


**Different Therefore Unequal:  
Employment  
And  
Women With Disabilities**



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DAWN CANADA: DisAbled Women's Network Canada  
Réseau d'Action des Femmes Handicapées du Canada



DIFFERENT THEREFORE UNEQUAL?  
EMPLOYMENT AND WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES

POSITION PAPER 4 PREPARED FOR  
DAWN CANADA: DISABLED WOMEN'S NETWORK CANADA

BY  
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THANKS TO ALL OF THE WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES FROM ACROSS CANADA WHO PARTICIPATED IN OUR PROJECT BY FILLING OUT A LONG AND DETAILED QUESTIONNAIRE. SOME OF YOU NEEDED ASSISTANCE IN GETTING THROUGH IT AND FOR THAT EXTRA EFFORT WE ARE ESPECIALLY GRATEFUL TO YOU. THANKS ALSO TO THOSE OF YOU WHO AGREED TO BE INTERVIEWED IN PERSON AND, IN THIS WAY, ENRICHED THE PROJECT BY SHARING EVEN MORE OF YOUR TIME AND THE DETAILS OF YOUR LIVES WITH US.

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SPECIAL THANKS IS DUE TO OUR FUNDERS, THE SECRETARY OF STATE DEPARTMENT'S DISABLED PERSONS PARTICIPATION PROGRAM, WOMEN'S PROGRAM, AND PROMOTION OF OFFICIAL LANGUAGES BRANCH, WHOSE FINANCIAL SUPPORT MADE THIS PROJECT POSSIBLE. WE ARE PARTICULARLY FORTUNATE TO HAVE THE CONSTANT SUPPORT AND ENCOURAGEMENT OF GLYNIS ELLERINGTON, OUR PROJECT OFFICER (DPPP).

AND LAST BUT NOT LEAST, TO OUR ANGEL WHO HAS SUPPORTED US IN MANY WAYS RIGHT FROM THE BEGINNING, THANKS!

JOAN MEISTER,  
CHAIRPERSON,  
DAWN CANADA.

## INTRODUCTION:

DAWN CANADA: DISABLED WOMEN'S NETWORK CANADA INCLUDED A NUMBER OF QUESTIONS ABOUT EMPLOYMENT IN ITS RECENT STUDY OF THE NEEDS OF CANADIAN WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES. WE DISTRIBUTED APPROXIMATELY 1200 QUESTIONNAIRES THROUGH DAWN AFFILIATES, DISABLED CONSUMERS' GROUPS AND CONTACTS IN THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT. TWO HUNDRED AND FORTY-FIVE WERE RETURNED BY WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES. AS THEY WERE FINDING THEIR WAY AROUND THE COUNTRY AND BACK TO US, WE TRAVELLED TO THE NORTH, THE ATLANTIC PROVINCES, AND ALBERTA, MEETING WITH GROUPS OF WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES -- WOMEN FOR CHANGE IN NEWFOUNDLAND, THE DANCE WITH DAWN GROUP IN CHARLOTTETOWN, AND PRINCE GEORGE'S HANDY CIRCLE, TO NAME A FEW -- AND INTERVIEWING APPROXIMATELY 50 WOMEN. WE PUT THE QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS TOGETHER WITH THE INFORMATION WE GAINED FROM THE WOMEN WE TALKED TO. THE RESULT OF OUR WORK TO DATE IS A SERIES OF PAPERS, OF WHICH THIS IS THE FOURTH AND FINAL. ITS SUBJECT IS WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES AND EMPLOYMENT EQUITY.

ACCORDING TO RECENT DATA FROM STATISTICS CANADA, 10.7% OF CANADIAN ADULTS BETWEEN THE AGES OF 15 AND 65 "REPORT SOME LEVEL OF ACTIVITY LIMITATION" WHICH IS NOT A TEMPORARY CONDITION (STATISTICS CANADA 1988). HOWEVER, ONLY 4% TO 5.4% OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES ARE WORKING, AND MEN OUTNUMBER WOMEN AMONG WORKERS WITH DISABILITIES. (EMPLOYMENT AND IMMIGRATION CANADA, 1988: 50) THAT MEANS THAT THERE ARE A LOT OF CANADIAN WOMEN OF WORKING AGE WITH DISABILITIES WHO WANT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE

LABOUR FORCE, BUT ARE UNEMPLOYED OR UNDEREMPLOYED. THE WOMEN WHO COMMUNICATED WITH US TOLD US OF THE BARRIERS THAT KEPT THEM FROM PARTICIPATING IN THE WORLD OF WORK AND OF THE HANDICAPS THEY ENCOUNTERED WHEN THEY DID WORK.

WE LEARNED THAT WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES ARE WILLING AND ABLE TO WORK; THAT WE ARE DISCRIMINATED AGAINST AS WOMEN AND AS PEOPLE WHO HAVE DISABILITIES; THAT THERE ARE VERY FEW SUPPORT SERVICES TO HELP US FIND AND KEEP JOBS; AND, THAT MOST EMPLOYERS ARE RELUCTANT TO ADAPT THEIR ATTITUDES AND THEIR WORKPLACES TO SUIT OUR NEEDS.

#### WE WANT TO WORK:

FIFTY PERCENT OF THE RESPONDENTS STATED THAT THEY ARE ABLE AND ONLY 14% SAID THAT THEY ARE UNABLE TO WORK. AN ADDITIONAL THIRTY-THREE PERCENT (79 OF THE 245 WOMEN) CAN WORK IN A LIMITED WAY, AND 17% COULD WORK IF THE WORKPLACE WERE ACCESSIBLE. (SINCE THESE LAST TWO QUESTIONS ARE NOT MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE, PERCENTAGES TOTAL OVER 100%). ONLY 34 WOMEN, OR 14% OF THE RESPONDENTS, STATED THAT THEY WERE NOT ABLE TO WORK AT ALL. YET ONLY 45% OF THE RESPONDENTS WORKED FULL-TIME. ANOTHER 12% WORKED PART-TIME OR OCCASIONALLY AND 23% DO VOLUNTEER WORK.

THAT LEAVES A LOT OF UNEMPLOYED AND UNDEREMPLOYED WOMEN. OF THOSE WHO ARE NOT EMPLOYED, 65% WANT TO WORK. WHEN ASKED TO STATE THE BARRIERS THAT RESTRICT THEM FROM EMPLOYMENT, RESPONDENTS MOST FREQUENTLY LISTED "NO SUITABLE EMPLOYMENT", WITH "LACK OF TRAINING" THE NEXT MOST COMMON BARRIER. DISCRIMINATION WAS CITED IN COMMENTS SUCH AS, "OVERCOMING PREJUDICE AND BUDGET CUTBACKS."

## DISCRIMINATION:

WHEN ASKED IF THEY HAD EXPERIENCED JOB DISCRIMINATION IN EMPLOYMENT BECAUSE OF THEIR DISABILITIES, ALMOST HALF THE RESPONDENTS WHO ANSWERED THE QUESTION (47%) SAID "YES." THIRTY PERCENT DID NOT THINK THEY HAD; THE REST WERE UNSURE. SOME WERE VERY CLEAR: "I'M NOT EMPLOYED BECAUSE OF 'UNWILLINGNESS TO HIRE ME'," CAME FROM ONE WOMAN WITH A SPEECH DISABILITY. "ALL I HEAR IS THAT OTHERS ARE BETTER SUITED TO THE JOBS I TRY FOR," WROTE A WOMAN WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES IN HER EXQUISITE CALLIGRAPHIC HAND. SHE DOES VOLUNTEER WORK AND LIVES ON LESS THAN \$5,000 A YEAR FROM A GOVERNMENT ALLOWANCE. SHE HAS TWO SCHOOL-AGED CHILDREN.

WE DID NOT DEFINE "JOB DISCRIMINATION" ON THE QUESTIONNAIRE. IT IS NOT SIMPLE TO DEFINE IN A FEW WORDS. IT CAN INCLUDE BEING DENIED AN INTERVIEW WHEN WE SLUR OUR WORDS IN A TELEPHONE INQUIRY OR ASK IF THE WORKPLACE IS INACCESSIBLE; NOT BEING GIVEN A JOB WHEN WE ARE AS QUALIFIED AS THE APPLICANT WHO GETS IT BECAUSE THE MANAGER DOESN'T WANT TO BOTHER BUYING THE AIDS WE NEED; OR, HITTING THE "GLASS CEILING" IN THE WORKPLACE.

THE "GLASS CEILING" IS THE INVISIBLE BARRIER THAT IMPERCEPTABLY BUT EFFECTIVELY KEEPS US IN THE LOWER ECHELONS OF AN ORGANIZATION. IT IS THE LIMITATION ENCOUNTERED BY A WOMAN WHO IS POST-POLIO AND MOBILITY IMPAIRED. SHE RESPONDED TO OUR QUESTION, "DID YOU LOSE YOUR JOB WHEN YOU BECAME DISABLED?" WITH, "NO -- BUT NO ADVANCEMENT WAS POSSIBLE."

DISCRIMINATION ALSO CAN INCLUDE SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND WHAT



FOR WANT OF A BETTER TERM I WILL CALL "ABILITY HARASSMENT." SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN THE WORKPLACE -- BUM-PATting, SEXIST REMARKS, OPEN DISPLAY OF SEXIST IMAGES, AND MORE OVERT MOLESTATION -- DESTROYS WOMEN'S DIGNITY IN THE WORKPLACE, TRAPS US IN DEAD-END JOBS, AND DRIVES US OUT OF OUR CAREERS.

"ABILITY HARASSMENT" INCLUDES JOKES, TEASING, NAME-CALLING, AND INAPPROPRIATE REMARKS ABOUT OUR DISABILITIES. THE OBVIOUS ONES, "HERE COMES THE GIMP," OR "WELL, JILLIAN, ARE YOU GOING TO ROLL OVER AND DROOL FOR US TODAY?" ARE EASILY IDENTIFIED. THEY CAN BE DEALT WITH THROUGH HUMAN RIGHTS CODES, IF WE HAVE THE ENERGY AND WHEREWITHAL TO PURSUE THAT COURSE OF ACTION. THE MORE SUBTLE ONES: "ARE YOU SURE YOU CAN HANDLE THAT TASK, DEAR? SHOULD I DO IT FOR YOU? I KNOW YOU PEOPLE WITH MS TIRE SO EASILY", ARE HARDER TO DEAL WITH. THEY MAY BE WELL MEANT, BUT THEY UNDERMINE US NONETHELESS. IT IS HARD TO CONVINCE THE BOSS THAT YOU ARE THE RIGHT PERSON TO GET THAT NEXT PROMOTION WHEN YOUR CO-WORKERS MAKE YOU THE OBJECT OF SUCH UNWANTED CONSIDERATION. MAYBE THAT'S WHAT A YOUNG WOMAN WHO HAS CEREBRAL PALSY MEANT WHEN SHE STATED, "THE JOB SUITS MY NEEDS, BUT THE STAFF DON'T." IF WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES FACE HARASSMENT OF EITHER KIND IN ADDITION TO THE PHYSICAL BARRIERS WE MUST DEAL WITH IN MOST WORK SITES, THE OBSTACLES MAY SEEM INSURMOUNTABLE.

EDUCATION:

GRAPHS 1: "EDUCATION LEVEL OF ALL RESPONDENTS", 5: "EDUCATION LEVEL: WORKERS WITH AND WITHOUT CHILDREN" AND 6: "EDUCATION LEVEL: UNEMPLOYED WITH AND WITHOUT CHILDREN" (APPENDICES A, E AND F) INDICATE THAT OUR RESPONDENTS HAVE

WIDELY VARIED EDUCATION LEVELS. THERE ARE WOMEN WITH "NO FORMAL EDUCATION" AND WOMEN WITH POST-GRADUATE DEGREES. JUST UNDER ONE-QUARTER (24%) OF THE RESPONDENTS DID NOT COMPLETE HIGH SCHOOL AND, THEREFORE, MAY NOT BE WELL PREPARED FOR SKILLED JOBS. OVERALL, HOWEVER, THEY ARE A RELATIVELY WELL-EDUCATED GROUP. FIFTY-FOUR PERCENT HAVE A TRAINING CERTIFICATE, SOME COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY OR A UNIVERSITY DEGREE.

EMPLOYMENT AND EDUCATION DO NOT ALWAYS GO HAND IN HAND, ALTHOUGH WELL PAYING JOBS ARE NOT AVAILABLE TO THOSE WITH POOR EDUCATION. SEVERAL WOMEN WITH LITTLE OR NO EDUCATION ARE IN THE LABOUR FORCE AND THE MAJORITY OF THESE WOMEN HAVE NO CHILDREN. DATA GATHERED IN TABLE 1: "EDUCATION LEVEL BY TIME OF ONSET OF DISABILITY, LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION AND PARENTING STATUS" (SEE NOTE 1) DEMONSTRATES THAT OF THE ELEVEN WOMEN WHO HAVE NO FORMAL EDUCATION BUT WHO ARE EMPLOYED, EIGHT ARE WOMEN BORN WITH A DISABILITY AND SEVEN OF THE EIGHT HAVE NO CHILDREN. NO MOTHERS WITH LESS THAN GRADE EIGHT EDUCATION AND ONLY A SMALL NUMBER OF MOTHERS WHO HAD NOT COMPLETED HIGH SCHOOL ARE IN THE LABOUR FORCE. TWENTY-ONE WOMEN WITHOUT CHILDREN WHO HAVE LITTLE EDUCATION (LESS THAN GRADE NINE) ARE EMPLOYED. TWENTY OF THEM WERE BORN WITH A DISABILITY OR ACQUIRED ONE IN EARLY CHILDHOOD. SOME HAD BEEN INSTITUTIONALIZED. FOR INSTANCE, ONE HALIFAX WOMAN HAD SEVERE SEIZURES IN INFANCY AND WAS NOT TAUGHT TO READ UNTIL SHE WAS TWENTY. HER JOB AT A SHELTERED WORKSHOP PAYS FOUR DOLLARS AN HOUR.

OTHER WOMEN WERE EDUCATED AT "SPECIAL" SCHOOLS FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES. THE EDUCATION THEY RECEIVED THERE MAY HAVE



BEEN GOOD, BAD OR INDIFFERENT, DEPENDING ON THE INSTITUTION. MANY FOCUS ON TEACHING COMPLIANCE RATHER THAN INGENUITY. MOST ARE LIMITED TO "CHILDREN" UNDER EIGHTEEN. BECAUSE OF TREATMENTS, SURGERY OR A NEED TO LEARN IN A STEP-BY-STEP WAY, WE MAY NEED ADDITIONAL TIME TO COMPLETE OUR COURSES. NONE IS ALLOWED. IF YOU HAVE READ THE PREVIOUS PAPERS IN THIS SERIES, YOU WILL HAVE MET "SHIRLEY." SHE IS THE YOUNG WOMAN WITH MILD CEREBRAL PALSY WHO LEFT HOME AT SIXTEEN. SHE WENT TO A SCHOOL ATTACHED TO A CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL. IN HER OPINION, HER EDUCATION THERE WAS "NOT GOOD". THE EMPHASIS WAS ON "SOCIAL SKILLS", SO THAT PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES WOULD "KNOW HOW TO ACT." SHE ALSO HAD TO SPEND A LOT OF TIME IN PHYSIOTHERAPY, AND MISSED CLASSES AS A RESULT.

SHIRLEY FEELS CHEATED; "IF I'D HAD MORE HELP ACADEMICALLY, I WOULD HAVE MY GRADE 12." SHE WAS FORCED TO QUIT AT 18, WITH ONLY HER GRADE 10, BECAUSE SHE WAS NO LONGER ELIGIBLE TO BE A PATIENT AT THE CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL. CURRENTLY, SHE IS TAKING A COMPUTER COURSE. "IT IS FREE FOR PEOPLE WITH CP." SHE ALSO TAKES AN ADVANCED CERAMICS COURSE. SHE WOULD LIKE TO UPGRADE AND GET HER GRADE 12. SHE'S BEEN OUT OF A JOB FOR A YEAR AND A HALF. SHE IS GETTING FRUSTRATED AND RUNNING OUT OF MONEY.

