

THE OTHER WOMAN

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CANADIAN WOMAN'S PAPER

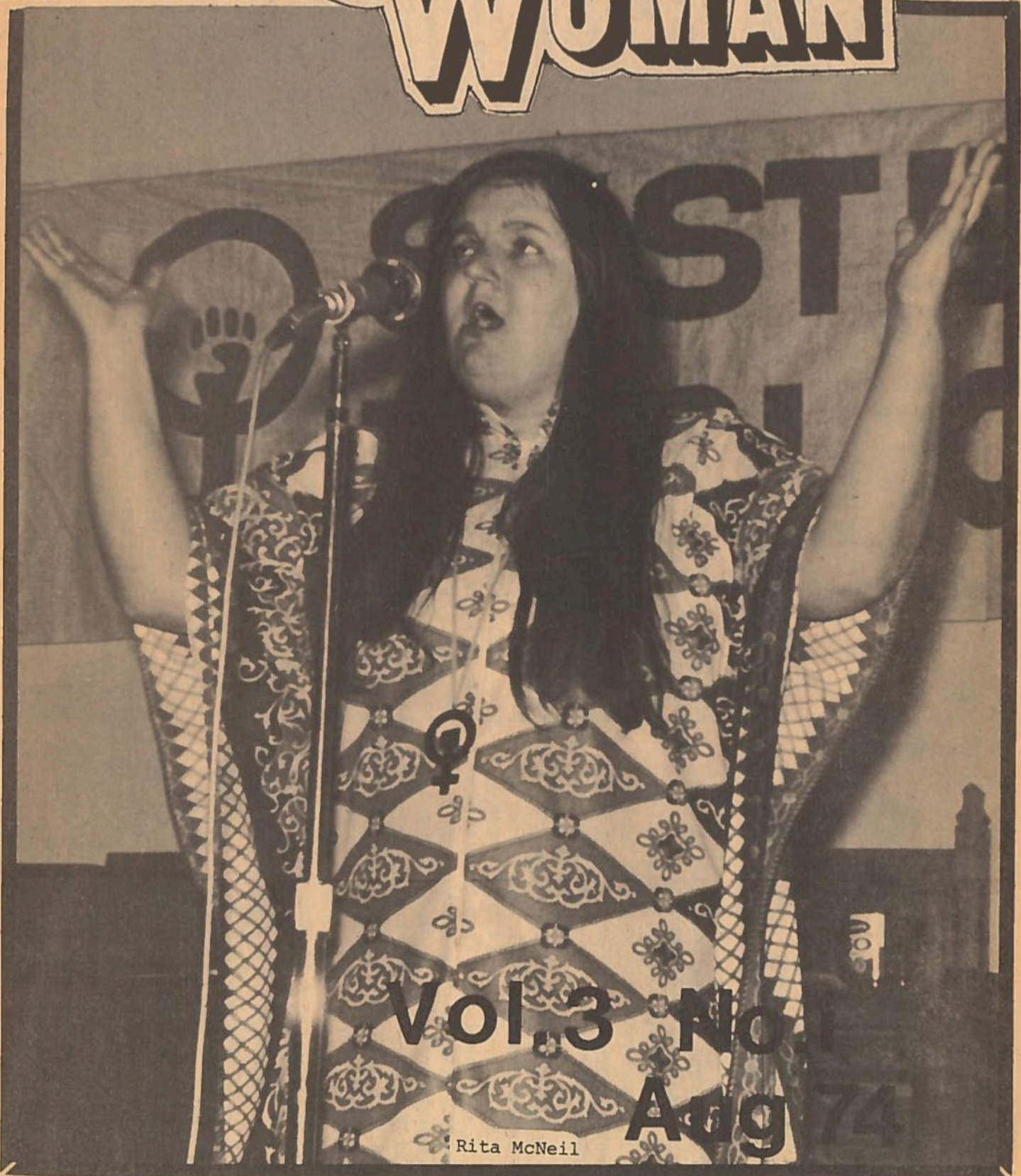


photo by Annette Clough

Vol. 3 No. 3
Aug

Rita McNeil

editorial

nationalism: anti- imperialism

TOW TALK

Hello, Sisters!

