

NEWSLETTER

SEPT. '84

ELECTION ISSUE & POPE JOAN SUPPLEMENT

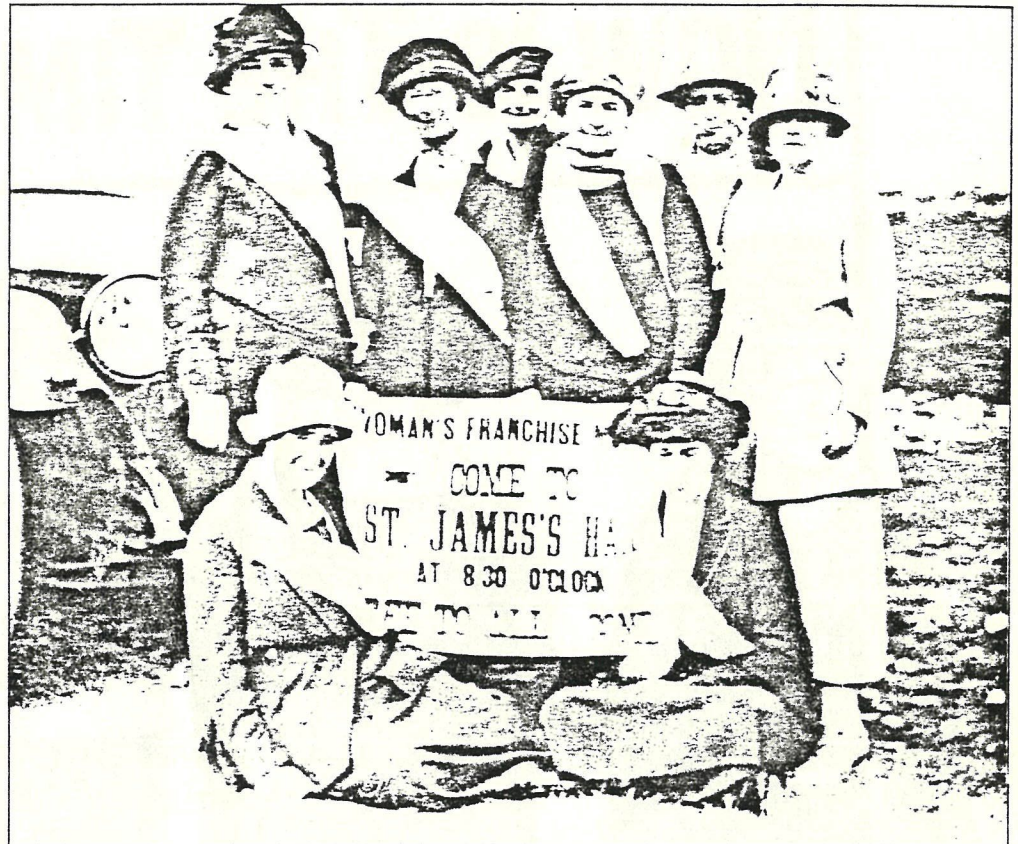
NOW IS THE TIME...



EDITORIAL: THE ELECTION

These women fought to get us the vote in Newfoundland: our foremothers. There was even a "Woman's Party" in a municipal election in the 1920s, with Mrs McNeil, Miss Kennedy and Julia Salter Earle running as candidates.¹

Group of suffragettes, c. 1920. Janet Ayre, one of the signatories of the letter to Squires on June 2, 1920, is holding the banner at the bottom right.



MRS. GERTRUDE CROSBIE

Mrs Ayre, Mrs Gosling and co. would probably be pleased at the involvement of women in the present federal election. They would I am sure have watched the Women's Debate on television with as keen an interest and with as salty comments on the three male leaders as their descendents did. The three leaders struck me as well-engineered puppets programmed to give the "correct" response. I was amazed at the glib way they promised millions of dollars. Broadbent promised 50 million bucks for centres for battered women, with an offspin of 3500 jobs, and 300 million for childcare. Turner upped this to 600 million for childcare. All three promised affirmative action programmes to redress the present dismal economic situation of women. But of course, as Mulroney reminded us at the end of the programme, we mustn't expect anything right away, for the Economy must be righted first. The Economy is a convenient escape hatch; next comes blaming provincial governments for not doing enough for social programmes. The best thing about the debate was the women involved. They were intelligent and articulate - a pity we weren't allowed to hear more from them rather than the mouthings of the male puppets. I would also have liked to see more of the audience's

reaction - 2000 feminists from all over Canada practising "empowerment". The TV debate showed the politicians, and the watching viewers, that women were serious and that they were not going to go away and shut up. It showed that NAC is a powerful lobby, a force to be reckoned with in the future. As one commentator said, it was a gigantic exercise in consciousness-raising.

I have only twice got involved in politics, both times through having my arm twisted by women at the Women's Centre. My first foray was in a municipal election when Five for Change were running, including two women. I was assigned to canvass Chestnut Place. I would ring a doorbell and say politely, "Would you consider voting for Five for Change? Here is a leaflet containing their platform." One lady looked over the list of candidates: "Fran Innes? I don't like her - too outspoken." Presumably a woman candidate was supposed to keep a ladylike silence.

The second time was just recently, when Fran Innes persuaded me to go to vote for Elizabeth Reynolds' nomination for the federal liberal party in St John's East. Having ascertained that I did not have to be a member of the Liberal Party and that Reynolds was pro-choice, I agreed to go. There was an atmosphere of excitement - so this was the democratic process in action! The two candidates gave short speeches - Reynolds's by far the best, more down to earth - we voted - Reynolds won by a big majority. I enjoyed the excitement and the tension - would our candidate win? - and I understood for the first time the heady attraction of politics.

There is much discussion going on about our vote in the election. Should we vote for a woman candidate, and cross party lines? Do we vote for the person, or the policy? It seems important that women should become more visible, and more vocal, in politics, whatever their political persuasion. It would be good to see more feminists up there in positions of power. Meanwhile, there are three women running in St John's: two NDP (Oliver, Patey), and one liberal (Reynolds). Reynolds and Patey have come to the Women's Centre to solicit our votes. Running against powerful men (Crosbie, McGrath), are they sacrificial candidates, or can they give them a run for their money? As we finger our ballots, every voter will make up her own mind....

In sisterhood, Roberta Buchanan.

1. The photograph of the Woman's Franchise League of St John's is reproduced from O'Flaherty and Neary, Part of the Main (1983), 144. More information about the Newfoundland suffragettes can be found in the Book of Newfoundland, ed. J.R. Smallwood (1937), I, 199-201; and in Roberta Buchanan, "The Suffragettes", a talk given on International Women's Day 1975, available in the Centre for Newfoundland Studies, MUN, pp.9-14. See also Dora Russell's comments on Mrs A.C. Holmes running for the National Convention in 1946 in Day by Day: Pages from the Diary of a Newfoundland Woman (1983), 43.



ELIZABETH REYNOLDS

... teaches Psychology and Communications at the College of Trades and Technology and is president of Reynolds Associates — a training consulting firm. She was born in St. John's and was educated at the old Bishop Spencer College and at Memorial University.

Elizabeth Reynolds

... has been involved in community activities for many years. She is:

- a member of the Canadian Multicultural Council
- a member of Memorial University's Board of Regents
- chairperson of the Newfoundland Committee for Organizational Development
- past president of McDonald Drive School PTA
- past president of the St. John's branch of the Victorian Order of Nurses
- past chairperson of the Memorial University Alumni Fund
- founder and director of a youth drama group in Lewisporte
- past member of the Grand Bank library board.