TO BE FAIR, SOME OF THE WOMEN IN THE MOST HIGHLY EDUCATED GROUP ALSO ATTENDED "SPECIAL" SCHOOLS. OUR SAMPLE INCLUDED SEVERAL WOMEN, GENERALLY WOMEN WITH MOBILITY, VISUAL OR AURAL DISABILITIES, WHO WERE GIVEN GOOD TRAINING, HAVE PURSUED STRONG CAREERS, AND MAKE GOOD INCOMES. TWO WOMEN IN THAT GROUP WERE INTERVIEWED. BOTH, AS IT HAPPENS, WERE VISUALLY IMPAIRED AS A RESULT OF ALBINISM. ONE WAS A SOCIAL WORKER IN A HOSPITAL; THE

OTHER TAUGHT IN A SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK. THEY WERE EDUCATED IN SCHOOLS FOR THE BLIND, THEN ATTENDED REGULAR UNIVERSITIES AND RECEIVED THEIR DOCTORATES. THEY HAD NOT EXPECTED TO MARRY, AND HAVE NOT DONE SO.

THEY BOTH SPOKE OF THE STRONG ACCEPTANCE AND SUPPORT THEY RECEIVED FROM THEIR FAMILIES AND FROM TEACHERS. THEY HAD ROLE MODELS IN THE SCHOOL THEY ATTENDED AND THEY WORKED HARD. NEITHER OF THESE WOMEN SPOKE OF DISCRIMINATION IN THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM, BUT OTHERS HAVE. LACK OF PHYSICAL ACCESS IS OBVIOUS. MANY COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES ARE INACCESSIBLE, IN PART OR AS A WHOLE. LIBRARIES ARE A NIGHTMARE FOR WHEELCHAIR USERS. STUDENTS WHO ARE VISUALLY IMPAIRED CAN GET BOOKS ON TAPE AT MOST INSTITUTIONS, BUT THEIR CHOICE OF MATERIALS IS LIMITED. FACULTY CAN BE PATRONIZING OR DOWNRIGHT BIGOTED. A FEW YEARS AGO, A FACULTY MEMBER AT THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA REFUSED TO ALLOW A SIGNER TO ACCOMPANY A STUDENT TO HER CLASS, ON THE GROUNDS THAT SHE FOUND IT "DISTRACTING."

WOMEN WITH PSYCHIATRIC DISABILITIES CAN BE SEEN AS POTENTIALLY DIFFICULT AND ARE DISCOURAGED FROM REGISTRATION. A RESPONDENT WHO DESCRIBES HER DISABILITY AS "EMOTIONAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES (SO LABELED)" IS NOW COMPLETING A B.A. SHE FOUND SHE HAD "TROUBLE SECURING FINANCIAL AID -- [I WAS] DISCRIMINATED AGAINST DUE TO DISABILITY. (ITS OK NOW.)"

ALTHOUGH THE DEVELOPMENT OF COMPUTERS WAS HAILED AS A BREAK-THROUGH FOR WOMEN AND FOR PEOPLE WITH MOBILITY AND OTHER DISABILITIES, IT IS BENEFITTING MEN MORE THAN WOMEN. AT THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA, 88% OF THE STUDENTS IN THE

COMPUTER SCIENCE PROGRAM ARE MALES. THEY ARE THE PROGRAMMERS. WE ARE THE DATA PROCESSORS, THE ONES WHO SIT IN FRONT OF A VIDEO DISPLAY TERMINAL ALL DAY AND GET PAID AS CLERICAL WORKERS ALWAYS HAVE BEEN PAID -- POORLY. THIS SEEMS TO BE DUE TO SOCIALIZATION. "BOYS TEND TO CONTROL THE COMPUTERS AND GIRLS ARE NOT INTERESTED IN FIGHTING FOR THEM," ACCORDING TO RICHARD ROSENBERG, A PROFESSOR IN THE UBC DEPARTMENT.<sup>2</sup>

A GOOD EDUCATION IS A PREREQUISITE FOR WELL-PAID WORK. A GOOD EDUCATION IS EXPENSIVE AND GETTING MORE SO. SPECIAL FUNDING, BURSARIES, OR SCHOLARSHIPS SPECIFICALLY FOR FURTHERING THE EDUCATION OF WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES WOULD BE A MEANS OF GETTING MORE OF US INTO POSITIONS WHERE WE CAN, IN TURN, SERVE AS ROLE MODELS FOR OTHERS.

#### **LACK OF SUPPORT:**

MANY OF OUR RESPONDENTS WOULD WORK IF SUPPORT SERVICES WERE AVAILABLE, OR IF THEY COULD FIND JOBS THAT MET, OR COULD BE ADAPTED TO, THEIR SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS. WE DISCUSSED THE LACK OF ACCESSIBLE AND AFFORDABLE DAY-CARE IN OUR PREVIOUS PAPER, "THE ONLY MOTHER IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD." DAYCARE IS A FUNDAMENTAL SUPPORT SERVICE FOR WOMEN WITH YOUNG CHILDREN. ONE OF OUR RESPONDENTS PUT MATTERS SUCCINCTLY: TO THE QUESTION, "IF YOU ARE NOT EMPLOYED, WHAT KEEPS YOU FROM GETTING A JOB?", SHE REPLIED, "DAYCARE'S EXPENSIVE; IF I WORK AT MINIMUM WAGE, IT WOULDN'T WORK OUT."

"THERE ARE VERY FEW PROGRAMS TO HELP FIND EMPLOYMENT FOR DISABLED PEOPLE," WAS ANOTHER OBSERVATION. ABSOLUTELY RIGHT AND THERE ARE EVEN FEWER SET UP SPECIFICALLY FOR WOMEN WITH

DISABILITIES. GOOD JOB COUNSELLING AND EMPLOYMENT READINESS TRAINING COULD HELP US PREPARE FOR THE WORLD OF WORK, AND HELP US OVER THE HURDLES WE WILL ENCOUNTER ON THE WAY TO THE WORK PLACE.

THE LOW SELF-ESTEEM THAT IS A CRITICAL PROBLEM FOR MANY, IF NOT MOST, WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES (SEE RIDINGTON 1989A) MAY MAKE LOOKING FOR A JOB SEEM OVERWHELMING. IF WE ARE AFRAID OF REJECTION, IT MAY SEEM MUCH EASIER TO REMAIN JOBLESS THAN TO WRITE UP A RESUME, WRITE LETTERS OF APPLICATION (OR FIND SOMEONE TO DO THAT FOR US, IF NECESSARY), MAKE TRANSPORTATION ARRANGEMENTS TO ATTEND INTERVIEWS AND GET OURSELVES PHYSICALLY AND EMOTIONALLY PREPARED TO UNDERGO THEM. ONE WOMAN SAID HER PROBLEM WAS A "LACK OF SELF-STARTING IMPULSE." SHE BLAMED HERSELF. SHE EXPECTED TO BE ABLE TO PERFORM MIRACLES WITHOUT THE INFORMATION AND SUPPORT THAT MAKE "MIRACLES" POSSIBLE.

EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS FOR DISABLED INDIVIDUALS TEND TO BE MALE-ORIENTED AND MALE-DOMINATED. BUT IF WE TRY TO ATTACK THE PROBLEM FROM THE OTHER DIRECTION, WE STILL FALL THROUGH THE CRACKS. JOB PROGRAMS FOR WOMEN DO NOT LOOK AT OUR SPECIFIC NEEDS EITHER. WORKERS IN A WOMEN'S EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM IN ONE OF THE ATLANTIC PROVINCES WERE ASKED ABOUT THEIR SERVICES FOR WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES. THEY TOLD ME THAT THEY REFERRED THEM TO THE APPROPRIATE DISABLED CONSUMERS' GROUP, "THE CNIB AND THE CANADIAN PARAPLEGIC ASSOCIATION BOTH HAVE OFFICES HERE." I POINTED OUT THAT THEY WERE SEEING US AS DISABILITIES, NOT AS WOMEN. THEY GAVE IT SOME THOUGHT, AND PROMISED TO DO SOME LIAISON WORK AND JOINT COUNSELLING WITH LOCAL CONSUMERS' ORGANIZATIONS.

IN VANCOUVER, DONNA STEWART OF WOMEN SKILLS REPORTED THAT

HER ORGANIZATION GETS NO INQUIRIES FROM WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES, "I GUESS WE JUST ASSUMED THAT THE B.C.C.D. [B.C. COALITION OF THE DISABLED] HAS PROGRAMS, BECAUSE THEY'RE NOT CONTACTING US." WE HAVE AGREED TO INVESTIGATE THE POSSIBILITY OF A JOINT PROJECT BETWEEN WOMEN SKILLS AND DAWN CANADA, TO DISCUSS DOING OUTREACH, AND FIND WAYS AND MEANS OF GETTING BETTER RESOURCES SPECIFICALLY DESIGNED FOR THE NEEDS OF WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES.

GOVERNMENTS HAVE NOT BEEN HELPFUL TO DATE. IN THE CURRENT CONSERVATIVE CLIMATE, IT WILL BE HARD TO GET THEM TO FUND NEW INITIATIVES. THERE ARE SOME POCKETS OF HOPE. WHILE IN THE YUKON, I MET WITH BOBBIE SMITH, OF THE GOVERNMENT'S WOMEN'S BUREAU. SHE IS TRYING TO INITIATE JOB READINESS PROGRAMS FOR WOMEN WHO HAVE SPECIFIC NEEDS. AS SHE PUT IT, IN BUREAUCRACIES:

PEOPLE WHO NEED HELP THE MOST GET FORGOTTEN . . .  
PEOPLE WORK WITH PEOPLE WHO THEY ARE COMFORTABLE WITH,  
AND THEY TAKE US OFF THE AGENDA.

THE GOVERNMENT OF YUKON HAS A "ONE ON ONE POSITIVE EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM" FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES. SMITH IS A NATIVE WOMAN WHO HAS A SISTER BORN WITH A DISABILITY. SHE IS MORE AWARE THAN MOST BUREAUCRATS OF THE PARTICULAR PROBLEMS THAT WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES ENCOUNTER AS THEY SEEK EMPLOYMENT. THE PEOPLE OF THE YUKON RECENTLY ELECTED LONG-TIME FEMINIST JOYCE HAYDEN, WHO HAS A VISUAL IMPAIRMENT, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE TERRITORIAL ASSEMBLY. PERHAPS, WITH INITIATIVE FROM JOYCE HAYDEN AND BOBBIE SMITH, THAT GOVERNMENT CAN BEGIN A PROGRAM THAT CAN BE A MODEL FOR THE REST OF CANADA. IT IS TIME SOMEBODY DID.

#### ENTERING THE JOB MARKET:

LACK OF TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT READINESS CAN KEEP SOME OF



US UNEMPLOYED. FORTY-SIX WOMEN WERE NOT IN THE WORK FORCE BECAUSE NO JOBS THAT MET THEIR REQUIREMENTS WERE AVAILABLE (OR WERE NOT KNOWN TO THEM). BUT NO COUNSELLING CAN HELP WHEN EMPLOYERS ARE TOTALLY UNCOOPERATIVE. WE HEARD FROM A WOMAN, MOBILITY IMPAIRED FROM BIRTH, WHO HAD TRAINED AS A TEACHER. SHE IS STILL UNEMPLOYED BECAUSE, "THE SCHOOL BOARD COULD NOT FIND AN ACCESSIBLE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL." (WHICH MAKES US WONDER -- IF THERE IS NO ACCESSIBLE SCHOOL IN THE DISTRICT, HOW MANY MOTHERS ARE EXCLUDED FROM PARTICIPATING IN THEIR CHILDREN'S EDUCATION? WHERE DO CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES GO TO SCHOOL? WHERE DO KIDS WITH AND WITHOUT DISABILITIES GET A CHANCE TO INTERACT?)

FROM ANOTHER TEACHER, A SIMILAR PROBLEM:

I BECAME A TEACHER IN SPITE OF MY DISABILITY BUT BECAUSE I HAD NO DRIVER'S LICENSE I COULDN'T ATTEND MANY OTHER OTHER FUNCTIONS CONNECTED WITH TEACHING. I QUIT TEACHING TO SEE WHETHER OR NOT MY SEIZURES WOULD BECOME CONTROLLED ENOUGH FOR ME TO GET A DRIVER'S LICENCE. I GOT THE LICENCE, BUT JOBS IN TEACHING BECAME VERY COMPETITIVE, SO I WENT IN FOR LESS STRESSFUL WORK. RIGHT NOW I CANNOT TAKE FULL-TIME EMPLOYMENT BECAUSE I AM CAREGIVER TO MY PARENTS.

FROM NEW BRUNSWICK, WE HEARD FROM A LAWYER WHO IS NOT EMPLOYED BECAUSE OF PHYSICAL BARRIERS — "NO ACCESS TO FEDERAL AND PROVINCIAL DEPARTMENTS." IT IS HARD TO GET CALLED TO THE BAR WHEN YOU CANNOT GET UP THE COURT HOUSE STEPS.

#### BECOMING DISABLED AFFECTS JOB STATUS:

WE ASKED WOMEN WHO FILLED OUT THE QUESTIONNAIRE, "DID YOU LOSE YOUR JOB WHEN YOU BECAME DISABLED? IF SO, COULD YOU TELL US WHY?" THE QUESTIONS WOULD NOT APPLY TO WOMEN WHO WERE BORN WITH A DISABILITY OR WHO BECAME DISABLED IN CHILDHOOD (103 WOMEN). OF THE 142 WOMEN TO WHOM THIS QUESTION WAS APPLICABLE, FIFTY



ANSWERED THAT THEY HAD LOST THEIR JOB, OR STOPPED WORKING, FOR REASONS CONNECTED WITH THEIR DISABILITY -- FATIGUE, WEAKNESS, OR LOSS OF DEXTERITY, AND THE LIKE. AS WELL, WOMEN WHO DID NOT SPECIFICALLY INDICATE THAT THEY HAD BEEN DISMISSED GAVE ANSWERS THAT INDICATED THAT THEY HAD GIVEN UP WORK, RATHER THAN FIGHT TO HAVE THEIR DISABILITIES ACCOMMODATED.

MANY WOMEN WHO COULD BE GAINFULLY EMPLOYED WITH SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS (FLEXIBLE HOURS, AN ACCESSIBLE WASHROOM, A TDD (TELEPHONE DEVICE FOR THE DEAF), A CHANGE TO A LESS DEMANDING POSITION, A PLACE TO REST AT THE WORK PLACE) DROPPED OUT OF THE WORK FORCE. FROM THEIR ANSWERS, IT SEEMED THAT MANY RESPONDENTS LOST OR GAVE UP THEIR JOBS DUE TO PROBLEMS THAT COULD HAVE BEEN OVERCOME BY CREATIVE THINKING AND/OR EMPLOYERS' WILLINGNESS TO ADAPT THE JOB OR THE WORKPLACE TO THEIR NEEDS. SEVERAL WOMEN SAID SIMPLY "I LOST THE JOB -- THE EMPLOYER WAS NOT UNDERSTANDING." A WOMAN WHO WEARS BRACES BECAUSE OF ARTHRITIS WAS FIRED, "BECAUSE THE BOSS THOUGHT I WOULDN'T BE FAST ENOUGH ON ACCOUNT OF A FIRE OR IF ONE OF THE PEOPLE GOT HURT." OTHERS COMMENTED:

I'M SEMI-BEDRIDDEN, NO PAIN CONTROL, NEED SPECIALIZED MEDICAL SERVICES AND REHABILITATION AND LEGAL SERVICES. LEFT JOB BECAUSE I NEEDED MEDICAL SERVICES, HARASSED BY EMPLOYER WHO WOULD NOT TAKE ME TO EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT OF LOCAL HOSPITAL.