We've had a very interesting month at T.O.W. We lost over one third of our workers for various reasons, the details of which you may conclude from some of the articles in this issue. Besides that, we were flooded out of our office through the basement window and one of our workers who was soaked trying to stop the deluge was caught in the nude by the typewriter repairman who came to fix our broken typewriter. We took some pictures of the disaster to convince the skeptical of the extent of the damage.

However, despite the obstacles the paper is out, as you can see. We include our impressions on OFY funding of the newspaper (pg. 3), and draw your attention to the article on psychosurgery (pg. 17).

We hope you have enjoyed the increased frequency with which the paper came out; but- (1) we need more volunteers (2) we need more money and (3) we need copy, graphics, et al. So-back to six issues per year, unless you have suggestions? Remember, our subscription rate has remained the same despite inflationary figures doubling again and again. Keep in touch. We're still at the same address: 31 Dupont St. (We thought we might have to move but Sister Magic lives!) Our meeting times are Thursday nights at 7:30 P.M. and Sunday afternoons at 1:00 P.M. So drop in ready to roll up your sleeves and work!

By the way, we'll try to include some more info about the directions being taken by Toronto's Women's Centres in our next issue. See you later-can't guarantee when.

Happy Reading!

open letter to the Amazon Quarterly

Dear Sisters,

The job of answering your request to place an ad in our paper fell to me. We will not print it because of our nationalist policy. I wondered whether you are familiar with, whether many of our American and even Canadian readers are familiar with, our nationalist policy. I was referred to your article (A.Q. Vol. 1, # 4, Around the Lesbian Continent: Impressions) concerning our policy which indicated to me that, while you are aware of it you do not understand it. I think it bears reiteration.

Canada has always been a colonized country. Colonized first by France and then Britain, we remained a British colony from the time of the French defeat in Canada until well after confederation. Britain was then the world's most powerful nation. Well the U.S. has that distinction now and it has taken over the colonizing role that Britain once held in Canada as in the rest of the world.

As Canadian women we must live with the everyday reality that our economy is controlled by the American corporate and political structure and that "respectable" culture in Canada looks to the U.S. for direction. Canadian bookstores contain more American than Canadian books. There are more American publishers in Canada than Canadian. Much of "respectable" theatre in Canada consists of off Broadway trial runs of American plays as well as many other popular American plays. Much of our T.V. programming is American besides which many areas in Canada pick up one or several American stations (They don't have any Canadian programming and broadcast minimal Canadian news.) Most of the movies shown in our movie houses are American. Much of our media news coverage is American. Our concert circuits feature more Americans than Canadians. Many of our best trained and most creative craftspeople, technicians and professionals (our would-be cultural "leaders") migrate to the U.S.

Those of us who choose to stay write books, articles, plays that will not be as popular with Canadians as those written in the U.S. We do original Canadian theatre that is nowhere near as popular as American imports because our theatre differs from American theatre but Canadians are bred on American theatre and anything else seems foreign to us. And we create community and movement periodicals and we are determined to keep these jealously devoted to Canadian news, issues, people.

But, you might say, the U.S. and the Canadian cultures are male cultures; that we are only now gradually becoming aware of our own heritage and that this culture crosses national boundaries of the world's male dominated countries.

I don't think this is accurate. Our experience as Canadian women is very different from the experience of our American sisters (as the experience of American black and Chicano women is different from their white American sisters). National (as well as racial, class, age, religious etc.) differences cannot be ignored. Yes we have much in common and we must become aware of these commonalities in order to understand ourselves better as a caste, as an oppressed group, as a multi-national force capable of organizing to free ourselves. But we must also recognize the indigenous ways in which we differ. For although women have been written out of history this does not mean that we did not take part in it.

So the Other Woman is a women's paper but we are also a Canadian paper. As such we are determined that it be devoted to developing and supporting our Canadian women's analysis/culture/consciousness. We will feature articles from time to time by or about non-Canadians or non-Canadian events or issues that are relevant to or need the support of Canadian women. Non-American articles of this nature

will be more numerous in light of the nature of our relationship to your country.