Elizabeth Reynolds

... is a former evening faculty member at MUN, a former freelance journalist with CBC Radio and TV, and is known to St. John's audiences for her performances in a variety of plays. The former Elizabeth Scammell, she is married to Cal Reynolds. They have three sons, Bruce, Brian, and Peter.

— Elect **ELIZABETH REYNOLDS** —
It's time for a change in St. John's East!

St. John's, NF
July 16, 1984

Dear Friend:

It's time for a change in St. John's East - and I'm committed to being part of its development.

We need:

- jobs for youth
- programs to stimulate small business & promote employment
- increased financial aid to the poor and disadvantaged
- much improved day care for our children

My work over the past two decades has brought me in contact with thousands of people who deserve a better chance in Canadian society. Now is the time when we must work together for improved social services and more responsible financial management in government. Help me to become a strong voice in government for St. John's East.

Thank you for your support.

Sincerely yours,
Elizabeth L. Reynolds

NOTES FOR AN ADDRESS BY BRIAN MULRONEY M.P.
LEADER TO THE OPPOSITION
.....

Having read Mr. Mulroney's address it would seem like he is Womans' knight in shining armor. His views, opinions and proposals are indeed ideal in that EQUALITY for women be recognized! He has taken a stand on equal rights for women in the so-called male-oriented world and if our dreams of equality become reality; Mr. Mulroney has so literally professed then he is indeed my knight in shining armor.

Ref. - To The Lunches with Leaders Group
Harbour Castle Hotel
Toronto, Ontario
May 25, 1984

-Sheila Moore

CAN YOU HELP?

NINA PATEY, NDP

Canvassing - Talking - dropping information
Posters - Making posters

Telephoning

Money

Typing

Writing - Letters to the Editor, Endorsing

Arranging a Meeting where Candidate can speak

- Church Basement

- Old People's Home

- Your Home (Coffee Party)

Arrange other events - Concert

- Dance

- Picnic

Service Club - (Rotary, Lion's, Kwiwani's)

- With five people

- " ten "

- " Fifteen "

- " Twenty "

- " Forty "

- " Eighty "

- " ? "

Encourage/ Ask ten people you know to vote for Nina Patey.

Mailing/Telephoning Lists

Ploughshares

Women's Centre

Planned Parenthood

Oxfam

CUPE/NAPE

Nfld Folk Arts Council

Daycares

The Francophones

Immigrants

Dicks and Co.

Gays

College of Fisheries

M.U.N.

Co-ordinating

Driving

Photo-copying

Delivering Press Releases

WOMEN'S CENTRE REPORT

Not much to report this month. I just got back from holidays so I'm just getting back into things. There's been a couple of T.G.I.F.'s this month with some of the candidates. There are a couple of conferences later in the fall (pending funding) which I'll talk about next month.

We'll be hiring a counsellor for the Centre late in August. There'll be a little bio next month.

Remember that we have a lot of power in our vote, so use it nicely. Do make an effort to get out and vote.

Till next month.

Beth

CANADIAN WOMEN'S MOVEMENT ARCHIVES REQUIRE BACK ISSUES OF NEWSLETTERS

We are looking for back issues of the Newsletter for The Canadian Women's Movement Archives. If you have any of those below and would like to donate them, please drop them by the Centre.

<u>1972</u>	<u>1973</u>	<u>1974</u>	<u>1975</u>	<u>1976</u>	<u>1977</u>
October	February	April	All of the	January	We need none
November	April	July	issues.	February	of the above
December	May	August			issues.
January	June				
February	September				
March					
April					
May					
June					
July					
August					
1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983
January	June	January	March	February	February
February	October	February	June	April	March
March	November	April	July	June	April
June	December	December	August	July	July
July			October	August	August
September			November	September	September
October				November	
November				December	
December					

Prime-Ministerial Hopefuls, 1984

Whence comes this certitude with which you speak
Caught in the smugness of a ready smile
Steeped in the satisfaction that has made you sleek?

Think of the power you are here to seek,
Looking to wield it without proper trial -
Whence comes this certitude with which you speak?

I see cold eyes through which no sorrows leak,
Counting those votes marshalled by rank and file,
Steeped in the satisfaction that has made you sleek.

Nothing about you points beyond your chic:
No wisdom gained that makes you pause a while -
Whence comes this certitude with which you speak?

You are a roadshow, just an empty freak
Gracing the hustings mile on mindless mile,
Steeped in the satisfaction that has made you sleek.

I am not answered when you kiss a cheek,
'Press the flesh', display your polished guile -
Whence comes the certitude with which you speak,
Steeped in the satisfaction that has made you sleek?

Rosemary Ommer

May 9, 1984

TAKE BACK THE NIGHT

WE all must fight against the physical and mental violence to which women are constantly subjected. As mentioned in the last newsletter, the St. John's Status of Women Council and the St. John's Rape Crisis Centre are sponsoring a "Take Back The Night" march. Information explaining the philosophy follows so I won't go into it here. I want now to make a plea that all the members come out to march, and bring their friends.

Violence against women is too frequent. We must show that we will not continue to tolerate it. So come to Bannerman Park Bandstand at 7 p.m. on Friday, September 21 and help us be heard. The march will begin at 7:30 sharp. Also, if you want to help organize the march, please call us at the Women's Centre.

Lynn Murphy

THANK GOD IT'S FRIDAY

The Council has decided that everyone in the movement works far too hard. Therefore, the last Friday of every month, beginning on September 28 at 5 p.m., we will be having T.G.I.F.'s. For those of you who have never been, that means a bunch of women gather at the Centre to drink a little (or a lot) and chat. The atmosphere is relaxed and the conversation is always witty. So COME AND JOIN US.

Photograph credit:
O'Flaherty & Neary, Part of the Main



Lady Helena Squires, wife of Sir Richard Squires, the first woman to be elected to the Newfoundland House of Assembly. She was returned in a by-election in the district of Lewisporte, May, 1930. She was defeated in Twillingate in the general election of 1932.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN: Our Reality

As women, we are subjected to both physical violence and mental and emotional abuse.

- 1 woman in 4 will be raped sometime in her lifetime.
- 1 woman is raped every 17 minutes in Canada
- 1 woman in 8 will be sexually assaulted before the age of 18.
- 54% of women living with men are battered.
- 60-70% of women are raped by someone they know.
- 9 out of 10 women have reported unwanted attention on the job.
- only 1 woman in 10 ever tells anyone about her rape.

Sexual Assault

As feminists, we believe sexual assault to be an act of domination, violence and aggression acted out by men through forced physical intimacy against a woman's will. Men are brought up with ideas and attitudes about women that allow them to harass, rape and beat us. These men are our husbands, lovers, relatives, friends and strangers. The conditioning goes one step further. The woman is blamed for getting raped. She is blamed for being in a certain place, she's blamed for wearing particular clothes. Women, the victims of these assaults are not to blame. All women are potential rape victims, regardless of age, race or class position. Sexual assault is also encouraged by the political and economic structure of a society which is organized to render women powerless. We know that men learn that it is okay to sexually assault us, and we believe men can change, on an individual and a societal level.

