

NEWSLETTER

NOV. '84



EDITORIAL : ON HALLOWEEN

When the little witches, ghosts and goblins with their plastic pumpkins full of candy have safely been tucked in bed, then the adults come out to play. In the costume parties and dances, adult fantasies are acted out: the mild and timid academics become swashbuckling pirates or Che Guevaras, the shy suddenly are transformed into brazen hussies, or vampires with long fangs, clowns, cabbages or kings. When the Newsletter Collective decided to do an issue on Halloween with a lesbian supplement, I wondered what the connection was.... Then I remembered that Halloween with its dressing up and cross-dressing was the time for gays - the gay parade in Toronto with men dressing as women and women as men, when homosexuals of all persuasions go public.

Halloween is also a time of the witches' festival. It is a time when mischief is abroad, a dangerous time. I remember being in Saint John, New Brunswick on October 31 and being advised not to leave my hotel: I watched from my window the bands of roaming, drunk men who might at any time break into violence, overturn cars & set them on fire. A time when suppressed emotions come to the surface, resentments break out.

To me personally it is an ominous time. It was at a Halloween party that I met my ex-husband, with unhappy consequences. For years I would stay in on that day, trying to keep out of trouble. And yet the excitement of the time sweeps one away, in spite of one's more cautious self. The Shadow Self emerges. I remember going to one party dressed in drag as a sailor. I had always had a romantic admiration for sailors, and a fantasy that I might have enjoyed life on the ocean wave if women had been allowed to join the navy (this was before they were). What struck me in my sailor attire was how weird it was to be without my purse! My purse was my protector, my alter ego, my companion; to be without it was rather like walking down the street naked, or like a cripple without her crutch. Perhaps carried away by my freedom from my purse, jingling my money in my pocket, and striding around in low heels instead of tottering around in my stilletoes (those were the days when high heels were the fashion), I committed the awful sin of going to the party with one lover and leaving with another, an indiscretion which haunted me for years afterwards and will probably be engraved on my tombstone and placed in the book of my bad deeds to be produced on the Day of Judgment. Put it down to the spirits abroad at Halloween which make us do things we shouldn't.

If dressing in drag makes us appreciate the freedoms and constraints of the opposite sex, and thus breaks down the absurd exaggerations in gender differences, perhaps feminists and others should welcome Halloween and celebrate it as a great festival.

In sisterhood, Roberta Buchanan

STAFF REPORT FOR THE NEWSLETTER

Hi,

As usual I missed an issue with my report and therefore have to combine two months into one report. September month was an-incredibly hectic month but was not without it's rewards. It was my last month as the lone staff person so I was extremely busy with crisis calls and counselling. The Take Back the Night march at the end of September, however, was a real energy boost and the party at the women's centre really completed the evening. Marjorie McGuire also "happened" in September and the TGIF for September month allowed many people to meet her.

On October 1st, Anne Donovan started work at the centre as our new feminist counsellor. Anne has a Masters of Social Work Degree from Ottawa and is into feminism, crafts and learning about Newfoundland. She's a wonderful woman and adds new life to the centre. We also have Cheryl French and Michelle Melendy at the centre on Thursdays and Fridays until April. They are two social work students from MUN. They have shown lots of enthusiasm for both the women's centre and feminism since they arrived and hopefully will gain some positive experience from their contact. We'll benefit from the contact as well as they are both interesting women who care about women and women's issues.

On October 4th, Eve Roberts conducted a will workshop for about 10 people. The report on the workshop was a positive one. Also in October we became involved in the CWC strike. We joined the Coalition for Equality and staged a rally at the picket lines. The strikers have been coming to the centre for coffee and we've learned much about the reality of inequality. We will continue to support these women until they attain equality.

Coming in November we have the Constitutional Conference. Sharon Pope has been doing a lot of work organizing this conference. If you have inquiries about it, please call Sharon at the centre. The Mary Daly lecture has been postponed until the Spring but their will be lots happening before then. We'll keep you informed through the newsletter and phone calls.

Beth.

"HEY PAT - HOW COME WITCHES CAN'T HAVE BABIES?"

"I DUNNO SANDY, HOW COME THEY CAN'T"

"'CAUSE THEIR HUSBAND'S HAVE HOLLOWEINIES!"
(groan).

"SANDY, I KNOW I SAID WE NEEDED MORE MATERIAL FOR THE HOLLOWEEN ISSUE - BUT THAT'S NOT QUITE WHAT I HAD IN MIND."

"SO, CAN I PRINT IT?"

"SURE, ANY MORE TEA BUNS LEFT?"

(our Newsletter sessions are fun!)



STAFF REPORT: ANNE DONOVAN

I'm Anne Donovan the new feminist counsellor at the Women's Centre. Since I started October 1st, I've been mainly involved in counselling. The women coming to the centre are in need of support to find housing, to apply for welfare, and to cope with marital problems. I also enjoyed participating in the Women's Centre's support of the telephone strikers on the picket-line. Attending the Feminist Weekend of October 20th, gave me a chance to meet other feminists in the community and share concerns and action plans.

The arrival of two social work students from MUN, Cheryl French and Michele Melendy has brought new enthusiasm and energy to the centre, that we all appreciate.

I recently moved here from Ottawa where I studied at the Carleton University School of Social Work. In Ottawa I worked as a community social worker at an all women's health centre, a staff member at a shelter for homeless women, and a member of a collective of women who researched and wrote a booklet on Community Economic Development. The best thing about moving to St. John's is meeting all the friendly people who live here.

My plans for the next month include starting up a Wednesday night film series with Elsa Burt and to start a group for separated wives. If you are interested in either, please call the Women's Centre at 753-0220 and I'll be pleased to answer any questions. Finally I want to thank Beth Lacey for making me feel at home in the centre.



ANNE DONOVAN

PROFILE: ANNE DONOVAN, FEMINIST COUNSELLOR

Recently the St John's Status of Women Council hired a feminist counsellor., Anne Donovan. Her job will be to counsel the increasing number of women who come to the Women's Centre for help: incest survivors, women with problems with housing or welfare, those in the painful process of separating from their husbands, or simply those in the grip of depression, alcoholism, or anxiety. Anne Donovan will be organizing a group for separated women, and also a film series which will be held at the Centre every second Wednesday. The following is based on an interview with her:

Q: Tell me something about your background: when and where were you born.

A.D.: I was born on May 8 1953 in Toronto, though I grew up in Montreal. We moved to Ottawa when I was seventeen - my father worked for the telephone company, and he was part of the exodus of Bell Telephone people from Montreal because of the Separatist scare. My parents separated when I was seventeen - actually my mother would have left my dad when I was eleven, but I wrote to my grandmother. She was the one who had the money in the family. She told my mother she wouldn't pay our university education if my mum left - my mother was beaten by my father, but my grandmother said it wasn't all that often and it could be worse.

Q: Was your grandmother yourmother's mother?

A: No my father's mother. She had a trade - she did slip-covers and those curtains with valances and fancy drapery. She made a good living - she had her own house in Toronto, a car, and went on trips to England every second year. I was going to be apprenticed to her but then she died.

Q: When your parents separated, what did you do?

A.D.: I went with my mother. I didn't see much of her: she couldn't get a job so she started studying at night, a secretarial course in a government training programme. She was at her course from three to 11 p.m.; I had a job in the telephone company delivering mail, so I had gone to bed by the time she got home. Then I was promoted to clerk - I answered 30 lines, did filing, answered letters, looked after the technical manuals - I was doing the work of one and a half people. I certainly sympathise with the women on strike in the telephone company here. I swore I would never work for them again, but I was forced to a year later because I needed a job.

I liked doing wild clothes. For example, I made a bra alternative out of old lace. (We laughed).

Q: But then you did go to university, didn't you?

A.D. Yes, when I was 24. I went to Carleton to do psychology. It was just an accident really that I went there - it was in Ottawa. There were lots of feminists there. I did a Psychology of Women course and hated it - but then when I did my Masters in Social Work I did a feminist counselling course. We were encouraged to work through a lot of our own problems. You can't counsel someone effectively unless you have done that. For example, even now I don't think I could counsel a man who was battering his wife - I would refer him to someone else. I don't think I could handle it. At Carleton I did a lot of political things around feminist issues. For example, a group of us got together to change the curriculum, so that now everybody doing social work has to do 3-4 months on feminism. After all, most of the clients ~~xx~~ social workers have are women. We had a women's credit union. I started a support group for women. We had a lot of fun - we sang songs, did massage, did rituals in the full moon round a bonfire.

