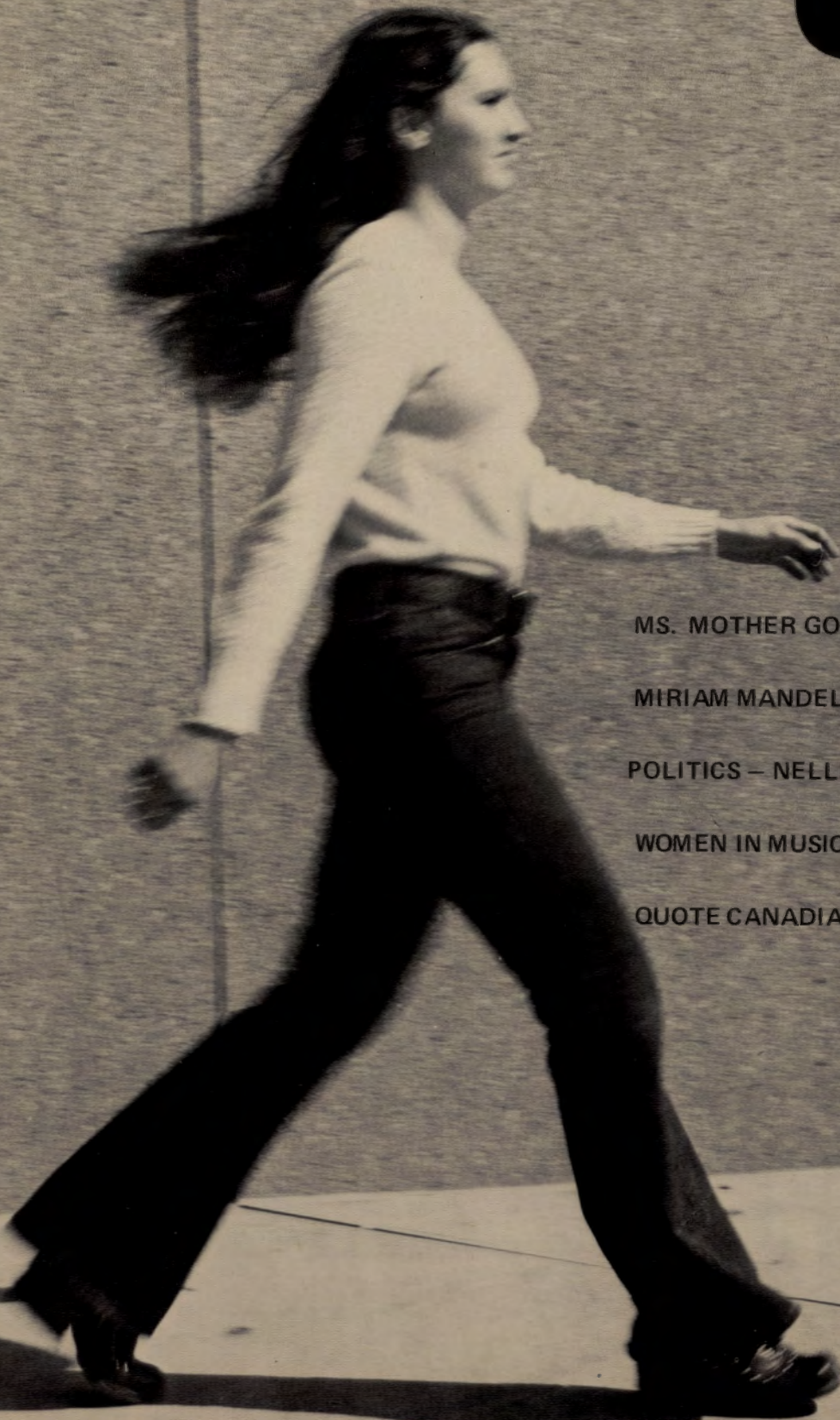


Branching Out

CANADIAN MAGAZINE FOR WOMEN JUNE/JULY 1974 \$1.00



MS. MOTHER GOOSE

MIRIAM MANDEL — AWARD WINNING POET

POLITICS — NELLIE McCLUNG AND AFTER

WOMEN IN MUSIC

QUOTE CANADIAN!



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Branching Out is published every two months by the New Women's Magazine Society, Edmonton, Alberta. Please send all correspondence to Box 4098, Edmonton, Alberta T6E 4T1. Submissions should be typed, double-spaced and accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Advertising rates are available on request.

Volume 1, Number 2, June/July 1974.

letters

We welcome letters to Branching Out on any topic. We reserve the right to edit letters, and will assume we may publish part or all of any letter received unless the sender states otherwise.

I applaud the concept of a Canadian (!) feminist publication. The layout and content of the two issues I have read is first class. I wish you continued success in your presentation of a forum for feminist opinion, reporting and talent.

Marion Alblas Allan Vancouver, B.C.

I was surprised to find myself enjoying the short story and the poetry in this issue — I've always been heavily non-fiction oriented. (Who am I kidding, I usually don't even *understand* poetry. I keep repeating to myself "green symbolizes rebirth, water means spiritual cleansing.") In short, the "Women in the Arts" section was especially pleasing for me.

Candy Fedoruk Edmonton, Alberta

Your enterprise, courage and ambitions are admirable and your magazine, *Branching Out* is a work of art. I congratulate you. However, the application of a little soap and water in the right places would do no harm. Education should carry some refinement and dirty language is offensive, as are the tales of a slut no matter how artistic the framework. Surely education gives us better words to express ourselves than those too often seen on public washroom walls. Pollution is insidious and pops up in unexpected places. Also, are we so superior we can refer to the members of any one Canadian industry as "stupid"?

In this struggle for equality let us pause from time to time and take a good look at ourselves. We should like what we see.

Mary Langley North Battleford, Sask.

Congratulations on a super March/April issue. Canadian women have precious few publishing outlets and it's encouraging to see more springing up.

Pat Davies, Fiction and Poetry Editor,
Miss Chatelaine

Glad to hear about *Branching Out*. Down here in rural N.S., where I'm branching out as a tow-truck driver, male chauvinism is of the particularly virulent, macho-frontiersman strain; your magazine, I hope, will be like vitamin therapy for my soul.

Shelia Connell Chester, Nova Scotia

I was delighted to find it a good looking, interesting, serious, and varied magazine....I believe very deeply that what women publish should be very good because we are still vulnerable to comments which suggest that we can't write or argue or report as well as men. So, keep your standards high.

Jean Mallinson West Vancouver, B.C.

I've had disappointing experiences with some women's publications, since they operate on a shoestring and have a very uncertain lifespan. I hope your publication enjoys a long and healthy life.

Janet Carney Halifax, Nova Scotia

Very few people understand what courage, talent, labor and love are needed to launch any magazine today -- let alone one of the obvious quality you are producing.

The response of your readership indicates already that you can attract a loyal and perceptive following, and my hope is that the business world will now have the good sense to lend a deserved and helping hand by way of the advertising so necessary for any publication's survival.

The varied range of subject matter gives *Branching Out* national appeal. In addition, there is depth, decency and honesty to the contributions that today's readers will surely welcome.

I salute you and truly wish you well. All concerned deserve the highest praise for their efforts.

John Patrick Gillese, Director
Literary Arts Branch, Department
of Culture, Youth and Recreation
Government of Alberta

I am pleased to inform you that a Citizenship Development grant of \$2,500.00 has been awarded to your organization. You will be receiving a cheque in the near future.

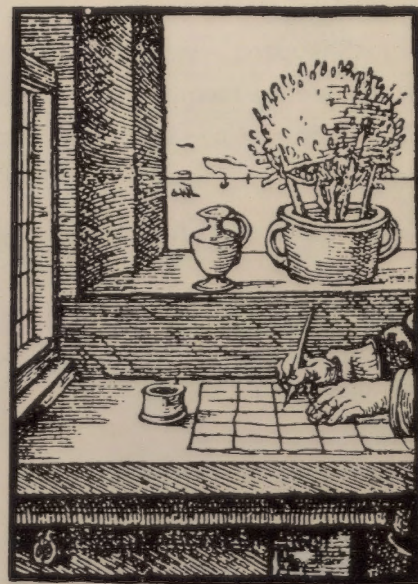
It is encouraging to learn of the objectives of your organization. I am certain that the proposed activities will contribute to the quality of community life.

May I offer you and the members of your organization my congratulations and best wishes for success.

J. Hugh Faulkner Secretary of State

Until today, when I heard a snippet of an interview on CBC radio's *This Country in the Morning* broadcast, I was unaware such a publication was available. As an ex-homesteader's daughter, ex-farm housewife and currently underemployed journalist, I'm very interested in exploring *Branching Out* and assessing present feminine trends as reflected in its pages.

Jean M. Holt Slave Lake, Alberta



Picked up your magazine in Jasper. Very good! Keep aiming for quality....An honest interview [with a man] would be interesting. There are lots of manly guys who don't belong to "Men in Groups". They're the rare civilized birds and we don't hear enough from them.

Doreen M. Wilson Burlington, Ontario

whose name?

"Only a very complicated girl," said our lawyer, "would keep her own name when she married." That is probably the most interesting reaction to the fact that, when I married, I retained my maiden name. Other reactions range from scepticism to tolerant amusement to a "how could you do that to your poor husband" attitude.

I could and I did. I don't know where or when the desire to keep my own name began, but the more I thought about it, the more determined I was to retain it when I married. At the time the reasons for keeping my name were hazy, but they hinged on a dislike of the idea of being just "Myles MacDonald's wife", which I later realized was a fear of losing my identity. People argue that there is nothing in a name and this may be so, but as I have not found one good reason to take another name, I am keeping mine. Besides, I like my name. And, the time has come to start breaking a few customs.

When I decided to keep my name (I hate the expression "maiden name") I was not even certain that I could. I did not know if there were laws in Canada stating that women had to take their husbands' names. As it turned out, there are no laws to this effect, but this does not mean that everything works out well. Many organizations like Canada Student Loan and Alberta Health Care would not recognize me in any but my husband's name. I informed Canada Student Loan that I would rather get money for my studies elsewhere, and I am still trying to convince Alberta Health Care that what I am doing is perfectly legal. I can see their reasoning in not wanting too many records and cross-indexes, but as there were two names before, I am sure it can be done again. Some places have changed. Passports can now be had in your own name. At our bank a couple of thoughtful eyebrows were raised, but we got our joint accounts arranged with no problem. That particular bank still does not recognize Ms., but when they do I shall have the Miss by my name changed to Ms.. Others who have retained their names have mentioned problems with getting family fares on airplanes, or joint car insurance.

Keeping my name has been relatively easy. Most people accept the situation though others are

bewildered by it. Many do not know how to address me, not understanding that it is exactly the same as it always was. I often wonder about our postman, thinking how confused he must be when he finds mail to Ms. or Miss or Mrs. Shatilla, Mrs. Shatilla-MacDonald, Mrs. MacDonald, and so on. He has not quit delivering, though, so he must be managing.

As for my "poor husband", he was in favour of my retaining my name. He felt that if it were important for me to do so, then I should. He does not feel insecure or any less a husband because of this, contrary to what some people think. He has even taken in his stride being called Mr. Shatilla the couple of times it has happened.

Many women who marry today are retaining their names. Some others who married and who took their husbands' names are going back to their names. There are many, too, who would like to go back to their names but are uncertain of how to do it and so may put it off or forget about it entirely.

The two main things to remember are that there is no law in Canada requiring you to take your husband's name, and you never lose your own name. However, going back to your name may vary from province to province. It would be wise to check in your own province before going blindly ahead. I am most familiar with Alberta as this is where I live. In some provinces the Bureau of Vital Statistics Change of Name Act covers all you need. In others, you must go through the courts. The cost may vary from thirty-five dollars (as in Alberta) to two hundred dollars, depending on lawyer's fees. Technically you can go back to your name without requiring any documents. In fact, you can take any name you want to and have as many as you like, but this is frowned upon as confusing and not a good idea since the names might be used for "fraudulent purposes". Documentation of change of name is perhaps a good idea for your own records and convenience. A divorced woman can also go back to her name, but a woman who is separated must have the consent of her husband. As for children, the Vital Statistics Act of Alberta requires, by law, that children take the name of the father.

I'm very glad I kept my name. I would not want to do it any other way.

by MEG SHATILLA.

both sides now

we no longer have to be the mothers of civilization — it's a grown child

THE MATING GAME by Judy Sinclair

I like being me. I mean, I can leave my shoes under my bed anytime. So why is there, in me, and in most of us, this deep in the soul belief that our ultimate fulfillment is to end as one half of a pair. This is definitely true of women more so than men, but it is also common to the latter. I am one of those who believe that the liberation of women is ultimately the liberation of men, if only they would open their (predominantly) pig-headed closed minds to the truths.

Anyway, here I sit at the age of twenty-two, a divorcee of three years. My motto seems to have been, "chin first, brains second", an attitude I've noticed as prevalent to the "fairer sex", which I'm working hard to change. I have just broken an engagement to my lover of three years. He is just as wary as I of marriage, and I don't think either of us can remember how in hell we became "betrothed" in the first place, but we've been playing at who gets "top dog" position for too long, until even living together became unbearable...so I moved out. And I am again led to the question...*why* must we couple? My lover even has the audacity to assume that I *must* be miserable, due to our break-up, and imperiously sweeps aside my assurances that I'm quite content in my little apartment with my fulfilling job, and assures me he can see the hurt in my eyes. Amazing. And he, in turn, is making himself miserable trying to find a way we can "live together and also live with ourselves". *Why* can't people love and live apart? *Why* are we conditioned to think that love means marriage. *Why* do we feel "weird" if we don't particularly wish to have children? *Why*, *why*, *why*? And above all, why do so few ask questions?

Think of the supposedly ardent womens' libber who still obviously searches for a mate, spending time and money on an appearance to attract a

male, and spending a lot of precious energy flirting, that could be used for self-fulfillment. Dancing - what is it - an advertising of sexual readiness - fine - but how many of us can bounce out of bed the next morning, shake hands, and say "thanks for everything, see you sometime, maybe" and mean it.

Perhaps our youth-oriented culture has something to do with it - it's a known fact that in our society, character lines are called "wrinkles" and are considered repulsive - we never

mind the wisdom that comes with them...appearance is all! Our values are placed on surface qualities. Is it because we are afraid to enter into this "age of exile" alone, that we feel the need to pair off. Could it also be that we can't stand ourselves - that we are so timid of our own inner-selves that we need someone else around to concentrate on. Our lives are so busy, crowded and cold all day, that perhaps we've lost the power to go below our veneers and get in touch



"Both Sides Now" is intended to serve as a forum in which women can discuss their opinions on different topics. Submissions are invited. Please enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope with your copy and send to "Both Sides Now" *Branching Out*, Box 4098, Edmonton, Alberta T6E 4T1.

with ourselves when we go home at night.

Be honest with yourself...how do you judge the men you meet - do you place a man of secure financial status and stable outer shell above a poor poet given to emotional ups and downs of a vengeance, in your esteem. Why should you care how successful he is or how stable he is...you don't have to live with him - you can choose what facets of his personality you can handle and ignore the rest - unless, (as is probably true of most of us) back in your mind you're probably considering him as a mate.

This "war" between men and women could be abolished if they didn't feel the urge to try and mesh their personalities. How much creativity and brilliance is lost under the pressures of marriage and marital "responsibility" on both sides.

Of course, there are people who seem *made* to live together, and each benefits from it - if that happens to you, fine, but we shouldn't consider that it *should* happen to us, or make it a goal. Many of us may never find it. And even those who do, may find an idyllic relationship under much strain as two people grow and change.

