, mumbled an awry 'excuse me.' She was always hearing things wrong! On buses, in stores, usually out of laziness and invariably when laughter was not called for—just a streak of perversity, a way of amusing herself. Think of something else immediately—

Back in high school Colleen and her friends used to go downtown to a new café after classes. It was a comfortable place, full of plants; women in flowery dresses served tea and pastries. One night when she was in Grade 12 Colleen dreamed that she was there, standing in front of the café. Her girlfriends were telling her they'd discovered her problem—that is, why she felt so afraid all the time. "It's your occlusion," they insisted. "You have a bad bite, your teeth hit each other the wrong way. This causes the secretion of an abnormally high level of *blardbren*"—something garbled—"into your blood, and affects your mood." On awakening Colleen felt this theory of a chemical cause for gloom to be a genuine ray of hope. She even suggested it to her doctor. But as the years passed (the doctor had only smiled rather condescendingly in reply) her fears were forgotten, at first in the distractions and worries of moving from one city to another; more recently they were diluted in the routines of each day.

She lay with her eyes shut now. Something cluttered seemed to have been removed from the dental room. Just as the atmosphere of the apartment is different once the dishes are done and the garbage is taken out, the room seemed filled with a crisp, delicate peace. She felt herself floating upward.

Her mother and father were there. It was true then, she hadn't misheard. Father held a slide projector whose beam was trained on the grey screen clamped over her mouth. The heat of it warmed her lips. Oh no. Hands clenched, unclenched. For a woman of thirty-four, she thought, I'm a terrible coward. Afraid of the dentist at thirty-four! What would her parents say if they knew? They were focussing the beam on her back tooth. It was intensely hot—a

"Why
do they
suddenly
care —
only after
they've
clamped
you down
and
propped
you up..."



laser?—prying the deep cavity there.

Mother and father conferred. "The early slides first? Shall we do it chronologically?" "All right. Then we won't lose track." They spoke gently, methodically, like people with a great deal of experience, people who enjoy their daily routines and yet are always open to suggestions. Not that they would necessarily make use of any, but they had at least made an issue of tolerance. "Okay, I guess this is ready. You all right?" her father asked Colleen.

A pathetic giggle rose in her stomach. Why do they always ask you questions—why do they suddenly *care*—only after they've clamped you down and propped you up and covered your mouth? Thinking about it brought tears to her eyes.

Father shut off the lights. A high-pitched hum like the whine of an ultrasonic drill began. "There's Willingdon," said her mother approvingly. She meant the city house on Willingdon Avenue they'd aspired to after the war. It was a little postwar Baby-Boom house, aluminum siding and no lawn to speak of, yet they'd named it as though it were a mansion on Wellington Crescent.

Something hurt, a metal instrument poked sharply into her gum. She couldn't adjust her mouth without something else hurting or the suction tube going into panic, stuck airless against the underside of her tongue.

The light grew sharper, in flashes, as the slides changed. They'd got them in backwards order after all; she could tell from the comments they made. The laser light must be getting overheated with all of it focussed on the one tooth. That gnawing pain. When Colleen shut her eyes she envisioned instruments grinding away, churning up nerve ends like bundles of telephone wire. Metal cutting into pumpkin pulp. She made herself small. Could they see it was hurting? Unassuming, unaffected, she was small now. But they didn't notice; they kept going back.

Here's Dad in the new swivel chair. His mouth is unsmiling; his glasses glare blindly. Here's Mum lying on the couch

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watching TV. That was after her bypass operation. Her irises glow with a red that comes from nowhere in the room: revelation of the devil. Her smile is wan, nauseated. Next comes a series of family marriages, a couple of babies, a dozen Christmases. High school photos—look at the chunky, silly fashions!—and shy elementary school photos. Colleen is in hardly any pictures; she always cried and hid under the bed when it was time for church or formal photographs.

The farm. Her sister Carla in the duster she made for 4H. The farmhouse, going ragged at the edges but still stately. A field of tulips, a field of mustard.

The pain so close now, almost breaking through. Change the subject. Clove oil, haven't they heard of clove oil? Ancient and dependable remedy, saviour of the tortured. An awful coward for a child—a girl—a woman of thirty-four. Other people, in countries at war—it is worse for them. Death and hypocrisy. Why? But she always turns those news pages without reading them; she doesn't want to hear about it. But this is nothing. Here they only want to make things better; there they torture because they choose to, men hurting men and women. Tear-filled overflowing eyes, the drops run down under her tongue where the tube catches them, sucking out salt spit. Who to think of? Think of those who are strong. For crying out loud! But the cavity must be filled. Such a baby at thirty-four—

Such a baby at thirty-four.

Living alone on the basement floor.

Karen once told her that the boa constrictor doesn't crush its prey to death as most people believe (she learned this at a Royal Ontario Museum exhibit in Toronto). No. The boa merely adjusts to each of its victim's exhalations. Having no choice but to breathe out half the time the victim, panicking, breathes that much faster. So the snake coils a little closer with each outward breath until it is asphyxiated. Karen added that the same thing can happen when you live alone: a friend moves out of town and you don't make a new one; you give up swimming lessons because you're too busy, and then do nothing instead; people invite you over for dinner but you convince yourself you're not in the right mood, repeatedly, until they stop asking; smaller and smaller until you're barely alive any more.

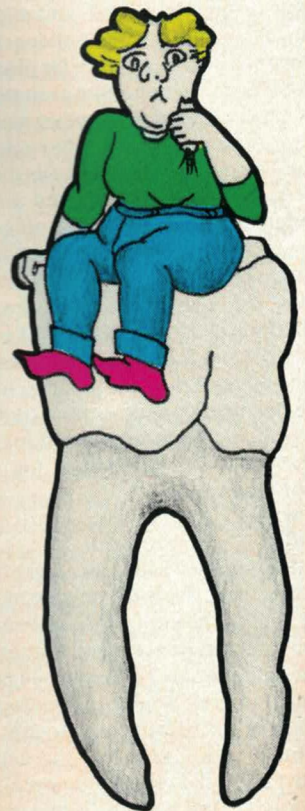
The cavity must be filled. Such a baby—soon they'll have to stop because her mouth will curve downward with weeping, and the screen will cave in.

The farm. All the children gawk cross-eyed at the camera at the last second, to embarrass Dad. A six-year-old Colleen embraces her betrothed, six-year-old Buddy Vandyke, each of them ready to shriek with hilarity.

The cavity must be filled. When will she find a lover? Alone and empty, sure, now even her mouth isn't her own any more, propped and pried open.

Pictures from after the war burn on the screen in overheated black and white. Colleen being brought home from the hospital. Her birthday, August sixth—a hot blast of pain ran from tooth to jaw and turned her spine to quicksilver. She sobbed aloud. The screen did not collapse; it dug into her gums and cut under her lips. "Okay, it's okay, we're just about done," said Dr. Bronsteen, looking embarrassed. They removed all the paraphernalia and let her go.

By late evening the freezing has melted away. Colleen sits on the living room floor, her back against the couch. She is sipping slowly from a bowl of clear soup cupped in her hands. Each time she swallows its warmth she thinks, "Thank you," without knowing who or what she's thanking. Her teeth feel woodenly solid: they are traps, dungeon doors, monuments, tusks. The rest of her trembles, and a voice in her mind repeats, You have to have teeth if you're going to eat. You have to have teeth.



Coming Out.



photo: sheila spence

Evelyn P. Frost

Early last fall, a man named Dave Janke, a pastor in the Independent Baptist church, staged a curious event in the basement of his Winnipeg home.

Media outnumbered actual participants as Pastor Dave fed a pile of books, videotapes, magazines and record albums he proclaimed as having been "inspired by Satan" into the fiery bowels of his wood stove.

One of the more memorable quotes from a sermon he preached afterwards which denounced the horrors of pre-marital sex, rebellion against authority, the American Equal Rights Amendment and the fact that many women chose to wear trousers, was a tirade against homosexuality.

Homosexuality, he said, was "the most wicked perversion known to man...it's the sin God hates the most."

It was probably just as well that Gays For Equality chose not to issue a statement the next day denouncing Pastor Dave for laundering his homophobic obsession in public. There would have been little profit in keeping alive the circus atmosphere that surrounded his comic gesture. As it was, the event disappeared from the newspapers the next day.

Yet the shock of seeing such a bold statement in cold type via the mainstream media stayed with me and it brought to mind another incident in another community.

A therapist friend related how she had attempted to place an ad in a northwestern Ontario newspaper offering her services as a therapist for women having problems with the fact that they were drawn to other women. The man in charge of ads flatly refused at first. His argument was that as far as he was concerned, there were no homosexuals or lesbians living in his community, nor did he want to be responsible for an ad that might encourage "those kinds of people."

The therapist's argument that according to some studies probably about one in 10 women prefer to share their emotional, intellectual and physical selves with other women did not phase the ad manager's belief that his town was "pure."

After a long discussion which lasted more than an hour, the ad manager finally relented and agreed to run the ad providing the therapy being offered was intended to turn lesbians into straight, red-blooded, heterosexual women. My friend offered no such promise but the ad manager must have chosen to believe she would in order to clear up some conflict in his own mind.

Pastor Dave and the ad manager are visible foes whom one can choose to ignore or challenge as one sees fit. They even do the gay community a service because they force it into cohesiveness so that it can mobilize against a common enemy.

