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THE OTHER WOMAN

CANADIAN
FEMINIST
VOL.4, NO. 3



FEATURING:

TALKING WITH MARITIME WOMEN
FEMINIST CREDIT UNION

POWERHOUSE: CANADA'S FIRST WOMEN'S ART GALLERY

PRICES AS INDICATED: \$.55 REST OF
CANADA \$.60 USA \$.75 ELSEWHERE

WOMAN ENERGY EXPLODES AT BENEFIT



Lounsberry

There comes a time in the life of a newspaper when a shot in the arm of Vitamin M (MONEY) is essential for survival. Vitamin M could be obtained by government grants, donations, sales pitches, advertising, pledges, bank robbery or counterfeiting. But, **now** decided we were going to get ours in concentrated capsule form by having a benefit.

The monthly budget to maintain **now** includes printing, postage, supplies, office rental, typewriter rental. Postage and printing costs have skyrocketed. Also, we plan to expand. Our immediate goals include a telephone and salary money. Our long term goal is to come out monthly by the beginning of next year.

Our benefit required a lot of planning and a lot of work; a lot of coordinating, legwork, publicity, last minute salad making and cancelling of taxis. The three hours before the benefit started were chaos. People arrived before we were set up, a performer cancelled because of illness, substitutions were made, there was too little food, there was too much food, we were afraid no one would come. Then everyone began to arrive. Pat womanfully handled the door alone. Everyone else ran around in hysterics.

After several hours of food and conversation, the music began. It was incredible! Our only problem, at that point, was that our energy was so high, and we were so attuned to the rhythms, that some people feared we might cave in the floor with our dancing and land in the IGA store. Afterward, instruments were passed around and we created an improvised jam session which was so loud that, around 2 a. m., the cops came to ask us to quiet down. We raised \$726.00. The money will go toward improving the paper (as you can see) and to pay our debts.

We couldn't have done it without a lot of help from a lot of women. We would like to thank: Cherbo, Sara Ellen Dunlop, Alexa De Weil, Beverly Glenn Copeland, The Three of Cups Collective, B.J. Danylchuk, Anna Hoad, Artemis and the anonymous woman who helped us with the sound system for the latter part of the evening, and all the fine women who came, danced, jammed, and had a good time. Thank you all!

The **Other Woman** would like to know your comments about this editorial and how we can strengthen the women's movement, particularly in Toronto. Also, there will be a retreat over the Victoria Day week-end at Bolton, Ontario to discuss where we're at in the women's movement. See next issue for reports.

Paper "Pulls Up Socks" To Re-Organize

The weather grows warmer, the birds return, the trees begin to bud, and **The Other Woman's** thoughts turn to...Spring Cleaning.

All winter long, the paper has been produced primarily by the efforts of five people. A lot of work goes into this newspaper you hold, from making decisions about copy to editing, layout, pasteup, and distributing the paper. And then there's all the other aspects of running a newspaper, managing the books, buying supplies, keeping up our correspondence and files. Like all housewives, **The Other Woman** is overworked and unpaid.

So we've decided to reorganize. Previously, we've requested a major time commitment and attendance at meetings from anyone who wanted to work on the paper. While we are still looking for new collective members, we also need people who have less time available but would still like to help with the paper. Perhaps you are leaving town next month but have some free time to give us now. Perhaps you are quite busy, but can manage one afternoon a month. Or perhaps you can't come into the office, but can help us from your home.

We need **typists, typesetters, photographers, graphic artists, copy editors, layout artists, pasteup people, proofreaders, writers, public relations help, correspondence editors, advertising coordinators, people to help with distribution, equipment hustlers.** We also need people who live in other cities to cover events and help with advertising and distribution in their areas. If you can do any of these things, or would like to learn how, please send your name, address, phone number, what areas interest you, and how much time you can offer **The Other Woman**. There will be a public meeting on May 20, 7:30 at 15 Birch Ave., to give newcomers a chance to learn how we operate.

We've been working very hard to improve the paper over the past few months. We need all the help we can get to continue these efforts.

EDITORIAL

REFLECTIONS ON MOVEMENT STRATEGY-

Is what we're doing truly weakening the institutions that structure our lives?

"It seems like a long time ago that we (that is, the women's movement) made a deliberate decision to base our activity on a direction which involved the setting up of alternative institutions to: 1) better meet our needs under a capitalist system and 2) use these in order to develop a comprehensive strategy. What happened to the second part of this decision?" (Pat Leslie, "Feminism and Business" **The Other Woman**, Vol. 4, No. 2)

Developing a political analysis is not just writing position papers to be glued onto reality. It is vital that we analyse and evaluate what we are learning as we work to create alternatives. This is difficult because we are often running as fast as we can just to stay in the same place. We struggle against hassles with money, energy, time, organization, day-to-day routine matters. Yet we are in danger of creating new bureaucracies, concerned only with maintaining ourselves and rarely questioning our purposes and usefulness. We are also in danger of creating pleasant ghettos for ourselves. Alternative institutions become comfortable to those who work in them. WE must ask: how many women do we reach? What do our alternatives say about our goals and values, about our politics?

Capitalist institutions destroy people's independence and freedom by convincing them that they do not have any business deciding how they should structure their lives. Accordingly, feminism seeks to abolish authority. Authority is the ability and power to determine or command on the basis of a hierarchical position. Authority is both internal and external. It will not be enough to weaken external authority because authority takes social and psychological forms. It becomes much more insidious and difficult to fight when it is internalized and becomes part of our personality structure.

While we reject authority, we still need ways of structuring our alternatives. Finding non-coercive ways is very difficult. It is not enough that an alternative institution be owned by "the people" or "women" or "the collective." This is just a meaningless, abstract idea unless that organization is fully worker-controlled and run. Furthermore, people operating institutions must be responsible and responsive. They must be aware of their impact and take responsibility for their actions. They must be available for criticism, ideally on a face-to-face level of contact.

WHERE ARE WE GOING?

All of this means that our politics must not be static. We must be constantly evolving and changing because there is no finite answer to our oppression.

We are in this movement because we are feminists, women who can no longer tolerate our oppression and who work to begin the creation of freedom. We are creating a revolution that will transform ourselves and our world. However, we must avoid the attitude that we in the Toronto women's movement are somehow the vanguard, the enlightened, who will lead Canadian women to liberation. We struggle out of necessity, not because we are altruistic missionaries.

Moreover, if we struggle around our true needs, then we avoid the trap of becoming martyrs for some abstract and ultimately futile idea. "The woman who sacrifices her needs for the sake of the movement is no threat to anyone, except to herself and the movement. Men have always respected an Antigone, adored a Joan of Arc, and why not? Such heroines deviate little from the norm: they sacrifice themselves for a principle or a vision rather than a man, but as long as they are sacrificing themselves, mankind is safe. The woman who endangers the patriarchy is the woman whose love for others grows from her love for herself—whose personal and political alliances stem from identification, not altruism. It is only when we love ourselves that we begin the work of destroying the patriarchy." (Karen Lindsey, *Boston Phoenix*).

We must remember this if sisterhood is ever to mean anything. We have insisted on an autonomous women's movement because we believe that sexism is the most fundamental oppression. However, we have divisions because, while all women experience sexism, it is in vastly different ways, according to class, race, age, education, sexual orientation...We cannot gloss over these divisions by invoking the notion of "sisterhood" conquering all. Sisterhood is our ideal, politically and spiritually, but it means struggle to reach it and maintain it.

It is imperative that we strengthen the communication links and networks. We must give each other feedback on an ongoing basis, and make it easier for new women to become involved in the movement.

Two Mad Tourists or The Day We Went To Niagara Falls

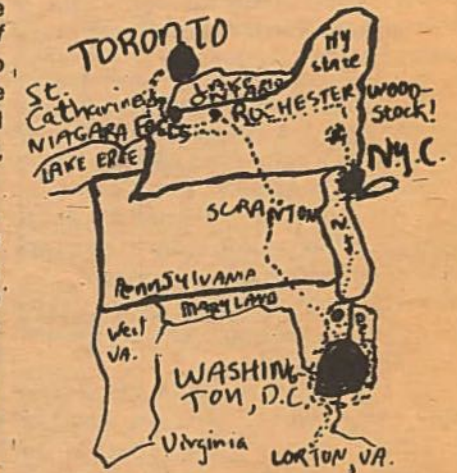
Several days after accidentally locking herself into the newspaper office overnight, the other woman said to the other woman, 'We've got to get out of here. I can't take this much reality.' So Angela held up the Vol. 3, No. 4 issue with Niagara Falls on the front cover and sprayed a cup of water at Pat asking, 'How's that for reality?'

Pat and Angela went off to St. Catharines to see the Niagara Women's Newspaper and decided to also check out the location of our front cover. To add a bit of excitement, 'Why don't we go across the border for a drink?'

'Well, since we're in the States, we may as well take a ride to Rochester to see the New Women's Times collective. It's only two hours.' So we called Rochester and ended up spending the night.

Someone casually joked, 'Why don't we go to Washington to see OFF OUR BACKS and New York City to see MAJORITY REPORT and Boston to see SISTER COURAGE since we are visiting newspapers?'

One woman said, 'Why not? (Hey, that sounds like a good slogan for IWY. We should tell the Canadian government.) As matter of fact, I've got some maps in the car...' which happened to be the ones we needed. We weighed the pros and cons and found them equal so we tossed a coin and left on a mind holiday.



Throwing all responsibility and commitment aside, we got back in the van and headed south. Once we started there was no turning back. We had finally managed to escape our definition of reality to become mad tourists. Just trucking along, going down the road, eagerly waiting to see what Scranton, Pa. looked like.

The trip was the thing, not having to do something and not having to go anywhere in particular. Every wrong turn was only part of the trip on the way to nowhere.

Twelve hours later, the trees were all in full bloom as we neared Washington. continued on page 19

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WE GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGE
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Copy deadline for Vol. 4, No. 4 will be June 15th and the 15th of every second month thereafter.

The Other Woman

At 4:37 a.m. on April 6, Raven Judith Murray entered the world. Margaret gave birth at home, with seven attendants. **to** welcomes our baby Amazon. We feel a special kinship, as Margaret appeared on the cover of Volume 4 no. 2.

ERRATA

Photo Cover Credit for Vol. 4, No. 2 should have read: Carol Pershyn not Carol Shermyn.

In Vol. 4, No. 2 **to** reprinted excerpts from the Wages for Housework Committee's petition against the Family Allowance cutbacks. The Committee has requested us to reprint the **entire** petition in this issue in order to avoid any misinterpretation by our readers.

We regret, however, that we are unable to do so. The missing lines from the petition are listed below:

"Our Housework Is Worth Money Like Any Other Work". "And we won't be satisfied with only a pittance for mothers—all women need more money, MORE POWER, to fight against the lower standard of life Trudeau has in mind for us all."

"We demand wages for housework for all women from the government."

DUMONT DUCKS

The Other Woman would like to give a special thanks to Dumont Press Graphix for all the help they have given us. We have gotten advice and assistance in layout, typesetting, and paste-up. We would not have managed to take the step of typesetting the paper without their help.

TWO WRITERS POINT OUT POLITICAL ERRORS

"SEXIST"

Dear Other Woman:

This letter is first to make it clear that it was **The Other Woman** collective and not myself who titled my book reviews on *Loving Women* and *Liberating Masturbation*. The title you chose and used "How to Handle a Woman" i found find incredibly insensitive and sexist. I would expect it from *Playboy*.

Naturally, i'm doubly offended because the unwitting reader might assume that i wrote the headline as well as the reviews. Had i been consulted re: the headline, i would have suggested "The Politics of Pleasure". I had thought that the book titles were sufficient. I guess that's all i can do or say. It certainly ruined what had been, 'til then, a very pleasurable experience for me. I resent that.

Chris Fox

Editor's Note: **to** collective added the title to the reviews with the intention of using the words in context with other words from the ballad... 'to love her, simply love her'. We apologize for any resentment we may have caused and for any insensitivity we may have shown.

"IRRESPONSIBLE"

Dear Sisters,

I'm writing about the "Switzerland" article published in **to** special issue of March. I do not assume this article in its form. I didn't write it and even a copy was not sent to me before the printing.

The fact that I'm not English speaking can explain a few confusions in information transmitted verbally. I don't want to enter into details even if I consider that the whole article doesn't make sense and is full of important mistakes. Mainly:

The Geneva self help group has nothing in common with the French Movement "for free abortion" even if their reflections had been important to us. Their real name is MLAC (*Mouvement pour la liberation de l'avortement et de la contraception*) and it was a mixed movement.

The whole self help movement in Europe is not at the level of the one in the States. We did never practice any menstrual extractions.

I'm not working with *Off Our Backs*. I consider irresponsible from **to** to publish that article on my name.

Rina

Editor's Note: The article "Switzerland" published in our special March 8th issue was not written by Rina herself but by a member of our collective. The information came from a conversation that we had with her in January. We sincerely apologize to Rina for any misunderstandings we may have caused concerning the article.

SPECIAL THANKS: Charlotte and Lounsberry (our friends from Dumont)



NEWS

Two lesbians were assaulted early April 10 as they were walking home to their apartment in the Annex hand-in-hand. Chris Bearchell and Connie Reich were struck repeatedly near the intersection of Bedford and Lowther by a man wielding a belt. While lashing at them the hysterical assailant called them "diseased" and demanded to know why they wouldn't "get a man." Bearchell suffered numerous bruises and abrasions. The attack was witnessed by a number of passers-by.

A charge of assault with intent to cause bodily harm has been laid in connection with the incident.

—K. Popert
(Body Politic)

and sometimes very discouraged because the population is so conservative and so transient. I am always flabbergasted to hear our innocuous little paper characterized as "revolutionary" and "Communist", etc. but that just goes to show what kind of environment this is. On the other hand, all this means that we don't lack of things to do and issues to fight. The mayor of Calgary wrote us once suggesting that we're "degrading the dignity of womanhood"—imagine! And there is the big fight over the Calgary Birth Control Association (the local Planned Parenthood affiliate) which is absolutely ridiculous, involving wiretapping and spying by Pro-Life people, etc., all of which were not reported by other media, only us.

Yours,
Gunilla Mungan

FROM MOVEMENT MEDIA

FREDERICTON

Dear Other Women:

First of all, *Equal Times* has been a monthly feminist paper on the stands since June of 1975. We are celebrating our first birthday in May. Since then we have been living from month to month. We were originally financed (first 4 months) by a Secretary of State grant. In September-October we had no finances but began paying for typesetting and printing from advertising and distribution. In November 1975 we got an LIP grant which pays the salaries of 2 people. This will end in May. We have applied for another summer grant and will hear in April whether or not there will be a salary for the months of June, July and August.

I expect we share the same problems you do with advertising but in Fredericton we are up against a brick wall. For one thing our circulation is small, 1,000 or so, and there are not many people or businesses interested in advertising in a feminist paper. And the number of people with advertising potential is limited to begin with. With cutbacks etc. advertising from our regular sources is falling off.

Our philosophy is a fairly standard feminist policy—to cover women's issues and provide a forum for women in the community. Again, the most difficult part is interesting those very women who need to be interested.

We run the paper as a small cooperative which means we have an editorial board of anyone interested for policy making. This same board supposedly screens all copy used but this is not always the case. Articles are written again through volunteer efforts. We do the layout ourselves and have it typeset and printed elsewhere. Unfortunately, we have just found out that typesetting and printing costs have gone up. There may be some changes made in the paper in the near future.

Alice Van Wart
for *Equal Times*
Fredericton.

CALGARY

Dear Other Women:

Our circulation is now 3,000, up from 1,500 since October. Only about 500 of the 1,600 we mail out (the rest are distributed through United News) are paid subscribers, but the list of subscribers is growing very satisfactorily. When the paper started out in February 1975, it was fully supported by Secretary of State and was mailed out free to about 1,200 women. Now we're about 2/3 self-supporting through subscriptions, newsstand sales and advertising. Of course we're trying to be fully self-supporting. Advertising is probably the key, but we find it a terrific hassle to sell it. We only started being distributed by United News in February 1976, so we don't have firm figures from them yet, but the response seems to have been very encouraging. We're planning to drop all free subscriptions soon.

The mail I get is absolutely tremendous. Several times a week I get letters from people who are practically thanking me for saving their lives. When we mailed out a questionnaire in the January issues, we got about 100 responses, all very encouraging. Quite a lot of our mail comes from outside Calgary, smaller towns as Drumheller, Red Deer, etc. in Alberta and B.C. Those people seem to need this sort of contact especially. One phenomenon that I've noted is someone writing me a letter highly critical of the paper BUT also including a donation, and a list of people we should send the paper to.

The two daily Calgary newspapers have both borrowed material from us on several occasions which I suppose could be considered an encouraging sign.

One of our strengths is being able to draw on the contacts and knowledge of the Status of Women Committee, from whose office we work. That's not an "official" Status of Women council, but just an informal volunteer group. It is the focus for all feminist activity in Calgary.

Being in Calgary means that we feel very isolated from "the mainstream"

POWERHOUSE ART GALLERY celebrating third birthday

interviewed by pat leslie

EDITOR'S NOTE: In February, *tow* paid a visit to Powerhouse Art Gallery at 3738 Dominique (844-4101). The former Director of Powerhouse, Tanya Rosenberg, is interviewed below by Pat Leslie.

sculpture
céramique

Powerhouse Gallery was founded on May 20th, 1973 by 8 Montreal women artists who got together during the consciousness-raising era through a small feminist crafts store called The Flaming Apron. It had a bulletin board and someone wrote that she was interested in having more involvement with other women artists. They got together, looked at each other's work, and decided that they would like to put their work together as a group exhibition. They applied all over the city and were not even given the courtesy of being responded to, even negatively. They decided that they would just do a show by themselves so they found a small, renovated office space on Greene Avenue and rented it, theoretically, for a month.

WAS THERE ANY BIAS, AT FIRST, TOWARD WOMEN SEEING THEMSELVES AS WOMEN AND NOT JUST ARTISTS?

There was that too. Basically, they were all novices at it, the whole procedure. The show got panned by all the art critics. It was not taken seriously. I don't think the critics viewed it as art. They said: If the criteria for these women organizing this exhibition is that women are discriminated against in the male-dominated art world, and if this art work is any indication of what women do, then it's no wonder that they are discriminated against, because it's not any good.

A group show involves all different kinds of work. A pitfall of a group show is that they are hard to evaluate because they are isolated works from so many different people. Some of the women who were shown there did good work and some didn't do as good work as others. The critics really didn't take the time to get into it at all. They saw it as a political thing, not really very relevant, and tried to brush it off. Regardless of that, they got a good deal of response from other women artists in the city who really had, up to that point, no place to go unless they wanted to get into the whole art scene. There were only two alternative galleries in the city before Powerhouse was founded: one for conceptual art and the other for printmaking. So, unless you fell into either of those categories, you were pretty well left out in the cold.

HOW DID IT CONTINUE TO FUNCTION AFTER THAT FIRST SHOW?

From December 1973 to June 1974, there was a LIP Grant. The nature of LIP Grants is that you only have six months to get anything off the ground so it really didn't help us a lot. Interest increased gradually, the critics came and we got reviews. It's all volunteer work, basically. It takes a great deal of time and energy to put together an exhibition. People get tired of it. You work really hard and long hours without much tangible reward. So, at various stages, people just dropped out because they were exhausted and they have to do their own work. Most of the women involved are artists so it is a constant conflict as to whether to do the administrative thing or whether to do your own work.

WILL THAT HAMPER THE FUTURE OF THE GALLERY?



suzelle levasseur
suzanne dubuc

I don't think so. There is always someone willing to do the administrative work. Right now, I'm the only person that is salaried which comes from donations.

WHY WAS THE MOVE MADE TO ST. DOMINIQUE?

The space we had was very limited. We couldn't show anything of any great size, the light was poor and the building was run down. Also, Westmount was not a really good place for an off-beat gallery since it's very WASP and middle-class. St. Dominique was a great space in the east and right off the main cultural, bohemian hub of the city. After a certain amount of deliberation and vote-taking, and deciding whether we were going to continue, we added up our money that we had collected through donations. We had enough to cover rent for a year. So we decided to move; we decided to take that risk. Somehow we would find the money to operate it. We moved here, renovated and then the public could no longer ignore the fact that we existed. We have a beautiful space now, big and versatile.