Creating Change: breaking the silence and ending our isolation

The cloak of silence surrounding sexual assault is one of the biggest barriers to social change. There are many myths and lies about rape, and as a result, women end up believing we are responsible for the assault. Somehow it is our fault that a man raped us! Nine out of ten women who have been assaulted choose not to tell anyone. Our silence is men's protection. Men must take responsibility for their actions and change their behavior.

This kind of change will also take massive public education. So we continue to speak out about rape. The more we share our common experiences, the more we break our isolation. The more we understand what has happened to us and why, the better we will be able to plan together, ways to fight back, individually and collectively.

TAKE BACK THE NIGHT

(La rue, La nuit, femmes sans peur)

Women taking to the streets at night to protest against the violent attacks, was started by our American sisters. Since the 70's this form of demonstration has been used by many women around the world. Take Back the Night is an action created to enable large numbers of women to publicly express our anger and rage at the reality of the violence we are subjected to daily. We will be silenced no longer!

Not all of us have been brutally raped in a back alley, but all of us, because we are women, live with that fear. We march at night, but we are also afraid during the day, in public places, at our workplaces, at our schools and in our homes.

a demonstration organized by women for women

- to stand together as women, refusing to be silent about the violence done to us by men.
- to state our refusal to take responsibility for sexual harassment, sexual assault, battering and incest.
- to celebrate the steps we are taking to support each other and to create change. To live without being dependant on the protection of men.
- to remind each other that as individuals we have strength and together we are even stronger.
- to shout out our desire to live freely, without the threat of violence.

Together On One Night:

WOMEN UNITE!

In 1981, at the initiative of women active in the Quebec Coalition of Rape Crisis Centres, The Canadian Association of Sexual Assault Centres selected a date for an annual demonstration of Take Back the Night. The date and action have been endorsed by the American Coalition of Sexual Assault Centres.

ORGANIZE NOW! Get Out into the Streets

the third Friday of every September

Our hope is that all over the world, more and more women will come out of their homes and into the streets of their villages, neighbourhoods, and cities during the night of the third Friday of each September. We want women to stand together - united with our differences of race, language, class, culture, age, sexual orientation, to protest the violence we commonly experience. Take Back the Night is becoming an increasingly effective and visible sign of our determination and show of women's strength to end sexual violence.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 18th, 1981: A SUCCESS!

Our first, co-ordinated North-American demonstration was a major success: - 6,000 women (reclaimed) took to the streets of more than 35 towns and cities in Quebec, Canada and the USA.

This Year Spread the Word

If you want to organize a march -

- (1) If you live in an area where there is a Rape Crisis Centre or a group of women working to end violence against women, contact them to get information, to exchange ideas and get support.
- (2) If there are no women's groups working against violence against women in your area, talk with your friends, co-workers, sisters, mothers, women in your neighbourhood. Get together and start your own group. One of your first actions can be a Take Back the Night Protest.

THESE ACTS OF VIOLENCE ARE TOTALLY UNACCEPTABLE TO WOMEN!

More and more, women are organizing to support each other and to speak out against sexual assault. Since the '70's, across Canada and Quebec, women have come together to work towards the prevention and ultimate eradication of the violence done to us.

The Canadian Association of Sexual Assault Centres is an across Canada and Quebec organization of over 35 Rape Crisis Centres. For more information call the closest centre or the one in your area.

THAT'S LIFE!

During the first week of May, 1984, three Inuit men appeared in court in Yellowknife to face criminal charges for having sexual intercourse with a 13 year-old girl. Their plea-guilty!

According to the presiding judge the 13 year-old was "slow". The men in their 20s and 30s were, according to the same judge, from good families and a credit to their community and country.

For their crime, the men were given one week in jail. As a result of their crime the girl is pregnant! That's Life ? REALLY!

Presumably, the judge donned an anthropological hat when he made this ruling. He reasoned ; quote, unquote, that when a girl starts menstruating, she is considered ready to engage in sexual relations. And by using the tag "culture" the judge oked a group of "intelligent" Inuit men having sexual intercourse with a "slow" 13 year-old girl.

Dene, Inuit and white Northern women are enraged at this cruel nonsensical court action. They can rhyme off umpteen examples by which the judicial system has virtually excused criminal behavior, i.e. wife battery and sexual assault where the victim is the only one who pays. Patriarchy is the issue. It has nothing to do with the culture.

Using -culture- as an excuse for crime is a bad joke! And, unfortunately the Butt most often happens to be the female.

Judges who bend over backward to save the dignity of male Inuit and Dene wife batterers and sexual assaulters should be educated in cultural mores and brought to live in the real world - not in a romanticized one of 100 years ago where, by the way, it was culturally acceptable to practice infanticide.

Why is culture used as an argument in cases in which native women and children are the victims and not in cases where the victims are frequently non-native? What's happening in the North is nothing short of racial and sexual discrimination and should be named as such!

Dene and Inuit women and children are not getting the same protection under the law that women in the South receive- and heaven knows we've got some distance to go.

IS THAT LIVING?

Sheila Moore

Star 10 May 84 - source - Lois Sweet.

To the Newsletter,

I am writing in response to a "letter to the editor", contained in your August, 1984 Newsletter (p.30). Besides being a sad attempt at humour, about a nebulous subject (cabbage patch dolls), it contained one of the most offensive lines ever printed in the newsletter, or elsewhere.

It pains me to quote the following paragraph: "Maybe I wouldn't mind so much if they were at least NORMAL-looking! Whatever happened to nice dolls with latex limbs and silky hair? These facial creatures resemble mongoloid Pilsbury doughmen!"

1. As to the first two sentences, I can only ask, why should something be "normal"? What is normal? Having had some experience with babies, I can assure you that very few of them have latex limbs and silky hair. Perhaps we should re-institute the Barbie doll craze?

2. In the last sentence, I assume what was meant by the term "Mongoloid" is that disability referred to, properly, as Down's Syndrome, a condition which affects hundreds of thousands of people. The term "mongoloid" was used inappropriately, at one time because people who have this syndrome have some facial characteristics which faintly resemble inhabitants of Mongolia. The term has been held in disrepute for many years.

The offensiveness of using this term as a negative adjective, synonymous for "ugly" defies any explanation.

3. The newsletter, as well as the individual writer of that letter, are equally culpable in this atrocity. The statement that the ideas and opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Council is not an "out" in this instance. If you had printed anything sexist or racist it would not protect you; neither can it when something is printed which is derogatory and demeaning to any oppressed group (i.e. mentally handicapped people).

4. Since its beginning, the Council has fought for the rights of all individuals to be treated with dignity. It has represented the constant battle against oppression which we must fight every day. To be a party to a letter of this nature is inexcusable. Nothing less than a full apology is acceptable.

5. I know that you will take this letter as the constructive criticism it is intended to be. We must all hold each other accountable in our actions, if we are to move forward. And, as long as one group is oppressed, we are oppressed.

Sincerely,

Diane Duggan

BATTERED WOMEN

Joanna Best (not her real name) is only 30 years old, and already she has spent seven years of her life in subjection to a man who beat her regularly. Joanne lived with her common-law husband in an isolated Newfoundland community, far from friends and relatives. For seven long years, she endured constant punching and objects such as knives and dippers being hurled at her, usually with no warning.

"Whatever came into his hand," Joanna remembers, "that's what he'd throw at me." Incredibly, she never seriously considered leaving him. Where would she go with three children?

She refused to go to her family with her problems, mainly because she didn't feel that close to her older sisters. They all lived in a distant town, and they were "more like aunts than sisters." Moreover, she feared they would consider her a failure.

