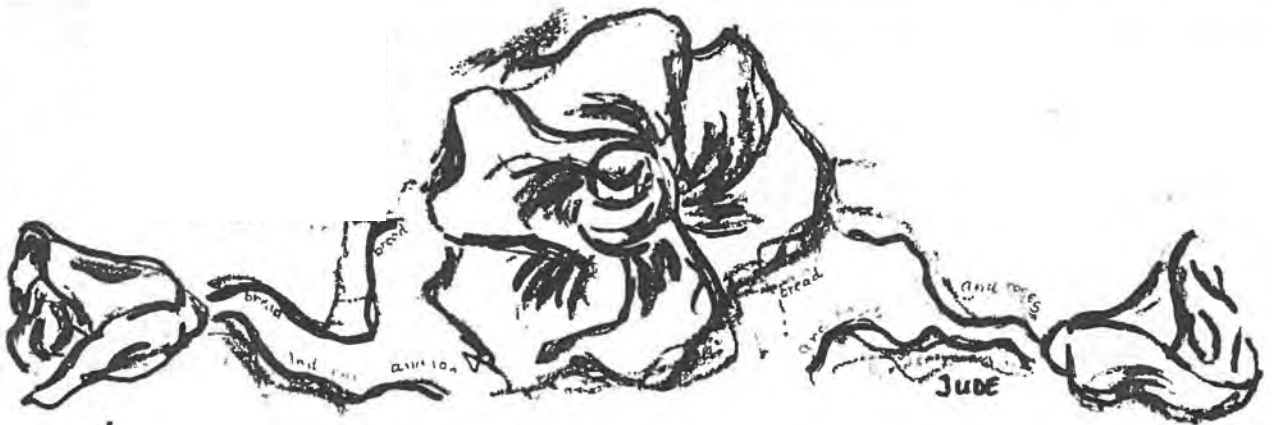




# ALBERTA STATUS OF WOMEN ACTION COMMITTEE

January 1987

Vol. 8 No. 2



As we come marching, marching, in the beauty of the  
day, a million darkened kitchens, a  
thousand mill lofts gray are touched by all the  
radiance that a sudden sun dis- closes for the people hear us  
singing bread and roses, bread and roses.

# ASWAC



## 1986/87 Board members

Darlene Abreu Ferreira - Edmonton  
Sheryl Ackerman - Edmonton  
Frances Adams (staff member)  
Luanne Armstrong (staff member)  
Anne Dobbie - Edmonton  
Helen Greaves - Edmonton  
Karin Goldberg - Edmonton  
Sally Issenman - Edmonton  
Terri-Ann Marco - Lethbridge  
Lorraine Mitchell (staff member)  
Suzn Morgan - Calgary  
Deborah Perret - Calgary  
Shelley Scott - Lethbridge  
Jane Wiley (staff member)  
Kathy Willis - Lethbridge

## 1986/87 Regional Reps

Annette Aarbo - Edmonton  
Home 437-4938 Work 432-3359

Gerry Bailey - Westeros  
Home 5862983

Joan White Calf - Camrose  
Home 672-2210

Lavera Creasy - Coronation  
Home 578-2211

Lori Crocker - Innisfail  
Home 227-1141 Work 227-3881

Naomi Lis - Lethbridge  
Home 381-8727

All members and interested women are invited to attend any or all of our board meetings. Come to the one nearest you! If you would like to see a board meeting held in your community, phone the office or let your nearest regional rep know.

The next board meeting will be held in Fort MacMurray, February 20-22. Phone Judy Moynihan at 791-4395 for more details (place and times).

If you have any articles, comments, artwork or features you would like to see in the ASWAC newsletter, send them in! Letters should be marked, NOT FOR PRINT, if you do not want them in the newsletter. The deadline for the next issue is February 25.

## Inside this newsletter

**Board meeting minutes . . . . . pages 3-4**

**International Women's Day . . . . . page 5**

**Science feature . . . . . pages 6-7**

**Abortion caucus . . . . . page 8**

**Lesbian issues . . . . . pages 10-11**

**The poet's corner . . . . . page 12**

**happenings . . . . . pages 13-14**

**ASWAC has moved with the Women's Building to 10826 - 124 Street, Edmonton. Our mailing address remains the same. Our new phone number is 455-5777.**

### Oops!!

**In the last newsletter, Darlene was mistakenly called Deborah and vice versa in the Board photos.**

### Hug these women!

Diane Dobbin, Valda Roberts, Loro Carmen, Aura Rose, Diana Chown, Colleen Day, Jude Major, The members of the Lesbian Caucus, The members of the Abortion Caucus, and Michele Butot for her work in Calgary.

### Donations

Monies have been most gratefully received from the following persons; Lana Stewart, Janet Walter, Shelley Robichaud, Barbara Prescott, G. Roper, Bernice Neal, Nola M. Erhardt, Dr. V.I. Birss, D. Pirie, Jean Reynolds, Barb Marshall, Pam Barrett, Anne Starling, Mary Ross, and Saskia Scott.

ASWAC's mailing address is Box 1573, Edmonton, AB, T5J 2N7. Telephone 424-3073. ASWAC's new home is at 10826 124 St., in Edmonton. ASWAC Lethbridge resides in the Women's Resource Centre phone 329-8338.

## Our board meeting minutes

# Eighteen hours at a glance

The following is our record of the board meeting held January 17,18 in Edmonton at the soon to be moved Women's Building.