I *enjoy* coming home to a nice quiet apartment at night, with no one to make demands on me but myself, no one to criticize my housework or cooking but me...if I don't feel like moving, I don't. If I feel like going out there's no reason in the world why I have to have someone to escort me - I can go alone and enjoy myself - perhaps even meet some interesting people (not just men).

The end of the Mating Game would also eliminate this horrible "cattiness" among women. You don't find men subscribing to that. We are sisters, as they are brothers, and we're missing out on a lot of companionship and exchange by being rivals. Why is it always second choice to spend an evening with a girl friend rather than a man. Ridiculous! We're prejudicing ourselves that way. In this age of rapidly growing sexual equality in employment (lots of work to be done, but we're getting there) there's no reason a child needs two parents to rear it. If you can afford it - and you want it - have a child. This B S about a child needing two parents, a male and a female image, is unfounded!

You can play ball with Tommy or teach him to pitch a tent as well as

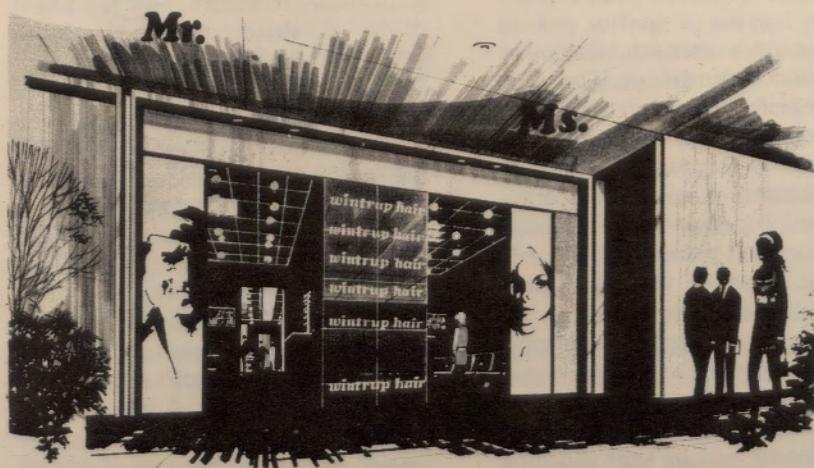
Daddy, unless you refuse to realize your own capabilities. Playing the weak female who needs to be attached to a male turns out to be *far* from fulfilling, I know. You end up as someone's ego-feeder, devoid of any valuable individuality.

I am personally against marriage, but if some people feel fulfilled by it, that's their business. All I am saying is that we need to eliminate the idea that we're missing something if we're not married. The fact is, a lot of times we're missing much more if we are!

Changing the institution of marriage won't solve anything. I consider any two people living together a marriage. Why must we attach ourselves to someone else. Is there no room for strong personal identities in this society. Let's add freedom of spirit to the list.

As a good friend of mine would say "it's just a difference in plumbing" and there's entirely too much "to do" about it. So why can't we all be friends and do our own thing. Let's concentrate on making something of ourselves - we no longer *have* to be the Mothers of civilization - it's a grown child. Let's stop being Mothers and Wives and start being Women!

* * *



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here and there

The April issue of the Edmonton Options for Women Newsletter is now available. Contributions are always welcome. They calculate it costs about \$1.00 per year to cover the cost of a newsletter subscription. Groups are encouraged to submit articles about their activities and upcoming meetings. Write to Options for Women Newsletter, 10006-107 Street, Edmonton, Alberta.

The *Canadian Newsletter of Research on Women* is now in its third year of existence. It appears three times a year (February, May, October, with a special August issue in 1974). Its aims are to establish and/or improve communication among people who are doing research on women; to list ongoing research on Canadian women in particular; to list selected relevant research on the international scene; and to provide for exchange of ideas about courses on sex-roles or women. A comprehensive, well-written and researched publication, it is worth the \$5.00 subscription rate (\$12.00 for institutions). Write to *Canadian Newsletter of Research on Women*, c/o Margrit Eichler, Department of Sociology, University of Waterloo, Ontario. Back copies are available for \$2.00 each (\$4.00 for institutions).

The Whole Apple, a non-profit magazine to be published in Calgary, is seeking material — fiction, poetry, personal essays, photos, line drawings. They are especially interested in life-styles that are characteristic (or non-characteristic) of the West, and in how women and men envision their roles. They intend to publish their first issue in September and would like to receive material for it by July fifth. Please enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope with your submission and send it to Judith Sloman, Department of English, University of Calgary, Calgary, Alberta T2N 1N4 (ph.: 244-2927 or 245-2816). *The Whole Apple* is an attempt to contribute to the network of people in this region who have something to say, and occasionally want someone to say it to.

In Victoria the Women's Centre at 523 Truch Street printed its first newsletter in March. The plan is to expand the letter each month, and the present staff are looking for people and money to make this possible. The centre is a home for some, a meeting place for others. If you want to drop in for coffee and a chat, office hours are 10 to 6 weekdays and 12 to 4 Saturdays (phone 385-3843).



Five Saskatoon women have compiled an historical calendar on Canadian women (*Herstory*) and are collecting information for a second calendar on prairie women. They want to know of the achievements of women in all areas and professions, more about the ordinary woman, and more about the various ethnic groups on the prairies such as Indian, Ukranian and French. Information in the form of photographs, songs, or poetry on and by women a hundred years ago or today is also needed. Information that is not used in the calendar will be kept and filed for future reference. Write to the Saskatoon Women's Calendar Collective, 416 5th Avenue North, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan.

The First Summer Writer's Workshop, University of Toronto, August 12 - 23, 1974. Prominent Canadian writers, playwrights, and journalists will conduct workshops and discuss students' manuscripts. P.K. Page and Bill Bissett are two who will be on the staff. All applications must be in by June 19, 1974. For information contact Gerald Lampert, Writer's Workshop, 106 Avenue Road, Toronto, Ontario M5R 2H3

Surfacing is the newsletter of the Women's Centre at 523 Trutch Street, Victoria, B.C. The current issue includes such articles as "A sick society makes for sick people", "Help your patient feel feminine again", and "A Bridegroom's Guide: How to Hold a Wife".

Founded in the spring of 1972, The Women's Press publishes material by women. It is a non-profit organization that welcomes material by Canadian women, including issues that face women in all areas, histories of women in Canada, and educational or fictional children's books free of sex and status stereotyping.

cont. on p. 29

Have you read a recent book which you think should be mentioned on this page? Has your women's group started a new project or set up a Women's Centre? Would you like to announce an upcoming event in your community? We welcome your contributions (and corrections) to "Here and There", *Branching Out*, Box 4098, Edmonton, Alberta T6E 4T1.



Political women in the west



by Marilyn Assheton-Smith

EMILY MURPHY

Where did we come from - where are we going?

HELEN HUNLEY

photographs courtesy of the Edmonton Journal

As women struggle today to improve their situation in Canada, it is easy to forget that many have gone before, and that the changes they fought for seemed even less likely than the changes which women seek today. Particularly dramatic was the winning of the franchise by Canadian women, a long, hard-fought battle in which western women played a leading role. Perhaps there are some lessons to be learned by reviewing that history, placing it in a general perspective by noting first that men also gained the vote only slowly, and then comparing the slower changes in Quebec to those in the West.

It is difficult to realize today that the concept of the "right to vote" was a revolutionary idea promulgated in the eighteenth century. Throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries debate on voting in Canada centred on the arguments that only people who had a stake in the country, or those who were not dependent on others, should be allowed to vote. Thus property holding, and later payment of taxes and military service, were used as criteria for determining eligibility. The dependency of paupers and married women, for example, made them unsuited for the task.

Efforts to introduce universal

manhood suffrage in Canada were sparse, and, if successful, short-lived, as was the Nova Scotia legislation from 1855 until 1864. As has often been the case in Canadian history, this notion was seen as inherently American, corrupting, associated with the American Revolution, the American Civil War and other obvious problems of the to deny suffrage to selected groups has been maintained to the present day. Chinese, Japanese and Doukhobors received the franchise in British Columbia only after World War II; the voting status of the Canadian Indian was not clarified federally until 1960, and the criminal or insane are still generally denied the right to vote.

In spite of the continued rejection of manhood suffrage, many Canadian provinces had almost universal manhood suffrage in the colonial period. Either it was very easy to acquire land, or the taxes and rentals were so low that most adult males were able to vote. In fact, it could be argued that the extension of voting privileges (sic!) has always been a piecemeal effort in Canada, tied either to political machinations or to broadening the definition of who had a stake in the country.

However, it should not be assumed that the right to vote necessarily implied the right to sit in legislative bodies, or vice versa. Al-

though often a voting act would simply read that those eligible to vote could also stand for election, there was no necessary connection between the two. The Act of Union of 1840, which united Upper and Lower Canada, incorporated stiff property requirements for sitting members of the house which did not apply to the electorate and which were specifically aimed at crippling French Canadian participation in the legislature. The reverse anomaly occurred with Doukhobors in British Columbia who could not vote for thirty years in provincial, and therefore federal, election but who could have stood for election to the parliament in Ottawa.

Before considering the specific case of women and voting, one more point should be made about nineteenth century elections in Canada. They were certainly not the staid affairs which they are today. Nomination was followed immediately by voting, and the voting might go on for days. A person voted publicly, stating in front of all his choice for a position. Liquor flowed freely, bribery was not unknown, and fist fights and violence in various forms were common. By confederation many of these abuses were beginning to be reduced with the introduction of the ballot, separ-

ation of nomination and election day, and simultaneous one-day polling at various points throughout each constituency. It was, however, this image of the polls which men maintained when they insisted they were no place for women.

It is against the above background of the franchise generally that the gradual enfranchisement of Canadian women should be viewed. It should also be viewed as simply part of a larger world process whereby social, political and economic forces gradually came together in such a way that the extension of the vote to women became not only possible but apparently almost inevitable.

In the United States female enfranchisement began with little effort in the territory of Wyoming in 1869, and when this territory became a state in 1890 it retained the women's franchise. "The movement" had by then begun, and Idaho and Utah followed in the 1890's. There

was a lull, then the enfranchisement of women in six western states between 1911 and 1912, and finally the culmination of the process in an amendment to the United States' constitution in 1920.

That this can be seen as simply part of a larger world event is seen by the dates of women's enfranchisement in other western countries: New Zealand in 1893; Australia 1902; Finland 1907; Norway 1913; Denmark 1915; Russia 1917; England, Sweden, Germany and Canada 1918. Conspicuously absent from this group is France, which delayed until 1945.

Yet, accepting the fact that the idea of the enfranchisement of women was a subject of world-wide discussion, and thus an idea that was available equally to all men and women in Canada, one may still legitimately wonder why it was accepted at different times in different provinces, and with very different results in terms of the ensuing part-

icipation of women. Particularly, one may question what precisely it was that made Western Canada such a fertile ground for the political involvement of women, so much so that a series of firsts marks the historic record of this region.

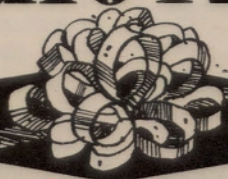
The first woman appointed a judge of a magistrate's court in the British Empire was Emily Murphy; she was appointed in Edmonton in 1916. She was joined that same year by Mrs. Jamieson in Calgary. The first women elected as MLAs were two Albertans, Louise McKinney and Roberta McAdams in 1917. The first woman in the British Empire to achieve cabinet rank was Mary Ellen Smith, in British Columbia in 1921, and the second woman was Irene Parlby in Alberta just one month later. And of course the famous Alberta five forced a reinterpretation of the BNA Act in 1927 so that women were after all to be politically classified as persons and therefore were eligible to be called to the Senate of Canada. Their story is one of dramatic participation by women in changing their status at this time. The western leadership of women has been partially maintained, as the first woman cabinet minister with portfolio was Tillie Rolston in British Columbia, who was appointed in 1952. The first woman Speaker in Commonwealth history was Nancy Hodges, who served in the same province from 1950 until 1952. Alberta's recent appointment of Helen Hunley as Solicitor General is in the same tradition and has occasioned little comment.

By 1950 Alberta, although sending only one woman to Ottawa, had elected nine to the Legislative Assembly. In the same period the Maritimes and Quebec had elected none, the other two prairie provinces had returned two each, and British Columbia approached the Alberta record.

What were the differences in these regions? Why could one find such marked contrast in active political participation of women within a few provinces in one nation? Whether causal or merely symbolic, the different patterns in acquiring the women's vote among the regions commands attention.

First, the Maritimes, the last to adopt women's franchise with the exception of Quebec, seemed to pass the legislation almost as an after-

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thought to catch up with the times. There was little active involvement of suffragette or other women's groups, although they had been active in these provinces earlier. Interestingly, one specific piece of 'progressive legislation' of the day probably contributed to this particular process in the Maritimes. All the Maritime provinces had adopted prohibition by 1910, with Prince Edward Island adopting it first in 1900. Thus one of the primary thrusts of the woman's suffrage movement throughout the rest of Anglophone Canada, that women should vote to morally upgrade the country and especially to obtain prohibition, was removed from political debate. The primary effect of this legislation appears not to have been a marked slowing of the enfranchisement process (women were enfranchised between 1918 and 1922 in the Maritimes) but the reduction of the participation of women in the debate. It is that non-participation which continued after enfranchisement.

In the west, and especially in the prairie provinces, women's suffrage was an issue that was well-fought by women. All three prairie provinces granted it within a few months of each other in 1916, the first provinces in the dominion to do so. What stands out in the literature of this period, besides the remarkable humour of Nellie McClung and the superb leadership of the women, was the degree to which women were an integral part of everyday western Canadian society. All were married women with families, and all had concerns that extended well beyond votes for women; the almost ubiquitous involvement of suffragettes in the Women's Christian Temperance Union was present here;

but in addition they were concerned with farm, health and economic problems, as well as the legal problems of women. They rejected the violence of their British counterparts, and were not concerned with such avant garde issues such as free love. They were totally respectable women, and the epithets hurled at women's activists provided ample grist for Nellie McClung's humour mill. The early embracing of their cause by the prairie farm movement

was a great help and implied unequivocal support from many men in the community. The fact that this farm labour movement later formed the government of Alberta for a number of years contributed to the relatively large numbers of women who remained politically active in that province.

No sharper contrast could be provided to this provincial development than the sad, oft-repeated tale of Quebec. The last province to grant women the vote, it had been the only province to grant it freely in the early 1800's. Some writers have associated this with the colonial reality of Quebec society, but in so doing they ignore the fact that France was also very slow with this particular reform, where it did not come until 1945. These and similar facts have led others to refer to the problems of Roman Catholicism and Latin attitudes. It cannot be denied that the Canadian Catholic hierarchy's rejection of woman's suffrage, which contrasted sharply with the Protestant churches' backing of it, contributed to the slow acceptance of woman's suffrage in Quebec.

Nevertheless, a slightly different interpretation of the facts may be more useful to today's activists than simple application of labels like

"colonialism" or "Catholicism". The woman's suffrage movement in Quebec was clearly aligned with the English interests of Montreal. It was, after all, an issue with the English-language *milieu* of North America, not the French-language *milieu*, and it is understandable that the Anglos should advance it as a just cause. Supported by the Anglican church and much of the rest of English Canada, these women worked hard to obtain this reform. Yet their insensitivity to their own French reality is shown, for example, by their wholehearted support of Borden's conscription policy. Surely nothing more clearly demonstrates their alienation from their own provincial society.