These incidents shocked me into realizing that homophobia was alive and kicking at my doorstep. But as my awareness of the whole issue grew, I came to realize that such obvious enemies of gay rights as Pastor Dave and the ad manager were only part of the problem. The hurdles they pose actually appear small beside the obstacles inherent in the gay women's com-

munity itself and that is what this article is really about.

The stumbling blocks lodged in Winnipeg's lesbian community are more subtle. A friend told me that you've got to be tough to come out in Winnipeg. To my dismay, I found that this was true.

At the time this article was written, support services in Winnipeg were all but nonexistent. Support groups, information lines geared specifically to lesbians, information period—if such services existed at all, they were a well-kept secret not disclosed to the average woman living in a closet in suburbia.

Despite all the strides the local women's movement has made in other areas of women's lives, if you want to come out in Winnipeg, and you haven't accidentally stumbled onto someone who can help you, you've got to tough it out in a bar. It wasn't always this way, I learned, but a particular set of circumstances had made it so.

This observation is based on my own experience and on conversations I had with others. Admittedly, none of the women I talked to had as hard a time as I did when I decided, in spring of last year, to finally come to terms with a part of myself that I had known about but kept suppressed since adolescence. At the age of 27, firmly entrenched in a long-term relationship with a man I loved very much but had little passion for, I realized that if I didn't come to terms with my own reality, I was going to wither and die—spiritually, emotionally, possibly even physically. I was lucky. Many women don't come to this conclusion until they are 60.

I did not know any lesbians then and I was involved in little else but my career and my home life. Not being from Winnipeg, I knew practically no one outside of my job. I felt that my first step would have to be finding a group or person with whom I could discuss my problem. I had not imagined how difficult this would be.

Looking back I realize I probably could have chosen a quicker, more direct route. But I was in a very scattered state of mind then, very much at odds with myself. I believed that I was shaking the foundations on which I had painstakingly built my life over the years. I had sought and achieved approval by pursuing a relationship with a fine, sensitive, upstanding man. The decision I made last spring would mean that I would always be a 'single' woman and my family, my co-workers and my acquaintances would always wonder why a nice girl like me had failed in the marriage sweepstakes.

I went through a period where I scanned every feminist periodical I could get my hands on, looking for clues as to where I might find a support group or something similar. Finally, I came across a bi-sexual

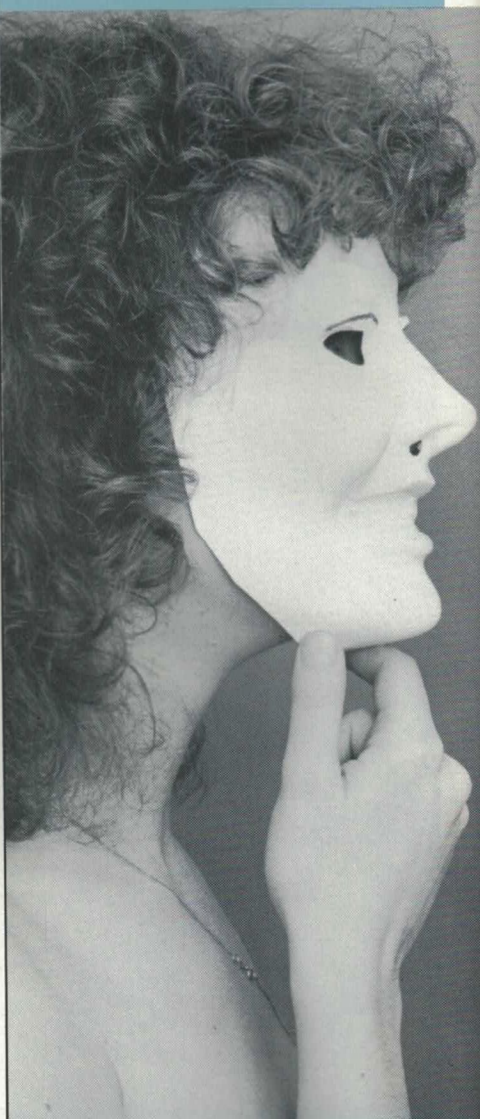




photo: sheila spence

women's group, wrote to it, received a reply many weeks later, and went to a meeting in someone's living room where a number of people, particularly myself, appeared ill at ease. The meeting broke up early, the group ceased meeting for the summer and since then I have not heard whether other meetings were to take place, although I had asked to be kept informed.

The group—which consisted of a variety of women from different backgrounds, some of whom were involved in sexual practices in which I had no particular interest—brought to my awareness a problem within the gay and bi-sexual community. It is difficult to instill a sense of community when all anyone has in common is their affectional preference.

After that I wrote to a group I had learned might be able to help me—The Women's Building on 730 Alexander St. in Winnipeg. I did not know it then but the building—which had sponsored women's socials, poetry readings, theatre and offered services for women pursuing non-traditional occupations—was closing down as it had run out of money and energy. I was eventually put in contact with a woman who told me that, no, there were no such groups.

Bars, such as Giovanni's Room or Happenings Social Club, I learned, were suggested to me as places where I could go to meet gay women (and men). But that's missing the point, I said. At this stage I didn't want to meet women in the beer-soaked atmosphere of a noisy, smoky bar.

I didn't want to get picked up by some stranger. I just wanted someone to talk to. I was told that I was probably right in my attitude but "that's all there is."

I eventually did attend the two places mentioned. Happenings, which is entered through an unmarked steel door and then a series of bare steps leading to a basement establishment, was a raucous place when I attended. It is like any loud bar except that men and women dance with each other. Giovanni's is somewhat more laid back, with more eye-appealing decor and fewer falling-down drunks (in evidence). I learned that many women do not go to either, partly because of the general atmosphere and mostly because they are dominated by men. Ms Purdy's, an all-women's establishment in Winnipeg has been the location of a few fund-raising socials which were well-attended and will be open on a more regular basis beginning in December.

Through travel and reading, I learned that there were more support services for women coming out in Vancouver and Toronto. It was a temptation to consider moving to either of those cities. And this is in fact what many Winnipeg women have done.

I talked to two women who had come out in the past year and found their experiences very different from my own.

Ruth (not her real name) is a student who has been involved in the women's movement for about five years. She said she came upon her lesbian identity quite by chance.

"It's something I never, ever had any contact with or information about," Ruth said in an interview. "I mean, you hear the term lesbian but you don't connect it with anything."

About a year ago, Ruth had her first lesbian experience with an out-of-town woman she had met on the street who had asked her for directions. They struck up a conversation, had dinner together and eventually went up to the woman's room so that Ruth could borrow a book.

"It was as if we had known each other for a long time," said Ruth. "As I got up to leave I gave her a hug. We hadn't even talked about sexuality or anything and then she kissed me...I left as she was sleeping. I never said goodbye. It was something I had never even thought about and I just put it out of my mind altogether. I didn't want to think about it."

Later, Ruth began to notice relationships among women she knew that she had never interpreted as being lesbian. "I just thought they were really good friends." It was not long after her experience that she attended her first women's social while attending a conference. The fact that women were dancing together and holding each other did not seem awkward or deviant to her.

"When that happened, I thought to myself 'that's the best-kept secret of our patriarchy, how good it is to be with another woman'. I never made love to my husband after that."

Divorced, with two children, Ruth says she feels very comfortable with her new identity. Her involvement with the feminist movement gave her many ready-made connections whom she could turn to for support but she admits that she is not ready to come out to her co-workers.

"I work with a lot of different women at all levels of political awareness and I would find it really a detriment for them to see me as a lesbian. When they see a lesbian, they think sexual preference. That's really just a small part of the whole experience and that would color everything I had to say to them. I don't want them to see me as someone who sexually prefers women."

"There is homophobia in our organization. There's a fear that if there's too much of a lesbian presence, that negates what's being done. It's not anything blatant. It's just something that we all bring with us because we were brought up in it. I mean,

anything you ever hear about homosexuality is very, very negative, right?"

Ruth belongs to a support group which discusses general concerns but lesbianism never comes up. "We had several lesbians that came the first time and they dropped out right after. They saw right away it was a very mixed group and they wouldn't get the support they wanted." Ruth said she felt comfortable going to women's socials because she knows a good third of the women there. "If I didn't know any women there, I don't think I would go."

Nicole, who also didn't want her real name used because she felt it would jeopardize her position with the school system, came out just over a year ago. She came to terms with her lesbian identity shortly after becoming involved in a number of women's organizations. Her first lesbian experience had taken place more than a decade earlier when she met a woman while travelling through Europe.

"I had always felt attracted to women but I never felt it would go anywhere and I had never met anybody who gave me that push like she did."

When she returned to Winnipeg, she chose not to follow up that experience.

"I was firmly ensconced in the heterosexual community. I didn't have many female friends then. I had way more male friends. I related to men more than women."

In the fall of 1982 she felt that her rela-

tionship with the man she was living with was stagnating and it was then she decided to get involved in the women's movement.

"It was a very closed relationship. We did everything together. We related just with other couples. I had my job but no other involvements outside of my job other than my relationship with this man. I gradually became aware that it wasn't a healthy relationship. There was no growth involved, I was beginning to be bored."