POWERHOUSE IS ONE OF THE MORE STABLE WOMEN'S GROUPS. WHAT KEEPS IT GOING?

What brought us together is that we really believe that we have to support each other. The fascinating thing about this gallery is that you have women from all ages, backgrounds, all different artis-

tic ilks who are here for no other reason than having had similar experiences being a woman and trying to be an artist. That's the only reason we are together, and that's the only reason that we support other women who are struggling the same way that we have had to struggle.

We have 20-year-old art students and women pushing sixty. We have Westmount married, middle-class couples and poverty-stricken divorced women with three kids. It's really diverse. At least three-quarters of the women involved in the gallery are on unemployment or some grant, if they're lucky. A few of the women have made it locally or have had some exhibitions outside of the city. But, for the most part, everyone is poor, struggling, young and hard-working.

WHAT ABOUT THE FRENCH AND ENGLISH ASPECT? ARE THERE ALSO ANY PROBLEMS THAT ARISE OVER POLITICS?

We have one French woman who has stuck it out. She has expressed that it was a very difficult decision because her culture is not with us. But her interest in art and the kind of thing that we are doing is not happening in the French sector. French women, at this point, are concerned with nationalism. You can't overextend your energy. You have to focus on one thing first.

We have our openings on Sunday nights which is often a nice quiet day at home but they are always very well at-

tended with a cross-section of people. There we do attract a greater French public than actual involvement. We have ex-patriot Americans involved, we have Europeans, all different kinds of people. To me, that's the exciting part: when you can put your ideologies, ideas and ideals about art aside, your own personal taste, to work with something that's really much broader. In that sense, we are not political. We are not making a radical feminist stance. We don't have energy to go out and politic but, by existing and by refusing to allow the male-dominated art establishment to get rid of us simply because they won't support us financially through Canada Council or whatever agency, we have very strong political statement. It's not everyone's politics, our politics are all different. It's what brings us together and makes a very strong political stand.

WE all realize that we all have our own way of thinking, and there's absolutely no way we are going to compromise on our ideas about art and that's why we produce what we produce. That means we have strong individuals who are committed to what they do. It's almost like we have all kings and no pawns. We have been able to maintain the ability to get together and work those problems through. We have had to face problems dealing with some women who want to be more radical, to exclude men from the gallery, even in terms of the audience. There are other women who are on the other end of the spectrum, who just feel that now we should allow men as members. There is that wide a difference in personal politics involved, so obviously differences come up but we have been able to overcome it.

POWERHOUSE IS RUN COOPERATIVELY, HAS IT BEEN SUCCESSFUL?

The interesting thing about a cooperative is that you find out who knows how to do electricity, sanding building walls. We did the electricity, we have (since moving in) renovated two small offices, knocked out a wall, pushed a wall back, rebuilt the wall and made a small gallery so that we have our large exhibition space plus a smaller, more intimate space for drawings, photographs and small sculpture.

We have pooled our resources, our money and knowledge. We have managed to put together one of the more interesting and dynamic spaces in the city. People who don't like us, who don't like the fact that we are a women's art gallery, can't deny that they feel an energy and an excitement when they come here.

WHAT KIND OF EXHIBITS HAVE BEEN SHOWN HERE?

We've had everything from photography, very realistic vegetable drawings, to environmental, conceptual pieces. We've had paintings, prints and weaving. We had a member show in December which 18 members signed up for and we all had to make a toy. It was a great show with good response from the public but lousy response from the critics. They panned it as, of course, we produced functional objects. Everyone

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FEMINIST CREDIT UNIONS

GIVING WOMEN CREDIT

philinda masters

There are a number of things a feminist credit union is not: it is not a bank; it is not a rip-off capitalist business; it is not a political strategy; it is not The Answer.

There are also a number of things a feminist credit union is; but first, the things it isn't.

A lot of people confuse credit unions with banks. Many credit unions even offer services similar to banks (chequing facilities, etc.) and have buildings that look like banks complete with tellers. But under the surface, banks and credit unions operate on totally different philosophies. A bank exists to make money off its customers. It is owned by a small number of shareholders who get rich from the profits. It is not a place "where people count" as one large Canadian bank insists.

A credit union is literally owned and run by its members/customers. One share in a credit union entitles you to one vote; 5,000 shares entitles you to one vote, so no one person or group can take control. Join a credit union and you have a say in its policies; you also get your share of the profit.

The word "profit" is a weighted one. Because our economic system is capitalist, we are all conditioned to see profit as something hoarded by a few men at the top, unrelated to the efforts of the workers who produce that profit. So credit unions refer to their profits as "excess income". This is not merely a matter of semantics, it is an attempt to distinguish between unfair and fair distribution of the money created by a business.

In effect, credit union profits are not pure profits, the excess income is not really excess. It belongs to the members (the same way an income tax rebate is not a gift from a benevolent government—it was our money in the first place.). The cost of taking out a loan (usually a 12% interest rate) provides a credit union with the cash to pay its

operating expenses and to make other loans. But a portion of the cost (i.e. the excess) is returned to the member at the year's end.

In the same way the word "profit" is weighted, so is the word "business". In a capitalist system, business equals profit equals rip-off. As long as one person produces wealth and another person pockets it, that's a rip-off. But business itself isn't. There's nothing wrong with a group of people banding together to produce goods or services efficiently, in factories or offices. The problem lies with one group's benefiting from the efforts of another, and in our society the benefits come in the form of money.



Carol Pershyn

Money is the currency of power in a capitalist system. But an individual with money is not automatically powerful. A woman or a black man with money will not, alone, be powerful since power rests with a group's, or class's, access to money. S/he is still a woman, or black, and therefore a visible member of a group which, under capitalism, has limited access to money.

the pie, because we are operating outside the pie. No matter what, women have very little money and pooling it doesn't make us rich or give us access to real wealth or real power.

For that reason, a feminist credit union can't be considered a political strategy—it is not The Answer to women's powerlessness. It is also not a centre for organizing around women's

issues. It is a holding tank for resources, in the monetary sense, to be used by the movement when needed.

But that's not to say that a women's credit union doesn't have worthy goals. Something that provides a much-needed service is always valid. And while the sole purpose is not to provide easy credit or combat credit discrimination, it certainly helps a woman who's in a bind. It's also better to pool our money for our own benefit than not to.

The idea for the Metro Toronto Women's Credit Union came into being several years ago when it was agreed that projects within the women's movement should not have to rely on government grants and unpaid labour for their existence. A structure that would provide a way to pool our money and redistribute it among women was needed, and a credit union for women seemed the most suitable.

Eventually it is hoped that the credit union can provide money for educational loans (particularly for women who want training in the trades), the funds to buy a building to house women's projects and food and housing co-ops. These long-range goals are not unrealistic (the credit union movement in Quebec has managed it) but in the meantime the credit union relies on granting small personal loans until it can increase its assets substantially.

But as useful as it is, one credit union in one city is not enough. In terms of giving women the economic base to begin controlling our own lives, it is a drop in the bucket. What is needed is an organized movement of autonomous women's credit unions across Canada. Women with some financial backing will be in a much better position to demand changes.

FROM AN EUROPEAN FEMINIST

ABOUT WOMEN'S CREDIT UNIONS

I'm a European feminist and it's travelling in the States and in Canada that I've heard for the first time of women's credit unions.

I want to answer to the article published by **low** in the vol. 4, No. 1. I suppose that this article was not written by women of **low** but I would like to propose my reaction as an **open letter**.

Who is going to put money in a W.C.U.? Middle-class women because they **have** money. Who is going to ask for some money? Women who need an abortion, or a divorce. Yes, as a group, women are poorer than men. Women have no money by themselves because they are housewives.

In a W.C.U., the profits are returned to the members. This is clear, it's a way to keep the money where the money is. Worst, rich women are going to have the possibility to make profit on poor women by the interest.

The fact that the credit union is for women only doesn't make it **feminist**. On the contrary, I think it's a reproduction of the male system.

Who is going to have the control of the money in a W.C.U.? Not every woman who is going to open a share account of \$5 but the directors.

Directors, like in banks, are rich. So it's **rich women** who are going to decide to who they are going to give some

money. They are going to refuse to give money, if it's not already done. It's going to be very interesting to see to who they are going to refuse the money.

Anyway, it's going to be **their power**. This is not an alternative system at all, it's a way to keep the control on the money. It's the business of a few middle class women.

Oh yes, your money is going to be safe in a W.C.U. Safe and part of a system to make profit. Great, isn't it?

I'm really afraid of this new tendency of a pseudo-feminist movement. Here sisterhood is a sad joke. Everything is not going to work better between women, just because we are women as

long as we are not going to take the time to think together what exploitation and oppression is.

Class differences exist between women too. W.C.U.'s are just a new form of exploitation: women on women. That's why, as banks, women's credit unions are our **enemy**.

from Montreal,
Rina.

HOW TO START A CREDIT UNION

It's not as difficult to start a credit union as might be expected. The world of finance has been largely mystified, but the concept of a credit union is really very simple: it is a money co-op.

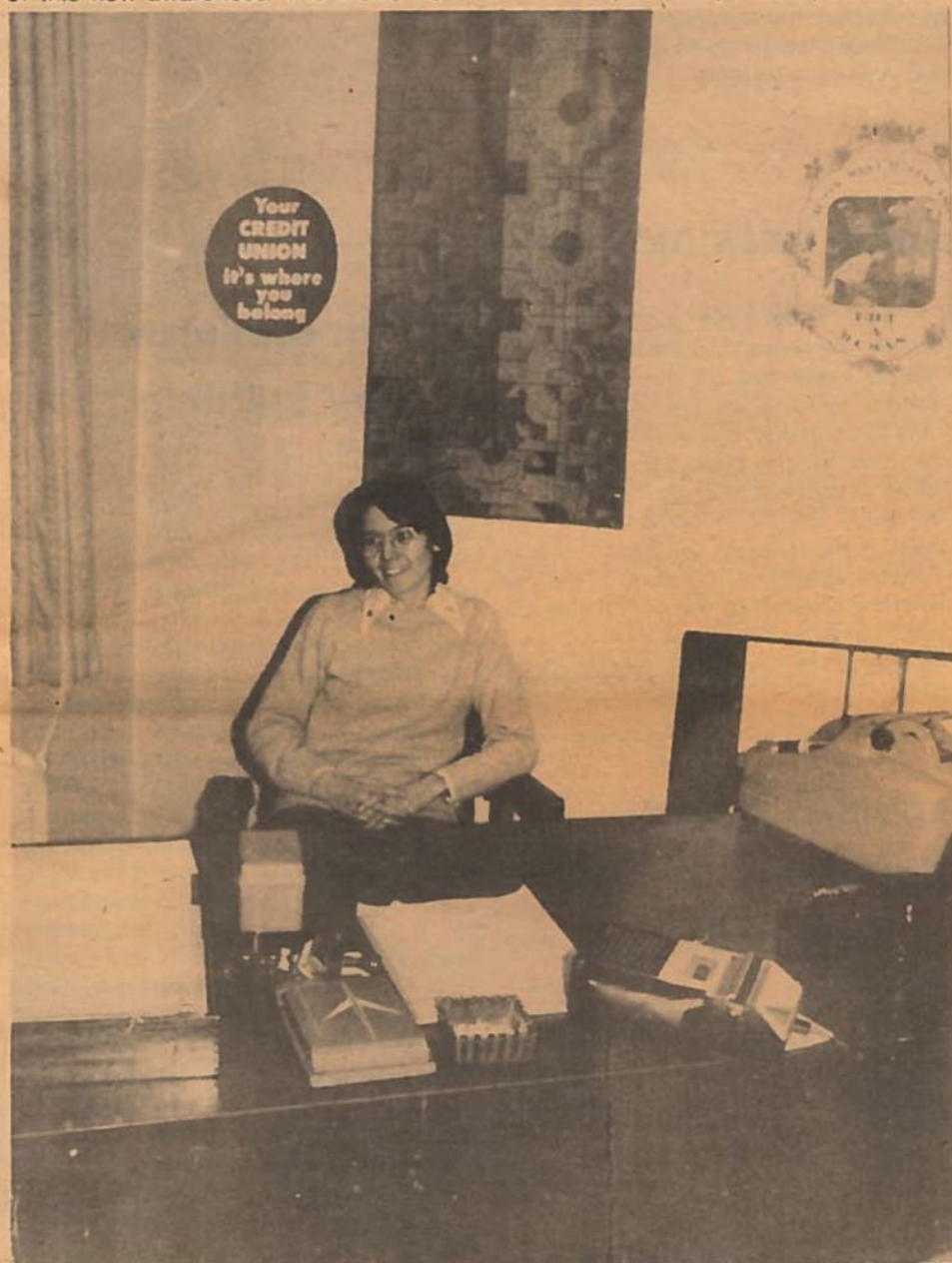
Credit unions come under provincial jurisdiction so the best way to start is to get hold of a copy of the Credit Unions Act in your province. It's also a good idea to contact the provincial Credit Union League. They can be useful in providing information about applying to the government for a charter, in supporting your application, and in supplying materials for setting up your office. (Affiliation with the League can be dropped at a later date.)

The credit union movement in general is becoming aware that women are a vast, untapped potential market, and feminist groups should take advantage of this new awareness. The Metro To-

ronto Women's Credit Union has set a precedent in having women considered a community, which will make it easier for other women's credit unions to obtain a charter.

The Metro Toronto Women's Credit Union is willing to act as a resource in helping other women's groups start credit unions. It will answer any questions regarding the specifics of applying for charter, details of operation, philosophy, goals, the problems of operating collectively within a legal structure, etc.

It's important that once a network of feminist credit unions is established, close communication be maintained. So contact the Metro Toronto Women's Credit Union by phone at (416) 960-0322 Thursdays, or write to: Metro Toronto Women's Credit Union, P. O. Box 595, Station "F", Toronto, Ontario, M4Y 2N4.



Carol Pershyn

FIRST ANNUAL CREDIT UNION MEETING

Two main motions were passed by the 40 or so members attending the MTWCU's First Annual Meeting held on February 27, 1976 at the credit union office. Both motions were proposed in the spirit of sharing knowledge in order to help the members clarify any confusions they may have concerning some of the aspects of the various processes undertaken by the main committees of the credit union.

The first motion stemmed from bewilderment over the election process which was to have been followed that evening to elect members to fulfill rotating vacancies on the board and committees. One member questioned the validity of 'bullet balloting' (voting for only one candidate when there are two vacancies in order to give more weight to that one vote and discovered that any ballot with only one name on it would be invalid. The request for the by-laws stating that this was the correct procedure for the election was unable to be met satisfactorily at that time. The realization that lacking the information contained in the credit union by-laws could put members in a powerless follower category, rather than in a knowledgeable decision-making category, prompted the motion that the board of directors would see that all existing members would receive a copy of the by-laws. They will be mailed with the quarterly report to be issued in May. New members would receive copies upon joining.

Arguments presented against the motion concern: cost and effort in prepar-

ing the by-laws for mailing; the Credit Union League-by-laws were available at the government bookstore; and a copy was available at the office. These were not strong enough to defeat the motion. It passed 23 to 11, showing that a majority of the interested members who attended the annual meeting realized the significance of easy access to the rules which govern their organization.

The second motion, passed unanimously, allows people who are applying for loans to be invited by the credit committee to be in attendance when their loan application is under discussion. This action acknowledges the applicant as a person able to participate in decision-making.

Other business carried out at the meeting was the filing of comprehensive reports from the board, the treasurer, the credit committee, and the supervisory committee. The detailed financial statement and the realistic projected budget for the coming year both show the credit union's commitment to sound fiscal procedures which they must carry out in order to exist.

MTWCU, the first women's credit union in Canada, has the potentiality of being a fine role-model for other women who wish to become involved in having some control over their money. **to** urges all women to be aware of the dictum "KNOWLEDGE IS POWER" and to do everything to place themselves in that position.

*Mary Cornish, Harriet Sachs & Geraldine Waldman
in association with
Lynn King*

*announce
the opening of their law offices
on April 12th, 1976
under the firm name of*

Cornish, Sachs & Waldman

*Suite 320 111 Richmond Street West
Toronto M5H 3N6 Telephone: 416-366 7392*

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

ABORTION

CARAL (Canadian Association for Repeal of the Abortion Law) A six-month study on the operation of the abortion law will be completed in April. We must be sure that a debate happens at this time in the House as, if the law is not changed this year, we will wait another 3-4 years before it comes up for debate again.

Write to members of Parliament stating your support for removal of abortion from the criminal code—the Hon. Ron Basford is Minister of Justice. Write often (no stamp necessary), as they are stacked up piles of pros and cons.

WHAT IS THE ABORTION LAW?

Section 251 of the Criminal Code forbids Abortion except when in the opinion of the Therapeutic Abortion Committee of an approved hospital, "continuation of the pregnancy would or would be likely to endanger her (the woman's) life or health".

RAPE

A 30 year old woman was raped after being handcuffed, stuffed in a car trunk and driven to a vacant house. She was left handcuffed to a stair rail and had to break the rail to get free. The man had pushed his way into the house and handcuffed her legs and wrists. He taped her eyes, put a gag in her mouth and dragged her to a car.

A 29 year old woman was raped on the 4th floor of a downtown residence. She awoke to find a man holding a knife against her neck. She was left with her feet and wrists tied with her clothing and gagged.

It is obvious that we can't forget about a thing like rape but we must be reminded that it never stops. Ever since the patriarchy began, there have always been rapes. Private property is the foundation of the patriarchy and, by private property, I also mean women. It is the man who feels his own powerlessness in society who needs to rape in order to

wield power over someone else. All men rape us mentally: staring at us on buses, rubbing against us on crowded subways, leering at the waitress as she bends over and on and on. They have been socialized to see all women as their very own 'piece'.

But things are getting heavier, more brutal. It is not enough to just rape her. It must be done in the most humiliating manner possible. Rape Crisis Centres in Toronto, Montreal, Ottawa and Vancouver have gained a good deal of publicity resulting in more and more women having the courage to stand up in court. But this does not **stop** rape. To stop rape would mean the ultimate destruction of the patriarchy. This certainly will not happen overnight. So what do we do in the meantime? Our very homes are being invaded, no longer is it a simple matter of a dark street. It may be you, even me, next.

SEXUAL ASSAULT

Friends:

Several attorneys and I are working on a civil case involving a woman who was sexually assaulted while serving time in one of our local county jails.

We would appreciate any information that you can supply concerning sexual assaults on women inmates by jail personnel so that we can effectively prosecute this case.

Very truly yours,
George C. Price
Law Clerk
Zarlengo, Mott and Zarlengo
1020 American National Bank Building
818—17th Street
Denver, Colorado 80202

palestinian women involved in armed struggle

(WLN)—**Palestine:** *Palestinian Women in the National Liberation Struggle* is an article in the latest Malaysia News Service. It documents the history and activities of women's resistance groups, particularly the General Union of Palestinian Women. The need for unity of all organizations resulted in the General Congress of the Union in Beirut in October 1974 at which all the women's organizations joined. The Declaration issued at the time states "the only possibility for a woman to liberate herself and to end the specific oppression to which she is subject, is to take part in the armed struggle." From the section Present Political Activities: "At the practical level the Union faces the usual conditions in which women of the Third World find themselves. In Lebanon, for example, it must fight illiteracy among those women in the camps who are over 30. It must take concrete steps to ease the household burdens of the married women, handicapped at an early age by a large number of children and precarious health....The young Palestinian women in the Lebanese camps

are more tied to their status as refugees than the men, with few jobs open to them....But even if participation of women in camp political life has started to shake off the yoke of tradition, this yoke is still present. The majority of the female population between 15 and 25 is economically inactive. The young Palestinian woman still has a low level of education. Because of this, she can find only a badly-paid insecure job in industry or agriculture. And if the fact of working is itself a sign of progress, the harsh conditions of work tend often to push her into an earlier marriage than she would wish....the GUPW is working to expand and develop socio-economic projects. Among its achievements are the opening of military training centres, embroidery centres, literacy campaigns and the founding of kindergartens." One of the facts that emerges strongly from this article is the fact that the Palestinian women's struggles have engaged large numbers of village women: "Well in advance of the city-dwellers, the village woman was participating in her own way; she was taking part in the armed struggle".

women fight indonesian invasion

(WLN)—**East Timor:** Women are playing a central role in the current fighting against the Indonesian invasion of East Timor, according to Jose Ramos Horta, foreign minister of the new Democratic Republic of East Timor at a UN press conference. He pointed out that 90 per cent of the forces along the Indonesian border are women, particularly along the south coast. "We believe for a national movement to succeed and not betray itself, women must play an active role in the liberation of themselves and their country," he noted.