"I didn't want them to think I was making another mistake." Her marriage to the father of her three children lasted five years and ended in divorce. Her relationship with her common-law husband ended with Joanna's hospitalization. In fact, Joanna was hospitalized three times before she made up her mind to leave. Her last stay in hospital was spent on a psychiatric ward, and there someone told her about Transition House in St. John's. In November, 1983, Joanne came to the shelter for battered women and their children. And life for the young woman started over.

At Transition House, she found supportive, caring individuals who helped her realize that she was, indeed, "a good person". For years, Joanna says, she has lived in deathly fear.

"I got to the point where I thought somebody was always following me, or there was always someone in the house."

At Transition House, instead of feelings of apprehension, she found comfort 24 hours a day. She was permitted to stay there for 17 weeks because she literally had nowhere else to go. Normally, women and children who come to Transition House are allowed to stay for only six weeks. They are then given advice on housing alternatives, and can obtain legal counselling if necessary.

Joanna says she hasn't been in contact with her former mate since she left him almost a year ago. The transition period has been difficult, or as Joanna puts it, "It wasn't easy, I'm telling you."

One of the major repercussions of Joanna's flight to safety was the uprooting of her three children. Still, the young mother's advice to other battered women is "don't stay for the children's sake."

Joanna has two daughters, 13 and 10, and an 11-year-old son. Overall, she thinks her children are adjusting well to the new life they have made for themselves in a city far away from what once called home. And Joanna has plans for herself; she hopes to pursue computer studies in the fall.

She credits Transition House with giving her a new lease on life, and she wishes more women in isolated communities knew of the service the House provides. She says she knows of several battered women in dead-end situations like her own, and they don't realize there is help to be found.

A major step towards aiding isolated battered women has been taken with the implementation of the new Safe House project, currently under way in Western Labrador. Safe House relies on community-minded families who will take battered women and their children into their own homes. A Transition House similar to the St. John's shelter opened in Corner Brook last year to service the women on the province's west coast. Meanwhile, the St. John's House provides help to women from virtually every other area in the province.

-more-

The House has been in operation since June 1981, and has offered sanctuary to many women like Joanna. 350 women and 450 children in all. Acting House administrator Cheryl Hebert says the building has always had a high occupancy rate. Waiting lists are not uncommon during certain peak months, especially since the House can accommodate only 14 women and their children at one time. Hebert says a major project of the House at this time is the search for a larger building which will put residents and staff under one roof.

Joanna says the staff and volunteers of the House were always there when she needed them. They gave her back her self-esteem, and chances are she might not have made it on her own. In her home town, Joanna was alone in her misery; at Transition House, she discovered there were many others who had gone through the same degradation of body and spirit.

These battered women, Cheryl Hebert says, come from every class of society; and they are all looking for the same things: "primarily a place of safety, and then for someone to believe them when they say they've been beaten - because people often don't." At Transition House, the victims of battering receive such basic living requirements as food and shelter. As well, the women are offered counselling and an opportunity to participate in various in-house programs.

The children of battered women also receive badly-needed help at Transition House with counselling and support groups for teenagers. Children's services worker Jan Burry-Foley says many of them have witnessed violence for a long time, "and they are often deprived of warm, loving relationships."

Burry-Foley says the main focus of the House's children's programs is on intervention, on stopping the cycle of violence."

"We try to teach them there's another way to deal with the frustrations of life besides violence."

Once the children leave the House, staff members stay in contact with them, and often teenagers will get involved with the House as junior volunteers. While living there, they help in the day-to-day operations of the building.

Transition House maintains a 24-hour, seven-day week crisis telephone for easy access to advice or an attentive ear. (The number is 754-1492.) The shelter is funded by the provincial government, which has committed \$209,800 for this year's operating budget. House administrators estimate the actual operating costs to be approximately \$282,000, and they hope the difference can be made up through fundraising. Any individual wishing to help may inquire at 722-8272.

Women like Joanna Best are depending on it.

Betty Ryan
Aug. 8/84
754-0280

Two American Feminist Literary Journals: A Review

HOW(ever)
subscriptions @ \$5 for 4 issues:
c/o Jaffer, 871 Cowbett St.
San Francisco, CA 94131
poetry submissions:
c/o Fraser, 554 Jersey St.
San Francisco, CA 94114

CONDITONS
P.O. Box 56
Van Brunt Station
Brooklyn
New York 11215
\$15 for 3 issues
\$9 hardship rate

HOW(ever) is a relatively recent, small-scale publication, printed on heavy stock, a few sheets stapled together in one corner. Vol.1, no.2, the issue I read, contained poems by two women, an informal commentary/criticism, a book review and a couple of letters about women writers. Everything I read was of interest and all the writers new to me. I have been out of touch with the recent wave of feminist literary journals and a lot has been happening. It's great to be catching up at last.

As might be inferred from the title, the contributors to HOW(ever) share a common fascination with and exploratory zeal toward language. Jacqueline Quinn brings jazz to the sonnet:

"Pumpkin's all a bowl. that orange nugget haze.

lazy you, lounge autúmn. unruffled pink."

For Amelia Earhart fans, excerpts from Maureen Owens' work-in-progress on the famous aviator will open up the horizons she flew:

"what we are always after that Flat

that lucid that unstopped Opening! the Space ..."

Perhaps other readers are already familiar with Laura (Riding) Jackson, a poet of the 20s and 30s. I was not but Carolyn Butler's brief commentary on her work ("her linguistic combat offers an alternative to blatant confessionalism and a cure for facile poetics") makes me eager to read her poetry.

Conditions: nine (Spring 1983), "a feminist magazine of writing by women with an emphasis on writing by lesbians" has also expanded my horizons and introduced me to interesting and exciting women writers. I realize a whole body of literature has been developing without my being aware of it. And I have come to realize that there are many perceived differences and a multiplicity of issues within the woman's movement. Black women writers have been developing a Black feminist critical theory but they still often feel stereotyped by white feminists. Sometimes they resent being lumped together with other women of colour; and black lesbian women find black straight women often live in too narrow a world. In the central essay of this issue, "Black Women on Black Women Writers", five black lesbian writers and reviewers discuss these and other issues, including the fear of exposure, the limitations reviewers put on themselves when they write about other black, feminist, lesbian writers (no put downs, etc.), the expectations the reader has of a book, and many more. A transcript of a discussion doesn't usually thrill me but this one was unusually vivid, specific, and though rambling, always coherent. Most informative all together.

Trying to write a review that makes sense of a 200-page journal of poetry, prose, essays and book reviews, covering different themes and topics is difficult. Other issues of conditions have gathered works together dealing with one theme, for instance, conditions five, the Black Women's Issue. As that is not the case here, I will simply mention some of the pieces I found most interesting, as a way of indicating the variety and scope of the journal.

The poetry in conditions: nine is less exploratory in form than that of HOW(ever). Two political poems I found very moving: "Raw Autumn" by Stacey Pies and "Inside the Iron Triangle" by Jo Carillo. Jewelle Gomez's love poem "Pomegranate" opens with this lovely image: "I curled up around you like a pomegranate around her seeds".

Paula Ross' "Telling" an excerpt from a novel-in-progress reveals the difficulty of speaking about, of telling a heterosexual friend about a lesbian love. Paula Ross captures the "telling" internal monologue of doubt:

"Why borrow trouble?

Not just the right. It's your duty, your obligation.

No truth is worth that kind of shame.

You have the right, you who are naturally silent.