Q: What did you do your thesis on?

A: How the phrase "self-help group" is defined in social work literature.

Q: What did you do after you graduated?

A: Looked for a job. It was very difficult. I got a job working in a shelter for homeless women in a church - All Saints Anglican church. We were only paid \$100 a week, and they wouldn't give us more hours. The work was very hard - 15 women and one social worker. Sometimes it was difficult to control the women - they would become violent, and it was safer to hit the social worker than the other women -- they knew she wouldn't hit back or she would lose her professional status, whereas if they hit another woman a fight would break out. Sometimes there wasn't enough food - I would bring them my own food, my own clothes.

Then I got a job on a project financed by a NEED grant - 6 women working on a booklet on community economic development.

Q: Is that available at the Women's Centre?

A.D.: Yes, it is. It's called A Third Way: Community Economic Development, and it's a resource book on alternative community enterprises in Ottawa, for example co-ops and credit unions, a multicultural women's centre, that kind of thing.

Q: But what of your education? Didn't you go to university?

A: I never finished high school - I was bitter because my parents didn't insist on my finishing. Actually I had dyslexia, although this wasn't diagnosed at the time -- except that they used to pull me out of class and a woman gave me tests in the cloakroom. Can you imagine? But they never told me what it was, they never told my parents. I was always much more comfortable working with my hands. I went to art school in Algonquin College and studied fine crafts - a two year programme - I majored in ceramics and metalworking, but I was really interested in textiles, weaving. We had no kiln --

Q: No kiln? In an art school?

A: Well, there was a kiln, but it was broken. I complained to the director. He said I was the only one who had complained. So I organized a petition among the students, signed by students and staff -- within 2 months we had a new kiln. Our professors at Algonquin were excellent - especially the psychology prof. Our metal-working prof., a woman, did work for the Canadian Government to give as gifts to foreign nations. In my second year there were only 6 students in the programme.

Q: So you had plenty of individual attention?

A: Yes. Long days - from 9 to 5 at college, then the evenings spent studying for English, history and psychology. I did a film for psychology on invading people's space - we filmed it at a shopping mall, to see what would happen if you came too close to people. Some of them became very hostile.

Q: What did you do after Algonquin?

A: I taught arts & crafts at night at Glebe Community Centre -- macramé, creative stitching, weaving. Then I got a job for the summer at the studio of a painter who wanted a potter to live and work there and deal with the tourists. It was then I found out I was not really a potter -- I preferred weaving. I worked on and off in offices from 21 to 24 years of age - my mother worked at Office Overload so I found it easy to get jobs. In my time off I did weaving and modelled for art schools - I taught weaving to senior citizens. I worked at Bell Canada again for 4 months - got a job as hostess to a convention, I had to wear a long dress and serve drinks, better pay than in an office. Then I went to Greece as babysitter to a family who were studying Buddhism. I had studied fashion design with a designer called Richard Robinson in Ottawa - from 15 years old I had earned money by doing sewing for a local shop. But I found the fashion business too cutthroat.

Q: So how did you come to Newfoundland?

A: I was looking for a job. I sent out 10 applications for jobs a week. I was desperate for anything - I even tried to get jobs cleaning. It's demoralising being unemployed. Finally, although all my friends were in Ottawa, I considered leaving the city. A friend of mine got a job at Memorial University, so I asked him to tell me if he saw any jobs going there. The next week he sent me the information about the feminist counsellor job -- just exactly what I wanted and was trained for. I applied, and Manpower gave me the money for the fare for the interview. They also paid my moving expenses.

Note: I did part of this interview in Anne Donovan's apartment, with some of her weaving and artwork hanging on the walls, and two huge life-sized stuffed dolls sitting in the corner - a man with a big bushy beard with his arm around a woman. There was a self-portrait on cloth - she told me her mother had drawn the face, and then she had pulled her own hair through the cloth (she has brown curly hair); the face with its curly real hair is surrounded by embroidered flowers. Another example of feminist art was a womb made out of burlap, and lined inside with flannel & pink satin, with a cervix. It was hanging on the wall, but you could take it down - it's big enough to crawl inside if one wanted to be symbolically "birthed". Artist as well as counsellor, Anne Donovan is an interesting addition to the feminist community in St John's.

Roberta Buchanan.



Anne Donovan

TAKE A SAFE STEP UP WITH SJSWC

STAIRWAYS AND STEPS CONJURE UP MANY IMAGES - OF MOVEMENT, OF ENTRANCES AND EXITS TO FAVORITE PLACES. THEY EVOKE IMAGES OF PARTINGS AND GREETINGS (AIRPORTS, RAILWAY STATIONS); OR PERHAPS VISIONS OF THE FUTURE. TAKE A "STEP UP" WITH SJSWC.

WE NEED TO RAISE FUNDS FOR A VERY IMPORTANT STAIRWAY - A FIRE ESCAPE FOR THE WOMEN'S CENTRE. TAKE A "STEP UP" BY CONTRIBUTING TO OUR NEW "STAIRWAY FUND." JUST THINK - YOUR CONTRIBUTION WILL PROVIDE ONE STEP TOWARDS A STAIRWAY WE VERY MUCH NEED.

ONE STEP, TWO STEPS... AND AWAY WE GO! THE COST VARIES FROM \$4,000 TO \$6,000. PLEASE CONTRIBUTE.

DON'T THROW OUT YOUR FEMINIST MAGAZINES!

Have you ever had to spend an hour in a hospital waiting room? Have you noticed how old, worn and mainstream the magazine selection is?

Do your part to improve things by taking used copies of Ms., Healthsharing, Status of Women News, SJSWC Newsletter, Complete Woman, or any other worthy publication you would like to see more widely circulated to the public library. They recirculate them to the hospitals.

Thanks!

MUN FACULTY ASSN. ACTIVE IN WOMEN'S ISSUES

Status of Women: This is another area where the Faculty Association has been active over the years. We are expecting a completed study on the relationship between sex and salary at Memorial. An earlier report on this subject was completed in 1974. Both the MUNFA Status of Women Committee and the Executive of the Faculty Association will address the results. For information concerning issues of interest to women, call Penelope Ailderdice, Faculty of Medicine, 737-6892.



**"See Jane run. See Dick run. See Jane beat Dick
in the 10th congressional district."**

THE BIGGEST STEP
ON THE WAY TO PERMANENT CHANGE

To: All Provincial Women's Groups

From: Organizing Committee, Ad Hoc Committee.

Re: Women for Government Boards

When conference delegates lobby provincial M.H.A.'s on Monday, November 19th we want to be able to show that we are willing to contribute our own efforts to the running of the province. We would like at that time to present the premier with the names of hundreds of women willing to serve on government boards, commissions and councils.

Please urge all members of your group to complete one of the attached forms and mail or bring it to the Conference Committee. There are no specific requirements for holding these positions - just interest and willingness to serve. Women have been badly underrepresented among past government appointments and to rectify this situation it is essential that we provide government with plenty of women to choose from. Please note that these positions usually include payment on a per diem basis, so you should not incur any personal expense by taking an appointment.

Following the conference, a duplicate set of forms will be submitted to the federal government for their use.

Bonnie James

Bonnie James, Conference Chair

INFORMATION SHEET

WOMEN AVAILABLE TO SERVE ON GOVERNMENT BOARDS, COMMISSIONS AND COUNCILS.

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

TELEPHONE: HOME: _____ WORK: _____

AREAS OF INTEREST AND EXPERTISE:

SPECIAL QUALIFICATIONS AND SKILLS:

LANGUAGES SPOKEN: _____

WORK EXPERIENCE (PAID AND UNPAID):

AREAS WHERE I WOULD BE ESPECIALLY INTERESTED IN SERVING:

I AM WILLING TO CONSIDER SERVING ON ANY GOVERNMENT BOARD:

FULL TIME: _____ PART TIME: _____ BOTH: _____

Oct. 24 1984

PRESS RELEASE

Women from all parts of Newfoundland and Labrador will gather in St. John's the weekend of Nov. 17th to discuss the new Canadian Constitution and Charter of Rights. The "Women and the Constitution" conference will include a full day of public sessions with speakers and panels, as well as workshops and a lobby with the three provincial parties in separate sessions on the morning of Monday Nov. 19th.

Planning for this conference began last spring following the 1984 annual provincial conference on the Status of Women, held in Labrador City. At this time, women decided to hold a Constitutional Conference and provincial lobby before April 1985 when the Equality Rights provision (Section 15) of the new Charter comes into effect.

