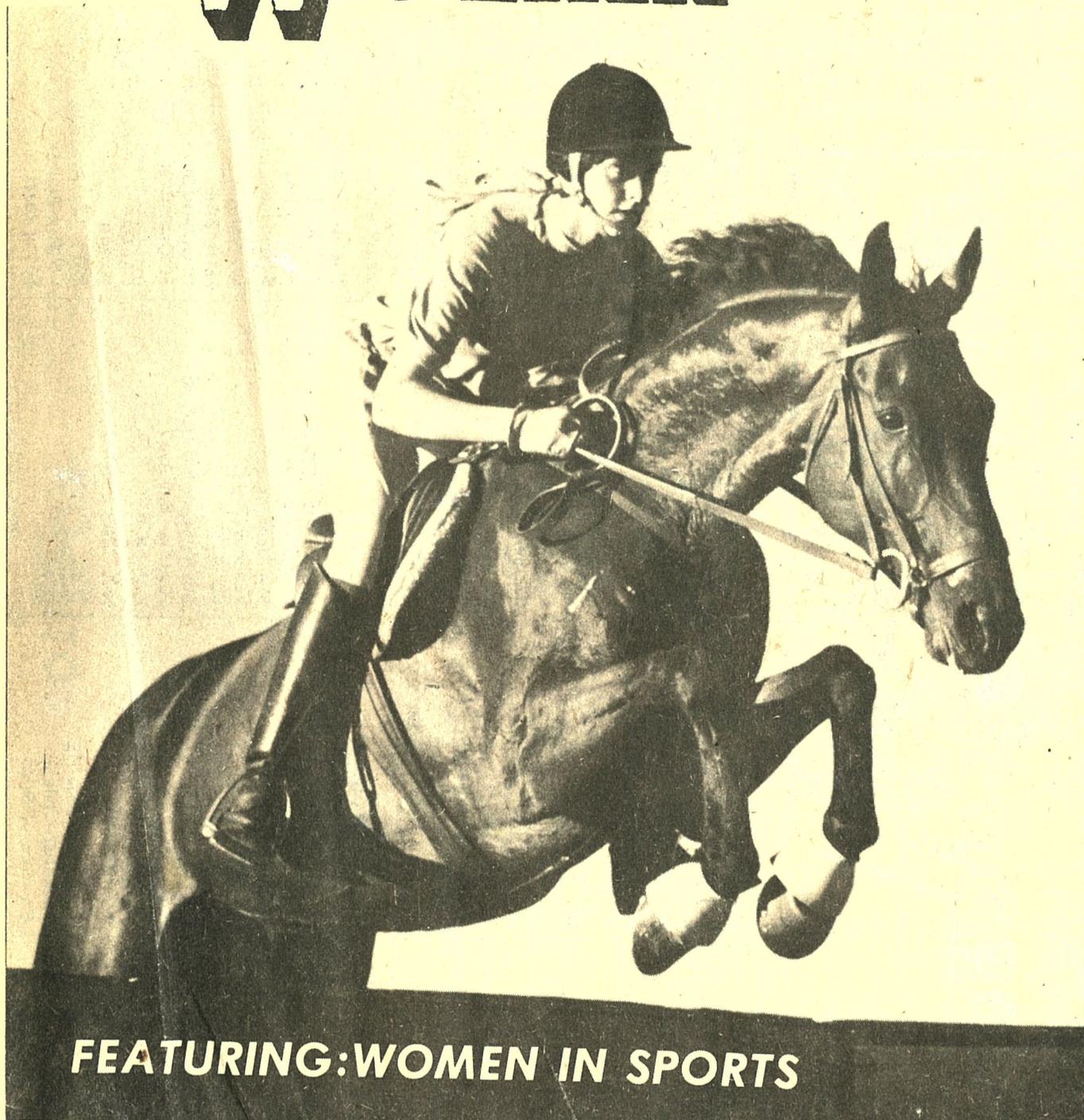


# THE OTHER WOMAN

50¢

CANADIAN  
FEMINIST  
VOL.4, NO.4



**FEATURING: WOMEN IN SPORTS**

PRICES AS INDICATED

\$ .50 ONTARIO

\$ .60 U.S.A.

\$ .55 REST OF CANADA

\$ .75 ELSEWHERE

## A MAD GAME

The attention of the whole world of sports will be focused on Montreal for 2 weeks this summer. State security has already been focused on the Olympic event in Montreal for well over a year. People in Montreal who have been working for social change as well as gay people in both Montreal and Ottawa have been persecuted by the police. Neither our 'corrupt' politics nor morals must influence our foreign visitors; after all, the Olympics is not a political event. Curiously enough, the very fact that Mayor Jean Drapeau is holding the Olympics in his City of Montreal is political in itself as the Quebecois do not consider themselves to be part of Canada. The people of Montreal would naturally prefer more and better housing to a vast Olympic stadium. Besides, for the past decade, athletes have been compelled to deal with politics whether it be internal Olympic dissension or international conflict.

The federal government (i.e., Pierre Trudeau) has not been anxious to pour any more money than necessary into the Olympic child of Drapeau. (One must remember that Canada already had its nationalist binge with the 1967 Expo Centennial under, again, Drapeau's firm hand.) The nationalists cry: "Remember Munich's glory--save our country's reputation with subsidies." Far better to subsidize our athletes and to give better sports facilities to all young people than to subsidize the egomania of Montreal's mayor. As our articles on Hope Hopkins and Cathy Wedge will show, women are extremely pressed financially to be able to compete with others of their calibre.

Tuning one's body to its finest peak of performance and then striving for one's own 'reachable goal is an ideal of life competition. When one knows that the very best has been expended, for whatever goal, one knows that success has been attained even though one may not have broken the record or won the medal or the money.

A prime example that exhibits both the rampant sexism and the nature of international competition is the question of genetic testing. Before a woman may compete in the Olympics, she must submit to a test to prove that her chromosomes are 'normal', (i.e., XX). Women with 'abnormal' chromosome structure, such as XXY, are not permitted to compete on the grounds that they are not **really** women, despite primary and secondary sex characteristics. The XXY chromosome is a mild mutation, occurring naturally in about .03 per cent of the population. The men are not similarly tested, the implication being that if **they** possessed the XXY (or XYY) chromosome, they would be too weak to compete anyhow.

The justification given for this testing has been to curtail the practice of some of the East European countries (particularly 'Communist bloc') to inject their female athletes with male hormones during training to encourage muscle building and enhance performance. The ideal of training one's body to excellence is certainly distorted here by the motive of winning no matter what the cost.

When the intensity of competition compels drug use, hormone shots to boost one's innate abilities, sabotage of another's efforts and on and on, then, in our mind, competition fails the ideal of bettering oneself. The Olympics has, indeed, turned into a mad game.



## WAGES FOR HOUSE WORK EDITORIAL

## A QUESTION OF STRUCTURE

Another collective comment on Wages for Housework--hopefully, the last. First thing it is necessary to summarize a bit of herstory to show how the relationship between **tow** and the Toronto Wages for Housework Committee (TWFHC) has developed thus far.

- 1) 2-page interview was solicited by us and printed in the winter of 1975.
- 2) 4-page pullout around their 1975 May Day action also solicited by us.
- 3) During the spring and summer of 1975, our relationship developed even further, aided by the fact that we lived next door to each other. This physical presence forced our collective to internally deal with the possible problems inherent in the TWFHC but this question (based on the known practice of the Committee) was tabled--we had a paper to put out. In the fall, **tow** agreed to several meetings to decide on the possibility of a special issue done by the Committee. After some hesitation, we agreed and announced this in our fall 1975 issue.
- 4) In our next issue we thought it necessary, since we were sponsoring a special Wages for Housework issue, to state our position re the wages for housework perspective.
- 5) In the following issue, we featured an open letter from the TWFHC in response to our editorial.
- 6) In the spring of 1976, we featured an article on Selma James' visit to Ontario.

This background is, perhaps, sketchy for those of you who haven't read previous issues. Therefore, the following is meant: 1) as a statement to our readers who have been wondering about the political relationship, 2) as a word of caution to those women who have been seriously considering the validity of the

TWFHC **structure** within its political perspective, and 3) as an open letter to the Committee itself in order to make quite clear our future position. The following has been a long and laborious process for us.

It is at this point that **tow** collective should repeat that it still stands by its previous editorial in Vol. 4, No. 1, which basically stated that **all** women are 'housewives' in the full sense of the word. What we are taking issue with is the actual **organization** of the Toronto Wages for Housework Committee and the International Network of which it is a part. Recent events (which we have linked with our knowledge of earlier incidents) have guided our political vagueness through the stage of anger to become directed political criticism.

Between October 1974 and February 1975, there were 2 wages for housework groups in Toronto. The first one had been a study group since spring of 1973 and the second group which, since its inception, has called itself TWFHC. An international conference was held in February of 1975 in Montreal. The TWFHC, along with Ruth Hall (England), Silvia Federici (New York) and Beth Ingber (Los Angeles), were instrumental in effectively removing the first group from any further contact with the International Network. The Montreal Power of Women collective voted against the exclusion and were subsequently denied contact themselves. This was only the beginning. There were several important theoretical differences between the Toronto group, which was purged, and the majority of the delegates to the Montreal Conference. It should be clear that **tow** does not align itself with either

side in that particular political debate but censures the process which took place.

The TWFHC adheres to the line put forward by the leaders of the International Network: Selma James (England), Maria Rosa Dallacosta (Italy) and Silvia Federici (New York). It is very concerned with keeping the line pure; therefore, individual interpretations of the perspective are not permitted. **tow** does not acknowledge the existence of any single 'correct line' (there is always more than one way to skin a cat). Nor does it acknowledge a 'goal orientation' as a substitute for process.

We give an example to illustrate the above. While TWFHC keeps strict control over their meetings, they see nothing wrong with disrupting other meetings within the women's movement. (For recent examples, see the article about the Bolton Conference on page 11 and the news item about the Lesbian Conference in England on page 10.) As one woman at the Bolton Conference put it "Wages for Housework has some good ideas, and they go to a lot of different groups to talk about those ideas. But when they keep other people from saying what they want to say, then I get mad!"

Also the TWFHC has a set way that they explain their line to individuals and groups outside their organization. To many women in the movement, with some knowledge of both feminist theory and economics, their tone is very patronizing. We consider it poor tactics to deliberately (or unconsciously) alienate a large portion of our movement. From our present viewpoint, it is evident that the TWFHC forgot all about integrating 'process' into their structure.

While the TWFHC is itself an autonomous women's group and constantly states the need for women's autonomy, we realize that the TWFHC does not consider itself to be part of the feminist movement. (See our Fall 1975 issue which stated that the majority of the Committee originated from the Left which might partially explain their disinterest in relating to other feminist groups who are also autonomous.) One difference between the TWFHC and other feminists: they must work within a formal structure. Lectures on their perspective are more preferable to an informal discussion as this leads to 'unnecessary' dialogue.

Any movement which sets out to achieve something **must** have unity but **not** through a specified leadership with no relevant input from outside of the group. The 'masses' are given the perspective and expected to agree with all of it, since it has all been worked out on an international basis by the most politically clear feminists. The TWFHC is not concerned with all of the above as their strategy is economist; they want the money NOW, not women who are conscious of themselves as self-active individuals. The Committee is more concerned with a mass movement than a human process. Can the TWFHC maintain tight ideological control over a mass movement which it is struggling to build?

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ARSENAULT

Cover Photo from Cathy Wedge's personal collection.

**ERRATA:**1) We inadvertently missed Amanda Bankier and Phil Masters from our contributor list last issue. and 2) Would the real Carol Shermyn please stand up. It should be Carol Pershyn.

## GUIDELINES FOR COPY WRITERS

1. All copy submitted must be typed, double-spaced, at 60 characters per line. Set the margins on your typewriter at 10 and 70.
2. Please keep a copy of your work.
3. Keep your writing brief and to the point. Edit your own work.
4. **tw** reserves the right to edit any copy submitted to us. We will attempt to notify you if we make any changes other than spelling, grammar and punctuation. Keep in touch with us.
5. Subjectivity is encouraged in all articles other than news briefs. As our paper is political in nature, we also encourage integration of political analysis with personal experience.
6. If you have any ideas for future articles, please write them on a separate page and attach to your article.

LETTER  
FROM THE OTHER WOMAN

Dear Everybody,

Everytime I sit down to write a letter from Europe, I feel totally overwhelmed. There is so much to write about and I can't remember hardly any of it.

But first--about the Irish Women's Movement. It's definitely here though I haven't yet contacted them because I've only just found it. The first group I heard about was AIM (I don't know what the letters stand for), which works for family law reform. I'm sending you a clipping about a recent activity of theirs which I thought very impressive. It would take a hell of a lot of courage anywhere but especially in Ireland. Unfortunately, I couldn't attend the meeting; I was not in Dublin. Another group is Irishwomen United which has been around for a few years...they would be the same group that Bonnie Charles Bluh mentions in *Women to Woman: European Feminists*. Nell McCafferty whom Bluh writes about is still around. She writes for the Irish Times and is still with Irish Women United. I am going to try and talk with her. And here is some great

## CAPE BRETON

Dear Other Woman:

My name is Audrey Butler. I'm 16 years old and an unpublished unknown, unestablished poet and prose writer but that's not all unusual I suppose. I'm submitting three of my poems for your consideration. My knowledge of poetic terms and styles, etc. is limited. I'm also not too accomplished in the 'Letter to the Editor' department (this is the first, in fact). I've read a lot of Sylvia Plath, Erica Jong, some Diane Di Prima and only one Anne Waldman (though I'm looking for more). I've read a little of the writings of Colette and Kerouac, a lot of Marie-Claire Blais, Angela Davis, George Jackson and Hermann Hesse. My lack of good reading material is not a matter of choice but where I live contributes to it a lot. I am currently whiling my way through high school, alternating back and forth from wanting a career on the Bar Association or in journalism--but really just wanting to move to either Montreal, Mexico or Cuba and write, write, write, maybe learn how to blow a sax.

I was only born 2 years ago when I started writing poetry (I've been writing though ever since I could remember) so I'm still a babe in the woods so to speak but I'm very willing to learn and I hope my mind is open. Forgive any atrocities or mistakes made, read my poems because they tell my prejudices, my strengths, my weaknesses, my love, my pain. . . . Sincerely yours,  
Cape Breton  
Nova Scotia.

news...Irish Women United now has a journal, *Banshee*, and naturally it is imperative that we go on exchange with them. I have a copy of what I think is their latest issue Vol. 1, No. 2, so it appears to be a new venture. Unfortunately the damn thing has no address on it whatsoever. At any rate it's quite a good journal in my opinion. I am sending you my copy under separate cover. Do read the editorial for one thing--it's interesting in relation to Wages for Housework... I also picked up a pamphlet in a bookstore on the herstory of the Irishwomen's Suffrage movement. The left here seems to be quite active. There's the Sinn Fein, the un-official political wing of the IRA. It's non-violent, republican and socialist and has a Women's Committee. The Women's Committee published a pamphlet which I bought called *The Rights of Women in Ireland*. It's full of facts and figures and the usual line from the left.

*Spare Rib* is available here and I buy it when I see it.

What confuses me are the censorship laws. Make a list of major 20th century writers of fiction and non-fiction and you have the complete list of writers banned in Ireland. For example Doris Lessing is banned in Ireland, yet I've seen her books in the stores. I guess the censorship is sporadic. It is ironic that a lot of these writers whose works are banned live in Ireland because there's no income tax here for writers!

## TORONTO

Dear Other Woman:

I thoroughly enjoyed reading your editorial 'Reflections on Movement Strategy'--Where are we Going?

I was strongly impressed that someone has finally decided to:

- 1) acknowledge politics in dealing with our situation.
- 2) demand that women get off their asses and become more assertive and make for 'change' themselves.
- 3) stress the urgent need for women to learn and accept themselves--to love ourselves, as full, potentially dynamic people!
- 4) 'Sisterhood' does NOT conquer all.

I think the paper could benefit from more writers and writings about Toronto happenings, women and their activities in Toronto, also accounts of 'positive' strokes. i.e., personal accounts of women gaining more economic and social stature and personal accounts of how women have overruled our patriarchal society and emerged with greater dignity and confidence.

Sincerely,  
Dale McDonough  
Toronto.

## IRELAND

And speaking of writers, Edna O'Brien who is Irish but now living in London, has just written her first non-fiction book, *Mother Ireland*. O'Brien was in Dublin to promote her book so I bought a copy and she autographed it for me.

Ireland is a very beautiful country. I just love the place. It's incredibly green and magical. One of my favourite places is Wicklow, south of Dublin on the east coast of Ireland. That was also the place where I found a cat in the Irish Sea, nearly drowned. I brought it back to my guesthouse and so they now have three cats.

Tomorrow I expect to take the train to Killarney. Next week I'll probably be in London. I've been here nearly three weeks and it's only just now that I'm getting out of the fog, confusion and loss of memory caused by jet lag, culture shock and liberal quantities of Guinness and Irish whiskey.

I bought a T-shirt that has the Guinness label on it and people here never fail to comment on it. I tell them that Guinness is paying me a thousand pounds a week to wear the T-shirt and drink Guinness all over Ireland. And people believe me...for a second. Hell, they don't need to pay me.

Furthermore I kissed the Blarney Stone and I'm now twice as talkative as I ever was.

I think of the paper often...I hope everything is o.k. with her and the Collective.

Love and Kisses to you all,  
Cindy  
for The Other Woman  
Ireland Edition.

THE OTHER WOMAN  
PROUDLY PRESENTS:  
THE FIRST FEMINIST RUMMAGE  
SALE!

That's right, folks! So start saving all your feminist rummage (or any non-feminist rummage you might have hidden away in your closets).

The sale will take place on September 25 and 26, location to be announced in our next issue. If you would like to donate rummage, put up posters in your neighbourhood, or if you have a vehicle and can help pick up rummage, call Josie at 532-0250. If it's busy, keep trying.

## WE NEED:

Someone to help out the paper once every two months by the free use of either their large car or their van for transporting papers. Please get in touch with us. We need you and your van.

## READER'S SURVEY RESULTS

In our last issue, we featured a 'Reader's Survey' on our back cover. We list below a sample response of what our readers think of *The Other Woman*. If you have not already sent in yours, please do so. If you wish to keep your back cover, just use a separate sheet.

Out of the number of women responding, only one came from outside of Ontario (astounding since we have a national readership), and only one was not a subscriber (but then she is a faithful reader anyway). Another interesting fact, which may only be indicative of our sample, was to have an average age of 35. (Gone, it seems, is the myth that

every feminist is in their twenties.) Only two did not go to university. (That makes us even. Two on our editorial collective didn't either.) About half of the response has been reading us for two years.

It looks like our readers are more demanding than we thought since there were several comments on improvement in our graphics and photos. People wanted us to give them more news stories as well as more analysis of society, but the majority also mentioned the need for more emphasis on the personal aspect. (This is our one fault just now. We need more accounts of women in different situations to act as role

models, and personal reports of women and their work situations.)

Please help us to help you by sending in short articles on your job and how it affects you. If you don't throw words together easily, we will edit for you, if you prefer. We are only a handful of women in Toronto so, please, if you really do want more news, send it into us yourselves so that others across the country may know. Again, we would be really grateful to know how we can best serve you by receiving even more responses and we thank those who have already mailed these responses to us.

**THE OTHER WOMAN**



CULTURE POLITICS FEMINISM

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## READER RESPONSE TO EDITORIAL

# WHERE SHOULD WE BE GOING ?

Dear Other Woman:

The following is my response to your editorial: 'Where Are We Going?'

It would be more to the point to ask: 'Where should we be going?' The answer to that is that we should be working to build socialism in Canada because the oppression of women is bound up with the question of class and the question of private property. Your editorial refers to some of the unpleasant side-effects of capitalist institutions, but it sidesteps the fact that human oppression must continue to exist as long as capitalism continues to exist because capitalism is based on the exploitation of one class by another. The working class creates the economic and political power of its oppressors, but it can hardly be said to do so freely. Freedom is incompatible with a system which places property rights ahead of human rights. If we as women 'can no longer tolerate our oppression', we have to recognize the fact that our oppression has an economic base. There is a purpose behind our oppression. It has nothing to do with our supposed physical strength or weakness or with male psychology. It has a lot to do with the fact that we have babies.

Many women point out that the oppression of women had been going on for many centuries before the advent of the industrial revolution. The end of feudalism did not terminate the oppression of women, so why should the demise of capitalism?

Women are oppressed in order to preserve class society. Social classes are ongoing things, and wealth is inherited. Wealth and poverty both are consolidated and transmitted from one generation to the next through the institution of the family. The family preserves the wealth of the class in power; it transmits poverty and respect for authority to the oppressed masses.

But the family as an economic unit exists only because women are oppressed. Women are dependent upon men, not because we are naturally weak or helpless, but because economic power is arrayed against us in every area of our lives. Whether we want a job with adequate pay or a divorce or an abortion, there is always some law or custom or financial reality to oppose us. It is terribly easy for us to give up our struggles for justice and accept a comfortable and respected life in a monogamous marriage. If our child allowance cheques really covered the cost of rearing a child, if free day care were available and if equal pay for equal work were a reality instead of a slogan, how many married women would remain in a totally unsatisfactory monogamous marriage where they are expected to work full time at an outside job and do all of the housework as well?

Male domination preserves class society because it preserves monogamous marriage, it preserves the family as an economic unit, and it preserves the wealth of the economically powerful. Our oppression serves to protect private property. In fact all too often women are taken to be property, either private or public. The economic emancipation of women would be the end of class society, and that is why so much pressure is

put on us to conform. Were the family to lose its economic function, all love would be free love. Nobody would be born owning millions of dollars, and nobody would be born into destitution. The oppression of women is the most fundamental oppression because it gives rise to all other forms of oppression. It does not exist in isolation. Likewise our liberation struggles, if they are genuine, will contribute to the liberation of all oppressed people.

The goal of the women's movement therefore should be the abolition of class society as a whole. An autonomous women's movement is essential, but not a women's movement that ignores its inherent interconnection with all other liberation struggles. In one sense we make up part of all classes, but in a more profound sense we can paraphrase Marx and say that the **oppressed** woman can have no **membership** in an oppressing class. The role of women is to overthrow class society. In doing so we will abolish ourselves as property and create for the first time in history a truly human society.

We should plan our strategy so that our short-term reformist goals advance the final and total emancipation of women everywhere. Most demands of the women's movement are of this type—demands for equal pay for equal work, equal access to all jobs, free day care, legalized abortion. All of these things have begun and they should continue.

We should be organizing around the government cuts in services because they constitute a double attack on women: (1) as users of day care and as mothers concerned about the health and education of our children; and (2) as workers. Most of the hospital workers who have lost their jobs are women, as are most of the teachers and social workers. Women are being forced out of the work place while cuts in day care and other services conspire to keep them in the home. If the government will not provide free day care we should look into the possibility of doing it ourselves on a co-operative basis and consciously using our day care centres as a forum for politicizing mothers and children alike.