Although some women are in lead positions on lower levels, he said none are on the decision-making level. "This is the result of our colonial past. It will be changed."

news briefs

(NWL)—**Philippines:** The Great Condom War began when the Population Centre embarked on an advertising campaign to induce purchase of government condoms in 'eye-appealing colours'. The ads and the colours were not appealing to the Catholic Women's League, to whom contraception is immoral. The CWL demanded an end to the programme, and the Marcos government retreated. The exceptionally high population growth rate in the Philippines (ascribed by Imelda Marcos to the extreme passion of Philipinas) is partly due to the fact that information and devices are scarcely available in most of the archipelago's 7,000 islands.

(NWL)—**London:** 20,000 people marched on June 21st through London to protest the proposed change in England's abortion law. Many organizations, trade unions, women's groups, health workers, political groups, etc., as well as individuals, have joined the fight. For the first time the Labour women M.P.s have united as women to defeat this Bill.

french prostitutes collective adds new demand

(WLN)—**Paris:** After we printed the page on **The Prostitutes' Movement in France**, in our last newsletter, we received supplementary information which throws a new light on this movement. (From Liberation 5/1/76) The prostitutes of Marseille have created the 'Association Entre-Femmes'; the address of that association (which we gave in the January newsletter) is the same address as the one of Mr. Blanchot, extreme-right wing lawyer!

In December, there was a meeting of the prostitutes in Marseille from which the MLF women were excluded. Speaking there were 2 right wing lawyers, defenders of many well-known fascists, a representative of the newspaper of the French National Front, a finance adviser, and in the room were many well-known and wealthy pimps. "So, what stage has the movement reached in Marseille, six months after the church occupation?"



(NWL)—**Portugal:** Abortion and contraception are both illegal in Portugal. There is no national organization but women are beginning, in factories and firms, to share and spread information about birth control. This of course is very difficult when they are in general not even allowed to attend their own meetings. They are tied to home and family and have no opportunity of access to information.

If the life of the woman is in danger—it is the choice of the husband whether she has an abortion. Abortions are available at very high cost for middle class women, performed by midwives; but for the poor, dangerous, often self-inflicted, abortions are the only alternative.

pamphlets tell about japanese women

(WLN)—**Japan:** *On Being a Woman in Japan* by Aiko Carter: treats some forms of sex discrimination (education, employment, abortion, and the problems of adoption) plus an article on "The Front Lines of the Ongoing Struggle" (Shibokusa Mother's Movement, Relations with Asian Women, the group 'Women in Battle', the Struggle for a Decent Retirement Age) plus articles on the legal status of women and on working women (Devaluation of Women's Work, Female Labour in the Textile Industry, a Union Organizer).

Why I Oppose Kisaeng Tours - exposing economic and sexual aggression against South Korean women by Matsui Yatori, Japanese women fight in solidarity with their Korean sisters who have to prostitute themselves to Japanese men and American tourists.

Onna Kaiho - Japanese women strike back by Tagaki Sawako: Series of short articles: Japanese Government's pimps for American GI's; October 21, 1970—the day the mountain moved (first women's liberation demonstration); Two million criminals a year (on the abortion laws in Japan); The Land of the Rising Sisters (on different groups in the women's liberation movement in Japan).

These three pamphlets are published by *Femintern Press*, P.O. Box 5426, Tokyo International, 100-31 Japan. Telephone: (03) 359-0043 and (03) 369-4101. *Femintern Press* has been collecting and distributing material concerning Japanese, Chinese and other Asian women.

The Prostitutes Collective has added one demand to the list of ten demands presented on the 29th of December to the government, asking that "the 'proxenetes alimentaires' (technical term for the pimp who is also the lover of a prostitute) do not get sentenced to jail for pimping, which happens at the moment, whereas the 'proxenetes industriels' (term for the pimps who are covered by the police and rule over 10, 20, or 30 prostitutes) are only sentenced to small fines and rarely go to jail."

spanish women demand equality -get gassed

(WLN)—**Spain:** On January 15, more than 2,000 women marched on the Premier's office demanding full equality with men in politics, jobs, education and culture, end to restrictions on pay rises, minimum daily wage of 830 pesetas (5 pounds approx.), democratic freedoms and the release of political prisoners. The demonstration was organized by 23 women's neighbourhood associations in Madrid and co-sponsored by Socialists, Communists and other illegal leftist groups. The women were dispersed by the police with tear gas.

women isolated at university

(WLN)—**Saudi Arabia:** From a statement handed out by the Delegation of Saudi Arabia at the Mexico Conference of IWY: *At the University of Riyadh, women are external students, attending lectures by way of closed-circuit TV in a room some distance away from the other buildings. By their side are telephones, which they may use to ask the lecturer questions, and in addition they may confer directly with specially appointed women tutors.*

danish feminists occupy building

(WLN)—**Denmark:** After 6 months of debating with the Municipality of Copenhagen, feminists from the Redstocking and Lesbian groups are setting up a new Women's Centre. (The previous Centre, owned and let free by the Ministry for Culture, is being converted into a museum.) It was occupied illegally by women from these two groups on December 10th. From that date, there has been a continuous rotation of women working in the building and guarding it. To begin with, organizational meetings were held every evening and are now held once a week. Base groups and project meetings have also begun to be held there while at the same time, Red Stockings and Lesbian groups are attempting to work through some of their political and ideological differences, with better co-operation in view. Communications are being kept up between these women and the Minister of Culture, the press, people living in the area and other European women's groups. It is not yet settled whether or not they will be able to remain in the building.

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

Toronto Women's Yellow Pages

" if i can't do it myself,
i want to hire a woman!"

Your car continues to run after you turn off the ignition. You're going on holiday and your plants need watering during the two weeks you'll be gone. Your clothes need to be drycleaned, your convention meed planning, your bicycle needs its chain replaced, your roof needs shingling, your eyes need examining, and you happen to believe that where you spend your money is political. In order to please your politics and lessen the pain of parting with the pay, just consult the second edition of the *Toronto Women's Yellow Pages*, and you'll have access to all the information necessary to locate a woman to take care of that job you can't do yourself.

The new edition, entirely woman-made, is divided into two parts. The first

contains a guide listing women who operate their own enterprises or who have some specific skill to market. The second section consists of a "catch all" guide for providing information in such areas as day care, equal employment opportunities, emergency housing, and legal aid.

Salaries for the women working on the book come from a LIP grant, but all other expenses must be met through sales. The new *Yellow Pages*, containing twice the amount of information as the old one, will cost \$3.00. To order your copy, send \$3.00 to *Toronto Women's Yellow Pages*, Box 153, Stn. Q, Toronto, Ontario, or look for it at bookstores everywhere.

NEWS BRIEFS

FNS folds

In March of 1975, a conference of women's newspapers and newsletters in Winnipeg gave birth to the Feminist News Service. Due to regional isolation and the lack of good coverage of women's events by the established press, the Canadian feminist media felt the need to set up a system in which they could better communicate with each other. Policies on structure and feminist principles were drawn up and taken back home by 7 regional representatives. A local central coordinator was located in eastern Canada with the anticipation of one also being found for the Western provinces.

During the year of its life, five news packets were sent to members and subscribers. After this heroic effort, the co-ordinator found it necessary to resign and the news service died from lack of strength, financial and otherwise. The Canadian movement NEEDS better communication from coast to coast. Our news service MUST be reborn.

new research institute for women

The Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women had its beginning in January 1975 and was born April 9th after 2 days of intensive consultation by 55 women and men from across the country. Pauline Jewett, President of Simon Fraser University, was elected President of the Institute and announced at a press conference in Ottawa:

"We have elected a board of directors, established a constitution and set our directives, purposes and ways of achieving them."

rug-ranking ended

A tentative two year agreement has been reached between the Federal Government and the Public Service Alliance of Canada on behalf of its 15,430 members in the secretarial, stenographic and typing group, the alliance announced April 9th.

The agreement provides for the elimination of rug-ranking, whereby secretaries are classified according to the ranks of their bosses and not according to their own work.

Wage increases would range from 10.5% to 14% in the first year and 7.6% in the second year.

b.c. women demonstrate

In April, all B. C. women's groups and women's centres participated in a massive demonstration at the provincial legislature in Victoria against both provincial and federal spending cutbacks that have hit women most severely. We regret going to press before a more detailed account can reach us.

Science-Fiction Writer

Joanna Russ, science fiction writer and feminist, spoke at Glendon College (York University) on March 26th. Her theme was "The War Between the Sexes as Portrayed in Science Fiction."

Russ used as examples ten stories by male science fiction writers. She hypothesized that in the stories chosen, men always won simply because they were men; because they owned penises, not because they were more moral, more intelligent or braver. The stories invariably ended with the woman falling in love with the man, getting raped (figuratively or literally), forsaking her struggle and living happily ever after.

women-in-focus: new a-v library in b.c.



The Women's Office of the University of British Columbia announces the existence of the *Women in Focus* Audio Visual Tape Library. The resource library, consisting of more than 30 video tapes, is the result of over a year's work by a group of women who decided to do something constructive about the lack of women in the communications media. Weekly workshops were held to train women in all aspects of video production in order to demystify the media and to help women have more control over the ideology and technology which controls present day society.

The tapes, produced, directed, and created by the *Women in Focus* team, cover such topics as "The Women's Suffrage Movement in Canada," "Women Composers," "Fashion as Social Control," "Mature Women," "Marie Claire Blais: An Interview," and "Women Within Two Cultures." For further information concerning purchase or rental of these tapes, contact Marion Barling, The Women's Office, Box 85, SUB, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, B.C.

in kitchener

The K-W area offers very little in the way of cultural activities other than movies or a play once a month. There is no place that we can go to have a quiet drink and talk. Most of the bars in this area are either too sleazy or expensive.

For a woman (who enjoys the company of other women), these places offer little more to me than gross harassment by men. Most people seem to see unescorted women in a bar as being on the make. Why would women ever want to spend time with other women? Why indeed!

The need for women's autonomy is one which has been neglected in the K-W area. That is not to say that most women do not sometimes enjoy the company of men but that women need the emotional support that comes from being in the company of other women.

joanna russ lectures in toronto

She ended her lecture by contrasting three examples of war between the sexes as portrayed by women writers; namely, Monique Wittig's *The Guerilleres*, Susie McKee Charnas' *Walk to the End of the World*, and her own *The Female Man*.

Russ spoke with humour and enthusiasm. Her examples were well chosen and often funny (though not, unfortunately, to the people who wrote them.)

gay women schedule events

in toronto

CHAT—199 Church Street (8:30 p.m.)

May 10—Women and the Law and Prison

May 17—*Coming Out*

May 31—Poetry Reading with Gwen Hauser and others

JUNE 5 — Women's Day—567 Queen St. W. (12 a.m.-12 p.m.) (Art Exhibit—Buffet—Entertainment)

gay mothers

There's a place to go to discuss what it's all about being a gay Mom. You can talk to other moms about kids, babysitters, jobs, relationships. You can talk to a doctor about medical referrals if there's something you've been wondering about. Ever worry a little about your legal position? Legal night will probably answer your questions. How does the Children's Aid see the gay mother? We have a couple of friends in their office who will tell us. (Believe me, it's probably a lot better than you may think.) How did you (or how will you) explain being gay to your kids? How do you work out your relationship around being a mother? More on the practical side, how about exchanging some of the outgrown clothes or toys and books? Or what about a night out doing something that lets you forget you have kids now and then? It might surprise you to know how many gay mothers there really are. We have our own unique lifestyles and we can help each other. So join us!!

NEXT MEETING
THURSDAY, MAY 27
8:30 pm
CHAT HALL
199 Church Street
(Just South of Dundas)

To fulfil this need for a place to go to meet with other women, a club has recently opened up in Kitchener called the *Dark Lady Recreational Club* open on Friday and Saturday evenings.

The *Dark Lady* located at 15 Scott Street is a very warm club where women can go to be with other women, without the risk of being 'come on to by men'.

The dimly lit club helps to bring women out of the isolation of their homes into an atmosphere where they may share their struggles with others in similar situations.

It is hoped that *The Dark Lady* will receive the support of women in the area and the respect of the men in the community.

(Reprinted from *Other Voices*)

LATIN AMERICA

THE STRUGGLE CONTINUES

(NWL) - Latin America: From a 3-part series in *Le Monde*: a) In a Mexican village a machine for making tortillas was broken by the men, who were angry that the women would now have time for other things. (The assumption was that this would mean promiscuous sexual activity.) The women went on strike. They won. The tortilla machine is repaired. b) The chamber maid in a Caracas hotel earns in a 48-hour week the price of one night's stay in a middle price room there. c) It is said in a number of countries that 'abortion is preferable to the pill, for the pill is 20 sins a month and abortion is only one a year'. d) The marriage campaign in Brazil is having meager results. One woman responded with, "No, madam, I wouldn't marry. As long as I'm single, he brings money at the end of the week or I threaten to leave. If I marry him and leave, he would send the police to find me and take my children."

For a peasant woman or a poor woman living in one of the misery belts ringing most Latin American cities, a child, no matter how loved, is always another mouth to feed, another human part of the burden that begins with birth and ends with death.

For many peasant women on the Continent, the delivery is the one break in a day-in day-out routine pretty much confined to the animals, the land and the heavy household chores.

I have seen Mexican women, squatting before the *comal* (flat ceramic brazier), slapping out the day's *tortillas*, get up and lie down on a pile of old newspapers to give birth, and several hours later return to the day's work. This, in spite of the fact that there is a strong tradition of 40 days' rest, the only "vacation" in the lives of millions of women. I have seen women turn their faces to the wall when told their baby is alive and healthy. Health is relative in a life of misery, and anyway: what will the price be of trying to keep the child fed, clothed, cared for. To say nothing of the possibility of a bit of education.

Birth control programs are racing to keep one step ahead of the social turmoil and revolution which are developing. The average peasant woman who is a childbearer, or the average domestic servant in the same category, is neither paid nor able to participate in the major workings of society. In many cases, she is forced to see no other outlet for her oppressed position than birth control (especially if it is free).

In socialist society, birth control is always put into the context of the whole economic system. A Cuban woman in the field of family planning explains:

In a nation where class differences have been eliminated, the woman is no longer an economic or socially dependent being, she can develop her abilities and pursue the career of her choice. Contraceptives are therefore provided not so much as an economic measure, but rather as an effective means of freeing women from the drudgery of household chores, releasing her talents for the benefit of all.

In showing that mothers desire fewer mouths to feed, the rationale for voluntary birth control seems difficult to question. The problems of poverty and misery are not caused by too many people, because poverty exists just about everywhere in the world where there is capitalist greed, in spite of the size of the population. Rather, misery and poverty are caused by the economic structure of capitalist society which denies the worker control over the means of production.



The populationist and demographers in the capitalist countries are determined to prove that in Latin American countries, family limitation is the overwhelming desire of Latin American families. The frequency of illegal abortion is used to hypothesize a strong desire for family limitation. In Chile, at least 1 in 5 pregnancies is voluntarily interrupted. An Uruguayan report estimated that for every live birth there are three provoked abortions. In Guatemala, it is estimated that 15% of all pregnancies end in induced abortion.

In Latin America, those most concerned with the population increase are those whose class interests would be jeopardized by the power of the masses. J.M. Stycos, director of Cornell University's International Population Program, says, "The proletarian masses are those most susceptible to communist propaganda, and if we do not do something to avoid their growth, we are going to find ourselves in a situation like that of Cuba."

What channels does imperialism use to effect this special kind of genocide on Latin America?

The Rockefeller Foundation has been one of the most important sources of funds for the population field. In 1968, \$18 million was given for study grants concerned with demographic research, program support, and reproductive biology (\$6 million).

In Colombia, the Universidad del Valle serves as a major recipient of Rockefeller funds that go toward the support of family planning in rural areas. The University's population research program initiated a series of proposals for a national birth control program that would be organized by the ACFM (Association of Colombian Faculties of Medicine).

In 1965, correspondent Jaime Arango, of the conservative daily *El Siglo*, wrote that 40,000 women, especially from the rural areas and the urban slums, had been sterilized under the ACFM programs during the past two years. He charged that these experimental programs had been conducted under the consistent guidance of North American doctors and consultants.

Arango, who claimed that his information had come from members of the Catholic hierarchy, wrote that many women had been persuaded to participate in the programs by money payments up to \$1.50, gifts of lipstick and artificial pearls and offer of free medical services!

In Bolivia, in 1968, when a revolutionary film called "*Blood of the Condor*" denounced the fact that Peace Corps doctors were sterilizing Bolivian Indian women on a large scale, public reaction was so violent that all the centres of such activity in the country had to close. Eventually, Bolivia kicked the Peace Corps out of the country.

Excerpts from Margaret Randall's draft copy of her manuscript on Latin American Women, reprinted from LAWG LETTER, Dec-Jan, Vol. 3, No. 2.

(NWL) - Colombia: The first abortion campaign in Colombia (where even therapeutic termination is banned) is getting under way...A bill is to be introduced in Parliament legislating abortion but no details are available, and the sponsors remain anonymous. About 200,000 illegal abortions are performed each year and between 1000 and 1500 women die from them each year.

CANADA AND LATIN AMERICA

Canadians have a tendency to become rather complacent about imperialism. "After all, we're not exploiting those poor underdeveloped countries!" Unfortunately, quite the opposite is true, particularly in Latin America. Canadian financiers (with financial aid from the government) have traditionally exploited Latin American economies. As early as the 1900's Canadians were creating monopolies on public transport and public utilities (light, electricity, hydro) in countries such as Mexico, Cuba, Brazil, Venezuela, Bolivia, El Salvador, British Guiana, and the West Indies. The Beaverbrook fortune, among others, was built in part on these enterprises.

The story of Brascan is a good case in point. Started in 1889 by Sir William Mackenzie and E. R. Wood as Brazilian Traction and Light, this company presently provides profits to the elite of Brazil and Canada at the expense of the poor. Among its subsidiaries: Labatt's, Chateau Cartier, Chateau-Gai, Catelli's, and Laura Secord in Canada; "The Light", Brinks Trucks, Swift-Armour Meats, The Hotel Intercontinental Rio, and several banks in Brazil. "The Light", (as it's commonly known) is universally hated by the working classes in Brazil.

The Canadian government has a history of giving "aid" to Latin American

countries in the form of loans tied to purchase of Canadian goods. A loan of \$26.5 million dollars was made to Brascan in 1972 to buy electrical equipment in Canada. It is also interesting to note that Robert Winters and Mitchell Sharp have served at different times as president and vice-president respectively of Brascan in between stints as high ranking Liberals. Winters was the Minister of Trade and Commerce and number two man in the party prior to 1968. Sharp is a former Minister of Finance and Secretary of State for External Affairs.

Canadian corporations also own copper mines in Haiti and Chili, phosphate and potash in northern Peru, fluorspar in Mexico, gold in Nicaragua. Falconbridge Nickel Mines Ltd. is developing a major concession in the Dominican Republic, and there are other Canadian owned mining developments in Brazil, Columbia, and Venezuela.

For more information on Canadian involvement in Latin America, see *Canadian neo-colonialism in Latin America* by F.C. and L.C. Park, *Canada and Latin America: A Summary* by J.W. Foster, and *The Brascan File* reprinted from *last post* Vol. 3, no. 2. All are available from LAWG., P.O. Box 6300, Station A, Toronto.