Section 15 (1) (2) of the Charter contains crucial protections for women and other groups who have not been treated equally by the law, and gives protection to affirmative action programs. When the Canadian Constitution was brought back to Canada in 1982, provincial and federal governments were given three years to bring their legislation in line with the new provisions of Section 15. This process, known as a statute audit, is of great importance to women, because after April 1985 women will have to go to court to press cases regarding discriminatory provisions in the law.

The Equality Rights section of the Charter is worded as follows:

- 15.(1) Every individual is equal before and under the law and has the right to the equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination and, in particular, without discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age or mental or physical disability.
- (2) Subsection (1) does not preclude any law, program or activity that has as its object the amelioration of conditions of disadvantaged individuals or groups including those that are disadvantaged because of race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age or mental or physical disability.

Status of Women groups in the province have been studying the implications of Section 15, and key areas for the provincial lobby include family violence, employment, economics, pornography, education, health, housing, and native women.

For further information on the "Women and Constitution" conference and provincial lobby, contact: Sharon Pope (co-ordinator)
83 Military Rd. 753-0220

How Women Fought For Equality

The following are some excerpts from an article by Chaviva Hosek published in Canadian Forum in May 1983. Anyone interested in reading the whole article, which tells how and why a dramatic nation-wide organization of women fought for the inclusion of Section 28 in the Constitution, should drop by the Women's Centre for a copy.

Women are generally perceived as having emerged among the winners in the process of patriating the constitution and entrenching a new Charter of Rights and Freedoms. A review of the history and outcome of that process, however, suggests a more qualified picture. Women had to wage a bitter battle to have their concerns recognized. At various points in the debate, gains that had seemed certain had to be fought for again. And even after the proclamation of the new constitutional provisions, there is justifiable scepticism about what has been achieved for women. The massive lobby effort in 1981 succeeded in securing a section guaranteeing all entrenched rights "equally to male and female persons." But the legal force of this section is unclear. Some see it as a symbolic and philosophical statement which will guide the interpretation of the Charter as a whole. Others reply that because the section is not part of some general statement of principles, it may well come into conflict with other sections in the Charter, and its force in such circumstances is uncertain. Clearly, any final assessment of the gains made by women in the constitutional wars will have to await the judicial and political developments of the next decades.

Nevertheless, the constitutional process itself tells us much about the position of women in the Canada of the early 1980s. This article examines the role of women's groups in the process of constitutional renewal from 1979 to 1982. The picture that emerges is a troubling one. It reveals the marginal role of women in politics and the forcefulness they must exert to avoid total exclusion. And this unsuccessful assimilation of women into the mainstream of politics raises some important questions about the quality of democracy in this country.

The Unfinished Agenda

In a typically Canadian compromise, we now have an entrenched Charter of Rights, but some of our rights are more entrenched than others. The question of whether Parliament or the judiciary has final say over rights in Canada has not been settled one way or the other.

The victory which let section 28 stand unimpeded by the override provision should not obscure the other changes in the charter which women's groups fought for and did not get:

1. There is no statement of purpose or governing principles in the charter within which the equality of the sexes is one of the guiding principles.
2. The power of section 28 in relation to other sections is not clear, and will surely have to be tested in the courts.
3. Fundamental, legal and equality rights in the charter can be overridden by Parliament and the provincial legislature.
4. Equality rights generally are subject to a three-year moratorium and so cannot be tested before the courts until 1985. It is the only part of the charter subject to the moratorium. Moreover, marital status, sexual orientation, and political belief were not added as prohibited grounds of discrimination.
5. The charter does not use the word "person" throughout. It is inconsistent and will clearly be grounds for battles on the legal rights of the fetus.
6. The multiculturalism clause remains problematic since there is no statement that gender equality overrides cultural practice.

7. The fate of section 12(1)(b) of the Indian Act is unclear in relation to the charter's equality provisions.

8. There is no constitutional right of representation of women in the Senate, the Supreme Court, and on government boards and commissions.

In addition to these specific points about the charter, the constitutional debate had raised a wide range of other issues of concern to women: overlapping jurisdictions and their impact on the availability and funding of services for women, the spending power of governments, family law, and the reform of government institutions.

Part of the story of women and the process of constitution-making in Canada is thus the progressive narrowing of the issues on which women have had a say. For the moment, the decision on family law jurisdiction are suspended. No government institutions have been reformed, and jurisdictional matters have not yet been addressed in this round of constitutional reform. The political history of the development of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms shows women's groups addressing a steadily narrower range of issues as it becomes clear that fewer and fewer of their concerns will be met. It was necessary to choose the very few rock-bottom issues to address, without which the Charter would be wholly unacceptable on the issue of women's equality with men. This is also a story of the progressive exclusion of women from the process of constitutional change, and of the elaborate strategies required for them to break into the process.

Chaviva Hosek is president of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women

IMPORTANT

The C. of R. is a document for women. It's a promise of equality. The Charter is about "our" rights.

Did you know that poor women, elderly women, native women, handicapped women and women discriminated against on the basis of religion are not protected under Canada's Charter of Rights and Freedoms until April 17, 1985.

For a copy of the Charter of Rights, and further information about the "Women and the Constitution" Conference (Nov. 16-17) drop by the Women's Centre, 83 Military Rd.

Women's rights in Section 15 have been suspended until April 17, 1985. The equality rights for women in S. 15 is the only section of Canada's new Charter of Rights and Freedoms that is not operative. Why? The governments in Canada know full well that equality does not exist. There are laws on the books now that deny women equality. A "moratorium" was placed on S.15 for a three year period because governments were essentially afraid that S.15 could mean a fundamental reorganization of Canadian society. It could mean equal pay for work of equal value. It could mean major revisions in pension funds, it could mean revisions in Family Law reform bills. Therefore, the governments wanted three years to review their legislation and clean up their act.

This means that there is the potential in the C. of R. to support whatever change women want. It's like a magic wand one could wave to bring about things like fair labour legislation, better protection for women in areas such as sexual assault and enactment of affirmative action programmes.

Women can get what we want if we lobby now and do our research and help judges understand what "equality" means. We must be part of helping governments and the courts know what the Charter means for women. We must be part of interpreting the meaning of the Charter for over 52% of the population.

WHAT WE CAN DO

Because of the three year moratorium contained in S.32, S.15 doesn't come into effect till April 17, 1985. Governments have said they need this time to review their legislation and amend it to bring it in line with S.15. This is a clear indication the governments think they have a lot to clear up. Whether they will clear them up is another question! We can expect before April 17, 1985, to see omnibus bills introduced in parliament and the legislatures to amend existing legislation in the light of S.15. What is not changed by April of 1985 will stay in place and can only be defeated by going to court, by litigation. It is in women's best interests to obtain as many changes as possible before April 1985. Therefore it is essential we find out from our legislators what they are doing in their reviews, in their statute audits and "encourage" the governments to do more. We must know what laws are being changed and which laws are not being changed. We also need to know what theory of equality is being used to bring their laws into line with S.15. We women can identify the major areas and causes of inequality in Canadian society and look to the appropriate statutes for correction of these injustices. This would mean examining things like pension and tax acts, social services legislation, welfare regulations, marriage, divorce, matrimonial property legislation, etc. We will need the help of "feminist" lawyers, be they male or female to help us figure out what it is we want to ask our governments for.

If we do not do anything now we will have to go to court and this is fabulously expensive to take a Charter Challenge on every single law we want changed. No-one is going to do it for us. We must do it for ourselves, our daughters and granddaughters, nieces and mothers. At present government lawyers and public dollars are being committed to protecting the status quo and not to broadening the equality rights of women. Our money, our women's tax dollars have been spent to protect government not us!

Rights and freedoms in Canada

Constitution Act, 1982*

PART I Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms

Whereas Canada is founded upon principles that recognize the supremacy of God and the rule of law:

Guarantee of Rights and Freedoms

1. The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms guarantees the rights and freedoms set out in it subject only to such reasonable limits prescribed by law as can be demonstrably justified in a free and democratic society.

Equality Rights

Equality before and under law and equal protection and benefit of law

15. (1) Every individual is equal before and under the law and has the right to the equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination and, in particular, without discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age or mental or physical disability.

Affirmative action programs

(2) Subsection (1) does not preclude any law, program or activity that has as its object the amelioration of conditions of disadvantaged individuals or groups including those that are disadvantaged because of race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age or mental or physical disability.