American sisters support Canadian women, buy our books and records, subscribe to our periodicals and reprint articles from them in yours (if you generally pay for the articles you print then pay the writers of Canadian articles you reprint), learn more about our country (we know a lot about yours), and accept in support and faith our nationalist policy as a safeguard of our emerging Canadian women's culture.

My response to your interpretation of our nationalist policy as per your article (that I mentioned earlier) is one of anger and confusion. Anger that you wrote this policy off because "a wonderful woman in Toronto" maintained that "yes, this was just part of a larger pattern with them (the O.W. Collective) of creating a bit of self-importance at someone else's expense".

Confusion that, although earlier in your article you called on readers to submit "carefully thought out and documented articles (on class)", you would be satisfied by the above conclusion and come to the subsequent conclusion: "We do not take that experience to be representative of the feelings of Canadian women at all". Where are your references to research, to the statistics or to the many Canadian women you would have to interview to reach this conclusion. I don't see careful thought or documentation in your approach to the issue. I see an emotional reaction to rejection and your refusal to listen objectively to the importance of the nationalist policy.

In reference generally to what you call the second distinction: nationality. As surprising as it may seem to you the distinction of nationality looms large in the lives of Canadians as many Quebecois, Acadiennes, and native women will tell you. There are many nations in Canada which fight to preserve their cultures. These you may reject as male-dominated but it is fucked-up and unsisterly to trash sisters in such a petty and personal fashion when we enforce barriers necessary to the preservation of the culture that we choose to identify with.

Elaine

FEEDBACK

We'd very much like to hear from Canadian women and Canadian women's papers their views on this subject as this is an article which represents the feelings of most of the Other Woman Collective, many of the women who have contributed to the Other Woman and/or have been part of the Collective in the past and many of the Canadian women I have known outside of my acquaintances on the Other Woman and Toronto's Women's Place. I know this from personal encounters and discussions with women having never undertaken a conscious survey.

TO SAVE OUR LIFE!!

Toronto Women's Bookstore

Toronto Women's Bookstore, formerly housed at Women's Place as Let Us Out Books, is the first feminist bookstore in Toronto open to the general public. After much discussion of the pros and cons of leaving Women's Place we finally came to the conclusion that it was time to expand and therefore time to find a storefront and move out on our own. So in May, when Women's Place left 31 Dupont for 137 George St., Let Us Out moved too, and opened a month later at 12 Kensington Ave. as Toronto Women's Bookstore.

After two months of operation we've almost doubled the stock we brought with us from Women's Place and hope to triple it by the winter. We've had many requests for a booklist, and now that we're settled, we've found time to compile our first mail-order list. We plan to update it at regular intervals and have a new completely annotated list ready by November.

So what's a feminist bookstore? It's a bookstore where women's books are neither spread all over the place so one gets no feeling of what's been and what's been written by women; nor relegated to the "women's section" in some corner. We carry only material by, for, and about women. Most of our books are by women, but we do carry some books by men that are particularly relevant to current feminist analysis. Also, we who work at the bookstore work continuously to find out more about women's literature and to make it available to women.

Who are we? We're a collective of about 10 women who share decision making and responsibility for running the store. This summer we've worked in conjunction with Cora, the feminist bookmobile, which has been travelling around Southern Ontario bringing otherwise inaccessible material to small-town and rural women. In the fall and winter we will have a travelling van to take our stock all over Metro Toronto to schools, women's groups and shopping centres.

A final word about our stock. We carry whenever possible paperback editions of books. However due to the great time lag between the publishing of some hard cover books and their paperback editions, we carry a few new titles in hardback. As soon as titles are available in paperback, we'll switch to the less expensive editions. We also carry women's records, buttons and periodicals.

Drop in to see us. (862-0414/5)
HOURS: Monday to Friday:
10 am to 7.30 pm
Saturday:
10 am to 6 pm

♀♂ locked out of Montreal YWCA

Dear Friend:

As you will probably have read in the press, our final efforts to get the YWCA to reconsider its stand in relation to the firing of Cerise Morris have failed. The remaining five staff members were suspended without pay on July 15th, and locked out of the Women's Centre offices.