EAST INDIAN WOMAN FIGHTS BACK

AGAINST RACISM

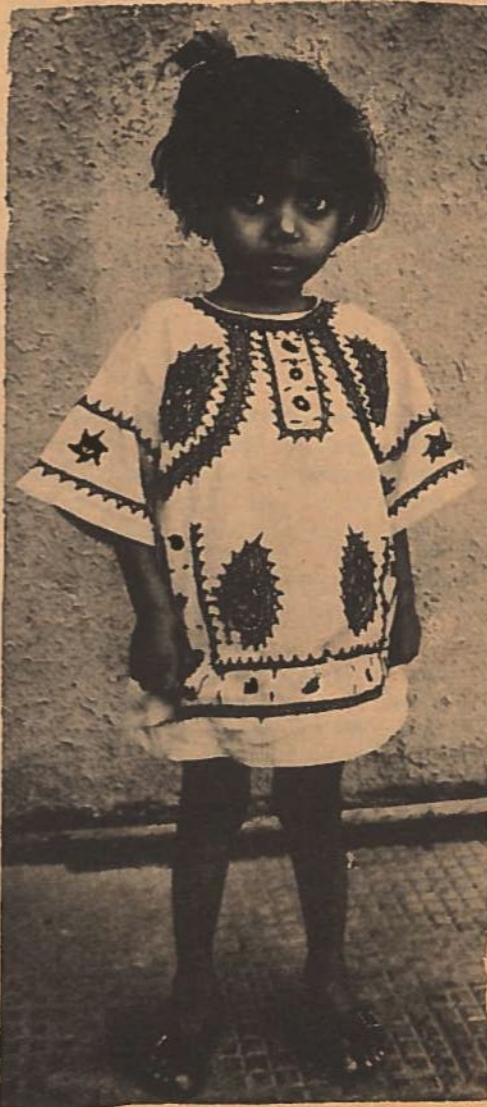
anu bose

The first time I was ever called "Paki", I was flabbergasted. I had just moved to Toronto from the linguistic battleground of Quebec. It happened right on the block where I used to live. A woman, her face contorted with hate screamed at me. "Paki" she said, "go back to the bazaars of Bombay." I was quick to retort, "and you to the barns of Orillia." My heart sank. I, who had finally learned to take male chauvinism in my stride, had to learn to cope with racism! I felt helpless. In my confusion I asked myself "why me?" All my conscious and unconscious efforts to blend into the Canadian mosaic had come to naught. I had only to look into the mirror for an answer. My dusky skin and straight dark hair were exotic and oriental except in these days of economic stress, high unemployment rates and service cutbacks.

The economic climate of Toronto has been a very fertile spawning ground for anti-Paki attitudes. The spectre of South Asian hordes invading Metro Toronto has had far reaching consequences. At any other time such an idea would have prompted amused chuckles; now it has caused the same citizenry to mutter ominously about "lowered property values" the moment a brown face appears on the block. This hostility seems to cut across the class and income barriers. The higher up the social scale one travels, the more subtle and veiled is the message. In blue collar areas, crude jeers and threats of physical violence predominate. Members of my community have been the victims of verbal and physical assaults on the public transport system. Usually the victims have been women or older men. Families moving into lily white neighbourhoods have had their window panes smashed, their children harassed. In one instance, a man was beaten mercilessly by his neighbours, for no reason but that he was brown. Even our institutions of higher learning are not exempt. Their washrooms are laden with graffiti directed against Pakis. I can dial a number any time I choose and hear a prerecorded "hate message" of the week directed against all visible minorities, especially blacks and South Asians. At work, our colleagues tell "Paki" jokes; in the letters to the editor section, we can usually find furious allegations that "the Pakis are taking over" or, conversely, "racism doesn't really exist in Canada." South Asians are often denied accommodation, especially in flats and rooming houses. Job openings are mysteriously filled if a South Asian accent inquires. I suspect that many firms have a quota on hiring South Asians, too. Even career oriented South Asians are beginning to wonder if the accident of their birth has anything to do with their being passed over for promotions.

Well meaning liberals have often said to us, "Trust in our institutions, the police and the Ontario Human Rights Commission, they will deliver." Unfortunately, this has not been so. Most immigrants, especially those from working class backgrounds, tend to regard the police and the bureaucracy with suspicion. In cases where people have tried to enforce their rights, they have been bitterly disillusioned. The police, they report, are unsympathetic and uncomprehending. The OHRC is wallowing in red tape, and slow to move. Besides, who wants to be branded a "Paki" and a troublemaker!

Nobody really knows how many South Asians live in Metro Toronto. Estimates range from 75,000 to 200,000. The community is by and large conservative and tradition bound. Thus, it is organized on religious, cultural, linguistic and provincial lines rather than on



political or ethnic groupings. This leaves us defenceless and open to attack from all sides. There is a leadership vacuum and no one person can say that he or she is the spokesperson for the community. The rivalries and hostilities of the Indian subcontinent all seemed to have carried over into the adoptive country. If the community is a passive one, then it is not only because we are the spiritual inheritors of Gandhi but because we are not organized to respond to the harassment and ill treatment accorded us. Lately, however, in an effort to unite the South Asian community and work on the incipient racism in Toronto, two organizations have emerged. I am in-

involved with South Asians for Equality, a group committed to improving the lot of South Asians as well as educating the community. But, I am not overly optimistic that the situation will improve in our time.

Anu Bose was born in Calcutta, India. She has worked at various "ladylike" occupations, like teaching and community work. She went to the Great Lakes as a "serving wench", got sold on it and is going back as a cadet, in the Canadian Merchant Marine.

She has done self defense and had a chance to use it on a "gentleman" (pig) who called her a "black bitch." She now does Taekwondo.

TWO DEFENSE GROUPS FORMED IN TORONTO

South Asians for Equality meets on the second and fourth Thursday of every month at 9 Boon Ave. (near St. Clair and Dufferin) between 7 and 9 pm. These are mostly information sharing meetings. All members of the South Asian community are welcome.

Our postal address is c/o Sarkar, Box 5414 Station A Toronto M5W 1N6. You can call 651-1400 between office hours

and leave a message and a member of SAFE will return your call.

East India Defense Committee is a Canada-wide organization actively committed to defending the East Indian community from racist attacks. They can be reached at 531 7830. Their next meeting is scheduled for Sunday May 3 at 3 pm in the Parkdale Library at Cowan and Queen St. W.

FAMILY CODE UPDATE

The Other Woman reprinted Margaret Randall's article, "Introducing the Family Code" (Cuba Review-Vol. IV, No. 2), in the March 8 Special Issue. The code was put into effect on March 8th, 1975 in honor of International Women's Day and **to**w would like to share with our readers some very up-to-date observations we have received from communication with Ms. Randall from Cuba. Grateful acknowledgement for making our contact possible goes to the Latin American Working Group based here in Toronto.

The following are the unedited responses we received from Margaret Randall to our brief inquiries. We thank her for the time and thought she was able to give us.

tow—Describe briefly the process involved in legalizing the code. (Was it done in steps or all at once?)

As with all these laws, the draft of the code was drawn up by a Commission set up for this purpose (multi-disciplinary). Then the draft was published in the papers, people had a chance to read it complete, discuss it through work places (meetings organized by the Unions) and Block Committees (meetings organized by the CDR's), FMC, schools, military units, etc. etc. All suggestions, changes etc. coming out of these discussions were sent up to the Commission, tabulated nationally through the different mass organizations studied, and many incorporated into the final draft. After this process the final Code was put into effect on March 8th, 1975, in honor of International Woman's Day.

tow—Do you know of instances where penalties for non-compliance have been utilized?

I do not yet know of any penalties being utilized, although I am sure there have been. But it's important to re-

COMMUNIQUE FROM CUBA



but had no place at all in the nation's social life. Now it is the bread of every day, so to speak: you hear men and women discussing these questions everywhere, and heatedly very often—in the street, in the markets, in waiting-rooms, on the busses, and I'm sure inside the family itself. In other words, the consciousness of the problem (as a social problem) has been raised.

Any reader who wishes to study the Family Code document in more detail, can send \$.50 (which includes \$.25 handling charge) to The Women's Press, 305, 280 Bloor Street West, Toronto, Ontario, and you will receive the 30 page reproduction prepared by LAWG and Women's Press.

member that, at least at this stage, the didactic, educational and consciousness-raising value of the law is at least as important as the actual legal aspect, i.e., perhaps few Cubans at this point would be willing to bring their husbands to court for this kind of offense, but the problem has been removed from the so-called individual, personal arena and has been recognized as a collective, social problem, demanding collective discussion, collective struggle and a collective solution.

tow—Are there noticeable changes in the interactions between men and women and various situations that have occurred since the Family Code's existence?

Very definitely. This kind of thing wasn't even discussed in Cuba before this. I mean it was discussed by certain individuals on a very individual basis,

(NWL) - Brazil: The Brazilian Government rejected for the third time the legalization of divorce on May 8. The amendment to the constitution received a majority of votes (222-145) but not enough for the required 2/3 majority. Polls of popular opinion show an increasing percentage in favour of a liberalized divorce law, but the Catholic opposition was able to thwart popular will. Under the constitution, sponsors must wait two years before introducing another similar bill.

(NWL)- Argentina: A pregnant woman on trial in Buenos Aires for 'illicit association' was told by the judge that the foetus was legally an accomplice. The woman later miscarried while undergoing torture in prison.

FROM WOMEN

GROWING UP

This tape is NOT for broadcast or other use for profit. Copyright rests with CBC and the writer.

Writer: Susan Perly and Producer: John Coutanche. Broadcast first on CBC-FM, July 18, 1975.

I have a few hesitations about transcribing it to print. I guess when you work to produce something which integrates music and voice in layers it seems like you're cheating someone to give them the material in print. But print passes from hand to hand, can be reconsidered and referred to.

So often you work hard on a project and never know what listeners out in the great beyond think of what you've done. The documentary was an important project for me, because I think there is still not enough good material on women, or on the Maritimes, on the media.--Susan Perly.

We thank both Susan Perly and CBC for their kind cooperation since we started communication last July.--tow

FROM THE MARITIMES

IDEAS...FROM THE MARITIMES
...(Music Background)

(MALE NARRATOR)...In 1895 when the Nova Scotia House of Assembly was in the midst of a debate on giving the women in the province the vote the Attorney-General J.W. Longley complained that women might forget their true callings...

(Music Background)...(Trumpets)...

"First the bearing and bringing up of children and this is the highest; second, the creating of home and the beautifying of home life; third, to charm men and make the world pleasant, sweet and agreeable to live in; fourth, to be kindly and loving, to be sweet and to be cherished, to be weak and confiding, to be protected and to be the object of man's devotion..."

(Ellen McIlwaine Background Music)...

(WOMAN NARRATOR)...She used to walk early Sunday morning down the shore and listen for the sounds of dreams. She was 16, on her day off and she had lots of dreams...

When I first started working, I was working at the Snow White Laundry. I was 16 years old. I worked 8 hours a day, 6 days a week and I used to bring home \$12.00 and work hard.

WHEN WOULD THAT HAVE BEEN?

Oh, about '49 or '50, round that time. And lots of times we were required to work a couple of hours overtime and I did that for nine months--like an alcoholic, I was doing it day by day, one day at a time.

(Ellen McIlwaine Background Music)

(WOMAN NARRATOR)...She used to walk down the stairs on Saturday night and straighten her hair with an ear to the mirror...

Before I finished grade 6, I guess, I was convinced that I was going to be married and I was going to have children, and if I didn't there was something wrong with me. There was the encouragement of a career but a career in the sense of very traditional female. In other words, the choice that you were offered at that point was that you were either going to be an office worker or you were going to be a nurse or you were going to be a teacher.

(Ellen McIlwaine Background Music)...

(WOMAN NARRATOR)...Late Saturday night after the date she climbed back up the stairs, lied in bed and listened for the pilot to land his jet in her backyard and take her away from the island...

Well, perhaps, Susan, I'm a little bit old-fashioned. But I still think where young people come to the point where they have decided that they want to get married, if you were really in love with your husband or what not, whether he wants to build igloos in the arctic or be a farmer, you're going to along with him because, after all, if you're going to have a happy family unit, he has got to be happy in his work.

I went to school to an all-girls school. Two nuns for the first 6 or 7 years and I'm totally convinced that you were brainwashed for those 6 years. Everybody went through the stage of whether you were going to be a nun or not and deciding like, well, maybe I should be. If I'm not a nun and that's what my vocation is then I'll go straight to hell. But I guess I went through to probably grade 10, wanting to be a teacher and didn't decide for myself that I wasn't going to be. Economics really decided for me that I couldn't be, that I couldn't possibly afford to go to university or to normal college so I went on to take a commercial course. There was never any thought that I might take trades training or some-



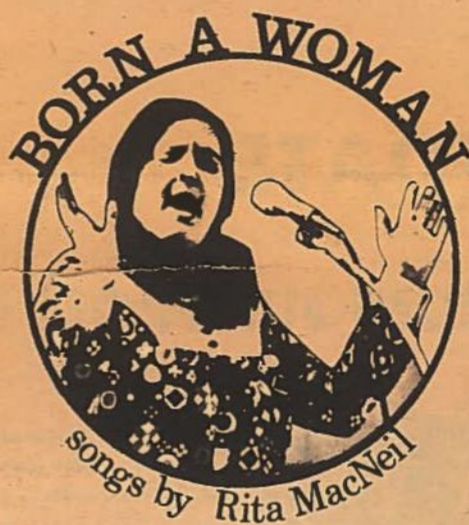
Charlotte

thing like that which I might have enjoyed, like being a carpenter or something. But that would never even have crossed your mind. We could be either nurses, teacher or secretary so that it made it quite simple and so I decided that I would be a teacher. I suppose, in my family particularly (my community too) education was the thing. If you could get a good education or be well-educated, you were on your way. It had a very high value and the parents and the community, you know, supported the children in this. And the parents would go to great lengths to see that they could make the money to educate their children.

I guess, my home, was typical of most homes. The girls, you know, weren't destined to go to college. And as far as school went, I remember mentioning I wanted to finish high school and I would like to be a teacher. My mother, you know, said we can't afford to send you to college. And I know there wasn't much money around but, you know, there wasn't any push given. You either got married or you went to be a nun. That was it.

So this was when I went to the University of New Brunswick and graduated. Then, by that time, I decided to be married. So I didn't use my education at all at that time, you know, in a practical sort of way.

Well, apparently, I decided what I was going to do with my life before I even started school. I don't remember but I convinced my mother every day that I was going to be a taxi driver. She was really uptight about it. We lived on one of the main streets and the Dominion Taxi drove back and forth to Glace Bay all day and I was sitting in the window watching. I just adored all the Dominion Taxi drivers that were driving by. It looked like so much fun. So that's what I wanted to be but I changed my mind. In grade 6 I decided I was going to



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WOMEN IN THE MARITIMES

"That's the same thing every day"

(WOMAN NARRATOR)...He used to walk early Sunday mornings down the shore and listen, listen for the sounds of dreams, the sounds of slippery, half-fish, half-women. Mermaids, they could tell him secrets from the sea, they could show him the mysteries of woman. Listen...

And then we go back in the morning, at seven o'clock in the morning, and we start. That's the same thing every day, putting the cans on and putting the fish in the cans--from seven to three, I'm on my feet all day. We have a ten minute break at 9:30 in the morning and our dinner hour is at 11:30 for 20 minutes and then we have another break at 1:30 for 10 minutes and at 3 o'clock we knock off and come home...

IN THE MARITIMES

"I convinced my mother every day that I was going to be a taxi driver"

be a scientist but, after thinking about it for a while, I thought by the time I grew up and went to school and became a scientist that everything would have been discovered. So it was just a waste of time. So after that, I didn't want to do anything.

(Music Background)....

(WOMAN NARRATOR)...*What is the sound of a push? What is the sound of a soothing voice, seducing dreams?....*



Sherry Coleman

WHAT DID YOU THINK YOU WERE GOING TO DO WHEN YOU GREW UP? DID YOU HAVE ANY PLANS OR IDEAS OF THINGS THAT YOU WANTED TO DO?

I always did housework for people's children while they worked. I was only getting \$10 a week then. I can clear \$85 down at the plant. I wouldn't do that tending children cause they wouldn't be able to afford to pay that much.

When I was about 6 or 7, I wanted to marry my father because I didn't want to change my name. I figured he was the only person I knew with that name so I had to marry him. The ironic part about it is that I've changed my name three times since then.

Oh, it was definitely as a female. And if the only way that I could keep my name was if I didn't get married, then I couldn't carry on the family because if I didn't get married then, of course, I couldn't have any children.

(Music Background)...

(WOMAN NARRATOR)...*A door opens, she shrugs and walks into the commercial class, an office worker. She grins and shrugs again. Only for a while, of course, until I get married...*

My youngest child had gone to school and I found the days very long. I had never had a feeling of creativity about housework. I mean, I take no great pride in having the whitest wash in town as long as it is reasonably clean. And I found that I could get my housework done and, although I had some social life during the day with other women, I didn't find it too stimulating. That's when I made the decision that I would like to go back to teach.



"I wasn't guaranteed to last more than a wife-life and a half...."

I knew when the children starts coming, I knew then, I sort of resigned myself that I was going to be home for a while. But I was always waiting for the day when they would be old enough where I could get out to work. You know, just to get out and be with people.

(Background Music)...

(WOMAN NARRATOR)...*She could hear herself rattling around the kitchen every morning, turn the lights on, turn them off again, open the fridge door, close it quick, just testing, boil up pots of water on the stove, dump them down the sink again, checking, testing, one eye in the sink catching drips from the tap, one eye on the floor watching the linoleum crack. The day is coming, testing, just testing, the day is coming into every corner of the house, the day is coming, testing, just testing. Why are you looking so amazed? Didn't my mother tell you? I wasn't guaranteed to last more than a wife-life and a half...*

WORKING

I have nothing against anybody working because a lot of the women need to work to support their families. For factory work, it would either be the fish processing plants or there's a wood processing plant here that hire women. But the jobs here, in this wood processing plant, apparently are very tedious. You're operating one machine and you're standing in one position operating this one machine for 8 hours or whatever they work.

I think women have been conditioned to work at more or less monotonous jobs. Women seem to have more patience or they've been conditioned to it. It's the same thing with packaging. Last week I was doing packing. I've been used to doing it and I don't mind, it's not a bad job. So they, one of the fellows from the warehouse came into help because I had quite a few and he said, 'How can you do this all the time? That would drive me up the wall.'

Before we were all out on the strike, I would have to say that the public thought that we were all actually a

machine but after us being out for over six weeks I think the public really realizes that an operator is a person and not a machine. You have a certain way to speak to a customer, you're not yourself. The customer says, check a number and see if it's busy, you have a certain phrase that you are supposed to use and that is all.

(WOMAN NARRATOR)...*All day long the voices (Music Background)...Every morning she used to walk down the stairs and hear Country Crooner on the radio...he would understand...At work one day, the miracle--he called for long-distance. This was her chance. She reached boldly down the circuit and pulled him through to her side. Then she laid him down to love. Well, of course, as help-less executives squawked--what's the hold up, sweetheart?...*

The women have been conditioned. They're more used to doing the jobs that don't take too much effort or too much thinking.

"putting cans on all the time"

When the girls puts the fish in the cans, I put the cans on the belt first and then when the fish comes through the smoker, the girls takes the fish and put it in the can. Then they put them on top of the belt and it goes down through,

and they put the oil in it and the covers goes on and it goes down into the carriages. When the carriages are full, they take them out of there and put a new one in. Then they have four girls down back laying the fish. It comes out in about half an hour's time and then the girls just puts them in the cans, about four in a can, and then I just keep putting cans on all the time. I put 23,000 cans a day on.

DO YOU EVER FIND YOUR JOB BORING?

Yes, it is because you stand there from 7 to 3, tired on the arms. You know throwing cans. You see, I have to throw cans all day, from 7 to 3. There's a second shift comes on from 3 to 11. Well, they do the same thing and then another shift comes on from 11 to 7.

DO YOU EVER GET MUCH CHANCE TO TALK TO THE OTHER WOMEN ON THE LINE WHILE YOU'RE WORKING?
(Music Background)

No, you can't hear nothing cause the machines are all going. The only time you get a chance to talk is if the machine stops. Then you can hear something but as long as the machine's going, you can't hear nothing.



from the Public Archives of Canada

FROM WOMEN IN THE MARITIMES

You have so many looms in your section and these looms are supposed to be going continually. A weaver has her time allotted to cover, for instance, so many warp breaks an hour, so many filling breaks an hour.

We had a ticket count, you had to have so many calls in an hour or you were asked why you didn't have. So therefore you couldn't give a customer any personalized help on a call.



GENERAL INSTRUMENTS

And it was getting to the point where you couldn't even turn around, couldn't turn your head-aside, in order to keep up with your quota and there was a quota system on that. If you took time to go to the washroom, well, you were all off—the whole thing. And, oh, another thing. All this time I was so busy trying to get to learn the job the first week, I guess I never noticed. But the next week I happened to notice this fellow walking back and forth, back and forth. I just leaned over to the girl and I said, 'What does he do?' She said, 'Oh, he just walks back and forth and sees how you're working and that.' I said, 'Oh, a watch dog.' She said, 'Yeah, that's a good name for him the watch dog.' If you happen to turn around and look sideways to talk to somebody, he would pass right by. He wouldn't say anything, just pass by, you know. So you would see him and he was there all the time.