Rights guaranteed equally to both sexes

28. Notwithstanding anything in this Charter, the rights and freedoms referred to in it are guaranteed equally to male and female persons.

Exception where express declaration

33. (1) Parliament or the legislature of a province may expressly declare in an Act of Parliament or of the legislature, as the case may be, that the Act or a provision thereof shall operate notwithstanding a provision included in section 2 or sections 7 to 15 of this Charter.

Operation of exception

(2) An Act or a provision of an Act in respect of which a declaration made under this section is in effect shall have such operation as it would have but for the provision of this Charter referred to in the declaration.

Five year limitation

(3) A declaration made under subsection (1) shall cease to have effect five years after it comes into force or on such earlier date as may be specified in the declaration.

Re-enactment

(4) Parliament or a legislature of a province may re-enact a declaration made under subsection (1).

Five year limitation

(5) Subsection (3) applies in respect of a re-enactment made under subsection (4).

Isn't it exciting!

April 18, 1985 is nearly here.

Women's equality rights are almost a fact.

Our challenge is to make the application of these equality guarantees in Sections 15 and 28 of the Charter meaningful. We women have to ensure that the equality theory which our courts develop and apply is in women's best interest.

Remember how Section 15 of the Charter was delayed for three years until April 17, 1985? That was to let the federal, provincial and territorial governments have time to bring their laws and practices into "line" with equality rights provisions in the Charter. This process is called a "statute audit". Some provinces are further ahead in their statute audit than others. Some provinces are willing to share their audits with women before the changes are legislated.

We can count on one thing, and that is the governments will not amend all the legislation in a way that satisfies women. If we don't get the changes we want before April 17, 1985 we will have to go to court to remedy the problems.

It won't be just women who go to court on April 18, 1985 but it will be those other groups that are discriminated against and mentioned in Section 15, such as different races, the disabled etc. As all these cases hit the courts April 18, 1985 and thereafter, important interpretations of the equality rights clauses will be made. These interpretations will have a spill-over effect for sex equality. If we women want the kind of interpretation in the courts that we want, then we will have to make sure we have good cases to take to get the judgements we are looking for.

If we want to make the most of the law reform opportunities presented by the Charter we have to continue our long standing lobbying activities... and we have to do more. We have to assist and support women who have good cases to bring to court and we have to become involved with important court cases on Sections 15 and 28 which other people bring.

Let's on April 18, 1985 continue our fight for equality in the courts. It is possible to accomplish change, although it can't be done without organization and resources.

The day our rights come into effect we can use the law that gives these rights to us. The day our rights arrive - in each province, Northwest Territories and the Yukon - we can take, that is, directly sponsor, a Charter case using Section 15.

Women can choose the issue, time and place for our Charter challenge. We chose the time, the place and issue in the Person's Case. Most of the time, women are reacting to things when they go to court, e.g. sexual harrassment. This time we will act, not react.

We have the best chance of being effective if we work together with a coordinated systematic approach to litigation from the trial to the appeal

This means that we shall need:

- leadership
- organization
- resources

We need a visible and respected national, legal education and action sensitive to women's needs and legal goals. This fund (temporarily known as LEAF) could provide resources like:

- research
- coordination with other women's groups
- coordination with other groups taking similar legal cases and litigation strategies
- preparation of trial and appeal briefs

Obviously, such a fund would have to raise considerable resources for these activities. The enclosed Globe and Mail article suggests \$1,000,000.00 a year, or a \$10,000,000.00 endowment. Such a fund does not exist in Canada at this time - so we have lots of \$money\$ to raise.

You will be hearing more about legal action by women. The Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women has done a study on legal action and how existing funds in Canada and the USA function. Their research will tell us in detail what is involved in taking systematic long range legal action. The current date of release for the CACSW's publication is October 18, 1984. The CACSW has promised us copies for our conference. Hurray!

REMEMBER

Litigation is slow and expensive.

Litigation is only one strategy.

Sometimes litigation is the best strategy.

Sometimes litigation is not the best strategy,

so.....

KEEP UP YOUR OWN GOOD WORK

Ad Hoc Committee on Constitution
PO Box 6072
St. John's Nfld A1C 5X8
753-0220

Oct. 26 1984

To: all delegates to "Women and the Constitution" conference
Nov. 16-19
from: the organizing committee

We are looking forward to having an enjoyable and informative 3 days together, learning how the new Charter of Rights will affect women, and lobbying the three provincial parties on our concerns.

Enclosed is an agenda for the conference. Please note that sessions on Friday evening and Saturday are public, but participation in Sunday's workshops is limited to members of Status of Women groups and invited guests. The actual lobby on Monday morning will involve two representatives from each lobby area sitting around the table with MHA's, but all delegates are encouraged and expected to come along as enthusiastic observers.

We wanted to state clearly what will and will not be paid for at the conference so there will be no later misunderstandings. Air fares are paid as per arrangement with your group. Gas mileage will be paid for certain delegates on an individual basis as arranged with the committee.

Hotel rooms (two per room) will be paid for 3 nights, Fri. Nov 16, Sat. Nov. 17 and Sun. Nov. 18. Special arrangements have been made with certain delegates for additional billeting.

There is a \$10 registration fee for the conference, and this includes a ticket to Saturday evening's banquet. This is the only meal that will be provided. Delegates are responsible for all other meals except where special arrangements in cases of need are made with the committee. Coffee, tea and light snacks will be provided on Saturday and Sunday in mid-morning and mid-afternoon. There will be a cash bar Friday and Saturday nights.

Please note that no taxi fares or long-distance calls will be paid for. Daycare is available free of charge.

There will be an office at the Hotel St. John's with typing and copying facilities for use during the conference.

The Hotel St. John's has a limited number of housekeeping units available with cooking facilities, and delegates who would like such a room should request this as soon as possible.

If there are any questions about any aspect of the conference please bring them up at the Nov. 1st teleconference.

Talk to you Thursday!

Sharon

Sharon Pope (for the Ad Hoc Committee)

"Women and the Constitution"

A provincial conference to discuss the implications
for women of the new Canadian Constitution and Charter
of Rights - Friday Nov. 16 (evening) and Saturday Nov. 17

location: Hotel St. John's, Kenmount Rd.

Friday Nov. 16
8-10 pm

Registration, social
Gerry Rogers will speak on
the involvement of women in
Newfoundland & Labrador with
the Canadian Constitution

Saturday Nov. 17

9:00 - 9:30 a.m.

"Inequality - the Silence of the Law"
Prof. Christine Boyle
Dalhousie Law School

9:30- 10:15 a.m.

Question and discussion period

10:30 - 11:15 a.m. coffee break

Panel: "Provincial Legislation and
Affirmative Action"
panelists to be announced
Question and Discussion period

11:15- 12:30

lunch

2:00 - 2:30 pm

Panel: "Working Conditions"
Grace Hollett and Linda Doody
will speak on teachers' special
problems in relation to the
new Charter
Lee Ann Montgomery (special advisor,
Dept. of Labour) and Marilyn
Luscombé (Employment project,
Corner Brook) will speak on
Labour Standards legislation

2:30 - 3 pm

Question and discussion period

coffee break

3:15- 4:00 pm

Panel: "Native Women" (panelists to be
announced)

4:00 - 5:00 pm

Question and discussion period

Banquet and entertainment Saturday evening

"Women and the Constitution" Conference
Part 2

Sunday Nov. 18

9:30-10:30 a.m.

Displays of material from conference participants (tea, coffee, juice, muffins etc. provided)

A time to relax and chat with other groups about their activities

-- please bring along display material!

10:30 a.m. - 1 pm

Plenary/Workshop on lobby areas

lunch

2 pm - 5 pm

Plenary/Workshop on lobby areas continued
-- rehearsal for Monday's lobby
will follow workshop sessions --

Monday Nov. 19

Location: 10th floor of Confederation Bldg. (press conference room)

9:30 -- assemble

10:00 - 11:00 am -- meeting with NDP

11:00 - 12:00 am -- meeting with LIBERAL MHA's

12:00 - 1:00 pm -- meeting with PC MHA's

note: The presentations will be given by two representatives on each issue. Other conference delegates will be seated in the room as supportive spectators

MATERIALS WANTED: for an anthology of women's writings on body image: journal entries, poems, prose. Topics of particular interest include fear of fatness, relationship to physical fitness, conflicts with food or body size, and accepting and appreciating our bodies, although all material will be considered. Deadline February, 1985. Send with SASE to Sandy Handley, P. O. Box 2781, Santa Cruz, CA 95063.