You the naturally silent daughter of a naturally silent mother."

"Bless Me Sister ..." by Shirley Glubka is the story of a young woman recollecting her first involvement with another, older woman in the convent. It is a story of innocence and real love, an awakening of self and a withdrawal from the church and from the loving sister.

Books reviewed in conditions nine include All the Women Are White, All the Blacks Are Men, But Some of Us Are Brave: Black Women's Studies, by Hull, Scott and Smith; Nice Jewish Girls: A Lesbian Anthology, edited by Beck, Radical Feminists of Heterodoxy by Schwartz, and three works of poetry and fiction: Zami: a new spelling of my name by Lorde, The Sound of One Fork by Pratt and Folly by Brady.

I read both these journals cover to cover and learned a lot. I've added several names of authors and/or books to my must-read list. If it weren't for the fact that I feel even more out of touch with Canadian feminist literary journals, I'd probably think seriously about subscribing to these. But perhaps a library will do the subscribing for us and then many of us can enjoy and learn from our feminist sisters in America.

Pamela Hodgson

POEMS ON MY GRANDSON..... by Rosalie Colbert

I.

The Diagnosis

White robed, the messiah sat-
One cheek perched on the bed,
Where a scrap of humanity feebly squirmed.

"Reflex actions," he said.

The white-robed disciples-
Attentively gathered the pearls
Of wisdom, which constantly dripped
From his mouth.

"Would you consider this alive?"

The disciples dared not speak.
Then I knew I was immortal-
For I heard - And did not die.

II.

The Echo

Pink and lethargic he lies
Helpless, while decisions are made
Unknown by him, his future is decided.

No future.

A silent scream explodes within
His future is his,
His future is mine.

And he cries.

III.

I'll Call Him Brant

...Then - after eons of time
Bright lights,
White ghosts,
Mask-filtered, hurried commands.

...Through dull haze, a crystal jolt
...A boy...
...Won't live...
...Call him?...

And she said: "I'll call him Brant."

WHAT IS A FRIEND?

...by Joan McGrath

What is a friend?
A person who is there.
Someone to talk to,
When no-one else cares.

What is a friend?
When others have failed.
Someone to walk with,
When your morale seems jailed.

What is a friend?
A person you can trust.
To be there at all times,
I think, that's a must.

On this and much more,
You can always depend,
You just can't do without it,
The help of "A Friend".

**P
O
P
E**



**J
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A
N**

supplement





16. Popess Joan in Rome in the Year 855

Reissue of the sheet, cut by the Master IR with verses by Hans Sachs (see Strauss 1975, p. 1268). Vienna. Drugulin 1867 III R. 21m. 1902. No. Bruckner 1969 212.

The German Single-Leaf Woodcut 1600-1700: I:48

Pope Joan, in procession in Rome, gives birth to a baby....

POPE JOAN SUPPLEMENT

The forthcoming visit of the Pope in September reminds us of the struggle presently going on for the full participation of women in the church, and in particular the traditional misogyny of the Roman Catholic Church. St Jerome assigned the numerical value of 100 to virgins, 30 to widows, and only 10 to married women. In his view, women could only escape from their "congenital inferiority" by choosing celibacy and repressing their gender and sexuality: "As long as woman is for birth and children, she is different from man as body is from soul. But when she wishes to serve Christ more than the world, then she will cease to be a woman and will be called man."¹ The female eunuch, par excellence.

Pope Joan held the papal tiara for two years, five months and four days, under the title of John VIII, from A.D. 855 to 858. An English woman, she disguised herself as a monk in order to follow her lover, was renowned for her learning, and became cardinal and then pope. But then her femaleness was betrayed when she gave birth to a child in the middle of a papal procession in Rome. "And the baby just slid out into the road....They took me by the feet and dragged me out of town and stoned me to death."² The historical existence of Pope Joan, later strenuously denied by the Roman Catholic church, was accepted as a fact in its earlier history, for a bust of her was included in the 170 busts of popes adorning the nave of Siena Cathedral, sculpted in the 12th or 13th century; labelled, "Johannes VIII, femina ex Anglia" (John VIII, an Englishwoman).³ There was a German play on Pope Joan, Frau Jutta (1480), in which, after her "fall", she was received by the devils in hell, but was freed on the intercession of the Virgin Mary and St Nicholas.⁴

At the time of the Reformation, the Protestants gleefully seized upon Pope Joan as a method of attacking the moral decadence of the papacy. In Siena cathedral in 1600 the bust was changed to appear masculine and the inscription underneath altered to "Zacharie". But guides to the cathedral would still point to it as the bust of Pope Joan, which irritated the cathedral authorities so much that it was removed altogether, and the canons of the cathedral sworn to secrecy; meanwhile the order of the busts had to be shifted in order to disguise the gap.⁵ Pope Joan became the target of a series of scurrilous broadsheets, showing her in full papal regalia giving birth to her child on the street.⁶ In the Lutheran Bible she was associated with the Whore of Babylon in Revelations, depicted with the papal tiara.⁷ Pope Joan: a Dialogue between a Protestant and a Papist; manifestly proving that a Woman, called Joan, was Pope of Rome, by Alexander Cooke, was published in 1625. The Protestant gives evidence for the historical existence of Joan, while the Catholic rather feebly protests.⁸

If the Roman Catholic church succeeded in obliterating the historical existence of Pope Joan, she continues to flourish and survive in folklore and literature. In the old Tarot pack, she became a member of the MAjor Arcana - No.2, the rapess (later transmuted under church pressure into the High Priestess). In the mystical interpretations of the Tarot she represents "gnosis", the intuitive knowledge of god, not brought by reason but by inspiration and insight....Seated between her pillars, she is a symbol of the Cabala, and of initiation into wisdom."⁹ She holds in her hand a book, or scroll, in some versions marked "TORA"; and sits in front of a veil or curtain which represents the hidden mysteries - behind it is a door which "gives entrance into the inner worlds of the psyche". In Jungian terms she is the Anima, the soul or muse. Sometimes she is represented as seated between two pillars, black and white, the negative and positive forces of the Feminine. "The negative aspect of this image is revealed when the reality and potency of the feminine element within is unrecognised or misunderstood;" she then becomes the vicious Hecate, the "weaver of illusions who destroys her lovers."¹¹ The pillars have also been associated with the two bronze columns at the entrance of the Temple in Jerusalem, and the pillars of Mercy and Severity, the two outer columns of the Tree of Life.

There are other folk memories of Pope Joan. In the 19th century in England you could, on the morning of the New Year, buy a "pope lady", a bun made in the form of a woman - probably a custom dating back to the pre-Christian Mother Goddess.¹³ Or you can play the gambling card game of Pope Joan, still listed in books of games today; Pope Joan is the nine of Diamonds.¹⁴

In the twentieth century, Pope Joan has been the subject of a novel by the Greek writer, Emmanuel Royidis, translated into English by Lawrence Durrell (1954). She has also appeared as a character in Caryl Churchill's play Top Girls (1982) in which Pope Joan, the Victorian traveller Isabella Bird, the 13th-century courtesan and Buddhist nun Lady Nijo, and nauseating wimp Patient Griselda dialogue with Marlene, a successful executive of an employment agency called Top Girls. While Pope Joan fell from power by having a baby (i.e. by being a woman), Marlene, to become a "top girl" had to foist off her illegitimate daughter Angie on her "housewife" sister Joyce. To become "successful" Marlene has had to negate her female role of mother and become hard and tough. In the process she has become fascist, Thatcherite, and anti-union: "I hate the working class," she says, "it means lazy and stupid." Those who do not succeed, like her daughter Angie, are stigmatized as "lazy and stupid and frightened." Top Girls is an interesting play. Do we only get to the top by, like Pope Joan, denying our female-ness, adopting "masculist" values? The Queen Bee syndrome, as feminists have called it.