(WOMAN NARRATOR)...The watch dog worked for General Instruments. GI came into Cape Breton in 1967 and under the cloud of Black Friday, October 13th, when Hawker-Siddeley pulled out of the Sydney Steel Plant, General Instruments started hiring hundreds of women to work in their new plant putting together radio tuners for cars. The minimum wage was lower for women than men and at 85 cents an hour, it looked like a good deal to GI. And for the 600 women they first hired on, the prospect of working didn't look so bad...

**their first time
that they ever worked,
outside the home."**

Well, there was a lot of middle-aged women working at the GI, there was. And it was their first time they ever

worked, outside the home. Some of them had never even worked before. They were married and, when GI came, it was the first experience they ever had working out and they really enjoyed it. They enjoyed going out to work, not that they particularly enjoyed working there after a while. They worked hard, particularly in the summertime, the heat of the summer, there was no air conditioning in the place. Some of them used to pass out from the fumes, you know, faint. It wasn't all that pleasant. I mean, just to get out. They were out working, earning money for the first time. It gave them a different attitude, a different feeling about themselves.

(WOMAN NARRATOR)...Last year General Instruments pulled out of Nova Scotia, pulled out of a choice set-up: 1,000 workers; a free factory worth a million dollars; 18 acres of free land from the city; and from the city; and a 10-year tax rate of 1%. The company claimed wages were too high. Women had been getting the same minimum wage as men since 1972 and GI didn't think paying \$1.85 an hour was a good deal. There were better deals. General Instruments, a run-away shop, ran away to Mexico—minimum wage 55 cents an hour. In Cape Breton, hundreds of women thrown out of work...

All over all over Cape Breton they came to work at GI. New Waterford, there was a big crowd. There was a lot of them from Glace Bay. These women are not doing anything, unless they were lucky enough to get on at a hospital. There's one woman from Glace Bay working with us, lucky enough to get on with us. But the majority of them right now are collecting unemployment.

(WOMAN NARRATOR)...Women now make up a out 40% of the labour force in the Maritimes but most women working outside the home are still in jobs mysteriously classified as women's work. Nurses, stenographers, waitresses, telephone operators, teachers. 10 years ago, 70% of Nova Scotian working women were in such jobs and most of them still are...What's the sound of a revolving door?...

WHAT ABOUT LAYOFFS? ARE THERE MANY LAYOFFS?

Well, usually in the winter they lay quite a bit off. They just keep the old hands on in the winter, but last winter we worked almost all winter. We didn't have much but, usually, when the herring stops running, they have to lay the second shift off and the third shift off. Just keep the first shift on and, like, when there's work down there, they'll just call the ones that been here the longest in.

pressures of farm prices

feeling of loneliness

I think basically you'll find, on a family farm unit, that the woman has to stay home to help her husband. The price of labour, in order to hire someone to help do the work, has got so high. With the prices that we are receiving, a lot of time you just can't afford to bring in outside help. So this necessitates the woman going out and driving the machinery or helping do the farmwork. So there's no question of who's going to go to the barn in the morning to do the work. They don't mind in the least. So they go and they milk the cow, they feed 60 head of cattle as well and they go to school and I go to work and we come home in the evening and we do the same thing. They don't mind in the least. They all pitch in and help.

HOW MANY HOURS IN A DAY DOES THAT MAKE IT FOR YOU?

Maybe 14, 16, in that vicinity.

YOU SAID THAT YOU STARTED WORKING BECAUSE YOU WANTED TO. WHAT LED YOU TO THAT FEELING?

What led me to that feeling was simply some neighbours had moved away that I really felt almost lonely. Some of my neighbors started working because of pressures of farm prices and there was a feeling of loneliness in the community. I wanted to get out and meet people and work with people and I really enjoy it.

HAS IT WORKED? DO YOU FEEL LESS LONELY NOW?

Yes, yes, I do. But I feel more pressure now because of the farm prices and a feeling that I have to work.

I was ready to climb the walls so I had to go back to work. Of course I had only one child and she was in school and the majority of the time I was home alone. And I'm just not built to take being home day after day. So it was either go back to work or go crazy.

LEAVING HOME

(Music Background)

(WOMAN NARRATOR)...Some were lucky to get on at the hospital, she was lucky to get on unemployment. She walked up the stairs, flopped on the bed, flopped on the radio and listened to the Country Crooner. Maybe I'll go up away, to Toronto maybe...

Well, it was more of an adventure, just leaving. It wasn't really seeking more advantages than I would have had in Cape Breton. It was just a big adventure but after I got there, after I had spent some time there, I realized that there is a lot more advantages. But then there is an awful lot of disadvantages too.

I'M ASSUMING THAT YOU FEEL PRETTY LOYAL TO CAPE BRETON?

Well, indeed, I don't. I think it's the last place God made and he never finished it.

WHY DIDN'T YOU LIVE SOMEWHERE ELSE THEN?

Because my fellow was here. And do you know how old I am? I'm nearly 82. So I couldn't go away now. From the time we were married, I always wanted him to leave Cape Breton and he wouldn't because his parents was here. He had a brother here and the two girls pulled away from here and he wouldn't. He couldn't leave his mother.

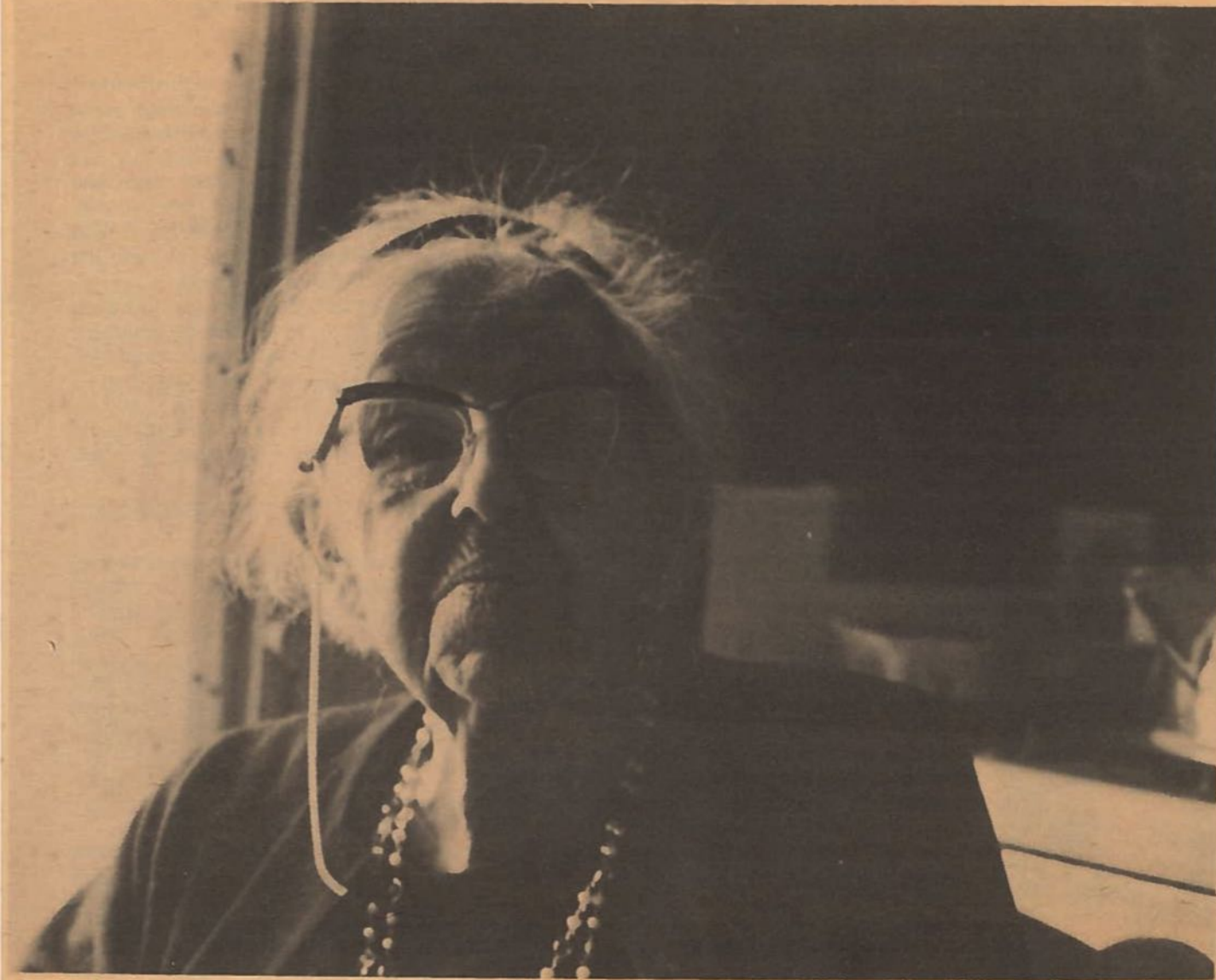
Now, there are some women, now for instance, like in the mill, that have never been any further than Halifax. And only then, for a visit of a couple of days, I mean, not enough to actually know what is going on in the world. And they're completely satisfied with their life.

I never dreamed I was ever going to get up there and I was just...we drove in on the Friday night and, you know, all the lights, well, I just couldn't see enough, you know, in one evening but I got around Toronto in no time at all. I could get around, I had no problems at all. Youngest fellow, he was 5, he used to love going on the subway and I used to take him. I'd just take him, dress him and we'd go for a ride in the subway cause he loved it. So when we first came home, first thing was the T.V., one channel, they didn't realize that. The P.D.C. Convention was on. We were at my sister's and they saw Stanfield and said, 'Change the channel.' He said, 'You can't change the channel.' He said, 'There's only one channel.' 'Aw, that's no good,' they said. So the next day they were going to town and Shannon said, 'Where's the subway?' 'There's no subway here.' 'This is no good, let's go back to Toronto.'

"As I get older, I think I'm more satisfied to be here because of family, because of friends."

I think that part of it, maybe, is fear, fear of what's out there and that's what it is to me. There is a wall around the island and it's what's outside that wall. I remember the first time that I went to Toronto, and it wasn't until 1972, and I was just like somebody you see in the movies. I was in a cab coming in from

"I think Cape Breton's the last place God made and He never finished it."



Anne Zeller

I think women, probably in P.E.I., tradition has been that they've never talked out about politics. They've never become involved very much in school issues, except to visit a home and school, something like that. And they've never really spoken out on farm issues. They've just really left that up mostly to the men, you know. I think, in comparison to, say, women in the west or in Ontario where they have had a provincial farm organization they've been involved in for years which we didn't really have on P.E.I. here. When we used to go out to the conventions first, you'd see the women in the west would get up and speak on practically every issue, and the young people also. But when we would be there and we would sit back and, sort of, our eyes would be popping out because this was something we'd never seen before. Even then we were amazed at how the women could speak out.

Now that I'm involved in a union, particularly this last time, I got elected as chief steward. They never had women as a representative of the union and that's too new, too strange to them. They don't really know how to handle it.

DO YOU THINK WOMEN ARE RELUCTANT TO GET INVOLVED IN UNION ACTIVITIES?

Oh, yes, terrible. They don't even read their contract till something comes up that they bump up against

"We lined up at the bottom of the road here with our aprons full of rocks to throw at the scabs...."

at the airport and I kept, sort of, my eyes were out the window and my mouth was open and all I could see was up. There was all this concrete and, oh God, I wanted to go home. I didn't like it at all. I just felt like this little mouse running around. I felt really small and really insignificant and I don't feel that here. Maybe it's security here, I don't know, but I don't feel like that here. I feel like I've got something to say and I can say it. I'm satisfied to be here. As I get older, I think I'm more satisfied to be here because of family, because of friends, I know that I'm going to have to be contented, at least work-wise with a lot less if I stay here. But that's one of the sacrifices that I think I'm perfectly willing to make, at least now.

The majority of the young people around Yarmouth are looking forward to the time that their education is over and they can go away somewhere. I'd say about 50% of the time they usually come back after being away for a couple of years.

Oh, I think there is definitely fewer choices but then there's fewer choices too for men here. So I don't think that they have fewer choices from a small town here than they would in Ontario.

HISTORY

(WOMAN NARRATOR)...(Music Background)...Tonight you are listening to Maritime women. Some of us never thought of leaving. Some of us wanted to go but couldn't. A lot of us left and came back. Maybe we heard ghosts. Elizabeth Bushnell, she was a compositor for the Halifax Gazette in 1752; Grace Ann Lochart, she was the first woman in the British Empire to be openly awarded a Bachelor of Science degree at Mt. Allison University in 1875; and, in wartime, women built ships in Baddeck...

Oh, yes I was in the parade.

WHAT WERE YOU DOING?

Trying to drown everybody's voice, make myself heard.

See our numbers still increasing,
hear the bugle blow,
buy on union,
we shall try and fall every foe.

Well, it's been a man's world for so long, hasn't it? Oh, I'm going to tell you....

(WOMAN NARRATOR)...I've been surviving on dreams. I never open my mouth to complain. I grieved in and out of the lunchroom for years and let the man take care of union business. Maybe it's time for a change...

DID THE WOMEN IN GLACE BAY PLAY A BIG ROLE IN SUPPORTING THE MEN, THE MINERS IN THE LABOUR STRUGGLES? WHAT WAS THE WOMAN'S ROLE IN THAT?

Well, the men didn't want you to do things like that. The men wanted you to go out and raise money. If there was a tag day, the women could go out and raise money and hand it over to the men to do what they wanted with it when they got it. Oh, we was always having bean supper or something like that, you know, to raise money for the men.

THE STRIKES IN THE 20'S--WHAT WAS THE WOMAN'S ROLE IN SUPPORTING THE MEN THEN?

Well, we went out to help them

when they was bringing scabs into the pig yard. We lined up at the bottom of the road here with our aprons full of rocks to throw at the scabs that was on the train that they was bringing in. And it wasn't just the labour club women. So there have been some fights and the women helped with them.

UNIONS

"Women underestimate

Women underestimate themselves and underestimate other women. Go to the federation conventions and maybe a quarter to a third of that delegation is women. And I've seen myself and maybe one other woman be the only women to speak on the floor of those conventions. Just because they will not get up, I just want to go over and kick them.

Well, I found the men in the union hall don't take the woman's grievances seriously. I've been to meetings when I first got started working there, where I just started to learn the aspect of it, what was going on. A woman might bring up something, or get one of the fellows to bring it up, and they would be laughed at, you know.

There isn't a department in the mill that has a woman supervisor. And as far as I'm concerned, no woman has ever been considered as a potential supervisor. At a union meetings at the plant, the women that attend the union meetings are outnumbered 5 to 1. Now, the employees are split about 50-50 male and female. But at the meetings, the women are always outnumbered.

and they don't fully understand. But they know that they're not being treated right. Then they'll read it, you know.

I'm the only woman lawyer practicing in Cape Breton County out of approximately 47 lawyers so it's natural that I'm a bit strange to everybody. There just haven't been very many women in Cape Breton practicing law in the last hundred years.

DO YOU THINK WOMEN ARE BECOMING MORE AWARE OF LEGAL SITUATIONS LIKE THAT? ARE WOMEN MORE CONSCIOUS WHERE THEY STAND IN THE LAW'S EYES THAN THEY WERE A FEW YEARS AGO?

Middle-class women are but working women aren't. I've had so many women come to me who have been abused by credit agencies, or by their husbands or by society in general who just don't understand their rights, their dignity. The trade union act of Nova Scotia says that trade unions are not permitted to discriminate amongst their members and that is, let's say, discriminating against someone because he's black or because he's Jewish or because he's--a woman. He is a woman. I find that the trade unions in this province are breaking that stipulation of the law left and right, that there is still certainly not equal pay for equal work because women aren't getting equal work, for one thing and pay rates generally. It's a well known fact that they are lower for women. And they are lower for women in union jobs as well as in non-union jobs. Women in the labour movement should start clamouring about this. There aren't that many laws that directly discriminate. The system discriminates, the people in power discriminate and that's basically the problem, social attitudes and social structure. I guess the attitudes have to be changed before the structures are changed.

FROM WOMEN IN THE MARITIMES



Kate Middleton

IS THERE A BETTER FEELING NOW ABOUT WORKING AT THE PHONE COMPANY?

Well, I feel there is 100 per cent. I really do. It is the atmosphere. I think it is a little lighter and the pressure isn't there and I feel that the girls are much happier. I think that they all realize now, the younger girls, they realize that they can accomplish these things by banding together and demanding things that they feel is rightfully theirs.



(Music Background)

(SONG)...

Well, I tried to be the kind of woman you wanted me to be.
And it's not your fault that I tried to be what I thought you wanted to see.
Smiling face, shining hair, clothes that I thought you'd like me to wear.

Made to please and not to tease, it's the custom made woman blues.
Yes, I tried to be the kind of woman you wanted me to be
and I tried to see life your way and say all the things you'd like me to say.
Gentle talk, gentle hands, all guaranteed to keep ahold of your man.
Made to please and not to tease, it's the custom made woman blues.
And now you say you're tired of me and all those things I thought you wanted me to be

Is it true you want someone who knows how to think and do on her own?
Lord, it's hard to realize the lessons I learned so young were nothing but lies.

Made to please and not to please, it's the custom made woman blues.
Made to please and not to tease, it's the custom made woman blues...

One thing is that I'm an only child and I was, sort of, never discouraged from doing things by my parents because I was female. I never realized, I guess, until I went to work that women really don't apply for jobs that are traditionally male jobs. But I had to go and work with other women who felt that way before I realized that women really did that. I was amazed, like I couldn't believe it. It was a total surprise to me. I was very naive about the whole thing and it was then that I really started to want to do something about it. And really start to challenge those things and encourage other women to challenge.

"not normal women...
just ordinary women"

Well, during the war, there was women working at the steel plant. I was only about 10,11, but I remember I used to marvel at them, you know. And they were considered tough, tomboyish, or whatever. They weren't not normal women but they'd be tough characters, you know. They were just ordinary women that the call was put out for work cause a lot of the men were overseas and they applied. They were a little bit more daring than others.

WHAT DID THEY DO IN THE STEEL-PLANT?

Pretty well all. They worked at the blast furnace, and the coke ovens and they did the work that the men did. They operated cranes. They weren't loafers. Oh, some of them probably did more work than some of the men.

"...some of the most aggressive spokeswomen we have proudly proclaim they have grandmother status.

I think the impetus for change, for the most part, will come from younger women although in saying that, I keep in mind that some of the most aggressive spokeswomen we have for status of women are women who proudly proclaim they have grandmother status. And some of whom proudly proclaim that they are approaching great-grandmother status. I think there will also be a drive for change among career women because these are usually the first group of women who recognize the need and it is unfortunate because I think that there's got to be changes coming among disadvantaged women, women who don't have

enough money to exercise the freedom of choice. One of the sad things about being brought up in Cape Breton is the lack of educational facilities that are here. When I was in school, there was never art except for when I was in grade 8. For one year, we all took art. I found that really beneficial. The sad thing, if it had gone on through the years, any artistic talents I did have (or do have), would have been developed; whereas, like now, they're latent and I keep saying, well, when I win the lottery, then I'll go to the art college. Cause I can't afford to go now. I went the academic road and I owe the government too much money.

very independent person,
she had doubts about it."

Oh, I think it was the same, really, all across Canada or, at least in the Maritimes I would think or in New Brunswick. The ultimate was to be married. And in my own family, I think it was an exception because my mother had lived in London when Christabel Pankhurst was having her riots and she never put a very high value on getting married at all. Have a career and then, perhaps, marriage secondary. A very independent person, she wasn't married herself until she was 33 and then I think she had doubts about it.

"the queen's dead,
the queen's dead"

Well, I'll tell you now why I think I've always been that way. My mother died when I was 7 and just before she was taken sick, we went to the cooperative for the order. I was taken so that I could look after the carriage while my mother was in the store getting the order and we would carry things in the carriage home. At about quarter after 11, there was a man come running up the street and all he said was, 'The queen's dead, the queen's dead, the queen's dead'. And I couldn't have been much more than six then. When my mother came out of the store to put the things in the carriage, I said, 'Mother, a man went up the street and he was hollering 'queen's dead, queen's dead'. 'My mother says, "Damn, the old bitch did die." 'She said, "Why should she be walking on silks and satins and other poor devils going round with no shoes on their feet?"

part of that but when it comes to support for equal pay for equal work, when it comes to day care centres, when it comes to property rights and issues such as that, they say, oh yeah, we're all for that. And if I turn around and say, yeah, but that's women's lib, they say, oh no, it's not because I saw it on television one time.