Ethel Cory of 37 Washington Square W, New York, NY 10011, is interested in diary/journal keepers who would like to do a collaborative publication, particularly those who have been keeping their journals for a long time (Ethel has been keeping hers for fifty years) and/or those who have been keeping a social journal of contemporary times. She would also like to work with those interested in personal history.

WOMEN'S DIARIES, A Quarterly Newsletter, is published in the spring, summer, fall, and winter at P. O. Box 18, Pound Ridge, NY 10576. Subscription rate is \$5 per year.

BRIDGEHEAD

...An Alternative Trading Organization

Importers and Merchants
of Third World
food commodities.

September 10, 1984

Dear OXFAM and/or BRIDGEHEAD supporter,

Our Statement of Purposes overleaf explains, and we hope justifies, our description. Now we embark upon a new venture — Alternative Christmas Gift Parcels. And just as with starting BRIDGEHEAD itself, this venture too finds us “on a raft not without risk”. But we have good companions — you and our other supporters.

We plan to sell 3,000 parcels at \$25 each. *Twelve percent* of that price (\$3 per parcel) will be given by BRIDGEHEAD to OXFAM-Canada for Third World development work. And BRIDGEHEAD's profit from the venture will be used as is all its profit — for the benefit of those who labour to produce the commodities that we sell and you buy.

Each parcel will contain one 250g vacuum-pack of **Nicaraguan** filter drip coffee, one 250g vacuum-pack of **Tanzanian** regular grind coffee (or two packs of either filter or regular as you indicate), one 200g can of **Tanzanian** instant coffee, one 250g packet of loose Broken Orange Pekoe tea from **Sri-Lanka** (Ceylon), one 250g vacuum-pack of whole, unsalted, roasted cashew nuts from **Mozambique**, and one 8g tube of pure vanilla beans from **Madagascar**. BRIDGEHEAD will make up, address and mail the parcels to addresses — but only within Canada.

We would appreciate receiving your order form and cheque by November 1. We will mail the parcels by November 21.

BRIDGEHEAD has already taken its first risk in this venture; the orders for extra shipments have been placed with our overseas suppliers. But with your support, the risks will be small and the goals both significant and worthy:

- \$9,000 to OXFAM-Canada
- A similar amount for BRIDGEHEAD's purposes
- 3,000 or so people in Canada introduced to BRIDGEHEAD and linked as consumers-in-solidarity with workers in five Third World countries.

* * *

BRIDGEHEAD — “A better choice for those with a taste for justice”

Statement of Purposes

1. To support Third World workers and peasants in their struggles for justice, for freedom from oppression and exploitation, and for a fair share of the wealth their labours produce.
2. To give concrete expression to that support by trading in Third World food commodities and using the profit from our trading for the benefit of those engaged in the struggles.
3. To educate Canadians about our links with the peoples of the Third World and the effects — political, economic and social — those links have upon the daily lives of all of us.

* * * * *

BRIDGEHEAD's Story

We are a not-for-profit unincorporated partnership. We receive no financial aid from any government or non-government agency, religious or charitable organization.

Our first sales were in November 1981. Now we have a nation-wide network of volunteer regional distributors. We sell to worker-controlled wholesale food co-ops, selected retail stores, church congregations, development education centres, religious orders and by mail-order. In just under three years of business, we have sold more than \$600,000-worth of Third World foodstuffs through our alternative network. And not one bad debt!

Our profit has been used to:

- fund training seminars in basic health care for women agricultural workers in **Nicaragua**.
- buy a textile cutting machine that was urgently needed to increase productivity in a "People's Property" clothing factory in **Nicaragua**.
- buy truck tires and machinery parts for the instant coffee plant in **Tanzania** that was out of commission for some time due to lack of spares.
- support the work of organizing among tea estate workers in **Sri Lanka** by an inter-racial, inter-faith group known as **SATYODAYA**. (Following a 12-day strike by nearly half a million estate workers in April, the government-owned tea corporations agreed to the strikers' demands, including the equalization of female with male worker wages.)

BRIDGEHEAD's Products

- **Nicaraguan** coffee. This is 100% pure Arabica, exported as green beans by Nicaragua's coffee marketing authority. It is roasted, ground and vacuum-packed in Holland for a Dutch alternative trading organization (ATO) which re-exports to other west European ATOs and to BRIDGEHEAD.
- **Tanzanian** coffee. The regular grind is 100% pure Arabica grown on the slopes of Mount Kilimanjaro and exported as green beans by the Coffee Authority of Tanzania. It is processed in Holland for the same ATO that handles our Nicaraguan coffee. The instant coffee, winner of the 1982 International Food Europe award for top quality, is processed in east Africa's only instant coffee plant that is owned jointly by the government and the co-operatives of small-scale coffee farmers.
- **Sri Lanka** tea. Grown on estates owned by a Buddhist trust which runs homes for the aged and for physically and mentally handicapped children, this tea is packed in Sri Lanka.
- **Mozambique** cashew nuts. They are roasted and vacuum-packed in Holland for the Dutch ATO by a workers' co-operative.
- **Madagascar** vanilla beans are grown on co-op farms set up some years ago by the Madagascar trade union organization, FMM.

* * * * *

BRIDGEHEAD TRADING CHRISTMAS GIFT PARCEL ORDER FORM

FROM: _____
(Please print your name and full address)

- I enclose a cheque/Canadian money order for \$_____, as full payment, including packing and postage, for _____ BRIDGEHEAD Christmas Gift Parcel(s) at \$25 each.
- I understand that BRIDGEHEAD will give TWELVE PERCENT of the purchase price of the parcel(s) I buy to OXFAM-Canada for Third World development work.
- I understand as well that BRIDGEHEAD will reimburse me with the full amount of the purchase price of any parcel I buy that is not delivered to the addressee(s) shown on the address label(s) below that I have completed.
- I indicate below with an X in the appropriate box(es) what my choice is of the combination of two 250g vacuum packs of fresh coffee that will be part of the contents of each parcel in addition to the instant coffee, tea, nuts and vanilla beans.

	Parcel A	Parcel B	Parcel C	Parcel D
2 packs of Nicaraguan filter drip coffee	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 packs of Tanzanian regular grind coffee	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1 pack of Nicaraguan filter drip coffee and 1 pack of Tanzanian regular grind coffee	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please return this complete page together with your cheque or money order in the enclosed business reply envelope. (November 1, 1984 is the last date for receiving order forms.)

Please complete as many address labels as the number of gift parcels you are purchasing and do please show YOUR address as the sender's address. (The parcels will be mailed only to addresses in Canada.)

From (A) To	From (B) To
A CHRISTMAS GIFT PARCEL OF BRIDGEHEAD PRODUCTS <i>"A better choice for those with a taste for justice"</i>	A CHRISTMAS GIFT PARCEL OF BRIDGEHEAD PRODUCTS <i>"A better choice for those with a taste for justice"</i>

From (C)	From (D)
----------	----------



CRIAW

The CRIAW Papers/Les documents de l'ICRAF

Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women

ICRAF

Institut canadien de recherches pour l'avancement de la femme

CRIAW invites submissions to the CRIAW Papers.

The CRIAW Papers comprises a continuing series of publications: original research papers advancing the knowledge and understanding of women's experience. Submissions may originate in traditional academic disciplines, interdisciplinary research, field studies, empirical inquiries, theoretical criticism or policy analyses. Papers already published in the series include:

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Basic criteria:

- the paper must contribute to feminist research
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Specifics:

- three (3) copies, 25 to 100 pages in length, typed double-space on 8 1/2 x 11 inches paper.
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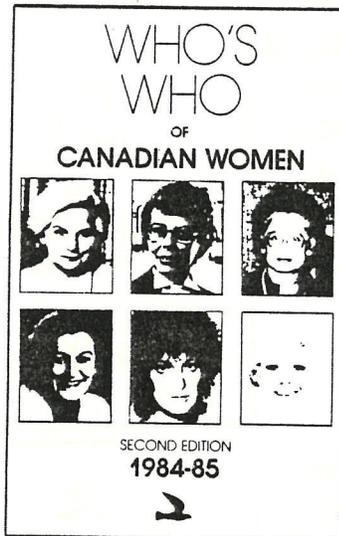
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Announcing...