At this point our chief concern is to continue our services to the community. We are located at "NEW WOMAN CENTRE"
1210 Greene Ave.
Westmount, Quebec
Phone # 931-3807

We are already engaged in a search for independent operating funds, but until such time as we have secured permanent funding, we will be in need of emergency cash to cover mailing, stationery costs, etc. We would be grateful for any donation you could make to help defray these expenses. Many of you will have already given \$2.00 as a mailing fee, but this money is of course no longer available to us. We would like to suggest therefore, that those who have paid the fee should write or call the YWCA, Miss B. Siebold or Mrs. Carla White, and ask that the money be refunded. We have enclosed a form letter...Once we have permanent quarters, we will re-establish our mailing list.

We are totally committed to the continuation of a new independent centre for women, and in order to do this, we are depending on your continued support and participation, both financial and in terms of community backing for our requests for permanent funding.

We look forward to a long and happy association with the Women of this community.

Yours sincerely,
Rina Fraticelli, Helen Knight,
Sally Mittag, Neva Pandos,
Cerise Morris, Marylin Rowell,
Grace Scarabelli.
The NEW WOMAN centre

The NEW WOMAN Centre was formerly the YWCA Women's Centre until one of the Y's staff was unjustly fired. We will try to have more about this incident in our next issue. For now, we at TOW express our solidarity with our Montreal sisters. If any of our Toronto area readers have money to donate to help the NEW WOMAN Centre in its struggles to stay alive, we're sure the help would be appreciated.

I'm sitting here trying to get the words together about something that's been preying on my mind. It's got to do with life blood and women and community and spreading ideas and growing together and being strong as a group of women. My problem is trying to explain all this in sentences that aren't cliches. But bleeding isn't a cliché, I guess and blood and veins better not be and the body of women that work toward freedom here in Toronto might be able to read between the lines anyway. So when a person comes out of her shell and finds a group of friends with smiling faces and lots of encouragement, it is really life-giving. And when that person grows really fast, flourishing in sister love and woman kindness to be aware, awake and never to have to not see again, then she must speak what she sees when the love that nourished her is in danger. Because that love that brought me out has got to bring out so many of my sisters—our sisters—that we have to be so strong so long and keep on building TOGETHER and my sisters you showed me my mouth, listen while I use it.

We have a number of women's activities here, all designed to bring awareness, understanding, help, comfort, growth to women. Many women are involved in more than one activity. Lots of women in the activities, workshops, and centres know each other. We really have a community of women. A real community—supporting itself with activities necessary for our existence as a community: Workshops, bookstores, self-help groups, health centres, food stores, clothing shops and a newspaper. There's the point of this article: a newspaper. I think a newspaper is the blood running through the body of women working in this city. If we are going to have a community we have to get our ideas back and forth to each other so that we can all grow together...these are just the notions of a bleeding heart but it's not easy to visit a freaked out sister who threatens to call the cops as she kicks you in the thigh and drips out of the side of the community without even a scream. We are you know only as strong as the weaknesses we can feel beating inside of us. Sisters, tell your sisters your deepest fears.

Well anyway, you see, this spring I came out and started to work on the newspaper, you know, The Other Woman. We had lots of ideas and lots of workers and I was so happy to know that the community had a voice and a newspaper. I just came out you see and I didn't know very many people because I had been alone for a long while and so I didn't really know what kind of sisterhood I was getting into, but it looked good and healthy to me.

(cont. on pg. 4)



OFY reflections: CINDY:

3

PAT:

WHAT I DID ON MY SUMMER VACATION.

I went into this grant unwillingly and ended up learning a few things about myself, and about the paper too. Reasons for applying for OFY Government Funding: 1) Last February, we were going thru one of our "unstable" periods. 5 members were leaving the Collective that spring. 2) Never keeping ahead of the printing bill enough to afford buying basic office supplies or renting a typewriter (meaning beg, borrow or steal) 3) To see how well T.O.W. can function under monthly deadlines.

1) The women who joined at the time of the OFY grant were new to the functioning of the paper. We went thru a change-over in staff during the grant so that we still have 5 women workers, no better than when we started. We never had time to make those essential contacts for either articles or more workers. You wouldn't believe the amount of extra paperwork that OFY has given us.