THE PROGRESSIVE NATURE OF MY DISABILITY KEEPS ME OUT OF LABOUR FORCE. LOST JOB AS RESEARCH TECHNICIAN BECAUSE THE WORK DRIED UP; AS A FREE LANCE WRITER/BROADCASTER, BECAUSE OF FATIGUE AND DECREASED MOBILITY.

MY DOCTOR REQUESTED TO HAVE MY PHONE DUTIES CUT DOWN. I WAS ALSO SICK VERY OFTEN.

NO ACCESS TO THEATRES AND MUSICAL PERFORMANCES; I AM A WELL-TRAINED SINGER AND MUSICIAN, BUT I AM LIMITED BY

MY DISABILITY. IT GETS ME VERY DEPRESSED AND FRUSTRATED.

JOB REQUIRED DRIVER'S LICENCE. (WOMAN WITH IMPAIRED VISION).

VARIABLE ENERGY LEVELS -- SOME DAYS BETTER -- I NEED LOTS OF PHYSICAL FLEXIBILITY.

DISABILITY LOWERED MY STRENGTH, AND PAIN.

I WAS TOLD THE JOB WAS DETRIMENTAL TO MY HEALTH, THE STANDING ALL DAY AND THE LIFTING AND CARRYING OF HEAVY OBJECTS.

I WAS A JUNIOR HIGH TEACHER, IN A WHEELCHAIR, BUT HAD TO QUIT BECAUSE I LOST MY UPPER ARM MUSCLES AND COULDN'T WHEEL MYSELF. I ALSO BECAME SO FATIGUED, I COULDN'T TEACH ALL DAY.

NURSES WHO BECOME DISABLED SEEM TO HAVE PARTICULAR PROBLEMS. OUR RESPONDENTS INCLUDED AT LEAST TEN EXPERIENCED NURSES AND NURSES' AIDES WHO COULD HAVE CONTINUED TO USE THEIR EXPERIENCE IN ADMINISTRATIVE OR OTHER LESS PHYSICALLY TAXING WORK. ALL OF THEM LOST THEIR JOBS WHEN THEY BECAME DISABLED. THE "CARING PROFESSION" SEEMS SINGULARLY UNCARING ABOUT ITS OWN. MAYBE IT CHALLENGES THE NATURE OF TRADITIONAL HEALTH CARE SYSTEMS WHEN NURSES, AS WELL AS PATIENTS, PROVE VULNERABLE TO ACCIDENTS AND DISEASES. THE COMMENTS OF DISPLACED NURSES WERE CURT AND TELLING:

I WAS A NURSE'S AIDE IN A HOSPITAL. MUST BE ABLE TO STAND AND WALK ALL DAY -- CAN'T. NOW EMPLOYED PART TIME AS BABY SITTER.

POST-POLIO SYNDROME BEGINS WITH EXCESSIVE FATIGUE AND WEAKNESS THAT MAKE IT IMPOSSIBLE TO FUNCTION AS A NURSE.

AN R.N. CANNOT LOOK AFTER PATIENTS IN A WHEELCHAIR.

I WAS NURSING -- UNABLE TO DO MY DUTIES DUE TO INJURY; UNABLE TO BE RETRAINED DUE TO LIMITED TIME SITTING OR STANDING, AND [LIMITED] RANGE OF MOTION.

LOST JOB DUE TO EMPLOYER'S RELUCTANCE TO MAKE NECESSARY

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR DISABILITY.(R.N. WHO IS WORKING ON B.Sc.)

I WAS UNABLE TO LIFT PATIENTS. WOULD LIKE TO BE EMPLOYED AT SAME PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT, AS AN R.N., WITHIN MY CAPABILITIES. BUT THEY SAID IF I COULD NOT DO ALL THE DUTIES OF AN R.N. I COULD NOT RETURN TO NURSING. (WOMAN WITH A BACK INJURY; SHE HAD 23 YEARS NURSING EXPERIENCE.)

IT NEEDN'T BE THAT WAY. GAIL IS A NURSE WITH A SIX-YEAR OLD DAUGHTER. SHE HAS MS, AND PLANS TO RETURN TO WORK WHEN HER DAUGHTER IS A BIT OLDER. SHE POINTED OUT THAT THERE ARE MANY TASKS IN NURSING THAT CAN BE DONE WITHOUT BEING ON THE WARDS ALL DAY:

IT WOULD HAVE TO BE IN THE OFFICE, RATHER THAN ON THE WARD. IT WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE FOR ME ON THE WARD. IT WOULD HAVE TO BE PAPER WORK, MAYBE RESEARCH.

FOR GAIL, RETURNING TO THE WORK FORCE IS A QUESTION OF ORGANIZING HER TIME AND CONSERVING HER ENERGY.

MY SITUATION WITH THE MS HAS GOTTEN A LITTLE MORE SEVERE THAN IT HAD BEEN FOR THE MAJORITY OF THE TIME, AND I'M FEELING THAT IT IS JUST ENOUGH FOR ME TO GET THROUGH THE DAY. . . . I IMAGINE IF I GOT INTO A WORK SITUATION I WOULD PROBABLY BE ORGANIZED THE WAY I WAS BEFORE.

GAIL IS LUCKY - SHE HAS BEEN ACTIVE IN THE NURSE'S UNION AND HAS RETAINED HER MEMBERSHIP AND ITS BENEFITS, INCLUDING THE RIGHT TO RETURN TO WORK. YET SHE MAY HAVE TO CONFRONT A DILEMMA THAT FACES MANY WOMEN COVERED UNDER UNION CONTRACTS OR WHO RECEIVE GOVERNMENT ALLOWANCES. WOMEN WHO HAVE DISABILITIES THAT GO INTO REMISSION, LIKE MS, OR WHICH ARE LIKELY TO GET WORSE WITH TIME AND AGE -- AS MANY WILL -- ARE AFRAID TO RETURN TO THE WORK FORCE ONCE THEY HAVE ESTABLISHED ELIGIBILITY FOR DISABILITY PAYMENTS. THEY CANNOT AFFORD TO LOSE THE FINANCIAL SECURITY THEY HAVE.

THIS DILEMMA KEEPS MANY WOMEN UNEMPLOYED. THE BENEFITS MAY

BRING GREATER INCOME THAN THE PART-TIME WORK SUITABLE TO OUR ENERGY LEVEL. IF WE TRY FULL-TIME AND OUR CONDITION DETERIORATES, WE HAVE TO REAPPLY FOR BENEFITS. PROVING OUR ELIGIBILITY FOR DISABILITY PAYMENTS CAN FEEL LIKE A REPLAY OF THE SPANISH INQUISITION. A WOMAN WHO HAD EXPERIENCED PROBLEMS WITH CANADA PENSION PLAN BUREAUCRATS WROTE THAT SHE WOULD TAKE A JOB, "WHEN C.P.P. WOULD ALLOW THIS — I CAN'T HAVE A T-4 TURN UP OR I LOSE MY CAR." AND FROM A WOMAN WITH MS: "I FEAR LOSING MY PENSION, THEN RELAPSING."

ONE WOMAN ANSWERED OUR QUESTION, "WHAT KEEPS YOU FROM GETTING A JOB?" WITH "HPIA RULES PREVENT EMPLOYMENT." SHE WAS REFERRING TO HANDICAPPED PERSONS' INCOME ASSISTANCE, ONE OF THE PROVINCIAL FINANCIAL SUPPORT PROGRAMS FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES. LIKE THE OTHERS, IT ALLOWS RECIPIENTS TO RECEIVE ONLY VERY LIMITED SUMS OF MONEY BEFORE WITHHOLDING THE ADDITIONAL EARNINGS. IT IS ALSO HARD TO GET, AND PAID ONLY TO THE "PERMANENTLY HANDICAPPED." SUCH PLANS ARE A REAL DETERRENT TO EMPLOYMENT RE-ENTRY FOR WOMEN WHOSE DISABILITIES RUN UNPREDICTABLE COURSES. THEY INHIBIT US FROM TAKING PART TIME OR TEMPORARY JOBS TO GAIN SKILLS AND ASSESS OUR READINESS FOR WORK. THEY DO NOT RECOGNIZE THE PATTERNS THAT OUR LIVES MAY TAKE.

WE MAY HAVE TO RE-ENTER THE WORK FORCE MANY TIMES. LIKE OTHER WOMEN, WE TAKE TIME OUT TO BEAR AND RAISE CHILDREN, OR TO CARE FOR FAMILY MEMBERS. ADDITIONALLY, WE NEED TIME OUT AFTER AN ACCIDENT OR AN OPERATION, AND DURING A PERIOD OF REMISSION. THESE ACCOMMODATIONS HAVE TO BE BUILT INTO OUR CAREERS. MOST JOBS DON'T WORK THAT WAY, BUT OURS HAVE TO.



CURRENTLY, THE BOTTOM-LINE DRIVES THE BUSINESS WORLD; ITS PHILOSOPHIES SPILL OVER INTO GOVERNMENT AND EVEN INTO GOVERNMENT-FINANCED COMMUNITY GROUPS. WE MAY NOT BE AS EFFICIENT AS PEOPLE WHO DO NOT NEED TO TAKE TIME OUT FOR SURGERY OR FOR NAPS, AND WHO DO NOT SPEND A LONG TIME IN THE WASHROOM BECAUSE TRANSFERRING IS SUCH A HASSLE. OUR STRUGGLE FOR EMPLOYMENT EQUITY TAKES PLACE IN A CLIMATE GEARED MORE TO THE NEEDS AND AMBITIONS OF THE "STRESS FOR SUCCESS" CROWD. IT'S NOT A WORLD THAT DEALS WELL WITH WOMEN LIKE THE FORMER UNIVERSITY TEACHER WHO MUST DEAL WITH "HYPOGLYCEMIA, RECURRENT DEPRESSIONS." OTHER RESPONDENTS WHO NEEDED TIME OUT AND/OR RETRAINING WROTE, IN THE TELLING SHORTHAND OF RESPONSE FORMS:

I WAS INCAPABLE OF HANDLING ANY KIND OF JOB AT ONE POINT DUE TO OBVIOUS BRAIN DAMAGE.

SIMPLY COULDN'T DO IT ANY MORE -- NO STRENGTH.

I DID HOMECARE AND BARTENDING AND WHEN SHOT, COULDN'T DO AND CANNOT RETURN TO EITHER ONE.

AS I BECAME MORE DISABLED I LOST A SERIES OF JOBS BECAUSE OF ILLNESS AND POOR ATTENDANCE (SURGERY) OR BECAUSE I COULD NO LONGER DO THE JOB (I.E. STANDING FOR LONG PERIODS.)

I QUIT BECAUSE PREVIOUS CAREER REQUIRED PHYSICAL STRENGTH, NOW ENTERING MY SECOND CAREER WHICH IS MORE SEDENTARY IN NATURE.

NOT EMPLOYED BECAUSE OF INTENSITY OF PAIN, GROWING APATHY, SELF-DOUBT.

THE PATTERNS OF WORK OUR BODIES REQUIRE OFTEN DIFFERS FROM THE NINE-TO-FIVE RHYTHMS OF THE WORK PLACE. THIS CAN BE MOST TRUE WHEN WE HAVE HAD AN INJURY OR A SETBACK, OR SUFFERED STRESS -- AS WE DO WHEN WE LOSE A JOB. THE IMPACT OF JOB LOSS CAN BE MADE WORSE IF WE ARE UNDER STRESS IN OUR PERSONAL LIVES AS WELL.

WE KNOW THAT 40% OF OUR RESPONDENTS HAVE EXPERIENCED VIOLENCE (RIDINGTON 1989B). AS A RESPONDENT MENTIONED, ABUSE CAN LOWER OUR ABILITY TO COPE AND DAMAGE OUR SELF-ESTEEM.

[I WAS] DEPENDENT ON JOB AT TIME, LOST SOME THROUGH SICKNESS, OTHERS BECAUSE OF ABUSE [AT HOME] AT THE TIME. NOW MY ENERGY LEVEL IS VERY POOR.

TO GET OR KEEP OUR JOBS, WE PUSH OURSELVES TO MEET EXTERNAL STANDARDS, NOT OUR INTERNAL ONES. WE TRY TO BE "SUPERWOMEN," A ROLE THAT EXHAUSTS NON-DISABLED WOMEN.

I INTERVIEWED RUTH, WHO HAS A JOB EACH WEEK-DAY MORNING AND AFTERNOON DRIVING A SCHOOL BUS. AS WELL, SHE SERVES AS CO-ORDINATOR FOR A CONSUMERS' GROUP. SHE HAS TWO SONS, AND IS GOING TO UNIVERSITY TWO NIGHTS A WEEK, STUDYING CHILD CARE. SHE HAS POST-POLIO SYNDROME AND A HISTORY OF HOSPITALIZATION AND SURGERY. SHE FINDS, "IF I DON'T WATCH MYSELF, AND REST WHEN I SHOULD, I HIT THAT WALL AGAIN."

NO WONDER. A SCHEDULE LIKE THAT IS TOO MUCH FOR ANYONE WHO IS SUSCEPTIBLE TO FATIGUE, AS A LOT OF US ARE. ALL WOMEN HAVE FAMILY AND COMMUNITY OBLIGATIONS ON TOP OF OUR WORK. "SUPERWOMAN" IS A POOR MODEL IF WE VALUE OURSELVES AND OUR HEALTH. YET IT IS THE ONE THAT SOCIAL SERVICE MINISTRIES SEEM TO PUSH US INTO. IN THEIR CATEGORIES, YOU ARE EITHER A WORKER OR A WOMAN WITH A PERMANENT DISABILITY, AN "UNEMPLOYABLE." THERE'S NO PLACE IN BETWEEN, WHERE WE CAN WORK AND TAKE CARE OF OURSELVES AND OUR LIVES IN OUR OWN TIME, AT OUR OWN PACE.

#### GOING BACK TO WORK:

RETURNING TO THE WORK FORCE AFTER YEARS SPENT WORKING IN THE HOME IS DIFFICULT FOR MOST WOMEN, ESPECIALLY THOSE WHO HAVE



SKILLS THAT ARE NOT WELL VALUED IN OUR CULTURE. GENERALLY, THEY ARE WELCOMED IF THEY ARE WILLING TO WORK FOR NOTHING (VOLUNTEER WORK) OR IN MINIMUM WAGE JOBS WITH HIGH TURNOVER AND LITTLE OPPORTUNITY FOR ADVANCEMENT. WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES WHO HAVE TAKEN TIME AWAY FROM PAID EMPLOYMENT TO WORK AS MOTHERS FIND THEIR SKILLS GREATLY UNDERVALUED.

"BEATRICE" IS A CASE IN POINT. SHE TRAINED AS A PRACTICAL NURSE AND WORKED FOR A WHILE. THEN SHE GOT MARRIED AND HAD THREE KIDS. WHILE SHE WAS PREGNANT WITH HER LAST CHILD SHE WAS DIAGNOSED AS HAVING MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS (MS). WHEN THE KIDS WERE GROWN UP SHE TRIED TO GET ANOTHER JOB. SHE WAS HIRED AS A RECREATION CO-ORDINATOR FOR SENIOR CITIZENS AT A LODGE IN HER NORTHERN CITY. SHE LOVED TO BE WORKING, TO BE HELPING OTHERS. "THEN THEY FOUND OUT I WAS DISABLED AND PUT ME DOWN AS A VOLUNTEER. I WAS NEVER PAID." SHE FUSSED AND THEN GOT PAID MINIMUM WAGE, BUT THE ATMOSPHERE CHANGED. "PEOPLE ACTED DIFFERENTLY TO ME BECAUSE I'D MADE TROUBLE." SHE LEFT SOON AFTER.

MANY WOMEN GIVE UP THE IDEA OF RETURNING TO WORK WITHOUT ATTEMPTING TO GET THE SUPPORTS THEY NEED. SOME SEEM TO FEAR THE REACTIONS OF CO-WORKERS: "SPEECH IS IMPAIRED; I SEEM RETARDED." ONE WROTE OF "STARES -- OFFENSIVE ONES."

