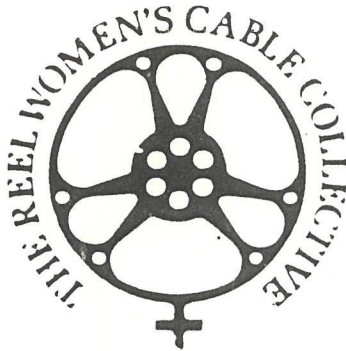


ALTERNATIVE MEDIA: REGINA WOMEN  
ON CAMERA

by the Reel Women's Collective  
93 Leopold Crescent  
Regina, Sask. S4T 6N5



"Stand by Camera 1. You're on air.  
Stand by Camera 2. Zoom in on the  
speaker '2'. Nice shot!"

These phrases have become part of the day to day vocabulary for a group of Regina women called the Reel Women's Cable Collective. Formed in the summer of '83 the group began exploring the possibility of producing a feminist news program through the local cable company, Cable Regina.

From the outset a great deal of interest on the part of various women in the community has been shown. As early as the second meeting of the collective twenty different topics were suggested as potential programs or features. Naturally, not all of these ideas could be utilized; however, the amount of enthusiasm which this revealed for the concept of a regular television series featuring women's issues from a feminist perspective was inspiring.

Eventually six topics from the original list of twenty were selected and a program format was developed. There were to be six half hour programs each consisting of a news section that concentrated on analyzing various day to day events from a woman's perspective and a special documentary which explored in some depth various issues of concern to women. The documentary section included, among other things, a program on pornography, "Backstreet Billionaires", which took to the streets to uncover people's thoughts on the increasingly expanding pornographic industry. Another feature, "We Are Your Sisters Too", examined the double discrimination faced by women with physical disabilities.

Jane Coombe  
93 Leopold Crescent  
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In both its news and documentary sections the collective attempted to give exposure to various female artists and musicians living in Regina. In turn, many of these artists contributed their creative work to the collective. Noelle Hall, a local feminist singer-songwriter, created and produced an original theme song, "Seven Sisters", for the collective's first series. Paintings by Karen Schoonover, another local artist, provided the visuals for the opening and closing of each show. Another Regina based artist, Kate Kokotailo, created a logo for the collective which provided the backdrop for interviews conducted in the studio.

In retrospect there are many positive comments to be made concerning the cable experience. A great sense of power is realized in the process of conceptualizing an idea, nurturing it and, ultimately, seeing the finished product. Power to use the latest in communications equipment; power to say what we want; power to present ideas in a visual medium; power to be in control of the creative process; these two were extremely significant aspects of the experience.

While the first series of six programs was produced without any financial assistance, the second series, upon which the collective is currently working, is being produced with the aid of Secretary of State funding. Such funding has allowed the collective to hire professional women in the media to deliver workshops on various aspects of production such as script writing and 'on camera' presence. The funding will also be used for the development of a training manual to be utilized by any women wishing to produce their own television programs in other communities in the province.

In the future the collective is hoping to approach women's groups in various parts of Saskatchewan and encourage them to work in conjunction with their local cable stations in order to produce programs of concern to women in their particular community. The

collective also plans to air women's programs produced in other parts of the country well as giving more exposure to the National Film Board's Studio 'D' films.

In short, the project has been a great success. The collective's greatest hope is that other women's groups in different communities will eventually share in this experience.

Jane Coombe  
Connections: A Newsletter For Women in  
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