Shelie Ludlow Carol Pasternak

Many of us became politicized by working for other people's liberation—in the black movement and the anti-war movement. We are intensely aware of the relationship with other oppressed people, sometimes to the point of repressing the consciousness of our own problems. But the positive side to this is our unique potential to exercise a unifying influence in the Left which today is badly divided. If the women's movement remains autonomous we can do a great deal to unify the various liberation struggles because some of us are Native Indian people, unemployed workers, injured workers, immigrants, etc. We should be joining coalition groups and working toward common front activities.

We should also re-think some of the programmes underway. I am completely in support of Rina's letter (vol. 4, no. 3) opposing women's credit unions and other pseudo-feminist projects. Things like this reinforce the injustices that surround us, and they also use up a lot of woman power that could be put to good use. We want to be busy but we don't want to run around in circles going nowhere.

And we certainly have to be on guard against organizing around issues that would only set back our cause. The issue I am thinking of in particular is "Wages for Housework", which frightens me somewhat even though I agree with the subjective side of the WFH argument. It is frustrating to work without reward,

without building anything to show for all our work, and without even the conviction that you exist as a person after 20 years of being "Mrs. John Smith" or "Billy's mother." Nevertheless there are a million reasons why wages cannot be paid for housework—the lack of an employer, the lack of a saleable product, the fact that single men and women do housework in rented rooms, that children are expected to help with the housework without remuneration, and the fact that it encourages the government to encroach on our privacy to inspect our housekeeping practices. But even if it were possible to arrange for housewives to be paid, it is still a reactionary goal—to get women out of the work force and away from the important issues of the day. Instead we should be experimenting with alternate life styles in communities and communes so that housework takes on a true social function and becomes **inherently** valuable. We should be demanding more social services and full employment.

The frightening thing about WFH is its fascist overtones. When Hitler and Mussolini came into power they talked a lot about the dignity of women and the sanctity of the home and about women's unique value as breeders of the master race. Women were supposed to stay home and have babies. Divorce and abortion were unpatriotic. Millions of people lost their lives under fascist regimes which were founded on home and mother. Today women are again being forced to give up their jobs. Racism and reaction are growing. Fascism is a distinct threat. And WFH could well be the spearhead of a fascist recurrence—women organizing for their own enslavement and that of the entire world. It is because of this possibility that I think that we should take time out no matter how busy we are and think a little about the nature and cause of our oppression and to analyze what we are doing and where it may lead. Women will be drawn into the women's movement when they see we are serious about making fundamental changes, but most of them see the irrelevance of pseudo-feminism and don't want to waste their time on it.

Yours truly,

Catherine Layton



Shelie Ludlow Carol Pasternak

**No, Spencer, the women's movement is not going to the dogs.**

## OUR BODIES

**PANDORA—India**--Compulsory sterilization is being planned for Punjab, India, and it is expected that the accompanying state legislation will be adopted early this year.

Open opposition to the measure has been minimal thus far, but this is not surprising as India is under repressive "state of emergency" which includes strict censorship of the country's newspapers and the holding of over 60,000 political prisoners.

Balbir Singh, Health Minister of Punjab, said the measure might attract opposition from "people who think they have a fundamental right to have as many children as they want...We ran into the same sort of objection with smallpox vaccinations and eventually it was accepted that everyone had to be vaccinated, even if they didn't like it, for the common good," the New York Times reported.

Sterilization is India's most widely used means of contraception, with the operation being performed on women in 85 per cent of the cases. Incentives are given for sterilization. There are also penalties for not practicing birth control.

There are apparently some officials who think forced sterilization might prove "unrealistic". However, the Punjab state is confident of its efforts and has already compiled lists of eligible couples--those in which the woman is between 15 and 45 years of age and has borne three children.

There has reportedly been debate in the Gandhi administration on the issue, and for the moment compulsory sterilization is not being projected nationwide. Officials plan to watch Punjab first to gauge the reaction of its residents.

Calling the legislation "revolutionary" and boasting the "honour" of the first sterilization law in the world, Indian officials expressed the hope that other underdeveloped countries would follow their lead.



**banshee—Germany**--West German women now only need to take one pill to be protected for a year against unwanted pregnancy. The Pill, which must be placed by a doctor in the womb, releases daily doses of progesterones through a plastic membrane. The maker, Chemie Gruenthat, said the main advantage is that it has fewer harmful side effects because it works locally and can be removed when pregnancy is desired.

### Free Tampons

**oob—Britain**--In Britain, a group called 'Free Sanitary Protection' is asking that the British National Health Program provide free sanitary napkins and tampons to women. The group claims that women will spend anywhere from \$630 to \$1,000 in their lifetime on having their periods.

Last November, a demonstration was held to protest the profits of the firms producing sanitary protection (Tampax and Sothalls). Soon after the Price Commission recommended an immediate 10 per cent reduction or the elimination of pricing them all together

(in Britain, the Price Commission can only make recommendations). The companies only considered the 10 per cent reduction by offering free combs with or a contest with the winner receiving a trip to 'gay paree'.

During further demonstrations women chanted 'The curse makes a hole in your purse' and '2-4-6-8, women have to menstruate.' They also protested the way that young women are portrayed in manufacturer's ads.

### Abortion March

**LNS-Italy**--More than 20,000 women gathered in Rome on April 3 to demand the right of free, legal and unrestricted abortion, in an impressive show of force against Italy's Christian Democratic government.

Women poured into the city from all parts of the country, and the many participating political organizations ranging from far left to moderate formed a united front, chanting such slogans as "We will decide, not the Pope." "Today in the square for abortion. Tomorrow in the fight with the gun." and "Let's abort the Christian Democracy."

The demonstration had been organized initially by militant leftist feminists organizations and the Radical Party to celebrate the 13th anniversary of women's rights to vote in Italy. However, a vote taken in the Chamber of Deputies the previous week sanctioning abortion only in cases of rape evoked a much larger and more unified demonstration.

According to LeMonde's Italy correspondent, the women on April 3 demonstrated "not only for abortion, but for a reform of the society...A referendum, if it takes place, will certainly not be 'apolitical', as the Christian Democracy hopes. Each 'yes' (for abortion) will...be interpreted as a 'no' to the present regime."

## Heterosexism

**bmr—USA** Mary Jo Risher, a 38-year-old nurse, was denied custody of her 9-year-old son Richard in December last year, after he had lived with her for almost four years.

In a Dallas, Texas Domestic Relations Court, a jury comprising ten men and two women decided that a "material and substantial change" had occurred in Risher's home, which warranted the removal of Richard from her custody. That charge was her homosexual relationship with Ann Foreman, a 29-year-old bank auditor.

This case has aroused national interest because this is the first time in American jurisprudence that parental fitness has been predicated on the issue of sexual preference alone.

Douglas Risher has remarried, and contends that Richard would be better raised in his home, where he would have a male model and a stepmother who "could be there to attend to this needs 24 hours a day". He admitted, under cross examination, that he had been convicted for drunken driving in 1971, that he had broken Mary Jo's nose during a marital argument; and that, before remarrying, he had paid for an 18-year-old woman's abortion when confronted by her father.

### Racism

**bmr—USA**--Dessie Woods and Cheryl Todd, the two black women who were accused of murder and armed robbery when they shot a white salesman who tried to rape them, were found guilty by a jury in Hawkinsville, Georgia, last month. Woods was convicted of armed robbery and voluntary manslaughter, and Todd of being an accomplice in the alleged robbery. Woods' lawyer has called the verdict "outrageous and unbelievable", and plans to file motions to set aside the verdict and acquit the women on grounds of insufficient evidence.

## NEWS

### BRIEFS

#### Argentina

**LNS**--Olga Talamante returned home to Gilroy, California, March 28 after being imprisoned in Argentina for 16 months on charges of subversion. Talamante, a Chicana working in Argentina, and 13 other rural teachers and community workers were arrested on November 11, 1974, during widespread police raids following the declaration of martial law by Isabel Peron's government. They were charged with possession of handguns and subversive literature, and tortured for the first four days of detention. After 10 months of imprisonment, Talamante and eight of the Argentines were convicted September 17, 1975 and sentenced to three years imprisonment.

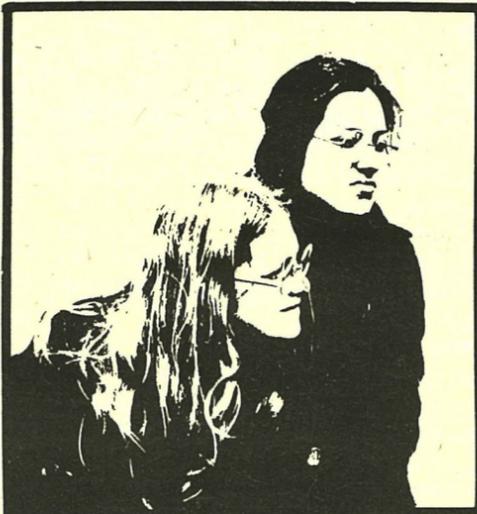
Olga has vowed to continue to struggle for the freedom of her fellow prisoners, who remain imprisoned in Argentina along with 7,000 political prisoners of the current military regime.

#### Thailand

Police smashed up a women's sit-in in Thailand at the end of March.

Last November the Hara clothing company in Bangkok closed one factory of 300 workers, sacked 120 from their other factory and cut wages to 70p a day.

Women picketed in protest, and management turned 30 hired thugs on them. So they occupied the factor, renamed it the Labour Union factory, and started to run it under workers' control. Five months later the police moved in.



Nina Sabanoff, Portland, Ore.

### Mercenaries

A California firm which hires mercenaries to fight in Africa, Asia and South America says that nearly half of its recruits are women.

The firm, *El Kamas Enterprises* of Anaheim, states that women are especially good in intelligence work and as pilots or demolition experts. The firm's director said 'Uncle Sam has had women with these skills on its payroll for many, many years.'

*El Kamas* hires women on weekly and yearly contracts at \$350-500 a week or more.

Graffiti in a women's toilet (in Ireland): 'When God made man, she was only testing'.

**bmr—Tanzania**--Most of the 1,226 people reported murdered last year in Tanzania were killed under suspicion of practicing witchcraft or because they were believed to be robbers. Others included wives killed for alleged adultery.

## NATIVE WOMEN

On February 25, the partially decomposed body of a young native woman was found on the edge of a road near Wanblee, South Dakota. An autopsy was ordered and the cause of death was officially described as 'exposure'. The body was buried after the hands had been severed to send to the FBI in Washington for fingerprinting. A month later her family in Antigonish, Nova Scotia was informed. She was Anna Mae Picou Aquash, a Canadian Micmac Indian, who had been active in a number of native rights activities in the U.S. Perhaps if the death had been reported in isolation from the events at Wounded Knee the previous year, or even the events a few weeks prior to her death during which two native Americans had been killed, it would have gone unremarked. However Anna Mae was a Canadian and her death and the events which followed it have seriously called into question the role of the FBI and other American law enforcement agencies.

Prompted by action by civil rights groups on both sides of the border, the Canadian government asked for a further investigation. An exhumation order was made and a second autopsy performed, this time by a pathologist selected by the Acquash family. This time it was found that Anna Mae had been shot in the back of the head: a fact curiously neglected in the previous autopsy.

The deliberate cover-up operation and the inexplicable mutilation of the body cast doubts on the propriety of the FBI's actions so far and open up more far reaching questions which are being taken up by five Canadian organizations including Oxfam, CASNP and the Quakers. You can support their action by writ-

ing to Allan MacEachen, House of Commons, demanding an enquiry into Anna Mae's death. Send copies to one of the above organizations.

(Reprinted from LAWG, Vol. 3, No. 5)



Joanna LeDeaux, a Cherokee/Navaho and paralegal worker with the Oglala Legal Defense/Offense Committee, has been incarcerated since September 1975 after refusing to testify before a Rapid City grand jury investigating the killing of two FBI agents on the Pine Ridge Reservation on June 26, 1975. LeDeaux stated the U.S. has no legal jurisdiction over her as a sovereign citizen of the Oglala Nation, nor was it a grand jury of her peers, since no Native Americans sat on the grand jury.

(Reprinted from *Fifth Estate*, Washington, D.C.)



**THE THREE OF CUPS**, a women's coffeehouse, will be open July 17 and 31, August 14 and 28, from 8 pm to 1 am. For information on performers and location, call 532-9047.

Toronto's coffeehouse for women is again looking for a place to live. A new space should be available by the first of July.

The herstory of the Three of Cups has shown us that we (as all women) need to have more control over our activities. We first had to move from Scadding House since it was being torn down to make way for the Eatons complex. At Queen St., we moved due to hassles with the landlord, high rents and certain standards imposed by the L.C.B.O. From these experiences, we have gained a sense of how important it is for us to control our own resources.

We are starting to investigate the practical ways to buy a building to be used by the Three of Cups and other women's groups. We are contacting a woman lawyer to look into different legal structures and are thinking amongst ourselves about ways of raising money for this building. One idea, for example, is to run a woman's lottery. Another idea we are investigating is the possibility of a woman's cooperative where women can use their money to help build a permanent women's community.

## TORONTO WOMEN'S NETWORK

The Toronto Women's Network has been meeting since January 1975, on the last Wednesday of every month, with alternating 5:30 and 8:00 p.m. meetings to accommodate as many women as possible.

The network began as a result of a Secretary of State consultation, October 1974, where representatives of many Toronto women's groups expressed a need for greater information sharing. Seven of us met and organized a founding meeting where the following aims were accepted:

The Women's Network is seen as a mechanism by which women's groups, agencies, services, organizations, collectives, etc., working to improve the situation-lives-lot-status-condition-power of women and to develop individual women, can:

1. Exchange information about what they are doing.
2. Come together around common interests and goals.

The primary function is to be information sharing with the possibility of ad hoc coalitions forming around issues, involving as few or as many members as wish.

The structure has changed a bit since then. Each meeting is organized by six women—five are supposed to be representatives from women's groups. Each month two women come into the committee and two go off so that each woman has a three month commitment. This committee organizes the agenda, the chairing and minute taking, the food and drink, and phones women's groups to remind them of the next meeting. Approximately 20 groups attend each month—there are about 70 in the city. Individual women as well as group representatives are welcome. For more information, contact either Chris or Mary at the YWCA Women's Resource Centre, 925-1154.

# MONTREAL

## FSA SAYS NO TO LESBIANS

It has been publicized in Montreal and elsewhere that a gay counselling service has been set up in Montreal, operating from the Family Service Association (FSA). FSA is a part of Ville Marie Social Service Centre, which is the government-funded social service agency set up to serve the English population of Montreal.

One person instrumental in organizing the Gay Counselling Project has been Mariam Boghen, who is a social worker at FSA who has been involved in the gay male community for approximately three years. She has helped to organize gay male CR and encounter groups, and has been doing counselling of gay males. She herself is straight, and has little contact with the lesbian community. She does not counsel lesbians. Also involved in organizing the project is Bruce Garside, a McGill School of Social Work Master program student who is on student placement with Ms. Boghen at FSA.

### CONFLICT ARISES

When it became clear that funding was going to be given to the Gay Project by Ville Marie, it seemed logical to the women involved in the Peer Counselling Group that a gay woman be hired—preferably a woman involved in the Lesbian Peer Counselling Group. The reasoning behind this was that both Mariam Boghen and Bruce Garside were counselling only gay men; no lesbians were giving or receiving services as a part of the FSA Gay Project.

The Lesbian Peer Counselling Group invited Mariam Boghen to meet with them during one of their regular meetings in order to express their desire that a woman be hired with whatever funds were forthcoming, and also to communicate about the dissatisfaction that the group felt with some of the decisions made by the FSA Project, mainly to do with the academic qualifications of persons hired by the project, which the lesbian group felt were a continuation of the social work hierarchy and status quo.

During this meeting it was learned that the amount of money forthcoming from Ville Marie would be a half salary and that the decision had already been made to hire Robert Vallee, a last year student in the McGill Masters of Education Counselling programme. When it was pointed out that this meant that lesbian women would still be left without services at the FSA Project, Ms. Boghen replied that in the request to Ville Marie for funding, the Project had used the

number of men coming for services to show that there was a need for such services, hence the hiring of a man.

As of this report lesbian women are still not being served by other lesbians or in fact by anyone—in the FSA Project. The staff continue to provide individual counselling and groups for gay men only. In the brief that the Project submitted to Ville Marie, it was proposed that "these services be offered to men and women."

As well, the FSA Gay Project has advertised itself in both straight (the Montreal Star) and gay (Gay Times, December, 1975) media as providing counselling for both women and men.

None will argue against the need for adequate counselling services for gay men; however, when such a service pretends that it is serving lesbians and gay men when in reality it serves only men, the result is the oppression of both women looking for lesbian counsellors and of lesbian women in the lesbian community doing counselling.

### PROGRESS OF EVENTS

After several meetings it became clear that the Advisory Committee was being used to give 'rubber-stamp' approval to decisions that were being made outside the Advisory Committee. Examples of this include: 1) deciding what qualifications any persons hired to work on the Gay Counselling Project should have, and presenting these qualifications in writing to funding bodies at Ville Marie—the qualifications being a social work degree or a Masters in something else (Education, etc.); 2) deciding who would be hired when a half salary was given to the project by Ville Marie.

Meanwhile, several lesbians who had been counselling for several years within the context of Women's Information and Referral Centre-Labyris Montreal-Slightly Older Lesbians, decided to form a Lesbian Peer Counselling Group in order to provide support for counsellors, to better coordinate services, and also to provide training for other lesbians wishing to become counsellors. This group of nine women started to meet weekly in September of 1975.

Some of the members of the Lesbian Peer Counselling Group attended the Advisory Committee meetings in order to see what services were being planned. As well, referrals were taken from the FSA Project, since the Project was unable to serve lesbians wishing to be counselled by another lesbian.

In the fall of 1975, when the project was in the planning stages, Ms. Boghen invited women and men from the lesbian and gay male communities to sit on an

## LESBIANS ORGANIZE

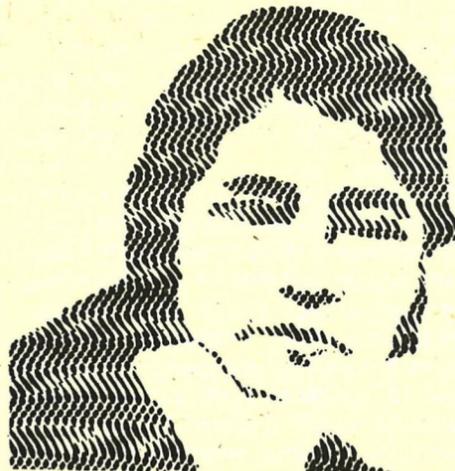
A new lesbian group has been formed in Montreal! It's called the MONTREAL LESBIAN ORGANIZATION.

Members of this group are holding the regular Lesbian Drop-In, every Thursday evening, starting at 8 p.m. at 3595 St. Urbain & Corner of Prince Arthur. All lesbians are welcome.

As well, the MONTREAL LESBIAN ORGANIZATION is planning other activities, including a disco night, lesbian film nights; the organization of consciousness raising groups for lesbians, and special events for the summer months. A regular monthly newsletter will be published, giving details of these events; to receive it, please phone or sign up at a drop-in.

You can contact the MONTREAL LESBIAN ORGANIZATION by calling Women's Information and Referral

Centre, who are lending facilities and giving support at 842-4781, Mon-Fri., 9 a.m.-5 p.m. or by writing them at the above address.



Advisory Committee. Most of the women and men on this committee were individuals who had been or were active in lesbian or gay organizing; very few actual gay organizations were represented.

Meanwhile, using unpaid workers and borrowing resources from their other projects, Women's Information and Referral Centre and Labyris continue to organize activities and services in the lesbian community. These include a weekly lesbian drop-in, monthly dances, a lesbian mothers group, a coming out group, lesbian consciousness raising groups and a monthly Labyris newsletter. A lesbian Counselling Team provides individual, couple and crisis peer counselling. As well, coordinated by Women's Info and Labyris, Montreal lesbians organize periodic conferences and seminars, provide speakers on lesbianism for community organizations, organize desensitization programs and make available reading lists and other resources for studies.

**LONG TIME COMING**

**CANADIAN LESBIAN FEMINIST NEWSPAPER**

BOX 128 STATION G MONTREAL, P.Q.

SUBS: \$5.00 YR INDIVIDUALS \$10.00 YR INSTITUTIONS 50¢ SAMPLE COPY

### FLASHNEWSFLASHNEWSFLASH

There will be a Lesbian Conference in Ottawa Thanksgiving Weekend, October 9-11. If you would like more information, or would like to offer suggestions or help in organizing the conference, contact:

Kendra Forbes  
c/o Ottawa Women's Centre  
821 Somerset W.  
Ottawa, Ont.  
(613) 233-2560

### TOWARDS A STRATEGY FOR THE LESBIAN MOVEMENT

Wages Due of the Wages for Housework Committee is holding a lesbian conference at the Donvale Community Centre on July 23-25. Topics will include: autonomy, child custody, cutbacks, sexuality, our lives as lesbians. Speakers are coming from New York City and London, England. For more information, call either 416-466-7457 or 465-6822.

### LAW JOURNAL

There is a new independent magazine available. The first issue of **L'Egale**, a magazine dealing with the law and how it affects women, can be obtained for \$2 from Canadian Council on Social Development, Box 3505, Stn. C, Ottawa.

### CREDIT UNIONS

Women's credit unions are now being considered in cities as diverse as: Calgary, St. Catharines, Thunder Bay and St. John's. We wish these (and more) luck and hope that they will eventually form a network in Canada along with the Metro Toronto Women's Credit Union.

# WOMEN'S RALLY FOR ACTION

## MARCH 22ND

**Editor's Note:** Some old news (but perhaps not so old, to those of us in Eastern Canada) to update what has been happening in B.C. (Excerpted from *Kinesis*, April 1976).

The culminating point of two months' work and organizing! WOMEN'S RALLY FOR ACTION DAY.

From the original 30 Lower Mainland women's groups the organization of the Women's Rally for Action spread out to involve over 400 women's groups and organizations throughout B.C. Both the B.C. Federation of Labour and the B.C. Teachers' Federation voiced support for the Rally and the latter released all BCTF Status of Women contacts for the day to attend the Rally. A number of new feminist groups were formed in more remote areas of the province as a result of women meeting to work for the Rally.

Regular press releases and information bulletins were dispatched to every paper (200 dailies and weeklies), radio and TV station in B.C. Rally organizers were interviewed on radio and TV frequently.

Some other facts to boggle the mind: — 700 Women's Rally for Action briefs were printed and distributed throughout B.C. and a copy sent before the Rally to each MLA. In addition, lobbying teams brought briefs on particular issues of importance in their own ridings.

— 10,000 flyers and leaflets promoting the Rally and explaining the issues were distributed throughout B.C.

— 5,000 Women Rally for Action support buttons were sold throughout B.C.

— hundreds of personal letters were written to MLAs by women unable to attend the Rally in person.