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2nd Edition 1984-85



The SECOND EDITION of WHO'S WHO OF CANADIAN WOMEN is the largest collection of biographies of leading women in Canada and is more than fifty per cent larger than the path-breaking First Edition published in November 1983.

A new publication like this is always a challenging task, requiring the skills of talented researchers, omnivorous reading habits, and inevitably a great deal of money, time and effort. Our original aim was to create an awareness of the many successful and talented women working in Canada and the first edition has certainly begun to achieve this. It is almost impossible to make everyone in the country aware of a new project first time around and it is only by continuing the effort to locate the many well-qualified women in Canada that each edition becomes more comprehensive than the last.

The NEW EDITION includes many more women in the field of science, academia, government, business, law, and the arts. These biographies demonstrate once again that the new leading women in

Canada are highly educated — most with one degree and over one third with several degrees — and in many cases have already achieved places of authority in Canadian life through their own efforts. These entrants to the workforce will continue to earn positions of greater importance in Canadian society. Each biography contains title, company, location, telephone number, directorships, previous career, personal history, affiliations and interests and all source information is approved by the biographee at no cost to her.

Here are some of the women to watch — a striking collection of interesting people, currently working in all areas, be it public or private sector, large or small, established or entrepreneurial — a new source of managerial, administrative and educational talent which will help Canada build a future in the global marketplace.

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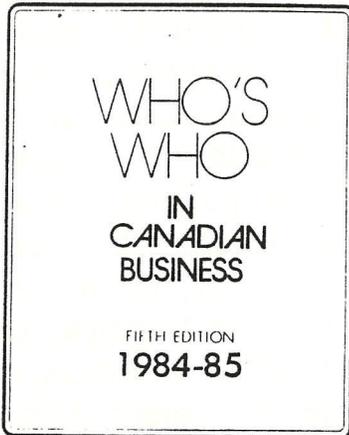
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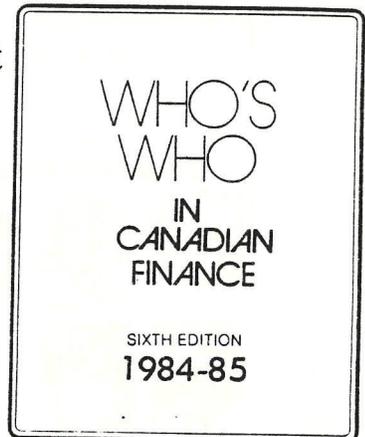
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Women's Issues and The Law

The first session consists of two parts: the first looks at the role the law plays in women's issues, and how women can and do use the law to effect change. The history and process of lawmaking will be reviewed and the function of interest groups will be considered. The second part covers women's issues in criminal law, such as pornography and sexual assault.

The second session considers family law issues such as divorce, separation, child custody, maintenance and matrimonial property. The proposed changes in divorce law also will be examined.

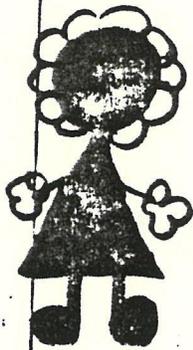
The third session looks at the woman as an offender in relation to the typical crimes she commits such as theft and prostitution. Also discussed will be murder and infanticide.

The fourth and final session will look at reproduction and how it relates to women. Topics include: birth control, abortion, surrogate mothers, sperm banks and in-vitro fertilization.

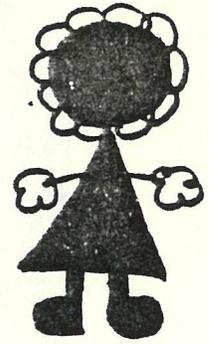
- When:** Mondays, 8-10 p.m.
November 12 to
December 3, 1984
- Where:** Room 1002, Blackall School
Elizabeth Avenue
- Instructor:** Lois Hoegg, Crown Prosecutor
- Fee:** \$40
- Information:** Please contact Pamela Hiscock
MUN Extension Service, 737-8474

Extension Service, Memorial University of Newfoundland

October 1984



ARE YOU SEPARATED?



JOIN OUR GROUP:

- to share your experiences.
- to find support.
- to discuss legal matters.
- to discuss financial problems.
- to explore the possibility of new relationships.
- to explore feelings.
- to learn new ways to cope with pressures from family and friends.
- to explore future prospects.

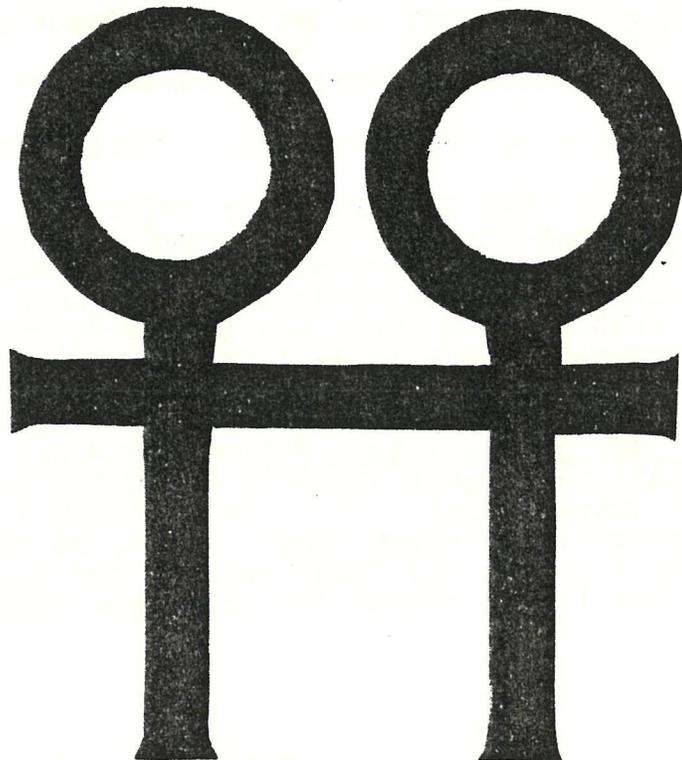
WHERE ▶ **THE WOMEN'S CENTRE**
83 Military Rd.
753-0220

WHEN ▶ *Tuesday's 2:00 p.m. (flexible)*
Tuesday's 7:30 p.m. (flexible)



*It's A
Lesbian Affair*

S U P P L E M E N T



EDITORIAL: ON LESBIANISM

The word "lesbian" is a word which frightens many women: to them it is the ultimate insult. I remember my own indignation at being called a lesbian when I was in my teens, by the man I was going out with when I wouldn't "come across". "What's wrong with you?" he said, "you must be a queer." It seemed useless to point out that there might be many reasons for refusing to go to bed with him, the main one being fear of getting pregnant.

If we do a Mary Daly and ask what the origin of the word "lesbian" is, it merely means someone from Lesbos, i.e. the famous Greek poetess Sappho, who was a lover of women. The word "lesbian" should then be a term of honour rather than an insult, since it refers back to a great poet who was widely admired in the ancient world. However, much to my surprise, when I looked up the word in the Oxford English Dictionary, it gave the following definition:

Lesbian: from Latin lesbius..., of or pertaining to the isle of Lesbos....lesbian rule: a mason's rule made of lead which could be bent to fit the curve of a moulding; fig. the principle of judgment that is pliant and accommodating.

Really? What happened to Sappho? What happened to female homosexuality? Curious, I looked up the modern supplement to the OED: no "lesbian". Then I looked up "Sapphic", often used as an adjective in place of "lesbian":

Sapphic. a. of or pertaining to Sappho, the famous poet of Lesbos.
b. a metre used by Sappho or named after her....

Still no mention of homosexuality. Curiouser and curiouser.

Why should such a respectable reference work as the OED ignore the common meaning of the word? Is this yet another example of patriarchal suppression? Is lesbianism a threat to the whole patriarchal system, in that such women refuse to submit to what Adrienne Rich has called "compulsory heterosexuality"? [See her article on the subject in Signs.] It is sad to say that in the history of the women's movement, women have often tried to exclude their lesbian sisters. Rita Mae Brown in the film Some American Feminists recounts how she was expelled from the National Organization of Women for being a lesbian. It was not respectable! It would give NOW a bad name! It would frighten other women away! Yet, as Rita Mae Brown says, it is often lesbians who fight hardest for women's rights, for equal pay and decent wages, for they know they are never going

be able to depend on a man for financial support; they must make it on their own.