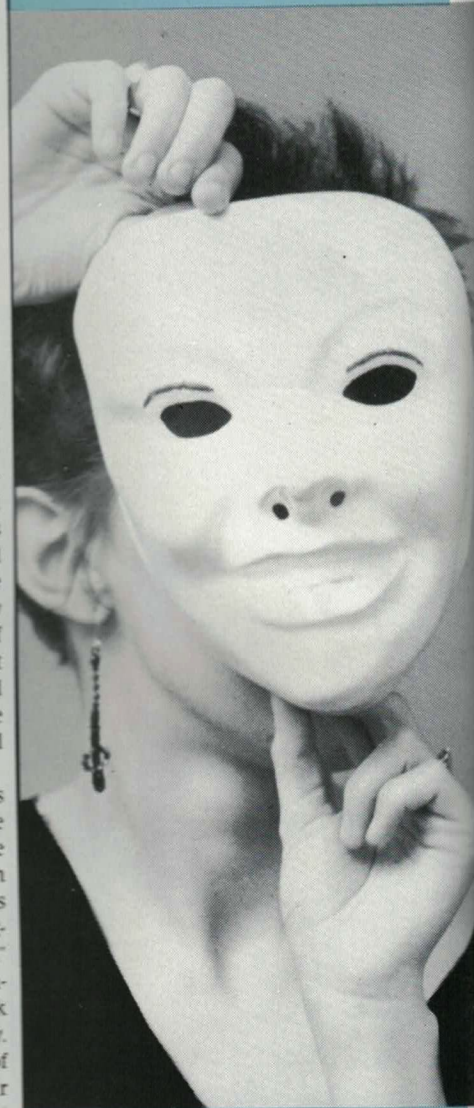
Her interest in women's issues led her to seek out books about lesbianism and these proved difficult to find. "Most of these books you will not find at the public library." A bookstore in the now-defunct Women's Building was the prime source for lesbian information.

Nicole said she encountered some awkward moments in her new-found identity. In one case, she attended a Take Back The Night march and was wearing a purple armband, which symbolizes lesbianism. A business acquaintance asked her what the armband meant and she was torn about what to say. Finally, she blurted out: "It means I'm a lesbian" and there was this dead silence...it was a very awkward moment and I excused myself and wondered what would become of it all...she came to the social afterward and I didn't perceive any difference in how she related to me...but it was never mentioned again."

Nicole's first all-women social event was also tense. She attended a dance at the Women's Building. "I guess that was the first time I had been with a lesbian woman in a social situation in the sense that I was her date...I really felt that I was being watched a lot of the evening. I was a new face"

Nicole's impressions of the lesbian community: "It's very cliquish...I don't think there's any kind of a lesbian community. There are little groups and pockets of women. Certain women feel that their groups are the 'in' groups. I'm certainly not the only woman who feels this way or has experienced this. Within the lesbian community there really are a lot of differences. There are women who are very political, there are some not involved in anything, there are women who are into the sports scene, women who are involved in playing hockey and baseball and there are radical separatists (women who refuse to have anything to do with men)."

Yvette Parr, who was involved with The Women's Building almost from its inception, did not argue with that observation. Parr, a 37-year-old mother of one, left her home in Sydney, Australia more than a decade ago. She came to Winnipeg in 1978, just as The Women's Building got off the drawing boards. Parr offered some insight into why the rise and fall of the building had much to do with the way the lesbian



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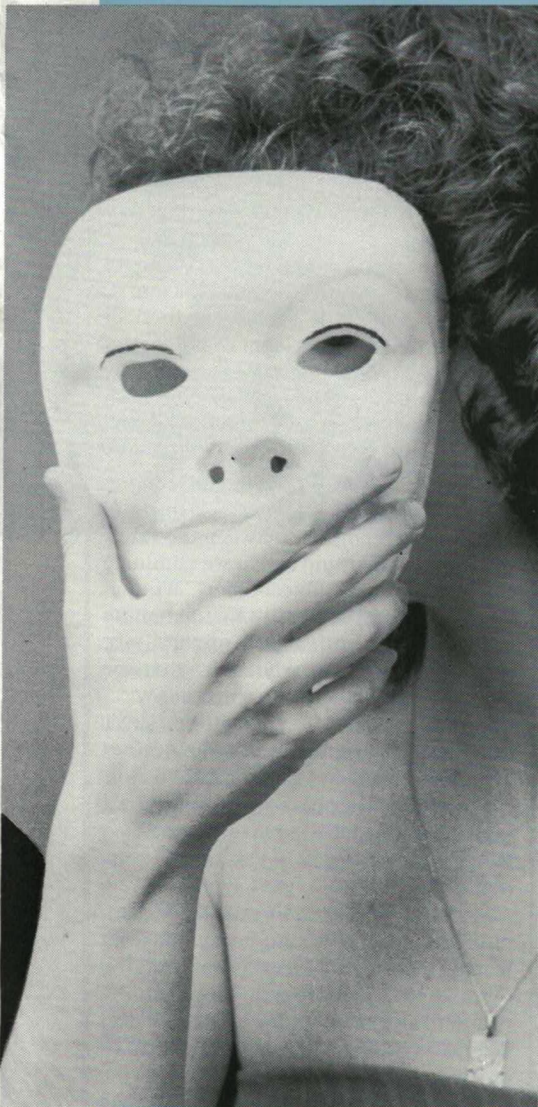


photo: sheila spence

community has become fragmented.

The building offered a whole range of services to women, particularly lesbians, that had never been available to the Winnipeg community before and are not available now. It had drop-in evenings for women coming out, a lesbian phone line, all-women socials, programs for underprivileged women and provided a space for women to display their art.

"It was really exciting. Things were happening all the time. It was new, right? It was a first. And when we opened we got telegrams from around the world. It was a hell of a big thing."

During its first year of operation, the enthusiasm over the building was boundless. But after that, the problems started to pile up. Located in a run-down, low-income area of Winnipeg, it was an area most people avoided.

"By the time, last year, I volunteered as a board member, it was on the downward spiral. Support for the building just started to dwindle because a lot of lesbians don't want any political involvement, but they associated the building with trying to change the government, trying to overthrow the world. And they don't want that political connection."

There were problems finding volunteers to staff some of the programs, such as the lesbian phone line, which operated Tuesday and Thursday nights.

"I think that any woman that wanted to come out in Winnipeg had to have a lot of strength because if one avenue didn't open to her, she had to look for another one. You had to really look around." And that is more true today, said Parr.

"Which is sad really, because it should be better today."

The average woman would find it difficult to walk into a social or bar and meet other women, she said.

A woman coming out in Winnipeg—or anywhere—finds alcohol abuse prevalent in the community. When there are no resources such as The Women's Building, the only other alternative is a bar. Historically, bars have been a refuge for lesbians because they were the only places they could be their true selves in a world that despised them.

But bars, a shadowy underworld that frightened the uninitiated, were not always healthy places and they are not healthy places today.

"Lesbians are sort of living in the twilight zone all the time," said Parr. "They're really not accepted. Coming out, they go to a bar, they look around and they're scared. They want to approach women but they're scared...they're really scared so they say 'I'll have a drink' and that sort of cools you out a bit and so 'I'll have a couple more.'"

Parr has seen "droves" of women leave

Winnipeg to go to more favourable climes in Toronto, and particularly Vancouver. She had in fact made plans to leave Winnipeg herself to go to the west coast.

"I'm not knocking Winnipeg. It could be Winnipeg, it could be Burke in central Australia, it could be one of the counties in England," Burke, she explained, is a "dry and barren place and you've got to be tough to live there."

In talking with Parr and others, it became apparent to me what had happened. The clock had been turned back and I had chosen to explore my new identity in the wrong place at the wrong time.

My frustration at the problems I had trying to find Winnipeg's invisible lesbian community and then, once discovered, finding it to be a cliquish, insular set of women without leadership and seemingly adrift in search of its soul gave me the impetus to find out why this is so.

Who was there to blame? Was it people like Pastor Dave and the ad manager of that northwestern Ontario paper? Sure they are at fault but pinning it all on them would be too convenient because it lets everybody else off the hook.

Was it the lesbian community? It's difficult to do that with a clear conscience because it takes little insight to realize that the community reacts to homophobic forces on the outside over which it has little control.

Was it the women's movement as a whole? The movement, in Winnipeg at least, puts commendable energy into the pro-choice movement, the fight against pornography and against violence towards women. Yet there is not one program locally that addresses the concerns common to perhaps 10 per cent of the female population.

One doesn't have to dig very deep to figure out why lesbian concerns are swept under the rug. Society at large begrudgingly accepts the belief that women should receive equal pay for work of equal value and that women should not be terrorized in their own homes. Those are motherhood issues. But lesbians, even though many have worked tirelessly for this movement, are still seen by many as unnatural creatures. And until the world at large changes its mind, the feminist community will feel it is going out on a limb to address the concerns of gay women. There is a fear that such a stand will negate all the other things the feminist movement is trying to do.

If the world were a place where all things happened for the better, the lesbian community in Winnipeg would somehow be pulled out of its misdirected adolescence into an era of purpose and vision. It would be a time when it wouldn't be so much toughness that counted, but compassion. ▽

SEARCHING FOR A WOMAN - DEFINED DESTINY

An Interview with Gloria Steinem

Denise Davy

"The last dozen years have been a time of enormous populace and consciousness raising and understanding that women's position is not biological and not ordained by Freud or by God. It's all a question of power. Our process of growth has been a communal one in which women and men have dared to tell the truth. We have begun to realize a shared reality which has turned out to be infinitely more reliable than our textbooks have taught us in the past."