But the women, I think, are pretty traditional, you know. As far as change, sometimes they don't really believe that there will be a change. It's always a struggle, even just to bring up a family, particularly in the last couple of years, particularly when it comes to groceries, getting the kids what they need. They don't know what to do, they don't know which way to turn.

I'm not exactly sure how much an impact the educational system is having and I'm not sure it's not as much as it should be having. I left school 10 years ago. I look at women I see now who have left the educational system no more than 2 or 3 years ago and their views aren't that different than mine when I left school 10 years ago.

I find that they're still interested in traditional feminine interests at the grade 4 level.

(WOMAN NARRATOR)...She used to walk early Sunday mornings down the shore and listen, listen for the sounds of dreams. It was 1918, spring. Searned \$15 a month as a kitchen girl at the Corona Cafe in Halifax. All day long, voices talked about the war. So they gave us the vote today for our efforts, but what will we do with it? (Music Background...)

a little more reluctant
about change."

People here are a little more reluctant to break with tradition than maybe the big city atmosphere is, a little more reluctant about change. Change here hasn't always been a good thing. For that reason, it's going to happen a little slower here. I get this time and time again. People say, oh women's lib. It turns out that what, in fact, they are not supporting is drive for equality by means of violence. They don't want any



Charlotte

**I'm not sure how long it's going to take before women really get up
and start to kick themselves and to do some things.**

DO THEY EVER TALK ABOUT WHAT THEY'RE GOING TO BE AND WHAT THEY WANT TO BE WHEN THEY GROW UP?

Yes, and it's usually they want to be a teacher. I never had any of them ever mention they wanted to be a doctor or a lawyer, or anything to that extent. They wanted to be a mother. Perhaps, when they get into adolescence it may change but, at this age, it hasn't.

(Music Background)
(WOMAN NARRATOR)...*He used to walk down the shore, and scan the waves for mermaids. She passed him on her walk one Sunday and he didn't even look up. She shrugged, gave her hair a pat and walked down the shore..*

Now I think the changes in terms of attitudes are going to be slower in coming than the changes in legislation. But I would hope that we can get moving on changes within the educational sphere at least. Because we, here in this province, rely, to a large extent, on changes in textbooks and that sort of thing generated from, if you like, Upper Canada. And they've been, to some extent, more aggressive than we have in the past about changing status and so on.

We've got free school books. It was the women's labour club that got free schoolbooks for kids. These women used to come to the labour club, to the meetings and tell us what things the priest had said about the labour club and they shouldn't belong to it and all this kind of stuff. There was a committee appointed to go and see the priest and ask him to leave the women alone, that we weren't hurting anybody. We're only trying to get better conditions for our kids and ourselves and he says, 'Look, Mrs. Whitfield,' he says, 'you can do what you like. (Music Background) You can take the red flag and wrap yourself up in it to keep you warm but, he says, I can't let my women see that. When I see them going the wrong road, well, I have to pull them back.



"Girls can't be farmers!"

(WOMAN NARRATOR)...*You can get by on dreams for awhile, mermaid murmurs are so soothing. But now open the door and listen....*

But it's a long process, very long process and I'm just not sure how long it's going to take before women really get up and start to kick themselves and to do some things. If it means a bit of fighting, then fight.

IF YOU HAD A LITTLE SISTER, WHAT DO YOU THINK SHE WOULD DO ON THE FARM?

Well, she could help around.

DO YOU THINK SHE COULD GROW UP TO BE A FARMER TOO?

Well, a farm wife, I would say. Girls can't be farmers.

WHY CAN'T THEY BE FARMERS?

Men are called farmers. Women are called farm wives. They have to do the work for their husbands. That's what girls are made for.

WHERE DID YOU LEARN TO SAY THAT, JASON? WHO TAUGHT YOU THAT?

My dad.

*In the gloom of mighty cities,
mid the roar of whirring wheels,
we are toiling on like chattel slaves of old,
and our masters hope to keep us ever
thus beneath their heel,
and to coin our very life blood into gold,
but we have a glowing dream,
just how fair this world would seem,
when each man can live his life secure
and free,
when the earth is owned by labour
and there is joy and peace for all in the
commonwealth of toil that is to be.*

You bet it'll come, it'll come all over when it does come. And they can't prevent it. It's coming closer and closer and closer. They can't prevent it. I'd like to be on the judges' bench and pass sentence on the bastards.

(Music Background...Ellen McIlwaine)

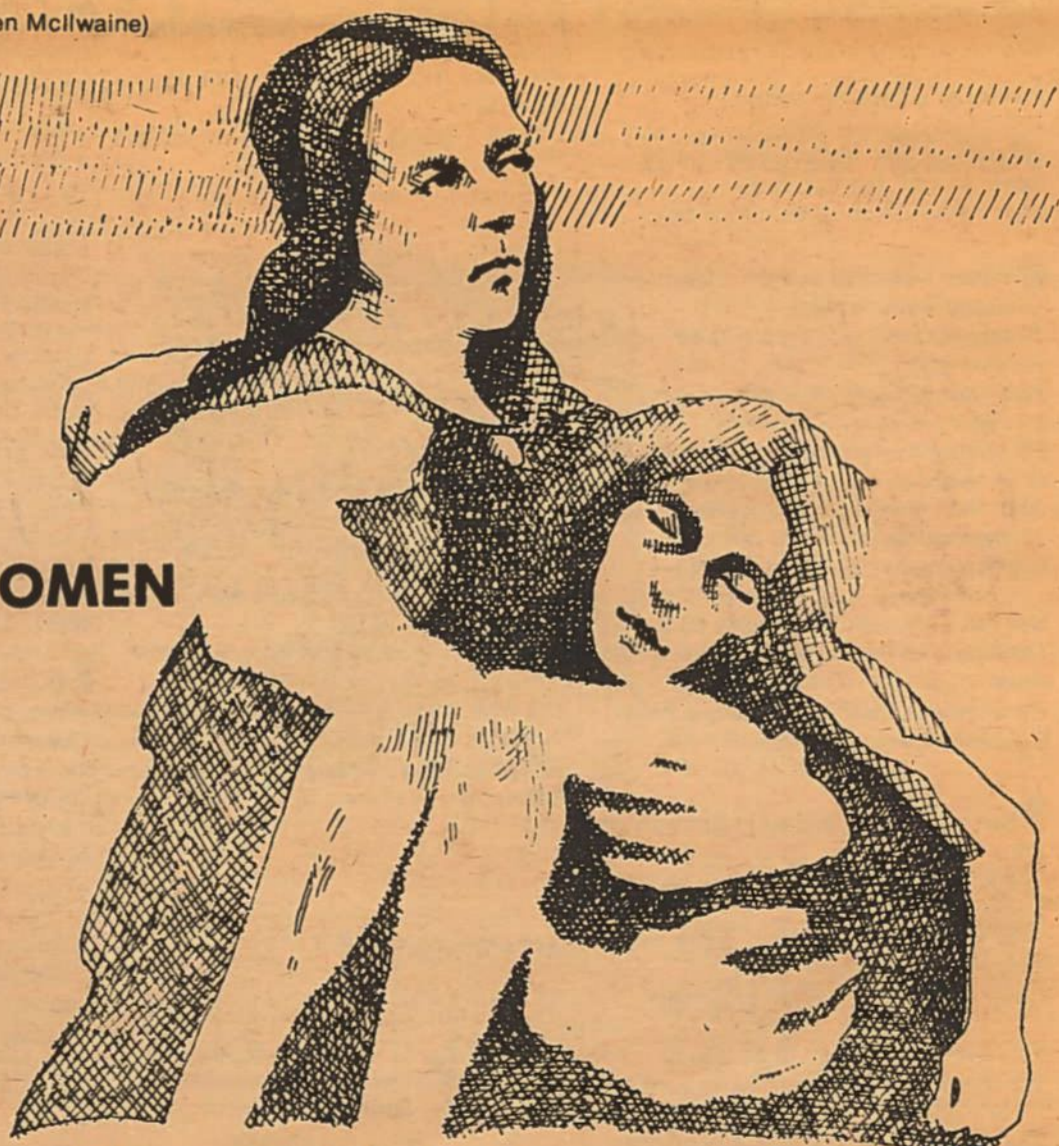
If it means a bit of fighting, then fight."

TALKING WITH MARITIME WOMEN

'When I hear that big black whistle blow, I feel inside that it's time for me to be going.

'Fortunately, baby, I've grabbed the sky.

'Fortunately, I've already gone before. Fortunately, baby, I've already grabbed the sky.



"Fortunately, baby, I've already grabbed the sky!"

FROM THE MARITIMES

I'm Gonna Be an Engineer!

As appeared in Sing Out! Vol. 22 No. 6.
Available from 595 Broadway N.Y. N.Y.
Calligraphy by Susan Liberatore
This song can be heard on "At the Present Moment" available from Rounder Records, 727 Somerville Ave. Somerville Massachusetts.



Easily *C*

when I was a lit-tle girl I wished I was a boy, I
tagged a-long be-hind the gang and wore my cor-dur-oy's
Every-bo-dy said I on-ly did it to an-noy, But I was
gon na be an en-gi-neer. Ma-ma told me "Can't you be a
la-dy? Your duty is to make me the moth-er of a pearl.
Wait un-til you're old-er, dear, and may-be you'll be glad that you're a girl."

1 When I was a little girl I wished I was a boy
I tagged along behind the gang and wore my corduroys
Everybody said I only did it to annoy
But I was gonna be an engineer

Momma told me, "Can't you be a lady?
Your duty is to make me the mother of a pearl
Wait until you're older, dear
And maybe you'll be glad that you're a girl"

Dainty as a Dresden statue
Gentle as a Jersey cow
Smooth as silk, gives creamy milk
Learn to coo, learn to moo
That's what to do to be a lady now

2 When I went to school I learned to write and how to read
Some history, geography and home economy
And typing is a skill that every girl is sure to need
To while away the extra time until the time to breed
And then they had the nerve to say, "What would you like to be?"
I says, "I'm gonna be an engineer!"

No, you only need to learn to be a lady
The duty isn't yours, for to try and run the world
An engineer could never have a baby
Remember, dear, that you're a girl

3 So I become a typist and I study on the sly
Working out the day and night so I can qualify
And every time the boss come in, he pinched me on the thigh
Says, "I've never had an engineer!"

You owe it to the job to be a lady
It's the duty of the staff for to give the boss a whirl
The wages that you get are crummy, maybe
But it's all you get, 'cause you're a girl

She's smart! (for a woman)
I wonder how she got that way?
You get no choice, you get no voice
Just stay mum, pretend you're dumb,
That's how you come to be a lady today!

4 Then Jimmy come along and we set up a conjugation
We were busy every night with loving recreation
I spent my days at work so he could get his education
And now he's an engineer!

He says, "I know you'll always be a lady
It's the duty of my darling to love me all her life
Could an engineer look after or obey me?
Remember, dear, that you're my wife!"

5 As soon as Jimmy got a job, I studied hard again
Then, busy at me turret-lathe a year or so, and then
The morning that the twins were born, Jimmy says to them
"Kids, your mother was an engineer!"

You owe it to the kids to be a lady
Dainty as a dish-rag, faithful as a chow
Stay at home; you got to mind the baby
Remember you're a mother now

6 Every time I turn around there's something else to do
Cook a meal or mend a sock or sweep a floor or two
I listen in to Jimmy Young—it makes me want to spew
I was gonna be an engineer!

I really wish that I could be a lady
I could do the lovely things that a lady's s'posed to do
I wouldn't even mind if only they would pay me
And I could be a person too

What price—for a woman?
You can buy her for a ring of gold
To love and obey (without any pay)
You get a cook or a nurse, for better or worse
You don't need a purse when a lady is sold!

7 But now that times are harder, and my Jimmy's got the sack
I went down to Vickers, they were glad to have me back
I'm a third-class citizen, my wages tell me that
But I'm a first-class engineer!

The boss he says, "I pay you as a lady
You only got the job 'cause I can't afford a man
With you I keep the profits high as may be
You're just a cheaper pair of hands!"

You got one fault! You're a woman
You're not worth the equal pay
A bitch or a tart, you're nothing but heart
Shallow and vain, you got no brain
Go down the drain like a lady today!

8 I listened to my mother and I joined a typing pool
I listened to my lover and I sent him through his school
If I listen to the boss, I'm just a bloody fool
And an underpaid engineer!

I been a sucker ever since I was a baby
As a daughter, as a wife, as a mother and a dear
But I'll fight them as a woman, not a lady
I'll fight them as an engineer!

Reprinted with permission from Peggy Seeger.

After Verses 1, 3, 6, 7

Am *Em* *Am* *Em*

Dain-ty as a Dres-den sta-tue gentle as a Jer-sey cow;

Fm *C* *Fmaj.* *C*

smooth as silk, gives creamy milk; learn to coo, learn to moo,

Em *Dm* *G7*

That's what to do to be a la-dy now.

Peggy Seeger

the trap

Caught in a suburban chaos,
She needs another drink of hope
From the bottle she keeps hidden
In a box of forgotten dreams.

There's a woman in the mirror
To whom she speaks when he's not home,
Her would-be lover hides somewhere
Beyond true possibilities.

The rain keeps pouring on their house
Like tears on cold metallic charms.
Worn by women who accepted
To be bound for what men called love.

Marie Simon



waiting for the prince

all my life i've waited for the prince
who would emerge from the frog after i kissed
his froggy face and broke the spell his wicked
mother or stepmother or somebody laid on him

this prince would appreciate the princess
in me--naturally--and love me madly and carry
me off to his magic kingdom where everyone
lived happily ever after especially me

but for some reason the frogs i've met object
to being pricked and prodded and told to drop
the disguise i usually end up covered
with warts for my trouble

all my life (sigh) i've waited for the prince.
but every frog remains just that--a frog--
and no one lives happily ever after
especially the frog

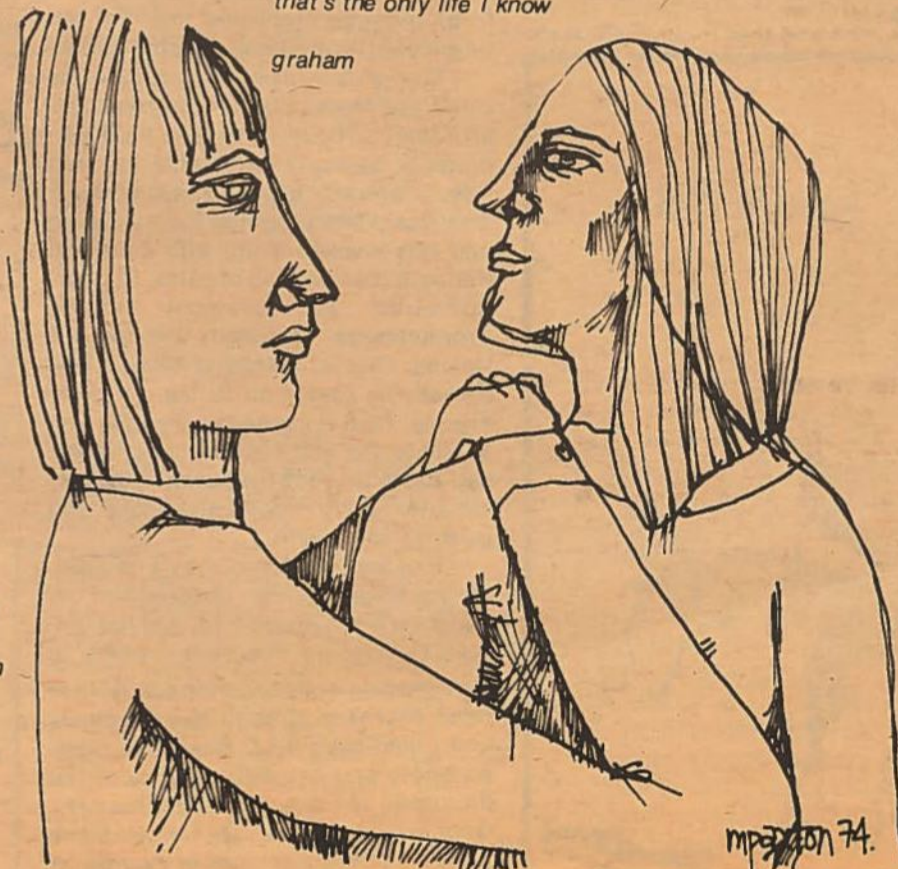
dorothy farmiloe

power politics

it really started with Eve
challenging the political game
of the Top Man and urging Adam
to do the same

and we've been
shaking their trees and looking
for new kinds of apples to taste
ever since

dorothy farmiloe



a yellow mercedes

Do you think
as I sit
on my chaise lounge
velvet padded
that I spent my lifetime
doing thus
and sip the wine
chilled just so
and hold my court
laughing
gay
that this yellow mercedes was always my bus

You don't remember
you cannot recall
when linoleum was lined
wall to wall
when a six pack of coke
lasted a two week
cigarettes
by hand
never too neat
one dress I owned
from season to season
yet
never doubted
given time
and reason
I would do well

You never saw tears
bitterly wept
at dead of night
for a man
who promised
yet never came
a deadly slight
you never knew heartbreak
retardation can bring
and know you are powerless
a dreadful thing
to have your back against the wall
and still decide to fight them all

The slight
heartbreak
all those tears
that never show
just sip the wine
hold the court
a yellow mercedes
padded velvet
that's the only life I know

graham

"letting go"

I
Women: in the kitchen,
Standing low in the dim light of
the lamp,
Serving and pleading,
Take off your apron.

II
Woman: in the bedroom,
Swinging your hips,
Seducing and being seduced,
Holding closely a battered dream,
Take off your apron.

III
Woman: of the world,
Rushing forward to be someone,
Making a gesture,
To hide
Take care to protect your
forever openness.

Mary M Oliver



towards release

I claw him in some dream,
to free myself
from the chains I deserved
by submitting.

He looks into my eyes,
sees not the pain
because I want to leave
between kisses.

Marie Simon

pursuit of a war victim

I
To taste the bitterness of terror,
And feel the icy hands of fear,
Choke every breath,
Slowly and deeply from your body-
Despair does so clutch.
Yet your brain is longing,
For a moment's reprieve.
A sanctity, or at least a small release.
From this ever-following,
Ever-so-close-behind pursuit.

II
Then I sit in a dark corner,
Any blackness will do-
Just to hide.
Or put my hands on all the walls...
Surround me,
Cover me up,
Take care to protect,
My forever openness.
That deceives so constant and tells,
That sometimes I am not a woman,
But for those few moments, a child.

Mary M Oliver

RECLAIMING OUR HERSTORY

The Story of Gaia

joanne fink

"I shall sing of Gaia, universal mother, firmly founded, the oldest of divinities." (Homeric Hymn, XXIX)

We women have been denied our roots and where they lead for far too long. This means we do not know fully who we are. In the articles that follow, I will present an alternate view of our history by presenting information relating to thirteen Greek goddesses. Each goddess represents a facet in the story of womankind and in the development of human civilization.

Much of what we know today of ancient gods and goddesses is gleaned from myths. The word myth is often used to denote a lie, an invented story, something that is fabrication. I do not regard ancient myths that way. Ancient myths are traditional stories or legends and are based in fact. They are statements of a way of understanding historical, social, psychological and spiritual process. They evolve with the times and are often changed to fit people's changing view of the world.

The stories of the goddesses are lively accounts of many-faceted females. They show woman in her glory, woman struggling, woman sorrowing. They show a transition from woman centered and woman valuing societies to the patriarchal order—an order which does not value women (and which is not all that healthy for men, either).

In the lives and histories of the goddesses we may often see ourselves as we re-live the ancient myths, passed down through the ages. Perhaps that is what a goddess is—that which is most central to our beings as women.

To begin with I will describe Gaia—primeval goddess of the earth.

Out of the vast expanse of Chaos sprang Gaia (the Earth) and Eros, the force of relatedness. Gaia brought forth a son, Uranus (the Sky), whom she made her equal. Then the mighty creatress shaped the tall mountains and created the sea.