Present: Board members: Jane Wiley, Deborah Perret, Darlene Abreu Ferreira, Sally Issenman, Kathy Willis, Shelley Scott, Terri Ann Marco, Helen Greaves, Suzn Morgan, Karin Goldberg Lorraine Mitchell, Frances Adams, Anne Dobbie. Visitors: Loro Carmen, Valda Roberts, Peggy Ward, Cathy Bray, Hana Soukup, Rebecca Coulter, Kirsten Ferguson, Susan Sharpe, Anna Pellatt, Susan and Brett Regional Reps: Annette Aarbo, and Joan White Calf. Social Work Practicum Student: Michele Butot.

### Employment Equity

Hannah Soukup from Transport Canada's Employment Equity Program informed us that the Department has a goal of 50% women for the latest recruitment drive for air traffic controllers. Given that there are 189 such positions in Western Canada and only six are filled by women, the Department is putting a lot of energy into recruiting women for this stressful but well paying job. (See announcement in this newsletter.)

### National Action Committee

Rebecca Coulter, Alberta/NWT rep for the NAC board brought us offers of support as well as encouragement from the mid-year meeting, for the abortion work that we are doing. We discussed the child care work that NAC and ASWAC are doing and Rebecca suggested that some of us become corresponding members of NAC's child care committee. Rebecca informed us of NAC's submission to the Standing Committee on the Women's Program (Secretary of State) and how it dealt very well with Real-women's attempts to have our funding withdrawn. Copies of this paper are available from the NAC office, 344 Bloor St. W. 5th Floor. Toronto, ON, M5S 1W9. The next annual meeting of NAC is in Ottawa, May 8-11 when NAC's 15th anniversary will be celebrated. The new travel policy of NAC will

enable more women from the "regions" to attend. Rebecca is going to set up a regional member's teleconference sometime prior to the Annual meeting.



photo by Sheryl Ackerman

**Michele, Darlene and Sally concentrating very hard at the board meeting.**

### Lesbian Caucus

The lesbian caucus met on Saturday and the board joined them for a while to discuss the focus and plans of the caucus and how the board and the caucus will work together. (See article in this newsletter.)

### Financial Report

We reviewed our financial situation. We have 56,078 left in our Sec State account although some of it will be transferred to cover Assembly expenditures. We came in under budget on the Assembly and decided to increase the honouraria to our workshop leaders, entertainers, and speakers by \$25. Jane agreed to do this. We have had over \$6000 come in for memberships, donations and sales so far this fiscal year, and have nearly 17,000 in our general account. ("our money")

### Personnel

Lorraine, Helen and Cathy Bray offered to form a personnel committee to review and update our policy and make recommendations regarding job descriptions and the personnel policy.

**January edition**

# The last ten hours or so . . .

## Membership Development

We had a good discussion on membership development. Michele Butot, a social work practicum student is doing an enormous amount of work in Calgary and is trying to find some space for an office in Calgary. Michele will be working for ASWAC until April. The regional reps will be holding a meeting in Calgary on Feb. 14,15.

## Kitchen Table Papers

The Kitchen Table papers are underway. They are part of our pay equity campaign. They will be a set of sheets looking into the value of the work that women do. We hope that they will be distributed through Women's Centres and Regional Reps across the province. The papers will be used as discussion starters for small, "kitchen table" discussions.

## Media

Board members agreed to take on the task of speaking to the media in their areas of expertise. It was felt that the media work should be shared more in order to allow more members to gain some comfort and familiarity in this area.

## Board Meetings

Meetings have been tentatively scheduled as follows: February 20-22 in Fort McMurray, April 3-5 in Calgary, May 29-31 in Lethbridge, June 26-28 in Pigeon Lake, August 14-16 in Camrose, and September 18-20 in St. Paul. More preparation work will be done in outlying areas to increase membership outreach and public profile of our meetings.

## Abortion Caucus

The caucus has drafted a statement of its long term goals and objectives and is looking forward to forming closer ties with other groups working on this issue.

## Charitable Registrar Number

Helen will look into the mechanics of setting up an educational trust fund that would be eligible for one of these numbers. It was decided that at present ASWAC's goals and activities would not make us eligible for one.

## Childcare

The Childcare Working Weekend, planned for February 7,8 looks as if it will be very successful. The weekend will be used to brainstorm some lobbying and long term planning around childcare issues, and ASWAC's childcare policy.

## Herstory

Lorraine will continue looking into whether we can get a grant from Alberta Culture to produce a book on the history of ASWAC.

## Budget

A decision was made to increase the newsletter budget slightly to allow for more photos. A few other slight alterations were made to the first draft of next year's budget. The budget committee will meet once more before presenting our grant application to Secretary of State.

## Computer

Luanne and Lorraine have done some research into models and prices of suitable computers for the office. Luanne agreed to do some further research and will present more information to the next board meeting, when a decision will be made.

## 3rd WORLD FILM FESTIVAL '87



3 theatres screening over forty recent films and videos on global issues, "people power," and world peace.

Guest poet is Susan Musgrave, who will read her poems about Latin America and Natives in Canada. Other speakers have been invited to address 3rd World issues.

A superb array of local singers and musicians scheduled to entertain festival attendants.

Additional festival highlights and services: 3rd World Photo Exhibit, Philippine Printmakers Show, Global justice information displays, International Food Dinner and Day Care services.

February 27, 28  
and March 1, 1987

Tory Lecture Theatres  
University of Alberta

Tickets: weekend pass—\$10.00, one day pass—\$5.00 and one session pass—\$3.00. Screening hours: Friday from 7 p.m., Saturday and Sunday from 1 p.m.

The 3rd World Film Festival 1987 is hosted by the EDMONTON LEARNER CENTRE, 10765-98 St., Edmonton T5H 2P2. tel 424-4371.

# International Women's Day

March 8, 1857 thousands of textile workers in New York's Lower East side dropped their work and joined together in a massive demonstration. They bravely withstood brutal police retaliation to voice their demands for reasonable pay and labour laws, and the long denied right to vote.