Transportation was arranged from all over the province to Vancouver and chartered buses scheduled from Vancouver to Victoria. Funds were provided for women in the Interior and North to help cover their travel and child care expenses. Billets were arranged in Vancouver and Victoria.

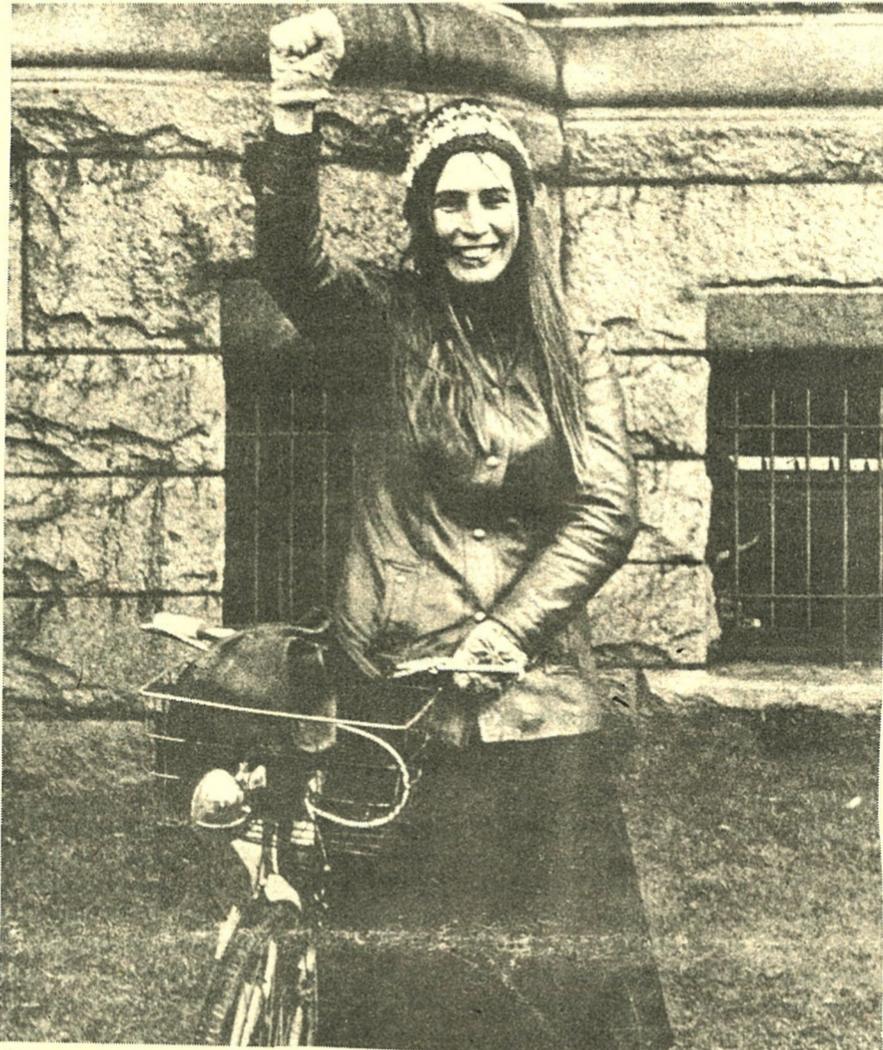
Women in Victoria gathered tents and equipment and supplies for the Women's Office and Child Care area, constructed an enormous wooden 'report card', made signs and slogged their way through the mountain of arrangements and crises connected with D-Day.

Members of the Appointment Committee contacted all the MLAs requesting appointments and spent hours on the phones and even travelled to Victoria arranging and confirming the appointments. By Monday morning every MLA except Pat McGeer had confirmed their appointment time and 246 lobbyists representing all 48 ridings were informed, trained and prepared for their meetings.

A full programme of speakers, lobbying reports, and singers ran from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. The four major political parties in B.C. were invited to send women to speak.

Rosemary Brown rose on the floor of the Legislative Assembly and asked for adjournment of the House to discuss urgent public business—the discrimination against women. Speaker of the House Ed Smith ruled this out of order and said there would be time after the Debate.

We were determined that no women would be excluded for lack of funds. In some cases unexpected sources of support were found in the community. Women gave their time, their energy, their ideas, their money. They provided



Women came by airplane and automobile. They came by bus and ferry. 8 month old Adrian came from Atlin in a pack on his mother's back. And they came by bicycle. They came to the Women's Rally for Action.

space in their homes for each other and looked after each other's children. We have money left over to mail out final reports and compile a Rally Kit!

Women's Rally for Action is a beginning! We have met with our MLAs and learned how they stand on issues important to women. We have experienced the strength that comes with knowledge and organization and cooperation and numbers. Our MLAs are supposed to be representing our interests in the government. We must maintain contact with one another to share our knowledge, experience and expertise, to organize action and to feel our strength and solidarity. Contacts and centres are spreading like a net across the province. We must keep adding to and strengthening that net.

## Mental Patients' Association

M.P.A. performs a desperately needed service for ex-mental patients. Lonely people come to our drop-in centre every day, 7 days a week, from morning till midnight—sometimes as many as 100 a day. Our halfway houses accommodate 48 ex-patients who stay for a while to make the difficult transition between hospital and community, then move on, and others take their place from our waiting list.

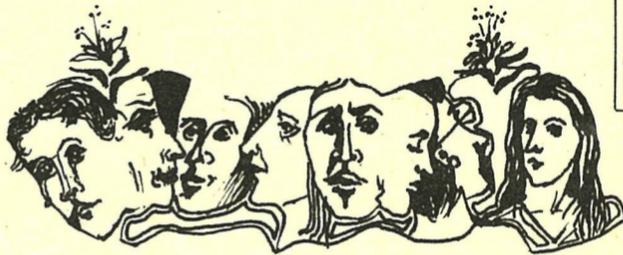
Ex-patients run M.P.A. One voice, one vote, on every issue. Because everyone has decision-making power, former patients regain self-esteem and improve their self-image which is so badly bruised in a mental institution.

Over the past several years, policy has been to discharge more and more patients from institutions into the unprepared and uncaring community. Prob-

bly unknown to the public, over the past five years our facilities and services have absorbed this problem, providing the vital missing link between hospital and community.

Our funding terminates July 31—unless we receive further funding we cannot continue to function in the community. Without M.P.A. where will they live? Who will befriend them?

We urge you to write to the government asking that we receive the necessary funding to continue to look after our people. Write on behalf of: Mental Patients Association, 2146 Yew St., Vancouver, B.C. to: Hon. R. McClelland, Minister, Dept. of Health, Parliament Buildings, Victoria, B.C. and to Hon. W. Vander Zalm, Minister, Dept. of Human Resources, Parliament Buildings, Victoria, B.C.



## MARCH 8TH

The Women's Rally for Action Committee celebrated International Women's Day, March 8th, with a noon-hour Information Rally in front of the Vancouver Courthouse. Speakers provided background on issues such as Daycare, the Berger Commission Recommendations on Matrimonial Property, Affirmative Action Programming, Sexism in Education, and funding for women's centres. These are some of the basic issues covered by the 20-page brief presented to every MLA in the province in preparation for the mass lobbying action March 22nd in Victoria.

## Federation of Women

The British Columbia Federation of Women (BCFW) is a new strong and vital form of political expression for women. The Federation is governed by a standing committee of 25 members elected at the annual convention.

The Federation works towards ending the isolation of women who live in the various parts of B.C., to this end the province is divided into 12 regions, each represented by a standing committee. The committee meets every second month and whenever possible outside Vancouver. The meetings give women of the area the chance to discuss their needs and concerns with all members of the standing committee.

B.C. women must organize to build the collective strength of the women's movement to bring about meaningful change. This can best be done through the BCFW.

The sub-committees are the main action areas of the Federation. There are now four sub-committees which deal with provincial issues: Childcare, Rights of Lesbians, Rights of Women in Prison and Education. In each region, including the lower mainland, sub-committees meet and formulate policy for the Federation to act upon.

## Women's Building

We are a group of Vancouver women trying to bring about the establishment of a desperately needed women's building in which we could have a coffee house and/or bar, as well as acting as co-ordinator and central switchboard for all women's groups in Vancouver.

We feel that an undertaking such as this is vital to our growth and strength and could be a corner stone in the fight to eradicate the many splits within the movement.

As we realize that we have a momentous job ahead of us we would like to benefit from others' mistakes and successes and would appreciate any information, ideas or advice you could find the time to channel our way, about anything from organization to financing.

Anyone interested in helping us out please contact us as soon as possible—we'll be looking forward to hearing from you.

Vancouver Women's Building Committee  
c-o Women's Bookstore  
804 Richards  
Vancouver, B.C.

## GAY ALLIANCE TOWARD EQUALITY

A civil rights organization for Gay women and men

Meetings: 1st & 3rd Wed.  
Dances: 3rd Sat. each month  
in the Graduate Student Union Bldg.  
16 Bancroft Ave.  
Office: 193 Carlton St., (416) 964-0148  
TORONTO

## CHILEAN PRISONER

Gladys Diaz Armijo, 35 year old mother who won a prize as the best Latin American journalist has been imprisoned and tortured by the Chilean junta.

She, her 7 year old son, and her husband Juan Carlos Perelman, were all seized in February 1975 by officers of DINA (the National Intelligence Directorate) and incarcerated in the notorious Villa Grimaldi.

Gladys Diaz Armijo had been press chief of the Radio Corporacion, Vice-President of the magazine *Punto Final*, and leader of the Union of Radio Journalists.

Chilean and Canadian people are trying to organize a letter writing campaign to obtain the release of Ms. Diaz. Those wishing to help are asked to write Prime Minister Trudeau, with a copy to Secretary of State for foreign Affairs, Allen MacEachen, requesting official Canadian intervention on her behalf.

Alternatively, letters may be sent to Gladys Diaz Appeal, care of Canadian Council of Churches, 40 St. Clair Avenue East, Toronto, Ontario.

Letters from North American journalists would be especially welcomed.

## GRAND JURY

Lureida Torres, a Puerto Rican Independentista and member of the Puerto Rican Socialist Party (PSP) faces jail within the next month for refusing to testify before a federal grand jury in New York City.

Ms. Torres, a 26 year old school teacher, was subpoenaed before the grand jury in January along with several other members and supporters of PSP. However, only Ms. Torres was granted immunity and held in contempt, the



others were released after refusing to testify.

Ms. Torres, a long-time supporter of the movement for Puerto Rican independence, has taken her appeal to the Supreme Court. The Puerto Rican woman faces imprisonment of at least six months, if the Supreme Court refuses to review the case.

The grand jury investigation centres around the 1975 bombings of Fraunces Tavern and several banks and insurance companies. A group called the Armed Forces of Puerto Rican Liberation (FALN) claimed credit for the bombings.

PSP has disclaimed responsibility for the bombings. The continued harassment of Lureida Torres is a vicious government attack on the Puerto Rican independence movement and on the participation of women within that struggle. *'The main object of this grand jury is to provide the FBI with information about any organization that supports and struggles for the independence of my country'*, said the Puerto Rican sister.

Over the past year, a majority of people subpoenaed before grand jury 'witchhunts' and jailed for contempt have been women.

However Lureida Torres remains firm in her decision not to collaborate with the federal government. *'I do not want to waiver in my determination in the face of this corrupt system which oppresses all and in particular victimizes the Puerto Rican people'*, said Ms. Torres.

## JOB EQUALITY

The Roberta Ryan Committee, composed of Nova Scotia women concerned with the status of women in this province, is seeking funds to help Roberta Ryan carry on her fight for equality in employment.

When Roberta, a graduate of the Holland College Police Academy was turned down for a job as a police officer in North Sydney in 1973, she felt that the decision was based on her sex, contrary to the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission. The Commission appointed a board of enquiry to look into her complaint after it failed to conciliate it.

On December 2, 1975, the board found that no discrimination on the basis of sex was involved in the refusal of the town's police chief to recommend Roberta for employment. Seemingly, this was the end of a two-year struggle for equality in employment.

Yet, in reading the decision of the board, two things stand out clearly.

In his testimony at the enquiry, the police chief stated that he had not recommended Roberta for the opening on his force because:

- 1) she failed to meet the minimum height and weight restrictions of 5'8" and 160 lb.
- 2) he anticipated problems with the union if he assigned Roberta to the day

shift rather than the back shift to which new officers were routinely assigned.

Nowhere in the board's decision were these two statements challenged or questioned.

The height and weight restrictions are in themselves discriminatory, not only against women, but also against some minority groups. Also, the police chief did not ask Roberta if she minded the back shift. He simply assumed that, as a woman, she was incapable of undertaking it.

In view of these two statements, the Roberta Ryan Committee finds the decision of the board of enquiry appalling. Accordingly, we are establishing a fund to help Roberta pay for the expenses she incurs in taking her battle further.

Since there are no provisions for appeal under the Nova Scotia Human Rights Act, Roberta's only recourse is to seek a judicial review of her case. In mid-May, she will ask the Supreme Court of Nova Scotia for such a review.

A judicial review does not hear new evidence; rather, the legal propositions enunciated by the enquirer will be studied to determine if any legal errors were made in interpretation.

Legal procedures, of course, are expensive. We are appealing to you to help Roberta Ryan. By helping her, you will be helping to clarify a woman's right to equal treatment in hiring and employment in Nova Scotia.

Please send your donations to:  
The Roberta Ryan Committee  
P.O. Box 2596  
Halifax South Post Office  
Halifax, Nova Scotia.

## HELP SUSAN SAXE

As you are probably aware, Susan Saxe was arrested last year in Philadelphia, after being on the F.B.I.'s Ten-Most-Wanted list for four and a half years for her alleged participation in antiwar actions in 1970. Presently in the Worcester Co. House of Correction, West Boylston, Massachusetts, Susan faces trial on charges stemming from a Boston bank robbery in September, 1970, during which a policeman was killed. Because Massachusetts has a "Felony Murder Law," she faces conviction on first-degree murder charges, even though she is not alleged to have had anything to do with the actual murder. Susan is presently preparing her defense with her lawyer, Nancy Gertner, for her trial, set to begin September 15th in Boston.

You may not be aware that Susan Saxe is also a sensitive poet. We are happy to announce the publication of her first book of poetry, containing poems she wrote during her first years underground. Entitled *Talk among the Womenfolk*, the book also includes several beautiful graphics by women.

*Talk among the Womenfolk* sells for \$2.00 per copy, postpaid, from the above address, or \$1.50 each to bookstores for ten or more copies. The proceeds from Susan's book will benefit her defense in Boston, where very negative pre-trial publicity for more than five years makes an unbiased jury a very unlikely possibility, since Susan is an outspoken Lesbian and feminist.

Susan Saxe Defense Fund  
c-o Phila. National Lawyers Guild  
1427 Walnut St.  
Philadelphia, PA 19102

## LOVE

## PRODUCTS

## EXPLOIT

## CHILDREN

As women, we are quite used to our representation in the media--as caricatures. In advertising we are seldom seen as anything else. It would appear that many products depend on the more oppressive of male attitudes for their selling power. What is more unfortunate is that women feed this oppression with passive silence, even compliance. We are all familiar with the advertisers' view of our particular reality, and the rules by which we are permitted to play their game. More often than not we are a combination of siren and drudge, incapable of rational assessment, yet a dependable housepet, trained to use our biological endowments to pleasure and serve the male--with the added bonus of reproducing heirs and future pets.

The whole industry is so full of abuse and outrage that it is difficult to isolate an example which can be viewed by any woman (or ethical man) as a rallying point, transcending attitudes. Such ads, however, do exist. Check the February issue of *'Cosmopolitan'* for a full-page number by 'Love' cosmetics.

Picture head and shoulders of female. She gazes at you soulfully through a sophisticated layer of makeup and professionally arranged hair. Picture a classically erotic-seductive face, emphasized by full lips slightly parted. The only hint of clothing is the sleeveless shoulder of white baby-dolls. So far all familiar, conditioned as we are to the exploitation of our sexual selling power. But there is a difference. Her limp hand holds a stuffed white cat, positioned to hide the breasts--or lack of them. And the subject is a child of about 12. The caption--'Love's Baby Soft. Because innocence is sexier than you think.'

This is pimping--the hard sell of virgin flesh, a male prerogative aimed at profit and pleasure at any cost.



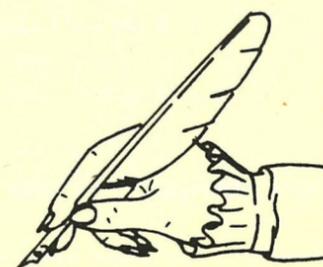
Women must reject any image of femininity that the existing media enforce through social rape! Our backs are already against the wall. For us it is moral suicide to accept any image which includes the symbolic (often real) deflowering of a child to sell a product. It is an act of intellectual cowardice to believe that such products can give the illusion of infant sexuality, or that infant sexuality is preferable to the mature sexuality of a woman. There could only be a further corruption of our feelings of worth and integrity as women if we dance as mere puppets to a male industry which finds our posturing and our humiliation both sexually arousing and economically orgasmic.

To accept this ad or any of those that include such definitions of ourselves is to deny our own inner child, our daughters and our sisters.

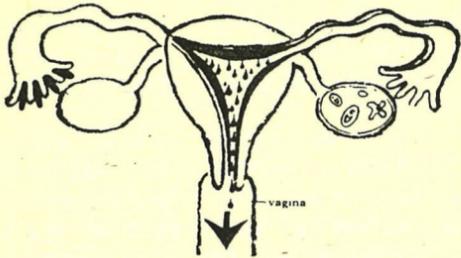
Make a start--fight. Ads are supposed to sell, not repel. Write letters to let them know that you will not buy. Remember that the cosmetic industry is financed by women who buy one of many brands. If 'Love' wishes to stay in a highly competitive industry, they can hardly afford NOT to listen.

Love cosmetics are distributed in Canada by Manley and James, Montreal, Quebec.

Two other addresses of relevance are:  
Task Force on Advertising, care of CAAB, 1240 Bay St. Suite 302, Toronto, M5R 2A7; and (regarding misleading advertising)  
Complaints Officer, Misleading Advertising Division, Bureau of Competition Policy, Department of CCA, Ottawa-Hull



# CONTRACEPTION CONFERENCE



## Participate

ACCT (the Abortion and Contraception committee of Toronto) wants all women concerned with the issues regarding birth control to attend a conference they are having at OISE in mid-September.

The conference is not only aimed at informing women of the facts but also in creating an opportunity for women to meet with each other, express themselves and help each other organize pressure groups to fight profit-gained pharmaceutical companies.

For too long, women have endured the often painful consequences of the lack of responsibility on the part of drug companies and of the doctors who approve and blithely assist these companies in exploiting us. Now is the time to confront ourselves and these "business associates" on the basic right of control and care of our own bodies, and to discuss alternatives among ourselves. This conference would seem to be the ideal setting and we would benefit from some experienced help in organizing and in learning interesting, important facts and theories.

Mary Stein of *Our Bodies, Ourselves*,

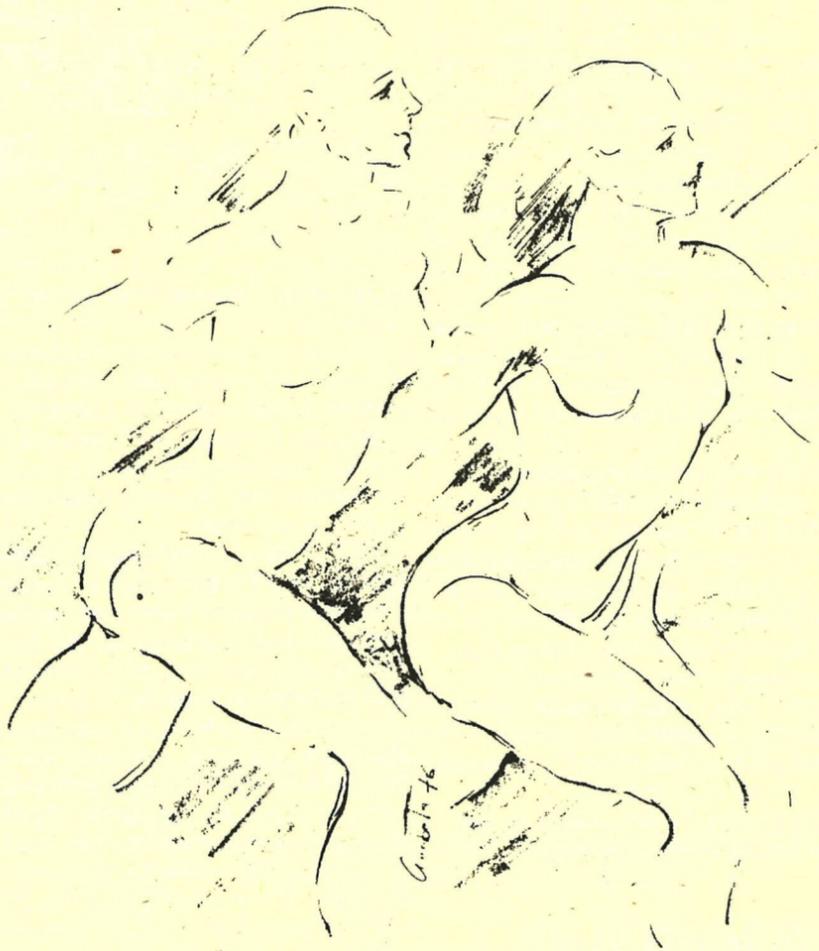
has been contacted and has expressed great interest in attending. Barbara Seamen, who will be the keynote speaker is controversial because of her criticism of the pharmaceutical industry and it is hoped that her tone will set the mood of the entire conference.

Four workshops are going to be offered on the following topics:

- 1) Myths of Population Control
- 2) Research
- 3) Counselling
- 4) Strategies for Change

Attendance at the fourth workshop listed is mandatory but women are able to participate in two other workshops of their choice. Each workshop will have its own bibliography and a reading list will be made available. Specialists in their field and doctors will be present to answer your questions and the emphasis will emphatically be placed on discussion; there will be no lectures. Unfortunately, to cover the costs of the conference there will be a registration fee of \$2.50 or \$5 for both the conference and the night before. But it should prove to be worth the money.

The individuals in ACCT are sincerely involved in reaching the people who are affected by these issues. This is not a professionals-only organization



but it is open to any one who wants to become involved and attend their meetings. The women and men in ACCT are very sensitive and receptive to new ideas and criticism.

ACCT has mixed feelings and is undecided regarding strategy and changes they do want and our participation is important now for it is concerned with action not just theory. It is our input—our

energy, interest and ideas that will give this conference life.

Amazon Press will probably be printing up the advertisements for the conference and these will be sent out to various organizations. If you are interested in knowing more about ACCT or the conference now contact the Birth Control and V.D. Clinic, 2828 Bathurst St., Suite 501 or telephone 416-789-4541.