GOING BACK TO A JOB WHEN YOU ARE THE SAME INSIDE BUT YOUR APPEARANCE HAS BEEN CHANGED BY AN ACCIDENT OR TRAUMA CAN BE REALLY HARD. SEVERAL WOMEN'S COMMENTS SEEMED TINGED WITH ANXIETY ABOUT GOING BACK AND BEING SEEN AND TREATED AS A DIFFERENT PERSON. "I WORKED FOR THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT FOR 15 YEARS; I

BECAME DISABLED RIGHT ON THE JOB; I LOST THE USE OF MY HANDS, LOST SPEECH. AFTER MY STROKE, I JUST KNEW I COULDN'T GO BACK."

YET SOME WOMEN HAVE CREATED AN APPROPRIATE AND SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT IN THEIR WORKPLACES. THEY HAVE THE WORKING HOURS AND THE AIDS THEY NEED. OFTEN, IT IS A COMBINATION OF BOTH THAT MAKES EMPLOYMENT POSSIBLE. WROTE ONE, "I USE A TDD, A BRACE, AND A 20-HOUR WEEK." RAMPS AND ELEVATORS IN THE WORK PLACE MAY NEED TO BE COMPLEMENTED BY ARRANGEMENTS FOR REST PERIODS AND FLEX TIME. NONE OF THESE ARE POSSIBLE WITHOUT UNDERSTANDING AND CO-OPERATION FROM EMPLOYERS. STILL, THE BEST OF EMPLOYERS CAN HAVE DIFFICULTY RECOGNIZING INDIVIDUAL NEEDS IN THE CORPORATE OR BUREAUCRATIC MAZE. WE HEARD THIS FROM A RESPONDENT WHO HAS JOB SECURITY, BUT SOME FRUSTRATION:

SEVERAL TIMES WHEN INSTITUTIONALIZED IN PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL AND ALSO WHEN EPILEPSY STARTED AT 17 SEIZURES A DAY I COULDN'T WORK. I NOW HAVE A GOOD JOB, WITH GOOD SUPPORT, AND GOOD PAY. BUT I WISH THERE WAS LESS READING, MORE UNDERSTANDING OF FEARS/INSECURITIES.

IN ONTARIO, A WOMAN WHO HAS BEEN BLIND SINCE BIRTH USES AN IBM TALKING COMPUTER, BRAILLE PRINTER, BRAILLER, BRAILLE LABELS ON THE PHONE. THE PROFESSOR OF SOCIAL WORK I INTERVIEWED HAS SIMILAR AIDES. BUT SHE IS FIGHTING TO KEEP HER SECRETARY, AN ESSENTIAL PART OF HER COPING KIT. CUT-BACKS HAVE MEANT THAT ONLY DEANS HAVE PERSONAL SECRETARIES. THEY ARE ASSIGNED BY RANK, NOT BY NEED. SHE COULD NOT WORK WITHOUT HERS.

AT THE OTHER END OF THE WAGE SCALE, A WOMAN WITH A DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITY NEEDS A CO-WORKER. SHE CURRENTLY WORKS PART-TIME; HER INCOME IS \$5000 PER YEAR. THE NEEDS OF OTHER WOMEN SEEM EASY TO MEET. SEVERAL WOMEN JUST WANT "A PLACE TO LIE DOWN

WHEN I'M TIRED". IT DOESN'T SEEM MUCH TO WISH FOR.

#### WORKING IN THE HOME:

WORKING WHERE WE LIVE CAN BE A SOLUTION FOR SOME OF US. SEVERAL WOMEN WROTE, "I WANT TO WORK OUT OF MY HOME," AND MANY OTHERS ARE DOING IT. SELF-EMPLOYMENT RESOLVES TRANSPORTATION PROBLEMS, AND PROVIDES US WITH AN ACCESSIBLE WORKPLACE. WE CAN DO OUR OWN CHILD CARE. WE CAN SCHEDULE OUR LIVES TO THE RHYTHM OF OUR BODIES, NOT OUR BOSSES.

WORKING IN THE HOME IS, HOWEVER, AN IMPERFECT SOLUTION. IT HAS LITTLE SECURITY. CARING FOR KIDS WHILE WE WORK CAN MEAN WE NEVER SEEM TO STOP WORKING, AND DON'T DO ANY TASK AS WELL AS WE WANT TO. WORKING IN OUR HOMES IS APT TO BE LOW-PAID, AND OFTEN NO BENEFITS ACCRUE. WE GET NO UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE IF WE ARE SELF-EMPLOYED OR ON PIECEWORK. WHEN WE HAVE SETBACKS, WE ARE ON OUR OWN. THE DOWN SIDE IS REFLECTED IN ANOTHER COMMENT FROM A RESPONDENT:

I WAS TOO ILL TO WORK FULL-TIME AND BECAUSE I WAS CONSIDERED SELF-EMPLOYED, I DIDN'T HAVE ANY SICK LEAVE.

SOME KINDS OF WORK, LIKE RESEARCH, WRITING, ART, CRAFTS, OR INDEPENDENT CONTRACT WORK IN A FIELD WHERE WE HAVE VALUABLE SKILLS CAN BE DONE EFFECTIVELY FROM A HOME OFFICE OR STUDIO. RUNNING A SMALL BUSINESS FROM HOME CAN WORK VERY WELL, BUT FEW WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES HAVE THE CAPITAL NECESSARY TO START THEIR OWN BUSINESS. OTHER KINDS OF SELF-EMPLOYMENT CAN BE UNCHALLENGING AND UNDERPAID. THERE IS LITTLE JOB SECURITY IN BOTTLE HUNTING, BUT IT WAS THE INCOME SOURCE OF ONE RESPONDENT.

LACK OF MOBILITY OR OF OPPORTUNITIES CONFINES MANY OF US TO

"HOME-BOUND" PART-TIME WORK, WITH LOW STATUS AND NO BENEFITS. MUCH OF THAT WORK IS REPETITIOUS, AND DOES NOT UTILIZE OUR EDUCATION AND SKILLS. THE MONEY WE ARE PAID IS, IN SOME CASES, LESS THAN MINIMUM WAGE, AND ONLY A SMALL PERCENTAGE OF THE PROFITS MADE BY OUR EMPLOYER.

I DO HAVE A PART-TIME, SEASONAL JOB (AUTUMN) WITH THE RESEARCH STATION (FEDERAL GOVERNMENT). I QUALIFY FOR THIS BECAUSE I AM CONSIDERED A HOME-BOUND HANDICAPPED PERSON. ALL IT CONSISTS OF IS SORTING FORAGE SAMPLES SO THAT FURTHER ANALYSIS CAN BE DONE ON IT. . . IT SUITS MY NEEDS TO AN EXTENT. I DON'T HAVE TO LEAVE HOME, NO OVERHEAD. HOWEVER, IT IS QUITE REPETITIOUS, NOT TOO CHALLENGING. . . NO SOCIAL CONTACT.

SEWING ON A PIECE-WORK BASIS, COPY TYPING, AND NOW DATA PROCESSING DONE IN THE HOME CAN BE A SOURCE OF INCOME AND A STEP TOWARDS EMPLOYMENT THAT IS MORE HIGHLY PAID. YET BECAUSE IT AGAIN CONFINES US TO OUR HOMES, IT INCREASES RATHER THAN DECREASES OUR ISOLATION. IT CAN BE A TRAP.

#### SHELTERED WORKSHOPS:

CLOSELY AKIN TO THE PIECE WORK DONE BY THE "HOME-BOUND HANDICAPPED" ARE THE SHELTERED WORKSHOPS THAT EMPLOY PEOPLE WHO ARE LABELLED AS MULTIPLY OR DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED TO MANUFACTURE GOODS. THE IDEA IS THAT THE EMPLOYEES WILL GAIN WORKSKILLS; THE RESULT IS OFTEN THAT THEY ARE PAID A LESS THAN LIVING WAGE AND CONFINED TO A LIMITING AND ISOLATING GHETTO. ONCE LABELLED "HANDICAPPED", WE MAY FIND IT IMPOSSIBLE TO BREAK INTO OTHER EMPLOYMENT.

IN OUR QUESTIONNAIRES, WOMEN WHO WORK IN SHELTERED WORKSHOPS REPORTED WAGES OF UNDER \$5000 ANNUALLY. IN SEVERAL CASES INCOME WOULD HAVE BEEN EVEN LOWER WITHOUT SUPPLEMENTARY SUPPORT. SOMETIMES THAT MEANS WORKING TWO JOBS. ONE WOMAN, DEVELOPMENTALLY

DISABLED, "GETS PAID A SMALL WAGE FOR WORKING AT THE ACTIVITY CENTRE AND MINIMUM WAGE AT PART-TIME EMPLOYMENT."

#### ATTITUDES:

PUTTING US IN JOB GHETTOS PERPETUATES THE ANTEDILUVIAN IDEA THAT PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES SHOULDN'T REALLY MINGLE WITH THE NON-DISABLED POPULACE. THIS PREJUDICE PROBABLY AFFECTS WOMEN MORE; MANY "WOMEN'S" JOBS ARE ONES IN WHICH DECORATING THE OFFICE IS AN UNWRITTEN PART OF THE JOB DESCRIPTION. SOME EMPLOYERS RULE US OUT OF JOBS THAT INVOLVE MEETING THE PUBLIC. WHEN THE JOBS ARE IN INSTITUTIONS THAT SERVE PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES, WE MAY BE ACCEPTED AS VOLUNTEERS, BUT GETTING PAID FOR SUCH WORK IS ANOTHER MATTER. IF WE GET HIRED, WE ARE THE FIRST FIRED.

SHIRLEY WORKED AT THE CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL FOR TEN YEARS, DOING "RECEPTIONIST AND PR WORK, ACTING AS A GO-BETWEEN BETWEEN STAFF AND PARENTS." SHE STARTED ON EVENINGS AND WEEKENDS WHEN SHE WAS STILL IN SCHOOL. SHE WENT ON STAFF AFTER SHE GOT TOO OLD FOR THE SCHOOL. SHE LOVED IT, AND THE PARENTS LIKED HER. SHE THINKS THAT SHE MADE THEM FEEL BETTER ABOUT HAVING A CHILD WITH A DISABILITY. THEY SAW HER BEING PRODUCTIVE AND HAPPY AND THOUGHT, "MAYBE OUR KID HAS GOT A CHANCE."

DUE TO GOVERNMENT CUTBACKS, 62 PEOPLE WERE LAID OFF FROM JOBS AT CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL A YEAR AND A HALF AGO, AND SHIRLEY WAS ONE OF THEM. SHE IS STILL UNEMPLOYED AND DOES NOT WANT TO BE. SHE IS HAVING TROUBLE LOCATING A JOB BECAUSE "I'M FINE MENTALLY, BUT PHYSICALLY LIMITED." HER UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE HAS RUN OUT, AND SHE IS "WAITING TO SEE IF SOCIAL SERVICES WILL HELP



ME." SHE HAS ONLY GRADE 10 EDUCATION, BUT HAS TAKEN ADDITIONAL COURSES AND HAD A LOT OF ON-THE-JOB TRAINING AT THE HOSPITAL. SHE IS AMBITIOUS, ENERGETIC AND DETERMINED, AND WOULD SEEM TO BE VERY EMPLOYABLE. SHE WOULD LIKE TO WORK IN A "PEOPLE JOB," SOMETHING LIKE PUBLIC RELATIONS. SHE'S ATTRACTIVE; SHE TAKES THE TIME TO PRESENT HERSELF WELL. SO FAR, SHE HAS SENT OUT 146 RESUMES, AND HAD 12 OR 15 INTERVIEWS BUT NO JOB OFFERS.

SOMETIMES OUR OWN ORGANIZATIONS UNDERVALUE US. SHIRLEY SPENDS A LOT OF TIME VISITING SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITY GROUPS, TALKING ABOUT CEREBRAL PALSY. SHE'S A ONE-WOMAN TRAVELLING WORKSHOP ON THE SUBJECT. A CALGARY CONSUMERS' GROUP HELPS SET UP THE "SPEAKS", BUT SHE GETS PAID NOTHING. FUNDS FOR SUCH PROGRAMS SHOULD BE BUILT INTO ORGANIZATION BUDGETS, OR SPECIAL GRANTS APPLIED FOR TO PROVIDE THE RESOURCES NECESSARY. LIKE THE WOMEN'S GROUPS WHO SAY THEY CAN'T AFFORD ACCESSIBLE OFFICES, CONSUMER GROUPS EXCUSE USING "VOLUNTEERS" FOR WORK THAT SHOULD BE PAID. "WE JUST CAN'T AFFORD IT," IS NOT GOOD ENOUGH. IF WE DON'T RECOGNIZE THE VALUE OF EACH OTHER'S WORK, WHO WILL?

PERHAPS THERE IS A PLACE FOR VOLUNTEER WORK, FOR THOSE WHO DO NOT NEED THE MONEY AND WHO DO NEED TO DECREASE THEIR ISOLATION AND REFRESH THEIR SKILLS. STILL, WE SHOULD ASK WHETHER IT IS FAIR TO ASK WOMEN ON MARGINAL INCOMES TO GIVE THEIR TIME AND SKILLS FOR FREE. WE LIVE IN A CULTURE THAT VALUES PEOPLE BY THEIR INCOMES. IF OUR WORK HAS WORTH, IT SHOULD BE PAID.

A RESPONDENT WROTE, "MY SALARY IS LOW PAY IS NOT DUE TO MY HANDICAP BUT DUE TO THE NATURE OF THE WORK (I TEACH IN A DAY-CARE)." LIKE THE WORK MOST OF US DO, CHILD CARE IS "WOMEN'S



WORK", AND STILL UNDERVALUED. WOMEN'S WORK IS NOT HIGHLY UNIONIZED. THE SAME CAN BE SAID FOR WORK DONE BY PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES. WE GET A DOUBLE DOSE. SOMETIMES IT IS HARD TO TELL WHETHER WE ARE POORLY PAID BECAUSE WE ARE WOMEN, BECAUSE OF OUR DISABILITIES, OR BECAUSE THE JOBS WE DO LACK RECOGNITION IN A CULTURE THAT PAYS HOCKEY STARS MILLION DOLLAR SALARIES AND MOTHERS NOTHING AT ALL.

#### DISABLING WORK:

WOMEN CAN BECOME DISABLED BY OUR WORK AS EASILY AS MEN CAN. WOMEN ALSO PERFORM MANUAL LABOUR AND WE DO GET HURT. ONE WOMAN'S DISABILITY IS THE RESULT OF A "JOB [THAT] INVOLVED HEAVY MANUAL LABOUR WHICH I COULD NO LONGER PERFORM." ELSEWHERE, SHE TELLS US THAT SHE, "CAN'T STAND FOR LONG PERIODS, LIFT, BEND. I BECOME TIRED EASILY, KNEES SWELL, CONSTANT STIFFNESS IN JOINTS." SHE IS GETTING NO COMPENSATION AND NOW SUPPORTS TWO SCHOOL-AGED CHILDREN ON UNDER \$15,000 A YEAR, HER WAGES FROM A PART-TIME JOB.

MANY WOMEN WORK IN JOBS WHERE CAUSE AND EFFECT ARE NOT EASILY CONNECTED, AT LEAST TO THE STANDARD DEMANDED BY INSURERS. WOMEN WHO WORK IN FISH PLANTS AND DEVELOP ARTHRITIS IN THEIR WRISTS (A FREQUENT PROBLEM) MAY HAVE TROUBLE PROVING TO THE SATISFACTION OF A WORKER'S COMPENSATION BOARD THAT THEIR INJURIES ARE THE RESULT OF LIFTING 20 POUND FISH FOR YEARS ON END.<sup>3</sup>

SIMILAR INJURIES CAN OCCUR TO WOMEN WHO SPEND YEARS AT A TYPEWRITER OR WORD PROCESSOR. THEY ARE EVEN MORE DIFFICULT TO CLAIM. WHO WOULD BELIEVE THAT JUST TAPPING ON KEYS FOR FOUR DECADES COULD BE DISABLING? A FORMER LEGAL SECRETARY WHO HAS "EXTREME, CONTINUING" PAIN FROM FIBROSITIS AND CHRONIC TENDONITIS

IN WRISTS AND ELBOWS, POINTED OUT THAT, "THE PROBLEM IS THAT I DON'T LOOK DISABLED. . . . THEREFORE I AM SELDOM TAKEN SERIOUSLY." MANY OTHER RESPONDENTS WHO HAD DONE SECRETARIAL WORK TOLD US OF THE DISABLING EFFECTS OF THEIR WORK:

I HAD TO RETIRE ON DISABILITY GROUNDS DUE TO ARTHRITIS; WORKED 42 YEARS; NOT PHYSICALLY POSSIBLE NOW. ARTHRITIS IN ELBOWS MADE IT IMPOSSIBLE FOR ME TO CONTINUE WORKING. I CAN NO LONGER TYPE WITH BOTH HANDS.