March 8, 1919 is declared a holiday - International Women's Day in Copenhagen. The declaration comes from the Congress of the Second International, at the urging of socialist leader Clara Zetkin. March 8 has been celebrated around the world since then as a day of protest and of triumph for women.

Echoing the familiar revolutionary cry for "bread and roses", women in the massive and bitter 1912 strike of woolen mill workers in Lawrence, Massachusetts, carried signs declaring "We want bread and roses too". Their slogan captured the spirit of women's struggles so well that it has become a popular and fitting symbol for International Women's Day.



## Edmonton

The Edmonton I.W.D. Committee has tentatively planned a march, March 7, at noon. The walk will leave from the Gazebo at Strathcona Park at 104 St. and 83 Ave. The walk will proceed to the University where there will be an afternoon of displays, films and greetings.

Anyone interested in helping to organize these events, or a social for the evening of the 7th, should contact Andrea at 451-3287 (h) or 429-3570 (w) or Lynn at 439-8373.

As a fundraiser for IWD in Edmonton, the IWD Committee is sponsoring a Coffee House Friday, February 13, at St. Joseph's College on the U of A campus. There will be an open stage featuring singers, performers and a poetry reading. Tickets are \$5 for waged and \$2.50 for unwaged. For information on child care contact Andrea at 451-3287 or 429-3570.

## Calgary

The theme for I.W.D. activities in Calgary this year is "Towards Building a Multi-Racial Women's Movement". Speakers, workshops and a celebration are still in the planning stages. For more information, contact Calgary SWAC at 124-320 5 Ave. S.E. or phone 262-1873.

## Lethbridge

Lethbridge ASWAC is planning a March 7 event, to be co-sponsored by the Lethbridge Cross Cultural Learner Centre. The day will probably feature films, displays and information tables. There is a social tentatively planned for the evening. Contact the Lethbridge ASWAC Women's Resource Centre at 329-8338 for more information.

## Camrose

Camrose: Plans have begun for an International Women's Day event for March 7. For more information contact Joan White Calf at 672-2210.

## Red Deer

For information on International Women's Day in Red Deer contact the Red Deer Status of Women c/o Kathryn Edwards 342-1469.

## Fort MacMurray

The Fort MacMurray Women's Resource Centre is planning an IWD event to take place at the centre March 7, at the Peter Pond Community School, Rm. 1, 9601 Franklin Ave. For more information call Nancy Swaby at 791-0858.

## Stettler

A group of women in Stettler are planning another International Women's Day Dinner, 6 pm at the Stettler United Church. There will be a speaker presenting views on Women's Health Issues. There will also be a reduced ticket price for senior citizens. For more information contact Bari Castle at 742-3387.

## Olds

For information on International Women's Day in Olds, contact the Olds Women's Resource Group c/o Siobhan Avery at 556-6456 (Home) or 556-8360 (Work).

## How feminism challenges science's basic methods

by Shelley Scott

Dr. Sandra Harding, professor of Philosophy and director of the Women's Studies program at the University of Delaware, stopped at the University of Lethbridge on December 4 during a western Canada speaking tour, to lecture on the topic "Is Science Sexist?"

Dr. Harding structured her lecture into five, inter-related topics, explaining that they became more controversial as they progressed.

Equity Issues Dr. Harding asked why, after a century of struggle for women to enter the sciences as students and practitioners ( and after being told, at the beginning, that the study of math and science would divert energy away from our wombs, thus causing them to wander around in our bodies) are there still so few women in science? She clarified that point - there are women in science, mostly lab technicians and support staff, and in Italy, for example, most biologists are women. However, these women are not in a position to direct the course or nature of their research.

Harding pointed out that when women do enter the sciences, they suffer from "the prestige gap" - their works are not thought of as highly or cited as often as the works of their male colleagues. She explained that boys are made more suitable for scientific study through the genderization process, encouraging them to manipulate their environment, for example, while girls are socialized away from those talents. Finally, Dr. Harding pointed out that including more women in self-directed roles in the sciences is a much more radical notion than it might sound when one considers what kind of testing these women might choose to do. "Probably not Dalkon. Shield or nuclear arms testing," she suggested.

The Uses of Science are Sexist Male scientists are far more willing to take risks with women subjects than they are with other males. Examples of this include the fact that half of all surgery performed on women in the United States is gynecological or reproductive in nature, that the household cleansers used pre-

dominantly by women are suspected of contributing to the high rate of cancer among homemakers, and the well-documented testing of contraceptives and other drugs on poor women and women of colour. Dr. Harding said that this willingness to exploit women arises from the biblically-derived philosophy that it is acceptable for man to have dominion over nature. She also said that the notion of Pure Science is a dangerous myth - that all scientific studies have some ulterior motive, usually related to funding by the military-industrial complex. An example of this are studies of the communication system of dolphins, which are not carried out because of interest in dolphins but because of the applicability of such studies to the Navy.

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*Male scientists are far more willing to take risks with women subjects than they are with other males.*

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Dr. Harding explained that she does not believe that all scientists have evil motives, that most have very high ideals, but that they become pawns in the functioning of science as an institution.

The Results of Biology and Social Science Research Exhibit Sexist Bias The questions that are asked depend on who is asking them; men look at things that interest them and so would women. But the absence of women asking questions results in a partial and distorted world view. Dr. Harding said that research is designed to exclude women, that women's test results are thrown out because they conflict with men's. She pointed to views of world history that ignore women's contributions, attitudes towards pregnancy as diseases, and society's invalidation of housework as the result.