## WOMEN'S COMMUNICATIONS CENTRE

The Women's Communications Centre, 3 Church Street, 4th Floor Toronto, Ontario (phone 416-368-0764) is a national information network, on, about and for women. It will answer inquiries, research topics, compile subject bibliographies and provide people to people resources across Canada.

The Women's Communications Centre acts as a clearing-house for feminist media, keeps up to date mailing lists of women's groups in Canada, and maintains an extensive index of subject material of interest to individual women and women's organizations as well as other community groups.

Our goal is to tie five regional information centres together to form a national communications network for women in Canada.

The idea originated with the Clearing House for Feminist Media at Ancaster, Ontario. Its goal was to coordinate information regarding the feminist media, i.e., films, women's press, journals, etc. but later they felt a need to expand their horizons to include a broader spectrum of women's groups and services. The original three women involved were Ann Woodsworth, Lorna Marsden and Linda Fischer.

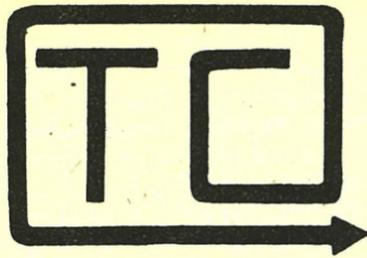
From May-December of 1975, a feasibility study was conducted using a 2-part questionnaire: a) to gather information on a wide variety of women's groups using a large mailing list of 600 and b) to find out what groups thought about WCC, i.e., the idea of a national network and how they felt it could most effectively be structured. The problems with the questionnaire were: a) a mailstrike in 1975, which hampered feedback and b) uncertainty as to why some groups didn't reply—how much was due to mail strike, relocation or disbanding of group, or group objection to aims of WCC.

Pat Oliver visited 5 centres—Vancouver, Saskatoon, Toronto, Quebec, and Halifax. She was very struck by the number of women involved and the degree of energy input but also saw a lot of burnt out women—they feel that one useful function they could fulfill is to help women's centres and groups avoid making the same repetitive mistakes and problems by gleaning relevant information from the various groups.

One outcome of the questionnaire was the groups very strongly felt that WCC should not depend solely on one source for funding, particularly government. They also hope that they can become self-sufficient to some degree by producing packages on women's issues. At the end of IWY, the report produced by WCC on the questionnaire convinced Secretary of State of their use so they were given interim funds of \$8,500 for April—August of 1976 to carry out a fund-raising campaign.

By 1981, the WCC will implement a communications system with 5 regional centres—Vancouver, Saskatoon, Toronto, Quebec City and Halifax. At the end of 5 years, the centres will be self-sustaining through community support and the production of information packages on a commercial basis. Each regional office will answer inquiries about regional problems and maintain contact lists. Resources related to community difficulties can be exchanged nationally through the WCC network.

They would like to be used and the more inquiries they have, the better they will know how they can be useful. Also, inquiries will help to validate their case for funding, so they welcome contact with our groups and individuals



**TIMES CHANGE**

women's employment service

Are You Looking for a  
Part-Time or Full-Time  
Job?

**TIMES CHANGE OFFERS**

- . Workshops for job seekers to help you organize your job search.
- . Career Planning workshops.
- . Manpower apprenticeship and retraining information.
- . Spanish and Portuguese Interpreters on staff.
- . Workshops for Immigrant and Black women.
- . Placement.
- . Legal Clinic.
- . Babysitting.

**NEW ADDRESS: 17 SHEPPARD AVE. W. WILLOWDALE, ONTARIO**

## TORONTO FEMINIST NETWORK MEETING

## ABORTION GROUPS SHARE INFORMATION

Representatives from the Bay Centre for Birth Control, CARAL, CARES and the Birth Control and V.D. Centre.

It is very difficult for women in rural areas and in areas where there are not approved, accredited hospitals to obtain an abortion. The law requires a committee of 3 physicians to process applications of abortions. The physicians must be members of the hospital staff or have admitting privileges to that hospital. But hospitals don't have to set up a committee; the law does not require them to do so. There is only one hospital in all of Newfoundland which does abortions, and that is in St. John's.

The provincial government could require hospitals by law to provide a facility, but there are difficulties when dealing with a religious hospital. It is not necessary to limit abortion to accredited hospitals. There can be free-standing abortion clinics rather than large major hospitals, but this is against the federal law at this time.

Aside from the problems in the law, there are a lot of instances where there are private restrictions which are hospital policy or private doctor policy that really put women in an extremely difficult situation. If a woman is interested in a second abortion, often she can't get it. If a woman has 3 children and needs an abortion, the doctor makes it very obvious that the only way she can get it is if she agrees to sterilization. You think of native women being given forced sterilization, well, it's going on right here on different levels.

In certain situations, when a hospital committee board is under fire, it definitely leads to restrictions. You're certainly playing this game to figure out what your client has to be before they are good enough to make a decision about their own lives. Hospital boards are put under a lot of pressure by Right to Life. The anti-abortion forces are extremely well-organized.

CARAL has had many requests from students whose job it is to arrange for speakers. We know that compulsory pregnancy groups knock on the doors of schools all over Ontario. The Birth Control and V.D. Centre also does a lot of its speaking to schools, specifically on abortion. We really prefer going after Right to Life has been there. The students aren't so stupid. A lot of the misinformation can be cleared up by us. A lot of young people are misinformed. They think it is quick and easy to get an abortion, or they still think it is illegal, or they think it is available on demand. There were over 100,000 illegal abortions last year in Canada.

One of the reasons that ACCT (see page 8) came together was as an information sharing network of people directly involved in counselling referral. If we had money, we would like to set up an abortion "hotline", so that any woman on the street could immediately find out where she could go to seek help. Most women don't know where to go or how to go about getting an abortion. Because we are on a limited budget, we are unable to advertise heavily, unlike the exploitative services that charge exorbitant fees. This year we are able to advertise under abortion in the yellow pages which has helped.

Women who were involved in the Women's Liberation Abortion and Birth Control Service started the Birth Control and V.D. Centre on a LIP grant in January of 1972. The WLM Referral was a volunteer group. They had a 24 hour answer-

ing service and 2 evenings when they did counselling. These women felt the need for a more on-going thing because birth control education was a major problem. Then we started abortion referral as well as birth control counselling. We have a mobile unit that moves to varying locations in Metro Toronto. We do information referral, a clinic 3 days a week, pregnancy assessments; we go to schools and community centres. As the years have gone by, abortion has become more and more part of our service although we primarily focus on birth control. We provide free services.

The Bay Centre for Birth Control has been seeing about 500 women a month for birth control and abortion counselling.

ARCAL (Association for the Repeal of the Canadian Abortion Law) in 1969 merged with Planned Parenthood and a group of 3 women doing abortion counselling. Planned Parenthood was reluctant, at that time, to become involved with abortion. So we started another organization called ACCRA (Abortion Contraceptive Counselling Research Agency). ACCRA requested funding from all levels. We were told that, if we took the word abortion out of our name, we would be eligible for funding. We became the Association for Contraception Counselling and Related Areas. We then made more applications for funding and were told that, if we merged with Planned Parenthood, we would be eligible

for funding. Planned Parenthood, at that time, was referring its abortion patients to ACCRA for counselling. When we merged, we were told that we were the pregnancy counselling division of Planned Parenthood. This was the time when big ads appeared in the paper for abortions in the States but Planned Parenthood did not have much money and would not advertise their service so women were going down to the States.

The latest trend is that gynecologists are cutting back—instead of 12 weeks, they are now doing abortions at 9 or 10 weeks. You also find doctors willing to do vacuum aspirations beyond 12 weeks. It depends on the individual doctor and if he/she is participating in OHIP. The ideal situation is to refer to doctors who won't opt out of the OHIP system. OHIP will reimburse the woman about \$67.50 for a therapeutic abortion. But some doctors can charge that minimum or as much as \$300 for a first trimester procedure. There is free abortion available if your doctor belongs to OHIP. If a woman has no OHIP and no source of income (and may even have to go to the States for the operation), she is screwed. Hospitals make you pay cash if you have no OHIP.

We managed to get one doctor reprimanded. A West Indian woman had a joint account with her brother. She was admitted and her brother never showed up to sign the cheque before her operation. The doctor had her discharged. As

a result, she fainted downstairs in the hallway, and was admitted via emergency back into the hospital. The doctor was reprimanded by his own colleagues and was not allowed to do any surgery for a month. If any woman has a complaint about the treatment given her by a doctor, send the times, dates and bills to both the referral agency involved and to the College of Physicians and Surgeons.

### FROM A SURVEY OF HOSPITAL ABORTION COMMITTEES IN CANADA DONE BY DOCTORS FOR REPEAL OF THE ABORTION LAW

In 1969 the Criminal Code of Canada was amended to allow abortions on medical grounds, if continuation of a pregnancy "would or be likely to endanger" a woman's life or health, provided the application for abortion was approved by a therapeutic abortion committee in an accredited or approved hospital (section 251). However, individual hospitals, by then financed through universal hospital insurance, were not required to establish committees and provide abortion services for Canadian women.

In September 1974, a group of Canadian physicians formed an organization (Doctors for Repeal of the Abortion Law) to work for removal of the subject of abortion from the Criminal Code so that decisions concerning abortion could be made by a woman and her physician. Because of the need for accurate data on the availability of abortion services, one of the first acts of this group was to conduct a survey of Canadian hospitals with therapeutic abortion committees.

In addition to the information obtained from this survey, DRAL has obtained other data from those states in the United States to which Canadian women have increasingly turned for help since the U.S. Supreme Court decision on abortion in January 1973. In 1974 a total of 1,319 Canadian women were aborted in New York City and an additional 2,814 in the rest of New York State. Vermont reports that 95 Canadian women were aborted there in 1974 and in Minnesota the figure from October 1974 when state wide data collection began, to March 1975, was 50 Canadian women.

Data published by ARCAL (Association of Review of the Canadian Abortion Law), Ottawa, Incorporated, a community abortion counselling service, provides a picture of what happens in many Canadian cities. That agency counselled a total of 1,193 women during 1974, 1,145 of whom went on to have an abortion. However, only 51 of these women were able to obtain an abortion in Canada, the rest being referred to New York City.

In Sudbury, ACCRA (Association for Contraceptive Counselling and Related Areas) counselling service counselled a total of 242 women seeking abortions, 110 of whom were referred to that voluntary agency by physicians; all but four of these women had to be referred out of the city for abortions, the majority—162—to Buffalo, New York State.

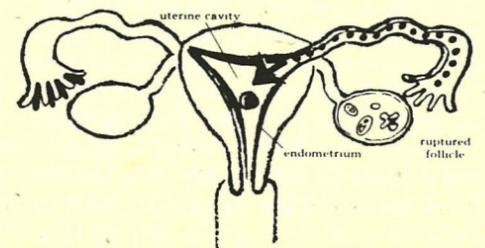


### New IUD

The progesterone IUD known as ALZA-T will soon be available in Canada pending approval. It is a small plastic T which does not cause as much cramping and bleeding as other IUDs placed in the uterus. The small amount of progesterone contained in it is the equivalent of several birth control pills and has an effect only on the cervical opening to prevent conception. Effective for one year, and it is 99 per cent effective, it is without the massive hormonal effect of the pill.—WCWN (*Kinesis*, May, 1976)

### HEALTH Packet

Vancouver Women's Health Collective has compiled a women's health packet summarizing tips they have learned over recent years in operation: tubal ligation; IUDs; vaginal infections; bibliography of women's health materials; how to set up a doctor's directory; how to make formal health complaints; how to set up lay-women's health clinics. Send \$5 to VWHC at 1520 W. 6th Ave., Vancouver or call 736-6696. (*Kinesis*, April, 1976)



## OTTAWA

On the long weekend (May 22—24), a number of us from Ottawa attended a conference in Kingston, sponsored by the Queen's Homophile Association. Among the issues discussed were the problems encountered by lesbians in the Gay Movement and the Women's Movement.

The conference was attended by about 100 people from various parts of the country with the majority of participants coming from Ottawa and Toronto. During the opening plenary session, the 40 women present decided to take the conference into our own hands. We met apart from the men and rescheduled the workshops so that we continued to meet separately, only coming together for the lecture on Child Custody and the closing workshop on Sunday where we shared experiences.

Glynis Ellerington  
Marie Robertson

(from Ottawa Women's Centre newsletter, June 1976)

LESBIAN  
CONFERENCE  
IN BRISTOL

Whatever our assurance of a lesbian identity—and our commitment to it—the policemen in our heads continue to whisper the message of self-hate. However "raised" our consciousness, there seems to be no way of avoiding some element of self-oppression. Can we really be free while society remains un-free?

Varying attitudes to sexuality were apparent in Bristol. Of course that in itself is one good reason for a conference, and ongoing discussion is crucial. But the very differences are also a partial explanation of the confusions and complications, the seemingly rapid alternations of love and hostility, rationality and irrationality of the weekend's events.

And it would be misleading to deny the reality of those differences. They reflect an ongoing debate not only within the lesbian movement, but the women's movement as a whole. Many of us are asking similar questions while putting forward very different causes and solutions. However, I firmly believe a constructive dialogue is possible. This is particularly true of lesbians as opposed to women who have not yet explored their own homosexuality. As women-identified, women-oriented women, those of us who are socialists may find it much easier to understand and empathise with many of the strains of radical feminism than our "straight" sisters.

Unfortunately, any such dialogue was to a great extent obstructed at the conference by the small but noisy presence of the Power of Women Collective. This group has linked the struggle of lesbians with the struggle of all women to be paid for the work they do in the home. But their analysis of lesbianism seems strangely at odds with the experience of those women in the collective who must have become homosexual or 'discovered' their lesbianism as a result of the warmth, support and tenderness among the sisters they work with. It seems anomalous, therefore, that all the papers they produced for the conference (and there were several) should continue to regard lesbians as a specific fixed minority group—and this not in an agitational sense but in speaking to other women at the conference. Surely any woman can be a lesbian. I am suspicious of any paper that starts "Nobody knows how many lesbians there are..."

LESBIAN CONFERENCE  
IN KINGSTON

linda lounsberry

*"I want to move that we women meet now to decide to change the condition of this conference. We feel strongly that the vote on this question be raised only to women. It is our decision to make. The paper we wrote for this conference is our own autonomy within the gay movement."*

*The power relations between men and women (the power that men have over us because they are men in a world where men have money and women do not) does not disappear when the men are sleeping with each other.*

*This power relationship has never been more evident than now, when the government is making an attack on women's independence from men. The cutbacks in jobs, family allowance, welfare, UIC, social services, all hit women hardest. For us these cutbacks mean our being forced even further underground or into relationships with men.*

*We are glad to see so many men here who, by their presence, hope to support our fight. You men can demonstrate your solidarity with us by absenting yourselves from the vote. We must talk as women to decide now whether we will continue apart*

*from the men to decide what kind of a conference we want."*

The above statement was made by Francie Wyland of the Wages Due Lesbians in the opening plenary of the gay liberation conference held in Kingston on May 22-24.

The conference, entitled "The Not So Invisible Woman—Lesbian Perspectives in the Gay Movement", was sponsored by the Queen's Homophile Association.

The decision for autonomy was made by the women and supported by the men. During the conference, the presentation made by Chris McNaughton on Child Custody and the closing plenaries were the only mixed workshops. This decision was unanimous.

Some lesbians chose not to come to this conference because of the conference in Bolton, or because of their frustrations from their past experiences of gay conferences where women's issues are always pushed into the background in favour of struggles against homosexual (male) oppression. For these women who did not attend, I will attempt to give a biased account of each of the workshops of the weekend.



Powerhouse

Their tactics at the conference tended to be fairly disruptive. They persistently opposed motions put forward by lesbians working on the Working Women's Charter and National Abortion Campaigns. In the latter case the conference was pretty equally divided over whether, in supporting abortion and a feminist campaign for our right to choose we should also support NAC. This discussion took place in a marquee erected on the downs. In spite of the cramped conditions and a good deal of organizational confusion discussion was informed and constructive.

Some women felt that NAC had become a front for various left wing groups, that it could no longer be described as a 'feminist' campaign and was apparently 'male-dominated'. A member of the NAC steering committee pointed out that this was in no way true and that anyway the steering committee was 100 per cent female. While aware of the dangers of a 'take-over' by left groups, a substantial proportion at the conference felt it was up to us to ensure this didn't happen. Lesbians were urged to raise the question of lesbianism in their NAC groups, and to support the April 3 demonstration against restrictive legislation on abortion with their lesbian banners.

The second motion, passed by a narrow majority, rejected the idea "that there is no link between lesbians and abortion; the call for free abortion on

demand and the fight to control our own bodies presents a direct challenge to the traditional notions of female sexuality as an agent of human reproduction."

Opposition to the Working Women's Charter was, if anything, more heated. Imperfect as it is, it makes no pretense to be more than a limited, agitational document linking women's oppression at home and in the workplace. To attack it, as Power of Women do, for being irrelevant to housewives is to attack it for failing to do what it never meant to do. In fact a large proportion of women at the conference supported amendments which raised the question of sexual orientation in clauses 2, 3 and 5. (see 'Gay Workers Conference', *Spare Rib* 45).

However, clauses 2 and 3 of the original charter have been formally met by the Sex Discrimination Act. Those of us who attended the National Working Women's Charter Conference in Coventry in April will be discussing ways of reformulating politically relevant and practicable demands. Problems may arise in incorporating our demands as lesbians who have no recourse to county courts or industrial tribunals in case of unfair dismissal. It may be that a separate clause will have to be introduced to cover all discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation.

Reprinted from *Spare Rib*, May, no. 46

## LESBIAN INTROSPECTION

This workshop was intended to observe and analyze the Lesbian movement in Canada. One of the first questions to arise was whether there was a lesbian movement in Canada that we could look at. That isn't to say that lesbians aren't involved in some kind of struggle already, but there has been no common strategy of struggle.

Several accounts were given by Lesbians who were struggling with the men against gay oppression. Many of these women felt frustrated because they were not struggling for their own interests but could see no alternative means of struggle. Others suffered from being closeted by the women's liberation movement. Many centres are afraid that lesbians will scare off other straight women and possible financial support. It was generally agreed that a common strategy was needed to guard against lesbian oppression by both men and straight women.

Francie Wyland spoke of the struggles of Wages Due Lesbians, an autonomous group struggling within a straight women's group for wages for housework for all women. She spoke of wages for housework as a strategy for all women—gay or straight—to use to fight against the oppression of women and lesbians.

The paper written for the conference by Wages Due Lesbians expanded on this strategy.

*"We are a part of an autonomous movement of women (the international wages for housework campaign) whose fight for the recognition of all our work for capital is the fight for the power to refuse the discipline of heterosexuality."*

*"We urge the gay movement to take a clear stand for lesbian autonomy. Unless we lesbians can build our power we will always risk gay men building their power at our expense. Our fight is to end the system which commands our work by keeping us weak and penniless, and which deforms our sexuality and our relationships with one another. Lesbian autonomy is a power in that struggle. And it is a power to call those, lesbian or straight, female or male, who are struggling against their own exploitation at the hands of the same system."*

Because many of the people at this conference had not heard of the wages for housework perspective before, there was much debate about it. Most of the people were impressed by the way the perspective seemed to suit their needs, although they expressed many questions and doubts.



Several did not see their housework as deserving payment because, as lesbians, they either lived alone or with other women, and that they didn't do that much work anyway. There were others who couldn't see that women (all women) suffered from the same oppression. They thought that women who couldn't make it were suffering from personal weakness. Many considered wages for housework to be a valid

—continued on page 19

## FROM GERT

Cedar Glen

Away from the noise of the city,  
far from the duties that call,  
We met where the time had no meaning,  
and the mirrors were turned  
to the wall.  
Here where the props of pretension  
dissolve in the spirits fire,  
we peer in the glass of the present  
to summon a future desire.  
Sometimes the vision is cloudy,  
sometimes the crystal betrays,  
for faith in the ultimate future  
must burn like a torch, always.  
Still magic the meeting, around  
the witches brew, where potions are measured  
and spells are cast, till only the blood  
has a voice at last.  
To-gether.....To-gether  
the spirits mantra, transcending  
the views that divide.  
Only to-gether the vision comes through  
only the whole can survive.

Gert Beadle.

THE ORGANIZING  
COLLECTIVE

Those of us who organized the feminist weekend look back on the experience with a tremendous sense of gratification, because we definitely had our share of doubts, and last minute panic about whether it would come off. We realized that we were taking risks in planning a weekend that could only be the product of the women there. The belief that, as a hundred feminists together for a weekend in the country, we could do just about anything we wanted battled against the comfort and security of predictable, solidly planned, topic-oriented workshops. The former won!

It was scary, but several things eased the agony of the choice:

One was the fact that we opted for a weekend event as opposed to a series of discussions. Most of us came from cities, and at the very least it meant some time in the country. But also it meant the opportunity to be together in a wide variety of ways as well as "meetings". We knew we could count on the power and energy created when women connect with each other on lots of different levels at once.

Another reason was that most of us are in a group together which shares a conscious commitment to the collective development of feminism both as a political process and as a community. This perspective has been basic to the political energy of our group and we felt more and more confident that it has relevance for the movement as a whole.

## REPORTS FROM

## THE FEMINIST WEEKEND

Photos by Carol Pasternak and Shellie Ludlow.

FEMINIST CONFERENCE AT BOLTON  
(from Ottawa Women's Centre newsletter)

A group of about 20 women travelled from Ottawa to Bolton to attend the feminist conference. The women from Ottawa found the weekend stimulating and felt that they would like to continue to discuss feminist ideology and strategy on an ongoing basis. They held a meeting Tuesday, June 1st at the Women's Centre to discuss this.



Gert Beadle, of 'The Northern Woman', reads her poetry.

The third was our conviction that the proliferation of small groups or projects over the last few years had both created the need, as well as, laid the basis for a broader discussion and development of feminist politics and values. We believed that we were not alone in expressing the need to evaluate where we are all going and to start breaking down barriers that exist among us to keep us from getting there.

It became clear to us in organizing the weekend that organic structure meant, not less responsibility and planning, but more widespread acceptance of responsibility and participation. The most important outcome of the weekend, to us, was that we all shared the **experience and recognition** of this process. And in the context of being committed to the development of feminism as political process and community, many things change form. For example, the barriers and divisions which keep us fighting amongst ourselves become less and less interesting ways to fill our spare time, and keep us from really experiencing our power and satisfying our need to fight together.

The Feminist Weekend Organizing Committee

FROM PAM  
GRONNERUD

On the weekend of May 21-23, more than a hundred women, from Edmonton to Ottawa, gathered at Cedar Glen Camp near Bolton, Ontario to enjoy three days of feminist discussion and companionship.

The weekend was organized by an ad hoc collective based in Toronto. Their purpose, they said, was to "supply the means for women to come together... (for) discussion of basic feminist values and how these affect our everyday life." The structure they planned was left deliberately loose, to allow for the growth of discussion based on the desires of the participants, and the promotion of a sense of community among feminists seemed to be as important an objective as actually arriving at concrete conclusions about feminism.