I WAS A SECRETARY. MY FINGERS GOT TOO SORE, SWOLLEN, I HAD TO STOP THE PROFESSION COMPLETELY AND EDUCATE MYSELF IN ANOTHER FIELD. (RECENTLY GOT A DEGREE IN RECREATION COUNSELLING, LOOKING FOR JOB.)

DISABILITIES -- ASTHMA, POST-POLIO OR OTHER SYNDROMES THAT AFFECT OUR LUNGS -- CAN MAKE US PARTICULARLY SUSCEPTIBLE TO ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTANTS. DAWN WAS BORN AT A MEETING ORGANIZED BY A FEDERAL WORKER WHO HAD BEEN DISABLED BY CHEMICALS IN HER WORKPLACE. VERA WALL HAS A SISTER IN THE WOMAN WHO WROTE:

VOLUNTEER WORK STOPPED WHEN BREATHING BECAME DIFFICULT DUE TO OTHERS SMOKING NEAR ME. I HAVE SEVERE MULTIPLE ALLERGIES; ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTANTS, CIGARETTE SMOKE, AND OTHER CHEMICALS, FOODS, ANIMALS.

SEVERAL WOMEN TOLD US THAT THEY REMAINED UNEMPLOYED BECAUSE THEY WERE CONCERNED ABOUT "THE EFFECT OF WORK ON MS." WE KNOW THAT STRESS AGGRAVATES DISABILITIES AND MAY CAUSE MANY. STRESS MAY BE DISABLING IN AND OF ITSELF:

I'M NOT WORKING; WHEN I BECAME UNABLE TO TAKE ANY STRESS I COULD NO LONGER WORK. I WAS BURNED OUT AT 20 BECAUSE OF THE STRESS OF MY CHILDHOOD IN A DYSFUNCTIONAL FAMILY, PLUS THE ENVIRONMENTAL ILLNESS I'VE PROBABLY HAD AT LEAST TWENTY YEARS - - SYMPTOMS STARTED 16 YEARS AGO.

EMPLOYERS' LACK OF UNDERSTANDING OF THE REALITIES OF LIVING WITH A DISABILITY CAN INCREASE STRESS. ONE WOMAN WHO HAS A MOBILITY DISABILITY LOST A JOB BECAUSE SHE WAS LATE.

TRANSPORTATION IS NOT SIMPLE FOR THOSE WITH MOBILITY IMPAIRMENTS, AND LACK OF PUNCTUALITY IS NOT USUALLY THE FAULT OF THE PERSON WHO MUST WAIT -- PROBABLY ANXIOUSLY, IF SHE KNOWS SHE IS LATE FOR WORK AGAIN -- FOR THE VAN TO ARRIVE.

A WOMAN WHO TOLD US THAT HER "MS IS NOT SEVERE ENOUGH TO STOP ME -- ONLY SLOWS ME DOWN," WROTE "I COULD NOT CONTINUE WITH MY JOB AS IT WAS TOO STRESSFUL. I HAVE PROBLEMS WITH MY BOSS BUT DON'T SEE OTHER GOOD PART-TIME OPPORTUNITIES. I NEED A QUIET AREA TO REST IN."

#### INCOME:

MONEY IS SEEN AS A VERY PRIVATE MATTER BY MANY OF OUR RESPONDENTS. ALMOST ONE-QUARTER OF THEM CHOSE NOT TO ANSWER OUR QUESTION ON INCOME. THAT RATE OF DNAs ("DID NOT ANSWER") IS THE HIGHEST FOR ANY QUESTION IN THE SURVEY. MORE WOMEN ANSWERED THE QUESTIONS ON VIOLENCE WHICH WERE DISCUSSED IN OUR SECOND PAPER -- ONLY 19% LEFT THOSE UNANSWERED.

AS GRAPH 3: "INCOME LEVEL OF WORKERS WITH AND WITHOUT CHILDREN" AND GRAPH 4: "INCOME LEVEL OF UNEMPLOYED WITH AND WITHOUT CHILDREN" (APPENDIX C AND D) INDICATE, MOST OF THE WOMEN WHO DID NOT ANSWER THE QUESTION ARE UNEMPLOYED. WE HAVE NO WAY OF KNOWING WHETHER IT WAS EMBARRASSMENT AT POVERTY, A FEELING THAT THE QUESTION WAS IRRELEVANT, OR SIMPLY A SENSE OF PRIVACY ABOUT MONEY MATTERS THAT CAUSED THE RETICENCE. PERHAPS SOME WOMEN WERE DEPENDENT ON OTHERS AND HAD NO INCOME. IN OTHER CASES, ANNUAL INCOME MIGHT HAVE VARIED AND BEEN HARD TO ESTIMATE. MONEY IS A TOUCHY SUBJECT, BUT UNLESS WE BEGIN DISCUSSING OUR POVERTY AND THE REASONS FOR IT, WE ARE VERY LIKELY TO REMAIN POOR.

GRAPH 2: "INCOME LEVEL OF ALL RESPONDENTS" (APPENDIX B) SHOWS THAT 23% OF THE 188 RESPONDENTS WHO DID ANSWER THE QUESTION ON INCOME ARE VERY POOR . THEY LIVE ON INCOMES OF LESS THAN \$5,000 PER YEAR. THIRTY-FIVE PERCENT SCRAPE BY ON \$5,000 TO \$10,000; 14% BRING IN \$10,000-\$15,000. EIGHT PERCENT HAVE INCOMES IN THE \$15,000 - \$20,000 RANGE, AND 21% ARE IN THE OVER \$20,000 BRACKET. TO PUT THAT ANOTHER WAY, 58%, OR 109 OUT OF 188 WOMEN, LIVE ON AN INCOME THAT IS BELOW THE POVERTY LINE FOR A SINGLE PERSON IN EVERY PROVINCE EXCEPT PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND.<sup>4</sup>

ONE-HUNDRED AND EIGHT (45%) OF OUR RESPONDENTS ARE IN THE WORK FORCE, WHETHER PART-TIME OR FULL-TIME. ALTHOUGH THE BEST EDUCATED ARE GENERALLY THE HIGHEST PAID, WAGES ARE NOT NECESSARILY CORRELATED WITH EDUCATION. WE RECEIVED QUESTIONNAIRES FROM UNIVERSITY GRADUATES WHO WORK BUT LIVE ON AN INCOME OF UNDER \$5,000.

EMPLOYED WOMEN, IN GENERAL, ARE BETTER OFF FINANCIALLY THAN WOMEN NOT IN THE LABOUR FORCE. AT LEAST MORE OF THEM WERE IN THE HIGHER INCOME BRACKETS. EIGHTEEN PERCENT OF THE EMPLOYED WOMEN WITHOUT CHILDREN ARE IN THE \$15,000 TO \$20,000 PER ANNUM INCOME BRACKET COMPARED WITH ONLY 7% OF ALL OF THE RESPONDENTS. FORTY-THREE PERCENT OF WOMEN IN THIS GROUP EARN OVER \$15,000 A YEAR WHILE ONLY 8% OF THE UNEMPLOYED WOMEN WITHOUT CHILDREN HAVE INCOMES IN THAT RANGE.

SURPRISINGLY, MOTHERHOOD DOES NOT HAVE A NEGATIVE EFFECT ON INCOME. PERHAPS THIS IS BECAUSE THE MAJORITY OF WOMEN WHO WORK IN SHELTERED WORKSHOPS AND OTHER LOW PAID JOBS ARE NOT MOTHERS. AS GRAPH 3: "INCOME LEVEL OF WORKERS WITH AND WITHOUT CHILDREN"

(SEE APPENDIX C) INDICATES, 36% OF MOTHERS IN THE LABOUR FORCE MAKE LESS THAN \$10,000 AND 58% EARN UNDER \$15,000 WHILE 30% HAVE INCOMES OVER \$20,000. BY COMPARISON, 48% OF EMPLOYED WOMEN WITHOUT CHILDREN MAKE UNDER \$10,000 AND 26% ARE IN THE \$20,000 BRACKET. EMPLOYED MOTHERS ARE ALSO BETTER OFF, OVERALL, THAN MOTHERS WHO WORK IN THE HOME. ALMOST HALF OF THE UNEMPLOYED MOTHERS (24 OUT OF 49 WOMEN) GET BY ON LESS THAN \$10,000 AND ONLY 12% HAVE INCOMES OF OVER \$20,000.

AS A COMPARISON OF GRAPH 3 AND GRAPH 4 SHOWS, THERE IS MORE GRINDING AND LESS ABJECT POVERTY AMONG THE WOMEN IN THE WORK FORCE THAN AMONG THOSE WHO ARE UNEMPLOYED. FEWER WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES WHO ARE EMPLOYED THAN THOSE WHO ARE UNEMPLOYED SUBSIST ON LESS THAN \$5,000 A YEAR. THE MOST OBVIOUS DIFFERENCE BETWEEN WORKERS AND NON-WORKERS OCCURS IN THE \$15,000 TO \$20,000 RANGE. MORE WORKERS AND PREDOMINANTLY THOSE WITHOUT CHILDREN, ARE IN THAT INCOME BRACKET. STILL, \$15,000 TO \$20,000 IS NOT A GREAT DEAL OF MONEY. ALMOST HALF (47%) OF THE WORKING NON-MOTHERS LIVE ON LESS THAN \$10,000 A YEAR. THIS IS A LOWER PERCENTAGE THAN THE OVERALL 58% BUT FAR FROM ACCEPTABLE.

ONLY 27% OF ALL OUR RESPONDENTS NAMED A JOB AS THEIR MAIN SOURCE OF FINANCIAL SUPPORT. AS MANY WOMEN (28%) RELY ON GOVERNMENT FOR THEIR MAIN SOURCE OF FINANCIAL SUPPORT AS DO THOSE WHO ARE ABLE TO SUPPORT THEMSELVES FROM EMPLOYMENT. ANOTHER 18% ARE SUPPORTED (IN WHOLE OR IN PART) BY A SPOUSE OR PARENT. OTHER MONIES COME FROM SAVINGS, INVESTMENTS, UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE, CRIMINAL COMPENSATION AND SCHOLARSHIPS OR STUDENT LOANS. FOR THE WOMEN WHO SUPPORT THEMSELVES AND DEPENDENTS,



POVERTY IS OMNIPRESENT:

I MANAGE TO WORK THOUGH THE WAGES ARE USUALLY AROUND MINIMUM WAGE. IT MAKES IT HARD WHEN THERE ARE TWO OF YOU TO SUPPORT AND ONLY MINIMUM TO KEEP YOU GOING.

HAVI ECHENBERG, OF THE NATIONAL ANTI-POVERTY ORGANIZATION (NAPO) SPOKE AT HEALTH AND WELFARE CANADA'S CONFERENCE ON CHANGING PATTERNS OF HEALTH AND DISEASE AMONG CANADIAN WOMEN, IN JUNE, 1988. SHE POINTED OUT THAT POVERTY LEADS TO MALNUTRITION, AND CAN ITSELF BE DISABLING. NAPO DID A REVIEW OF COMMUNITY-BASED HEALTH AND POVERTY LITERATURE, INCLUDING MATERIAL FOCUSSED ON SINGLE PARENTS, ELDERLY WOMEN, AND WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES. THE CONSENSUS ACROSS 70 ORGANIZATIONS IN 200 PUBLICATIONS IS "ADEQUATE INCOME IS A KEY FACTOR IN ELIMINATING HEALTH PROBLEMS". CERTAINLY, IT IS MANDATORY FOR MAINTAINING THE GOOD HEALTH THAT CAN EASE THE EFFECTS OF DISABILITIES.

PROVINCIAL WELFARE RATES RANGE FROM 40 TO 70% OF THE POVERTY LINE. MALNUTRITION AND STRESS ARE THE RESULT. WELFARE ONLY PAYS FOR 2 WEEKS' GROCERIES FOR A FAMILY IF THEY FOLLOW THE CANADA FOOD GUIDE. "MOTHERS MUST CHOOSE BETWEEN FOOD AND TAXI TO HOSPITAL FOR A SICK KID." (ECHENBERG, 1988) IN SEVERAL PROVINCES, TWO JOBS AT MINIMUM WAGE, WOULD NOT BRING A FAMILY OF FOUR ABOVE THE POVERTY LINE. ONE DOESN'T EVEN COME CLOSE. LOW INCOMES DURING OUR WORKING YEARS ARE FOLLOWED INEVITABLY BY POVERTY WHEN WE ARE OLDER. ONE WOMAN WHO IS NOW NEAR RETIREMENT AGE LOST NOT ONLY HER JOB BUT HER FINANCIAL SECURITY WHEN HER MS DEVELOPED TO THE POINT WHERE SHE NEEDED A WHEELCHAIR. TO THE QUESTIONS "DID YOU LOSE YOUR JOB WHEN YOU BECAME DISABLED? IF YES, COULD YOU TELL US WHY? SHE RESPONDED, "WASHROOM ACCESSIBILITY, COMBINED WITH



EXACERBATION/REMISSION NATURE OF MS. THIS, OF COURSE, AFFECTED CPP CONTRIBUTIONS, RESULTING IN LACK OF DISABILITY PENSION." AS MY MOTHER USED TO SAY, "THEM AS HAS, GETS."

#### JOB SATISFACTION:

SOME WOMEN HAVE FOUND WAYS AND MEANS TO DO WHAT THEY WANT TO DO. MOST DID IT DESPITE THE SYSTEM, RATHER THAN THROUGH SUPPORTIVE GOVERNMENT AND COMMUNITY PROGRAMS. A FEW, WHO WERE FORTUNATE ENOUGH TO HAVE THE CAPITAL TO DO SO, STARTED THEIR OWN BUSINESSES.

MOST OF US LIKE THE WORK WE DO. ONCE WE GET INTO THE WORK FORCE, THE MAJORITY OF US ARE CONTENTED EMPLOYEES. SIXTY-SIX PERCENT OF THE WOMEN WHO RESPONDED TO THE QUESTION "IF YOU ARE WORKING, DOES YOUR JOB SUIT YOUR NEEDS?" ANSWERED "YES"; ONLY 23% STATED THAT IT DID NOT, WHILE THE BALANCE FOUND THEIR JOB SOMEWHAT SUITABLE. MAYBE OUR EXPECTATIONS ARE LOW AND WE FEEL LUCKY TO GET A JOB AT ALL. WHATEVER THE REASON, WOMEN WHO HAD MADE THEIR ENTRY INTO THE WORKFORCE REPORTED FEWER PROBLEMS THAN THOSE WHO WERE TRYING TO GET IN OR WHO HAD BEEN FORCED OUT. HOWEVER, AS WE HAVE REPORTED EARLIER, MANY WOULD WISH FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING AND ACCOMMODATION.

WE ARE NOT SO SURE ABOUT THE MONEY WE GET PAID. FORTY-THREE PERCENT OR ALMOST HALF OF THOSE WHO ANSWERED THE QUESTION, ANSWERED "YES" WHEN WE ASKED, "DO YOU FEEL YOU ARE PAID ADEQUATELY FOR THE WORK YOU DO?". TWENTY-THREE PERCENT (A SURPRISINGLY LOW NUMBER, GIVEN THE LOW INCOMES CITED BY RESPONDENTS) SAID THEY DID NOT. THE OTHERS WERE NOT SURE. PERHAPS THERE WILL BE MORE "NO'S" GIVEN TO QUESTIONS LIKE THIS

ONE WHEN WE LEARN TO RECOGNIZE OUR OWN WORTH.