Science's Practices have been Infused with Sexual Meaning Dr. Harding read quotes from speeches made by Machiavelli, Bacon, Richard

# feature on science



Fineman (Nobel Prize Winner) and Paul Fireaubin (a colleague of Dr. Harding), which all used blatant rape metaphors to describe their attitude of man conquering nature. She said that the point is not that these individual men are sexist, but that they have this availability of sexual rhetoric to employ, and that it is damaging to women, men and science. This attitude promotes an interventionist, macho mode of research that is not the best means of working. For example, male scientists usually look at evolution as based on scarcity and competition, but it could just as easily be viewed as being based on abundance and cooperation. She also pointed out that by using these kinds of metaphors, these men are assuming that their listeners are male, again excluding women as scientists.

Dr. Harding mentioned that, in looking at historical writings from the 15th to 17th centuries, we usually assume that their misogyny is a reflection of the way life was like at the time, but that they are really an indication that the writers were threatened by changing

sex roles taking place during that period. "People don't agitate for things they already have", she said.

Epistemologies of Science An epistemology is a theory of knowledge, and used as a justificatory strategy (the other end of the scale would be killing everyone who disagrees with you). There are currently three feminist epistemologies: feminist empiricism, feminist standpoint strategies, and feminist post-modernism. Dr. Harding explained the first two. Feminist empiricism simply states that politically guided research produces more scientifically justified results. The women's movement has removed our blinders so that we can see more clearly, and as a result, science can look at the whole human experience instead of one distorted part. Just as Marxism demands that we look at the world from the workers' perspective, and anti-colonialism that we look at it from the viewpoint of oppressed races, feminism demands that science re-think its most fundamental beliefs.

Feminist standpoint strategy is similar, in that it argues that a truer picture is formed by looking up from the oppressed position than down from the dominant. A female colleague of Dr. Harding has a theory based on this, looking at the soap opera as the flipside of sociology. In a soap opera, men play supplementary roles to the women, who are the real actors in the world's problems, while in sociology the reverse is true. Dr. Harding said that the clearest perspective is gained by using three steps: understanding the world of women on its own terms, understanding men from the perspective of women, and explaining the relationship between the two worlds from the perspective of women.

Dr. Harding said that science and sociology have always needed an "alien" to view society from the right perspective. This person must be outside of society, but understand that society as well as a native, and of course this ideal "alien" is women. Dr. Harding also said that women in higher education are even more in this position, since they are alien to both the traditional women's world and to the male world, and so can look at both.

Finally, Dr. Harding explained the title of her recent book, "The Science Question in Feminism" (Cornell Press). She said that we have moved from scientists asking themselves "What should we do about those women?", to feminists asking, "How can we use science to our benefit when it is so deeply entrenched in sexism?"

# The crisis continues

by Luanne Armstrong

Since its initial formation at the Annual Assembly in November, the ASWAC abortion caucus has continued to meet and strengthen its membership, as well as clarify its aims and objectives.

Although the initial impulse for organizing the caucus was in response to the continuing crisis in access to therapeutic abortions, the caucus has also set out its long term objectives, which includes lobbying, public education with respect to reproductive rights, and increased access to safe and affordable abortions.

In the short term, the caucus decided to wind down fundraising for its emergency fund, which was established to help those women who needed assistance in obtaining abortions outside of Alberta. The fund worked well, but was initially established as a short term solution to the abortion crisis. The fund took a lot of time and energy to administer, more than had been foreseen, and in addition, while helping a few women with their immediate needs, was not putting pressure on the government and doctors to solve the crisis. A press release was issued in January, stating that the abortion fund was being discontinued, and received fairly wide coverage.

## *Marv Moore attempted to attribute the drop in the number of abortions to panic over AIDS.*

In order to carry out its short term objectives, specifically, to put pressure on the doctors and the provincial government to find some way to solve the crisis, the caucus decided to network with other groups dealing with the same issue, and at the same time, to develop some method of public education and publicity. Ideas being talked about include a public forum, or some kind of public demonstration. The caucus had organized a "coathanger" vigil at the Legislature in December.

Representatives of the caucus also met with other interested groups in a meeting organized by Abortion by Choice (Edmonton branch of CARAL) on January 22. At this meeting, the groups were presented with a proposed philosophy statement and three possible structures for a proposed coalition. The groups will take this information to their memberships for discussion and decisions.



*(This cartoon appeared in the Edmonton Journal, believe it or not!)*

The crisis in access to abortion continues. Mr. Moore's statements on the subject so far have been mystifyingly fuzzy. On the morning of January 25, he attempted to attribute the drop in the number of abortions being done in Edmonton to panic over AIDS, and a corresponding decrease in sexual activity!! He has also, in the past, stated that he thought women should ask the men responsible for their pregnancies to be involved in their decision to have an abortion. Obviously, Mr. Moore has a less than direct acquaintance with women's needs and women's lives around this issue.

Statistics supplied by Planned Parenthood show that since October, the number of women being referred to the US for an abortion has doubled, while the number of women able to obtain abortions in Edmonton has dropped significantly. There has also been an increase in the number of Edmonton and out of town women obtaining abortions at Calgary's Foot-hills clinic.

The ASWAC Abortion caucus welcomes all interested women who want to work on this issue to come to the meetings or contact the caucus via the office. Times and places of the next meeting are posted in the Women's Building in Edmonton. Although the caucus is based in Edmonton currently, it would be great to hear from women in other places in the province who are interested in working on the issue. A province wide effort would be fantastic.



Women writes to ASWAC

## Handicapped lack choice

Please let me introduce myself and explain why I have chosen to write. I'm a single parent of a multiply handicapped child. I do not want to go on social assistance and I certainly don't want to put my child in a group home for her life. She is aware enough that either of the above choices would make her life - to say nothing of my own, miserable.