To me, there can be no room for homophobia in the women's movement - whether it is directed against women or men. It is sad that even lesbians in the movement react negatively to the idea of having a lesbian supplement to the Newsletter: a lesbian friend of mine said to me yesterday, "Well that's one issue of the Newsletter I won't have anything to do with." Others have told me that they would lose their jobs if it was known they were lesbians. So we bow to our own oppression. How different it is in the U.S. where women are busy collecting lesbian archives so that lesbian history (herstory) will not be suppressed.

In sisterhood,

Roberta Buchanan



The Causes of Lesbianism:

a simple guide in pictures.

by Jo Nesbitt

A HETEROSEXUAL VIEW OF LESBIANS

As a staunch heterosexual I want to write a letter in support of my lesbian friends and sisters.

I arrived from the cold of a large Canadian city - my only previous experience with lesbians the occasional contact with "dykes" in some of the "let's go slumming" downtown bars. I certainly never considered that lesbians would ever touch my life. I like men and have grown over the years to love women -- they are so much like me -- but men are my sexual preference. I felt only vaguely threatened by lesbianism: how I would handle the embarrassment should one make moves on me.

From the cold to the fog, and a slow insidious commitment to the women's movement. In the course of confronting women and women's issues I found friends, gradually coming to know, appreciate and admire the women actively involved in the endless draining fight for women and their rights. It became apparent that some of these respected and admired colleagues were (oh my goddess!) lesbians! And it became equally clear that it couldn't mean less to me. Their sexuality had nothing to do with how I felt about them. The women's movement has taught me the value of the caring of all of us for each other. That caring exists regardless of sexual orientation.

I believe one must not judge the choices another person makes - be it abortion, marriage, religion or sexuality. To judge and exclude on sexual choice is to deny oneself experiencing the diversity of human nature. I want to judge my friends on their ability to care, to support, to laugh, and to share my thoughts and feelings. I cannot respect those who judge others on superficial values.

The time has come for us to unite, to accept each other for who we are and not what we are. I can proudly say that in the making of friendships with lesbian women, I have benefited in spirit by these friendships and best of all, I have that wonderful sense of freedom that comes with the knowledge that another social restriction built into my nature has "bit the dust".

In Women we Trust.

Astri

LESBIAN CLOSES CLOSET DOOR - FROM OUTSIDE

I've been bugging Roberta for a long time to put a lesbian supplement in the Newsletter. Now that the time has come, I'm not sure that I want it. I guess I just don't want to see the women's movement divided over "controversial" issues. I hope the time has come and lesbianism is no longer considered divisive.

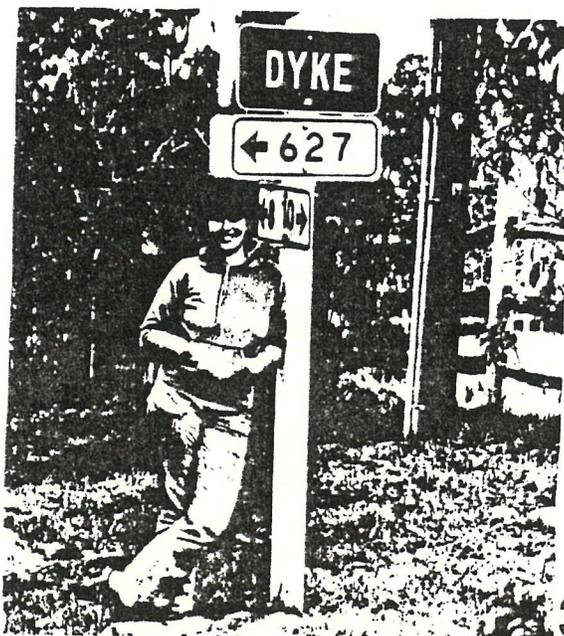
I have been a "practising" lesbian for about ten years, and for the last two have been committed to the feminist movement. Before that time, I felt that my lesbianism would not be acceptable and so stayed away from the Women's Centre and the Status of Women Council. These fears were not based totally within my own paranoia. In speaking with women who were involved, I got a lukewarm response. The feeling seemed to be that my presence might not be totally welcome especially if I went around talking about it.

Things, obviously, have changed to some extent. I am now not only a member of SJSWC, but a very involved member and many, many women know of my lesbianism. As well, other lesbians have begun to feel welcome. This is vital. We, as feminists, need women of all shapes, sizes, orientations and classes in order to make an impact on society. Therefore, we cannot exclude the lesbian, the working woman, the woman of colour, or other doubly oppressed groups. We all experience the inequities in society and the lack of choices afforded women. If, as feminists, we again begin to limit the choices of women by forcing them into heterosexuality, we are aiding and abetting the patriarchal aggressors.

For the lesbians who are out there and are nervous about telling others within the movement, I would say that I have been made to feel welcome and even cherished. I hope that you can be made to feel the same way.

I toyed with the idea of signing my name to this, but I feel that I would prefer to "come out" to people one-on-one as opposed to "en masse". As well, although committee members and others have shown support for me and have said they will respect my decision, I prefer to wait until a "safer" time.

- A DYKE



ON QUESTIONING A LESBIAN

There has been much discussion over the past ten years about the roots of homosexuality. You cannot begin to know how much this discussion has irritated me. How come nobody has asked the heterosexuals why they feel they "became" heterosexual? I don't know why I'm a lesbian - I just know I'm damn glad I am. I have heard so many feminists say how difficult it is to live with men and fight in the movement, that I thank the Goddess that I am a lesbian. That is not to say there are not many problems associated with one's homosexuality; (try telling your mother you are a lesbian), but I feel that I can live more easily in this world as a lesbian.

The largest problem with being a lesbian is not my lesbianism but other people's homophobia. I'm as happy as the proverbial pig but I seem to offend the "normal" people in our society. They insist on believing that I have a wimpy father, an aggressive mother, a hormonal imbalance or perhaps all three. My mother, my father and my hormones would all be a little pissed if I laid my lesbianism on them. I prefer to give credit to my good taste.

Actually I feel I have no choice in my lesbianism and cannot remember being any other way. I certainly don't think I can be changed into a heterosexual, although this has been suggested by "friends" of mine. My answer to them is this: Try to imagine living in another world. In this world, homosexuality is the norm (because they're trying to control the population and heterosexuality is frowned upon and even seen as a crime in some parts of the world). You are born in this world with all your heterosexual feelings. What would you do? I see that you have two options. One is that you decide that it's unsafe to come out in this world, so you spend the rest of your life pretending to be and acting as a homosexual. The other is that you say society be damned! I am what I am and I cannot spend my life pretending to be something I am not. I feel that as feminists living in a traditional world, we have made the second choice. As a lesbian in this world, I have made that same choice. Allow me to do that as I would allow you to do the same on that other world.

- A Lesbian

HEAR ABOUT THE GAY GUY WHO TOOK A LESBIAN TO HIS ROOM?
THEY ARGUED ALL NIGHT ABOUT WHO SHOULD DO WHAT TO WHOM!

DEFINITION OF A GAY DENTIST: The tooth-fairy!

SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL DYKES!

I don't know, maybe its our weather, or conservative mentality, but by God, dykes have been around in droves, in this province/city for as long as I can remember (and that's well over a decade) and what have we done??? Oh, we've had great parties, and made some stupendous attempts at organizing the gay community, but by and large, we've contributed as much to society, no, GAY society, as the Pope has to legalizing abortion!

It's an accepted fact that we can't flaunt our lesbian orientation and I'm not suggesting we should. But what are we doing to help EACH OTHER?

Oppression is something that we as lesbians are constantly faced with. It comes in a variety of forms: socially, economically, sexually, emotionally, physically, culturally and spiritually (to name a few of the biggies). I'm also convinced of another kind of oppression that threatens our existence, let alone cohesiveness - the oppression experienced from other women, both within the community and outside of it.

There's scads of things we can be doing to support each other. First, we must not object to women in army pants and boots (they too are lovable in their own militant way.) Secondly, we must learn not to take ourselves too seriously, God knows we would be if our straight acquaintances found out! Then ta da! Then comes the implementation of support groups to deal with lesbians having trouble with "coming out" - there's potluck suppers, and nature hikes for dykes - there's film festivals and all-gay newsletters,, and... God the list of things we can do for each other boggles the mind.

But, before I get too carried away... here's a look at what other lesbian groups are doing in other places (two actually, and one of them is much smaller than St. John's):

-Bret

The Lesbian Alliance invites you to our New Years Eve Celebration, 1983

The Political Conference Committee is having a potluck on
Saturday, January 7th at UMHE
6:30-9pm.