### CAN LEGISLATIVE REMEDIES HELP?

IN 1986, THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT PASSED BILL C-62, THE EMPLOYMENT EQUITY ACT. THE ACT REQUIRES FEDERALLY REGULATED EMPLOYERS WITH MORE THAN 100 WORKERS TO IMPLEMENT EMPLOYMENT EQUITY PROGRAMS AND TO REPORT ANNUALLY ON THE RESULTS. COMPANIES UNDER FEDERAL REGULATION ARE THE EASIEST EMPLOYERS TO REGULATE, AFTER GOVERNMENTS THEMSELVES, SOME -- BUT NOT ALL-- OF WHICH ALREADY HAVE EMPLOYMENT EQUITY PROGRAMS. IF EMPLOYMENT EQUITY CANNOT BE ENFORCED IN THESE COMPANIES, IT IS DOUBTFUL THAT IT CAN BE MADE TO WORK IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR.

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT REGULATES COMPANIES IN THE BANKING, COMMUNICATIONS, AND TRANSPORTATION INDUSTRIES, AMONG OTHERS. JOBS IN TELEPHONE COMPANIES, THE CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION AND OTHER MAJOR RADIO AND TELEVISION STATIONS, AIR CANADA AND GREYHOUND BUS LINES ARE ALL COVERED UNDER THE EMPLOYMENT EQUITY ACT. PROCLAIMED AUGUST 13, 1986, THE ACT'S STATED AIM IS TO "ACHIEVE EQUALITY IN THE WORK PLACE SO THAT NO PERSON SHALL BE DENIED EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES OR BENEFITS FOR REASONS UNRELATED TO ABILITY." IT ACKNOWLEDGES THAT EMPLOYMENT EQUITY REQUIRES ADDRESSING SYSTEMIC DISCRIMINATION AND "MEANS MORE THAN TREATING PERSONS IN THE SAME WAY BUT ALSO REQUIRES SPECIAL MEASURES AND THE ACCOMMODATION OF DIFFERENCES."

THE ACT TARGETS WOMEN, DISABLED PERSONS, ABORIGINAL PEOPLES, AND MEMBERS OF VISIBLE MINORITY GROUPS AS "DISADVANTAGED." THESE GROUPS MAKE UP MORE THAN HALF OF THE POPULATION OF CANADA, YET ALL HAVE A HIGHER RATE OF UNEMPLOYMENT THAN THAT OF THE TOTAL

POPULATION. (EMPLOYMENT AND IMMIGRATION CANADA., 1988: 27) OF COURSE, WE MAY BE MEMBERS OF MORE THAN ONE GROUP -- AN ABORIGINAL WOMAN WITH A DISABILITY WOULD BE COUNTED THREE TIMES. STATISTICS, THEREFORE, ARE SOMEWHAT SKEWED. THIS SKEWING BENEFITS EMPLOYERS, NOT US.

THE EMPLOYMENT EQUITY ACT ANNUAL REPORT TO PARLIAMENT 1988 (EMPLOYMENT AND IMMIGRATION CANADA 1988), REFERRED TO HEREFTER AS THE REPORT, COMPILED THE RESULTS OF THE ANNUAL REPORTS WHICH FEDERALLY REGULATED COMPANIES FILED WITH THE GOVERNMENT. THE REPORT TELLS US THAT THE ACT HAD LITTLE EFFECT IN ITS FIRST FULL YEAR. IT ALSO GIVES US A LOT OF INFORMATION ABOUT THE STATUS OF WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES IN FEDERALLY-REGULATED COMPANIES, A SECTOR OF THE LABOUR MARKET THAT PROVIDES RELATIVELY WELL-PAID AND SECURE JOBS.

PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES ARE GROSSLY UNDER-REPRESENTED IN THE CORPORATIONS COVERED UNDER THE ACT. OVERALL, "PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES REPRESENTED 1.6% OF THE WORKFORCE COVERED BY THE ACT, WHICH IS ABOUT ONE THIRD OF THEIR OVERALL REPRESENTATION IN THE CANADIAN LABOUR FORCE." (REPORT: 50) IN OTHER WORDS, ALTHOUGH ABOUT 5% OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES ARE EMPLOYED, LESS THAN 2% HAVE JOBS IN FEDERALLY REGULATED COMPANIES. (REPORT: 50)

WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES DO NOT EVEN GET A FAIR SHARE OF THAT TINY PERCENTAGE OF JOBS. WE ONLY GET ABOUT A THIRD OF THEM (34.9%) THERE ARE 586,861 JOBS COVERED UNDER THE ACT. PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES HAVE ONLY 9,352 OF THEM. WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES HAVE 3,260. (REPORT: 50)

MEN WITH DISABILITIES HAVE MORE OF THESE JOBS AND THE JOBS

THEY HAVE ARE BETTER PAID. THEIR ESTIMATED AVERAGE SALARY FOR FULL-TIME WORK WAS \$34,061; OURS WAS \$23,356. (REPORT: 51) AMONG THE INDUSTRIES COVERED UNDER THE EMPLOYMENT EQUITY ACT, THE WAGE GAP BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES IS THE GREATEST IN THE BANKING INDUSTRY. BANKS EMPLOY MANY MORE WOMEN THAN MEN BUT THE MEN GET THE HIGHEST-PAYING JOBS. WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES WHO WORK IN THE BANKING INDUSTRY MAKE ONLY 55.9% OF WHAT MEN IN THAT INDUSTRY ARE PAID. (REPORT: 53)

ON AVERAGE, OVER ALL THE REGULATED INDUSTRIES, 66.1% OF WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES WERE PAID LESS THAN \$20,000. ONLY 14.6% OF DISABLED MEN WERE IN THIS SALARY RANGE. AT THE TOP END OF THE SCALE, 20.6% OF MEN WITH DISABILITIES WHO WORKED IN REGULATED COMPANIES HAD INCOMES OF OVER \$40,000. ONLY 2.7% OF THEIR FEMALE COUNTERPARTS TOPPED THAT \$40,000 MARK. WE DO BADLY WHEN COMPARED WITH OTHER WOMEN, TOO. THE AVERAGE SALARY FOR ALL WOMEN IN FULL-TIME WORK WAS \$24,675, WHILE OURS WAS \$23,356. BUT GENDER SEEMS TO BE MORE OF A HANDICAP THAN DISABILITY. MEN IN FULL-TIME JOBS AVERAGED \$34,920 AND A LOT MORE MEN, WITH DISABILITIES OR WITHOUT THEM, WORK FULL TIME. WOMEN MAKE UP 76.2% OF THE WORKERS WITH DISABILITIES WHO WORK PART-TIME, A SLIGHTLY HIGHER PERCENTAGE THAN PART-TIME WOMEN OVERALL (74.6%) (REPORT: 51)

THE WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES WHO WORK FOR FEDERALLY REGULATED COMPANIES WERE A BIT BETTER OFF FINANCIALLY THAN THE RESPONDENTS IN OUR SURVEY; 79% OF WOMEN WHO ANSWERED OUR QUESTIONNAIRE HAD INCOMES UNDER \$20,000. HOWEVER, A BIT BETTER THAN BAD IS NOT GOOD ENOUGH.

WE DON'T BEGRUDGE OUR BROTHERS WHO HAVE DISABILITIES THEIR

STILL-LIMITED ACCESS TO SECURE, WELL-PAYING JOBS. IT IS THE EMPLOYER'S FAULT NOT THEIRS THAT SO FEW JOBS ARE AVAILABLE, AND THAT THOSE FEW ARE UNFAIRLY DISTRIBUTED. THOSE THAT DO EXIST ARE DISAPPEARING. THREE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-THREE PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES WERE HIRED FOR FULL-TIME POSITIONS BY THE REGULATED COMPANIES IN 1987, BUT TWICE AS MANY -- 655 -- WERE "TERMINATED." IN PERCENTAGE TERMS, 0.7% OF PEOPLE HIRED HAD DISABILITIES, BUT 1.2% OF THOSE WHO LOST JOBS WERE DISABLED. HERE, WE WERE BETTER OFF THAN OUR BROTHERS. THERE WAS A NET DECREASE OF 280 POSITIONS HELD BY MEN WITH DISABILITIES. WE ONLY LOST 52 JOBS. (REPORT: 56)

THE REPORT INDICATES THAT THE EMPLOYMENT EQUITY ACT IS NOT BEING COMPLIED WITH AND SHOWS THE INADEQUACY OF THE SANCTIONS PROVIDED UNDER ITS PROVISIONS. NON-COMPLYING EMPLOYERS ARE GIVEN SEVERAL CHANCES TO MEND THEIR WAYS BEFORE BEING BARRED FROM FURTHER GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS OR BEING FINED TO A MAXIMUM OF \$50,000. THE CANADIAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION HAS ACCESS TO INFORMATION ON THE STATUS OF DESIGNATED GROUPS, ON A COMPANY-BY-COMPANY BASIS, AND CAN INITIATE ACTIONS AGAINST OFFENDING COMPANIES -- BUT IT IS NOT REQUIRED TO DO SO. (REPORT: 4)

DISABLED PEOPLE FOR EMPLOYMENT EQUITY (DPEE), A COALITION OF MAJOR AGENCIES AND DISABLED CONSUMER GROUPS IN ONTARIO, EXAMINED THE EMPLOYMENT EQUITY REPORT AND FOUND IT WANTING. THEY TARGETED NINE MAJOR COMPANIES, INCLUDING THE FIVE MAJOR BANKS, THE CBC, CANADA POST, THE CANADIAN NATIONAL RAILWAY AND BELL-CANADA, AND FOUND THAT, OVERALL, ONLY 0.67% OF PERSONS HIRED BY THE COMPANIES WERE PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES. THEY HAVE FILED A COMPLAINT



AGAINST THESE NINE EMPLOYERS WITH THE CANADIAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION (DPEE, 1988). ANN MUSGRAVE, SPOKESPERSON FOR DPEE, OUTLINED THE NEXT STEPS IN HER STATEMENT OF NOVEMBER 17, 1988:

IF THE COMMISSION TAKES A CORPORATION BEFORE A TRIBUNAL AS A RESULT OF OUR COMPLAINT, THE ONUS WILL BE ON THE COMMISSION TO PROVE THAT "ON THE FACE OF IT," BASED ON THE DATA SUBMITTED PLUS THE RESULTS OF AN INVESTIGATION, SYSTEMIC DISCRIMINATION OCCURRED. THE CORPORATIONS MAY THEN PROVIDE MORE INFORMATION TO REFUTE THE CLAIM.

OBVIOUSLY, THE MAJOR BANKS CAN PUT MORE TIME AND MONEY INTO PROVING THEIR CASE THAN CAN COALITIONS OF CONSUMER'S ORGANIZATIONS. NOR WILL A SMALL FINE BE A GREAT DETERRENT. DPEE DEMANDED "A SOLID COMMITMENT FROM ALL THREE PARTY LEADERS DURING THE [THEN] CURRENT ELECTION CAMPAIGN THAT THEY WILL IMMEDIATELY MOVE TO AMEND THE EMPLOYMENT EQUITY ACT TO GIVE IT TEETH." THAT DID NOT HAPPEN DURING THE CAMPAIGN. IT WAS NOT MENTIONED IN THE APRIL, 1989 THRONE SPEECH. SUCH AMENDMENTS OBVIOUSLY ARE NOT A PRIORITY. THEY WILL NOT BE, UNLESS GROUPS COVERED UNDER THE EMPLOYMENT EQUITY ACT WORK TOGETHER TO DEMAND SUCH CHANGES.

AS A COMPLEMENT TO THE EMPLOYMENT EQUITY ACT, THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT HAS INITIATED THE FEDERAL CONTRACTORS PROGRAM, A NON-STATUTORY CONTRACT COMPLIANCE PROGRAM. IT REQUIRES FEDERAL SUPPLIERS EMPLOYING 100 PERSONS OR MORE WHO BID ON GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS VALUED AT \$200,000 OR MORE TO CERTIFY THEIR COMMITMENT TO IMPLEMENT EMPLOYMENT EQUITY. IT IS TO BE ADMINISTERED BY THE EMPLOYMENT EQUITY BRANCH OF THE CANADA EMPLOYMENT AND IMMIGRATION COMMISSION, WHICH ALSO ADMINISTERS THE EMPLOYMENT EQUITY ACT. (REPORT: 5)

THE FEDERAL CONTRACTORS PROGRAM IS NOT AN ACT OF PARLIAMENT.

THE FACT THAT IT IS NOT LEGISLATED MEANS THAT IT WILL BE EVEN MORE TOOTHLESS THAN THE EMPLOYMENT EQUITY ACT. UNDER THE PROGRAM, THE "ULTIMATE SANCTION IS THE DEBARMENT FROM THE SUPPLIERS SOURCE LIST AND THE LOSS OF OPPORTUNITY OF DOING BUSINESS WITH THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT." BEFORE THAT HAPPENS, THE EMPLOYER CAN APPEAL. DEBARMENT IS NOT PERMANENT. DEBARRED EMPLOYERS CAN BID AGAIN, PROVIDING THEY ATTACH A SUMMARY OF EMPLOYMENT EQUITY MEASURES INSTITUTED SINCE THE DEBARMENT, AND SIGN A NEW CERTIFICATE OF COMMITMENT TO CONTRACT COMPLIANCE. (EMPLOYMENT AND IMMIGRATION CANADA 1987:8)

LIKE THE CHARTER OF RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS AND THE CANADIAN HUMAN RIGHTS ACT, THE EMPLOYMENT EQUITY ACT IS SUPPOSED TO WORK ON OUR BEHALF. LIKE THESE OTHER ACTS, IT SEEMS THAT IT WILL REQUIRE OUR CONSTANT VIGILANCE AND ACTION TO GET THE ENFORCEMENT THAT COULD REALLY MEAN EQUALITY FOR WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES. THE EMPLOYMENT EQUITY ACT WILL BE REVIEWED BY PARLIAMENT IN 1991. ACCORDING TO THE REPORT, "THE GOVERNMENT EXPECTS TO SEE EVIDENCE OF CREATIVE AND COMPREHENSIVE APPROACHES TO THE ACHIEVEMENT OF EQUALITY IN EMPLOYMENT" BY THAT DATE. WE HOPE THEY DO, BUT WE WILL BE WATCHING CAREFULLY.

WE CANNOT GUARANTEE THAT LEGISLATED REMEDIES WILL WORK, EVEN IF WE PUT OUR BEST EFFORTS INTO LOBBYING FOR THEM AND MONITORING THEM. IT IS CLEAR THEY ARE NOT WORKING AT PRESENT. YET PUBLIC AWARENESS IS INCREASING AND CONTINUED EFFORTS TO INFLUENCE LEGISLATORS MAY PROVE WORTHWHILE.

#### CONCLUSION:

WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES WANT TO WORK AND WE ARE LOYAL

EMPLOYEES. HOWEVER, MANY OF US WHO HAVE EXISTING DISABILITIES ARE DENIED EASY ACCESS TO THE LABOUR FORCE. OTHERS MUST STRUGGLE TO KEEP JOBS WHEN WE BECOME DISABLED. TOO MANY OF US ARE TRAPPED ON SMALL GOVERNMENT ALLOWANCES OR IN LOW-PAYING JOBS. ONLY 27% OF THE WOMEN WHO RESPONDED TO OUR SURVEY LIVE ON MORE THAN \$15,000 A YEAR. INCOMES BELOW THAT ARE INADEQUATE IN CANADA TODAY. ONE-QUARTER OF OUR RESPONDENTS SUPPORT CHILDREN OR OTHER DEPENDENTS AS WELL AS THEMSELVES.