United with her son Uranus, Gaia bore the mighty race of Titans—twelve in number, six males and six females. (Oceanus, Coeus, Crius, Hyperion, Iapetus, and Cronus; Theia, Phea, Themis, Mnemosyne, Phoebé, and Tethys). Mother and Son next produced the one-eyed race of Cyclopes and the three monsters—Cottus, Briareus and Gyges. (the Hundred-handed Ones) So repulsed was Uranus with his last offspring that he kept them shut up in the gloomy regions of Tartarus. Greatly vexed Gaia urged her children, the Titans, to gain revenge against their father-brother. All hesitated, save Cronus, the youngest of her six sons. Taking the gleaming steel sickle his mother had fashioned Cronus lay in wait for his father. When Uranus came to visit Gaia, Cronus castrated him with the sickle of Gaia. So Cronus succeeded his father. The Titans freed their brothers, but Cronus imprisoned them once more, and Gaia was sorely enraged.

Gaia and Starry Sky prophesized that Cronus would meet the same fate as that of his father. And so it happened that Cronus and the Titans came to be deposed by his youngest son, Zeus. The struggle between the Titans and Zeus and his allies lasted ten years. But Gaia prophesized that Zeus would be victorious if he took the Hundred-handed Ones as his allies. This he did and with their aid, Zeus and the generation of gods and goddesses known as the Olympians, gained supremacy.

Zeus and his brothers, Poseidon and Hades, then divided the world between them and imprisoned the defeated Titans. But these too, were children of Gaia and she was grieved and angered to see them imprisoned. She urged her children the Giants (twenty-four in number) to rebel against the Olympians. They too were defeated. In revenge Mother Earth brought forth the most hideous of all her children, the monster Typhon. His father was Tartarus and he was the largest monster ever born. But even the terrible Typhon was destroyed by Zeus.

And so after many long and terrible battles Zeus sat firmly enthroned on the heights of Mounts Olympus, calling himself 'the father of gods and

Let Zeus thunder and wield his bolts of lightning to remind the races of gods and men that they owe allegiance to him. Meanwhile the cycle of oppression and rebellion continues. The harmony of Gaia (Mother-Earth) has been broken. She values all her children (one-eyed ones and hundred-handed ones included) and will not stand to see any of them imprisoned. Today the 'gloomy regions of Tartarus' are filled with many more of her children (women, native people, blacks....) who are not truly valued by the powers that be.

Gaia, the great creatress, personifies the earth. Many ancient cultures spoke of earth as the all-mother. For it is the earth from which life springs, which nourishes life and into which life decays. She is the matrix of life, the ground of being. Woman was also regarded as the matrix of life. Like the earth she can carry life inside her, bear children and nourish them. Gaia, then, is the personification of this fertile nourishing function of earth and woman.

In matriarchal or woman-centred societies woman's child bearing capacity is greatly honoured. This is not to be confused with the sentimental, patronizing, 'motherhood and apple pie' attitude displayed towards mothers today. Woman's role as child-bearer was respected as an integral part of the life and death cycle. Women were proud of their part in that cycle. Nor were child-bearing and rearing used as an excuse to keep women out of other spheres of life.

Woman's role as nurturer was an important and dynamic one. It is the basis of many of the skills and abilities women developed to provide for and further the growth of their tribes or clans. Mothers proudly passed on this legacy to their daughters.

Gaia's later emanations can be explained in this way. Many goddesses (eg. Themis, Demeter, Persephone) are said to be more differentiated forms of the original earth goddess. I interpret this as

Though Gaia's power was shared by other goddesses she always remained an important deity. Even once the Olympians (a basically patriarchal lot) had risen in precedence, her cult continued. She was offered the first fruits of grain and was invoked along with Zeus and Helios in the swearing of oaths. She was honoured as foremost among prophetesses. Originally the famous Delphic Oracle; belonged to her. She passed the oracle on to her daughter Themis. Next it passed to Phoebé and finally to the god Apollo, though some say Apollo usurped the power of the oracle after killing Python, the snake who guarded the oracle.

In a legend recorded by Euripides, Mother Earth became concerned for her daughter when Apollo took over the Delphic Oracle. So she sent dreams to Gaia passing on and sharing some of her most cherished gifts to her daughters and grand-daughters. She gives righteousness and her divine oracle to her daughter Themis, who becomes the Goddess of Justice. To Demeter she gives fruitfulness and power over growing things. Demeter becomes the God-



Anne Zeller

dess of Agriculture. Her dominion over the dead who are laid to rest in her she gives to Persephone, who becomes Goddess of the Underworld and Spiritual Realm. Each of these goddesses is powerful in her own right, with special potency in particular areas. As well, their areas overlap and they share power. Demeter is sometimes called the law-giver. The dead are often called Demeter's children. Persephone is also regarded as a type of earth and agricultural goddess.

This undermined the Apolline method of divination and greatly angered Apollo. He appealed to Zeus, who then forbade the use of the dream oracle at Delphi. This legend shows the struggle between two differing ways of life resulting in the patriarchy bidding its people to deny their own inner experience as a way of guiding themselves. By denying and de-valuing our own inner experience (feelings, dreams, intuitions) we lose harmony with ourselves and the larger whole (Nature). In Evangeline Walton's fictionalized accounts of the Mabinogian, the ancient Britons spoke of their deities collectively as The Mothers and lived within what they called the Ancient Harmonies. Gaia bids her children also live within the 'Ancient Harmonies', setting the example herself, as she values her children's differences, urges them to fight oppression, shares and distributes power, and invites them to value their own inner experience.

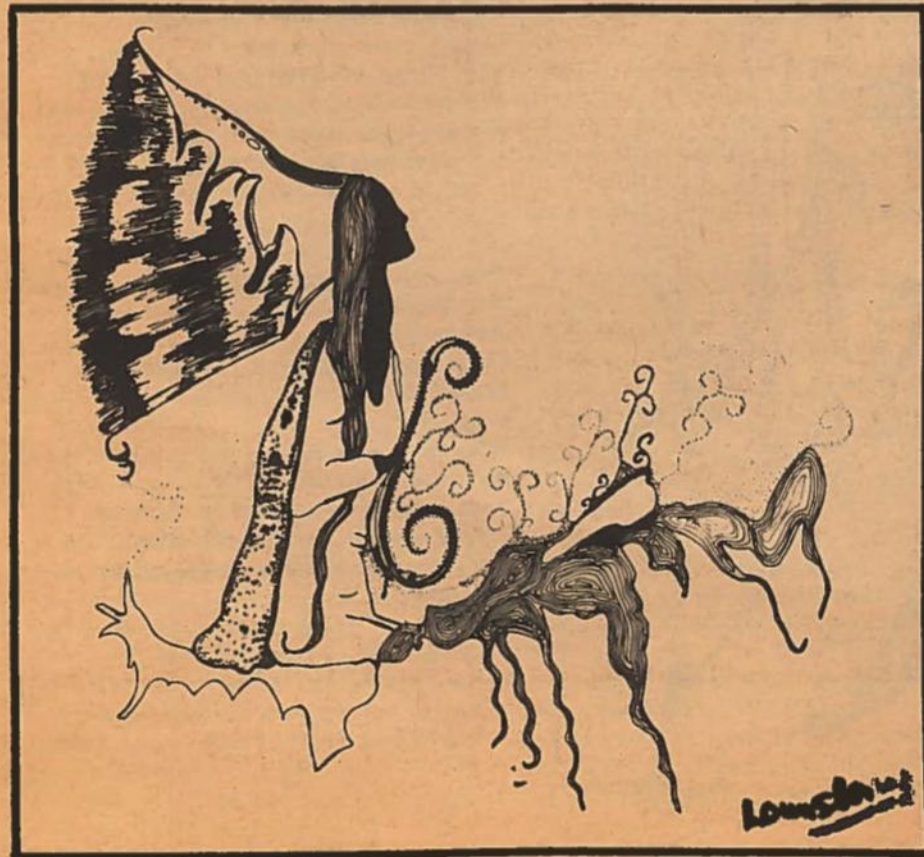
This distribution and sharing of power defines the structure of matriarchal clans, where power and decision making were shared collectively. There were no chiefs. Leaders might be appointed to oversee areas they were particularly skilled in. (For examples, see Robert Briffault's *The Mothers*, Chapter VIII). This did not give that person complete authority over the clan. Because power was distributed and shared, it emanated from the clan and was not imposed upon it. Thus all remained powerful.

GAIA'S GUIDE, 1976 for Gay Women

Annual pocket size international bar guide and complete directory. All U. S. A. plus 40 other countries. 2000 listings: restaurants, resorts, bookstores, mail order and publishing houses, resources and services. \$5.00 only from TORONTO WOMEN'S BOOKSTORE, 85 Harbord Street in Toronto. Or write:

GAIA'S GUIDE

115 New Montgomery Street
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Our Mother The Earth



Who has sold their land as they say the Indian people have sold their land?

Some of the old people that are still alive today that we listen to have told us that there were times when people came from the government. They would travel a couple hundred miles to the reservation asking the Indian people to sell their land. The Indian would answer: "I can't sell my land." They would sit and talk for a few hours and argue and the man would go away. He would come back a week later asking the same questions. He would do this two or three times. And he came back. And the woman said, "I'll sell you my land. But on one condition. Do you have a mother?" And the man said, "Yes, I have a mother." She said, "Okay, I'll trade you this land for your mother. Bring your mother here." And he said, "Why do you want to do that?" She says, "So I can jump on her, I can pull her hair out and I can beat her up and I can violate her because that's what you want to do to my mother. My mother, the Earth." He left and he never came back.

That's why Indian people say 'we cannot sell our land, because it's our mother'. It's someone from the time they were born gives them life, nurses them, gives them food, gives them medicine, teaches them, puts a roof over their head. This is what the mother, the Earth is to all of us....She always takes care of her children. What nation has ever sold its mother or what nation has ever sold its land? That never happened. This is the concept we have to struggle against today.

....Kakwirakfron

Reprinted from *No More Broken Treaties*, Ganieneh's Struggle, Vol. 1, No. 2, Fall 1975.

two mad tourists

At one in the morning, two police were not very helpful—they did not seem to know what we meant by a woman's bar. No, thank you, we don't want the Salvation Army women's hostel. We drove round the Washington Monument a few times on our way to Virginia to sleep at a rest area. Angela, the tour guide, wanted Pat to at least say she was as far south as Virginia—right in the heart of imperialism.

Next morning, far from Canada, bright and early, temperature heading toward ninety, back to the city. We set out to find that elusive women's movement. Finally found the *Off Our Backs* office and, first thing, we receive an apology for the critical article printed in *oob* on the state of the women's movement in Toronto. (Of course, we weren't about to say too much about that since we had botched up an article to our paper from the same author.) 'We're sorry that the first major article we have printed about Canada is so negative...' An invitation to join their collective that night for the mailing of their paper. Some joke—all feminist reporters across the world have this one thankless task in common.

'No, we don't want a tour of the FBI Building. Where are the bookstores and the bars?'

Are you looking for good, non-sexist books about alternative ways of birthing a baby? This bibliography will help you. It was compiled for Vol. 4, No. 2, our special issue on mothers, but we were unable to print it because of space limitations. Here it is.

1. *Immaculate Deception*. S. Arms. Houghton Mifflin, Boston, 1975. History/exposé of childbirth in America; see review in last issue of *to*
2. *Our Bodies, Ourselves*. Boston Women's Health Book Collective. Simon and Schuster, New York, 1971. Excellent chapter with good emphasis on postpartum experience. More oriented to hospital deliveries with natural birth. Also talks about why women choose to get pregnant.
3. *Free Delivery*. Free Childbirth Education Centre. Press Gang, British Columbia. Only Canadian book I could find. Poor quality photos and lay-out; good information about infant care and development of fetus; lacks somewhat in details about labour.
4. *Prenatal Yoga and Natural Birth*. H. O'Brien Nedvin, Freestone Publishing Co., California, 1974. Good alternative to boring birth exercise.
5. *Birth*. C. Milinaire. Harmony Books, N.Y., 1974. Excellent and detailed accounts of a variety of births; good photos and general information about nutrition, fetal

development, birth, and afterwards. Section on role of father worth noting.

6. *Nourishing Your Unborn Child*. P. Williams. Avon, N.Y. 1974.

One of the few books dealing with this vital topic; can be modified for vegetarian use.

7. *The Experience of Childbirth*. S. Kitzinger. Pelican, Great Britain, 1962.

Although very into strong role playing by pregnant couples (married of course) and placing much responsibility on the doctor/midwife, this book is well-written and lucid, especially in experiential material.

8. *Infant Feeding*. M. Bunther. Penguin, England, 1971. *Please Breast Feed Your Baby*. A. Gerard. Signet, N.Y., 1971

Both books explain exercises to encourage inverted nipples, also care of breasts before and after birth. Explains advantages and disadvantages of breast feeding with a slant to the former. LaLeche League has information and advice, too.

9. *Pregnancy: The Psychological Experience*. A. Colman, I. Colman. Seabury Press, N.Y., 1971.

One of the few books on the subject; a must for anyone attempting to understand the full scope of pregnancy. oriented; excellent handbook for technical details of pregnancy.

10. *Pregnancy*. G. Bourne. Pan Books, London, 1972.

Factual, comprehensive; medically

11. *The New Childbirth*. E. Wright. Tandem Books, London, 1964.

Somewhat condescending; explains breathing exercises very well; emphasis on married English lifestyle.

12. *Childbirth Without Fear*. G. Dick-Read. Harper and Row, N.Y., 1943.

Dated style but if you can overcome the heavy moral and religious overtones has good advice re: pain and labour.

13. *Birth Without Violence*. F. Leboyer. A.A. Knopf Inc., N.Y., 1975.

Latest trendy birth style; interesting view of birth as the child experiences it; tends to make it very mystical and places heavy responsibility on doctor's role.

14. *Spiritual Midwifery*. I May. The Book Pub. Co., Tenn., 1975.

Although very sexist, has innumerable birth accounts country hippy style; good section on the relationship between partners and the birth experience.

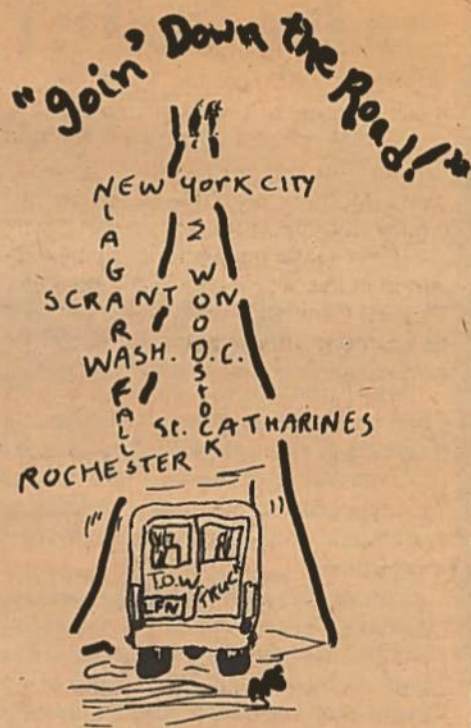
15. *The Birth Book*. R. Lang. Genesis Press, Cal., 1972.

Excellent photographs; factual, detailed accounts of various labours; a favourite with home birth people.

16. *Pregnancy, Childbirth, and the Newborn: A Manual for Rural Midwives*. Elosser, L., Galt, E., Hemingway, I. 2nd English ed. Mexico: Indigenista Interamericana, 1959.

Difficult to obtain but has detailed explanations of various birth positions; should be read if no skilled person will be present at birth.

* indicates male author.



Well, we found both. After a twelve hour stay in Washington, D.C., the nation's capital, we left the women's bar on our way north to the Statue of Liberty. We didn't get too far. We found the Lincoln Memorial but we couldn't seem to locate Jefferson. We went round and round and round Capitol Hill doomed to die a slow death in front of the Washington Monument—finally, a road that went somewhere else.

Great, a policewoman! We have to find a way out of this city. She says, 'Where's your car?' As we point to across the street, she says, 'You had better stay

with it or it'll get ripped off.' Oh yes, we really are in the belly of the beast—crime and murder everywhere.

Through tunnels and over bridges, excitement mounted as we approached New York City traffic. 'Look, over to your left is the Empire State Building.' Pat, the naive Toronto feminist, asks, 'But where's King Kong?'

Whoever said Toronto was a speedy, too fast-moving city? Head up, hanging out the window, the one major disappointment of the trip was missing a ride down Wall Street. The whole trip was laid out before us, no forethought, no plan. But somebody must have planned it as our aimless meandering led us to the Statue of Liberty ferry docks.

After a quick run-through of feminist bookstores, coffeehouses and restaurants, listening to Casse Culver and riding subways, walking round Greenwich Village and driving round Times Square, we started on down the road, driving north. Just trucking along, paying our toll charges.

Woodstock, New York ('hippies' and granola)—'Where can we park for the night?' 'Hey, I think we're going too far up this mountain. My ears are popping.'

Finally, a stopping-place near day-break. We drink our wine and eat our Mother Courage bread sticks enjoying the insane reality of being free enough to carry through our impulses. New York State, being too close to home, reminded us of our unfinished work in Toronto.

We made it back across the border to our HOME again just in time to enjoy the woman energy of Toronto's feminist coffeehouse. It was as if we had never left, seeing familiar faces and a familiar environment; our bodies feeling physically exhausted and our heads just a bit stoned and spaced-out from a five-day quickie tour of the east coast women's movement.

Gaia (con't)

The myth of Gaia is a relatively late version of a creation myth. Most of the details are recorded in Hesiod's *Theogony* written in the eighth century B.C. (though the myth is probably much older than that). By this time the patriarchal order was well established. Hesiod does not record the war with the Giants and the section regarding Typhon is often disputed as being part of the *theogony*. Both these incidents are recorded elsewhere. (See Robert Graves' *The Greek Myths* (Vols. I and II for further references.)

*Oracles-- Jane Ellen Harrison describes prophecy 'in the old sense of prophecy, utterance, ordinance, not in the later sense of a forecast of the future.' (p. 482, *Epilegomena and Themis*).

Welsh Mabinognian--ancient Welsh legends.

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- L.R. Farnell, *The Cults of the Greek States* (Vol.iii)
- Robert Graves, *The Greek Myths* (Vols. I and II)
- Lewis Gray, *The Mythology of All Races*
- Jane Ellen Harrison, *Epilegomena and Themis; Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion*
- Hesiod, *Theogony*
- Larousse, *Larousse World Mythology; The New Larousse*
- Evangeline Walton, *Prince of Anwnn; The Children of Llyrr; The Song of Rhiannon; The Island of the Mighty*.

IN AN IRON GLOVE

reviewed by cynthia wright

IN AN IRON GLOVE and THE RIGHT CHEEK

by Claire Martin,
published by Harvest House,
4795 St. Catherine St. W.,
Montreal, Quebec. \$2.50 each

Claire Martin is a survivor. Her two-volume autobiography *In An Iron Glove* and *The Right Cheek* is a story of tyranny and Martin's triumph over it.

Claire Martin was born in Quebec City in 1914. Her father was savagely cruel, physically and mentally, to his wife and children, most of them daughters. Her mother was a woman of intelligence, but she was afraid. She died young, drained by the birth of her children, by her husband's cruelty and by the Church which told her to be a martyr. Martin writes of the boredom and claustrophobia she felt in a house where it was forbidden to even smile, because that revealed you were thinking lustful thoughts. Her life in convent schools was miserable. She was treated sadistically by the nuns, but somehow she emerged as a woman with a love of learning.

One of the qualities of her autobiography is Martin's ability to portray the world from the point of view of the child. She shows the irony of adults' description of childhood and adolescence as "the best years of your life" when contrasted with the cruelty and pain she experiences. She uses sarcasm to show the hypocrisy and contradictions of the family, the Church, and patriarchal soci-

ety. She rejects the society that told her she had two choices: marriage or the convent; that told her, whatever you choose, deny yourself and your sexuality.

Claire Martin's autobiography ends with her older sister Françoise's marriage. However, I couldn't help but think that her real story is contained in the 23 years between her sister's marriage and her decision to write her autobiography. It becomes obvious that Martin is a strong woman who must have struggled for years with her emotional bondage to the horrors of her family and of convent life. She left Quebec and has lived and worked in France since 1972. One wonders what led to this decision and how it affected her as a writer and as a Quebecoise. I hope she continues her autobiography; it seems she still has much to talk about.