Gloria Steinem, co-founder of Ms magazine was in Burlington, Ontario during a recent book tour. She also addressed a fundraising dinner for the Canadian Abortion Rights Action League in Toronto. Before her CARAL address, she spoke to HERIZONS.

"We are not crazy," she said of feminists. "The system is crazy. All of the basic issues raised by the women's movement — whether it be equal pay or reproductive

freedom — all of those issues now have an overwhelming majority support according to public opinion polls and that is a huge accomplishment."

As a major figurehead for an international movement, Ms Steinem's long hair and aviator glasses have become as much her trademark as her calm and compassionate nature. That cool exterior however, quickly changes when asked about how women should deal with the anger that results from the daily frustrations of simply being a woman.

"Women are so obsessed with plumping pillows and wanting to be liked. Who cares! For women to think we're going to

make a revolution by asking politely is just total bullshit. And it's our cultural training that makes us think that way. The main problem is that we're not aggressive or angry or strident enough. We have the right to be angry and it's important that we express that rather than repress it and let it turn into depression or drug addiction or alcoholism or suicide. People will discredit you whether you're strident or polite. You can always tell when someone is really against you when they criticize the form and not the content so you might as well say what you feel."

Ms Steinem believes the foremost ingredient in ridding society of sexism is to eliminate this polarity between the sexes. "The important thing is that we eliminate the paradigm of subject-object, winner-loser, victim-oppressor. It's that paradigm that has been initiated by sex and race systems based on the whole idea that one group is born superior to the other."

Ms Steinem said the Constitution gives Canadian women an advantage not afforded to women in the States.

"Clearly you're further ahead having a Constitution than we are in the States. That is sort of an umbrella guarantee of rights that we don't have."

Ms Steinem criticized the Reagan administration for taking away most of women's policy-making powers, adding that "the major pressing need in the women's movement today in the U.S. is to get rid of Reagan — before he invades Canada!"

In defending accusations that the women's movement has been largely responsible for the rising divorce rate, Ms Steinem said marriages have been deteriorating because of an increased realization that equality is a necessity in any relationship.

"Feminism doesn't cause divorce, marriages cause divorce. Feminism breaks up bad marriages and saves good or salvageable marriages. When you consider the classic form of marriage, it's a miracle that men and women's friendship survived because there are such strong polarities in the two roles, in breadwinner and homemaker. To share interests is to make the roles less polarized and to make friendship, love and marriage more possible."

During the second wave of feminism, Ms

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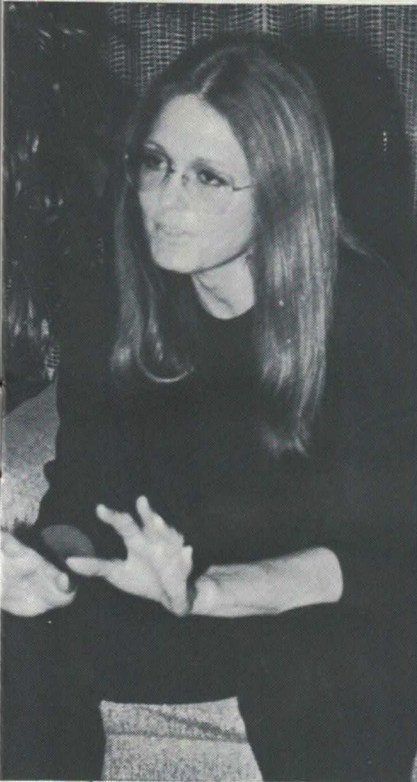
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- profiles of you or your neighbours;
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Steinem believes important changes have already taken place, the most crucial of which is reproductive freedom.

"We are somewhat further ahead on the issue of abortion because at least women in the States don't have to go before a committee in an approved hospital and submit to that procedure in order to get one."

"The right to have or not to have children in safety is fundamental in life and health itself. The desire to control that is the bottom line of a male dominant patriarchal system."

There is also a pressing need to cure the Superwoman syndrome. The phrase "women who don't work" must be eliminated from our vocabularies and housework must be recognized as work in order for that issue to be resolved.

On the issue of pornography, Ms Steinem said Ms magazine and sex education books are subjected to more censorship than are violent pornographic films in the U.S.

"In Canada the general public seems to be further ahead in understanding the connection between pornography and behaviour and that sexual violence, like all other forms of violent literature, does legitimize behaviour."

Ms Steinem says women may suffer from burn-out unless they accept that changes may be few and far between.

"I find it absolutely crucial to have one place in my life where I can get support from other women. For me it's where I work, but all of us need a place because women are the only discriminated against

group that will never have a country, which is good because it makes us anti-nationalist. So we need either a consciousness raising group or a rap group or a network or a quilting bee where we can say 'God, here's what happened to me.' It's like having a psychic country."

Though enormous advances have been made in the women's movement, Ms Steinem says it will take more than a second wave of feminism to undo over 5,000 years of patriarchy and racism.

"It's not that all men are sexist but the world has been organized like that for so long and it has been internalized. The very definition of masculinity is being in some sense superior to women. Thousands of years of conditioning has to be uprooted and it's not going to change overnight."

Change will ultimately be a result of people allowing each other to be complete individuals or as Ms Steinem puts it, "...allowing each person to sing a unique song."

"There's nothing that will ever make up for all of the songs unsung, for all of the great writers who only wrote in their diaries and for all the great musicians who sang only lullabies, all the Golda Meir's running PTA's and the Shirley Chisholm's and Barbara Jordan's locked in on welfare. Nothing will make up for it. But I think we are at least beginning to understand the loss and to understand that men's full songs have been lost since they are restricted by 'superior' roles. But at least we are beginning to insist that each person be allowed to sing a unique song." ▼

1984 CELEBRATION

A FESTIVAL OF LIFE AND LEARNING

"SHOULD SOLICITATION REMAIN A CRIMINAL OFFENCE?"

JILLIAN RIDINGTON

A Rep from The Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women

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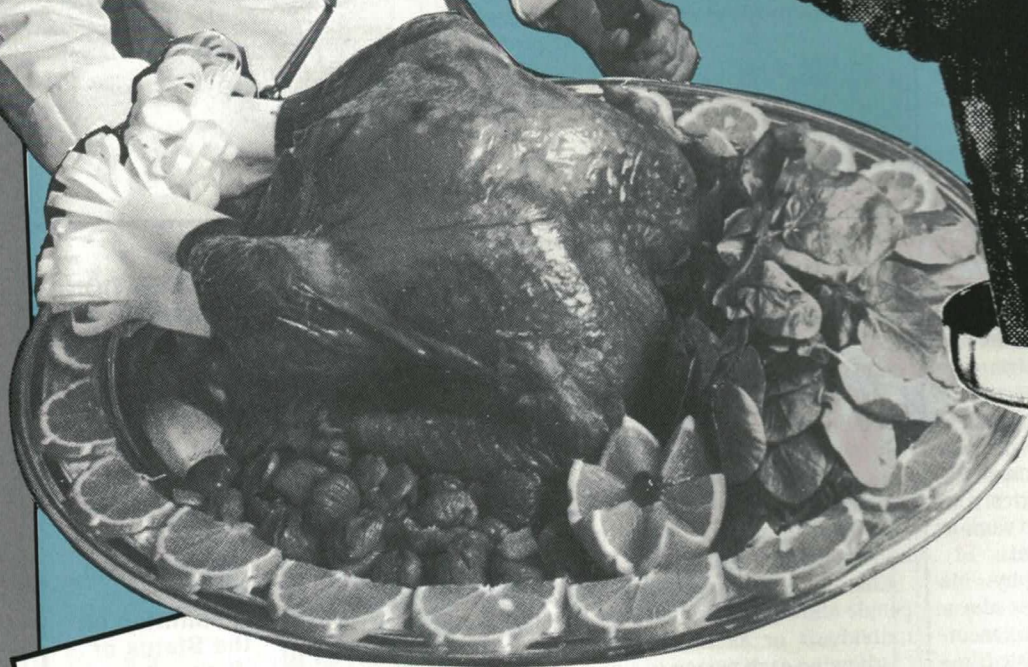


A PRESENTATION OF THE U OF M STUDENTS' UNION

NANCY REAGAN COOKS FOR

PEACE

OR "A FLASH IN THE PAN"



Baja California Chicken

8 boned chicken breasts
Seasoning salt and pepper, to taste
2 cloves garlic, crushed

Sprinkle chicken with seasoning salt and pepper.
Saute chicken pieces until golden brown, turning frequently.

Pour sherry over pieces and place in 350 degree oven for 10 minutes.

Yield: 8 servings.

4 tablespoons olive oil
4 tablespoons tarragon vinegar
 $\frac{2}{3}$ cup dry sherry

Crush garlic into oil and vinegar in a skillet.
Remove; place in a baking dish.

With best wishes,

Nancy Reagan



nce upon a time, in a land not far away enough (unfortunately), there lived a smiling woman who married a movie star and moved into a Big White House where she planned to live happily ever after.