Unlike the prairie women who spoke, both literally and figuratively, the language of other prairie women and prairie men, and therefore the language of their legislators, the Quebec women were outsiders who shared neither the symbols nor the emotions of the wider French-language community. It seems highly unlikely that prairie women would ever have received the vote if it had been interpreted as a policy of the French-speaking people and the Catholic church in their midst.

One other point should be mentioned: in most cases (excluding Alberta but including Quebec) the vote first became a platform plank of a party out of office. When that party was elected, it honoured its commitment. Indeed, Quebec could well have continued without a woman's franchise until the death of Duplessis except for the short period of Liberal government between the two Duplessis regimes. In spite of this obviously partisan aspect of obtaining the vote, women consistently define their roles and concerns in

cont. on p. 29

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MS. MOTHER GOOSE

by Nancy Millar

illustrations by Grete Schnepfer

There's more and more concern expressed these days about sexual stereotypes in children's literature. You know the sort of thing — Dick gets to run and play while Jane gets to watch him. Or mother is inevitably portrayed in the house, reacting rather than acting, while father sets the world on fire.

It's discouraging to say the least, and a mother of daughters wonders whether to skip story hour entirely or play the substitute game all the time — turning Billy the Bus Driver into Betty the Bus Driver, and so on. However, straight across role substitution doesn't always work either.

In desperation, I started rereading Mother Goose rhymes to my daughters, and I discovered that Mother Goose is just about the most liberated lady around. She's got rhythm and imagination and humour, qualities that have held her in good stead for years, but she's also got an independence of mind and action that's very refreshing and up-to-date.

Just consider the lady herself. Have you ever heard of Father Goose? Never. Did Mother Goose require Father Goose to help her fly through the air? Not by a long shot. Mother Goose when she wanted to wander just climbed on a very fine gander — all by herself — and took off.

Notice...she was free to wander. No dreary dishes or household duties

for this liberated lady. She wandered the world at will, and her plain looking son Jack (who appears only peripherally in her poems) was expected to *quo vadis*. Quite a switch.

For those of you who remember your English lit courses, let me say here that I realize Mother Goose did not personally write all of the poems credited to her. In fact historians can't even agree on who Mother Goose really was. But it doesn't really matter. The baby who learns Pat-a-cake doesn't care who originated the poem. The four year old who gets a Mother Goose book for her birthday doesn't really want to know that some of the rhymes originated as bawdy ballads, others as prayers and proverbs, others as a neat way to criticize a harsh government without actually

saying anything critical. None of that matters. What matters is that somehow these are Mother Goose rhymes, and Mother Goose turns out to be quite a gal.

In fact she's a Ms. if ever there was one, and I don't know why the movement hasn't lionessed her long ago.

Most of the poems that come under her jurisdiction are as straightforward as their namesake, with very few traces of feminine shilly shally. For instance, when the young man and the milk maid get talking, this is what happens:

*"Where are you going,
My pretty maid?"
"I'm going a-milking, Sir,"
She said.*

*"What is your fortune,
My pretty maid?"
"My face is my fortune, Sir,"
She said.*

*"Then I can't marry you,
My pretty maid."
"Nobody asked you, Sir,"
She said.*

Now there's a young woman who knows her own mind, and isn't going to write to Ann Landers for advice on how to catch and keep a man. In fact, it sounds as if this particular young lady could very nicely get along without a man to shape and define her. She knows what she is — she's a milkmaid and a pretty girl — and if that isn't enough for Mr. Wonderful, then too bad for Mr. Wonderful.

Mother Goose could never be accused as holding marriage up as the ideal state. For instance:

*Little maiden, better tarry
Time enough next year to marry.
Hearts may change
And so may fancy,
Wait a little longer, Nancy.*

Mother Goose rhymes don't always suggest a happy-ever-after ending to marriage either, which makes them more realistic reading than fairy tales. Look what happened to the Jack Sprats, after all. Jack Sprat could eat no fat, his wife could eat no lean, and although they licked the platter clean, there are overtones of disagreement in the Sprat household.

In the singing rhyme called "I've Got Sixpence", the fate of

wives is spelled out quite clearly as well. The fellow has sixpence, remember, tuppence to spend and tuppence to lend and tuppence to send home to his wife, poor wife.

In this poem, Mother Goose suggests a more equitable arrangement:

*Sukey, you shall be my wife
And I will teach you why;
I have got a little pig
And you have got a sty
I have got a dun cow
And you can make good cheese;
Sukey, will you marry me?
Say yes if you please.*

But while Sukey seems to be willing to share responsibilities within a marriage, Curly locks decides she will:

*Sit on a cushion
And sew a fine seam,
And feed upon strawberries
Sugar and cream.*

That's the beauty of Mother Goose. Her girls are so unpredictable; some are independent and some are not, some work and some sit around all day, some are good and some are bad. There's "lazy Mary" and Mary, Mary, quite contrary." And there's the little girl, who when she was good was very very good, but when she was bad, was horrid. That's a far cry from the dreary Jane in the Dick and Jane type series, in which Jane is always predictably nice — stupid but nice.

Some of Mother Goose's girls are a little stupid, it must be admitted. Little Bo-Peep, for instance, loses her sheep and can't tell where to find them. But at least she's out doing something, not just standing by passively while her brother or her father do the real work. Besides, Little Boy Blue forgot to blow his horn and let the sheep get into the meadow, the cows in the corn. They were equal in stupidity, at least.

Mother Goose doesn't exactly picture her boys as wonderful heroes either. Take the case of Little Jack Horner who hogs a whole pie off in a corner by himself, mainly, it seems, to prove to himself what a great guy he is. Then there's Simple Simon who met the pieman and expected to get a pie for nothing. And the crooked man who couldn't get

anything straight. And the man who was led around by his nose:

*Peter White will ne'er go right;
Would you know the reason why?
He follows his nose wherever he goes
And that stands all awry.*

You can see that there's no stereotyping in either the male or female roles in Mother Goose. She was obviously a proponent of 'people's liberation'.

There are some nursery rhymes that the liberated lady might want to skip — Little Miss Muffet, for example, who reinforces the image of women as passive and easily frightened creatures. The point is — there are some girls like Miss Muffet, so perhaps the best solution is to include Miss Muffet along with some of Mother Goose's more independent heroines like the Queen of Hearts.

Peter, Peter, Pumpkin Eater, is also a bit hard for feminists to stomach, what with Peter's propensity for keeping his wife locked up in a pumpkin. In this case, perhaps a revision is in order:

*Peter, Peter, Pumpkin eater
Had a wife and couldn't keep her.
Put her in a pumpkin shell
And there he kept her very well.
Until one morning he woke to find
She'd left the pumpkin far behind.*

The very worst example of sexual stereotyping has to be the poem about "sugar and spice and all that's nice". That's what little girls are supposed to be made of. On the other hand, boys are supposed to be made of snips and snails and puppy dog tails, a combination that isn't all that palatable either. So it might be wise to skip that poem entirely.

Otherwise, Ms. Goose is a game old girl. Her equality is never an issue. In fact, it's a wonder that she hasn't been banned by the powers-that-be. Imagine allowing this sort of propaganda in a collection of poetry:

*I had a little husband
No bigger than my thumb.
I put him in a pint pot
And there I bade him drum.*

Long may you reign Ms. Goose. You're a wonderful switch from Dick and Jane. * * *

miriam mandel

Miriam Mandel recently received the Governor General's Award for her first book of poetry *Lions at her face* published by White Pelican in 1973. "My Prairies" is from this collection.

MY PRAIRIES

I left the edge of our small city
when I was very small.
There was a stream
which seemed big
but I didn't get very wet.

I climbed a small hill
to the open prairies
which was
really
a deserted golf course.
My eyes widened
in delight
at the sight
of prairies I had never seen.

On my knees
I found
yellow buffalo beans
purple crocuses
the white grace
of Queen Anne's lace
and something else white
that smelled very sweet.

There were cactuses
sown so tight to the ground
I couldn't loosen
their red, yellow and orange
blooms.

I gathered my flowers
rushed home to mother
to present her
with my gift.

Her face went grey
with fear
when I told her where
I'd been.
But I went again and again
to see
the blooming prairies.

I found a bird's nest
with eggs in it
and heard a bird
calling frantic.
I didn't touch
the eggs
but looked and looked
at these
my prairies
which are always
said
to be barren
when
really close to the
ground
they're overgrown
with flowers, pretty weeds
bird nests
gopher holes
small hillocks
smaller streams

Yes
those prairies
haunt me
heat my heart
at the thought
of all that living
so silent
few ever see it.

My prairies should
be seen
only
on your knees.



Eunice Willar

Eunice Willar is a photographer who lives in Saint John, New Brunswick. The three photographs on pages 13, 15, and 17 are scenes from her area.

Age

Privacy is a privilege not granted to the aged or the young. Sometimes very young children can look at the old, and a look passes between them, conspiratorial, sly and knowing. It's because neither are human to the middling ones, those in their prime.

Margaret Laurence author, from her book *The Stone Angel*

Happiness

I may never marry. Therefore, beginning right now, I am going to take full responsibility for my own happiness, for the rest of my life.

Louise Beatty, journalist, from the article on new woman, *Chatelaine*, October 1971

quotes canadian

Ambition

I have no dreams of having a house in the suburbs and two cars in the garage. I'll live as cheaply as I can and drive a car that gets 33 miles to the gallon.

Dr. Sylvia Von Hanna, Woman's Clinic, Toronto, from a CP story in *Nanaimo Free Press*

Arrogance

There is no worse arrogance than knowing what is best for others.

Sheila Kieran, author, from the article in the *Vancouver Sun*, 1970

Canada

There is something in a Canadian — a desire to be a victim.

Margaret Atwood, author, from her book *Survival*

Canada is romantic... Canada, the land, means so much to me. If I ever thought I couldn't come back here, I would collapse.

Margot Kidder, actress, from the article in *Chatelaine*, October 1971

...stones made this country. This country makes us stones...

Phyllis Webb, poet, from her poem "Beachcomber"

Education

Getting marks is getting marked.

Winona Baker, from an article (unpublished)

Family

Families...there is so much slumbering violence, so many unspoken murders beneath everyday routines!

Marie-Claire Blais, author, from the book *Manuscripts of Pauline Archange*

Indians

The children love it when they come around, they (Indians) are a gentle and generous people.

Anonymous white woman settler 1790

If I go downtown (Vancouver) with an Indian friend I know men... are going to try and pick us up. It isn't because we are two girls-it's because we are two Indians...It makes me sick, I want to cry and scream at them.

Colleen Gonu, adult student from a reserve, a quote by Ms Gonu in the *Vancouver Sun*

I wouldn't marry a white man.

Kahn Tineta Horn, activist

Windigo is a dark spirit of the forest who devours human flesh. There was no such thing as a Windigo until the white man came to this land.

Cam Hubert, poet-playwright, from the award-winning poem-play *Windigo*

Life

Don't expect life to be fair.

Dr. Marion Hillard, from the book *A Woman Doctor Looks at Love and Life*

Loneliness

I've thought sometimes it would be better to take them down below out of the loneliness. But if loneliness is being in one's own skin and flesh, there's only more lonely people down there than here.

Sheila Watson, author, from her book *The Double Hook*



photo by Eunice Willar

Love

The question of what people see in each other still defies analysis...almost the only true mystery still left to us, and when we have come to the end of it there will be no more need for literature-or for love, for that matter.

Mavis Gallant, author, from a 1971 article she wrote for the New Yorker called *Annals of Justice*

After a love affair has ended and the tears have been shed and the hurt has receded, then comes that beautiful feeling of emotional freedom.

June Minas, from a quote in one of Richard Needham's columns in the Vancouver Sun

Nothing offends society more than the woman who loves, respects, and lauds a man whom the world perceives as a failure.

Lisa Hobbs, author, from her book *Love and Liberation*

Mother

She loved her mother dearly and hated her a little. People should not be so powerful. People should not always succeed.

Ethel Wilson, author, from her book *Swamp Angel*

Nationalism

I'm not a great nationalist. You go through nationalism to throw it away.

Jackie Burroughs, actress, from an interview by P. Gzowski on This Country in the Morning, CBC radio, March 12, 1974

Pornography

Look, what I say is not obscene, poverty and childbeating are obscenities.

Nancy Morrison, B. C. Judge, from Star Weekly's interview, June 2, 1973

Theatre

Everyplace — except on the stage —
I bugger up everything I do.

Kate Reid, actress, interview

Women's Lib

There are very few men-haters in woman's lib.

Barbara Black, interviewer, from an interview on Take Thirty

Writing

The only duty of a writer is to produce a masterpiece.

Alice Munro, author, from *Lives of Girls and Women*

* * *

FIRE PLACE

The northern storm had damped you out
and sent you running for the plains;
I heard your heart had cracked with cold.

Your absence eased by custom;
funereal rites on snowshoes
were performed where you last burned
and each step sank away below
the crust that cut the falling wrists.

And then as if one tree had turned
your wilderness within his wood,
I stumbled near your hidden door;
you found me frozen to the root
and warmed me at your hearth once more,
a sorry weathermaker.

BY EVA VAN LOON



photo by Eunice Willar

the federal election

WHO WILL TRANSLATE PARTY POLICY INTO NATIONAL ACTION FOR THE RIGHTS OF WOMEN?

Some of the issues in the upcoming federal election are unemployment, energy and inflation. But all parties have promised that, if elected, their government would deal effectively with these problems.

Branching Out suggests there are other issues which women in particular might be concerned about. Some of these issues are abortion law reform, provision of and funding for day care centres, and discrimination against women in both government and industry. These and other problems peculiar to women have been with us at least as long as unemployment and inflation have, yet government has been slow to act. Since industry often takes its lead from government in these matters, industry has been slow to act. The federal government must provide legislation and examples before the situation for women will improve.

With a view to discovering what is being planned in the areas of women's rights, we asked the major political parties to submit policy statements on the matter. Their replies follow. In the short time available to us, we were unable to contact anyone within the Social Credit Party who could provide such a statement.

Of necessity these statements are short. We suggest that female voters talk to their candidates and find out their views on the problems of women and that these views should be considered before you decide how to vote. Perhaps pension plan reform is not as urgently needed as is a solution to inflation, but that does not mean it is not an issue. Be an informed elector.

Mary Alyce Heaton

ndp

The liberation of women must be a vital part of the struggle for socialism in Canada. The struggle for liberation is not a struggle to gain for women the equal right to be exploited in the manner that the majority of men in a capitalist society are exploited. The demands are not simply for equal wages and equal job opportunities, but for the end to a system which requires passive, obedient and low paid workers in order to function. The demands are not the kind which are aimed at winning more positions for women on Boards of Directors or Corporations in

order that they may join with male Directors in exploiting the working people of this country. The struggle for the liberation of women is a struggle for the benefit of the majority of women, not the privileged few. ... The demand for an end to the sexual exploitation of women, for an end to the treatment of women as items of property through advertising and beauty contests and for a change in accompanying social attitudes is a rejection of a society which perpetuates such exploitation in the name of profit seeking.

These words are taken from the Policy Statement of Women presented to the Alberta New Democratic Party Convention in 1971. That convention adopted a number of resolutions dealing with equal opportunity legislation, goals and guidelines legislation, changes in matrimonial property laws, the unionization of women, the development of free, twenty-four hour community controlled child care facilities as well as industrial facilities, the removal of abortion from the Criminal Code and the distribution of safe birth control methods for both men and women, the reform of the educational system as it relates to the socialization of women, and aid for women making the transition from the home to the outside work force.