The location chosen for the weekend—Cedar Glen Camp—was well suited to the twin purposes of discussion and informal socializing. Beautiful surroundings enhanced relaxation, and the fact that all "housekeeping" chores—from meal preparation to coffee-making and nighttime snacks—were looked after by the camp staff ensured that no participants were excluded at any time from any of the activities they came for. Women who came with children were gratified to find that their offspring were competently looked after for the whole time by someone else.

As the women who attended came from many different cities, and from as many different orientations and levels of involvement in the movement, much of the time was spent reducing the diversity of specific concerns into a manageable number of supertopics. When this was accomplished, the three major workshops which resulted were: "the feminist community", "the heterosexual



institution", and "media". In the final plenary session held Sunday, the feedback given by each group indicated that "the heterosexual institution" stimulated the most active verbal response, "media" was somewhat bogged down by the conflict between the "commercial" and "alternate" approaches, and the feminist community has yet to be cohesively perceived, even by the small number represented at this weekend.

Despite the attempts made at constructive discussion, it would appear that there has been no decrease in the gaps between our various politics. Indeed the apparent need we all have to justify the decisions we make concerning means and ends tended to divide rather than synthesize our common effort. Political schism was made overt by continual recourse to "party line", which disguised the similarity of our mutual goals. Regional differences led to frustration—what is a viable strategy for Toronto feminists may not apply in Thunder Bay.

These inherent drawbacks, however, were less obvious than the good feelings generated during the weekend. Seeds were sown for future conferences to probe specific issues raised at this time, and it was agreed that skill-sharing workshops are a priority for many. The only disappointment, felt by non-Toronto participants, is that much of the followup will necessarily be held in Toronto.

FROM THE  
OTHER WOMAN

On Saturday, we met as a whole, numbered off, and broke into small groups. Discussion topics rose from the interests of women attending these groups: women in the media and their role either outside or inside the movement, the gay-straight split, feminist community, spirituality, wages for housework, the importance of support for each other in our groups, women's therapy, marxism and feminism, communication, motherhood and the class split in the movement. Some felt these small groups to be very enlightening, others were frustrated. One group found such good rapport that they met together again in the afternoon.

The highlight of the weekend, for many, was the workshop that was made up of those who were not interested either in the media or the feminist community workshops. The first half of the meeting began quite innocently. "Well, why don't we start by giving the political

—continued on page 22

## FROM LYNN

cedar glen

grassy meadow

on hilltop  
where dandelion fire shot through me  
watching the pattern of women feet  
running from base to base  
feeling the thud now and the thunder  
of screaming and clapping  
voices  
and laughter breaking out  
so spontaneously  
you never see on subway lines  
or streetcar rides

city cloisters

claustrophobic sneezes  
and my hoarse voice  
from screaming and laughing with my sisters  
confirms the life breath  
still inside me  
the life breath that will be the last breath  
the last breath that will be the life breath

my body hurls forward and i throw the bat  
running as though for my life to first base...sliding  
in then rolling in the grass

catnip high now it doesn't matter  
that the ball beat me there  
oh gillean...are you pitching to the stars my dear?  
these are the fields where you grew up  
tumble happy sandy flopping hair  
in the breeze

jumping into hay after days work is done  
hey, what a bunch of happy critters! you cry  
and i

riding on dandelion fire feel

a sisterhood born out of the flame

that leaped from the

fire that consumed us

once before when we threatened

the patriarchy

and witch dyke is witch now did we meet before

it does not seem important in the hereandnow

we all left with a smile on our face

and a wish that we contain this hayday

bonfire

revolutionary joy

letting it explode on other grassy fields

jumping in the air to catch a ball

letting it explode where we're together

and remember

so many ways to curb this lethargy

that grows like

creeping vine

let it unwind



she's had that baseball since she was ten years old...  
can we unwind it like a golf ball?...will it bounce  
funny in the air? all over the place

making us laugh  
once more

no more goodbye to baseball diamonds  
in fields of dandelions

running wild

yellow fire flower

remind us of our play power

to cities bring this simple wish  
not to fear when alone  
i remember this

the next was fireworks day  
we continued the play

lynn kirk

## HISTORY OF THE KINGSTON PRISON FOR WOMEN

The earliest public record of women prisoners in Kingston is in the writings of Charles Dickens, with regard to women and children he saw in the almost-new Kingston Penitentiary in the 1840's. Women at that time were incarcerated in an area off the dining room of the men's penitentiary as were children of all ages, some as young as 10 years old.

There is very little information available to the lay reader until 1925 when the construction of the Prison for Women began. It was finished in 1934 at a cost of \$373,781.15. Although the trend of women's prisons in the United States had been towards cottage type institutions, the Canadian government chose to build this one on the design of 19th century maximum security prisons for men. One hundred bar fronted cells were constructed, each with a wash basin and open toilet. The whole unit was walled in by a 26 foot stone wall topped with six strands of barbed wire. The original inmates were thirty-four women who were transferred from the Kingston Penitentiary across the street.

In 1937 the prison contained only twenty-nine inmates. In a facility designed for one hundred, the cost was exorbitant and any efficient program of rehabilitation and classification was impossible. The Archambault report of 1938 recommended that due to the small number of women in prison, the female federal prisoners be kept in provincial institutions.

In 1960 the population of the Prison for Women had risen to one hundred, i.e. capacity. An auditorium and fifty bedrooms were built on a prefabricated design within the prison walls at a cost of approximately \$200,000. Unfortunately, although the auditorium could accommodate four hundred people—almost three times the capacity of the prison population—no library, additional classrooms, office space, or music room had been considered.

In 1964 three cells in the basement of the Prison, classified as unfit for human habitation but the only facilities available for uncon-

trollable inmates were replaced by a section of the cell block at a cost of \$70,000. Continuous heating, plumbing, and electrical repair were necessary throughout the prison, most of which was done by male inmate labour which caused obvious problems of discipline. More urgent priorities in the corrections field put the solutions of the Prison for Women's physical problems out of reach.

In 1969 the Ouimet report was published which repeated the recommendations of the Archambault report of 1938 that federal female prisoners be kept in provincial institutions and their services be purchased by the Federal Government.

What is obvious throughout this brief look at the history of the Prison for Women is that despite the expenditure of vast amounts of money, the numerous task forces, briefs, committees, and changes of superintendents (both male and female) little has been accomplished at the Prison in terms of rehabilitation of the inmates there. One of the current suggested solutions to this problem is to close the old prison and purchase services for federal

female inmates from the respective provinces. This suggestion is more than thirty years old. It seems inevitable in this era of heightened awareness of women's rights and unique problems that something drastic will soon have to be done about improving the physical, social and psychological conditions in women's penal institutions in this country. As Isobel MacNeil, Superintendent of the Prison for Women, 1960-1966, says in a brief written in the summer of 1972: 'In the past twenty years innumerable medium, minimum and camp facilities have been built for men. Now community based correctional centres are being opened. It would appear that women, few of whom are excessively 'criminal' or a danger to persons or property, must remain in surroundings which are an affront to human dignity.'

This information and data was obtained from scrapbooks of the Elizabeth Fry Society and from a brief prepared by Isobel MacNeil for the Elizabeth Fry Society.

Reprinted from History of the Elizabeth Fry Society.



MADNESS NETWORK NEWS/CPF

### For Any Woman Wishing to Become An Inmate at the Prison for Women This is a Reprint of the Official-- INMATE DISORIENTATION BOOKLET

By Caro Walters

Now that you've arrived, we hope that your stay is as long and as pleasant as possible. The management accepts no responsibility for any personality changes that may occur during your stay. This booklet may help to confuse any answers you may feel you have.

**Location**-Kingston, Ontario Canada, the western hemisphere, the world, the solar system.

- 3,614 miles from Alice Springs, Aus.
- 15 miles from the U.S. border
- 2,135 miles from downtown Hong Kong
- 5,196 miles from Arkhangelsk

Kingston is accessible by train, plane, bus, rocketship, canoe and pogo stick. Schedules are not available.

**Reception**- The newcomer is required to sign a paper stating that she has arrived alive and then hand over all her documents, possessions and her individuality. Later she will see an administrator who will extract all information from her.

**Bathing**- The newcomer is required to bathe and be deloused, de-flea'd and de-contaminated.

**Accommodation** is available. On the range she is offered luxurious 4 x 6 foot cells, decorated in ice blue, personal "bathroom" and constantly running cold water.

**Meals**-  
Breakfast 8:00 - 8:04  
Lunch 12:27 - 12:32  
Supper 4:32 - 4:37

There is no room service.

**Health Care** - The newcomer is advised not to be sick on Tuesdays, Thursdays or weekends as sick parade is on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. She will be required to see a Psychiatrist who will attempt to play with her mind.

**Visits and Correspondence** - Parcels may be received at the rate of one every ten years. They may **not** include:

1. Liquor or Dope
2. Guns or Bombs
3. Files or Hack Saws
4. Males of the Species
5. Anything Useful or Entertaining

Visitors will be frisked, interrogated and humiliated, but otherwise may communicate freely with the inmate so long as they don't:

- a. Kiss
- b. Touch
- c. Make-out
- d. Smile
- e. Talk

**Interview with Correctional Officer** - Each new inmate will be assigned a C. O. or if they're lucky they won't. The inmate will soon learn that the C.O.'s sole function is to arrange telephone calls.

**Work Departments** include -

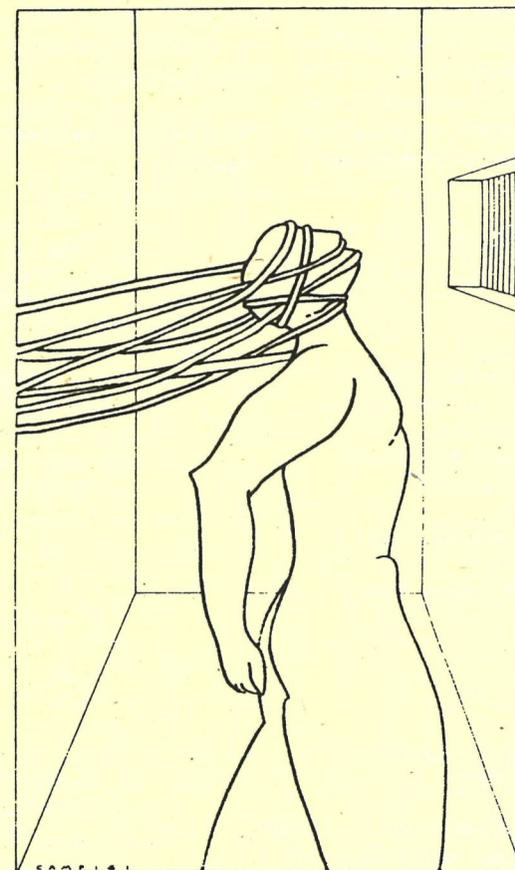
1. Laundry - where the wash is done.
2. Sewing Room - where the sewing is done.
3. Kitchen - where the cooking is done.
4. School - where the schooling is done.
5. Beauty Parlor - where beautification is done.

**Chapel** - There are weekly services and other random events.

**Conclusion** - It is hoped that this booklet will discourage any prospective inmates from doing any further heists, boosts or deals OR alternatively, GETTING CAUGHT!!!!

*Tightwire* is a publication about women in prison written by prisoners. It comes out of the Kingston Women's Penitentiary. Subscriptions are available at \$2 per six issues from:

Tightwire  
Box 515  
Kingston, Ontario



Real Paper/CPF

# WOMEN IN

Women are incarcerated more often for stepping out of society's preconceived boundaries of how women should behave than for their crimes. Whether the courts are in Canada, the U.S. or Great Britain, in most court recommendations for institutionalization and in actual sentencing to a municipal or federal prison, women are sentenced and treated much more harshly than their male counterparts. In an instance where a woman commits an indictable offence the same as a man, the sentence would be longer with less chance of parole. A good portion of the crimes committed by women are victimless crimes in which women are punished for stepping out of the circumscribed behaviour allowed women.

In the last two decades the attitudes of women entering prison have changed. Women are now frequently being sentenced for crimes previously more likely to be committed by men, such as armed robbery, loan-sharking, extortion, and crimes of violence. Those women who are still convicted of 'crimes of sexual mores, i.e., prostitution, disorderly conduct and crime charges involving incorrigibility', are labelled criminal female deviants.

More women are committing crimes and more women are committing serious crimes. It

## LETTER FROM PRISON

Dear Society,

I am back to serve you more penitence. I'm sorry I didn't live up to your expectations, but I wasn't corrupt enough to be president, and also I'm not a good enough burglar to join the CIA. However, I realized myself and my associates are no more criminal than those who "cheat" (which is a nice word for fraud or false pretenses) on their income tax; that smuggling a few joints over the border is no worse than smuggling other commodities over the border; smoking grass or hash no more harmful than an alcoholic drink.

Robbing an insurance company by writing a bad check or theft of anything that is covered by insurance is no more a crime than claiming whiplash or falsifying any situation to steal, and that is just what it is, from your insurance company.

A "criminal" looks down his nose on anyone who robs the old or disabled, yet our politicians vote themselves staggering pay hikes, then they ensure the old and disabled can't afford to eat properly, let alone have a dime to spend on a luxury item. Convicts have been put down for their mistreatment of those fellow inmates who commit crimes against children, they are sick and to be pitied. (I agree, but...) Our government is then sick and to be pitied for condoning and indirectly assisting in the slaughter of children during the Viet Nam War. Napalm is a nasty weapon. We go to jail for theft of property. The government has been committing theft against the native Canadian Indians for years.

Why am I back here? For **association** with my "criminal friends". But you see it's getting very hard to differentiate anymore. I don't think I'm any more enterprising than today's big businessman, nor more corrupt than a politician. I failed to keep no more promises than the last government you elected, committed no more illegal acts than the average citizen. But, I do believe I sleep better at nights. And when I die I'll bet I stand as much a chance of getting through the pearly gates as Billy Graham. I'll also have the satisfaction of knowing I had a hell of a good time on earth.

Sincerely,

(With as much respect as is due)

Nancy Ward-Armour

P.S. Seeing we have so much in common, society, then why do I spend my vacations in jail while you spend yours in Florida?

????????????????????????????????

is less the impact of feminism than it is a question of economics. Why shoplift and risk doing time when any woman is just as capable of shooting a gun or using one to hold up a store or bank? Women find the temptations of stealing with a pen just as lucrative. The more women who are entering the workforce and striving for economic power, the more reasons and opportunities for committing crimes.

Prison perpetuates the double standard by punishing grossly by upholding the traditional standards. Prisons prepare women only for prison. The correctional programmes (though few inadequate ones currently existing) tend to only reinforce a woman's expected role in the outside world. Curiously, the correctional programs currently available are little different from those available a hundred years ago. Prison training courses consist of: Commercial Cleaning, Bulk Laundry, Cosmetology, Domestic Training, Cooking, Sewing, Budgeting, and believe it or not, in one prison, Poultry Keeping. Isn't this just what a woman needs to prepare her for job opportunities in the outside world? Although the retraining programs have broadened slightly in the past twenty years, programs like vocational training and light factory work, reupholstery, data processing (which only teaches you how to do keypunch), provide a limited choice. Prisons retrain women to fit back into 'traditional' roles. Prisons uphold the double standards of society by reinforcing obedience, dependency, and punishing aggressive behaviour.

Although women have the need for further education and trade skills, the over-all attitude of prison authorities is that while men need to learn a viable trade, women will be content with 'make-work'. Women in prison are systematically denied access to even the limited level of vocational training and educational services allowed men. The programs are inappropriate and inadequate, and have been throughout history. Women make up a reported 6 per cent of the prison population in Canada, yet receive a smaller percentage

## WORDS FROM ANNIE

yuck  
this food is awful  
did you hear that vickie was caught?  
she was found in california  
where is she now?  
they have her in lock up.  
the royal suite.  
Do you have a cigarette?

hey, who stole my facecloth?  
bernice would you fucking hurry up with the shampoo.  
what's going on at the other house?  
they're having a party  
WHY DON'T WE EVER GET A PARTY.  
yah, why don't we, i'm sick of this joint.

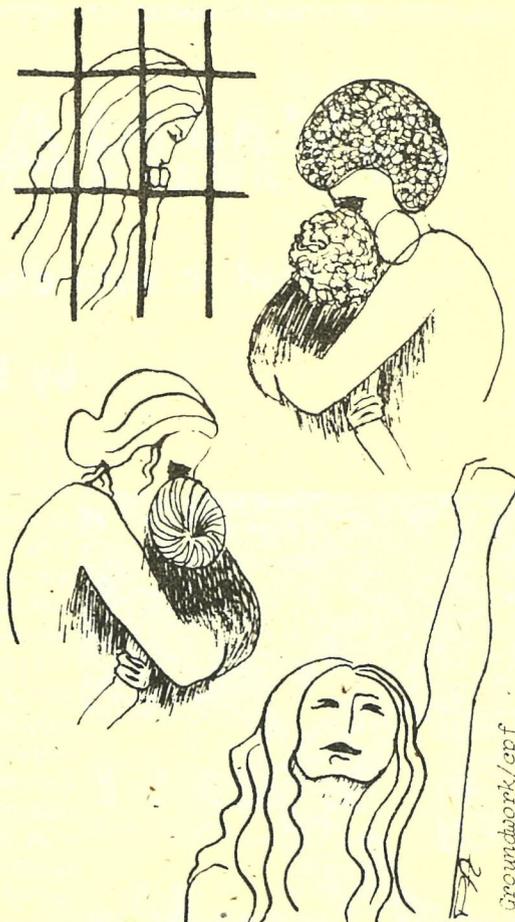
what do you like about this place?  
nothing.  
what don't you like about it?  
everything.  
only 138 days left, till I get outa this fucking hole  
my mother's coming this weekend. maybe she'll  
bring me some decent food.

I'm making a tape of this place. i'm going to tell  
the outside what this place is really like, marion  
would you do a scream so i can tape it? "sure  
okay, scream...  
"how should i do it?" ...just  
scream..."okay aaaaauuggg  
aaaaaaugh eeeeeeeeeeeeeeee hhhhhhhhh  
aaaauuugh  
ha ha ha ha ha

"GIRLS! WHAT IS GOING ON IN  
HERE?????????"

"Z," i was just screaming, so that annie could  
tape it. she's taping everything. she has a tape  
of you saying "I have a cold bath every morning."  
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# N IN PRISON



is less the impact of feminism than it is a question of economics. Why shoplift and risk doing time when any woman is just as capable of shooting a gun or using one to hold up a store or bank? Women find the temptations of stealing with a pen just as lucrative. The more women who are entering the workforce and striving for economic power, the more reason and opportunities for committing crimes.

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provincial and federal funding. Obviously those authorities in charge of allocating money to prisons do not feel the necessity to adequately support programs for women. "After all, they are the smaller percentage of all prisoners and they have the option of getting married." Even the few existing programs (Vocational Training, High School Education, or Recreational Facilities) are limited and inadequate to reach all women in prison. All this perpetuates the limited options that a woman has before she enters prison and when she leaves.

Because roles for women are changing, women in prison are undergoing transitions. Women in prison are less likely to adapt to current prison reform and even less likely to fit in to the attitudes that have survived from the past. They are becoming more articulate in their anger, more willing to demand their rights as prisoners. (See reprints from *Tightwire* on this page.) Women are changing and it is nowhere more evident than in women's prisons.

## PRISONERS' RIGHTS

Kingston is the only federal institution for women in Canada. Women sentenced to terms of two years or more are sent there from all across Canada. They are isolated in maximum security from families, friends, and their communities.

Mary is a 17-year-old Cree from Labrador. She was sentenced to three years in Kingston for breaking windows in Police cars. This was her second conviction; the first was on a charge of drunkenness, a non-indictable offense. When Mary first went to Kingston, her isolation was total. She had some difficulty speaking English and other native prisoners had difficulty understanding Mary's dialect of Cree, (Naskapi). She was also cut off from the outside world—prison authorities refused to give her letters written in Indian syllabics. After Prisoners Rights protested this cruelty, she was permitted to receive her letters.

Roxanne, a prisoner at Kingston, was beaten by several male off-duty prison guards. (Male guards at Kingston are supposed to stay on the prison's perimeter; they shouldn't be inside at all). During this attack, she allegedly cut one of the guards on the arm with a pair of scissors.

After this beating, Roxanne was stripped, thrown into a segregation cell and left there naked for a long period. Roxanne is still in segregation, some months after the beating. She, not the guards, has been charged in connection with the incident, and authorities keep remanding the case. She is due for another hearing in February.

There are some things about Kingston Prison which affect all women inmates, and the public should be aware of them:

1. The presence of male guards inside the prison is damaging to morale and creates a highly volatile situation. There have been reports of male guards in the cell area at night, and instances of unacceptable behaviour of the guards towards inmates.
2. Academic and vocational training at Kingston, according to an ex-inmate, is almost non-existent. There is little opportunity for women to increase their earning power in preparation for their release.

Women inmates are subject to humiliating controls, even in trivial personal matters. Small amounts of canteen money, for instance, are earned through a "Brownie" point system. Inmates are assessed and graded each week with points for tidy rooms, neat beds, clothing, personal appearance, good relations with staff and other inmates. Points can be lost for untidy hair, obesity, nail biting etc.

Women even lose control of their children and of their own bodies while in prison. They often find it difficult even to obtain information concerning their families. If the mother's family cannot care for her children while she is in prison, they usually become wards of the court. If she cannot prove that she can care for them adequately after her release — according to a social worker's standard — her children will be taken from her permanently.

If a woman is pregnant when she is imprisoned, she cannot have an abortion. In one case, a woman was consistently told by prison doctors that she was not pregnant. They admitted she was right a bit too late — after five months. When she does have her baby in prison, the infant is snatched from her within a few weeks.

It is no surprise that policy and practice within women's prisons are controlled by men. In all women's institutions in Canada, every single senior administrative position is held by a man.

Reprinted from *Fact Sheet, Kingston Prison for Women*. Available from the:

Prisoners Rights Committee  
Box 340, Station S  
Toronto, Ontario

### WORDS FROM ANNIE

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did you hear that vickie was caught?  
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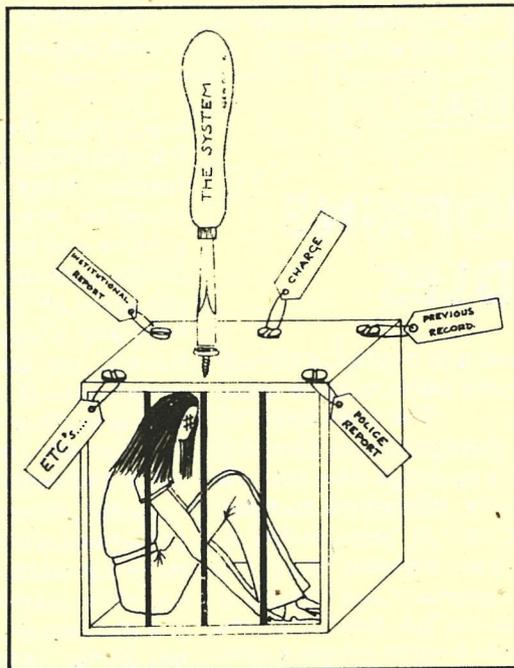
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ha ha ha ha ha

"GIRLS! WHAT IS GOING ON IN HERE?????????"