2) Tho still working underground, we now have a permanent office thanks to OFY money. We can build up supplies; we can afford the luxury of a Selectric typewriter.

3) This has become a 'temporary' project which is one part of the nature of OFY. Luckily, the newspaper has a long enough herstory that we will not (and never intended to) just drift away into the night like so many other OFY projects. A monthly woman's paper is necessary. It could not have been done without OFY money.

I can see that there was a lack of political discussion round copy and very little original copy being produced. This comes from the hectic pace set round distribution, layout, etc. to fulfill the OFY expectations.

There is also the thing called commitment. All 3 above points relate back to commitment too. During the past 2 years women working on the paper had to have more commitment just because they were giving up all their spare time to the paper after their normal work day whether it be sorting mail in the post office or working as a typist. People starting to work on the OFY grant had the idea that it would be a part-time job for some money until they realized - until they realized just how much was involved. A lot of goals we had set for ourselves did not get done because of this.

"I would not do this again for all the money in the world. Which is the one point that pleases me the most having lived with the other woman for 2 years under very penny-pinching circumstances."

LINDA:

OFY means free government money to me. It means money spent on building cultural interests instead of armies and parking lots. OFY means I was saved from the "8 to 5" hassle of a straight job for a few more months. OFY means being paid for something I like to do. But it means not being able to share this experience with very many of my sisters. OFY means salary for a few chosen people and no more than those few. OFY means hurt feelings between the money-earning few and their just-as-poor sister volunteers. OFY means the volunteers get angry and don't come to meetings anymore. OFY means the paper suffers from too little help and too few decision-makers, plus lots of extra paper work and ridiculous petty details.

OFY means a government which thinks it has sufficiently placated the masses by token offerings to a few representative projects.

OFY means a mixture of relief and frustration from accepting help from a capitalistic government.

ELAINE:

Dear Govt. of Canada: give women some money, lots of it. And we will divy it out amongst ourselves to (1) support ourselves while we devote our time to destroying discrimination against women and (2) pay the expenses of the structures we create to do this. You need not tell us how to do this. We are competent, devoted, and determined and we know what's best for us.

We argued about money. Who would get paid? Some of us worked on the paper anyway but had to have a straight job to support themselves. They were drained of energy by these jobs and seeing that there was paid full time staff, cut out of the paper to do other things (possibly even to hang loose in what little free time they had anyway). So our staff dwindled to only those paid. At the end of the grant most of us are returning to straight jobs and school. This will leave us with little time/energy to devote to the paper. Some of us will have little to give to the paper now - we will be too hassled. And there has been no new blood added to our staff this summer. One woman came by. But we were in the midst of one of this summer's deadline hassles; we didn't make her welcome, show her around and she never came back.

One of the stipulations of the grant was that we came out monthly. This was heavy for us. It meant that we had little time to get together and edit copy. It took us a week to type copy and layout, another week to get it off to and back from the printer and several days for distribution. This left us approximately a week and a half to devote to copy.

Speaking personally first, I would say that working on the government has been good for a number of reasons. Esp. for someone my age, it is very difficult to find a job that is interesting. Yet has OFY been good for the paper and for the women's movement? Sometimes it is hard to know whether stressful situations arise from OFY redtape and deadlines or from our personalities, the nature of putting out a feminist newspaper, or our own expectations. Sometimes I don't think it any of that. It's the humidity. Seriously tho, there is no doubt that money has brought in a lot of pressures, such as thinking you should be running around doing a 1000 little irritating things as part of your job. Then feeling guilty because you don't do them.

We need time to argue, think, discuss and define. OFY doesn't allow us that kind of time. I would say this is one of the most important things T.O.W. needs, yet it is the one thing that is so hard to get due to simple economics. I would prefer to see us produce 5 or 6 well-planned, well-thought issues in a year than 12 slap-dash affairs put together to meet government deadlines.

GILLEAN:

The problems of short-term funding. Long enough to become thoroughly engrossed in putting out a paper while receiving an income for previously volunteer work. Long enough to like the feel of time spent with women, relatively free of sexist hassles. Work valued and chosen.

