

Vancouver Status of Women  
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Tel: 873-1427

July 17, 1985

Dear Member;

We wish to thank all those members who took the time to answer the membership questionnaire that was sent out last March. Over 60% of those questionnaires were returned, which is a good response.

Many new ideas about VSW programming and membership were suggested. We feel energized by some of the response and hope to implement the ideas into the VSW framework when we look over our programming this fall.

The results of the questionnaire are enclosed. All questions were tabulated to the closest percentages and general comments are recorded. Basically, most women felt that VSW membership and visibility was directly related to the visibility (distribution) of Kinesis. Women said that they would like to see Kinesis more available in libraries and on newsstands (throughout Canada). As a result, we have done an outreach campaign to all libraries in B.C. and to bookstores in Canada and the U.S.A.

There is a way for members to help with the Kinesis outreach and that is to approach your local bookstore or women's centre and ask them to carry Kinesis. We have enclosed a letter of introduction to booksellers for which you could use to approach such places. Or, send us the name and addresses of bookstores in your area and we will send them a complimentary Kinesis to review.

Also enclosed is the new VSW pamphlet which was produced on this grant. We would also like to remind you that the VSW Annual General Report is now available. Please contact us if you would like a copy sent out.

Again, thank you for your responses to the questionnaire.

Sincerely,



Kim Irving

VSW

## MEMBERSHIP QUESTIONNAIRE

As part of the Canada Works program, VSW members were sent a lengthy questionnaire in order for us to see how they say VSW membership. Not all questions were answered by individuals. Answers are in percentages based on the total questionnaires returned. More than 607 questionnaires were returned. We thank all those who took the time to answer them.

### General Statistics

Age 20 26: 11%; 27 35: 36%; 36 50: 41%; 50 65: 9%; 65+: 3%

Unemployed: 26%

Employed: 68%

Annual Income: under 12,000 - 28%  
12,000-16,000 - 17%  
16,000-20,000 - 6%  
20,000-26,000 - 12%  
26,000-30,000 - 8%  
30,000 and up - 23%

Dependants: Yes - 31%; No - 53%

Number of Dependants: 1 - 13%  
2 - 12%  
3 - 2%  
4 - 2%

1) Why did you become a member of VSW?

- a) wanted to support Kinesis but could afford to pay more - 21%
- b) support the work of VSW - 49%
- c) all of the above - 25%

2) How long before becoming a member were you aware of VSW or Kinesis?

- a) same time - 20%
- b) 1 - 6 mths - 12%
- c) 6mths - 1yr - 16%
- d) 1 to 2 years - 19%
- e) 2-3 years - 11%

3) What part of VSW most appeals to you?

- research on women's issues - 56%
- resource/referral information services - 42%
- representation to government - 37%
- programming (discussion evenings, forums, etc.) - 18%
- organizing - 20%

all of the above - 19%

others: Kinesis, Community Networking, Women's Centre, Linking women

4) Your Interests: What issue are you interested in?

- |                          |                              |
|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| Pornography - 39%        | Equal Rights - 46%           |
| Prostitution - 16%       | Sexuality - 25%              |
| Legislative Reform - 31% | Peace - 44%                  |
| International - 20%      | Violence Against Women - 50% |
| Family - 16%             |                              |
- Others: Art/writing - 7%, Lesbian rights - 4%, Abortion Rights - 4%, Health - 4%  
Education, Poverty, Daycare, Spirituality, Wages for Housework, Reproductive Right



Union/work, class, race, sports, pensions.

5) Do you have suggestions on how V.S.W. can improve its visibility?

Approximately 15% of the response suggested we improve V.S.W visibility by producing a pamphlet or poster. Other suggestions in this area; have more information tables, produce a video, advertise on mainstream media such as CBC, increase KINESIS circulation, do public speaking in schools, women's centres, etc.

More programming said others. More activities for older women, younger women, disabled women, native women, and married women. Some suggested that KINESIS quality should be improved; generally better packaging and presentation for all V.S.W. publications.

Approximately 7% felt V.S.W./KINESIS emphasised lesbian issues too much as one stated;

"V.S.W. has lost visibility/credibility because it appears to have considerable emphasis on lesbian issues.", another said; "V.S.W. is too lesbian dominated and intimidating." Many felt that V.S.W should "reach out to women in a broader political/social/economic/ethnic backgrounds". Another felt she "didn't know what V.S.W. does. I don't know where KINESIS leaves off and V.S.W. begins". But then, many also said things were fine the way they were!

6) Have you found V.S.W. publications-briefs useful?