These resolutions were comprehensive and dealt with almost all the demands that have been made by the women's movement in Canada. The women in the New Democratic Party soon learned that our work was not ended at that 1971 convention and they have formed a provincial women's caucus to ensure that our MLAs, our candidates and all persons speaking on behalf of the New Democratic Party put forward at every opportunity the policy on women passed at that 1971 convention. At the 1974 convention a resolution was passed formalizing this demand of the women's caucus.

The women's caucus is presently organizing regional caucuses which will elect representatives to a national conference of New Democratic Party women. We hope to organize ourselves to take over more and more leadership roles within the party. We hope to ensure that any New Democratic government will, on election, act immediately to implement policies on the liberation of women.

We invite all women who feel there is a need for political action to enforce the demands of the women's movement to join with us through the NDP Women's Caucus and ensure the implementation of the above policies.

by Jean McBean
Vice President, Alberta NDP

conservative

The following are excerpts from the pamphlet "Prepared for the Challenge - Women in Canada" published by Progressive Conservative Party Headquarters.

- It is time for action not words. Widespread discrimination against women still exists in Canadian society, despite a growing public understanding of the waste of human resources and the unfairness involved in such negative attitudes. The recommendations of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women 1970 provide the basis for useful policy in the area of women's rights yet well over half its proposals have not been acted upon by the Government.

- It is Progressive Conservative policy that changes must be made which will guarantee in law the right of Canadian women to equal rights with men and, as a corollary, equal responsibilities.

- A Progressive Conservative government will work speedily to implement in the public service a policy that treats women and men equally. The system of "rug-ranking", that is, tying a woman secretary's advancement or promotion to that of her "boss" must be ended forthwith. Private industry and other jurisdictions will be encouraged to follow the federal example.

- Our Party will also ensure that there is available to the public free of charge, *birth control and family planning information*. Financial assistance for the training of family counsellors will be provided.

- A Progressive Conservative government will amend the *Divorce Act* reducing to one year the present three-year separation period as a ground for divorce. The existing five year separation period required before a deserted spouse may file for divorce will be reduced to three years.

- A government formed by our Party will amend the Order-in-Council establishing the Federal Advisory Council on the Status of Women to ensure the Council will *report directly to Parliament*. The Council's aim should be to identify discrimination against women, to advise the government about the best way to eliminate discrimination, and to demonstrate to the public how harmful present discriminatory practices are.

- The *Adult Occupational Training Act* will be amended so that persons with full-time household responsibilities will be eligible to take advantage of the Act.

- Many of the present adult training programs ignore the *needs of rural women*. The farm of the seventies has become a large and complex operation, resulting in new responsibilities for women. The P.C. Party will provide assistance to help rural women meet these new challenges. Such assistance will include making available training programmes in farm management and special courses in accounting, taxation and economics.

- The practice of treating women differently from men in the *granting of credit* and other commercial areas must end. The Bank Act and the Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation provide the means for the government to ensure equality of treatment in these areas of federal jurisdiction.

- The constructive object of federal policy to ensure equality for the women of Canada, in fact as well as in law, should be based upon human sensitivity to a long neglected area of government policy. "Yes, We Can", is not a defiant boast, rather it is realistic self-awareness on the part of women of their skills and abilities and of their desire to enter fully into a shared heritage - Canada.




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liberal party

The following are excerpts from the pamphlet *The Woman in Canada* published by the Liberal Party of Canada. Sources within the party say this pamphlet represents official party policy on the status of women.

I pledge the full support of the Liberal Government to the removal of discrimination and the provision of opportunity to women in all fields of Canadian life.

Pierre E. Trudeau Prime Minister

FAMILY AND WOMEN

Married women now allowed to carry passports in their maiden name if used after marriage.

Upon divorce, maintenance may be ordered for children over the age of sixteen attending school or university.

Established in 1970 a federal family planning program: grants totalled \$1,350,000 in 1972-73.

Granted \$500,000 to sports programs for women in 1972-73.

Increased family allowances from \$7.21 per child to an average of \$20 per month per child effective January 1974.

APPOINTMENTS

Trudeau government appointed 249 women to federal agencies, boards and commissions between August 1968 and January 1974.

Appointed first woman as Speaker of the Senate — the Honourable Muriel Fergusson

Appointed first woman as Lieutenant-Governor in a province: Pauline McGibbon (Ontario).

Appointed first woman at the deputy-minister rank — Sylvia Ostry — Chief Statistician.

Appointed first woman as Commissioner of the Public Service Commission — Irene Johnson.

Appointed first woman as director of the National Museums Board of Canada — Dr. Jean S. Boggs.

Appointed 6 women as federal judges of Superior Court level.

Appointed 5 women to the Senate.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Appointed a consultant at headquarters and in each manpower regional office with specific responsibilities for employment services to women.

Provide career information service through Canada Manpower Centres.

Provide women who have worked for one year at any time the opportunity to receive training and training allowances through Adult Occupational Training Program.

Provide courses for Visiting Homemakers Program, under the Manpower Training Program.

Set up part-time training courses to enable women to enter or re-enter the labour force.

Support from the Secretary of State to women's groups to promote the participation of Canadian women in activities that affect the quality of their lives.

Allocated \$200,000 to women's voluntary associations in 1973-74.

\$75,000 from Minister responsible for Status of Women for national women's organizations to promote status of women in Canada.

MATERNITY LEAVE AND BENEFITS

Canada Labour Code — provides maternity leave for up to 17 weeks for all employees under federal jurisdiction.

Prohibits dismissal of an employee because of pregnancy or request for maternity leave.

Public Service employees can obtain maternity leave without pay for a period commencing 11 weeks before and ending no later than 6 months after confinement.

Public Service Health Insurance provides supplementary health insurance coverage at the regular cost to employees on maternity leave.

The Unemployment Insurance Act provides employed women up to 15 weeks of maternity benefits including 8 weeks before, one week during and 6 weeks after confinement.

WOMEN IN GOVERNMENT

Designated a Cabinet Minister responsible for matters relating to the status of women in Canada.

Appointed in February 1971 a Status of Women Coordinator within the Privy Council Office — responsible for monitoring all governmental activities to insure agreement with policies to remove discrimination and provide equal opportunity for women — advises the Minister responsible on government initiatives to improve the position of women in Canada.

Established, in April 1972, an Interdepartmental Committee with representatives from federal departments and agencies directly affected by the recommendations of the Royal Commission Report on the Status of Women in Canada.

Created an office of Equal Opportunities for women in the Public Service Commission.

Designated numerous senior positions to provide special advice about implications of departmental policies and programs on the status of women.

CANADIAN FORCES

Employ women on the same basis as men except combat arms, sea-going duties and isolated areas.

Provide maternity leave and benefits.

Open all subsidized University Education Plans to women candidates.

THRONE SPEECH '74

Legislation will be introduced to create a Federal Commission on Human Rights and Interests to protect women and other groups from discrimination.

All inequities based on sex will be removed from rules relating to government employees.

Crown corporations will be asked to place more women in responsible positions.

The government will end discrimination against women contributors under the Canada and Quebec Pension Plans.

* * *

JULIET OF THE GERIATRIC WARD

I am sightless and insensate.
My only pleasure is my gramophone
Especially the part where it sticks
On my Lili Marlene record
Endlessly repeating the bit
about...

Until my upstairs neighbour
Who is deaf pounds on her floor
My ceiling complaining
About the noise we
Neither one of us can see.

Last winter I strangled the canary
Whose patch of lemon
Made nonsense of the season;
Only a few feathers remain
Perfectly at home, now it's spring

...I'm
growing a rather large lump
On the side of my face
Having decided that my memories
Cramped, undusted, cobwebbed
Needed more storage space.

GREY MRS. OLD*

aged eyes they were
but clear blue and unspectacled
without looking even
they could see

at the age of 92
saw a zigzag of pain
wriggling across the door
pain that wriggling
twisted her legs
snapped to and fro
her body like a marionette

as a damp sheet is folded
over a wire her body
was wrapped round the pain
a cruel invisible hand
spasmodically
tugged the wire

she flung out a foot
outflung a hand

then it stopped

she sat still for a moment

the next moment was free

*This poem is a free translation
from a piece of prose by
Virginia Woolf.

elizabeth brady



June Sheppard, woman in the media

by Dona Harvey

photo by Alice Baumann-Rondez

Columnist-commentator June Sheppard is a woman of independence and determination. Few people could imagine her playing the dumb female role, or could see her letting domesticity get in the way of self-fulfilment and her own career.

A columnist for *The Edmonton Journal* she is a strong feminist and an outspoken critic of the self-centred, materialistic forces in society. But over the years, she has also played as many of life's male-female games as the rest of us.

"Despite what I suspect a number of people think about me," she admits, "I have denied talents, played the 'dumb little me' games and pretended to be totally devoted to domesticity in order to seem 'feminine.'"

During high school in the 1930's, she learned that intelligent girls may become academic successes, but socially they're flops. So she followed the example of every 'smart' female of that era: she kept quiet in class, stopped studying and let her grade average drop to a nice respectable 'C'. The ploy worked, the dates increased and June became a non-intellectual, non-aggressive young woman with vague feelings of inner discontent.

Once married, June continued to bury her 'unfeminine' desires for writing and independence in favor of the role of supportive wife, cook, mother and general cleaner-upper. But she found she could play the game only so long. After a few years, the real June Sheppard struggled to get out. What makes her an example of hope for other troubled women is that eventually -- after much heartache and difficulty -- she stopped being afraid to look at her inner self, and the real June Sheppard gradually did emerge.

"I think that once you start looking at yourself as an independent person, you start a process which is irreversible. This kind of thinking opens up a whole new life which can be very exciting. But it can also be very dangerous unless people in your life can accept this change, and are in the process of growing, too. Unless that occurs, the chasms open up."

What does she mean by this process of achieving independence?

"I don't necessarily mean going out to get a job. That could be part of it, but more important it involves finding your identity as a person in your own right, rather than living through others... and that's a very revolutionary thing for women!"

"It's not done without the chance of a good deal of hurt," she reflects, "but I don't think anything really worthwhile ever is."

June's transition took many years. She firmly believes that a woman's duties as mother come first, particularly where young children are concerned. Her three children are now 28, 26 and 20. She felt she had to wait until they were old enough before she attempted even a part-time job. Her training for a job was limited -- a high school diploma and a year at business college. Women didn't aspire to much in those days.

She started as an office worker, but her dream since childhood was to write. Gradually, she dared to let the dream emerge and began to work slowly, carefully towards it. She wrote advertising copy for an Edmonton radio station first. Then she helped write a few radio programs. Soon she was organizing and announcing various programs. She expanded her talents as an interviewer and commentator, first for radio and then for television. Five years ago, she joined *The Edmonton Journal* -- the largest paper between Vancouver and Toronto -- as a columnist for the family section.

Her column runs four times a

week. Through interviews and reflective pieces, she discusses such diverse issues as feminism, the right to abortion, world poverty, emerging nations and urban quality of life. And through each of these subjects, she weaves a thread of humanity. Human relationships, she says, is the factor common to all her columns.

Now an independent career woman who is separated from her husband, she reflects back on the transition in her life.

"I couldn't have done it if I hadn't developed my own separate life -- my own work and my own set of friends -- over the years. Well... maybe I could have done it, but it would have been far harder."

One of the main influences in her life was her job at radio station CKUA, where she started working in 1961 and remained until five years ago.

"I started with one program, conducting interviews. It was almost a hobby. But gradually the work and the people around me broadened my life perspective. At the same time, the job gradually became more demanding, and started occupying a greater portion of my time. It really was a very big influence."

CKUA was no ordinary radio station. Owned by Alberta Government Telephones, it was given broad freedom within its context of being an "educational" station. Interview and discussion programs on everything from current affairs to the theories of Hegel were a key part of the regular programming. An enthusiastic, involved, intellectual atmosphere pervaded the station and "had a strong effect on almost everyone working there at that time," June recalls.

She sympathizes with divorced or separated women who have spent most of their life in the home, moving in a couples-only society.

"It must be terrifying for them to strike out on their own. I know how difficult it was for me, and I was bless-

ed with the loving support of many friends."

She knows a number of women who, after years of marriage, attempt to move toward some form of independence -- but who get frightened and soon return to the kind of life from which they were trying to escape.

"I was unable to go back," June says. Once she started the slow process of growth and independence, there was a stubbornness, a streak of honesty and determination within her that wouldn't allow her to return to the kind of woman she once had been.

"I think that once you move toward independence, it's a process that has to continue. And I think that's true for everyone. Some women who try to break free and then go back -- and then say they're happy and fulfilled -- I think they may be just pretending to themselves." Commitment to one's family may be a convenient escape, rather than a genuine excuse for a woman to bury her own desires and ambitions.

June has reflected on the part-time work she did for many years while her young family was growing up.

"I kept my hand in work over those years, but I never really made a commitment to it. I guess I felt my commitment was to my family... Actually, what I probably did was run away from a commitment. In retrospect, I think a person should be able to have a commitment to both (work and family). It's difficult, but not impossible."

Life is an on-going process of introspection and analysis for June Sheppard. In most ways, she is happier than she has ever been in her life.

"Sometimes I find myself standing at the window, looking out over the river valley, just filled with the joy of being alive. Life has never been more exciting, happier, richer, love-filled, challenging or filled with promise."

But she still has some personal dragons to slay.

"I often stretch myself too far," she admits. "I have a tendency to run in twenty different directions at the same time. I'm still trying to teach myself to keep enough time for me."

She's improving. Through constant effort, she has been able to slow down her pace of life considerably. Nevertheless, much of the time she lives in what one friend calls "a state

of orderly confusion."

There are days when she rises at 5 a.m. to finish reading a book to review on CBC radio at 7:10 a.m., before she starts writing a column at 7:30 or 8 a.m., an interview at 10, noon luncheon followed by a University of Alberta Senate meeting (she's a member of the senate and heads its current task force on the status of women on campus), a bowl of soup and a few crackers for dinner, and then a few hours of babysitting with her two rambunctious grandchildren... all of which is interspersed with endless telephone calls and stacks of mail and, several times a week, a squeezed-in hair appointment as well.

She's a morning person who would far rather tackle a major project at 6 a.m. than at 6 at night... and NEVER at 10 or 11 p.m.

"How do you always look so good at this hour of the day?" radio-TV personality Colin McLean teases whenever she does an early interview on CBC-AM.

"You're seeing me at my peak," she jokes. "I go steadily downhill from here."

Her position as a columnist is, by its very nature, high profile. It also leads to many demands on her time. She gets dozens of requests to speak to this school class or that organization or society. Lack of time -- and her conscious effort to keep a tight rein on her galloping pace of life -- force her to say no to most of the requests.

Despite her busy life, June is very much a quiet, introspective person.

"I see myself as much more introvert than extrovert... something which I think many people don't suspect."

She loves being with people -- sometimes, as with many of us, feels a strong need to be with people -- but she also enjoys being alone. In the quiet moments at home in her eighth-floor downtown apartment, she curls up in the corner of her soft tweed chesterfield, sips a cup of Earl Grey or Constant Comment tea, and listens to music.

She's an incessant reader. Her three bookcases are filled to overflowing... mostly with Canadian books, and with far more non-fiction than fiction. Her reading interests cover many subjects, but tend to dwell more on social, economic and political issues than on any other major areas. (At the same time, she loves poetry, humor, history; you simply can't tie

down her reading and stick a label on it.) Besides books, her coffee table is often cluttered with reports and magazines. *New Yorker*, *Saturday Review/World* and *Ms.* are among her favorites.