Claire Martin is a courageous woman who refuses to be a martyr and refused to be self-pitying. She now has the strength to write: "To be a child or a woman will always be like being destitute or coloured—a hazardous situation. And it seems that mankind is always very eager to point out that whenever anyone is strong enough, male enough, rich enough, or white enough to persecute the weak, he will gladly do so. But people like that always have something ridiculous about them. And the weak look in and laugh."

DON'T HAVE YOUR BABY IN THE DORY

reviewed by
grace scott

DON'T HAVE YOUR BABY IN THE DORY

H. Gordon Green
Harvest House
3.50

Don't Have Your Baby in the Dory by H. Gordon Green is not only a biography of Nurse Bennett, a woman with incredible strength and endurance, but of the people of Newfoundland. Their great versatility and resourcefulness is prompted by a need to survive against weather, seclusion and economic fluctuations. They bear the brunt of countless "newfie" jokes which portray them as a province of morons.

Nurse Bennett came over from Liverpool on Friday, April 13, 1921. She came prepared for the seclusion and the almost impossible task of looking after the inhabitants of 200 miles of coast. She found she had to combat superstition and old customs amongst the permanent inhabitants called "liveyere." For example the liveyere believed a nose-bleed could be stopped by hanging a yard of green ribbon around the neck or a toothache could be 'charmed' away.

Another problem Nurse Bennett had to face was the Newfoundland idiom and accent.

"One of the district nurses who serves another section of the coast tells the story of the rather shy individual who came to her for a jar of salve. When the nurse discreetly asked what the salve was for he said simply, "Please m'am, my 'arse is sore."

The nurse, knowing better than to probe for more details, provided him with a jar of haemorrhoid ointment and sent him on his way without bothering to discuss the matter. A week or so later the nurse happened to encounter the man in the village and asked him, again as discreetly as possible, if the salve had been satisfactory.

"Please m'am," came the forthright reply, "it don't do no bit of good, it don't. My arse he be just as sore as ever!"

Which prompted the nurse to be a little bolder about the matter. "But how do you use the salve?" she asked.

"Please m'am I puts it on just under his collar where his sore be. But it don't do no bit of good, M'am. My arse he be so sore I can't take him to haul wood no more..."

Nurse Bennett's dedication was legendary. No problem was too great or distance too far. Even after retirement she kept caring for the people at her own expense.

This is the moving story of a Canadian woman who helped mold our history and of a province rejecting its backward character.



BEING INDIAN IN HUEYAPAN: A Study of Forced Identity in Contemporary Mexico
by Judith Friedlander
\$4.95 St. Martin's Press, New York
194 pages

A native school teacher entertained Judith Friedlander, author of *Being Indian in Hueyapan*, with the following joke: "In the United States people think that their government is so advanced technologically because, with the help of computers, election results can be tabulated and announced within hours after the polls close. In Mexico, however, things are even more efficient. Here the public knows the result six months before the election takes place!"

It is part and parcel of being Indian in Hueyapan to know beforehand who wins elections and to feel embarrassed and inferior because of your ancestry. Admitting that you're Indian in Hueyapan is like admitting you're a nigger in the U.S. Most of the villagers respond to their Indian-ness in one of three ways: it was their unfortunate lot and nothing could be done about it; childlike innocence—who could expect anything more of

BEING INDIAN IN HUEYAPAN

reviewed by
grace scott

them; and finally those who try to hide their impoverished cultural condition.


Ms. Friedlander presents a comprehensive study of life in Hueyapan by looking at a village family and their history, as well as chapters on the religion, history, post-revolutionary government agencies and cultural extremists of Hueyapan.

The most readable and enjoyable part of the book is on Dona Zeferina and her family. Their way of life is steeped in tradition. Only recently have modern elements come into their life. One example is Dona Zeferina and her healing methods. She uses hypodermic needles and cough medicine to cure a man's severe cold but uses a traditional method to cure her headache.

"She calls to several of the children and instructs them to urinate into a chamber pot. Although they complain that they 'do not have to go', Dona Zeferina insists. Finally, complying with their grandmother's command, Lilia, Maruca and Raul take turns using the metal receptacle. Dona Zeferina pours the urine into a smaller pot and adds tobacco leaves. Next she heats this over a small fire in the kitchen until the urine begins to boil. Then she removes the mixture from the hearth and pours in a bit of alcohol, the final ingredient. Using

the tobacco as a sponge, Dona Zeferina applies some of the medicine to her aching head; the rest is saved to rub down the bathers' bodies before they steam themselves in the temascal".

The rest of the book, although providing a wealth of information on Hueyapan and their way of life, is somewhat tedious and boring to read. It is written like a history book—full of facts but lacking the warmth and personal touch of Dona Zeferina's and her family's history.



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WOMEN IN THE CANADIAN MOSAIC

reviewed by pat leslie

WOMEN IN THE CANADIAN MOSAIC
 edited by Gwen Matheson
 Peter Martin Associates Limited,
 Toronto
 346 Pages, \$5.95 paper

I have waited for the publication of *Women In The Canadian Mosaic* for at least a year and a half. Gwen Matheson, with the aid of government funds, was compelled to spend twice as long coordinating and updating articles from across the country as well as worrying over the constant postponement of publication. At a time when bookstores are glutted by books written about American women, Gwen Matheson made the rounds of practically all the Canadian publishers before PMA accepted the manuscript. PMA's priority list of books meant that the interruption of all business by our national mail strike set back the publication date even further. Thanks to the perseverance of Gwen Matheson, we now have an update of the activities of Canadian women.

This book, though no means revolutionary in content, is important in the sense that it enables us to look at the diversity of the Canadian situation. Unlike most other books, this one has an Appendix (compiled in September 1975) listing all known women's centres and newspapers.

However, the one drawback of this anthology is the absence of two articles. One is a topic that should be of concern to a North American women's movement. The well-known case of Jeanette Lavall and that of other non-status native women who have been trying to change the Indian Act is not represented nor is the more general struggle against racism by native women. One other article missing from the anthology should have generally dealt with women in the Atlantic provinces. It seems that "down east" rarely gets enough attention as it is. As Matheson admits in her introduction, "My original plan of attempting to present the entire situation of women in Canada in microcosm soon proved to be far too ambitious."

Matheson's Canadian feminist heroine proves to be none other than Nellie McClung. In 1943, McClung wrote, "People must know the past to understand the present and to face the future". Matheson, therefore, has tried to present us with, first, a look at our past as Canadian women and then, in the second part of the book, to look at what is happening with women in Canada today.

A condensed biography of Nellie McClung starts us off, followed by a synopsis of the suffragist campaign in

Canada indicating its distinct Canadian development. It is interesting that the last two articles dealing with our past happen to be on women in Quebec and the Voice of Women organization which was only formed in 1960. Naturally, "Women In Quebec", by Caroline Pesticieu, relates to only the Francophone experience. One reason she gives for the political awareness of Francophone women is, ("The existence of the Separatist opinion and the experience of unequal opportunities for French Canadians have obliged a large number of women, who would not otherwise do so, to think about politics and to be prepared to take a stand of one kind or another.") One organization in English Canada that has been more active than any other is the Voice of Women, dedicated to peace through non-violent means. They were not taken seriously by the federal government when they first began protesting about such things as nuclear testing or strontium 90 in milk. As the 1960's progressed, they became increasingly more involved with the anti-war movement around the war in Vietnam and, at the same time, were radicalizing their political attitudes. They played a large part in a 1971 series of meetings in Vancouver and Toronto between Indochinese women, and

Canadian and American women, all of whom were interested only in bringing about eventual peace.

Matheson takes us now into the present and she manages to cover a lot of ground. Cecilia Wallace, a well-known activist within the Catholic Church, writes about "Changes In The Church" and two Spanish-speaking women, Ana Alberro and Gloria Montero, give an overview of "The Immigrant Woman". "All This for Three and A Half A Day: The Farm Wife" by Norma Taylor gives us a general picture of prairie farm life for women. Taylor is an active member of the National Farmers Union and the formation of labour intensive cooperative farms in which women and men would work as equal partners is of major importance to her. The above articles speak to the need for a specific feminist perspective.

The Canadian woman in the labour union movement, in the educational system in general and in the university atmosphere, in politics, in the art world as writers and artists are all represented here by prominent women in each field. The last article, "The Feminist Mosaic", by Lynne Teather is a summary of the three groupings within the Canadian movement: Women's Rights, Women's Liberation and Feminist.

Call me naive nationalist or simply over-dramatic, but this book, with such clear references to women I know, have heard or have seen, gives me shivers. I feel a part of it without even agreeing with all of it.

LIVING WITH LESBIANS



Women's Wax Works A002
 Available from:
 Project No. 1
 Preston Hollow, N.Y. 12469

Alix Dobkin's new album is entitled *Living with Lesbians*. It is a solo album for Dobkin, best known for her songwriting and singing on *Lavender Jane Loves Women*. Inevitably, one must compare the two albums.

Frankly, I was disappointed. With one or two outstanding exceptions, the songs on *Living With Lesbians* just aren't as good as those on *Lavender Jane*. The melodies, while good, are not memorable. The lyrics are frequently autobiographical and herstorical. Unfortunately, they are not very poetic. While Dobkin does a good job with internal rhyme scheme and alliteration, there is still a stilted quality to the lyrics. A good example is "Hearts and Struggles." The music is a catchy calypso-style melody—the only danceable tune on the record. The words tell, in third person, the story of how Dobkin came out. It loses something in the translation—reminds me of the stories I used to write about myself in Grade 8. The song does carry a fine, singable chorus as its saving grace.

My personal favourites on the album are "Over the Banks" and "Chewing Gum." "Over the Banks" is a romantic song, a hauntingly beautiful Macedonian melody with words based on a Scot-

tish folk song. I would love to sing it to a lover. "Chewing Gum", on the other hand, is a conglomeration of North American folk tunes—mostly children's songs—about the joys of chewing gum.

To the album's credit, it does manage to exhibit the full range of Alix Dobkin's considerable vocal talents. From yodeling to Balkan exercises, Dobkin's voice never falters. She has a good range, excellent pitch control, and the music on *Living with Lesbians* demonstrates her versatility as a vocalist, as *Lavender Jane* never did.

The production and mix on the album is superb. Dobkin has produced the album herself, in itself a monumental task. She has done full justice to the talents of the musicians working with her.

The album is heavily political in content, quite a contrast to the recent Olivia releases (Chris Williamson's *Changer and the Changed* and Kay Gardiner's *Mooncircles*) which lean towards the spiritual. According to a recent article in *Paid My Dues*, Dobkin has joined with several of the other women on *Living with Lesbians*, to form Dyke Salad Productions. They are currently touring the U.S.

reviewed by
 ruth dworin

MOUNTAIN WOLF WOMAN

reviewed by ruth dworin

Mountain Wolf Woman
Sister of Crashing Thunder ♦
The Autobiography of a Winnebago Indian
 Edited by Nancy Oestreich Lurie
 Ann Arbor, U. of Michigan Press 1961
 142 pp.

At the time this book was written, (1960), *Mountain Wolf Woman* was a 76-year-old Winnebago Indian living in Black River Falls, Wisconsin. This book tells the story of her life, and the history of her people through her eyes.

I should, perhaps, explain my biases about this book. First, I love "oral" history—the stories told by the old and wise about life in their time as opposed to the patriarchy's catalogue of facts considered "important". Second, I am fascinated by the cultures and histories of the native peoples of North and South America, and in particular by the changes wrought by European cultural imperialism.

Mountain Wolf Woman speaks succinctly on both counts. She describes her early childhood, being located and relocated as the white people demanded more and more Winnebago land. She tells of her clan's efforts to survive—to maintain old customs and livelihoods while taking advantage of the new concept of selling their labour power to the white settlers. She speaks with humour and dignity about incidents in her own life—schooling, marriage, work. The narrative flows smoothly, creating in my mind vivid pictures of life seventy-five years ago.

I was most impressed and upset by the chapter dealing with *Mountain Wolf Woman's* conversion to the peyote relig-

ion. I was not previously aware that the cult, called the Native American Church, had spread so far north. I was familiar with the religion as it originated in Arizona, New Mexico, and Mexico before the European conquest. It appears that the Christians had adapted the peyote ritual to suit their own purposes, for *Mountain Wolf Woman* speaks of it in relation to baptism and describes taking peyote and seeing visions of Jesus. This is a far cry from the original intent of the ritual. It seems that peyote was simply adopted as an extra "sacrament" to sell native people their own "special" brand of Christianity.

The editor, Ms. Lurie, shows her love and knowledge of the Winnebago people in her preface, appendices, and footnotes. She has done a fine editing job, weaving together translated Winnebago and English transcripts to form a continuous narrative. The one drawback to the book is the arrangement of the footnotes. They are numerous, lengthy, and often quite essential to understanding the narrative, as they usually give information about Winnebago customs. However, they are located in a section in the back of the book, and it makes slow reading to continuously refer back to them. I found it most convenient to read all the footnotes for a chapter either before or after reading the chapter, and refer to them only when I wanted a particular point clarified.

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POWERHOUSE CANADA'S FIRST WOMEN'S ART GALLERY

continued from page 3

knows that functional objects aren't art. Well, we beg to differ. The things that we do are unconventional. Some work demands more space than others. We have partitions so we can make other walls if the artist wants to create a more intimate environment. With a large space, you can break it up. With a small space, you can't make it bigger.

DON'T ESTABLISHED GALLERIES CHARGE A LARGE FEE FOR A SHOWING?

They will charge anywhere from 40-60%. To be a member of Powerhouse, you have to donate time. If you can afford it, we take 15% from members and 30% from non-members but since we don't view things with a saleable intent we often don't get exhibits that sell. We do pay for postage, that's something. The entire membership is the jury about four times a year. We don't book our selves very far in advance because another thing we don't like about traditional galleries is that they are so booked up ahead that you can't often show your work. You have to wait 2 years to get a show and, by that time, you're not even interested in that work any more. We try to keep it booked ahead just so we can get publicity working properly and then we have space open.

SO, IF THE GALLERY DOESN'T HAVE MUCH MONEY FROM EXHIBITIONS OR DONATIONS, HOW HAS IT SURVIVED FINANCIALLY SO LONG?

We did the first major exhibition of women's art in Canada. We started the whole proceedings before it was declared International Women's Year, so it was something that had been in the making before it was fashionable to be a woman's gallery, especially considering Canada. Even in Los Angeles with Womanhouse, and Judy Chicago, people didn't get started until 1972 or 1973 which is when we started. They were affiliated with a university which is a much easier avenue to take in some respects, at least you have a facility. Those women were also getting a salary.

Most of the women here don't have a salary. They're doing part-time jobs here and part-time art there, plus devoting sometimes 40 hours a week to the gallery. That's because women have been forced to jam so much into one hour that we just do it. It's like devotion. It's one reason why we haven't died. It's a lot of work for 4 or 5 people to put together an exhibition and we can't really do much more than that. Maybe if we could get a documentation grant we would be able to afford salaries for full-time people.

We are approaching Canada Council on a "project" basis. We want to do documentation for women artists across Canada to collect slides, take photos, collect newspaper clippings, to document what's happening to women artists today so that we don't face the same problems. What were women doing in 1950? There must have been women painters but who knows about them and it takes so much energy and research time to find out. We really only know a few token names here and there.

There are alternative galleries who get \$35,000 a year or more from Canada Council who do not offer any more than what we offer, who do not receive any better reception from the critics and who receive less reception from the public. That's because they are so concerned with ART on its little pedestal that they can't see the reality that, without people, there is no art. It's somehow got to go together. They have the icing but we have the cake.

Powerhouse was started before it had a LIP grant. What happened when you have something like IWY and you give money to have a specific project (which is the same thing that happened with the LIP syndrome) is that almost all projects fold. You can't get the money, it's impossible. For example, there have been times when we've had literally no money. We've had rummage sales. No other art gallery has done that.

We close for July and August because most people go away and it's too hard to keep it up and, besides, not that many people go to galleries in the summer.

YOU HAVE MANAGED TO EXPAND QUITE WELL WITHOUT A LOT OF MONEY.

There was a lot of empty space in this building and many of us needed studio space. Once again, you pull back energy and resources to rent studio space on the first floor. We now have 12 women and a waiting list for studio space and it's very cheap. It's helped to create a lot energy. The creative aspects of art are happening downstairs and the exhibitions are upstairs. It makes for more activity in the building. When we were just a gallery, there wouldn't be as many women in and out during the day. Now there are greater numbers and more ideas. With more ideas, you come up with more energy and it just keeps snowballing.

It's hard to describe what it is about this place. It's really special and friendly. People can walk in off the street and they don't feel intimidated the way they do in more traditional galleries. We don't have any emphasis on saleability. We want our artists to have as much success as possible but we don't care whether or not they're famous. We don't care if they're even concerned about that kind of thing. We feel that there is often this great barrier between artists and public. There is really no need for it. You can be intellectual about the existence of a chair if you want to be intellectual. We try to make people feel comfortable. We try to make people feel that they can talk to the artist or to whomever is around about whatever is being exhibited. Since we're not the kind of gallery that shows the same kind of art all the time, it varies from one show to another about what kind of response we get.

In 1973, there were 8 women. Of those original members 6 have since moved away and gotten into other things. Other women have come and gone as time dictates, or they get into doing their own art and don't have the time to devote to supporting other women actively. We have an active membership of 35 women. That's a lot of women. Of course within that group are women who work harder than others but, for the most part, everyone does their fair share and we all do shit work. We all scrub the floor.

YOU WERE SAYING THAT, WITH MORE ACTIVITY, THERE ARE MORE IDEAS. IS THAT HOW "NEW SPACE" CAME ABOUT?

"New Space" is a step again. No other gallery has a separate performance space. We didn't really have anyone who was interested enough in music or the performing arts to be able to devote any time to developing it until the latest group of women decided that that was something that they would really like to do. So they are working as a separate project within Powerhouse. It's a real treat. We can have two exhibitions, films, plus poetry readings all going on

at the same time.

I think I would like to see a stronger relationship between more women's organizations. It tends to get very split-up. You have women who are doing actually many of the same things in different places. That's why we wanted to expand to the performing arts so that it does become a centre, so that it does become a focus that will appeal to a broader range. You get project duplications and they really don't have enough resources. If they could only do it together it would be twice as good.

We will be having performances, bi-weekly film series by and about women, open mikes on Sundays, brunches with bagels and coffee, and bring your own instrument if you want to jam. It's a poor person's Place des Arts, somewhere that is approachable. You have ideas, and if you have the energy to do it, you present your idea to the general meeting and it gets voted on.

We charge for concerts because we have to pay the performers. We have to have some money to rent a piano in case a performer needs it, to rent sound equipment, to build partitions in the gallery and for the walls. One reason we can't attract women who are better known is partly because of politics, but also because we can't provide the artist with anything material—frames, posters, wine, etc. The artist has to be willing to absorb these costs herself. What we do offer is space, the opportunity, a lot of support, and whatever contacts and knowledge we have gained.

I HOPE THAT THE WHOLE COUNTRY CAN KNOW THAT YOU EXIST

We've had a couple of articles in Branching Out (Edmonton women's magazine), had coverage in the local newspaper, Chatelaine, a good deal of radio and television coverage. It goes in spurts. We send publicity to everybody, we don't care if it is a longshot. Other women's groups across the country are aware of us. We've been in enough publications to get correspondence from Australia and the U.S.A. asking for information which we just can't provide. We don't have the personnel to put it together.

When Powerhouse was young, it was fresh. None of those women knew each other but, over time, friendships have been established that will never go away. We also feel that if we ever started getting good reviews, and if we ever started becoming accepted, then we must be doing something wrong. It would be time to do something different anyway. Maybe negative response is our fuel.



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NOTE: There are many more women's centres across the country. We cannot list them all. For further information, you might try the Women's Programme, Sec. of State in Ottawa as they have put out a Directory of Women's GROUPS in Canada in French and English.

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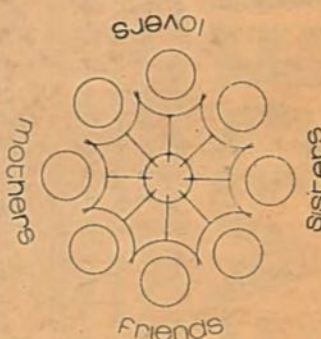
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