





## WHO WE ARE . . .

The Canadian Women's Movement Archives is an organization of the Canadian Women's Movement. This is not an obvious statement when one thinks about how archives generally operate as institutions. Collective members and volunteers at the CWMA are feminist activists creating a community-based archives, resource and research centre.

Our autonomy from the usual institutions upon which most archives are politically and financially dependent is important, because such reliance would almost certainly place us outside the women's movement. The price of this independence, though, is precarious financing and relentless fund-raising.

## WHAT IS IN THE ARCHIVES?

- Material on over 1,500 women's groups, coalitions, conferences, demonstrations and cultural events from across Canada.
- Over 600 periodicals, newsletters, newspapers and magazines ranging from the 1960's to the present.
- A large selection of lesbian newsletters, periodicals and group files.
- Collections of buttons, posters, t-shirts, photographs, slides, tapes and other ephemera.
- A library of Canadian books, both fiction and non-fiction, by and about Canadian women.

## WHY AN ARCHIVES?

Feminists in Canada suffer from a lack of popular or scholarly writing on the history of our own contemporary women's movement. Much of what exists is borrowed from south of our border. Since the collection of the CWMA focuses only on Canadian feminist groups and individuals, the Archives will play a pivotal role in any future effort to write the history of Canadian feminism.

What our movement did and did not do can tell us a lot about who we are today. The history of the current women's movement in Canada is still in the process of being formed. How it will be perceived will depend largely on what historical material is available. In the past, information on feminist activism has often been lost or written out of history, leading to the assumption that there was an absence of feminist activity. An archives controlled by feminists, for feminists, ensures that our history will never be lost again.

Within the present women's movement, our energy is often directed towards "getting the job done", organizing, meeting, planning and strategizing. Documenting the work we are doing is usually given a low priority. The existence of a women's archives allows feminists to make documenting our past a priority and makes our history available to feminist activists and researchers.

## CONTRIBUTE TO US . . .

**INDIVIDUALS** — You can help us by looking through your basements, boxes and attics! Flyers, newsletters, periodicals, minutes of meetings and correspondence are all important records of our groups' activities. Keep your almanacs and journals. Nothing which relates to the women's movement should be thrown away!

**GROUPS** — Add the archives to your mailing lists. Send us copies of your papers, articles, posters, buttons . . . Take minutes of all of your meetings, tape any important discussions and photograph any events or demonstrations which you are organizing.

**VOLUNTEERS** — The more women who become involved with the Archives, the stronger our group will be. Women from across Canada can help the Archives by forming a national network of women's archives to co-ordinate our activities with feminist work in your area. If you or someone you know would like to volunteer, please write to us or call us at (416) 597-8865.

**FINANCIAL DONATIONS** — The Canadian Women's Movement Archives is a registered non-profit, charitable organization. Financial donations are always gratefully received and tax deductible receipts for donations are available.