If I had addressed this problem earlier, during my marriage, perhaps I would still be married. The need now is much more desperate. I believe I should be entitled to work for my living without either compromising my extended family or giving up my child. To put it another way: Why should I go on social assistance just because I want to keep my child at home?

I know that when I was in my early thirties and my daughter was beginning to pass into the school age category, the family pressure intensified for me to work. However, there were no integrated day cares available to us at that time and babysitting was a nightmare. Therapy, appointments, sick days off, lack of support systems or alternatives became too much. Yet to choose not to work, against family and societal pressure created greater problems both with financial denial for the family and social life, and the early creation of emotional health problems.

Mine is a fairly typical story, yet it is not one that people either want to tell or listen to.

In British Columbia, there are adult day cares available. In Alberta there is not even teen age day care. There are also not enough programs for the handicapped population after

the age of twenty. But, there is an overabundance of trained rehabilitation practitioners looking for work. Certainly the opportunity for job creation is there as is the opportunity to reduce welfare applications and mental health rehabilitation.

I was told by one doctor that parents generally juggle the incomprehensible inconsistencies until the child is eighteen, then from exhaustion largely, place him/her in a group home. I've also heard horror stories of handicapped children being left on their own all day because there is no child care available.

We recognize that child care/day care is politically young of age but we also believe that our children and families are just as important as those of our neighbours and that if we can and want to work we should be entitled to, without the fear of/for the quality of life our children experience.



Louise Rolinger, without whose friendship and support I would have given up, is also a parent of a handicapped teen. Together, we are beginning to secure a network of concerned parents and families who could benefit from the establishment of a subsidized, quality teen/adult day care. There are a lot of names required on the petition before we can approach the provincial government. So please call: Louise 484-4547 or Gail Smyth 435-5979.

## Third World film fest

Reserve the last weekend in February to take in the Third World Film Festival at the Tory Lecture Theatres, U of A. There will be over fifty films and videos screened at the film festival scheduled for February 27,28 and March 1.

The films about women are numerous - "No Longer Silent" (India), "Witness to Revolution: The Story of A.L. Strong" (USA), "Las Madres de la Plaza de Mayo" (Argentina), "Frida Kahlo and Tina Modotti" (Mexico), "Winnie and Nelson Mandela" (South Africa), are only a few of them.

Susan Musgrave, a well-known Vancouver poet has agreed to read her poems at the festival. Susan has

spent the last couple of years travelling to different parts of Latin America. Her poems will be about her travels and about Natives in Canada.

An enthusiastic team of film festival volunteers have planned a quality program. There will be a Photo Exhibit, Information displays, Phillipine Printmakers Show, International Food Dinner, Music and Entertainment, and available Childcare.

Admission to the festival is cheap - \$10 one weekend pass, \$5 one day pass, and \$3 one session (afternoon or evening) pass. For more information call Evelyn David 424-4371 or 424-5952. (Edmonton)

# Lesbians come out in ASWAC

The Lesbian caucus that began at the ASWAC Assembly in Innisfail last November held its first meeting in Edmonton on January 17. Its first gathering was much like the general experience we have had 'coming out' as individual lesbians.

As individuals, the process of calling ourselves lesbian and creating the changes in our lives that came with that changed identification was full of both excitement and confusion. When 18 of us gathered from five corners of the province to the first meeting of ASWAC's Lesbian caucus, we felt the same way.

The need for a caucus was felt two years ago, and the decision to get together was made at this year's Assembly in Innisfail. The basic structure and purposes were decided then (see the last newsletter for more). But, "how to go about it?" was left to the first meeting.

*Everyone agreed that the work we take on must be rewarding, effective and fun.*

Some things seemed clear: the caucus would be provincial in scope and activity, and we want to involve both action and analysis in our work on the issues that affect our lives. Everyone agreed that the work we take on must be rewarding, effective and fun.

Visibility of lesbians is important if we are to change the laws and attitudes that discriminate against us. And we need to make sure that how we do things does not endanger the jobs or safety of our mem-

bers. We want to build bridges to other women by sorting out the fears that surround the issues of sexual preference and choice.

To a large degree organized lesbian feminist work is new to this province, and like anyone taking first steps in new directions we came up with more questions than answers.

What do we as a group believe about the issues that affect us and what do we want to do about them? How do we set priorities for action and understanding the issues? What activities should come first - lobbying or educating - and what might they look like? How do we fit with ASWAC?

We met with the ASWAC Board and that felt like coming out as well: we needed to decide how we are the same and how we are different. The link between our two groups must be strong and we must communicate with each other clearly. We are not relieving the Board of its responsibility or ability to respond to lesbian issues, we are going to dedicate ourselves to those issues that affect lesbians.

We believe that many of the issues we will address are also important for heterosexual women. To be able to make choices for our own lives outside the norms, roles and rules of patriarchy is fundamental to the movement.

## Ontario moves ahead

by Elizabeth Massiah  
(taken from the Newsmagazine by Alberta women)

On December 2, an amendment to the Human Rights Code in Ontario was passed extending civil rights to lesbians and gay men. Bill 7, which passed by a vote of 65 to 45, will make it illegal to deny housing to lesbians and gay men or to fire them from a job or refuse to promote or hire them because of their sexual orientation. Until now, because sexual orientation was not a specified status in the province's Human Rights Code, lesbians and gay men had no protection under the law. Many people suffered discriminatory practices with no recourse to the law that protects heterosexual men and women.

The recent inclusion of sexual orientation in the collective agreement of the federal government, plus this change in Ontario, make 1986 a landmark year in the story of gay and lesbian liberation. The energy generated by

*The opposition to Bill 7 was vociferous. A major opponent was the Catholic Church.*

the work is enormous. The next opportunity for a similar amendment here in Alberta will be in 1988, when the Individual Rights Protection Act will be up for review again.