June also likes a quiet evening of just talking. Her conversation is dotted with names familiar to most Canadians: Farley Mowat, Doris Anderson, Pierre Berton, Simma Holt, Margaret Laurence. At first, before I knew her well, I suspected her of name dropping. But that impression soon disappeared as I began to realize these well-known people are a part of her normal life experience. They're friends and acquaintances whom she has come to know after many years of working in the media and the publishing business (June was a representative for McClelland and Stewart in Edmonton for several years).

Titles and famous names in themselves don't impress her. She relates to other people as individual human beings, not on the basis of their fame, position, background or accomplishments, but more in terms of their personality, their warmth, their awareness of the world and the people around them. She has a perceptiveness that probes inside a person, attempting to strip away the layers, to get below the superficial.

With her perceptiveness go a tremendous gentleness and warmth. She's an open person who lives and loves with a constant giving. For that reason, her highs are very high, but her lows can be moments of heartache and agony.

Sometimes she gets burned. Nevertheless, she refuses to erect walls around her, to avoid being vulnerable. She has an inner drive that compels her to be fully involved with people and with her life.

In working and personal relationships, men are an important part of her existence. She views feminism in part as a movement toward more open, honest, loving relationships with men. She has good friends of both sexes. But she also feels the need for a "close relationship with one person" to really complete her life. Close, but not smothering. "There has to be a lot of room to move," she declares. "I'm very frightened of possessiveness."

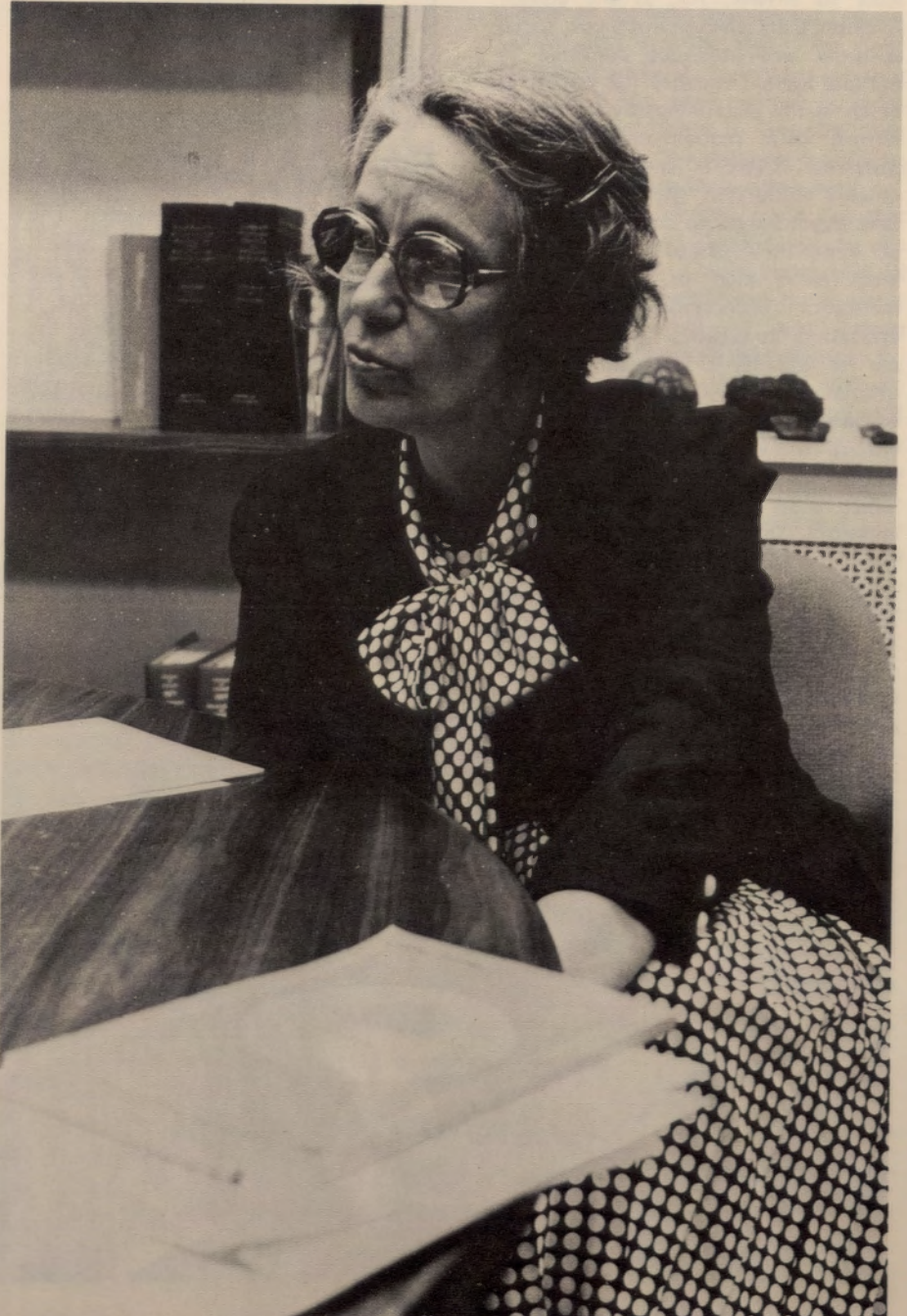
Her liberal views on love, marriage, abortion and human rights place her outside the mainstream of society.

cont. on p. 29

Where are the recommendations of yesteryear?

In the 1950 *Canadian Historical Review*, the late Frank Underhill cited a then-recent pamphlet on the rights of women by Miss Anne Francis, which showed the many existing limitations on women's equality. Noting that it was twenty years since women in Canada had obtained the vote, Professor Underhill concluded that "evidently there was something unreal in the political equality which was achieved". Another twenty years was to pass before his comments were to go forth and multiply into the voluminous evidence presented on September 28, 1970, to the federal government by the Royal Commission on the Status of Women, chaired by none other than the same Anne Francis, now better known as Florence Bird. The message was essentially the same as Underhill's; the medium was an impressive five hundred page report studying legal, financial, social, and cultural discrimination faced by women in Canada because of their sex. Coming on the crest of a wave of interest in "women's liberation" in North America, the report discussed the position of women in the Canadian economy, in education, in the family, and in public life. Attention was paid to the attitude towards women expressed by tax regulations, criminal law, and government pension plans. The absence of comprehensive government action in areas vital to women such as child care and part-time work was outlined, as were discriminatory practices in the federal public service, the largest employer of women. Attempts were also made to come to terms with the special problems faced by women living in rural areas, by Indian and Eskimo women, by immigrant women, and by those in low income groups.

But the report was not meant to be just an interesting analysis for use in sociology courses; action-oriented,



DR. KATIE COOKE — photograph by Vivian Frankel

its terms of reference had asked the commissioners to recommend steps that might be taken by the federal government to ensure equality for Canadian women. The commissioners answered with 167 recommendations, 122 of them falling within the federal jurisdiction. The others pertain mainly to the provinces and territories, with private industry and the universities also receiving some suggestions.

Over three years after the tabling of the report, can it be said to have had an impact? Such a question is difficult to answer, for, as the commissioners themselves pointed out, social customs and attitudes continue to militate against equality for women as much as the discriminatory legislation which their recommendations pinpointed. Even if the latter were quickly eliminated, the former would take much longer to change. With this in mind they identified three main areas of a plan of action: implementation, enforcement, and public education "to create a favourable climate for equality of opportunity". The ultimate success of the royal commission's mission was thus linked to the extent to which their recommendations were adopted, the degree to which these changes were able to be enforced, and the existence of some means of bringing the rights of women into the public eye on a continuing basis.

These criteria are frequently in the minds of Martha Hynna and Katie Cooke, the two women whose positions have been created by the federal government as a response to the Royal Commission. Martha Hynna is a lawyer who serves as an advisor to the cabinet minister responsible for the status of women (at present, John Munroe, Minister of Labour) helping to develop and shape overall government policy using the royal commission recommendations as a guideline. Classifying herself as an "internal public servant", she is also a member of the social policy secretariat in the privy council office, and thus also advises Cabinet on policy pertaining to the status of women.

More in the public eye is Katie Cook, a Ph.D. in sociology, who is chairman of the National Advisory Council on the Status of Women. The thirty-member committee of which she is head is a direct outgrowth of the Royal Commission's plan for action. It was created in May, 1973 to advise the government as well as keep the public informed, particularly through women's organizations, on issues affecting women. Federally funded and reporting to the Minister of Labour, the Council was given the special power of making public all their recommendations at the same time as they present them to the government.

The Council meets regularly and has issued several policy statements and papers outlining desirable changes in federal legislation including alterations to the Canada Pension Plan and the Citizenship Act. It soon plans to establish a working group to study the problems of one-parent families. Weightiest of its publications to date is a 40-page document entitled *What's Been Done* that acts as a kind of report card on federal action on the Recommendations of the 1970 Royal Commission. The reader finds that about 33.4 per cent of the recommendations which fall within federal jurisdiction have been implemented; another 30.3 per cent have been partially implemented and the final 35.3 per cent have not been carried out at all.

Dr. Cooke says that the changes so far, while "excellent", have tended to be the ones which are "easier to do". Alterations have been made in various government regulations to eliminate discrimination against women. For example, National Housing Loan Regulations have been amended so that either a husband or a wife could be a home owner or purchaser; the Fair Employment Practices section of the Canadian Labour code now makes provision for maternity leave for workers in establishments such as banks and crown corporations; through the Secretary of State increased funds have been made available to women's voluntary associations which perform a public service. Within the government, departmental and interdepartmental committees have been established and steps taken by the relatively new Office of Equal Opportunity to ensure the elimination of sex typing of occupations in the civil service. Various programmes have been launched to bring more women into high-level positions. But, says Dr. Cooke, "while some strides have been made, it's not the millenium."

Still to be handled in a meaningful way are such conditions as the admission of women to the work force on a part-time basis. While many structural changes have been made to enable women to advance to good positions in the public service, in fact women still tend to be concentrated in certain occupational groupings. Rates of pay for groups such as nurses, librarians or social workers are still considerably lower than those for



MARTHA HYNNA — photograph by Vivian Frankel

groups which tend to be male dominated. Many underlying attitudes still preclude full consideration of volunteer experience in assessing a woman's qualifications for a government appointment. Little has been done to ameliorate the conditions of female employees in Crown corporations and agencies.

Also anxiously awaited are major legislative changes such as amendments to the Citizenship Act and the Canada Pension Plan. The latter is considered particularly significant since it would be a first step in recognizing the homemaker's economic contribution to society. Proposed changes would enable 50 per cent of the Canada Pension Plan contributions of one spouse to be credited to the pension build-up of the other. Distressed by the Murdoch case in Alberta, the advisory council is also calling for protection for women who work with their husbands on farms and in small family businesses and thus would not be covered by changes in the pension plan.

High on Katie Cooke's and the advisory council's priority list is the creation of a human rights commission. Such an institution would give Canadian women an authoritative and powerful body to which to turn when they feel they are being discriminated against. Such a commission would have far-reaching inspection and enforcement powers as well as grievance procedures to protect the individual. It is hoped that the establishment of such a commission would be accompanied by specific amendments to the Canada Labour Act, the Citizenship Act and the Immigration Act. Such legislation is urgently required now since the Laval case [see *Branching Out* Preview Issue] has brought into question the power of the Bill of Rights to protect women and minorities against discrimination, thereby making weaker what anti-discriminatory legislation does exist.

But Katie Cooke is cautiously optimistic that things are getting better all the time. While protest marches by feminists may be on the decline, behind the scenes steady, plodding progress is being made. Pointing to an omnibus bill tabled by John Munro on May 3, 1974, she says "this is really a nice step ... [which] deserves commendation." The bill would correct anomalies in various pieces of existing legislation including the Unemployment Insurance Act, the Immigration

Act and the Public Service Employment Act. Thus for example it provides that maternity benefits under the Unemployment Insurance Act would be available for a flexible fifteen-week period, thereby enabling women for the first time to draw most of their benefits after the birth of the child if they so wished. However, with the election being called, the bill died; women should make sure it gets reintroduced at the next session of parliament.

Martha Hynna shares Dr. Cooke's hopes for improvement. She stresses that as a government priority, the status of women has not been low: "I think you'd have to say that inflation and oil affect women as well as men; they're pretty serious problems right now, but after you get over that kind of thing, the position of women is certainly considered one of the next ranking type of things. ... The government is really seriously working in the field and a lot of things where they say 'we're studying' they really are studying and they're moving on things." She attributes apparent inaction on major legislative changes to the slow grinding wheels of a big bureaucracy: "Everything takes so long inside a big organization ... there are only so many people who can draft legislation. How do you decide which ... gets drafted first?"

However, she does emphasize that any changes which have come are the result of public pressures. Referring to the Laval and Murdoch cases, she says that considerable government action has taken place in the last six to nine months because those judicial decisions sparked nation-wide protests from a broad cross section of women. Acknowledging the need for a human rights commission with broad enforcement and inspection powers, she adds that if such powers are to be there, women will have to demand them in a

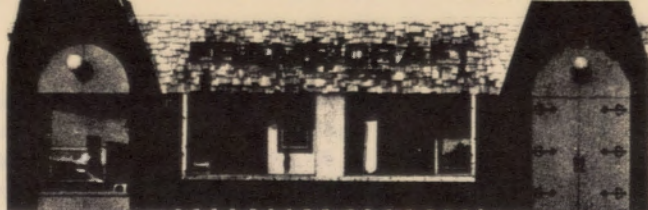
concerted fashion, both as individuals and as groups: "Things get done if they are demanded by the public, and by a large public. It doesn't help to have a small group somewhere demanding something ... [if] there is a large public writing in ... that's how you make sure that things happen. The politicians make the decisions based on what they think the public wants." During the federal election campaign she urges women to "go after the existing parties" and make their views known to the [that] when you want to change a situation you have to appeal to the men to change it." Katie Cooke also stresses that "the only power an advisory council has is public support." She urges women as individuals and as groups to identify their priorities and then question candidates about their attitudes to these aims.

But both women point out that the federal level should not be the only target. Dr. Cooke hopes that all provinces will soon follow the example of Ontario, Quebec and Saskatchewan and appoint status of women councils, analogous to the national advisory body. It should be remembered that provincial and, to a lesser degree, municipal governments are also involved in many issues of vital importance to women, such as labour codes and provision of child care. Amendments to the Canada Pension Plan, for example, must have the approval of the provinces. Martha Hynna points to the lack of adequate child care services in many parts of the country as a failure on the part of many women to express their needs. She says that some provincial governments and "a lot of people in the provinces still see day care as something to allow women to get out of what they should be doing, to go off and work ... Women in the provinces must persuade women that this is something they have to do." At present, the federal government does

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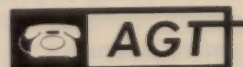
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share the costs of child care programs with the provinces through the Canada Assistance Plan, but Ms. Hynna feels that more federal monies could be made available "if the mood's right". Pointing to present federal support of post-secondary education, she elaborates: "There's no reason they should be supporting post-secondary education rather than day care.... When there's a fairly widespread program that has to be funded properly, then governments move." Reiterating the necessity of concerted action by women's groups *vis a vis* the provincial as well as the federal level, Katie Cooke says that one "doesn't expect that [the advisory council] is going to jump up and down on provincial governments". Later, she adds somewhat reflectively, "I wouldn't say we're [women] our own worst enemies, but I have to agree with Pogo saying 'We have seen the enemy and the enemy is us.' " The Royal Commission on the Status of Women showed Canadian women the directions in which to move to attain equality with men. If they really want equal status they will just have to try harder to ensure that governments add to whatever gains have already been made.