Unfortunately for the woman, her evil husband (who was also a bad actor) planned to destroy the world in one fell swoop. When she found this out, she decided there was only one thing for her to do. She would have to pretend to share her husband's concocted fantasies about winning a nuclear war. But because she secretly despised her evil husband and his cruise missiles, his Pershing II's (and his Pershing I's for that matter) and all the rest of his nuclear what-nots, she secretly began a terrorist society called Cooks For Peace.

Their mission was to subvert the attempts of the woman's husband to blow up the world by selling recipes to raise money for peace. Even though everyone knew the woman had never baked in her life, they thought her terrorist society was a nice idea. So when the Winnipeg Co-ordinating Committee for Disarmament held their Celebrity Auction, they approached the smiling woman for a contribution to their peace effort. She obliged and sent in these recipes.*

*Footnote: Labour Minister Mary Beth Dolin won the bid at the auction for Nancy Reagan's recipes and agreed to share the subversive recipes with HERizons readers.▼



Onion Wine Soup

- ¼ c. butter
- 5 lg. onions, chopped
- 5 c. beef broth
- ½ c. celery leaves
- 1 lg. potato, sliced
- 1 c. dry white wine

Melt butter in large saucepan. Add chopped onion and mix well. Add beef broth, celery leaves and potato. Bring to boiling. Cover and simmer for 30 minutes. Puree mixture in a blender. Return to saucepan and blend in wine, vinegar and sugar. Bring to boiling and simmer 5 minutes. Stir in cream, parsley and salt and pepper to taste. Heat thoroughly but do not boil.

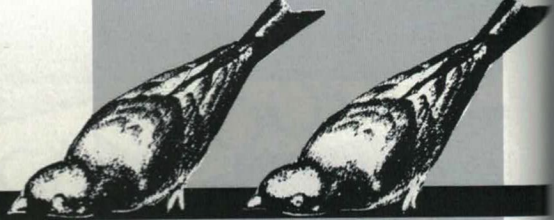
Yield: 6 to 8 servings.

- 1 T. vinegar
- 2 t. sugar
- 1 c. light cream
- 1 T. minced parsley
- salt and pepper

With best wishes,

Nancy Reagan

Occupational Health~ Women as Canaries



If you go out to work today, you're in for a big surprise...Toxins, gases, lead, vinyl chloride, ionizing radiation, VDT's, biological and psychological hazards are but few of the dangers that await workers — in offices, smelters, restaurants — everywhere.

Photocopiers in small, poorly ventilated offices produce high levels of ozone which can cause severe headaches. White-out, touted as every typist's savior, can contain trichothene which has proven to cause cancer of the bladder. Long term exposure to small amounts has not been studied yet.

The list is depressingly endless. Formaldehyde causes muscular and skeletal problems. How many of us realize this preservative is in our carpets, curtains and some of the clothes we wear?

It's only recently that manufacturers are producing protective gear of all types in women's sizes. The Federal Government, in Bill C-55 acknowledges the rights of Canadians to a healthy and safe working environment. Why then, are there still

dangerous places to work? The answer lies mainly in big money concerns. Protecting workers is costly and lowers profit returns.

Another reason this state of affairs is allowed to continue is because it's a man's world, according to Dr. Linda Murray, head of the Winnipeg Occupational Health Clinic. Her role at the Clinic is to investigate occupational illness and educate the public. To begin to remedy the situation, she suggests women lobby and demand that the scientific community take women's occupational health concerns seriously; she feels women need to be more involved in unions and should refuse to purchase products made of questionable or hazardous components.

"Women are the canaries of occupational health," Murray says. The analogy is appropriate, for just as miners used canaries to test the air in the mine shafts, women are experimented on every day in the laboratories of home and office with cleaners, dyes, inks, polishes, sprays, makeup and even food. Home Sweet Home is not safe when we use chemical products to clean, kill bugs, paint, glue, fertilize plants or refinish furniture. Through inhalation, ingestion or absorption, side effects may be immediately observable or the toxins may be stored in the liver, stomach or lungs to get us at a later date. Compounding the problem is the fact that toxins are usually tested individually and we do not know yet what combined effects can do to us.

Some things sound dangerous because they're impossible to pronounce, like methoxyflurane or mochloropropane, but even something as innocuous sounding as noise and vibration can be detrimental to women's health. Airline attendants, assembly line workers, garment and textile workers face menstrual cycle disturbances, miscarriage and premature births because of loud noise and long exposure to vibration.

There are some labour laws to protect women working in male occupations but where are the laws to protect women in what society has come to regard as female occupations? Restrictions of hours and places of work for women only serve to lower their status and economic position and to mask the issue that there are hazards for both men and women.

Do Canadian women want equal employment opportunities or do we want to be 'protected'? Women desiring to work in traditionally 'male' occupations have been confronted by hiring policies. Nancy

Chenier, writing for the Canadian Council on the Status of Women, says that the increase in exclusionary employment policies means women are denied jobs that pay a decent wage and are forced into low paying and often hazardous work while men are left to work in conditions that impair their general and reproductive health (infertility and damaged sperm are some of the hazards).

According to Murray, the major occupational health hazard for women is unemployment. Predominant side effects for women include suicide, stress, emotional/psychological problems and nutritional deprivation, especially in women who are single parents. When employed, women and men are affected by psychological work hazards. Wages and benefits, hours of work, amount of supervision, physical work conditions, and the hierarchy of promotion are stressors which can lead to hypertension, stomach ulcers or alcoholism. Few studies have been done on how job satisfaction, work overload, lack of job control, piece work, job responsibility and shiftwork affect female workers. Only recently have we begun to study the effects on women who "double work" (full time at an outside job and full time in the home.)

Compounding the problem, Murray says, is the fact that "women face more problems in the workplace because of discrimination against female workers. The myth still pervades that women are a temporary part of the workforce, and therefore their job related health concerns are taken as less than serious by the medical establishment".

The ramifications of women's occupational health hazards are far-reaching, for what affects women also affects men, children, the unborn, the community environment and society. Murray is correct when she says that women have to do more than any other group to change society's rules. It's time the canaries flew the coop.

by Heather Emberley

If you have information or a personal experience you would like to share with other Manitoba women concerning women and occupational health write to:

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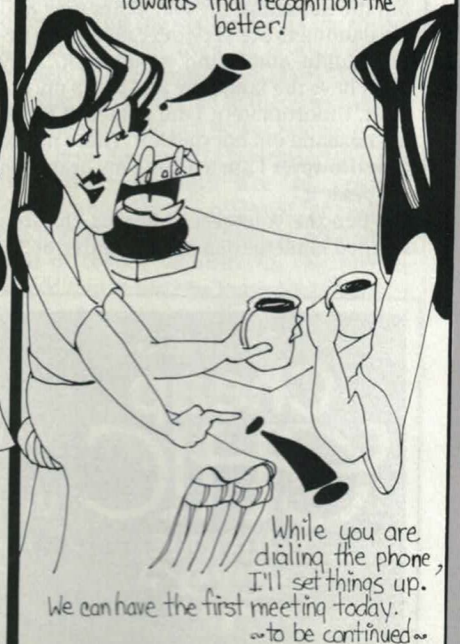
Femina learns of the occurrences & decides that she would stay for a lengthy visit as Amanda's cousin.



Now that these appliances are helping me, with the housework, I'll be able to concentrate on other things.



Women have fought hard through the years to be recognized. The more steps we take towards that recognition the better!



PROFILE

Margaret Smith

Open and warm are two adjectives that apply to the operations of Services to Native Patients at Winnipeg's Health Sciences Centre. Co-ordinator Margaret Smith and her staff of six offer comfort, companionship and translation services in Cree, Ojibway, Saulteaux, and the Island Lake dialect.

Margaret, a Saulteau who was born and grew up on the Fort Alexander reserve, has been involved in the helping professions since the age of fourteen when she first went to work as a nurses' aid. When, at twenty, Margaret married a Metis man, she lost her status as a Treaty Indian. Her mother had died by that time and Margaret recalls: "My father cautioned me, made me aware that I would lose my rights but at the time I was very young and thought I was in love. I followed my heart. Back in the 50s it was quite common for the Indian people to intermarry with whites; in fact, it was the 'in thing' to do. We used to think it was really something to go out with a white guy. Our parents frowned on it; at least my parents did."

Although she is in agreement with the ongoing struggle of native women who wish to regain status lost through intermarriage, Margaret is not currently active in that area. "I gave up fighting for that. It's not a pressing issue with me. I'm active in other things...trying to follow the traditional ways. My children feel (they) are a part of the Indian community. My son follows the Indian ways. He's been learning the Sundance for four years now and my daughters are very, very much into being Indian and being proud of it...they don't have the language and that's my big guilt. Unfortunately, I did not teach them; my husband did not speak it. That's my excuse. However I am teaching my grandson to speak it."

When the youngest of her six children reached kindergarten age, Margaret, at 34,



by Margaret Dwyer Matas

decided to complete her own education. She completed a Bachelor of General Studies at Brandon University as well as one year of registered nurses' training. The latter course she reluctantly abandoned because of the complexities of co-ordinating studies with the demands of making a home for her six children. The Smith family had returned to Winnipeg and Margaret was working in the private counselling field when the opportunity to direct the Native Services department arose.