In the thirteenth century Guglielma of Milan prophesied that there would be a new church ruled by a female pope, female cardinals and priests. Only with such a church would world-wide salvation be possible. The Holy Ghost was believed to have become incarnated in a woman. When Guglielma died, her body was dug up by the Cistercian monks who were her enthusiastic supporters; washed in a

mixture of water and wine, the liquid remaining was used to cure the sick. An altar was erected to her; her feast was celebrated on 24 August, with sermons, a feast, and claims of miracles performed by her. The patriarchal church could not long tolerate the feminist inclinations of the Guglielmites, with their claim that Guglielma's disciple, Mayfreda, would be the new pope. The Inquisition moved in; Guglielma's remains were exhumed and burned, and a smear campaign accused her followers of sexual orgies (gasp!) and of drinking wine mixed with the dust of murdered infants born of their nefarious goings-on. 15

Guglielma and her followers were only one of the so-called heretical sects which promoted a more active role for women in the patriarchal church. Perhaps Guglielma, like many prophets, got her dates wrong. But perhaps Guglielma in substance was right: a female pope is just a question of time. I am not a prophet, but I predict that within the next century we will have a woman pope; also, as Guglielma predicted, female priests and cardinals.

Roberta Buchanan

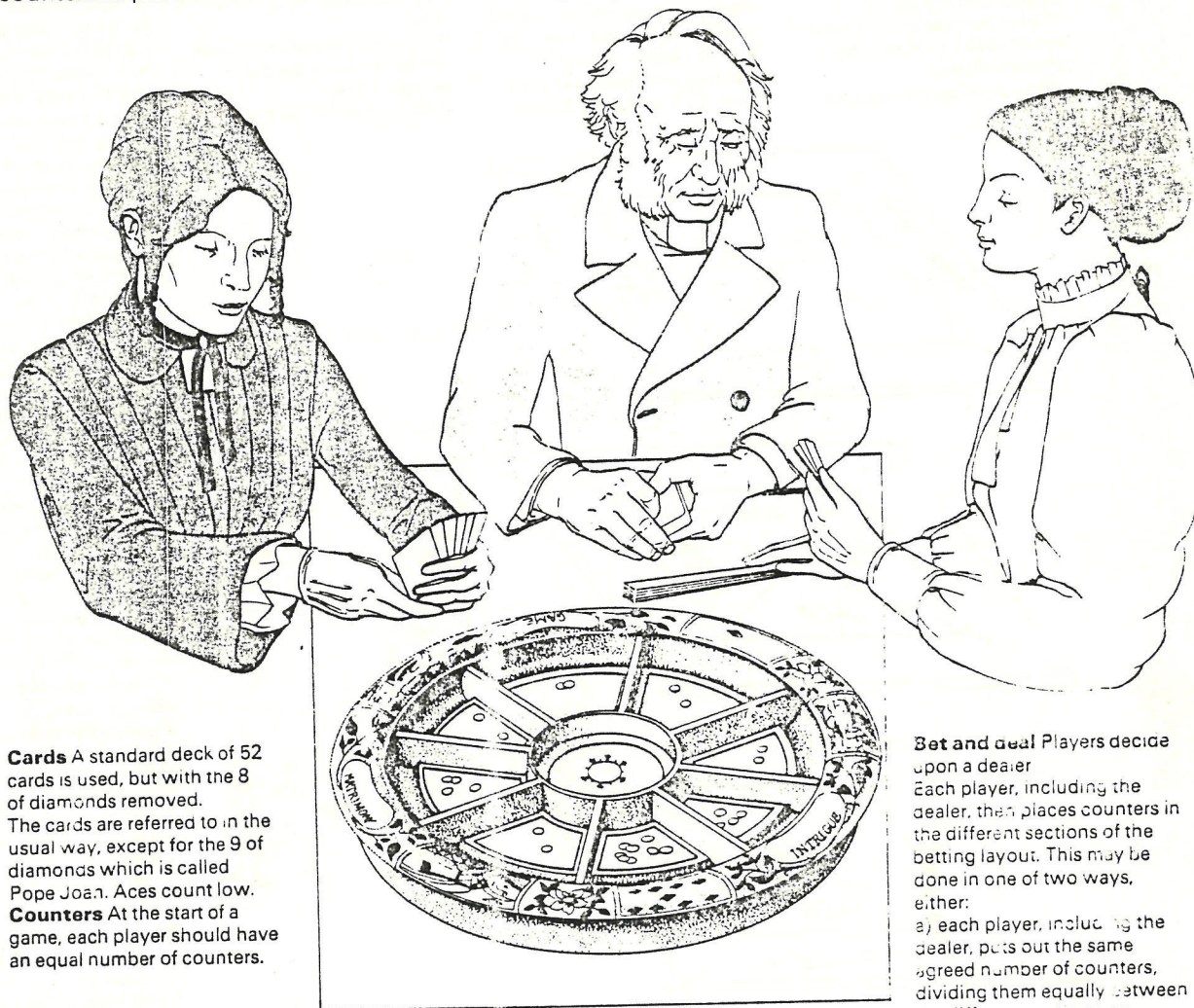
P.S/ Meanwhile, even in the Roman Catholic church, things are stirring. Mary Daly, radical feminist, trained as a Catholic theologian, MAY be coming to St John's to speak in October. Watch the next issue of the Newsletter. And a pro-choice Catholic will be speaking on September 28th, Margaret Maguire - call Women's Centre for details, 753-0220.

Notes: 1. Katherine M. Wilson, ed., Medieval Women Writers, xxiii. 2. Caryl Churchill, Top Girls (1982), 12. 3. Barbara G. Walker, The Woman's Encyclopedia of Myths and Secrets, 475. 4. W. Scherer, History of German Literature (1886), I, 242. 5. Joan Morris, "Iconography as a Means of Research on the History of the Status of Women", in Aspects of Female Existence: Proceedings from the st. Gertrud Symposium (Copenhagen, 1980), 46-47. 6. Dorothy Alexander & W.E. Strauss, The German Single-Leaf Woodcut 1600-1700, I, 48. 7. R.W. Scribner, For the Sake of Simple Folk: Propaganda for the German Reformation (1981), 171-173. 8. Reprinted in The Harleian Miscellany, ed. Park & Oldys, IV, 63-141. 9. Richard Cavendish, The Tarot (1975), 71-75. 10. Alfred Douglas, The Tarot: the Origins, Meaning and Use of the Cards (Penguin, 1974), 55. 11. Douglas, 55. 12. Cavendish, 72. 13. W. Carew Hazlitt, Dictionary of Faiths and Folklores, Vol.II. 14. Games of the World, ed. F.V. Grunfeld, 124-125. 15. S.E. Wessley, "The 13th-Century Guglielmites: Salvations through Women", in Medieval Women (1978), ed. D. Baker, 289-305.