Tell someone about
 the good times.
 Dial-a-smile
 LONG
 DISTANCE



"HELLO MOOSE?"

"Wait till you hear this!"

HERE & THERE
cont. from p. 6

Emergency Librarian! is a new periodical intended for (no kidding) librarians, but it will be of interest to those concerned with sexism in print generally. The focus is on liberating the printed word, and on making those who deal with the printed word aware of the implicit discrimination against women which may be present. It also publishes bibliographies which may be of use to various women's study groups. Published every two months, subscriptions cost \$2.00 and are available from Barbara Clubb, 697 Wellington Crescent, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3M 0A7.

PLUS is a quarterly magazine put out by a collective of women of Ottawa-Hull. It covers articles of interest to women, ranging from Day Care to Women in Work to Children's Stories. For subscriptions or contributions write to Ottawa Women's Centre, 212 Lyon, Ottawa, Ontario.

We would like to report a correction to our listing for the women's centre Quebecois in the preview issue of *Branching Out*. The address should read *Quebecois Deboutte!*, 4319 St Denis, Montreal. *Quebecois Deboutte!* is also the title of a feminist magazine published from the same address.

POLITICS cont. from p. 9

politics as above partisan interests. Consequently they tend to participate to this day in a limited way in party politics; this continues to have implications for their involvement throughout the political system.

Any reader who is interested in the subject of women in politics in Canada will find two superb historical sources recently reprinted by The University of Toronto Press. These are Nellie McClung's *In Times Like These* written in 1915, and Catherine Cleverdon's 1950 work *The Woman Suffrage Movement in Canada*. Unfortunately there is no fully updated account of women in Canadian politics since 1950, but the report of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women provides some information. ***



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SHEPPARD cont. from p. 24

As a result, she lives with a special kind of isolation.

"I've been very aware of the loneliness of holding minority views while, through circumstance, having to mix largely with the majority," she reflects. "I also think I surprise people because my views on most things are much more unconventional than they expect -- judging by my rather conservative dress and usually fairly well-coiffed hair."

Despite pressure from more conservative readers, she carries on as she feels she must: true to her own ideas -- and ideals -- in her column and in her own personal life.

The self awareness and independence gained after many years of struggle are not things to be neglected or pushed aside. June Sheppard constantly strives to maintain these qualities, and to expand them. At the same time, she's looking outward at the world -- believing it CAN be a better place, determined to do whatever she can to help improve it. determined to do whatever she can to help improve it.

She has come a long way herself, and knows other troubled people who have made the journey too. She and others like her offer a message of encouragement and hope: people can change; the world can change.

It's not easy ... but with honesty and courage, it can be done. ***



up from the mattress

by Pascale Taquine

My name is Pascale. I have three kids and a husband. When I had one kid and no husband, I thought it was possible to have one's life and the kid too. But the little duties and concerns came creeping up on me. Being nice, making things friendly, helping out, until I became responsible to more people for more time than was healthy. It seemed I couldn't do anything to free myself without hurting somebody. Every move required ponderous deliberation and organization. Five lives to juggle. In the end it didn't seem worth it. I'd twist and turn, tied to the spot, looking for a way out. When there was no way, I'd lie on the bed. Not even the juice for self-pitying tears.

Once, sitting late at night on the couch, cornered in the big room, soul all cramped, nothing to do about it

(indeed what is it), nowhere but my head to live in (the bell jar splitting), I thought to hack off my hair. My long hair. How surprised Pierre would be. How shocked. I would make an excuse for the kids. "Time for a change" or "Thought I'd look better that way" but really I delighted in how ugly I'd look. I would chop at it, crooked, mannish, close to the skull. No longer would it be "how pretty Pascale is" but "why'd she do it". I could make myself ugly. It was something. I looked in the mirror, the scissors in one hand, the brush in the other and did nothing. The hair was a subterfuge, cover-up for the red eyes, the tired face, the desert of joy. And I was still part enough to want to pass.

Last night I had a dream in which I confronted my mother.

"Stop it." I screamed. "Stop the

litany of disappointments I have caused you. The prizes I didn't win, the people I didn't charm, the story-book happiness I don't have. Stop plaguing me."

I screamed louder and louder, all the time knowing that it was beside the point, that her golden-haired girl was floundering, unprepared for a marathon so delicate, so total, that endurance depended not on will or force, but on balance.

There are no winners in this place. Only survivors. Only those who have psyched out a totally new, totally unprepared — for reality. There is no public recognition for a family life lived with grace. No trumpets for gurgling babies, curious children, constant consideration. At best there is a sense of completeness. Moments of bursting fullness.

It is a new landscape. A long journey from the platform where I orated to the mattress where, day after day, I lay.

I started doing something to stave off the paralysis. There was a big calendar on the back of the bedroom door and everytime Pierre and I fought, or whenever there was a family impasse, I would haul myself off the mattress and write on the calendar. Just a few words from me to it. A shorthand diary. An attempt to chart Pierre's menstrual cycle. It broke the spell and gave form to my perceptions. Made me start thinking as I was lying there, something to tell the calendar. Made me realize that I, magnum cum, was a full-blown zombie with the housewife blues. It can't happen here. To me. And while the zombie is controlling, popping valium, making do, big Pierre Daddy Bear with his male headstart and the bleachers cheering, is pushing away, piling up points, just doing fine. There he is — accessible but inaccessible. Concerned, but from the distance of his own life. He still has his.

It is so very insidious that even as I am choking I can't believe I can't breathe.

Meanwhile, after many role reversals and trying this and that, I accept to be fully in charge of the kids. The only other choice is resentment and continual fights. When we tried to share responsibility, Pierre yelled at the kids and me. He was harassed, picked on little things, responded monosyllabically. Hopefully, with the pressure off, there will be a friendly atmosphere in the house. But, as usual, it is not clear cut again. Now that Pierre has only himself to worry about, his mind is expanding and banging into me. I am his emotional punching bag. The latest is that Pierre initiated a discussion where it appeared that it is artificial, if you feel snugly toward someone, not to snuggle them. You should even ball them if it feels right.

Whammo.

But what can you do? Far be it from me to be the uptight bitchy wife. No social taboos for us, just free, natural, spontaneous love and kisses.

Now I put it to the calendar that this is the last thing on my mind. Nursing the baby, taking care of the kids, lots to do, lots of warm body contact, lots of love and kisses. Beautiful, squiggly, cuddly naked kids. If

anything, more time needed for me and Pierre.

"I am," I say to the calendar, "more into deepening and developing this life which now consumes all my energies than in starting a new one. There is ample room here for the art of loving."

I put it this way to the calendar, but far be it from me to be too uptight to handle it. And that is how it is coached. "Can you handle it, Pascale." Yeah, I can handle it. I don't want it. But, yeah, I can handle it. Better than recriminations from my inventive ever-so-adventurous hubby.

"I can handle it, Pascale." When pushed... "oh, of course, not if it takes away from the family." Well what do you think it's going to do you stupid shit.

So a few days ago we took mushrooms with Suzanne. Psilocybin. One spoonful. Just enough to get nicely high for about four hours. I'm minding the kid and they're playing frisbee. "Wanna play, Pascale?" but I'm already into minding the kid and the stone is coming on pretty heavy and I really don't see how they're getting it together to throw that thing around. Anyway, it isn't something I want to do. I am having enough trouble figuring out how far my nipple is from me so I can stick it in the howling baby's mouth. I'm taking care of the baby and not hating it, noticing even that the wood bench I'm lying on is accommodatingly soft, moulding itself to my body. There it is. Crept right up. But I am aware that in a different world I too would like to be playing frisbee. Why not. I'm young, used to do a lot of sports. Yeah.

Frisbee is over and we're ready to crash out. Pierre gets a mattress and we lay it in the sun. Somehow we find ourselves positioned with me and Suzanne on either side of Pierre. The baby is crying and Pierre bounces her a bit, Suzanne does too, Pierre makes faces with the fat folds of the baby's face, Suzanne plays with the dogs, she leans the baby on a dog, the dog moves, baby cries and I get her back to nurse her to sleep. We're all lying there, spaced out in the sun, and I notice that Pierre has his hand on me and on Suzanne too. Far out, I say, remembering the discussion, I guess he's feeling snugly. Sure is beautiful here.

But there is a funny thing. We lie there some more and it's awkward. It

doesn't feel natural at all. Suzanne is lying straight as a board and I'm not snuggling in like I usually do. I'm stoned, lying in the sun, feeling the mellow high of mushrooms, of the sucking baby, but there's a tension in the air. Very uptight vibes. And I start to figure. What's coming off.

How come Suzanne and I who are such good friends are lying here like stiff. Does he want to fuck her, does she want to fuck him, am I in the way, am I the old witch with the stick and the baby. Sure feels strange lying here like this. And how come this is happening. Is a prick all it takes for two women to get so uptight with each other.

Me, lightening quick, running through paranoid stereotype numbers in my head and Pierre, spaced, peaceful, lying there god-like in the middle, with a hand on each of us. Thank you, god.

My head is aching. Sure was beautiful here, I remember nostalgically. "I'm going home."

Big bad spell broken. Pierre says, "One minute, I'm coming." Suzanne and I put away the mattress and we talk about a communal supper. It all feels better.

That night I talk to Pierre. His reality is that he was passing a warm vibe from me and him to Suzanne. In the brotherly light of mushrooms, he didn't want her to be left out. He's calm and understanding. He sensed we were "having trouble" but we should have reassured each other, we should have trusted him. He is confident in his action, used to making arbitrary moves.

Next day I talk to Suzanne. Her reality is that she didn't know what was happening. This guy who had kissed her twice, on special occasions, in six years of knowing her, was touching her. What did he want? He touched her and she lay there, so paralyzed that she sometimes didn't even swallow. She didn't want to offend him. She hoped it would go away. We talk and I tell her Pierre's reality but I am more comfortable with hers. Touching leads to balling, balling leads to responsibilities and allegiances, we are friends, friends are hard to come by, why not value what we have. Suzanne is only concerned about herself and our friendship. If I can handle it is the only question. Do we want to? And if the configuration were different, would Pierre? What for? Is the

impulse organic or fatuous, titillated by the myth of the orgasm and ads for romance. Sex isn't Further for me or Suzanne, only for Pierre.

That night I tell Pierre of Suzanne's reaction and I realize with amazement that he, knowing the tension was there, knowing the insecurity it caused, knowing it was two against one, wants to do it again. Oh, maybe not with Suzanne, "she's too immature", but it is still, potentially, further. The sexual-revolution rhetoric is at his disposal. We should all love one another. Physically. His dynamic is the natural one. I'm an uptight bitch. In fact, when you get right down to it, he wants me to sing him into someone else's cunt. I should have presented a stronger case to Suzanne for the lovey-dovey snuggly bit. I should pimp for him. "Go ahead, Pierre, I WANT YOU TO." He wants his cake and he wants to eat me too. He wants no downs, no guilt feelings. Wants me to give up my feelings and endorse his for The Greater Good, For Country, For The Christian God, For Unfettered Sex.

Of such stuff do men make wars.

And I wonder that Suzanne and I lay there. I wonder that we could be so stymied by our desire to please that

we could not reach across one male body to each other. I wonder at it because it is finished and done.

It was hard to get out of the house. It is so comfortable there when it is functioning. So compelling. I left when I was too tired to stand. Tired of being understanding, keeping it together, being there. Too much life swirling about me. It was leave or be damned. To a whine. To a whimper. I didn't leave for an ideal, for a dream or a plan, but because of a primeval need for air. I took the baby and went to Suzanne's house.

It is hard to ask myself, "What do you, Pascale, want to do?" It is hard to take steps. In the rush of the day, one forgets the lesson of the night. The night when, from the well-being of a full day, Pierre falls asleep in my mid-sentence and I am left with the painful engorgement of talk and a life unshared. I lie awake, having touched nothing that day, not even myself. I have been disembodied. In abeyance. Waiting for a smile.

So. To the typewriter this time. Action on paper. I'm fed up minding the house. It was nice while the baby was nursing but no full-time job for an

adult human being. My turn to do some striding along and uninterrupted work. Here it comes, Pierre. For you it won't come creeping but land in one slightly angry but graceful swoop.

I send you this letter from Suzanne's house where I have my own room. I, too, need space and time. I suggest we schedule alternate days on house or two days each alternately. I am prepared for you to be unhappy. To glower and complain. But I must explore the resources within myself.

You will not overcome by bad temper but, tempered, you may perhaps develop some of your so-called feminine qualities. You may learn to wait, to be flexible, to empathize with others. To make peace. And when these ways have become part of you, you may find a centre like that which the Hindus attribute to the merger of man and woman in the god Shiva. Then, balancing equidistant from earth on the teetertotter, you and I can talk again.

You've got a good thing going, Pierre.

I guess you'll have to evaluate how much it means to you.

love,
Pascale

FROM: CHOU DYNASTY BOOK OF ODES

When a son is born
Let him sleep in a bed.
Clothe him with fine dress and give him jades
with which to play.
How lordly is his cry!
May he grow up to wear crimson
And be the lord of clan and tribe.

When a daughter is born
Let her sleep on the ground.
Wrap her in common cloth,
and give her broken tiles for playthings.
May she have no faults, nor virtues of her own;
May she well attend to food and wine,
And bring no discredit to her parents.

(Chou Dynasty: c. 1122 or 1050 to 256 B.C.
Submitted by Evelyn Blakeman.)

possessions

susan musgrave

Seanach
of hosts

black gatherer

toad of the
wound I say
my prayers about

lie down and be
little

forgive me
an old woman
sagging against
lies

Seanach
element I
warm to
brush the blood
from my womb
without ceremony
open the
morning mail
without certainty

Seanach
I see the
pity
the faith that makes you
animal

my animal
waking to my
nights' hunger
stroking my
fatal hunger

wanting
without desire

Seanach
you are lost
you are unable
to sleep as
I alone
inhabit
the dark

Seanach
you dream of a
lost familiar

needing darkness
that moves around you
like weather
with no
discipline

but awkwardly
triumphant

Seanach
I am not sure
of anything
indistinct as
pleasure.
I've seen
your skull
and will always
remember it.
Perhaps you've
held mine
in your
long white hands

Seanach
go down
sink to
human will
forget
for a moment
what strength is.
Perhaps it will help you
sleep

Seanach
when I am
old
be compassionate.
Remember me
as a
woman,
an idea without children
to learn by

remember
what choice means
and how few of us ever
needed to be
happy

perspective

THE AFFAIR by Ellie Teshar

To hell with James Bradey! He's the creep for whom I played Mata Hari, my blood pounding in my head as I walked purposefully through the hotel lobby, looking neither to left nor right, knees knocking as the elevator rose, taking me to the altar of adultery.

It was time, you see. I'd done everything else, from the Nursing Mothers' Association to Group Therapy. It was all the same thing. Dig deep, reach the Earth Mother, reach the earth. Bare the breast, bare the soul. Let it all hang out. My breasts were diminished, my soul over-exposed, and my spirits fatigued.

I was trying to keep it all together: three super-charged kids, a home reflecting most of the dictates of middle-class consumerism, a retinue of over-interested family and friends, and one husband with several personalities, all of them looking to me as Wife. The strongest tie was still umbilical — one child whose rate of growth could not be matched to my need for temporal freedom. He was as yet in nursery school and needed, according to suburban standards and my own confused set of values, the energy release of organized activities. In other words, I was either afternoon playmate or chauffeur.