THESE RESULTS INDICATE A GREAT NEED FOR SUITABLE JOBS, ACCESSIBLE WORKPLACES, AND OTHER ACCOMMODATIONS TO ALLOW THOSE OF US WHO ARE ABLE AND WILLING TO WORK TO DO SO. THESE MEASURES MUST BE UNDERPINNED WITH SOCIAL PROGRAMS WHICH WILL GUARANTEE A DECENT STANDARD OF LIVING AND DIGNITY FOR ALL OF US.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTIONS WERE PASSED UNANIMOUSLY AT THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF DAWN CANADA ON MARCH 27, 1989:

1. THAT DAWN CANADA INVESTIGATE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF PLACING WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES ON BOARDS AND IN DECISION MAKING POSITIONS AND FIND WAYS OF IMPLEMENTING THIS RECOMMENDATION.
2. THAT DAWN CANADA WORK TO HEIGHTEN THE AWARENESS OF PLANNERS AND DIRECTORS OF JOB DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS FOR WOMEN REGARDING OUR NEEDS AND WORK WITH THEM TO MAKE JOB ENTRY AND RE-ENTRY EASIER FOR WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES.
3. THAT DAWN CANADA STRONGLY URGE GOVERNMENTS AT ALL LEVELS TO SUPPORT JOB READINESS PROGRAMS FOR WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES AND TO INSTIGATE THEM WITHIN APPROPRIATE DEPARTMENTS.
4. THAT DAWN CANADA DISCUSS THE NEEDS OF WOMEN STUDENTS WITH THE NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION OF DISABLED STUDENTS (NEADS), PROVINCIAL MINISTRIES OF EDUCATION, THE COUNCIL OF MINISTRIES OF EDUCATION, THE CANADIAN FEDERATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN, AND THE CANADIAN FEDERATION OF STUDENTS; AND, WORK WITH THEM TO IMPROVE OVERALL ACCESSIBILITY FOR AND ATTITUDES TOWARDS WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES IN SCHOOLS, COLLEGES, AND TECHNICAL INSTITUTES.
5. THAT DAWN CANADA RECOMMEND THAT THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT PUT IN PLACE STRONGER SANCTIONS AND AUGMENT THE AUTHORITY OF THE CANADIAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION TO RIGIDLY ENFORCE STRONGER SACTIONS AGAINST EMPLOYERS WHO DO NOT COMPLY WITH THE EMPLOYMENT EQUITY ACT.

NOTES

1.

TABLE 1:  
EDUCATION LEVEL BY TIME OF ONSET OF DISABILITY,  
LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION AND PARENTING STATUS

	NONE	1-9	10-11	H.S.	HS+	STDNT	RN	U.GRD.	GRD+	TOTAL
BIRTH										
ØWØC	-	2	6	5	7	3	-	-	1	24
WØC	7	11	2	6	11	-	-	13	2	52
ØW+C	1	2	-	2	2	-	-	1	1	9
WM	-	-	-	1	5	-	-	1	2	9
TOTAL	8	15	8	14	25	3	-	15	6	94
EARLY (CHILDHOOD)										
ØWØC	-	2	3	1	1	-	-	4	-	11
WØC	1	1	-	1	6	1	-	3	2	15
ØW+C	1	2	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	5
WM	-	-	2	-	2	-	-	2	-	6
TOTAL	1	5	5	2	12	1	-	9	2	37
MORE THAN TEN YEARS AGO										
ØCØW	-	-	-	4	9	-	2	5	2	22
ØW+C	-	2	-	4	10	-	-	-	1	17
WØC	1	-	-	1	3	1	-	4	3	13
WM	-	-	-	1	5	-	-	2	2	10
TOTAL	1	2	0	10	27	1	2	11	8	62
FIVE TO TEN YEARS AGO										
ØCØW	-	1	-	2	7	1	1	2	-	14
ØW+C	-	-	3	4	2	-	-	-	2	11
WØC	-	1	-	-	5	-	-	4	-	10
WM	-	-	-	-	4	-	1	1	1	7
TOTAL	0	2	3	6	18	1	2	7	3	42
LESS THAN FIVE YEARS AGO										
ØCØW	1	-	1	-	2	-	-	-	-	4
ØW+C	-	-	-	2	3	-	-	1	2	8
WØC	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
WM	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
TOTAL	1	-	1	2	5	-	-	1	3	13

TOTAL 11 24 17 34 87 6 4 43 22 248  
(OVERALL = MORE THAN NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS AS 3 LISTED IN MORE  
THAN ONE CATEGORY; E.G. RN WORKING ON MASTERS )

KEY:

EDUCATION LEVELS: NONE= NO FORMAL EDUCATION (COULD INCLUDE TUTORING)  
1-9: HIGHEST LEVEL GRADE 1 TO GR. 9 10-11= GRADE 10 OR 11  
ONLY H.S.= HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION HS+ = TRAINING CERTIFICATE  
OR SOME COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY STDNT = CURRENTLY IN EDUCATION  
SYSTEM RN = REGISTERED NURSE U.GRD. = BACHELOR DEGREE  
GRD+= MASTERS OR DOCTORATE

CATEGORIES:

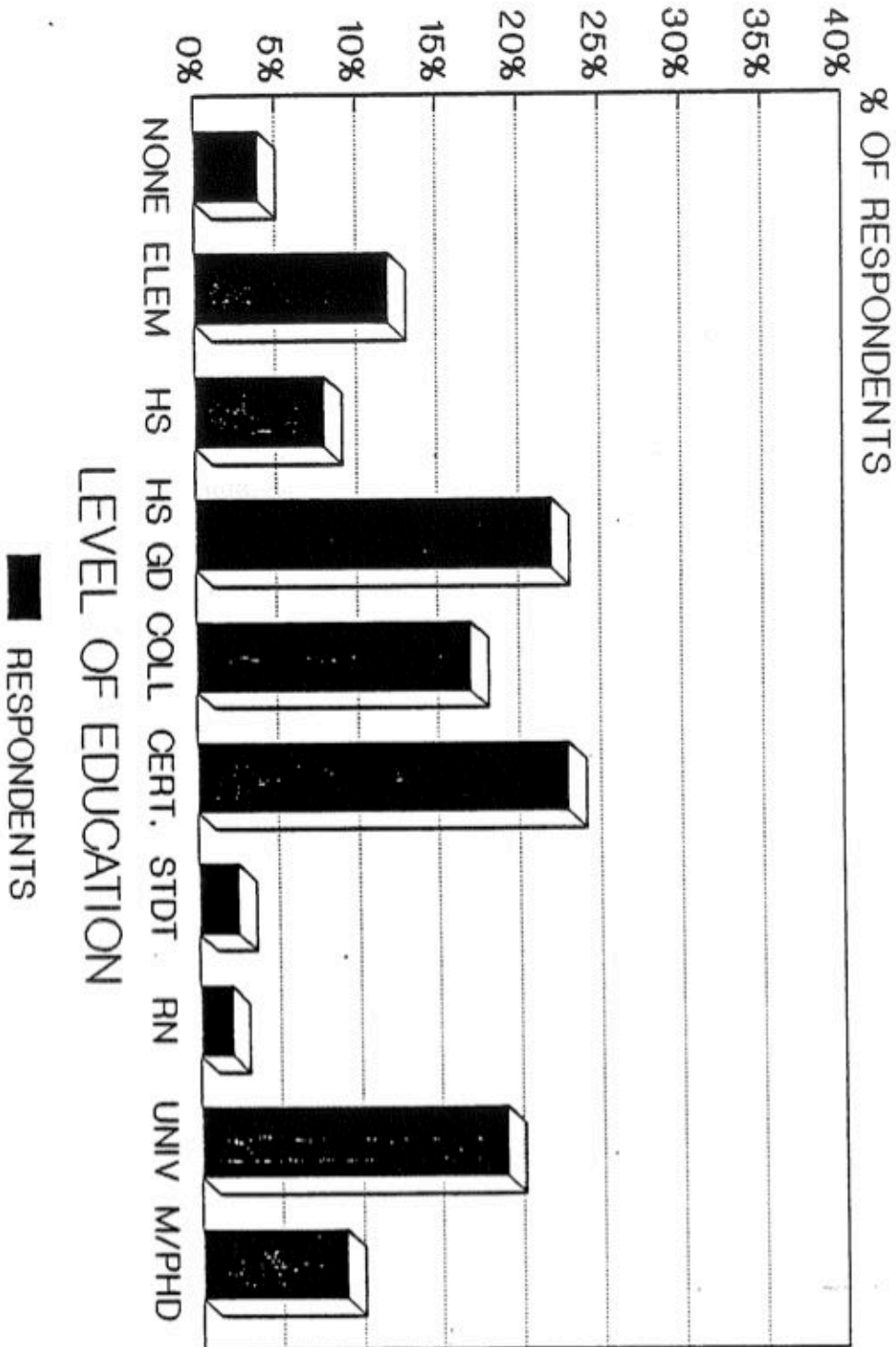
ØCOW = UNEMPLOYED, NO CHILDREN CW+C = UNEMPLOYED WITH CHILDREN  
WØC = WORKING, NO CHILDREN WM = EMPLOYED WITH CHILDREN



2. SEE "WHY BOYS LEAD GIRLS IN COMPUTER RACE." VANCOUVER SUN FEB. 20, 1989.
3. IN 1981, I CONDUCTED A STUDY OF "WOMEN IN TRADITIONAL JOBS" FOR THE B.C. HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION. THE RESEARCH INCLUDED INTERVIEWS WITH WOMEN WHO WORKED IN FISH PROCESSING PLANTS ON B.C.'S NORTH COAST. AT THAT TIME, A CASE HAD COME BEFORE THE COMMISSION WHICH INVOLVED A YOUNG WOMAN BEING DENIED THE RIGHT TO DO A MORE HIGHLY PAID JOB IN A FISH PLANT BECAUSE SHE WORE BANDAGES ON HER WRISTS. THE JOB WAS TRADITIONALLY DONE ONLY BY MEN. IT INVOLVED LIFTING HEAVY FISH AND CRATES. SHE TESTIFIED AT THE INQUIRY THAT THE WORK SHE WAS DOING WAS EQUALLY PHYSICALLY TAXING, AND THAT THE BANDAGES WERE WORN AS PROTECTION, NOT BECAUSE OF EXISTING WEAKNESS. WOMEN NOW DO JOBS IN BOTH CATEGORIES. MANY WORKERS OF BOTH SEXES DO EXPERIENCE STRAINS AND INJURIES TO THEIR ARMS, WRISTS, AND BACKS. THESE MAY SHOW UP IMMEDIATELY, OR APPEAR LATER AS ARTHRITIS AND SIMILAR DISABILITIES. THE LATER LINKAGES ARE HARDER TO PROVE. EXPLORING THE ISSUE WAS DIFFICULT IN 1981, AS WOMEN WERE RELUCTANT TO GIVE ANY INFORMATION WHICH MIGHT HAVE UNDERMINED THEIR EFFORTS TO BE ACCEPTED INTO THE HIGHER PAYING JOBS. THE STUDY WAS NEVER PUBLISHED BECAUSE THE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION WAS DISBANDED BY THE SOCIAL CREDIT GOVERNMENT BEFORE THE WRITE-UP WAS COMPLETED.
4. INFORMATION SELECTED FROM THE TABLES IN WELFARE IN CANADA: THE TANGLED SAFETY NET. A REPORT BY THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WELFARE. OTTAWA: SUPPLY AND SERVICES CANADA. (1987) THE "POVERTY LINE" IN P.E.I. FOR A SINGLE EMPLOYABLE IS \$8,775. FOR A SINGLE PARENT WITH ONE CHILD UNDER 2 IN THAT PROVINCE IT IS \$11,548. THE POVERTY LINE IS HIGHEST IN BRITISH COLUMBIA: FOR SINGLE UNEMPLOYABLES IT IS \$10,653; FOR SINGLE PARENTS WITH A TWO-YEAR OLD, IT IS \$14,055. SEVENTY-SEVEN OF THE WOMEN WHO ANSWERED THE QUESTION ON INCOME WERE RESIDENTS OF B.C.; 58 OF THEM (75%) HAD INCOMES UNDER \$10,000.