Native Services was set up in 1973 by the Health Sciences Centre and the provincial government to serve the needs of a special group whose numbers have run as high as 50 per cent of the patient population. The proportion varies from season to season, but because of the poor state of health care on reserves, and the living conditions of the urban Indians, there is always an influx of native patients.

The six staff members attend ongoing classes in anatomy and physiology, biology, psychology and communication.

They assist the hospital treatment team in taking histories and teaching health care to patients and their families. They frequently accompany and support patients through complex tests and procedures. Spiritual issues are attended to as well. Margaret and her staff have made arrangements for recovering patients to attend ceremonies at a sweat lodge and on rare occasions, brought in a traditional native healer.

Recent developments have included the making of a seven-part documentary on native health issues in conjunction with the departments of Anthropology and Social and Preventative Medicine at the University of Manitoba. The film became part of a presentation Margaret made at a conference on Native Support Services held this fall in Regina. Manitoba is the only province that has had the foresight to take positive steps toward meeting the special needs of native patients.

In the future, Margaret would like to see more attention being paid to the plight of single mothers in urban settings. "They have a very lonely time of it and they really could use some support. We would like to have some men on our staff again. They never seem to last long. Indian men are too chauvinistic; they don't like to hear the women speak out...they could really help the male adolescents. Many are suicidal. Desperate."

Admission to an urban hospital and its perplexing routines intensify linguistic and cultural barriers between caregivers and patients. Open communication is the intrinsic factor that warms this experience.

The prospect of a hospital stay away from family and the comforts of home is an added burden for the non-English speaking native patient. The sight of the visiting interpreter is indeed a welcome one and that, Margaret Smith says, "is what keeps us going."

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REVIEW

The Anatomy of Freedom

The Anatomy of Freedom: Feminism, Physics and Global Politics by Robin Morgan. Anchor Press/Doubleday, Garden City, New York 1982.

Hologram: A three-dimensional image produced by laser beams and stored on a photographic plate. Close examination of the plate reveals myriad dark lines and spots which bear no resemblance to the original object. When the plate is exposed, however, a perfect three-dimensional image of the object appears suspended behind the plate. It is the fact that these lines and spots contain all the information required to reproduce the whole object in detail that is so significant.

The Anatomy of Freedom is a hologram; it taps all areas of women's lives from all levels of women's being. Morgan's writing style is holographic; she uses journalistic, prosaic, academic and poetic styles to pick up the various strands of women's lives with which to weave a philosophy of feminism that reflects the whole in each of its parts. The brilliance of Morgan's book lies not only in its content, but also in its holographic nature. For anyone who perseveres, their personal understanding of feminism and freedom will be significantly expanded.

The Anatomy of Freedom is a courageous and challenging book. Each chapter is a book in itself and yet, together, all the chapters make a coherent whole. Morgan approaches her task — ostensibly a dissection of freedom — from so many angles and through so many writing styles that the book takes on a three-dimensional quality. When I sit back and let images form in my mind, I see the book as an intricate weaving with varying textures, colours and patterns making up a complex but unified whole. Despite the abstract nature of the weaving, each strand is very concrete and vibrates with meaning.

Freedom is an elusive concept, just as the enslavement of women is often subtle. The degree to which the oppression of women is enculturated, institutionalized and denied makes it difficult for many people to comprehend its existence. The degree to which freedom is defined by its absence makes it difficult for all of us to grasp what it is in positive, active terms. Similarly, the fact that Woman is defined in negative terms (i.e., non-man and therefore non-human) makes it difficult to know who Woman is in positive, active terms. Thus, Morgan poses the questions:

Val Paape

"Is it coincidental that we have no idea what freedom is, or what Woman is — while we feel we have an idea of what bondage is, of what Man is? Is it possible that our very ignorance of what Woman is constitutes the very thing that stands in the way of our knowing what freedom is?" *The Anatomy of Freedom* makes a negative answer virtually impossible just as it makes an analysis of freedom from other than a feminist perspective intellectually untenable. Nowhere is there a better place to begin an anatomy of freedom than with the experience of the female half of the human race whose enslavement continues to be denied and whose identity remains elusive.

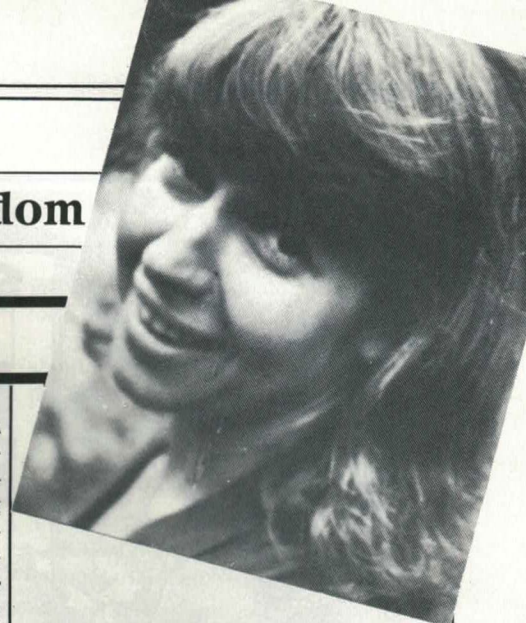
Morgan takes us deeper into the questions, "who is woman?" and "what is freedom?" These questions are asked from every perspective of a woman's life — her body image, her sexuality, and her spiritual existence, as well as her presence in committed relationships, families and in the socio-political order as it exists in the technological age. These questions are basic to Morgan's task which is more far-reaching than an elucidation of the feminist issues and facts with which many readers will be familiar. Her central task in writing *The Anatomy of Freedom* is to put forward a philosophical basis for feminism that is consistent with a scientific view of reality and provides a map (albeit a complex, three-dimensional map) which women and men can use to chart their way toward freedom and peace.

The context within which Morgan chooses to explore "who is woman?" and "what is freedom?" comes from scientific insights and models derived through holography and the New Physics. This choice is an important one for feminist philosophy. First, it challenges the anti-technology, back-to-the-earth fundamentalism of some feminists. A Mother Earth, nature-bound image of woman is no more freeing than is patriarchy's image of woman; and, an ostrich attitude towards science and technology will not free women (or men) from its potential destructiveness and increased enslavement of women. Second, it increases women's awareness of the chasm between what science knows about physical and psychic

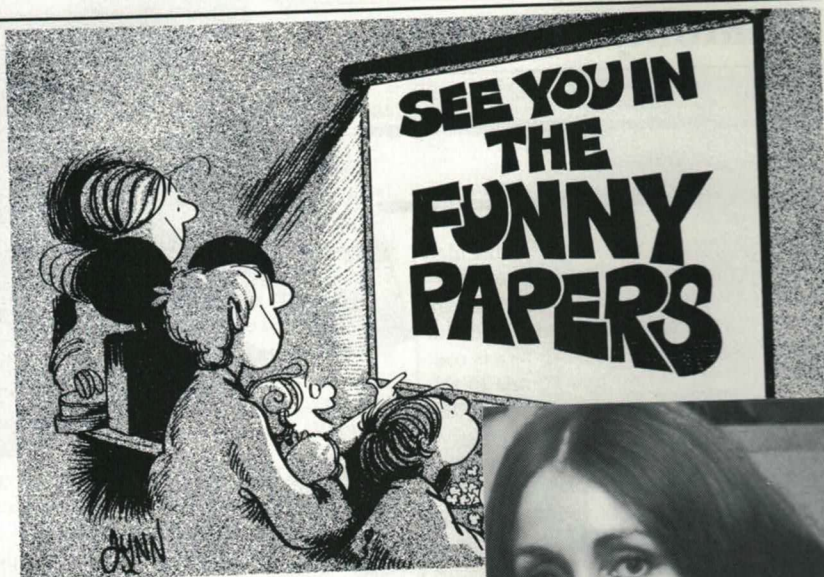
reality and what is practised in modern technological society. Thus, it enables women to see how science can make tremendous contributions to the feminist vision. Indeed, science must be involved in the feminist struggle to articulate a philosophy of interconnectedness, interdependence and unity. By making this choice, Morgan has brilliantly thrust us into such an endeavour.

The hologram is important because it challenges the way that we have been taught to view the world. It can be experienced directly (in Winnipeg at the Manitoba Telephone System Building) and is relatively easy to understand, but it is the New Physics that is building a comprehensive picture of the oneness of physical reality, psychic phenomena and spiritual experience.

Although *The Anatomy of Freedom* is theoretical, true to its holographic nature, it is also practical, for it provides concrete directions for the application of the theory in our personal lives. It is also an extremely hopeful book: Each of us does matter. The whole is found in the parts and we are released into our power knowing that there is no hierarchy of issues and that our individual actions are of cosmic significance. We are released into acceptance, knowing that our sisters' actions are also of cosmic significance. We are released into a new challenge knowing that like a subatomic particle, we can and must be everywhere at once. We are released into freedom from our own fundamentalisms, for example "A feminist or a lesbian is...," knowing that duality and the Other no longer exists. This message that Morgan brings to us is vitally important for there is much fear, burnout and divisiveness at the very time when empowerment and unity are critical to our survival. Morgan exhorts us: Carry yourself as one who will save the world. Because you will."