Nothing in this lifestyle was unique with me — everyone I knew was more or less involved in the same hectic race to live life to the fullest, but so many of them seemed to like it! They smiled complacently over their needlepoint, swapped recipes between tennis sets, and beamed at each other with accomplishment at endless dinner parties in their glossily decorated homes.

I always felt I was watching from the outside. Somehow, it just wasn't my bag.

More about my Partner — he understood me, and loved me. That is, one of him did. The other still expected me to be doing exactly the same things as ever, only happily, now that I was understood and loved. Sometimes, yet a third figure emerged,

pulling out the Big Guns of Reason, and Maturity, exhorting me to face facts and meet my responsibilities square on.

Help!

I thought I recognized it in the eyes of James Bradey. They smiled at me, knowingly, all the time his mouth was making trite and trivial conversation with me. We met at the piano lesson, the most tedious of the motherly duties to which I was addicted, as I sat, or stood, week in, week out, in the narrow overheated upper hallway of a music conservatory annex.

His wife was out of town, so he drove his son to his piano lesson. He carried a Time Magazine and I had brought my mail. We didn't read, but watched each other carefully while we spoke of acceptable topics, and shortly, drifted out for coffee at the restaurant next door.

He switched from pollution to "getting together again" without even a pause for breath. It seemed the most logical step to take and I said "I guess so."

Then came a phone call, and the Plan: the where and how of the big Meeting. Even as I became excited about seeing him again, there was a vague familiarity to the whole thing. He planned for His convenience, worried for His risk, and hung up abruptly.

I went. I was very nervous. He wasn't so relaxed either. The sentences that had bounced back and forth with

an instantly electric rapport, were now static with pauses, and little bursts of attempted intimacy.

And then the Big Scene. Good, lusty, experienced sex — then over, with very little in the way of a caressing warmth, that blanket of caring that a couple wrap over themselves after love-making.

No, it wasn't there. And I had to hurry home to the kids and supper, and he had to get back to work.

He didn't try to reach me again, so I was left to justify my actions to myself, and pretend there was no ego to soothe. I covered that whole area by cursing James Bradey, and the ease with which he indulged his needs: here a squash game and there a flirtation. He entered and exited from episodes in his life with a prudent and finite sense of Self above all else. I even cursed his wife as I recognized his son, meticulously dressed, return to his piano lesson, dropped off, no doubt, by his competent mother.

I did not want an affair — a romance maybe, but I hadn't the energy to tune myself to another man's lifestyle.

Back to my Partner. There had been a romance once, and there was still a well of affection between us. It needed to be drawn from more often, and I had felt no spirit to do so. The romance I sought was within myself, and I was stifling it with an over-zealous approach to duty. I had made a demanding profession out of a service position, and had no idea how to serve me.

You know, James Bradey, maybe I can learn from you — combine some of that self-preservation with my own warmth and sensitivity to others. Maybe the Nursing Mothers' Association still has a place in my life — give the breast when it's needed, but take care of it, as well. After all, it's my breast! Or it was. * * *

"Perspectives" is a new column for *Branching Out*. We invite readers to submit accounts of their experiences as women and as people in today's world. Topics are flexible; statements about both the joys and the problems of living are welcomed. We see this column as one way women can help each other solve the problems common to us all, and as a medium for sharing their pleasures and triumphs.

Manuscripts should be 1200 to 1500 words long, typed, double-spaced, and accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Please address submissions to "Perspectives", *Branching Out*, Box 4098, Edmonton, Alberta T6E 4T1.

women in music:

SHOULD WE BE SURPRISED?

by Beverley Ross

Easter Sunday, 1974. In Stanley Park, Vancouver, the annual Easter Be-In is underway. I sit with a group of friends in a sunny open space in the midst of a kaleidoscope crowd of freaks and straights, bikers and boozers, dogs and dopers and babies, all of us noisily anticipating an afternoon of music and people-watching. Our attention is called suddenly to the make-shift stage, where the first group is about to appear. They launch into a bluegrass tune which captures the sunshine mood of the crowd. One of the trio is a woman, who doubles on fiddle and mandolin. Great, I think, at least we'll have a token representative up there today. They finish their set and disappear. In the next group, the bass player is a woman; not only that, but she is a completely competent bass player. Five years ago if she had appeared at all, she might have been heckled off the stage. Today, the crowd just digs the music.

A country band follows. The lead singer is a woman. Not so unusual, but she moves without inhibitions and her voice is strong.

Then a "name" group, a blues band from Toronto comes on stage. They have recently released an album and their appearance here is part of a cross-country tour. Their piano player is a woman. I am jubilant. I want to stand up and demand of the crowd whether or not they have noticed that there is a woman in each of the four bands here today, and have they ever seen anything like it before. I am jubilant, but I am surprised.

Why should I be so surprised?

I was formally introduced to music at the age of six as a pupil of a down-the-block piano teacher, whose principle interest was polishing up her pupils in preparation for the annual Toronto Conservatory exams. I survived eight of these ordeals, at which point I walked away from the keyboard and stayed away for several years. What eventually brought me

back to it was the realization that I was free to become as capable and as creative musically as my guitar-playing boyfriends.

Not such an earth-shattering revelation perhaps, but in my high school years, a girl's musical career was limited: she was socially safe playing violin, cello or flute in the school orchestra, or singing in a folk group, but she was most appreciated as an admirer of the local Saturday afternoon rock band.

The boys, meanwhile, were busy learning the "pop" instruments that could be played later for money: brass, reeds, bass and drums. They were teaching themselves guitar, forming rock bands and playing at school dances.

Open your mind for a minute to the images which you immediately associate with the phrase "a woman in music". Those which present themselves to me are neither flattering nor new: the sleazy jazz singer, threatening and suffering alternately; the prima donna, a busty temperamental operatic star; the pale and earnest classical student who studies violin or piano until her Man appears and no one ever takes her quite seriously; and finally, everyone's school music teacher whose class is completely out of control, whose voice is a shrewish soprano. (She is invariably a spinster.) Juxtapose these images with those of the men in music: the ever-present ghosts of Bach and Beethoven; the control and power of a symphony conductor; the insolent virility of a lead guitarist: the comparison speaks for itself. Can you close your eyes and envision a woman leading that orchestra through Beethoven's fifth symphony? Can you listen to your favourite rock album and imagine that a woman is playing those aggressive lead breaks? Can you imagine playing them yourself?

In the face of this how does a woman become a musician?

A century ago, young middle-class women were encouraged to become accomplished parlour musicians but their audiences included only friends and relatives. Performing in public was considered a scandalous display in most circumstances. Yet, as was the



photograph courtesy of the Edmonton Symphony Society

case in other fields, a young man's interest in music was to be taken seriously. Technically and theoretically he would be prepared for a career as a concert artist or a composer; after all, he must be ready to cope with the possibility that he was a genius. Training of that calibre would have been wasted on a woman — there was no such thing as a female genius.

Today, women are most readily accepted into the field of classical music. Here there is space for them to become teachers or orchestral musicians, and the best may emerge as technically excellent soloists with a chance at success not unequal to that of their male counterparts.

However, at the creative heights of the classical world where the composers and conductors reside, women are a scarce commodity. But why? Until recently the tools needed for these jobs were difficult for a woman to acquire: years of intensive theoretical training and the ability to create, interpret and direct with confidence. Similar to the skills we expect to find in the executive suite, and out of reach to women for the same reasons. Consider the poise and control required of the symphony conductor and you come face to face once more with the "power problem" of a woman leading men.

As for the aspiring composer, who does she emulate? The great *masters*? Female composers have led a virtually invisible existence. Clara Wieck Schumann was a famous nineteenth century pianist who, aside from being the wife of Robert Schumann, and the mother of six children, was responsible for the successful debut of many of his works. She was herself the composer of a considerable number of works for piano and small chamber groups. Although her work was not "ambitious" in its scope, her "Trio in G Minor" stands favourably beside other examples in the same genre, although it is infrequently performed. One wonders how much of her creativity was stifled by social stigma and the responsibilities of wife- and motherhood.

In the twentieth century female composers have been most successful when they have championed the avant-garde. In the thirties, Germaine Tailleferre allied herself with five other French composers and formed the Group of Six, to promote the acceptance of their medium. Peggy Glanville-Hicks, who has composed six operas and several other works, often includes elements from ancient traditions and folk music in her compositions. Jean Coulthard and Violet Archer are two Canadian composers who have combined university careers with their creative endeavours. Hopefully these women are encouraged by the sense of freedom that comes from exploring a less rigidly defined area and by the knowledge that they are contributing to its development. But often this very freedom ensures that the public will be less than ready to accept their music.

The situation facing a woman in the world of rock music is no better. This type of music relies on ensemble playing, and for a woman this prob-

ably means that within a group she must submit to a definition of her role which has little to do with her musical ability. As the "intruder" in the undisputably masculine world of rock, she must be labelled sexually, if not by her colleagues, then most certainly by the audience. They want to know which member of the group she belongs to; who does she sleep with, who is she married to, whose sister is she; and if none of the above apply, is she available?

Her functional role within the group has also been rigidly defined. A woman is most readily accepted in rock as a vocalist where her visual impact is greatest and where she has minimal control over the meat of the music, since she is restricted to a melodic rather than a chordal vocabulary. Few women ever "make it" in rock on the basis of their skill as lead guitarists, bass players or drummers. The myth that one acquires the ability to play aggressive, driving music by virtue of one's gender is a myth that has yet to be dissolved. Fortunately women like guitarist April Lawton and the reigning Queen of Rock, Grace Slick, are working on it.

One way of overcoming these restrictions is to join a group with other women. In "Joy of Cooking" two women formed the nucleus of the group. "Fanny" is a commercially successful all-woman band. Apparently the major problem to be dealt with here is that of not being taken seriously. The "How many words can you type?" question of the club circuit seems to be "The music's fine, honey, but do you play topless?"

Few women have become successful jazz musicians. As vocalists they have been influential: Bessie Smith was one of the first to unite the elements of blues and jazz; horn players and guitarists still return to recordings by Billie Holiday to learn from her melodic ingenuity. But unless she is able to use her voice freely as an instrument, the vocalist will find herself limited in a field that is predominantly reserved for instrumentalists.

Why can't female instrumentalists make it? Well, in the first place they seldom equip themselves with the right instruments. About the time when a prospective jazz musician ought to begin learning the rudiments of the sax, the bass, or the drum-kit, a well-conditioned adolescent girl is concerning herself with her appearance and her social standing. There's nothing ladylike about good chops, or spittle, callouses or drummer's muscles.

A working knowledge of jazz includes not only technical preparedness but also the ability to perform in an ensemble situation. This latter skill is usually acquired in a jam session where a group of musicians play together, informally, in order to learn from each other. But to join these sessions an aspiring musician must have "musical friends". To meet these people she must drop into their after-hours world where booze and dope and sex are realities to be faced along with the music — exactly the kind of environment that parents would not want their adolescent daughters to frequent. And once she makes it past the stage door, a woman has to convince the other male musicians of her seriousness. They assume by her presence that her intent is of a completely different nature.

Some of the women who have succeeded: Mary Lou Williams is a respected pianist; Nina Simone is known mostly as a singer, but she plays piano and writes some of her material; Alice Coltrane is a harpist-pianist who

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creates music of a mystical nature; Barbara Donald, a trumpeter, resides on the freakier fringes of jazz, where she finds the greatest acceptance and freedom.

It is as singer-songwriters that women are coming into their own as musicians. Carole King's *Tapestry* is one of the largest-selling albums ever, having sold over four million copies to date. Joni Mitchell, Carly Simon, Dory Previn, Rita Coolidge, Buffy St.-Marie, Helen Reddy, Roberta Flack — the list of names is familiar and long.

The singer-songwriter is a child of the introspective mood of the seventies. For women this general mood has coincided with a heightened sense of ourselves and our own potential. Women are tired of having their images defined in lyrics written by men, and men are finally beginning to realize the validity of our vision of things.

A career in music requires knowledge, confidence, the desire to succeed and a mobility that until recently was available to few women. Women in music must also contend with the problems that face every

woman who chooses to seek fulfillment outside of traditional roles.

Perhaps what happened at the "Be-In" was merely an unusual coincidence. Perhaps it is a sign that women in music are at last receiving the support and encouragement they deserve, and that they themselves are reaching out for opportunities in all fields of music. I hope that my surprise at seeing these women on stage will soon prove itself unjustified.

* * *

DISCOGRAPHY OF MUSIC BY WOMEN

Clara Wieck Schumann: *Chamber Music by...* Oryx 1819

Peggy Glanville-Hicks: *Nausicca: An Opera in Three Acts* Composer Recordings Inc. CRI 175

Jean Coulthard: *Contemporary Music for Cello* Columbia XLP 5873

April Lawton: (with Ramatam) *In April Came the Dawning of the Red Suns* Atlantic SD 7261

Grace Slick: (with The Jefferson Airplane) *Volunteers* RCA LSP4238; *Manhole Grunt*

Joy of Cooking: *Joy of Cooking* Capitol ST 661; *Castles* Capital ST 11050

Fanny: *Charity Ball* Reprise RS6456; *Mother's Pride* Reprise

Alice Coltrane: *Ptah the El Daoud* Impulse AS9196; *Journey in Satchidananda* Impulse AS9203

Nina Simone: *Sings the Blues* RCA LSP3789

Barbara Donald: (with Sonny Simmons) *Manhattan Egos* Arhoolie 8003

Joni Mitchell: *Court and Spark* Asylum 7ES 1001

Yoko Ono: *Feelin' the Space* Apple SW3412

Toni Brown: *Good For You Too* MCA MCA386

PROMISE I MADE TO FRIEND

You asked me to photograph you in sepia
and then burn the edges of your snap
So somebody might find it,
think it old
and romance its nonexistent memory.
'But I do not take photos, I
am a wordsmith.'

'Then write a ballad about Camelot and
Carnivals and dedicate it to me!
Or tell of my beauty with lovely
brownstone metaphors and similes'

But there is nothing I can do.
I am only one person.
eons from now,

a group of bespectacled college students
will study your
fossiled impression,
Pick the lime from between your toes,
and pretty teeth.

It's what you've always wanted.

sparkle hayter

FOR MARCUS (IN MEMORY OF TIMES)

Next summer when you are just
an ornament on another woman's body,
take note of the memories
I placed in
your head.

the music,
connection of fingertips,
an expansion of faces

in the sun
and the gossip of old, small birds
discussing our incident.
Postponing September.
Remember these things
and I, in turn will forget
the cruel promise

of continuation.

book ends

The Diary of the Seduced by Christine Hope

review by Roberta Kalechofsky

Christine Hope has written a book which deals with the women's movement from an arresting point of view. Her insight into the issue of female identity is not political, but spiritual. No doubt, her profession as a teacher of philosophy has equipped her with a special angle of perception. The title of her book *The Diary of the Seduced** derives from a chapter in Kierkegaard's *Either-Or*, called "The Diary of the Seducer". The plot and the theme of the novel revolve around Kierkegaard's love for Regina Olsen and his need to break with her when he realized that Regina, young, lively, earthy, might never be capable of sharing his religious life. The novel, told from Regina's point of view, is a study of the struggle of women to understand themselves. It has some easily labelled weaknesses, but its insights are rendered with dignity and, for the most part, are free from liberationist rhetoric.