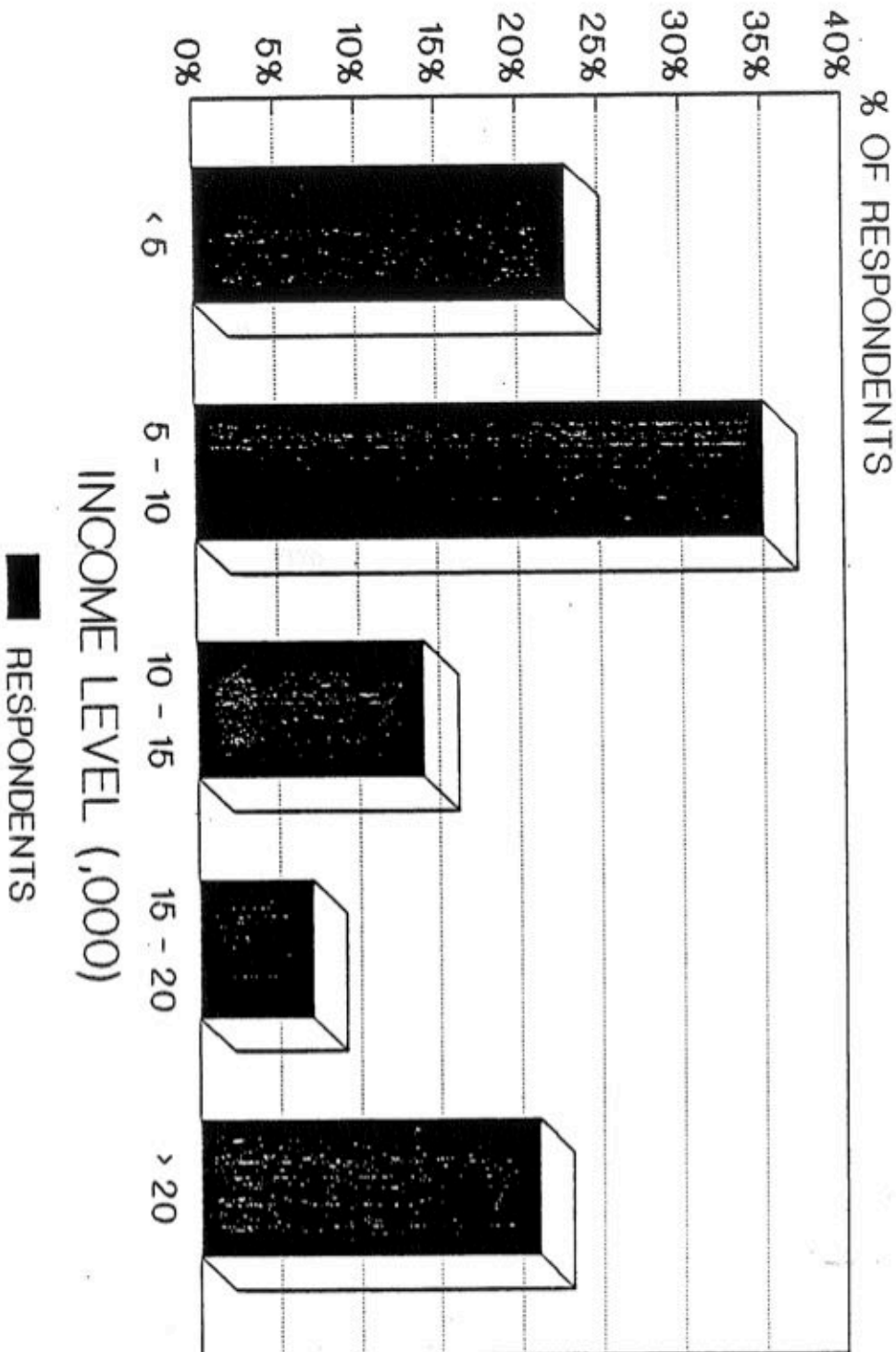
APPENDIX A

# #1: EDUCATION LEVEL OF ALL RESPONDENTS



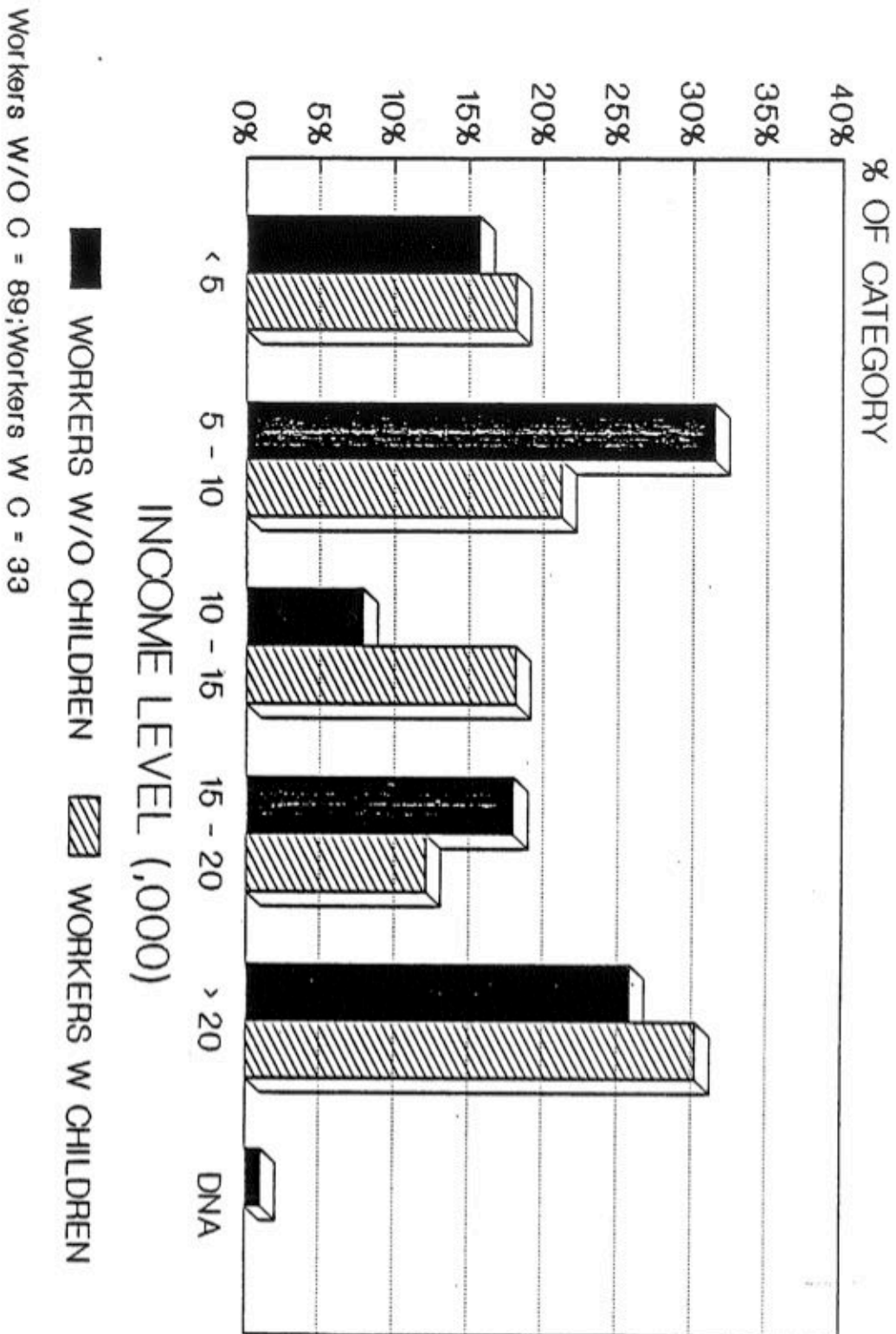
APPENDIX B

## #2: INCOME LEVEL OF ALL RESPONDENTS



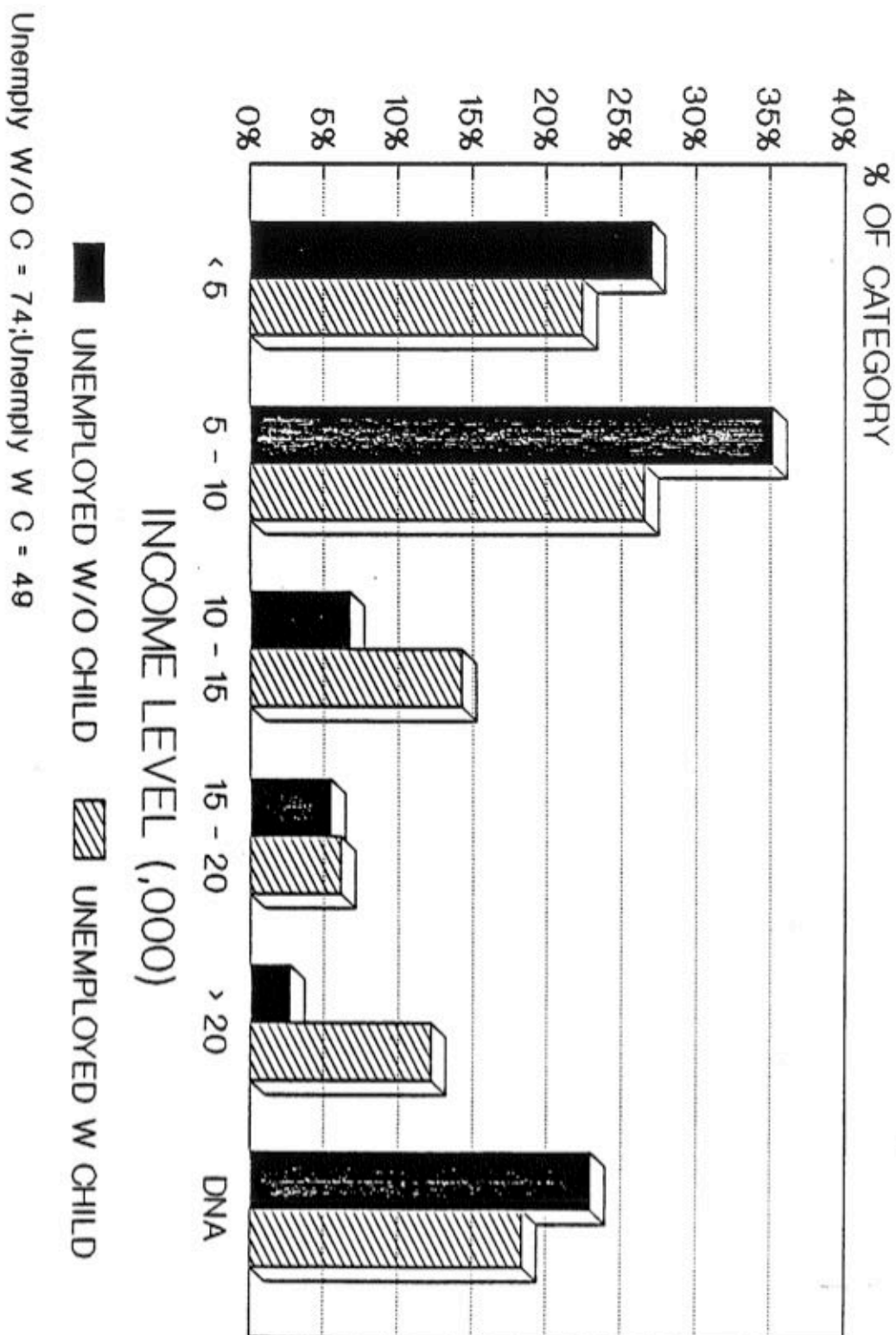
APPENDIX C

# #3: INCOME LEVEL OF WORKERS WITH AND WITHOUT CHILDREN



APPENDIX D

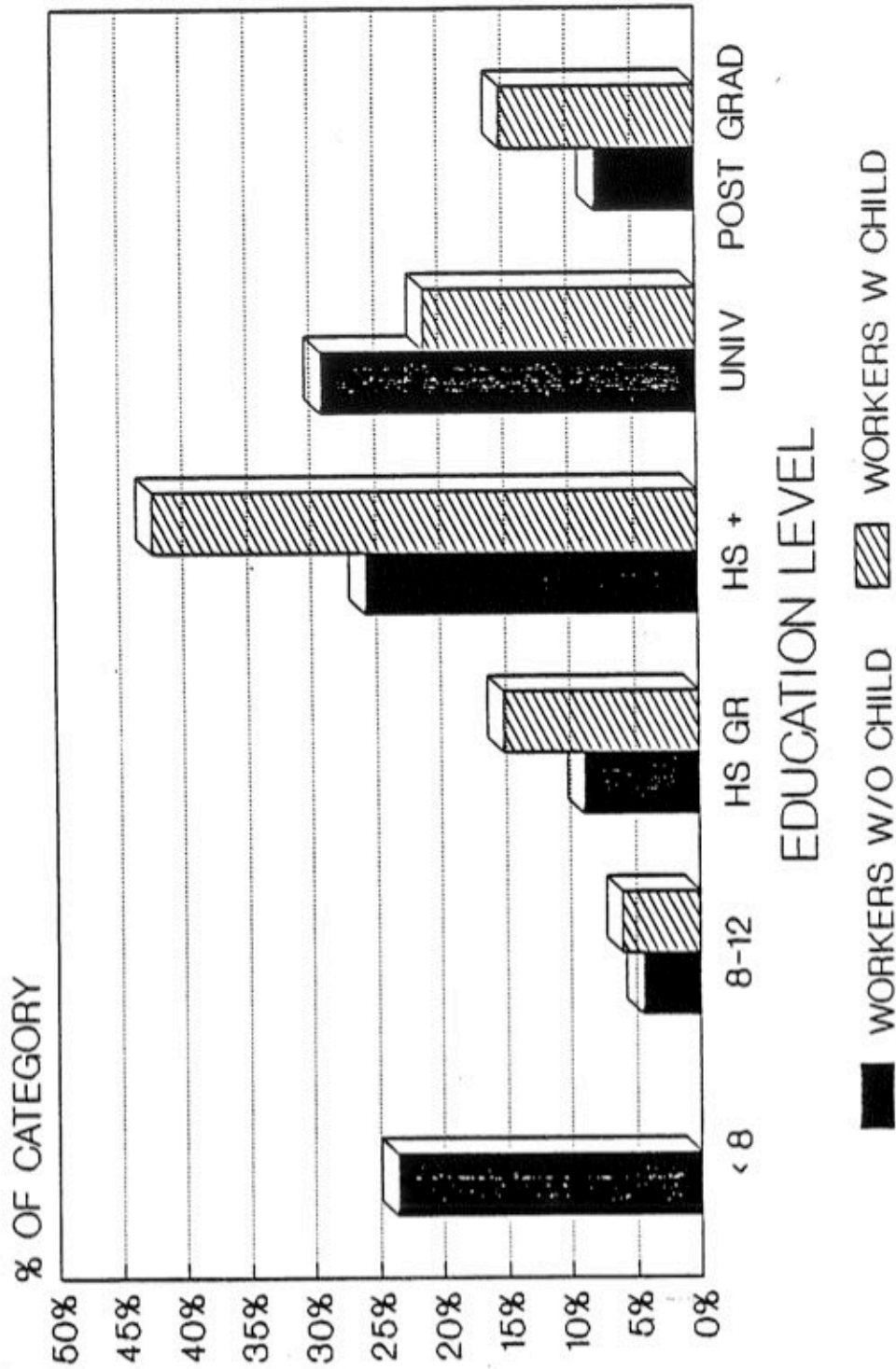
# #4: INCOME LEVEL OF UNEMPLOYED WITH AND WITHOUT CHILDREN





APPENDIX E

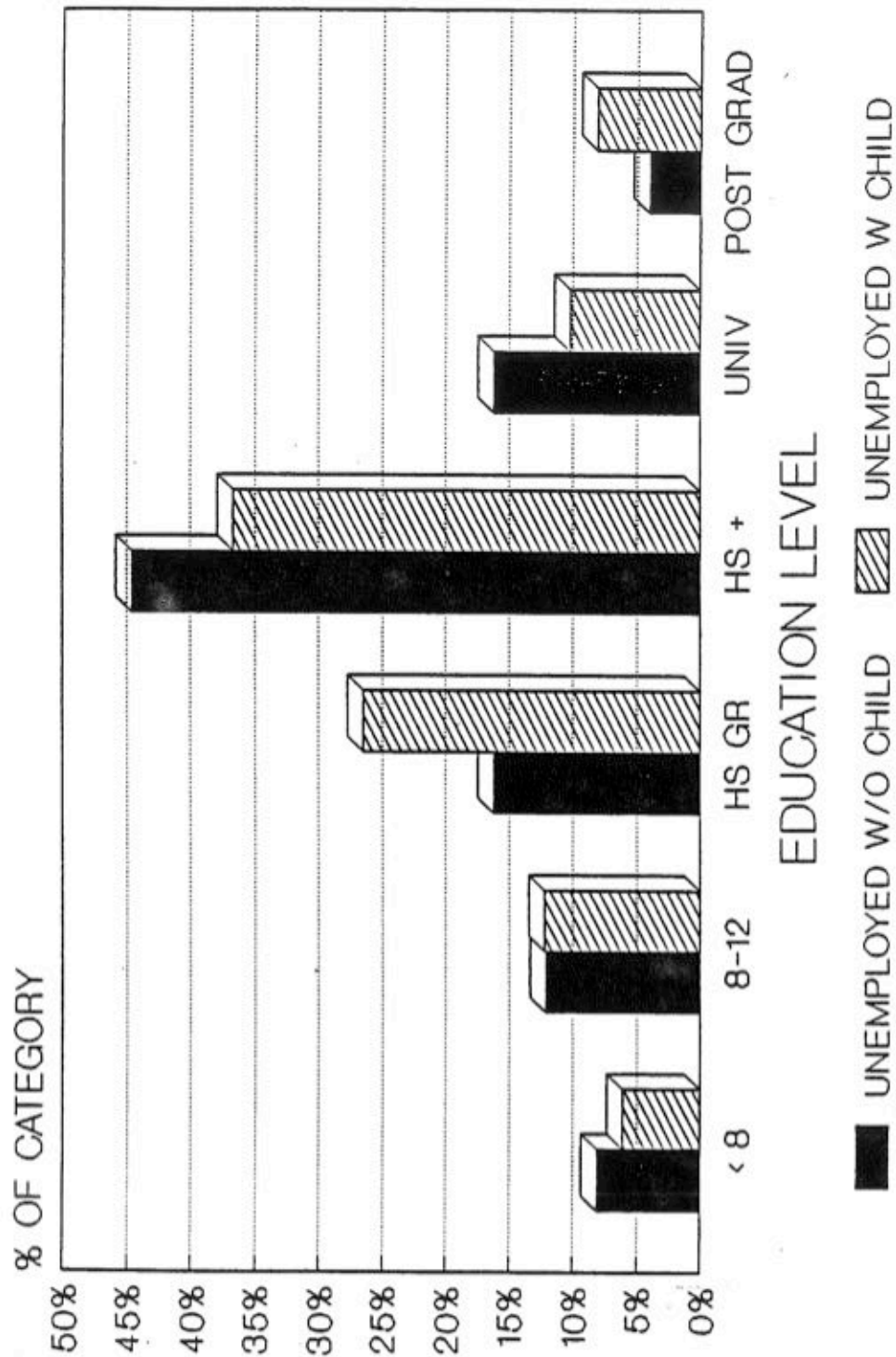
# #5: EDUCATION LEVEL WORKERS WITH AND WITHOUT CHILDREN



Workers W/O C = 89; Workers W C = 33

APPENDIX F

# #6: EDUCATION LEVEL UNEMPLOYED WITH AND WITHOUT CHILDREN



Unemploy W/O C = 74; Unemploy W C = 49

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