Pope Joan

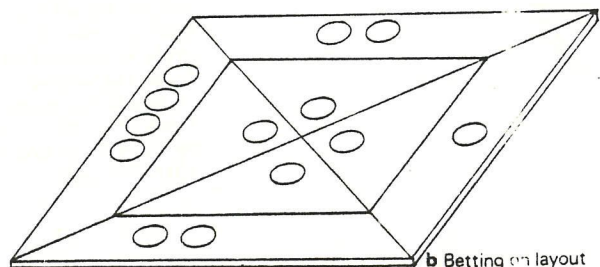
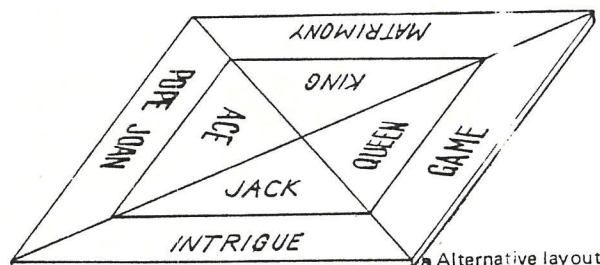
From: The Way to Play: the Illustrated Encyclopedia of Games of the World (1975) 98-99

Pope Joan is a card game for three or more players that was invented by combining two earlier games, commit and matrimony. Contestants try to play their cards in such a way as to win as many counters as possible.



Cards A standard deck of 52 cards is used, but with the 8 of diamonds removed. The cards are referred to in the usual way, except for the 9 of diamonds which is called Pope Joan. Aces count low.
Counters At the start of a game, each player should have an equal number of counters.

Bet and deal Players decide upon a dealer. Each player, including the dealer, then places counters in the different sections of the betting layout. This may be done in one of two ways, either:
 a) each player, including the dealer, puts out the same agreed number of counters, dividing them equally between the different sections, or
 b) each player, including the dealer, puts four counters in the pope section, two in matrimony, two in intrigue, and one in each of the other sections (b).
 The dealer then deals one hand to each player including himself, and one extra hand. He deals by giving one card to each player in a clockwise direction, beginning with the player to his left. The card for the extra hand is dealt just before he deals to himself. All cards are dealt face down. The deal continues in this way until all the cards but one have been dealt; this card is placed face upward or, top of the extra hand.



Betting layout A board or other betting layout is required for the game. Layouts are usually circular or square (a), and are divided into sections labeled ace, jack, intrigue, queen, matrimony, king, Pope Joan, and game. Some traditional Pope Joan boards comprise a circular tray revolving on a central stand. A layout can easily be drawn on a sheet of plain paper or material. Each section should be large enough to hold at least 20 counters.
Objective Each player aims to win as many counters as possible by playing certain cards. Counters are also won by the first contestant to use all his cards.

The exposed card If the card dealt face upward is Pope Joan (the 9 of diamonds), the dealer wins all the counters in the pope and game sections (c). (In an alternative version of play the dealer wins all the counters on the layout.) The round ends and the player to the dealer's left becomes the new dealer. If any other card is dealt, its

suit determines trumps for that hand. If the card dealt face upward is an ace or a face card, the dealer wins the counters on the section with the same name. **Play** Each player examines his own hand, but no player may look at the extra hand. The player to the dealer's left begins. He plays any one card

from his hand face up onto the middle of the playing area and says its name, eg "3 of hearts." The player with the 4 of hearts then plays it, followed by the player with the 5, the 6, and so on. This continues until no player can add to the sequence because either: a) the sequence has been

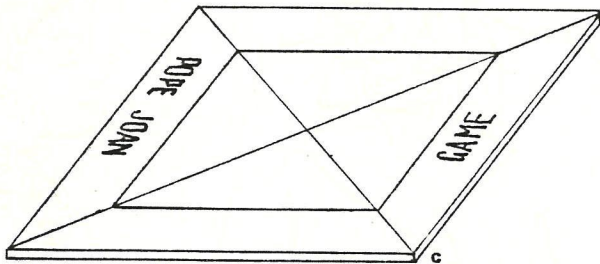
completed by reaching the king; b) the next card needed is the 8 of diamonds; or c) the next card needed is hidden in the extra hand or has already been played. At this point the cards already played in the sequence are turned face down, and whoever played the last card begins a new sequence by playing any card of his choice. **Claiming counters** Anyone who plays the ace, jack, queen, or king of trumps receives all the counters in the section marked with the same name (d). If a player plays the jack and queen of trumps in sequence, he wins all the counters in the intrigue section, as well as those on jack and queen (e). If anyone plays the queen and king of trumps in sequence, he receives all the counters in the matrimony section, as well as those on queen and king (f). A player putting out Pope Joan wins all the counters on that section (g).

It should be noted that these cards only win counters when played in the correct way, ie by starting or adding to a sequence. They win nothing if they are still unplayed at the end of a round.

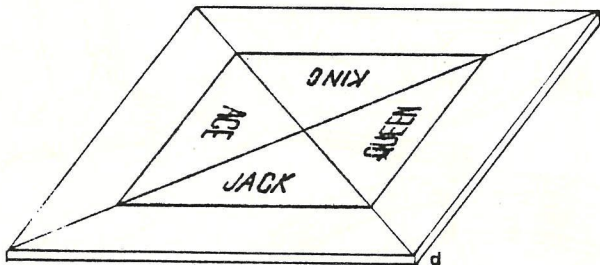
Ending the round The round continues until any one player has played all his cards, when he may take all the counters in the game section. All the other players have to give him one counter for every card still in their hand, with the exception of anyone holding the unplayed Pope Joan, who is exempted from paying for the cards left in his hand.

Unclaimed counters Any counters that are not won in a round remain on the betting layout until won in subsequent rounds.

New counters are added as usual to all sections at the beginning of each round. Any counters left at the end of a game are distributed by redealing the cards, face up, without an extra hand. The players who receive the ace, jack, and queen of diamonds and the Pope Joan take any remaining counters in those divisions. Any counters in the matrimony section are divided between the holders of the king and queen, and those in the intrigue section between the holders of the queen and jack.



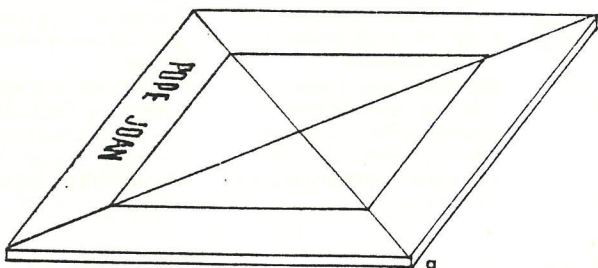
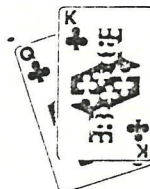
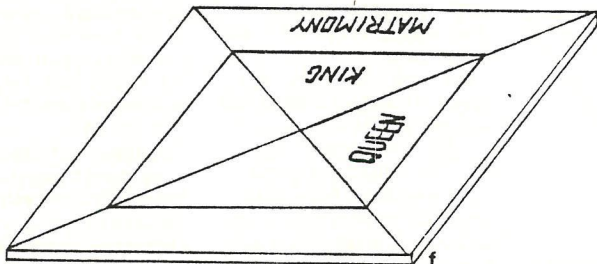
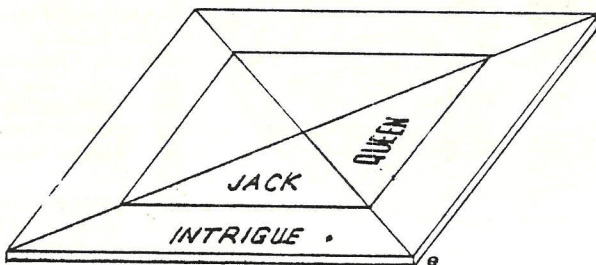
Exposed card