In *The Diary of The Seduced* Regina Olsen becomes Regina Terra, symbol of earth, matter, of the woman seeking spirituality. Kierkegaard is Soren Coeli, symbol of the poet, the visionary, of spirit and heaven, divorced from earth, nature and matter. To be sure, Ms. Hope has deliberately surrendered her male and female to conventions, partially to emphasize the barrenness of a world divided into spirit and matter, into "God the Father" and "mother earth"; partially because the allegory transcends her stated purpose to take the reader on "a journey into the soul of a woman

who lives at no particular time and in no particular place." Though the novel is cast as a parable of woman's quest for identity, it is also a parable of the ancient quest of all human beings for the union of spirit with matter. The novel suggests that "liberation" is a spiritual achievement of completeness and unity — the convergence of passion and mind, intuition and reflection, the particular and the universal — all the human qualities which have been separated as female and male. The book is divided into two pertinent parts: The Encounter With Woman and The Encounter With Man.

In the beginning Regina meets with an "angel-witch", one of the most imaginative figures in the book, who propels herself down the road by doing cartwheels, so that first her angel side comes up, and then her witch side comes up. It is she who starts Regina on the journey in which she encounters seven female types: the virgin, the mother, the thinker, the revolutionary, the artist, the saint, and the siren. Each type stands for a human quality, a different approach to life and a limitation of it. The virgin is developed through wind imagery, for she is "all surface." Her primary sensation is tactile. "The world is outside the body, and I live by letting the world blow over it." In contrast to the mother whose symbol is the womb, there is no inner space in the virgin. If she wholly on the outside, the mother is wholly on the inside. She is absorbed in inner movement to the exclusion of the outside world. Her habitat is the ocean. Removed from light and air, she is subsumed.

Regina's mission is to choose which type of woman she wishes to be. She discovers that each of the seven women is limited. She seeks completeness. The siren controls men through the mystery of her sexuality, but Regina craves openness. She wants to be unfolded, not covered. Moreover, the siren's consolation and exaltation are only of the moment: life based on carnal mysticism is insufficient.

The revolutionary is the symbol of will. She offers Regina the fortitude of self-determination. But Regina must pay the price of sexual mutilation for this. The siren, the mother and the revolutionary present three aspects of sexuality: one the apparent, momentarily compelling sexuality, the mother as the vessel of life, the lesbianism of the revolutionary as ultimately the way to death. Regina says to her, "...you live as a parasite. You need others to kill in order to live." Ms. Hope knows that the advocacy of lesbianism is not a tenable philosophical position.

In the chapter on the mother, the breast and flowing milk symbolize nourishment and survival, renewal of life through children. Hence, the amputation of the breast is amputation from future life. The revolutionary calls forth from Regina deep affection and recognition of her thirst for freedom. But Regina turns her back on her. Rejecting Susan Sontag's "militant lesbianism", she says, "...the world is male and female, and I have within me a driving desire for completeness, a passion for everything, for wholeness, and to spend my life with only the female is to cut myself in two."

The woman as saint was Ms. Hope's greatest challenge — as it would be any writer's, male or female. Saints are notoriously hard on writing talent. Wisely, Ms. Hope does not attribute a flaw to the saint who, by virtue of being a saint, must be flawless. The flaw is in the "system." Regina Terra is initiated into spirituality in a cathedral. But the cathedral had as a crack in the ceiling and Regina is drawn to examine it. Curiosity — the death of many a cat — leads her astray. She wants to see what is outside. Religiosity immediately becomes as confining as a coffin. Through the crack she spies an amphitheatre below. Later, in The Encounter With Man, this crack is developed into a symbol of the division in human nature. "The fissure was

**The Diary of the Seduced* was published by the Writer's Cooperative and is not available in bookstores. Anyone interested in purchasing a copy may inquire how to do so, by writing to Christine Hope, Department of Philosophy/Sir George Williams University/Montreal, Quebec; or to Writer's Cooperative, 2501 Park Row East, Montreal 262, Quebec.

the blindness to the human. All persons were matter and form, all persons had intuition and reflection, all persons should love the particular and the universal."

The amphitheatre is where the drama of choice takes place. Regina is confronted by the seven women and told she must choose which she will be. Only later, after marriage, does she realize that she has been all of them, that her struggle has been a journey through all phases of womanhood.

Ms. Hope's weakness is her handling of language, which is too often banal, inconsequential or melodramatic. It is fearfully dangerous to wrench a well-known line from Shakespeare and treat it as a common sentence. After Regina's marriage to Soren she goes through a sexual crisis in which all love-making, begun with desire, ends for her in disappointment. In this crisis, praying for help, she realizes that "God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit were all male", that Mary was a virgin, and that Magdalen, in shame, turned aside from her experiences. Regina cannot find comfort in her religion for her sexual agony. She has a breakdown and undergoes analysis. Leaving the analyst one afternoon, she says, "I will see you tomorrow, then." This appropriately ordinary sentence is followed with, "Tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow came, and he listened." Surely there must be other ways to express weariness.

Elsewhere, Ms. Hope renders the language stilted and old-fashioned, as in the words of the saint: "I cannot say to you what you would like to hear, although I would love to, for in truth it might be too late." And the passages of sexual description which every writer today feels obliged to try his hand at, whether he or she has the talent for it or not. Ms. Hope does not do worse, but not better than most. Here she avoids melodrama and lyricism. Her language is almost severely biologically correct. The approach is naturalistic and one suspects that naturalism here — that is, the reduction of the writer to observer and recorder — is a way of avoiding creation on a difficult subject. However, her weak use of language does not impede her ability to convey insight or to find appropriate symbols for her theme. While undergoing analy-

sis, Regina realizes that through her the divorced natures of her mother and father are fused. Thus, she has always had the gift of both matter and spirit. Nor can it be otherwise for any human being born of human beings.

Regina's compulsion for spiritual unity — hardly a modern compulsion — is so strong that she is able to resist adultery when her husband turns cold towards her during her pregnancy. Her carnal longings are real, but so is this woman's passion for spiritual life. "O fire of truth, help me..." she cries out, realizing that to commit adultery is to substitute "time temporary" for "time eternal", fragmented love for unifying love, a succession of diverse relationships for a continuous relationship which has the power of self-renewal.

After so much rich thematic development it is surprising that the end of the novel is ambiguous. In the next to the last chapter, "The Couple," Soren and Regina prepare to leave this world of robots — of mechanical matter. They have been through arguments, partings, distress and reconciliation. They learn that "...no choice is an isolated choice," that

communion between man and woman imposes a communal choice, that sex divides as well as unites. Symbolically speaking, they leave this world with their child to seek a better world.

In the next chapter, Regina is confronted by the angel-witch who tells her that her struggle has been for nothing, that she was seduced by love, by the vision of union. Regina struggles with the angel-witch and defeats her, but the vision of union is gone. Husband and child have incomprehensibly vanished. Nor is Regina identifiable with the issues of her struggle or with anything earthly or human. She is at the end "...a halo of light in the darkness, wondering." Ms. Hope had argued passionately and well for the use of mind as a way of loving and possessing the world — which it surely is. She brought to bear upon the issues of the women's rights struggle a rich medieval apprehension of the dichotomous nature of human life and of its endless search for unity. The concluding image of bemused solitariness is dismaying as an end to this novel.

* * *

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people in this issue

MARILYN ASSHETON-SMITH

Marilyn Assheton-Smith has been a nursing instructor at Medicine Hat, a Health Education Advisor in the Yukon and N.W.T. and a Community Development Worker. She is currently studying for her Ph.D in Sociology with an interest in social change and Canadian society. Her interest in women and politics is life-long.

W.L. BAKER

Winona Baker says she has spent most of her time as a housewife: she has worked as a teacher and in canneries and stores. She collects her quotes from books and radio and television programs. The sentences and phrases she doesn't want to forget are written on file cards, she says she has two shoeboxes full, and some of them have been compiled into a book-length manuscript. Ms. Baker lives in Nanaimo, B.C.

ELIZABETH BRADY

Elizabeth Brady is a frequent reviewer of Canadian fiction and her poetry has appeared in several British magazines. She is currently working on a collection of poems and a book-length study of an early Canadian writer.

DONA HARVEY

Dona Harvey, 29, is staff development officer for *The Edmonton Journal*. She has worked as a reporter, copy editor and section editor on newspapers in Canada and the United States for 13 years.

SPARKLE HAYTER

Sparkle Hayter, 16, is a student at Jasper Place Composite High School in Edmonton. She hopes to make writing her career. Aside from poetry, she is interested in football, hockey, animals, music, literature and flying kites. She is presently working on a collection of poetry.

MIRIAM MANDEL

Miriam Mandel is an Edmonton poet. Her first book, *Lions at her Face*, received the Governor General's Award for poetry in 1974.

NANCY MILLAR

Nancy Millar is a freelance writer and broadcaster in Calgary, Alberta. Presently she hosts and produces a twice-weekly television talk show. She says she writes for "whoever will buy me". Her background includes teaching and newspaper work.

SUSAN MUSGRAVE

Susan Musgrave is a published Canadian poet. She is presently living on the Queen Charlotte Islands in British Columbia.

BEVERLEY ROSS

Beverley Ross is an Edmonton-based pianist and writer and singer of songs. She is presently studying music and hopes to make her career in music.

JUDY SINCLAIR

Judy Sinclair is a newcomer to *Branching Out*. She comes from Moncton, New Brunswick. She calls herself "something of an eccentric."

ELLIE TESHER

Ellie Tesher plans to return to university in September to continue her post-graduate work in sociology. She has worked as a case worker and has worked in small group dynamics in family life seminars. She expresses her appreciation of people through humour and analysis in the written and spoken word. Ms. Tesher is married and has two children.

EVA VAN LOON

Eva Van Loon is an Edmontonian living in Calgary. She says she lives in a "cosy little shack with two dogs."

PASCALE TAQUINE

Pascale Taquine lives near Montreal and writes for the French-Canadian review *Mainmise* and for the CBC. Several more of her stories will be published soon.

GEORGINA WYMAN

Georgina Wyman lives in Ottawa, where she is actively involved in community projects like setting up a day care centre and writing for the community newspaper *Glebe Report*.

Branching Out needs distribution centres throughout Canada. If you are able to arrange an outlet in your area through your local bookseller, library, women's group, et cetera, please write and let us know, and we will handle it from here.

Branching Out depends totally on the mail for receiving manuscripts, distributing copies, promotion - everything. The recent disruption in postal service caused us some problems which delayed the publication of this issue of *Branching Out*. We sincerely regret this inconvenience.

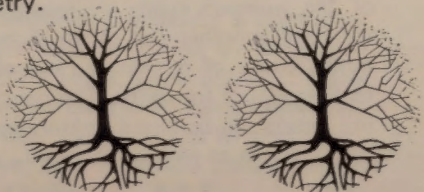
Please note that our new mailing address is *Branching Out*, P.O. Box 4098, Edmonton, Alberta, T6E 4T1.

We apologize for the omission of credit for cover photographs of both the preview issue of *Branching Out* and Volume One, Number One. They were the work of Alice Baumann-Rondez, who is also responsible for the cover of this issue.

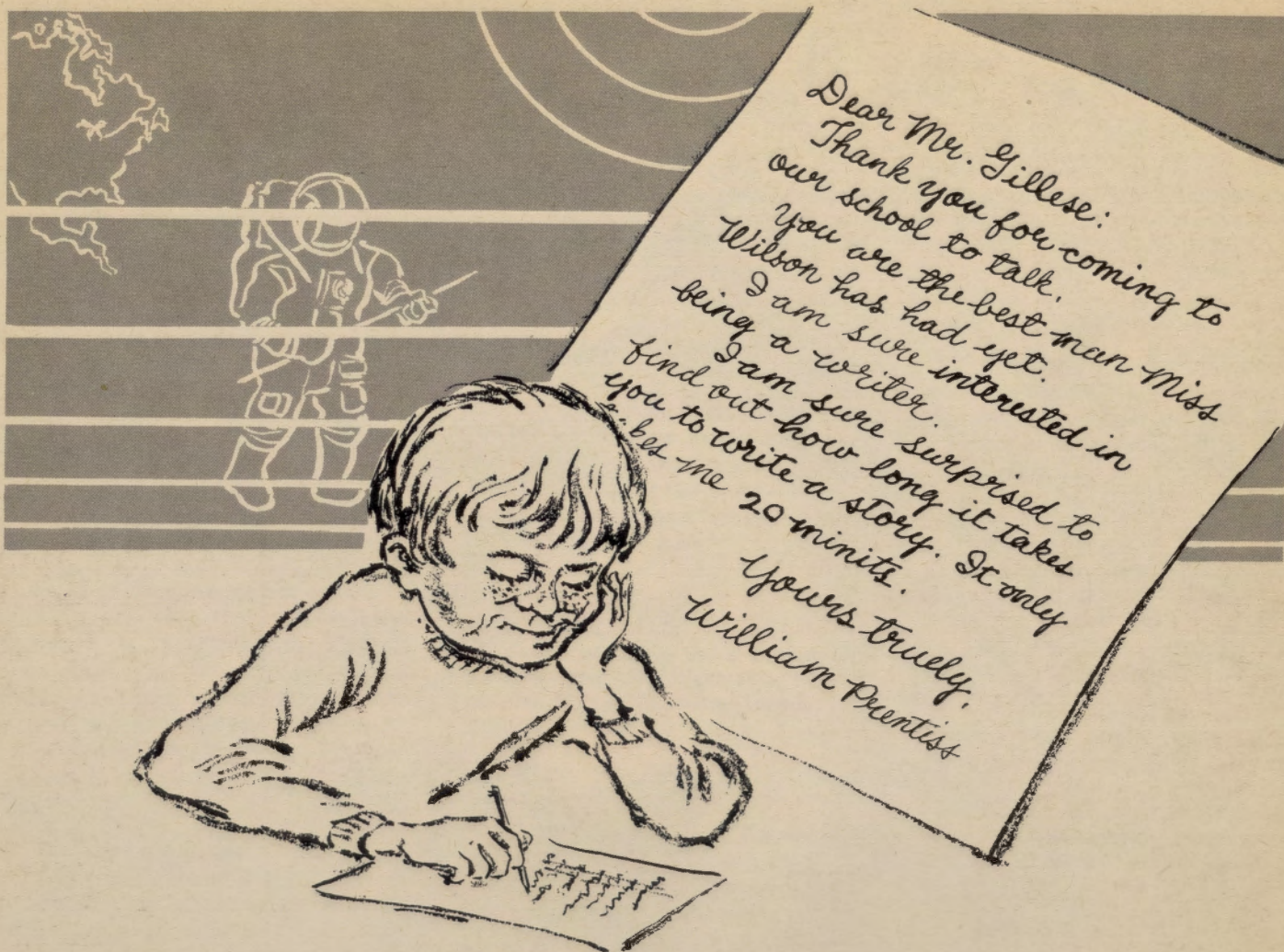
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Branching Out







Dear Mr. Gillesse:
 Thank you for coming to
 our school to talk.
 You are the best man Miss
 Wilson has had yet.
 I am sure interested in
 being a writer.
 I am sure surprised to
 find out how long it takes
 you to write a story. It only
 takes me 20-minits.
 Yours truly,
 William Prentiss

We're keeping an eye on Willie...

Willie, as you may have already guessed, is in Grade 5, and Miss Wilson is his teacher.

Before you know it, Willie, or someone like him, may be making Canadians proud of their country — as a writer of short stories, human-interest features, best-selling novels. That's why we go to Willie's school.

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John Patrick Gillesse, Director
 Annelie Speidelsbach, Assistant
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