REVIEWS



A film about Lynn Johnston
Produced by the National Film Board of Canada

Straightforward, warm and personable have all been used to describe Lynn Johnston.

"See You in the Funny Papers", a new release by the National Film Board, confirms those adjectives. As well, it looks at the life of the creator of the comic strip, "For Better or For Worse".

However, the fact that it was made four years ago at the outset of Lynn's fame alters some of the film's highlights. Lynn says that in watching the film, "it is a look into the past for me."

"It's a look at somebody newly blasted into the world of publicity and having a terrible time handling it," she adds. Today, she feels she would have answered the questions more completely and differently.

Although the film does not examine the cartoon strip's remarkable success when so many others fail, Lynn does intimate the reason. She notes that the strip deals with the day-to-day problems, frustrations and joys of family life. Her talent to remain in tune with ordinary lives is the key to her extraordinary success.

Part of the film includes a speech to a psychiatric convention in Winnipeg. Lynn is obviously nervous and upset, taking the audience on a journey into the painful isolation of public speaking. The speech was the first Lynn gave. By recording the event, the film board created a withdrawn, controlled audience. For Lynn, this resulted in a feeling of being exposed and being inadequate. On viewing this segment, she says, "It was one of those days you want to forget and there it is, recorded for posterity." Four years later, Johnston feels she has fulfilled the initial challenge of public speaking. This fact, combined with time restraints, are the basis for her decision to no longer speak in public.

In the film, the cartoon-character Elly is described as "vulnerable, unhappy, manipulated and very, very different from me". The strip often becomes a ventilation

Patricia Rawson

for Lynn, notably during the break up of her first marriage. The lives of creator/character are paralleled once again with Elly's new-found success as a freelance writer.

"If I get one more load of ironing, I'm going to throw up" situations spark "go get 'em kid" letters from women. On the other hand, romantic and loving themes draw numerous responses from men. Lynn explains, "men tend to remember things in very positive terms because they're at work. Their recollections are of sweet bed-times and birthday parties."

War, political events, and abortion are some of the topics the strip does not address. "My stuff is drawn so far in advance that upon publication date, who knows what could have happened," explains Lynn. She adds that unless one is willing to back up a statement there is no point in making the statement, referring to a U.S. radio station appearance where she was bombarded with responses after she said, "if women ran the world, there wouldn't be any wars". Of the women's movement, Lynn admits, "I'm benefitting by it, but I haven't been part of it."

The charm of the film is related as she is shown working in her Lynn Lake home, having conversations with dentist-husband Rod and children, Katie and Aaron. "As someone from the city, going to Lynn Lake, it's been a real university for me."

Though publicity stints are confined to four weeks a year, Lynn reveals, "I get thoroughly sick of myself after a tour. Like this film...here's me and here's me and here's more me and here's me again and here's another opinion from me and just for a change, here's me."▽

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LEGALEYES

Willfull Planning

There are three ways to make a will.

You can make one entirely in your own handwriting, you can utilize a stationer's form of will, or you can have a lawyer draw one for you.

Making a holograph will entirely in your own handwriting is certainly the cheapest and most convenient way to ensure that your estate will be dealt with according to your wishes at your death. Such a document must be *entirely* in your own handwriting and you do not need any witnesses whatsoever. Typewriting will not be acceptable.

You may wish to include the following clauses:

1. A clause stating that this is your last will and testament and that any wills made previously are revoked.
2. A clause describing how you wish your estate to be disposed of. This can be done in equal shares, ("to my three children in equal shares"), by percentage, (50% to Janet, 30% to Joe, and 20% to Jeffrey), or by specific bequest, (\$1000 to each of my children). If you do leave specific bequests, beware the effects of inflation which can seriously diminish what was once a generous gift. You may also wish to provide an alternative bequest if the beneficiary has predeceased you, ("everything to my husband unless he has predeceased me, then everything to my children in equal shares").
3. A clause naming an executor, that is, the person that you wish to be in charge of distributing your estate. It is wise but not required to ensure that this person is a resident of Manitoba. It makes their job easier if they live near to you.
4. A clause naming a guardian for your children. This can be a different person from your executor.
5. Finally, be sure to sign and date the will.

A word of caution: while holograph wills are valid in Manitoba, this is not true in every province and you should consult a lawyer if you relocate subsequently.

The stationer's form of will is probably the least desirable option because of the possibility of making an error in execution. Such a form can be picked up at many stationery stores and it leaves you to fill in the blanks with the appropriate information. The fancy scroll writing gives people a sense of confidence that such a will is somehow more legal or legitimate than one entirely in your own handwriting. However, unlike a holograph will,

Jennifer Cooper
Lawyer, Newman, Maclean



you do need witnesses to sign and the rules are somewhat technical. Both witnesses must be "present" while the testator signs, and then the two witnesses must sign in the presence of the testator although not necessarily of each other. "Presence" means both the ability to appreciate what was going on at the time as well as the ability or possibility of seeing the actual signing. Neither witness can be a potential beneficiary under the will. If these rules are not followed, the will can be declared invalid.

Finally, you can have your will drawn by a lawyer. If it is at all complicated, and if you can afford it, it is worth going to a lawyer for the security of knowing that it's done right. Most lawyers charge a nominal fee for a standard will and will quote this fee in advance to you. If you are fortunate and have a rather large estate, you might benefit from some estate planning to reduce your tax liability and you will need a lawyer that specializes in this kind of work. Many law firms will also hold your will in safekeeping free of charge and this

may be desirable if you do not wish to pay for a safety deposit box.

If you have already made a will, you should be aware that it can be revoked in the following circumstances:

1. If you make a subsequent will;
2. If you destroy the original of your will with an intention to revoke;
3. If you subsequently marry, unless your will was declared to be in specific contemplation of marriage to that person;
4. If you subsequently divorce then unless there is a specific declaration that the will was made in contemplation of divorce, any gift which is made to your former spouse will effectively be made invalid.

In general, you should keep the original of your will in a safe place and in a place that your executor is aware of. Do not make more than one original since it could be confusing if you meant to revoke your will by destroying it and someone later found another original that had not been destroyed. You can make as many copies as you wish and these should be clearly marked "copy only". If you wish to leave directions concerning the method of disposing of your body or other particulars concerning the funeral or ceremony, be sure to communicate these desires to your executor verbally or preferably in writing. Your will may not be read until after the funeral and by then it would be too late. Speak to the person or persons that you would like as guardians for your children to ensure that they are willing to accept this responsibility.

Whatever method you choose, you owe it to those who are close to you to indicate now what your desires are for the disposal of your estate so there is no confusion later.



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Child Care Expenses

In its spring budget, the Federal Government proposed significant amendments to the rules relating to the deductibility of child care expenses for income tax purposes. The ensuing article is a discussion of both the existing law and the proposed amendments.

Under the current tax laws, the effect of the child care provision is that where a mother has her child(ren) cared for to enable her to work, she will be allowed to deduct the cost of such care from her income within certain limitations. Only where the father is unmarried or separated from his wife, or where the mother is unable to care for her children because of mental or physical infirmity or confinement, may the father deduct child care expenses from his income.

In addition to eligibility for the deduction, the current legislation also differentiates between the mother and father on the amount of the deduction.

If you are the mother, you may deduct the amount you actually spent on child care provided that it does not exceed the least of the following amounts:

- \$1,000 per child,
- \$4,000 for the family,
- two thirds of your earned income for the year.

If you are a father eligible to claim child care expenses, in addition to the above, the deduction is further limited to the lesser of:

- \$30 for each child
- \$120 for the family

for each week throughout which you are eligible to the claim.

If the father claims a deduction, and the mother has deductible expenses for the year, the maximum limits of \$1,000 per child and \$4,000 per family which would ordinarily apply to the mother's claim will be reduced by the amount of the father's claim.

The proposed changes to the legislation governing child care expenses are designed to remove the distinction between the sexes in the qualification for the deduction, and to increase the amount of the deduction.

The following highlights the key changes to the legislation:

1. Any individual who incurs child care expenses in order to enable him or her to work, will be allowed to deduct child care costs (within certain limitations).
2. In the case of two individuals contributing to the support of an "eligible child" (defined below), the deduction is generally limited to the individual with the

**Paula Gardner, C.A.
Arthur Andersen & Co.**

lower income. If the incomes of the two supporting persons are equal, a deduction will be allowed only if the two jointly elect which of them may claim it.

3. The "supporting person" (defined below) with the higher income may claim a deduction based on the number of weeks in the year throughout which the lower income individual was:

- living apart for at least a 90 day period commencing in the year due to a breakdown in the domestic relationship
- in full time attendance at a university or other designated educational institution
- certified to be incapable of caring for children for the foreseeable future because of physical or mental infirmity or because of confinement to a bed, wheelchair, hospital or institution for a continuous period of two weeks or more
- confined to a prison for a continuous period of two weeks or more.

4. The amount of child care expenses has been doubled to \$2,000 per eligible child to a maximum of \$8,000 per family.

"*Earned Income*" includes salary, wages and taxable benefits; income from a business carried on either alone or as a partner actively engaged in the business; adult occupational training allowances and research grants; and the taxable portions of awards such as scholarships, fellowships, bursaries or prizes.