# Realwomen write the book on homophobia

reprint from The Body Politic  
by Lynn Macfie

Realwomen of Canada, an anti-feminist women's group, is continuing its campaign to save the Canadian family by attacking federal government policy acknowledging that gays and lesbians have rights under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

A pamphlet recently published and circulated by the group, expresses concern that legislation declaring sexual orientation a prohibited grounds of discrimination under Section 15 of the Charter - no such legislation has been proposed - will lead to the proliferation of AIDS and hepatitis, an increase in prostitution and pornography, the seduction of youth, and the destruction of the family and traditional moral values.

The pamphlet also offers a crash course in what constitutes homosexual activity: ("It involves acts such as oral sex, anal intercourse, masturbation by manual stimulation, sadomasochism, bestiality and other perversions.") and explains that, while everyone is against discrimination, the alleged amendment to the Charter will de-

prive employers, landlords, and parents of the right to "exercise a sound discretion based on a legitimate factor, (moral character)."

An article in the Summer 1986 issue of Realities, the Realwomen publication, echoes these sentiments and urges all concerned women to write to Prime Minister Brian Mulroney, federal justice minister Ray Hnatyshyn and their own MP's.

A staff member at the Realwomen of Canada office told The Body Politic that "thousands" of pamphlets were being prepared for distribution to members of the Ontario legislature and to members of Realwomen. She noted a "favourable response" to these measures by the membership and expressed confidence that the write-in campaign would be effective.

Although a number of petitions and exhortations to write to MP's have been circulating in the gay community for some time, the knowledge that Realwomen have mounted their own write-in campaign may encourage those who haven't yet made their feelings known in Ottawa to do so. No postage is required. And remember, you too may play a role in the downfall of Western civilization.

## Call you

when I call you beautiful, I am not  
your mirror  
not a judge, not your mother, not a camera  
not a magazine,

when I call you beautiful it is because  
you are to me, a single flame wrapped in wind

or once I called you, obsidian, black glass  
sharp and dangerous - shining

called you warmth, called you food, called you home

but these mean nothing  
when I call you beautiful

by Luanne Armstrong



Jewels Graphics Serrita Johnson

## April conference in Calgary

Plans are well under way for the 1987 Provincial Lesbian Conference to be held in Calgary with a tentative date of April 24,25. An organizing committee has been meeting regularly since October and has received funding for two PEP positions to help with the logistics of organizing a provincial conference.

Some tentative workshops include; Coming Out, Spirituality, Aging Lesbians, Parenting, Couple Relationships, Legal issues, Addictions, Abusive Relationships, Religion, Sexuality and more Sexuality. A massage workshop is optional.

There will also be some great lesbian entertainment and a major dance to close the conference. Billeting will be available with advance registration. Please watch for our brochures, to be 'out' in February or March. You can reach the organizing committee c/o Calgary SWAC Rm. 124 320-5 Ave. S.E. Calgary.

January edition

# The poet's corner

by Luanne Armstrong

Several times during the past year, I've heard it announced here and there, that the feminist movement is dead, and we are now moving into the "post-feminist" era. I've had women say to me, "Oh, I'm not a feminist even though I believe in equal rights for women.

What's going on here? I'm not dead, and I'm sure as hell a feminist, and so are hundreds of thousands of other women worldwide. Is this some ad man's dream so he can sell high heeled shoes and dress-for-success suits to these new "post feminist" women? If so, he's doing some pretty wishful thinking.

Just think without feminists around to bug them about silly little issues like equality, and poverty, and social justice and sexual abuse and peace, the government could get on with the really important stuff, like Cruise missiles, and free trade, ... you know, "hard" issues. If they could just get women back into their closets with the dust pans and brooms, how much simpler life would be, - for them.

Sorry, whoever you are out there, it just won't work. The ASWAC Assembly this year was bigger and stronger than ever, and we put a lot of energy into discussing important issues like access to abortion, labour legislation, farm women, pay equity, child care, and lesbian women. We're more determined, more organized, more knowledgeable, than ever before.

Part of the problem seems to be that because feminists are now everywhere, in the office, in the government, in the boardroom, in small towns, and on farms, we look like ordinary women and the media had a hard time recognizing us. So they have concluded that we are dead. In the mean-

time, we take for granted many feminist ideas and issues that were unheard of or hardly discussed a few years ago, such as pay equity, women working, women running for political office, women having choices and options in their lives.

This is not to say, of course, that we don't have a long way to do. After all, feminists have set out on the measly little task of transforming our violent, unjust, hierarchical society, into one that's fair, peaceful, and equal. It just might take us a whole lot of time. But we have no intention of disappearing.

There is one serious danger in all of this though. If we allow the idea that feminism is dead to get through to people, especially younger women, a few years down the road someone is going to have to go through the tremendous effort of reinventing it.

## Peace place at the U.

The Peace Place is a place for people to share concerns and ideas related to peace during International Week 1987 at the University of Alberta. The program for the day-long event is chock full of activities. The place will be the Arts Courts Lounge, in HUB mall, Thursday, February 24, from 10 am to 9:30 pm.

What about the Children? is the session from 10-1 and it includes a film on war toys, a video, a presentation on children and peace and an opportunity to see and play various co-operative games.

"Stronger than Before" is a video that will be shown at 1 pm. It is a 1985 production about the Women's Day of Remembrance and Resistance at Litton Systems Canada. It features interviews with some of the women involved.



Then the media will rediscover us and announce that not only have we died, but we are now re-born. I can hardly wait.