Yes: 35%

No: 10%

Was not aware of them: 38%

7) Do you ever use V.S.W. by phone, in person or by mail for resources, services, research or general information?

Yes: 44%

No: 49% (17% of the "no's" were women living out of the city, province)

Comments: "Really enjoy V.S.W. forums and workshops," "See V.S.W. as a women's centre," "I count on V.S.W. as a major voice of women in B.C. - as part of the national grassroots network," "Use V.S.W. to find out what's happening in the women's community," "I can never get through to V.S.W.," "Always get a phone answering machine"

8) Do you refer friends or family to V.S.W.?

Yes: 62% (15% were rural/out of province women)

No: 30% (8% rural/out of province)

9) V.S.W. Resource Centre: Do you think you would use it?

Yes: 55% (14% rural/out of province)

No: 18% (8% rural/out of province)

What's in the resource centre?: 8%

Comments: 21% said they would use the resource centre for their own research. Many wanted more information on the resource centre; what hours it is available?, How is it available?, What's in it?, Is a copier available?

10) Do you have suggestions on how V.S.W. could improve membership services for rural women?

As with question 5., many responded that V.S.W. should distribute pamphlets/posters in rural women's centres.

Approximately 10% felt we should take a more conservative position (both vocally

and in Kinesis) as there was "quite a bit of anti-feminism in local women's centres. They have Kinesis there but they don't read it". Yet, others felt "rural women need to be radicalized - speakers should make themselves available, maybe V.S.W. should initiate speaking tours with the help of local groups". Many women expressed interest in further information of V.S.W. services, wanted V.S.W. to "go on the road" or "provide workshops in rural communities".

Women also felt Kinesis could be used to connect with rural women. One woman said; "Support and information was very important for organizing women. Kinesis makes it seem like I belong to a community." Some felt that Kinesis should carry articles from rural women's groups or newspapers and generally that Kinesis circulation could be improved.

11) Membership Costs:

Too Much - 3%    Too Little - 15%    Just Right - 63%

Comments: A lot of women (about 15%) suggested we deserved more money, but they couldn't afford to pay more. As one said; "Too little for what I'd like to give, too much for what I can afford." They said if they had to pay more, they would. Some suggested a sliding scale on the prices, which we thought we had (by saying "or what you can afford") - yet another thought "or what you can afford" was demeaning and embarrassing for a person to have to admit they can't afford a subscription. (Note: Many women pay only "what they can". We would much rather see women get Kinesis at a reduced rate than not at all!) Others felt there should be a student, unemployment and/or pension rate.

12) Suggested Membership Benefits:

a) Membership Cards: 5% commented that they liked the idea, 6% hated the idea! (They felt cards were a waste of money and served no purpose.)

b) A Separate V.S.W. Newsletter: The 20% in favour of a separate newsletter were mostly from rural communities who expressed a lot of interest in V.S.W. activities. The 5% who didn't like the idea felt V.S.W. coverage could be done in Kinesis.

Social Evenings were generally accepted but women felt they should be open to everyone, not just members. Many felt member only events were too elitist. This was also reflected in objections to Study Groups. 8% were opposed to Study Groups, yet 15% were in favour as they felt women needed to connect. 18% felt all the ideas were great!

13) Are you a member of another feminist women's group or progressive group?

Yes: 52%

No: 12%

More than one centre: 15%

17) Do you think that Kinesis should have more internal V.S.W. information?

Yes: 21%

No: 19%

Comments: "This questionnaire has made me realize how unaware I am of what goes on at V.S.W. besides Kinesis", "A regular column would broaden people's awareness of V.S.W.", "I would like to know more about Kinesis/V.S.W. staff members", "V.S.W. column would give Kinesis a more personal style". Objections to this idea were based on the thought that Kinesis was for more pressing issues and V.S.W. activities should be in a separate newsletter.



- 18) V.S.W. staff often provide research and analysis in Kinesis on current women's issues. Is this useful to you? Would you like to see more or less topics covered?

Yes: It is useful: 52%

There were no "no" answers, though some did not answer the question.

Comments: A variety of issues were suggested or disapproved of; more art, photography and poetry, less country, less international, more on work and the family, more articles relating to middle-age and health. Some objected to lesbian articles as one stated "Your paper reads like an incrowd paper for lesbians." Plenty of women said "Just more - what you're doing is great!"

- 19) Have you ever contributed to Kinesis?

Yes: 32%

No: 59%

- 20) Would you like to see Kinesis having more workshops?

Yes: 27%

No: 16%