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annie del zoppo



Tightwire

### SINGING

*Singing* is a collection of writings by women in Canadian correctional institutions, to be published early next year. Project coordinator is soliciting poetry, stories, articles and opinions from women in prison. Those interested should write Bernice Lever, 79 Denham Drive, Thornhill, Ontario. (*Kinesis*, April, 1976)

# GYMNAST EXPOSES SEXISM

as told to ruth dworin

by lindsay cobb



My particular field of knowledge is gymnastics. It is one of the more feminine graceful sports. It's daring, takes a tremendous amount of technique and incredible strength. There are four events in it, balance beam, floor exercise (which is a combination of tumbling and dance), uneven bars (wooden bars, one up and one down) and vaulting exercises. On the uneven bars, you do handstands, circle round exercises that take a lot of strength, a lot of timing. It's graceful in that the technique is very pure, as are the movement lines, they're geometric. In vaulting, you run down an 80 metre runway, hit a small springboard and fly through the air. You turn head over heels, like a cartwheel or handspring, and land on your feet.

The physical training for gymnastics has two aspects. You have to be very strong and flexible, and you have to be graceful. You can't just build up a wad of muscle and hunker out onto the competition floor. Men have a certain style, they don't have as much flow in their

routine as women do. We have a strong dance background coming out of ballet. You're supposed to be typically female—you're supposed to have muscles but you can't show it. You can't look too mannish.

It took a long time for the women's side of the sport to emerge. When it finally did, the women who were together running the Federation of International Gymnastics were careful to make sure that gymnastics are very, very feminine. They deduct points for strength! In essence, women still do things that take a hell of a lot of strength; they just can't show it. Men, in their events, can grunt and groan.

The elements of performance and presentation, count especially with floor exercise. You're smiling at everybody while you're leaping, turning and tossing, head-over-heels. In the ten point breakdown, there is a whole point set aside for general impression. You have to pay attention to how your hair is done, your makeup. Some people go out and get suntans. I'm sure everybody shaves their legs. You have to have a certain hairdo so that your hair doesn't fall in your face. You make sure the colour of your leotards complement your skin-tone. You know your impression counts. You practice walking onto the floor, bowing to the head judge. There are judges at the four corners of the floor and some people even plan their routine so that they make eye contact with each one.

The sexism in the sport is obvious in the number of coaches in North America. In the top people who are producing young female gymnasts, the men far outnumber the women. In the U.S., there is only Muriel Grossfeld, the national coach for the States. In Canada there are two women in Quebec, Nicole MacDuff and Jackie St. John, who are very strong, and in the Toronto area you have Mrs. Savage. She really got a lot of things going. She knows what it is like to put somebody on an international floor. Otherwise, all the coaches are men or they are husband and wife couples.

These young kids are often manipulated by their male coaches. They work with the kids from the time they are seven or eight on, five or six hours a day. By the time a girl enters puberty, he's become her main male model. He can play a number of roles. There are two very well known coaches who have given a lot of guidance to their gymnasts since they were quite young and then married them when they were old enough.

Gymnastics is dominated by men. Sports in total have no political consciousness. There's a story going round that Nixon got really upset when he heard that the jocks in America were questioning him because if athletes question you, then you're in trouble. I can't imagine any group that is more conservative than athletes because athletics is built on a lot of principles of discipline, good clean living, with a lot of hypocrisy thrown in about the goodness of competition and building character.

The Olympics is a real zoo. There's so much going on, all these different people trying to get their training in. Women are beginning to see other women with some sense of respect, but most athletes just don't socialize. It's very hard to fit in any sort of socializing and maintain any friends because you're putting most of your time and energy into training, or travelling to compete which is an incredible drain.

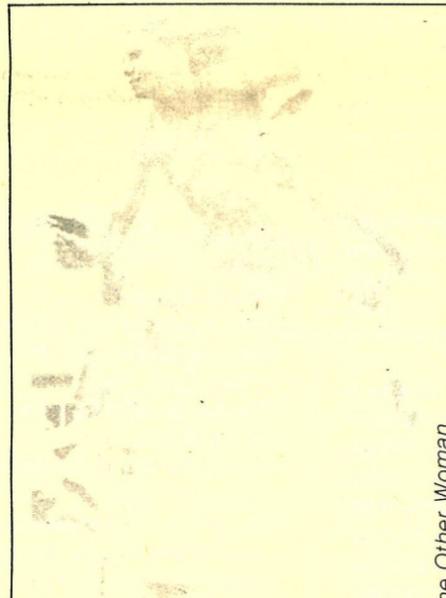
I think there are some very strong female figures who have come out of sports. When I was growing up, I saw mature women competing on the floor, the Russian women, Astakhova, Latynina, Caslavka. They were older women and they showed it, they had a maturity in their performance on the floor. They weren't some little pipsqueak going out there and being cute. (There aren't many women today who make it through the sport past the age of 21). That made a large effect on me, I thought, 'Wow, those are women out there!' They had something, somehow their strength came through. Astakhova competed until she was 32, Latynina competed into her fifth month of pregnancy, had her child and started competing again. Caslavka was 26 when she competed in the Mexico City Olympics in 1968 and she totally dominated the competition. This was just after the period when the Russians had invaded Czechoslovakia, and she was hiding out. Those people had strength, character.

In gymnastics, you have incredible control over your body. You know when every muscle comes up, you know how fast your heart can beat. You know your limitations, your strengths, how much you can push yourself. You know your fear level. That's starting to take your life in your hands. This is where feminism can gain a strong foothold in sports. You are incredibly independent in terms of having a strong, healthy body and it sure changes your identity as the classic woman.

I started gymnastics with my best friend. She was 3 years older than I and of course I did most ever what she did. Competed for 8 years, judged and started coaching at the end of high school. You always help each other anyway so it was natural transition.

As I became more involved with coaching and less with being an active competitor I ran my own programmes, about 300 kids and then apprenticed in the summers: in Illinois with Dick Mulvihill who has had more international level competitors than anyone in North America, in New Haven with Muriel Grossfeld, U.S. National Coach, 3 time Olympian herself, a creative genius, in northern Michigan at Ruth Ann McBride's summer camp who developed one major international team member and a number of national level gymnasts. My experience with them covered 7 years.

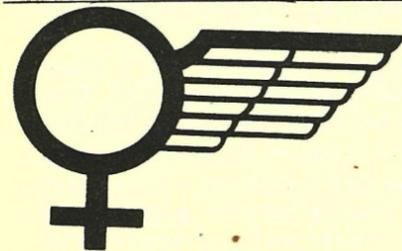
At this point I am unemployed due to a number of reasons, not the least of which being that I respect myself despite my being a woman, which causes certain consequences.



The Other Woman

1936 MONTREAL

## HOPE HOPKINS HURDLES



In 1976 the city of Montreal rushes to prepare for the influx of thousands of athletes from around the world. Forty years ago, the city received placidly a number of athletes who came to earn a spot on the Olympic track and field team thereby winning the right to represent Canada at Berlin. One of the competitors, Hope Hopkins (now Davies), reminisced with/for/to **The Other Woman** about her year and a half of intense involvement in women's track and the high point, Montreal, 1936.

What was it like for a woman in sports then? As far as Hope was concerned, she did not have much support from her family. If she had done particularly well in a contest, her father bragged a bit, but there was no family involvement in her training or meets. Hope considered herself very feminine and dressed very stylishly, with high heels and stockings. This caused some of the other women

who were training to doubt her dedication and to make snide remarks about her appearance. She often found no place to train during the days so had to work out in the evenings wherever she could find a track. Wintertime curtailed most athletes' training because few indoor facilities were available. She had to buy her own equipment and finance all her other expenses, too. Most of all, she had to put up with other people's comments about women in track and field. "I didn't go around bragging about my events. If I had been a figure skater, I might have bragged more. After all, they were considered to be more feminine."

Hope's ability to compete in the Montreal trials depended on her ability to pay all her own bills—lodging, food, transportation—and this restricted her to the minimal amount of time for competing in her specialties. She travelled at the last possible moment and arrived

late at night the day before her events. (Her traveling companion was a schoolteacher, Hilda Cameron, who was allowed no time off from her teaching to prepare and had only a day before her events were run. Her short time proved not to be an obstacle for she won her heat and made the team.) The trip, Hope's first away from Toronto, the strangeness of the new city, having no time to acclimate herself to the sporting facilities and her inexperience in top-notch competition made Hope "nervous as a kitten and ready to vomit." By the time she arrived at the track, she could hardly move nor could she talk. It was the first day of her menstrual cycle and as far as she was concerned, that definitely made her performance poorer. (How asked Hope if other women athletes expressed this same feeling and the answer was yes. She said it was a topic the women discussed and most agreed they lost some of their sharpness if they were menstruating during a competition. She also agreed that it could be much less of a factor today because of more acceptance of the naturalness of the menstruation cycle and because of more general knowledge women have of their own bodies.)

Hope then described the hurdles race for which she went to Montreal. "I got off first; I was leading in the race. I knew I was out in front, but I didn't have the stamina. I could see the others coming...if I could have gotten in Montreal earlier, I might have been able to make it." She placed third in her event. She recalled sitting disconsolately in the dressing room when she was called to prepare for the 220 sprint which was her second race. She said to herself, "Damn it, I'm going to win this race!" And she did, but she admits now that her effort was not her best. "When you are a front runner, when your stamina is low as long as you are ahead, you most likely don't expend all your energy." Although she won first place, it was to no avail. When it came time for the Olympic committee to allocate money to athletes to go to Berlin, only the best two in the hurdles could be subsidized. Because the winning time in the 220 was not spectacular, the committee decided to spend its limited funds elsewhere and not send any women runners to compete in the 220. Hope was assured that if she could spend her own money, she could go and be a Canadian

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# 1976 MONTREAL FEMINIST RIDES TO THE OLYMPICS

interviewed by angela sergio

(CP)--Cathy Wedge of Saskatoon rode City Fella to a first-place finish yesterday on the final day of the three-day event to determine Canada's Olympic team in the equestrian competition.

Cathy finished first after completing runs over the steeplechase, cross-country and stadium jumping courses. She also finished fourth aboard Law and Order and sixth on El Adohr, (*Toronto Sun*, Sunday, June 16, 1976).

This is the confirmation **The Other Woman** has been waiting for ever since January when, through a series of fluke chances, being in the right places at the right times and speaking freely with others who were in the same places at the same times, **The Other Woman** met Cathy, who at that time was in earnest training for a position on the Canadian Equestrian Team in her specialty, the three-day (or combined) event. With Cathy, **tw** has had a fantastic guide into Olympic calibre competition and into the background preparations as she prepared herself for the final selection of the riders for Canada.

**The Other Woman** has been in close contact with Cathy during the past few months and has had the opportunity of watching a woman athlete train to be in perfect harmony with her skills, her soul and her environment. Following her makes one realize she is working to present an attitude of control and confidence so that this harmony can be maintained throughout the roughest passages of the song of sport.

One day, **tw** sat in a freezing training arena near Toronto where the team hopefuls were receiving further coaching and became enchanted as Cathy worked her horse, City Fella, through a few practice manoeuvres. It was obvious in watching Cathy work that she was totally communicating with her horse and that the animal was responding to her commands and assurance. She explained the use of the lunging exercise she was doing. "It is expected that the rider is in control of the horse through leg and back muscles. In this exercise, we are attempting to gain flexibility and to let the horse receive commands in ways other than the reins."

After horse and rider had warmed up a bit, Cathy led him through a dressage exercise. "Dressage is the first aspect of the three-day event and involves the basic obedience of the horse. The arena has various markings around it and within these boundaries the different dressage movements are performed. This basically shows the horse's fitness and boldness. It checks his suppleness and athletic ability."

It was in 1928 at the ninth Olympic Games in Amsterdam that Ethel Catherwood of Saskatoon equalled her own world record of 5'2 3/4" to take the gold medal for the women's running high jump. One story has it that a Toronto reporter, overly anxious for a scoop, wrote up an interview with 'Ethel Catherwood, Toronto product', before he'd met her, and presented it to her for approval. "If another reporter said I was from Toronto," Ethel fumed, I wouldn't even go to the Olympics! I'm from Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, and I'm proud of it."

Cathy took a brief break and went into an explanation of the second and third days of the three-day event. "The second day is the most important day—endurance day. There are four phases to the endurance—phase A which is travelling and cantering and the fitness of the horse. Time is very important on the second day. You have to teach yourself what it feels like to be going 340 metres per minute (it is approximately four minutes to a kilometre). I have three different watches that I check during the time of the race. The course is all marked with various kilometre markers up to phase B where the officials halt you and count you down. Then you do a very fast mile and a half to two mile steeplechase over the big brush hedges, ditches and water jumps. Again, speed is very important—you're going 690 metres per minute. Then phase C, similar to A, takes you to D, which is the actual cross-country. By the time the horse is really starting this big deal, he has already done a lot of work. He has to be very fit and so has the rider, especially if you are riding three horses in a competition because you may go 80 miles in one day. Phase D is when the course is anywhere from three to five miles, with anywhere from 27 to 35 simulated obstacles which you could potentially meet out on a cross-country. If you make a mistake, you fall, not the fence. Then the third day is the stadium jumping which is basically just to show that the horse is still sound and willing to jump, although sometimes the whole event hinges on the stadium jumping. If you don't have a clear run, if you have a fence down, you might lose the whole race even though you were ahead. The event is the amalgamation of the points of all three days and that's how the overall winner is chosen."

After Cathy and City Fella were finished, **tw** witnessed what we consider to be a major factor in Cathy's success. We watched her groom her horse and put into further practice her philosophy of what three-day eventing is all about. Her concentration and precise careful technique in grooming the sweaty horse showed a beautiful rapport between the two of them. "I think a horse will go so much more kindly for you if it wants to do it. You can only bully a

## la superiorite physique de l'homme sur la femme est un 'mythe culturel'.

Les sports, de toute éternité, du stade olympique grec jusqu'à la ligue nationale, sont affaire d'hommes. Les grands événements sportifs à la télévision sont toujours masculins. Ce sont des hommes qui pratiquent les sports et ce sont des hommes qui regardent évoluer des "héros-athlètes" déifiés pour leurs seules performances musculaires. Quant aux femmes, elles se contentent souvent d'admirer la belle tête et les épaules carrées de nos sportifs!

Mais pourquoi les sports ont-ils toujours été histoire d'hommes? Le service de recherche du CSF s'est penché sur la question.

### Absentéisme volontaire ou culturel?

En 1964, le Comité d'étude sur les loisirs, l'éducation physique et les sports présentait un rapport au minis-



Cathy Wedge's personal collection

CANADA



3-Day Event Team

JUMP  
CLEAN & FAST  
JUMP  
Montréal '76

1500 pound thing for so long. Even if you bully it all the time, it's jumping scared. If it's scared, it's not thinking. My horse was having a good time today; he was out for a stroll, whereas a lot of horses would have been completely freaked out. He's always thinking about what he's doing. He's just really a kind horse anyway." She continued brushing and wrapping City Fella's legs as she explained her enjoyment with the three-day event. "It's like therapy. When I'm in there doing two-track or jumping and cantering down to the fence, that's all that I'm thinking about. It's very nice."

Cathy packed away some of her own personal equipment. We talked about some dress requirements for the rider and more about the sport. Her description revealed more of her dedication. "The rider usually wears boots and her own colours. The calliante (hat) doesn't have a brim because if you do have a fall, and the hat comes down, you could break your nose really easily. Very important is the stop watch because you could win or lose an event on timing. If you pick the easiest spot to jump, the chances are you are wasting time, but if you gamble and take the

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# LES SPORTS ?

## L'éclosion et les sports

Dans nos écoles et dans nos organismes sportifs, il existe encore des activités offertes exclusivement aux filles telles que l'expression corporelle et le ballet-jazz. Il faut avouer que ces activités connaissent beaucoup de succès chez nos filles mais que leur exclusivité contribue à les cantonner dans ces rôles désuets de "grâce" et de "charme". Les garçons ne pourraient-ils pas, eux aussi, s'accorder le plaisir de la danse et de l'expressivité du corps?

Les conseillers et directeurs de programmes semblent tous d'accord pour dire que la participation des filles aux sports organisés est moindre, que leur participation tend à s'accroître mais qu'elles sont difficiles à motiver. Mais

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## hope hurdles

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competitor because she had qualified in both events. The disappointment at not being able to afford the trip is still quite evident. "All I cared about was being on the team, to go to Berlin. It's not a bitterness I have, but a sadness at a lost opportunity. After all, the Olympics only come every four years and there's such a short time when your body can compete." One consolation which Hope has is the fact that she measured up to world standards with her race. The Canadian winner, Betty Taylor from McMaster University, placed second against all the other women from all around the world. Hope knew she had been beaten by the best.

Hope's career in track was short for many reasons. She ran races in public school and won. One day she went to a "Y" to see what it was like to work out indoors. She participated in a "potato race." "I've never heard of it before nor since, but it involves lots of obstacles. I won this medal and it encouraged me." Someone at the race directed her to the Lakeside Ladies Club, a women's track and field club with a very serious approach to training. Several members of the club had participated in and won in the British Empire Games and were intent on gaining Olympic team spots. She eased her way into the club and soon discovered the petty jealousies which can undermine one's efforts. Hope was attending the University of Toronto at the time and had access to Varsity Stadium and to coaching by Hector Phillips. He spent many hours with her because he recognized her potential. He'd work with her approach to the first hurdle until he was satisfied that it was as smooth as possible. (Hope commented on a recent TV programme on Babe Didrickson Zaharias and how the woman playing this athlete had all the wrong techniques for hurdling. "She jumped

over the hurdles. You don't do this. It's a matter of how close you are to them for getting your best time." They would take a hurdle and find a place to work out. At times it was difficult to find space because men and women did not train together and the men usually had priorities for all the facilities. The time Phillips spent coaching her began to cause resentment with some of the other club members and soon Hope began to detect subtle signs of ostracism. She soon became stand-offish and sensitive to their reactions and left the club to train on her own. Years later, Hope's intuitions were proved to be correct. Her daughter ironically worked in the same place as one of the club members who had talked against her mother and one day two foes met again. Hope was told that the others were jealous of her and that they had consciously ignored her.

Although Hope had discontinued her affiliation with the Lakeside Ladies Club because of her discomfort with the members, she still had to compete with the members in order to train for the British Empire Games. By a twist of fate, the sprint heat she was scheduled in had one of her most vocal foes as her competitor. Hope, actually out of her specialty in the sprint races, had to beat Thelma to prove to her that she had earned all her honours fairly and that Phillips was not favouring her. The day of reckoning found the two adversaries looking daggers at one another—a showdown was in the offing. "I dashed myself headlong into beating her! But during the race, I pulled a muscle. That was that. My hurdling days were over. I've run that race a thousand times since."

Later on in the conversation, Hope confessed she was glad to get out, that the pressures were too much. "It's too hard a grind. I think that's when I damaged my heart. I concentrated on winning and didn't pay attention to my body's signals. I wouldn't recommend it to anyone." But when Hope's daughter got involved in international fencing competition, she encouraged her to participate. "It's a gutsy thing to do. You have to have the desire to win. You are self-centered as an athlete. You almost have to be a non-conformist. You're expected to hold in your feelings if you lose and not to let your disappointments show. But, you know, the year and a half I competed made a person out of me. I often remember my training of forcing myself to finish the race. I've put the psychology of this into my life."

Hope briefly glanced at the three medals which are all she has left. "I didn't care about the medals. I just wanted the trips. I used to let my daughters play with them. These are all I have left. It goes to show you I did win them. Strange, I didn't keep the medals." Somehow through all her



words, the experiences of a woman athlete "struggling for something—I didn't know exactly what it was" were made very clear. **The Other Woman** listened to the ring of nostalgia in Hope's voice and knew she didn't need those medals to prove she is a winner.

## cathy jumps

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most difficult spot, if you can pull it off, you are rewarded by making up three or four seconds. When you walk a five mile course the day before, it is really hectic; you are riding, doing dressage, working with two or three horses, memorizing things. Sometimes I've walked a cross-country course as many as five times to be absolutely certain of where I'm going. Our coach would say, 'What's fence 23 and how are you going to jump it?'"

**The Other Woman** asked her how important all this preparation was for her. "Well, I think it's—you compete against yourself. I want to better my performance but I have to admit I am a very competitive person. In a lot of ways, I don't particularly like that about myself, but on the other hand, for example, if Liz Ashton beat me in a competition—great. I think she does it the right way. I'd like to win because I'd like to prove that it can be done without brutality, by doing everything from going to a to b to c so that in a sense, I feel, as a lot of people feel, that I'm doing it correctly. There are certain people that I like to be better than. I find it a real contradiction in terms—my own philosophy of life because I don't believe in competition. I don't believe in it in schools. The students who aren't that athletic, why should they be punished for it? Everyone should be looking after themselves as I do believe that physical well-being is important, and that if students have pressures put on them to either be the best or don't do it, then look what happens. So I don't like the whole competitive thing. Our society is based on competition and that means that people are judging how good you are by showing that someone else is not as good. That's not a very nice way to prove to yourself how good you are. You go to competition and it's super because there are people there who like their horses and walk their horses together. It's a real feeling of camaraderie. People are just getting off on everyone doing the same thing. In that sense, it's nice. The three-day event is seen as a dangerous, fast-moving sport because it was originally a military exercise for men. People view it as a kind of machismo thing, something where you can prove how tough you are. I don't think

that needs to be. It does demand a lot of speed and endurance, but it's like an art, not a sport. I think you can combine the two, but you can't do it through a male principle."

We went back to the house where Cathy was staying and looked through some books and other material she had. She showed us the gold medal she had received as one of the victorious Canadian Three-Day Event team members at the 1971 Pan-American games. This was the first time that any country had female members on its team and this created a dilemma for some of the Latin American team members. The men moaned and groaned about how humiliated they would be if a woman beat them in such a grueling test. No woman should be allowed to compete in this man's sport! Cathy flashed a big grin as she told this. "None of them actually killed themselves, but I'm sure they didn't like the idea of us winning."

During this quiet time over coffee, Cathy mused about other political aspects of participation in the sport of horses. She touched on expenses and how difficult it was to have on-again-off-again funding. The team hopefuls had been forced to raise much of their own finances for training in a warm weather climate and had to have this worry placed on them while they were trying to train. Cathy expressed anger at the unstable financial picture and how the withdrawal of promised backing upset many plans.