In the meantime, though it be unfashionable, feminists, who are rarely fashionable but almost always correct, will continue, in our homes and our offices and our small towns, to do our work. Because it matters, and it's necessary, and that won't change for a long, long time.

Women and Peace is a forum at 2 pm. This discussion will feature women talking about their personal experience with peace, be it internationally, nationally, or in the home. Representatives will be there from Making Connections, Nurses for Nuclear Disarmament and the Salvadorean Fraternity

There will be peace singers, a peace walk and a peace meal at 6 pm, hosted by the Salvadorean Fraternity. There will also be an evening of entertainment beginning at 7:30 at the Thrust Theatre, Fine Arts Building, U of A. "Words for the World": a series of skits on hunger, militarism, etc. will be performed by YES (Youth Evolution in Society) from Archbishop Jordan High.

For more information about the Peace Place, contact Erica at 436-0152.

# Reaching out to rural women

The Women's Studies Outreach Project housed at Athabasca University has received another grant from The Women's Program, Secretary of State to develop educational materials and activities designed to raise awareness of and provide information about women's issues to all Albertans, particularly those in rural areas who have previously been denied access to educational opportunities and experiences in the field of Women's Studies. In order to accomplish the tasks set for the Outreach Project, several activities will be undertaken. For example, several learning packages on women's issues will be developed utilizing the methods of distance education.

Each package will be designed for use by a wide range of community women's groups and will include both print and audio materials. The package will be structured to allow women in a group or individuals working alone to access the information easily and without the assistance of an 'expert'. Topics to be covered include women and the law, women's health, women and politics and women and employment. In addition, a training package for volunteers in shelters and sexual assault centres will be developed. Persons will be hired on a contract basis to develop these learning materials.

The provisions of the grant also allow us to hire someone to develop a detailed, fully costed plan for a Women's Chautauqua. The Women's Chautauqua would utilize the touring caravan methods of an earlier period of Canadian adult education to bring speakers, displays, films, theatrical performances, musicians, etc, to rural communities during the summer months. The Women's Chautauqua will thus provide an innovative way

to disseminate ideas and information about women's experience.

In addition, the Women's Studies Outreach Project is developing a Speakers' Bureau of women willing to travel to speak to women's groups around the province. If you would like to add your name to the list or if you would like access to the existing Speakers' Bureau, please contact the Outreach Project.

We also hope to establish a "speakers' circuit" within the province to allow women

outside the major urban centres to benefit from selected speakers and/or exhibitions. Working in conjunction with local groups, the Outreach Project hopes to be able to tour speakers to interested communities. If your group would be interested in participating, please contact the Outreach Project.

Florence Ellis, Project Co-ordinator, Womens' Studies Outreach Project, c/o Athabasca University Box 10,000 Athabasca, AB T0G 2R0 phone 675-6392

## Lecture series

Dr. Ursula Franklin, internationally known metallurgist and peace activist will be visiting the University of Alberta and doing a series of lectures, February 23 - March 5. Her tour is being sponsored by the Co-ordinating Committee on Women's Studies and the Women in Scholarship, Engineering, Science and Technology, and The Women's Program, Department of Extension, University of Alberta.

A Feminist Critique of Peace Research: Dr. Franklin will trace the history of peace research particularly in Canada which now spans 25 years, and will show how the concepts of peace and research have changed. Peace research, seen from a feminist perspective, has not yielded the results which were promised. Monday, February 23, 7:30 pm Humanities L-1, U of A. This is co-sponsored by UNDO.

Women in Extra-Parliamentary Opposition: Dr. Franklin will show that people outside parliament have been the source of new thought and policy intervention far more than the official opposition. The Relationship between the Voice of Women and the Women's Move-

ment will be discussed. Thursday, February 26, 7:30 pm Humanities L-1, U of A. This is co-sponsored by The Edmonton Voice of Women.



Complexity and Context is the title of a two part lecture series, co-sponsored by WISEST and the Academic Women's Association. The first one is subtitled, "Looking into the Future of Scientific Enquiries" and will be Monday, March 2 at 4:00 pm in the Humanities Building, L-4, U of A.

"Looking into the Future of the Women's Movement" is the subtitle of the second lecture which will be Thursday, March 5, 4:00 pm in Humanities, Lecture Theatre 1.

# happeningshappeningshappenings



## Herstory project

Do you have some of ASWAC's herstory tucked away in a drawer or box? Old photos (or new), journal scribblings or memories? Poems? Memorabilia? Anything that would help us preserve our stories for women now and in the future?

If you do, and are willing to share these, please send them to ASWAC. We are hoping to find some grant money to eventually publish our herstory in some form. Please put as many details, names, occasions on the backs of photos. If you are sending a copy of some personal writings, make sure your name is on it in the event that we use it in the future publication. Also, if you are willing to be interviewed about any aspect of ASWAC's story, please let us know.

If working on such a project interests you, or if you have ideas that would help, please contact Lorraine at ASWAC.

Now, clean out those cupboards and boxes!!!

## Self-help health

Are you interested in the creation of an Edmonton Chapter of the Endometriosis Association? Anyone interested in such a group which would provide support and information to those suffering from endometriosis should contact Pascale Daigneault, P.O. Box 11184 Edmonton, AB. T5J 3K5.

## Womospace

Womospace is the lesbian organization in Edmonton and meets in The Women's Building in Edmonton. A general meeting is held the second Tuesday of every month and dances are held the third Saturday of each month at Bonnie Doon Hall in Edmonton. For more information phone 424-7040.

## Second annual lesbian conference

"Just for Us" is the title of this year's lesbian conference to be held in Calgary April 24 - 25. There is a wide range of workshops in the planning stages including coming out, parenting, massage and many, many more.