We will discuss our plans for this conference, which we hope will be a national event for Lesbians. If you are interested in working with a dynamic group of dykes on an exciting project, come and talk with us. We will discuss our current plans and talk about other new topics. Our current working title is

**Lesbian Community —
Celebration and Struggle,
Our Histories, Actions and Visions. . .**

Bring a dish to pass, coffee and tea will be provided, and we have napkins and paper plates!

Substance Abuse Discussion/Potluck Brunch

• • *Bring some food and let's talk!*

Sunday, January 8 11:30-1:30pm UM

Not Accessible Free to Members, \$1.00 for Non-Member
For childcare reservations, special needs,
transportation, call Karen, 372-3742 (call by January 5).

Come and let's talk about the problem of substance abuse
in the Lesbian Community.



At the December Substance Abuse Workshop the bu
closed before we finished. So we're having a continuat
the discussion. Lesbians who couldn't make it in Dece
are encouraged to a

September 15, 1984

The Gay Association In Newfoundland (G.A.I.N.) is a self-supporting, non-profit organization working for the interests of lesbians, gay men and bi-sexuals in Nfld. Our funding comes mainly from profits of our dances. Some of this money is used towards operating costs, building rental and music for the dances, newspaper ads and correspondence. Presently we are working towards purchasing a building so that we can expand our operations to include such things as a library, drop-in centre, phone line, dance hall, etc. In order to achieve this we need the support of the gay community in the province.

Between now and New Years, we will be having 7 dances. Unless otherwise specified, the cover charge is 3 dollars and NLC ID's are required if your age is questionable.

Regular dances on ~~November~~ 17th and December 8th will be followed by our Christmas Bash on December 15th. We haven't decided where our New Year's Dance will be but stay tuned.

At some of our previous dances, door prizes have been donated. We would like to thank the Swiss Chalet for the dinner for 2 given away at our August 4th dance and the girl's softball team for a bottle of liquor during the summer. We hope you will support people who are supporting us.

We have been placing an ad in the Evening Telegram every second weekend. So far this year the cost has been over \$450.00. Several letters a week arrive from all over the province as well as from the rest of Canada and some from the U.S.A. We even had one from Trinidad and another from England!

Including contact mail with other gay organizations and regular business mail, the cost of postage has been \$64.00.

The G.A.I.N. Committee presently has 10 active members. In January some of us will be leaving for various reasons. We need new people who are willing to put a few hours a week into organizing and talking. It's not hard work but it has to be done.

Do you have any complaints or changes you would like to see? Do you want more/less dances, other activities such as outdoor ones? We could rent a boat some weekend or go on a hike. How about more men's or women's dances? Why don't you think about it and pass your ideas along to us. We'd love to hear from you!!

DANCES WILL BE HELD AT THE GRAD HOUSE ON THE FOLLOWING DATES:

- November 17th (Regular dance)
- December 8th (Regular dance)
- December 15th (Christmas Bash)

SEE YOU THERE !!!!!!!!

G.A.I.N.

In addition to the well established Body Politic, a newer magazine named "Rites - for lesbian and gay liberation" is being published in Toronto. If you subscribe before November you will get issues 1, 2, and 3 free. Send \$14.50 to: Rites, Box 65, Station F, Toronto, Ontario M4Y 2L4 .

During the Second World War the Nazis forced the Jewish people to wear yellow stars and the homosexuals to wear pink triangles. In the past few years gay men and women in North America and Europe have been wearing these triangles as a symbol of their sexual freedom and identity. G.A.I.N. has 40 of these enamel pins at a cost of \$5.00 each. Buy one and help support our group.

Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (A.I.D.S.) has become a problem for all of us. As of July 1984 1 case had been reported in Nfld., 2 in Nova Scotia and a total of 96 in all of Canada. In the U.S. there were 5,134 confirmed cases. In one instance 40 of the cases had been traced back to one man who has since died of the disease. On September 10, 1984 a research group in California announced that they think a possible vaccine might be only weeks away. If you want more information on A.I.D.S. contact 'The A.I.D.S. Committee of Toronto' , Box 55, Station F, Toronto Ontario M4Y 2L4

The Seventh-Day Adventist Kinship is a gay support group working with and for people who wish to retain their religious affiliation within the SDA religion but who are openly gay. They have published a book called "HOMOSEXUALITY AND THE BIBLE" which can be ordered for \$2.00 US (\$2.50 CAN). Write to, Seventh-Day Adventist Kinship (Canada) P.O. Box 408, ST. "C", Toronto, Ontario M6J 3P5

"Turn Back Time"

I wish I could turn back the hands of time for just one year.
Too hold on to someone whom I love and who is so very dear.
If I knew then what I know now but it's only a dream gone by.
My life was so much better then but I didn't realize.

What I had was so very precious and now it's all gone.
I wonder some times if it were me, did I do something wrong?
I'm trying my best right now to keep body and soul from falling apart.
I have an ache that is so very deep in my heart.

I think of things that I know I could have done better.
My mouth was always a problem, but now it doesn't matter.
I've lost the only person who means the world to me.
She just wants to be friends and to be set free.

I never let her move because I did not trust her at all.
If I had the chance again it wouldn't be the same call.
You learn by your mistakes, I know that it is true.
Just remember, "my babe" I do still love you.

Author: Joan McGrath.

Trying to "Accept"

Oh my God, what am I going to do right now.
I feel so all alone, I could cry but I will not bow.
Down to those emotions but I know it would feel good.
I would like to cry right now, Oh God! I wish I could.

I've been "lied" to so often these past few months.
There is "no trust" left anymore, I've been getting a few bunts.
I've been knocked around before but I can't understand why?
I have never fooled around on her, I can't be that sly.

Maybe, I'm old-fashioned and expect the same thing from my mate.
I guess she wanted more freedom and I think now it is too late.
Too late to bring back her feelings she once had for me.
If she wants to go I'll have to set her "free."

Her freedom means everything to her, I guess
Right now, "I still love her", I wish it were less.
But my feelings are not what she's worried about.
"Oh God!" give me the strength to handle this clout.

Author: Joan McGrath.

"Sleeping Beauty"

This morning I was lying beside you watching you sleep.
I was afraid to touch you because you may have leaped.
So I just watched you and you looked like "A Sleeping Beauty".
I was so proud that you were my only baby cutie.

You were smiling in your sleep and I wish I knew why.
There was a lump in my throat and I felt I was going to cry.
Tears of happiness is what I felt for you.
You know My Love for you is oh! so true.

When you sleep you are so peaceful and so care-free.
I want the world to know that you are mine, I want them all to see.
You are so attractive and so beautiful in my eyes.
Just watching you, my heart would never lie.

That's why I watch you sleep, because you can't see me.
I Love You Girl, and it will always be.
Just the way you want things to come true.
That's why honey it will always be just you.

Author: Joan McGrath.





E.J. Stacey.

CHRISTMAS CARDS AVAILABLE

The above reproduction (which in no way does justice to the original—sketched by local artist JUDY STACEY) is a sample of the Christmas cards now available at the Women's Centre on Military Road.

The cards, printed by Jespersion Press, sell for \$4.50 (10 cards), and are available by contacting the Centre at 753-0220.

YES, I SUPPORT THE ST JOHN'S STATUS OF WOMEN COUNCIL

Enclosed is \$10.00 membership/ subscription.

Students & underemployed - \$5.00.

Desperate straits - free.

Subscription only - \$10.00.

Donation \$....

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

Send to: St John's Status of Women Council, P.O. Box 6072,
St John's, Newfoundland A1C 5X8

The ideas and opinions expressed in this Newsletter are of the writers and do not necessarily express the ideas and opinions of the Newfoundland Status of Women Council.

THE NEWSLETTER exists to provide a forum for women's opinions and an outlet for their expression. We welcome letters, comments, book reviews, poems articles and suggestions.

OUR NEXT ISSUE WILL BE THE DECÉMBER ARTS ISSUE. All budding and established writers, artists etc., are invited to submit copy. Deadline for copy is 25th November.

NEWSLETTER COLLECTIVE MEETING will be 2:0'clock, Sunday, November 11th at 16 Barachois Street. (By Village Mall, off Hamlyn Road).

This NEWSLETTER was produced by Roberta Buchanan, Sandy Stavlo and Pat Balsom.



ST. JOHN'S STATUS OF WOMEN COUNCIL

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