Cathy then hit other topics not directly related to riding, but important to her as a woman in Canada. She feels sympathetic to Quebec and its struggles to build its identity. She is a feminist and very interested in seeing better opportunities for women. She definitely feels women have a right to control their own lives. A sense of regret flickered on her face as she realized how far away the world is in reaching this goal. She expressed a bit of compromising she was willing to do in order to win her place on the team. "They can legislate my behaviour on a horse, but to do so elsewhere is a bit much." **The Other Woman** listened to the determination in Cathy's voice. At that time there was no doubt in our minds about her being one of the winners. All her words, all her actions, all of her encircled the concepts of a winner, of a person who will make her own kind of music with her own kind of instruments. **tw** wishes Cathy nothing but good feelings with her Olympic experiences. We will listen to her song any day!

...The Edmonton Grads were a women's basketball team. They were not merely the best female basketball players in Edmonton, but in the world and maintained that dominance for the quarter-century between 1915 and 1940.

Montreal—For the past three days a specially trained squad of 150 Canadian soldiers and Mounties has been patrolling the U.S. Border south of Montreal, driving along back roads and trampling through the woods in search of terrorists.

So far, all it has turned up are two elderly ladies (sic) from Derby Line, Vt. who wandered across the border on their evening constitutional Sunday night. They were told to go home.

## les sports

—continued from page 15

comment peut-on s'attendre à une motivation quand, tant au niveau des autorités, de la population et des adolescentes elles-mêmes, il existe encore des tabous tenaces comme les menstruations, l'odeur de la sueur et la peur d'une musculature masculine?

### Une question de gros sous

Pour arriver à cerner ce qui ne va pas dans le sport féminin, il est un élément qu'il ne faut pas négliger: les budgets qui y sont consacrés. Il ressort clairement que les sports les plus dispendieux sont le hockey, le football et le basketball, sports masculins entre tous. A cause de la faible participation des filles et du coût fixe de certaines immobilisations (personnel, locaux), les filles coûtent plus cher per capita. Si on encourageait la participation des filles

en éliminant les vieux tabous, on augmenterait leur participation et on réduirait par le fait même le coût.

### La science contre la tradition

Bref, il semble bien que la société du Québec a pris pour acquis que seuls les enfants font autant d'exercice, qu'ils soient garçons ou filles. Peut-être parce qu'ils n'ont pas encore de sexe... Un rapport sur la condition physique des Québécois, fait en 1974, établissait que le niveau de développement des garçons et des filles est équitable jusqu'à la puberté (12-13 ans). Durant l'adolescence, les filles accusent une faible augmentation de leur capacité, alors que les garçons prennent une avance très marquée. Vers l'âge de 30 ans, la condition des hommes dégénère pour rejoindre progressivement celle des femmes. Ce rapport constatait un état de fait présenté comme étant le cours naturel des choses. Des études faites par le département d'éducation

physique de l'Université de la Californie contredisent cette croyance de la différence de force physique chez les garçons et les filles de plus de 12 ans. En effet, Jack Wilmore et son équipe ont mesuré, pendant les dix dernières années, les performances athlétiques des hommes et des femmes. Il sont arrivés à la conclusion que, en bonne condition, l'endurance et la force sont potentiellement égaux chez les deux sexes, en fonction de la taille, du volume et du poids. De plus, si les hommes ont 15% de tissus gras et les femmes 28%, cette différence s'atténue considérablement chez les athlètes féminines qui suivent un entraînement rigoureux. Appuyé par ses études, Wilmore conclut que la supériorité physique de l'homme sur la femme est un "mythe culturel".

reprinted from Conseil du Statut de La Femme



INTERNATIONAL TRIBUNAL ON CRIMES AGAINST WOMEN: Report from IU delegate to Brussels, March, '76

### Oppression of Women

In Brussels, at the beginning March, fifteen hundred feminists from thirty-two countries of the world, held a tribunal on "Crimes Against Women". Crime was defined as immoral laws which punish women (The Irish law forbidding contraception and divorce, for example), cultures which insult and maim women's bodies (the practice of clitorrectomy in Arab and African countries), and religious, economic and political oppression of women.

### Decolonization of Women

The Tribunal was described by Simone de Beauvoir as the first step towards the decolonization of women. By this she meant the first step in the process of disengagement from a system, any system, which treats women as second class citizens.

### Testimony

Testimony was heard from countries as far apart as Japan and Spain, Brazil and Scotland, South Africa and America. The crimes we talked about ranged from the denial of contraception, abortion, and divorce, to rape and pornography and to economic and menial crimes against women. The problems quickly fell into three categories.

### Third World

Third World, or coloured countries, spoke about the desperate economic position of black people under a white regime, and the fact that black women were always at the bottom of the pile. The South African delegate, for example, was a school teacher who lives in a shack with her mother, brothers and sisters and her own three children. Because she was divorced and did not have a man to be responsible for her, or an adult son, she was not allowed to rent any property of her own. (In this case, property means shack with no electricity or running water.) So she had to move back in with her parents. Being black was bad, she said. Being a black woman was worse. She blamed racism as a greater cause of oppression than sexism.

### European Women

European and South African women testified about the lack of control over their own bodies. In Brazil, for example, which has a very high birth rate, very low employment, and very bad housing, the government answer was birth control.

### Sterilization

But it was birth control of a very vicious kind. The government considered that contraception was expensive, and difficult for the peasants to understand — what woman would remember to take the pill every day? So they introduced sterilization. One in every three women of child bearing age in Brazil has been sterilised.

### Contraception

In Europe, by contrast, where there are liberal contraceptive laws, there is a great demand for abortion. The delegates explained the reason for this, giving important lessons for Ireland, which has not received the benefit of free legal contraception. Artificial birth control may be a fact of life in Europe, but it is a fact of which many people are not sufficiently aware. The governments there merely legalized contraception, and then left it up to the populace to practise it privately, without providing

# CRIMES AGAINST WOMEN

Reprinted from BANSHEE, Journal of Irish Women United, Vol. 1, No. 2.

an adequate education programme on birth control or sufficient clinics for its distribution. This slot machine mentality meant that many women were still becoming pregnant in ignorance, and were driven to seek abortion afterwards as a quick solution.

### Abortion

The delegates demanded abortion, not as an easy alternative to the pill, or the IUD, but because of the stark and simple fact that thousands of European

cpf



women were having unsafe, illegal and mostly back-street abortions. If they're going to have abortions, the delegates said, then let's make it free, legal and safe. They provided statistics to back up their arguments.

### 1 1/4 Million Abortions in Italy

Portugal had 135,000 illegal abortions last year, causing the deaths of two thousand women. Italy had one and a quarter million illegal abortions. Ten thousand Irishwomen went to England seeking abortions over a period of ten years. Thousands of German women travelled every year to Holland and Austria, where abortions are legal, in order to terminate unwanted pregnancies. In one South African hospital, there was an average of thirty-five women per day admitted for treatment suffering from septic abortions.

### Cultural Oppression

The third category of crime covered cultural attitudes to women which resulted in sexual abuse and the suppression of a woman's sexuality.

### Pornography

The Danish delegate showed a pornographic film in which a woman was raped orally, vaginally and anally by three men. Such films, legalised by the state, which men paid money to watch, gave rise to the popular male myth, she said, that women were sex objects, with no feelings, to be manipulated by men. When men queued daily to see such films, and read similar books, was it any surprise that women prisoners in Chile, Iran, India and elsewhere, were daily subjected to rape by male warders, and other forms of sexual abuse?

### Clitorrectomy

If men the world over held such attitudes, encouraged by the state, was it any wonder that ninety five percent of females in such countries as Saudi

Arabia, and Ethiopia, were subjected to clitorrectomy before a man would marry them? Clitorrectomy means the amputation of the clitoris, a vital organ of female sexual pleasure. Without the clitoris pleasure in sexual intercourse goes only to the man. And the clitorrectomy further maims the female genital organ. The woman is visually scarred, the man's body remains intact.

### Rape

America backed up the argument with statistics on rape. One hundred and seventy five thousand women were raped in the USA last year. Rape is often hard to prove, as in over half the cases, the women were raped by men they knew, however casually. Try going into a court, they said, and tell the judge that you really did not want to have sexual intercourse with the male you met at a

dance or in a cafe. Try explaining that you gave in because you feared you would be killed if you didn't. Four hundred women who resisted last year in America were later found murdered.

### Lesbians

Lesbian women testified that they were discriminated against by both men and women. In heterosexual cultures, it was considered normal to love only a person of the opposite sex. Conditioning was so powerful that women were afraid to have even friendly relationships with other women, lest people point the finger at them and accuse them of being 'abnormal', 'frigid' or 'lesbian'. Lesbianism has become a form of accusation, not a natural way of loving.

### Analysis

The Tribunal closed after five days on a convincing note — wherever people suffer it is women who suffer most. The next international tribunal will attempt to identify the common causes of our oppression, and suggest solutions to them. In the meantime international networks have been set up to provide communication between groups of women on particular issues.

**margaret  
atwood:**

**free  
speech**



I don't belong to very many organizations, especially international ones. I do belong to this one, for a very simple reason: I'm glad it exists, and I realize it's poor enough and small enough so that its existence isn't a foregone conclusion. I'm glad it exists because I think I might need it someday.

It may seem paranoid for a Canadian citizen in 1975 to be worrying about political imprisonment and deprivation of human rights. We look at the events in Chile and Russia and parts of Africa and say, "It can't possibly happen here." But it has happened here, and more than once. It will happen wherever a government decides that its own power is more important than its responsibility to and for the people; that its own power places it above the law; that its own power makes it unnecessary to answer for its acts or apologize for them. Governments do have these unfortunate tendencies, and the government of Canada is not exempt. I was out of the country at the time of the imposition of the War Measures Act in October 1970, and what little I could learn was from foreign newspapers. Allowing for distortion and sensationalism, it still seemed to me most alarming that the Canadian government was arresting people without warrant and imprisoning them without charge or trial. To give the army and the police powers of this kind is to make the people subject to the mere whim of those doing the arresting and to leave them without protection of law. The other thing that alarmed me was that so few people were speaking out against this. Were the Canadian people really so easily intimidated, so susceptible to government propaganda? Were they that ready to surrender their rights without a squeak? We tend to forget that though the so-called crisis was soon over, the War Measures Act remained in effect until April of the following year.

The experiences of October 1970 may seem tame in comparison to what goes on in other countries. Not much physical torture, no long-term imprisonments, no murders by the authorities; just a little intimidation and harassment here and

there, and a few unpleasant and humiliating weeks in jail for a lot of people who didn't have the faintest idea why they were there. Maybe we should shrug it off and be thankful for small mercies. But once a government is able to assume this kind of power with so little protest from a people, the rest is no longer inconceivable.

Amnesty International has no temporal power. It has little money, it depends on volunteers, it represents no governments or political interests, and it is able to achieve what it does by moral pressure alone. In the face of the massive fascist techniques being employed by governments all over the world — and not only by governments we think of as "fascist" — what it can do may seem little enough. But its most important function is the puncturing of the wall of secrecy and silence that surrounds these activities. Even though it may not be able to get a prisoner released, it can investigate and tell her/his story. As more of the truth is known, it becomes more difficult for governments to lie to the outside world.

It can happen here. If it ever does, many people will be grateful for the existence of Amnesty. When your own voice is taken away from you, someone else must speak for you.

**NOTE:** Margaret Atwood, Canadian poet and author, joined A.I.C. in May 1975.

**FREE SPEECH** is a new monthly forum of opinion and analysis which invites readers to speak out on issues relating to AI and human rights. Free Speech, c/o Amnesty International Canada, 2101 Algonquin Ave., Ottawa, Ontario K2A 1T2

—reprinted from Amnesty International Newsletter



# SPIRITUALITY LYNN KIRK THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS

Through The Looking Glass  
Woman and Spirituality Conference  
Boston, Massachusetts  
April 23rd-25th, 1976

One-thousand-five-hundred women gathered for The Woman and Spirituality conference in Boston, Mass. on the weekend of April 23rd. The moon was in Pisces, a time when psychic processes are particularly influential and powerful.

Friday night opened with a ritual declaring and affirming of our birth. There was a spark of something in the air - so many sisters gathering together - the joy of friendships being renewed - eyes lighting up and faces glowing - there was a feeling as if we'd finally found one another. The performance of the ritual magically drew women from the audience to become part of it. Soon many of us were up beating on drums, playing flutes, dancing in circles, making wild noises and taking our shirts off. There was very little need to exchange names as a way of introducing ourselves. We joined together and communicated through music much of the time.

The conference itself functioned as a gathering place for women exploring spiritual energies in many various different ways.

Kay Gardner was there refreshing us with her music which flows so naturally from her woman soul and has the power to ease tension and release deep inner feelings. She really encourages women to play along with her, on any instrument. Her album, *Moon Circles*, is available from Olivia Records, Box 70237, Los Angeles, Calif. 90070 U.S.A.

Zsanna E. Budapest, a Hungarian born witch, who has sparked off the formation of a sisterhood of Dianic covens throughout the United States, gave some very stimulating talks and slide presentations. A workshop of hers that I attended was entitled; "The Politics of Spirituality and the Herstory of Goddess Worship."

'I love the Goddess and all her shapes and forms, and I could talk about her for hours.' Z. tells us excitedly after we've

been informed that the slide projector is missing and we may have to wait awhile. *'Academia calls me emotional because I call the Goddesses by their proper names. The names of the Goddesses have been masculinized by the Patriarchy and their powers taken away.'*

Yes, most of us sat there spellbound and I know we could have listened to her for hours and hours. She goes on to describe life "at least 10,000 years ago" vividly as if she has lived then herself. *'In matriarchal societies priorities were given to such things as hanging gardens and proper sewage systems. Snakes were close to women. They were kept as pets and would keep the vermin away. They served in temples as spiritual symbols - examples of the Goddess' renewing powers. In daily life they were used in herb hunting. Snakes were trained to find herbs and lead women to them.'*

Her slide presentation showed the many different images of the Goddess found in sculptures and archaeological findings throughout the world. Z. highly recommends the book *Gods and Goddesses* by Maria Gimbutos. Maria is an archaeologist who has uncovered a wealth of information about early matriarchal forms of Goddess worship. Despite the title of her book Z. assures us that only 2 per cent of the images she discusses are male.

Z. feels we are changing ourselves and by bonding together evoking the life force. *'We are the future!'*, she exclaims. As far as sexuality is concerned, she believes that sexual energy and life energy are the same thing. She describes the last great Goddess worship, to the Goddess Selena. *'She is seated on a white log showing her clitoris. That's why Judaism declared anti-sex laws. But Aphrodite splits from anti-sex religion which is anti-life and anti-woman. Aphrodite only exists in freedom.'* She says, *'Monogamy is not really what the matriarchies did. It is protection for us at this point. We will change when we can.'* A few slides in her vast collection depict architectural structures shaped like the Yoni, a shape that women are instinc-

tively drawn to. One other slide shows a sculpture of an amazon with her breast cut off. It is very ironic that the Patriarchy should choose to mutilate sculptures in this way when we know that breasts were power symbols in matriarchal societies and highly valued. It is their attempt to try and alienate us from trying to discover our roots.

During Z.'s talk a hat was passed around to collect money to help Z. pay off bail money she needed to borrow when she was arrested in L.A. for reading Tarot cards. The fact that a feminist witch should have been singled out for prosecution in an area where lots of people are practicing occultists, keeps us aware of the patriarchal forces acting to suppress us as they were three hundred years ago in the Salem witch trials. At the conference Z. was selling copies of a book she has written called *The Feminist Book of Lights and Shadows*.

A feminist artist, Adele Aldridge, presented a slide showing of drawings that



Beth Breen

have come out of her meditations on the I Ching hexagrams. Her desire is to develop an I Ching that women, as well as men, will be able to identify with. As Confucius' commentary was his subjective meditation of his time, so she sees hers as being her subjective meditation of this time. She uses the figure of woman to represent nature in many of her drawings. She is doing all the typesetting and printing herself and expects the I Ching meditations to take her ten years to complete.

A 1977 lunar calendar was sold at the conference. It is the collective work of many different women and a great deal of time and energy has gone into it. The calendar gives a daily illustration of the moon's phase, its rising and setting time, the sign of the zodiac it is in. All together there are 13 twenty-eight day months, with one day left over called Liberation Day! The calendar is a beautiful creation with poetry, drawings, photographs and articles on topics such as Stonehenge, Eclipses, and The Quantum Leap and the Feminine Principle. In a workshop I attended called "The Lunar Calendar - Reclaiming Woman-Time", we all talked about our own personal experiences of the moon's energy. I came to understand that the Lunar calendar came before the solar measure of time. We talked about how polarized light from the moon may affect us differently than solar energy. Also, how following the changes of the moon might bring us closer to following our own inner mutable natures. One woman suggested that this time round we literally "seize the time".

Mary Daly, who wrote the book *Beyond God the Father*, was at the conference and gave a very stimulating talk on ways in which we need to change the English vocabulary to create a feminist time-space.

All in all the conference gave me a good feeling in my heart that we are finding our common roots as women and creating the future. Much exploration and discovery is going on in the women's movement and women are learning from each other. The process of revolution is a process of creating more and more bonds with each other and learning to trust our own interpretations of the world and act in accordance with them.

## kingston lesbian conference

—continued from page 10

strategy but decided they would have to think about it before they committed themselves.

### DYKE SEPARATISM

Marie Robertson had been scheduled to lead a workshop on "dyke separatism" but, after the discussion of the lesbian introspection workshop, she decided to speak more about strategy in the lesbian movement.

"I realize now that if I limit myself to just the gay liberation movement, I will not have gained anything more than being able to sleep with whoever I want to. I would like to see a strong sense of the power we as women are capable of."

Marie also said that she supported the struggles of Wages Due Lesbians but she wasn't sure about using it as a national strategy for all lesbians.

### GAYS AND CHILD CUSTODY

The first workshop on Sunday was a presentation on Gays and Child Custody given by Chris McNaughton, an auditor for a St. Catharines law firm.

"Child Custody is a sensitive issue for anyone, but for a gay person to keep custody of his-her children, this really legitimizes their being gay. (...and of course the courts wouldn't want to do that.)"

McNaughton discussed several court cases reported in law journals in Canada. Out of 3 cases reported, only 1 case was successful in giving custody to the gay mother. One question raised in these cases was the definition of a homosexual act. In one case, the courts had to decide whether a woman touching another woman's breast was a homosexual act or just a gesture of friendship. Because homosexuality is grounds for divorce, it is difficult for the person charged with being a homosexual to get custody of the children. McNaughton also pointed out that custody is never final—it will always be up for question in the future.

### CONCLUSIONS

After McNaughton's presentation, women got together to talk about strategy and where we should go from this conference. In this discussion, there were 4 points of agreement:

- ..We are uniting finally
- ..We realize the need for a separate autonomous lesbian movement
- ..We need one main centre to correlate information and the objectives of our movement
- ..We recognize the need for a strategy in order to build our power as lesbian women and, to that end, we are holding more conferences in the future.

Marie Robertson wrote up a proposal to present to the plenary in the afternoon.

"We have decided that there exists a need for an autonomous lesbian movement in Canada to fulfill our needs, and thus have formed an informal coalition. Our fight for an autonomous organization of lesbians began at this conference on Saturday morning when we women took the weekend into our own hands. We made this conference our own. However, because of the fact that a number of lesbians are isolated in small communities and feel the need for support from mixed gay movements, this autonomy, in some cases, will manifest itself as an independent lesbian voice from within these movements.

"We realize the need to build our power as lesbian women so that we need no longer subordinate our interests to those of the straight women or the men—straight or gay! And so that our lesbian sisters who are, in the majority of cases, still invisible to us will have the possibility of coming out. With the awareness that many lesbians did not attend this conference for various political and personal reasons, we have postponed the formalization of strategy proposals until we have a larger, more representative voice. To this end, 2 lesbian conferences will be held: one in Ottawa next fall and one organized by Toronto Wages Due Lesbians in July.

We welcome support from gay men who endorse our stand and believe that the efforts of our autonomous movement will be a positive move in strengthening the fight

against oppression."

### THE PLENARY

Marie Robertson read the above statement to the plenary and received unanimous approval. The men agreed that a lesbian autonomous movement was necessary.

There was a short discussion about Gay repression and what action to take against it. Two demonstrations were organized for the following week. GATE-Toronto said that they would mail bulletins around to everyone at the conference to inform them of the outcome of these demonstrations.

After the plenary, Wages Due Lesbians were asked to do an informal seminar on Wages for Housework for the gay men. Many men showed interest in getting involved in the men's chapter of wages for housework in Toronto along with showing their support by signing the Family Allowance Petition distributed and endorsed by Wages Due Lesbians.

Although there could have been a larger turn-out of lesbians at this conference, we got a lot accomplished. We agreed that women's autonomy is important and links were set up between the lesbians who attended. Everyone received a list of the names and addresses of women coming from Halifax, Quebec City, Montreal, Ottawa, Kingston, Toronto, Hamilton, and Kitchener-Waterloo. These links could be vital in building a strategy for a Canadian lesbian movement.

# FROM A SPANISH JAIL

reviewed by angela sergio

## FROM A SPANISH JAIL

Eva Forest  
Translated by Rosemary Sheed  
\$1.95 - A Penguin Special

191 pages  
(This book has a "To Order Only" status, which means you must contact your bookstore and prod them into ordering copies. I urge you to do so.)

By way of familiarizing people with the name Eva Forest, let me quote from the "Penguin Book Brief" which *The Other Woman* received with its review copy of *From a Spanish Jail*.

*Eva Forest was arrested, tortured, and imprisoned without trial by the Spanish police in September 1974. The authorities alleged that she had been involved in the murder of Prime Minister Carrero Blanco and in a bomb explosion in a Madrid cafe which occurred three days after her arrest.*

The publisher's notes included within the book flesh out the above quote with a brief but thorough explanation of the Spanish political scene at the time surrounding the arrest. They provide a frightening picture of the control used in political cases by those in power. They can interpret rules and laws to their advantage and can be obscure and/or obtuse while keeping their opposition off guard as it tries to prepare its defence. These notes, along with Eva's dedication of the book, so general yet very specific, and her prologue, so filled with emotion, dignity, strength, optimism, and a sense of solidarity, combine as the teasers to entice the reader into the book and to pave the way for the complete internalization of what the author says and of what she does not say.

The body of the book is her personal journal written during her first days of solitary confinement at Yeserias prison and her letters to her three children: Juan, 18, Pablo, 16, and Eva, 12. Through sharing these, Eva Forest reaches out and pulls readers into her world of incarceration. Revealing the family intimacy in these letters and journal was a barrier Eva had to circumvent before she agreed to the publication of the book. I, for one, am grateful she eventually decided it should be made available to all. Her words to her children are valuable for people who need reference to heroic efforts in order to give life to their own flagging spirits and struggles. Her views, explanations and cour-

age create so much care for her that it is of vital importance for her situation to be analyzed and discussed by all concerned with human freedom. This analysis and discussion should lead to the destruction of the concept of political prisoners. (Reviewer's note: *The Other Woman* learned from Amnesty International Canada that as of May 18, 1976, Eva Forest is still being held in Yeserias prison. Concerned readers could contact A.I. Canada, Box 6033, 2102 Algonquin Ave., Ottawa, Ontario, to find out more up-to-date information.)