The Friday evening of the conference will feature entertainment and there will be a dance the Saturday evening.

Registration is \$20 before March 21 and \$25 afterwards. There will be a sliding scale, but because the conference is very tight for funds, those women who can afford to pay should. There will be free childcare available and the to-be-announced premises will be wheelchair accessible.

The conference is being organized by the Lesbian conference Committee and is being co-sponsored by the Lesbian Mothers Defense Fund. For more information call SWAC at 262-1873 or The Lesbian information lines at 265-9458.

## Lecture on porn

Dr. Neil Malamuth, psychologist and professor at UCLA will be speaking in Edmonton, Thursday March 5, at 7 pm at the Edmonton Convention Centre, 9797 Jasper Ave.

The fee for this lecture is \$12 although a \$4 subsidy is available through Postivie Action Against Pornography, call 486-3409.

Dr. Malamuth will speak on the links between the mass media, pornography and violence against women. Dr. Malamuth has participated in some very important studies in this area. For more information call 486-3409.

## Jobs for women

Transport Canada, being a Federal Government Department, has an Affirmative Action program. Their objectives have been set to achieve 50% female representation for Air Traffic Control Trainee programs.

If you might be interested in training to order planes around contact:  
The Regional Staffing Officer  
Transport Canada  
9820-107 St.  
Room 1051  
Federal Public Building  
Edmonton, Alberta  
T5K 1G3 phone 420-3885

## IWD Coffee House in February

The Edmonton IWD Committee is sponsoring a fundraising Coffee House, February 13 at St. Joseph's College. The evening will feature singers, players, and poetry. There will also be an Open Stage.

Childcare will be provided. For more information contact the IWD committee c/o Andrea at 451-3287

# happeningshappeningshappenings

## March conference

March 4, 5, and 6 are the dates of an upcoming conference on Family Violence: An integrated response. The conference is sponsored by Grant MacEwan College in Edmonton. There are brochures at the ASWAC office, or phone 462-5553 for more information.

## Working on racism

On December 4, A Women of Colour Group was formed in Calgary. This is a major step towards bringing women of colour together to share their common concerns. As one member stated, we can talk about our concerns without having to explain ourselves for we understand and share each other's experiences. The Groups will not only provide an opportunity for Women of Colour to share their concerns it will also actively work on the issues of racism and sexism.

The group will be meeting in January to determine its objectives and action plans for the next year. All women of colour are welcome to join the group. Please phone the Calgary SWAC office for more information at 262-1873.

## More work on racism

On December 6, a group of white women met for an initial meeting of a new discussion group. Our purpose is to look at racism. We have decided to keep the group loosely structured so that people can feel free to come to some meetings even if they can't make it to all of the monthly discussions.

The next meeting for the "Exploring Racism Group" will have occurred by the time this newsletter goes to print, but if you are interested in getting in touch with the group phone Calgary SWAC at 262-1873.

## The poor in Canada

There are more poor women than poor men in Canada. What circumstances have led to this feminization of poverty? Many women, especially seniors, experience poverty in their daily lives. This forum includes a locally produced film about women and poverty in Alberta, and a panel discussion about real, day to day events for poor women.

Panelists will discuss ways to end poverty. Thursday, April 2, 7:30 pm. Humanities Lecture Theatre 1 U of A.

## Women's Time Out

Some wonderful women in Stettler have planned a "Women's Time Out" program, beginning the first Wednesday in February. This will be an opportunity for women to have time for social programs and fun.

For more information contact Bari Castle at the Stettler United Church, or phone 742-3387.

## Calgary Film series

ASWAC and The Women in Social Work Association in Calgary are co-sponsoring a film series beginning in February. The series' focus is on national and international women's concerns.

"The Priory" will be shown February 24. This film deals with women and aging in hospices.

"With our Own Two Hands" will be shown March 24. This film looks at women's lives in post-revolutionary Nicaragua.

"Mother of Many Children" is the title of a beautiful film which looks at native women's issues and those of their children. It will be shown April 28.

## "Our children, ourselves"

ASWAC has acquired a new, 33 minute video, entitled "Our Children, Ourselves". The video was produced by the Canadian Union of Public Employees. It is very informative, presenting a full range of the issues involved in daycare. Contact the office if you would like to borrow the video for yourself or your group.

## Women's Centres meet

The Bow Valley Women's Centre will be hosting the 1987 Women's Centres Conference, March 20-22. Workshops will deal with issues of Burnout, Feminism and Women Centres, Community Programming, Native women and Women of Colour. There will also be one large information session on issues common to all women centres such as funding, fundraising, and goal clarification.

Discussions will also be held for those centres interested in creating a network or association of Alberta women centres. The conference organizers want the event to be a participatory one, so if you have any ideas for the weekend please feel free to contact Kathleen Sacht 762-5922 or write Box 888 Canmore, AB. TOL OMO.

Childcare and travel subsidies are available, registration fees are \$15. Bilingual may be arranged and there is accommodation available in a nearby hotel at reasonable rates.



# Are you raising eyebrows?



photo by Sheryl Ackerman

**You're kidding! You haven't renewed your membership yet?**

**Well, now is the time, and here is the place. If your label reads '85 in the corner, this will be your last newsletter. If your label has a little '86 in the corner you are raising a few eyebrows!**

**NAME** \_\_\_\_\_

**ADDRESS** \_\_\_\_\_

**PHONE-home**  
**work**

**\*suggested membership fee is \$10 but we will of course, accept whatever you can afford.**

**New** \_\_\_\_\_ **or Renewal** \_\_\_\_\_

**Donation:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Where did you come across the Newsletter?**

**Please make cheque out to:  
ASWAC, Box 1573, Edmon-  
ton, AB T5J 2N7**