Claiming counters



Trump suit



ST JOHN'S STATUS OF WOMEN COUNCIL - STEERING COMMITTEE

Linda Kealey - Economic Issues Committee
Marian Hopkins - Treasurer
Sharon Pope - Secretary and Peace Sub-committee
Sheila Moore - Social Committee
Lynn Murphy - Programming, Violence against Women Subcommittee
Pauline Stockwood - Pornography Subcommittee
Astri Thorvik - Liaison with Transition House & Kirby House
Ann Escott - Public Relations and House
Roberta Buchanan - Newsletter

YES, I SUPPORT THE ST JOHN'S STATUS OF WOMEN COUNCIL
Enclosed is \$10.00 membership/ subscription.
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Send to: St John's Status of Women Council, P.O. Box 6072,
St John's, Newfoundland A1C 5X8



FIG. 7.
THE FEMALE POPE JOAN
French Tarot Card (17th Cent.)
(No. 2 of the "Atout" series)

NAC Lobby 1984

Native Women

Q. Will you support registering the women and the first generation children on the band lists when the section 12(1)(b) of the Indian Act is repealed?

NDP support this as a strong priority

CONSERVATIVES have supported this for a long time

LIBERALS expect the legislation to be forthcoming soon.

Charter of Rights

Q. What will you do to ensure that an omnibus bill which brings existing legislation into compliance with Section 15 of the Charter is introduced into Parliament before April 15, 1984?

NDP has raised this with the Minister of Justice in the House and in the Justice Committee asking that the bill not be a last minute one and they will continue to press.

Q. Will you change your position on the entrenchment of property rights, given the threat that such an amendment to the Charter poses to women?

CONSERVATIVES looked at property rights from the concept of real property and are now re-examining their position in light of the arguments that NAC has brought on this.

LIBERALS give a commitment to release a draft audit by the end of September 1984 so that women's groups will have time to respond to it prior to April 17, 1984.

Survival

Q. Will your party include women who are active in peace research and who have negotiating skills in making foreign policy decisions and in disarmament negotiations at the UN?

NDP has asked the Minister in the House to give serious consideration to having at least one woman involved in the arms control and disarmament division of the Department and has asked if the Minister would fill the position of Ambassador for Disarmament which has been vacant for many months with a prominent woman who is concerned about the issues of disarmament and peace.

CONSERVATIVES appointed a woman as the first Secretary of State and would hope to fully utilize women at the highest level and in all delegations and at the negotiating table.

LIBERALS have appointed women to the UN Status of Women Commission.

Pensions

Q. Are you prepared to allow homemakers to get pensions through the Canada Pension Plan?

NDP agree that homemakers require better pensions but do not agree that this should be done through the CPP; want an expansion of the CPP.

CONSERVATIVES support the inclusion of homemakers in the CPP, support changing the present tax deduction system to a tax credit for people who have locked money into retirement plans.

LIBERALS agree to the inclusion of homemakers in the pension plan but require the consent of the provinces; agree to the expansion of the CPP but not in relation to the average industrial wage.

Job Creation

Q. Do you endorse the principle of creating permanent jobs for women by increasing funding in the areas of community and social services? To you support 50% of the projects being funded in the sectors where women work and 50% of the positions created to be filled by women?

NDP have proposed it in the House of Commons a number of times and support the proposal brought forward by the Canadian Council on Social Development for long-term, full-time, adequately-paid, direct job creation.

CONSERVATIVES support funding jobs in the sectors where women are employed and support creating permanent jobs, but would not guarantee that 50% of the jobs go to women.

LIBERALS: no.

Canada Labour Code

Q. Will you support the pro-rating of benefits for part-time workers and health protection legislation for workers who are using VDT's?

NDP have advocated pro-rata benefits and have called for a limit of 40 minute-periods working on VDT's.

CONSERVATIVES would support only part-time workers in the labour force on a full-time basis throughout the year (i.e. permanent part-time).

LIBERALS: under consideration. (EDITORIAL NOTE: Andre Ouellet, Minister of Labour did not include these provisions in the bill. NAC is to appear before a Parliamentary Committee in June to protest this. This is a key election issue for NAC. Please promote it along with the Labour Code Card Campaign. See post cards in this issue.)

Daycare

Q. What steps would your party take to set up a daycare system which is not income related, but accessible to all and totally subsidized through public funds?

NDP have suggested increasing the number of daycare centres in Canada and passed an extensive policy on daycare at the last convention.

CONSERVATIVES would allocate funds to ensure that daycare needs of the women of Canada are met but would not say if it would be direct grants to a day care system.

LIBERALS would participate through the Canada Welfare Plan but social services are the jurisdiction of the provinces. (EDITORIAL NOTE: Task Force on Day Care announced in June/84)

Canada Health Act

Q. Would you change "medical practitioners" to "health care practitioners"?

CONSERVATIVES: yes

LIBERALS: will consider.

Abortion

Q. Given that 72% of Canadians believe that the abortion decision rests with the woman, will your party support repeal of Section 251 of the Criminal Code?

NDP: yes.

CONSERVATIVES would favour a free vote.

PEACE PETITION CARAVAN CAMPAIGN

Sign Up for Peace

THE PEACE PETITION CARAVAN CAMPAIGN ASKS FOR YOUR SUPPORT.

The possibility of nuclear war, once unthinkable, grows more real with each passing day. All of us — women, men, children — have a direct stake in peace. That's why the Peace Petition Caravan Campaign asks you to join millions around the world in calling for nuclear disarmament. And why we're asking you to take a first step by putting your name to a coast-to-coast petition.

PETITION

To _____, Member of Parliament for the riding of _____ for presentation to the House of Commons.

- We ask that the Parliament of Canada act to refuse the testing of the Cruise missile in Canada and to reject research, production, testing and transport of any nuclear weapons, their delivery systems or components in Canada.
- We ask that Canada be declared a Nuclear-Weapons-Free Zone in accord with similar initiatives by other nations and become actively involved in working for the multilateral de-escalation of the arms race.
- We further ask that wasteful spending on the arms race to be diverted to fund human needs so as to ensure prosperity through peace.
- Finally, we ask that the above-stated objectives be subject to ratification through a "free vote" in the Parliament of Canada.



Name	Signature
Address - Postal Code	
Name	Signature
Address - Postal Code	
Name	Signature
Address - Postal Code	

SEND TO:

Peace Petition Caravan Campaign, Box 13392, Stn. A., St. John's.

VOLUNTEER FOR PEACE

THE PEACE MOVEMENT NEEDS YOU!

If you can spare a few hours a day, a week or a month we need your help in building the peace movement in St. John's. The Peace Petition Caravan Campaign will involve thousands of volunteers working together for peace. Women from all walks of life will help build one of the most important disarmament campaigns in Canadian history. We need your help.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

If you would like information on any aspect of the Campaign, please contact the Peace Petition Caravan Campaign at P.O. Box 13392, Station "A", St. John's, Nfld., A1B 4B7. Phone (709) 722-9545.



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 on WOMEN & VIOLENCE. DEADLINE for copy is 30 September.

This newsletter was produced by Roberta Buchanan, Sheila Moore and Sandy Stavlo.



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