Reading *From a Spanish Jail* created quite a quandary for me. The more I read, the more I felt as if I were an intruder into the closeness of her family circle, as if I was made aware of all the little jokes, special names, special concerns and intimate details which do make up a family. This invasion into the personal arena was rather uncomfortable at first until the realization that this careful attention to all the bonds between Eva and her husband and children (who she writes of very explicitly) is most necessary to her in making her imprisonment more endurable. Her passionate pleas for more news from her older son (who was far from the family studying medicine in Cuba), her praise for Pablo's efforts in supporting his sister emotionally and for attacking his own studies so diligently, and her suppression of her fears for how this ordeal will affect her daughter are themes cropping up in nearly every letter. She begs for information from Cuba, and then rationalizes why she does not receive it. She understands her second son's need for travelling in Italy and encourages him to do so even though it separates the family further. She urges



Every person is born with the capacity for dignified work and a human existence.

her daughter to send her more drawings, to improve her handwriting, to form fast friendships, not to be discouraged and to realize that she is old enough to start reading and comprehending various books. The letters which deal with the time she and her husband could interact with each other are the most beautiful to read. Her husband, Alfonso Sastre, who according to Spanish law was "legally responsible for crimes committed by his wife" (*tow* Vol.2, No. 3, page 12), had given himself up to the police. He eventually was released on bail. For a short time the two of them were able to have regular visiting. The respect and love for one another and the pain of their separation is very evident and powerful.

At no time in the book is there hard evidence of regret for those circumstances which caused her to be taken away, tortured, imprisoned and kept in a constant state of imbalance, not knowing what was going to happen to her or when it was going to happen. Although

## FEMINIST SCIENCE FICTION

# THE WITCH AND THE CHAMELEON

reviewed by ruth dworin

Do you read science fiction? Do you find yourself frustrated by the stereotypically stupid roles women play in most science fiction books written by men, and, unfortunately, in many books written by women? Have you been drawn to the works of feminist writers such as Joanna Russ, Suzy McKee Charnas, or Vonda McIntyre? Are you looking for good feminist analysis of science fiction? Then perhaps it's time you discovered *The Witch and the Chameleon*, Canada's (and perhaps the world's) first and only feminist fanzine.

*The Witch and the Chameleon*, published "irregularly" (three or four times a year) contains fiction, poetry, graphics, book reviews, and numerous letters to the editor. The latter often reveal a fascinating dialogue between science fiction writers about their politics. The writing is consistently top-notch. I particularly value the short stories. Any of them can match or top the quality found in the average science fiction anthology or magazine: however, in most of the stories the subject matter is too radical (i.e. feminist) for the average editor. If you are interested in learning more about the political motivations behind the books you read, you can follow the

ongoing debate between Joanna Russ and Marion Zimmer Bradley about their perceptions of feminism that has spanned the last several issues. If you want to find out about new science fiction books by women writers, the review section provides an excellent start; not only does it include good feminist analysis of books published, but the reviewers themselves are often established writ-



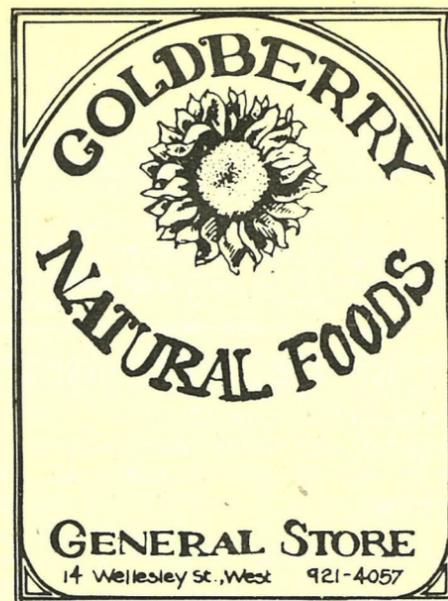
## The Witch and the Chameleon

A Feminist View of Science Fiction



she expresses discouragement, confusion, fears, and loneliness, she has courage and faith and these glow through her words. Her personal philosophy, her advice to her family (and indirectly to the readers of the book), and her ability to maintain a rational, hopeful grasp on her ordeal in its over-all perspective are worthy of sampling. "Life goes on, and you must carry on as if nothing had happened." "I keep thinking of my father...he painted most vividly the horrors of poverty in the poor parts of the city." "It's a very good thing to go through the world making questions about what's happening around you — and never being afraid to ask questions even if you're afraid they'll sound silly." "...I have always fought for a world where people can be really human — can think, and not just stay at the stage of the ancestral monkey!...we must study, and progress, and discover how and why things happen, and not just accept what people say, and churn it out again like parrots..." "We are one enormous family, a family spread far and wide over the world, with a single heart beating in us all—wherever we may be, no amount of solitary confinement can separate us—we are always together; we go everywhere together, and in the end we'll all meet up." "I have comrades on five continents...yet I feel their support as near me as though we could really clasp hands—perhaps because I know that they are in complete sympathy with me at this moment. What a difference that makes!"

In her last letter, dated 28 Feb. 1975, she ends with the following: "The days are lengthening out, and winter's almost over. How much longer will this separation go on? Not much longer, I'm sure...I'll tickle you next week, and then you'll have to laugh...All my love." Learning about Eva Forest, researching into her background, and being touched by her words makes me yearn for her winter to be over.



ers. Also, the graphics and over-all layout of the magazine (especially those in the recent double issue) are superb.

Amanda Bankier has been quietly struggling in the wilds of Hamilton to produce this heroic effort single-handed. It's obvious that there is a great need for a fanzine of this sort, as she gets a lot of support from some of the better-known women science fiction writers. Articles by Joanna Russ, Vonda McIntyre, Kate Wilhelm, Marion Zimmer Bradley, and Suzy McKee Charnas, among others, appear in *The Witch and the Chameleon*.

If you want to read this wonderful magazine, you'll have to write to Amanda, as it's not likely you'll find it on your local newsstands. Sample copies of back issues are \$.75 (the recent double issue is \$1.50 and is highly recommended). A year's subscription is \$4.00 (for three issues). She also welcomes manuscripts and graphics. Write to:

Amanda Bankier  
2 Paisley Ave. S. Apt. 6  
Hamilton, Ont.

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\$8.00 a year

\$2.00 single issue

P.O. Box 69403 Station K, Vancouver

# PRAIRIE HERSTORY

two reviews by pat leslie

## THE LOUISE LUCAS STORY

J. F. C. Wright  
Harvest House, 137 pages  
\$2.50 paperback

## FOREMOTHERS

Candace Savage  
350 Carleton Drive  
Saskatoon, Sask.  
\$2.50 (bulk discount available)

These two books together give us the opportunity to really acknowledge the unique herstory of women in the western provinces. It is always a pleasurable experience to find those rare books that give fresh insight on Canadian women. (We should all eagerly look forward to the forthcoming publication, *Prairie Women*, by Canadian Women's Educational Press which will undoubtedly supplement our reading.)

To briefly summarize, Wright shows us in his *The Louise Lucas Story* how a transplanted mid-west American became known as the "Mother of the CCF" in the 1930's in Saskatchewan, and how this woman was assured of a victory against the incumbent Liberal Minister during the 1945 federal election. Unfortunately, there was no celebration for Louise Lucas as her long fight with cancer was over.

The life of Louise Lucas was not exceptional. Farmwomen everywhere have always been a stabilizing influence in a new land: a community of schools, churches, hospitals and libraries rise from the earth. The hard life imposed upon an isolated farm wife was compensated by the recognized contribution made to the farm and the home which her counterpart in the city, to this day, has found impossible to achieve. The attitude of equal partnership played a large part in the early development of the west. Farm women became part of prairie political life and worked along with their men to achieve 'the idea that the farmers themselves should own and control grain-marketing facilities'.

The beginning of the 1920's also saw the beginning of the western co-op movement. Lucas' first convention of the United Farmers of Canada, Saskatchewan Section (forerunner of the present National Farmers Union) was in 1927 in Moose Jaw. It was at the 1931 convention where Lucas was elected President of the Women's Section. Several months later, Farm Women's University Week in Saskatoon brought forward an outline of changes for the school system: history of the co-op movement to be taught; operation of the monetary and banking system and the origin of money and its purpose as a medium of exchange, not as a commodity; elimination of the glorification of war; temperance as opposed to prohibition; and the effect of tobacco on the body. These are only a few of the changes demanded by Lucas, many others in the Women's Section, and women throughout the province as a whole. While it is evident that not all women were involved in farm politics, this was, however, the route that many of them did take to become involved in the world outside the home. It was through the acceptance of female participation in political life that the co-op movement was able to take on a sense of community.

During the "hungry thirties", Lucas travelled around the province as a speaker on behalf of the farmer's union, sometimes taking off on trips that even a man found tiring. Always, she considered herself "an ordinary farm wife". Listen to this farm wife: "just think what it will mean if we can spread this movement right across Canada, and elect a govern-

ment at Ottawa that will do away with the profit system and establish a system of production-for-use and humanity first." Or, "Farm women are too busy washing that cream separator, or having babies and caring for the family — they haven't time to become pessimistic like the men." She continued to urge on an expanding consumer cooperative enterprise and commended the growing and politically awakening labour unions.

It is regrettable that the idealism of her time did not survive. The prairie cooperatives have now become a multi-million dollar business, more concerned with the making of money than adopting a cooperative lifestyle, in the real sense of the word. This book on Louise Lucas was more than the story of one woman's life but, rather, an integrated account of the development of the west and its relationship to moneyed interests in Ottawa and eastern Canada. This, in itself, proved to be of value as the history of Canada given to us in school is of little use to anyone.

The one difficulty with Wright's book, though, was its complete objectivity as opposed to *Foremothers* by Candace Savage. *Foremothers*, a collection of articles about a few of the important personalities and issues in the history of women in Saskatoon, first appeared last

year in a number of dailies and weeklies in the province — one woman's project for IWY. The booklet includes the series of articles along with extensive reference notes and bibliography. To quote from her foreward, 'Its purpose was and is two-fold: on the one hand, to celebrate the accomplishments of a few distinguished prairie women; and on the other, to explore a number of themes in the history of Saskatchewan women as a class.'

In comparison with *Louise Lucas*, Savage has taken an entirely different approach with *Foremothers*. Let Candice explain: "Women's work in the community, both paid and volunteered, has been an extension of their role as wife and mother and of their work in the home. Their realm has not been wealth and power, the stuff of conventional history, but welfare and community, and until these become a focus of historical study, women's contribution to prairie society will either be chronicled separately, or not at all." So she has concentrated on a more personal, subjective style of writing which tells us much more about women but, unfortu-

—continued on page 22

## THE UNION FARMER

*The Union Farmer*, monthly publication of the National Farmers Union, devoted its September 1975 issue to IWY. It contains articles of general interest, as well as portraits of women in agriculture, and other areas of special interest to women engaged in farming. Copies are available by writing: Union Farmer, 250 C-2nd Ave. South, Saskatoon, Sask. (*Kinesis*, April 1976)

## FARM WOMEN IN ALBERTA

Women of Unifarm is the organization for farm women in Alberta. They publish monthly bulletins dealing with Health, Family Living, Environment, Education, Citizenship, Agriculture and Cooperation, Economics of Farm and Home, and Associated Country Women of the World.

Among the resolutions dealt with at the Annual Convention held last November, was one on 50-50 division of property upon dissolution of marriage to apply retroactively.

Spring Conferences are being held throughout the province. The theme is Attitudes and Legislation affecting women. Equality in marriage will be stressed.

(from *Calgary Women's Newspaper*, June 1976, Vol. 2, No.6.)



# WILDERNESS WOMEN

reviewed by ruth dworin

## WILDERNESS WOMEN-Canada's forgotten history

Jean Johnston

Drawings by Patricia Wilson Johnston  
\$4.95 - Peter Martin Associates Limited  
242 pages

*Wilderness Women* provides a series of short biographies of some pioneer women who colonized Canada. While a book of this nature is sorely needed to fill the gaps in our herstory, the book has

serious flaws.

The first difficulty one encounters in reading the book is the writing style. The sentence structure is often clumsy, making it difficult for the reader to make any sense of the narrative. The style is similar to that of the junior biographies popular in senior public school and high school libraries, but the vocabulary might be a bit difficult for a young person to comprehend.

The book's lack of political analysis is,

photo credits Glenbow-Alberta Institute, Calgary, Alberta



for me, another drawback. I feel that all historical writing should include analysis, as events don't occur without some political context. The author does make some slight attempt to analyse the animosities between the Iroquois and the American rebels in the chapter dealing with Molly Brant. Unfortunately, she also describes the lovely Christmas parties thrown by the Hudson's Bay Company for the native peoples in the Northwest without elucidating on the oppression the HBC heaped on them the rest of the year. She persists in stereotyping the French voyageurs as "romantic, superstitious, and easy-going; moreover, they could sing," while the British and Scot bourgeois are characterized as "a hard-headed, efficient, unromantic lot."

The final charge I have against the book is that it strikes me as being rather racist. In the early chapters, while I realize the people she is describing are themselves racist, the author does have the benefit of 400 years hindsight and can avoid making the same mistakes. She persists in using the word "savage" in her descriptions of native people. Of the nine illustrations in the book, three depict evil-looking native people committing acts like cutting throats or stealing babies.

The book provides a chronology of the migration to Canada, starting with the viking woman Gudrid in Newfoundland, continuing through the French nuns who first established hospitals and schools in Quebec, and finishing with the British aristocracy who governed the West and Northwest. It also includes the stories of one native woman and one Metis (Molly Brant and Amelia Douglas), who provided essential services to the Europeans by acting as interpreters as well as mistresses, figuratively as well as literally facilitating the rape of Canada.

Until a better book is written, *Wilderness Women* should and probably will be used in high school women's studies and history courses. A flawed herstory is, I suppose, better than no herstory at all. But I fervently hope that more books will soon appear which deal with this vital topic.

# A GROWING LIST OF TORONTO FEMINIST GROUPS

**BAY CENTRE FOR BIRTH CONTROL**  
901 Bay Street  
966-7151  
(counselling and referral)

**CARAL**  
Box 527, Station Z  
961-1507  
(repeal of abortion law)

**CANADIAN WOMEN'S EDUCATIONAL PRESS**  
280 Bloor St. W. Suite 305  
962-3904  
(women's publishing house)

**IMMIGRANT WOMEN'S CENTRE**  
368A College St.  
924-7161  
(Italian, Portuguese, Spanish women's centre: birth control, referral)

**METRO TORONTO WOMEN'S CREDIT UNION**  
15 Birch Ave.  
960-0322

**MOTHER LED UNION**  
48 Cather Ave.  
781-0293 or 368-8439  
(welfare single parents)

**NATIONAL ACTION COMMITTEE ON STATUS OF WOMEN**  
121 Avenue Road  
922-3246

**DAYCARE ACTION ALLIANCE**  
P.O. Box 517  
925-3137  
(daycare coalition for better daycare)

**GAY WOMEN UNLIMITED**  
201 Church St.  
862-1544  
(Monday night meetings)

**INTERVAL HOUSE**  
596 Huron St.  
924-1491  
(housing for sole-support mothers and their children)

**ITALIAN WOMEN'S CENTRE (COSTI)**  
75 Stanley Road, Downsview  
745-6363

**ONTARIO NDP WOMEN'S COMMITTEE**  
67 Sussex Ave.  
964-8640

**NELLIE'S**  
275 Broadview  
461-1084  
(hostel for women with no children)

**PLANNED PARENTHOOD OF TORONTO**  
63 Yorkville  
961-8290  
(birth control and referral)

**RADIO WOMEN**  
961-0722 (Susan Ferrier)  
(2 hours per week on Radio Varsity)

**WOMEN'S KIT O.I.S.E.**  
252 Bloor St. W.  
923-6641  
(kit rental and sales on women)

**WOMEN IN TRANSITION**  
143 Spadina Road  
967-5227  
(crisis housing for women with children)

**RAPE CRISIS CENTRE**  
P.O. Box 6597, Stn. A  
368-8383

**REDLIGHT THEATRE**  
24 Ryerson Ave.  
368-9094  
(professional women's theatre company)

**TIMES CHANGE WOMEN'S EMPLOYMENT SERVICE**  
17 Shepard Ave. West  
787-6136

**BIRTH CONTROL AND V.D. INFORMATION CENTRE**  
2828 Bathurst, Suite 501  
789-4541  
(counselling, referral, clinic)

**WOMEN FOR POLITICAL ACTION**  
Box 1213, Stn. Q  
463-5914  
(encouraging women to run for office)

**WOMEN'S YELLOW PAGES**  
P.O. Box 153, Stn. Q  
964-0354

**WOMEN'S COMMUNICATION CENTRE**  
3 Church St., no. 401  
368-0764  
(working on national communication centre)

**WORKING WOMEN**  
595 Queen St. W.  
363-4058/9  
(employment service for immigrant women)

**WOMEN'S TRAVELLING MEDICINE SHOW**  
45 Linsmore Ave.  
461-5686  
(integrated approach to health: massage, yoga, nutrition, etc.)

**WOMEN'S COUNSELLING, REFERRAL AND EDUCATION CENTRE**  
15 Birch Ave.  
925-1155  
(education about women and mental health, and referral)

**WOMEN'S DEVELOPMENT CENTRE**  
Resource Centre YWCA  
(925-1154)  
15 Birch Ave.  
925-3137  
(library, courses, referral, legal clinic)

## feminist conference at bolton

—continued from page 11

justification for heterosexuality?" This is always a loaded question in a mixed group of women. After defending and/or promoting one's sexuality, it became clear that nobody was getting a fair deal out of their relationships with people. It was the **institution** of heterosexuality that was not only keeping us apart from each other but oppressing **all** women on different levels. Not until we realized (gay and straight together) the many ways in which our sexual preference was perverted by the **institution** of heterosexuality was there any room in our discussion for unity. Many of the women felt this to be a revelation which would change their political thoughts and, also, agreement was unanimous that this was a rare moment as the barriers of sexuality dividing us had been bridged to reach some common understanding.

One other high point of this workshop was the decision made by the whole group that they had heard more than enough from the 8 members of the Toronto Wages for Housework Committee. Once the Committee tried changing the topic and relating it to economics, it became a disruptive debate full of tension and patronizing statements made by the Committee. One does not convert active feminists, well-versed in political views, by loudly arguing when the object of the workshop was to rid ourselves of tension nor by giving a lesson in basic economics in a condescending manner.

After supper Saturday evening, there was a variety of entertainment. April Kassirer sang and played guitar, sometimes with Alexa DeWeil accompanying her on drums and vocals. Alexa read her poetry. There was an unscheduled poetry reading by Gert Beadle which nearly brought down the house; the women were wildly enthusiastic on discovering the talents of this Northern Woman. Lorna Boschman gave a comedy skit. There was a movie on the life of Gertrude Stein and Alice B. Toklas, "When this you see, remember me". There was a dance afterwards into the early hours.

Sunday morning, we reconvened as a large group. We discussed what had occurred in the workshops the day before. Plans were also made to establish a study group and to have a specific follow-up conference on the institution of heterosexuality. (For more informa-



Shellie Ludlow  
Carol Pasternak

tion on this, write to Pat Murphy, 342 Jarvis St., Toronto.)

In the afternoon, there were walks and talks, baseball games, and ritual mask making. Gradually the women drifted off to pack and go home, sated with the country air and political discussions.

## prairie women

—continued from page 21

nately, very little about women living through Canadian history. For example, two chapters dealing with the early development of the west tell us about the Grey Nun missionaries and one native woman who had distinguished herself. It was hard to read into either of these any of the effects on native people of either western religion or English fur traders in liasion with the Hudson Bay Company.

However, the many fine women Candice Savage has researched for us makes for exciting reading and has served as a reminder of my own tenuous link to the west. My great-aunt Liz followed the example of many more women who came from Eastern Canada and England by heading out west as a domestic, later to become a prairie farm wife.

Women who found greater freedom and independence out west were able to put their talents to use such as, Francis Beynon (women's editor of the *Grain Growers' Guide* from 1912 to 1917), who says of herself, "All my life, I have been a woman's woman." And, ah yes, E. Cora Hind (*Winnipeg Free Press agricultural reporter*), who once remarked, "Don't call

me a lady. Call me a woman. I may or may not be a lady, but I know I am a woman."

It is not my intention (nor was it Candace's) to ignore the many women in *Foremothers* who weren't reporters, judges or organizers. As you will see for yourself on reading this book, women had struggled long and hard in their groups and as individuals.

In 1892, the Criminal Code of Canada made birth control devices punishable by two years in jail. By 1930, the farm movement was committed to work for the repeal of the Code. In 1929, a group of western women finally won us the right to be called "persons". An 1867 British common law decision was used to oppose them — "Women are persons only in matters of pains and penalties, not in matters of rights and privileges."

Property law reform is, by no means, a new issue. As far back as 1915, women were fighting for the legal recognition that property acquired during a marriage would automatically belong to both husband and wife. Women fighting for the vote in Saskatchewan couldn't call it a real victory for, as it turned out, it was "not a matter of logic but of expediency."

In spite of coming from different places, both authors have managed to give us a good idea of the real value of our contribution to society. It cannot be measured (nor should it be) in terms of wealth or power for the individual woman. I am sure we all know (as *Foremothers* has shown us) that women working together can achieve power as a group.

**i say**

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# spreading across the land

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\*has a newsletter



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Also for complete B.C. listings, contact: Western Canadian News Service 2029 West Fourth Ave. Vancouver, B.C. 736-3746

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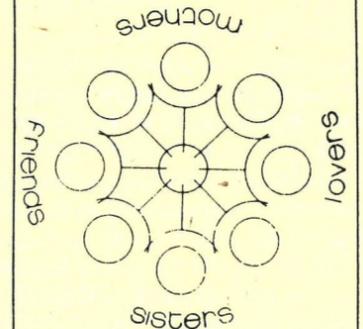
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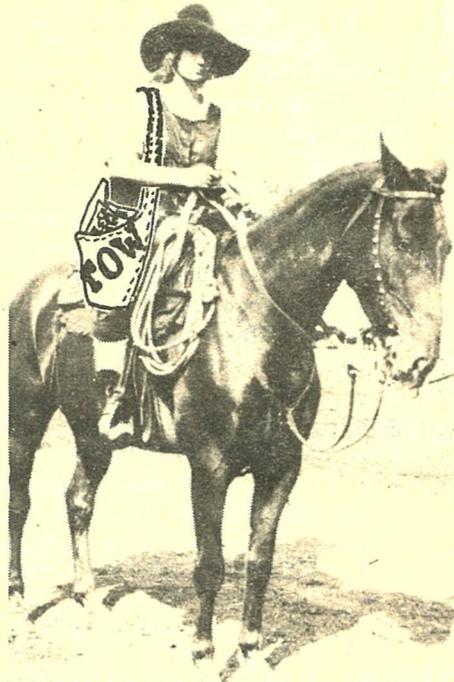
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