An "*Eligible Child*" of a taxpayer includes a child of the taxpayer or the taxpayer's spouse, or a child who was wholly dependent upon the taxpayer for support during the year. The child must be under the age of 14 for some part of the year, or if over 14 years, must be either physically or mentally infirm.

"*Supporting Person*" of an eligible child of a taxpayer means the child's parent, taxpayer's spouse, or an individual on whom the child was wholly dependent for support during the year. The parent, spouse, or individual as the case may be, must have resided with the taxpayer at any time during the year and within the 60-day period following the end of the year.

"*Child Care Expenses*" include all costs of babysitting and day nursery care, and up to \$60 (increased from \$30) per child per

week for lodging paid to boarding schools and camps. Deductible costs exclude payments to the child's father, mother, or "supporting person", a person who was under 21 and related to the taxpayer or his spouse, or a person claimed by the taxpayer as a dependent.

To illustrate the proposed revisions consider the following:

Mary Smith's husband John was confined to a hospital for a period of four weeks in 1983. During his stay in the hospital, Mary paid a babysitter \$1,000 to take care of her three children, all of whom are under the age of 14. During the remainder of the year, a total of \$6,500 was paid for child care expenses. Mary's earned income for the year was \$25,000 while John's was \$20,000. Mary being the taxpayer with the higher income may claim a deduction of \$720 for the period of John's confinement. This is computed as the least of:

1. The overall family limitation \$ 8,000
2. Number of wks x \$240 (4 x \$240) \$ 960
3. Number of wks x \$60 x no. of children
(4 x \$60 x 3) \$ 720
4. \$2,000 x no. of children (\$2,000 x 3) \$ 6,000
5. $\frac{2}{3}$ x earned income ($\frac{2}{3}$ x \$25,000) \$16,667
6. Actual expenses paid \$ 1,000

The remainder of the child care expenses may be claimed by John, the supporting person with the lower income. His deduction for the 1983 taxation year of \$5,280 would be computed as:

- The least of
1. The overall family limitation \$ 8,000
 2. \$2,000 x number of children \$ 6,000
 3. $\frac{2}{3}$ x earned income ($\frac{2}{3}$ x \$20,000) \$13,334
 4. Actual expenses paid \$ 7,500

minus

1. the amount claimed by another taxpayer for the same children \$ 720

To be allowed deductions for child care expense, you must support these expenses with receipts. Each receipt should include the name, address, social insurance number, and signature of the person to whom you made payments for the child care, your name, the amount paid, and the date of payment. While the receipts do not have to be filed with the returns, they should be retained in case Revenue Canada should ask for them at a later date.

The above amendments to the legislation are to be effective for the 1983 and subsequent taxation years. At this point in time, the legislation has not been passed by Parliament. However, one would hope that the changes are enacted in enough time to allow for the preparation of the 1983 personal income tax returns. ▽

POETRY

PERENNIALS/ THE GROWTH OF WOMAN

The choice was never ours
 Whether or not to flower
 We were the seed
 Given the exacting conditions
 Nature became our benefactor
 Ripening from a sultry compost
 We emerged
 Delicately pale or brazenly colored
 Undulating
 In full bloom
 One by one we are plucked from our youth
 Separated from our roots
 Some wither
 Heads bowed, crisped with finalities
 Those of a hardier stature remain glorious
 Perfecting the illustrations of House and Garden
 Until dried and packaged we become a potpourri
 Fragrances lingering
 Images confined
 In memory
 The faith in our nature renewed
 We are the second coming
 Brilliant with exuberance
 Strong with the wisdom before us
 We thrive
 No longer needing to be nurtured
 Persistent in our need to survive
 Combating the elements
 We are more vivid than remembered
 In full bloom
 A.J. Parrish

THE CHRISTMAS TREE PARTY

She was a farm wife
 Not far from Rivers, Manitoba
 With her summer, fall and early winter
 A season on season of neverending
 crop, the harvest, the rootcellar,
 the order in for the catalogue.
 Days filled,
 Empty too
 Of other women's faces, voices,
 Adult talk and adult laughter,
 The echoes of mandolins and fiddles.
 So she worked and waited
 For the Christmas Tree Party at
 The new public school in Wheatland.
 Not a far walk for a farm wife.
 No one felt the storm, it just came up
 As prairie storms do.
 The frozen body was found
 Not a quarter mile from home.
 Susan Foley Currie

EDITORIAL

Are You Financially Fit?

"Whether you're a housewife or a high power executive, a determined feminist or a dedicated 'Total Woman', young or old, affluent or plagued by money problems, statistics show that you are not in control of your own financial life. Money is central to every woman's existence, yet most women continue to be exploited, ignored, cheated and devalued in an economy run by and for men. Women must take their economic destiny into their own hands."

All women should — (*The Economics of Being a Woman*, by Dee Dee Ahern)

- Assess their present economic status
- Discover where their money sources are
- Try to get equal pay and fringe benefits
- Know the mechanics of bank loans, pensions and insurance compensation
- Secure information about estates, taxes, investments and wills

If you work outside the home you should learn how to reap your just reward and manage it. If you are dependent upon a husband's paycheck, knowledge of your rights and obligations is essential to an economically sound future.

A woman should know:

- How to get money
 - How to keep it
 - How to make it grow and work for her
- Statistics prove that women live longer than men — consequently many of us will be alone in our late years.

Many women in their senior years spend their time furthering their education, starting a career, travelling, involving themselves in volunteer work or with hobbies. They do the things they have always wanted to do but couldn't, or just did not have the time.

To be able to do what you want at this time in life — and not be dependent on others, you will need additional income. Government and company pensions provide a meagre existence:

Avg. Canada Pension — 1983	\$345.15
Avg. Old Age Security — 1983	\$250.63
Total \$595.78/month	

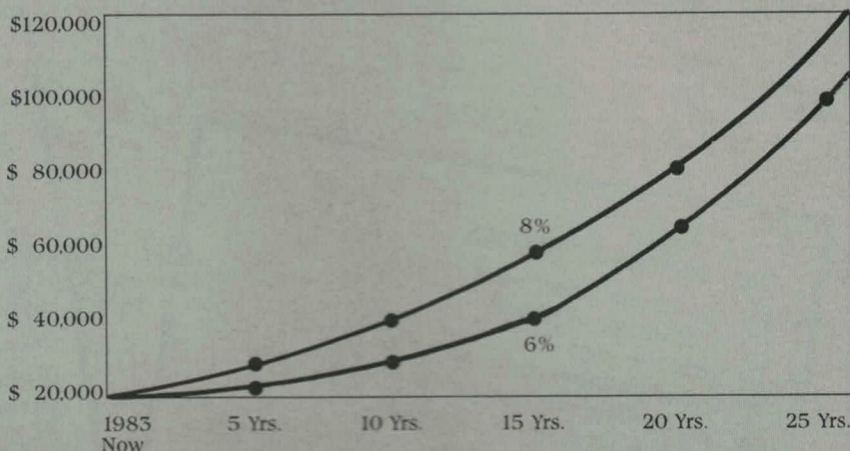
If you were fortunate enough to have a company pension, in addition to the Canada Pension, and it paid \$500. per month, it certainly wouldn't allow you today to do the extra things you wanted to do.

Inflation and the increasing cost of living are the problems. At a rate of 6 or 8 per cent increase per year, the graph indicates the reality of the problem.

There are only two ways to guard against inflation, either people working or money working.

Marlene Kunderman

Ravages of Inflation



What \$20,000 will buy today — \$60,000 will be needed in 15 years at 8% inflation.

You can hedge against inflation by retaining capital (money at work).

When Should I Start My Financial Plan?

The best time is now, even if it is a small start — any start is better than no start at all.

The first step is to find out how you are doing financially today. List everything you own, and it's value; then list everything you owe, and it's value — the difference is your net worth.

To plan for the future it is essential to set goals, decide how much you can save for your senior years and plan what you want to be doing. Everyone's plan will be different, but your basic program or portfolio should include:

- a savings account
- insurance and investments

Financial products such as Registered Retirement Savings Plans, Registered Home Ownership Savings Plans, Guaranteed Investment Certificates, Term Deposits or Insurance Programs, may confuse the new investor and even scare them off. Trust companies, investment and insurance companies have trained personnel available to explain these products to you, without obligation to purchase. Many financial companies have become aware that women are potential clients to be

treated as serious, concerned individuals. You have probably noticed advertising being directed to women by these companies.

January and February are prime investment months. You will notice registered plans advertised at various interest rates. The reason for this is that a registered plan purchased at this time can be used for tax deferral in the preceeding year. (e.g. \$1,000. deposited into a registered plan up until February 28, 1984 can be used as a tax deduction for the year 1983. If you were in a 40% tax bracket you could in fact save \$400. in taxes.)

An RRSP is "one" way to start saving for your "senior years".

In choosing an RRSP you should consider the cost to you:

- Interest Rates
- Net Gain
- Fees and Expenses
- Flexibility of Plan
- Ease of Transferring or Cashing in Plan
- Options at Maturity and at Retirement
- Canada Deposit Insurance.

Seminars and adult education classes on investments are recommended to everyone. Remember, education is the foundation of success.

Marlene Kunderman is an insurance agent as well as a sales representative for HERIZONS magazine.▽

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314 Bond Street
- **HOBNOBBERS RESTAURANT (family)**
TransCanada Hwy. & St. Anne's Rd.
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