What does O.F.Y. mean? It would be more appropriate to talk about why the government is phasing out O.F.Y. Such "make work" programs offended John Q. Public; Pragmatic Politician wins votes by siding with whatever reactionary, conservative backlash of opinion there is against any experimental program.

O.F.Y. meant native people, women, community-poor, and other disadvantaged minority groups could organize, reach out from local communities, weave a network of community voices in cable television, drama production, art and ethnic culture. O.F.Y. meant research, day care, landscape improvement, handicrafts, growth of a media network: newspapers, radio and T.V. programs-- it meant for a time that people were being paid to do things the government with its own network of professionals and institutions, has not and cannot achieve.

O.F.Y. may have "eaten up" the taxpayer's dollar-- I wonder, and I know, the degree of government spending which is wasteful, irresponsible and extraneous. If anything needed trimming it wasn't O.F.Y.

"The question is: what will the government substitute in place of O.F.Y.?"

B.B.B.

Last issue, we promised you some more information on the Brown Breast Brigade. This information is in the form of legal answers to the dilemma of arrest for baring our breasts in public.

There aren't any reported cases of bare-breasted women on trial in Canadian Law books. This doesn't mean that no woman in Canada has ever taken off her shirt and met resistance. It doesn't even mean that no woman has ever been brought to trial for doing so. It just means that if there ever was a case, it wasn't reported. Unfortunately for us, this means that no precedent has been set, or maybe fortunately! We just have to see what happens when we exercise our right to be free.

We may find ourselves in prison for six months or out of \$500 or both. That's the worst that can happen if a pig decides to prosecute a bare-breasted woman. Or we may find that the Attorney General (AG) doesn't want an issue made out of this kind of "nudity" and therefore, refuses to let the case be tried. These assumptions are made on the grounds that the conviction a bare-breasted woman would face would have to be under section 170 of the Criminal Code. This section, defined as "Nudity", is designed to "cover" all "Offenses which insult public convention" but are not intended to insult anybody. For example, if a woman "flaunted" her breasts in a public place, she may be charged with Indecent Exposure or Disorderly Conduct. However, if a woman was minding her own business on a beach and refused to cover up her breasts, she could not be charged with anything more serious than "Nudity". All charges under the nudity section are summary convictions. This means that they require the consent of the AG for prosecution. Depending on the mood of the AG the case could be tried or dropped. Many such cases may have already been dropped so the AG could have avoided having a precedent set which could favour bare breasts.

POSTAL DILEMMA LETTER

Dear Sisters,

In answer to your postal dilemma: do it! Tell the P.O. that you'll use the code, and do use it. It's not going to make one whit of difference.

How do I know this? Simple: I was working as a postal coder (now how's that for a dilemma!)? Needless to say, I boycott the code, past, present and future. Now, however, I'm a "lady mailman"—a much better job except for the things I have to take from men affronting my dignity because of my "position".

The coding machines are grossly inefficient and extremely delicate and fussy. They accept only letters of a certain size and weight, and not always those. They are constantly breaking; even so, there is very little coded mail. In two years time they will be outdated and useless. In short, newspapers



Baldwin Street Gallery

By refusing to allow such cases to come to trial, the AG can prevent the issue from ever being settled.

So, if we take our shirts off and the AG doesn't prosecute, we suffer the hassle of going "down to the station" and getting kicked around for a while but no prison term or fine. If the AG decides to prosecute, we face the problem of convincing the judge that convention is discriminatory to women. It's pretty obvious that convention is discriminatory to women. Most of the rights for which women are fighting are forbidden by post-war convention. However, we would have to convince the judge of this on many counts. (1) "Nudity" is defined as baring the "private parts". So, in male-hard-on law, the breasts are private parts. A lawyer skilled in Human Rights cases may be able to prove that this definition is in itself discriminatory. There was a case reported where a woman was sitting on the beach nude, reading a book. She was arrested for Indecent Exposure. The case was thrown out on the grounds that it couldn't be indecent exposure because the woman had no intention of shocking anyone. In another case, Johnson vs. the Queen (1972) involving nude dancing, the court

do not go through the machines and it doesn't make much difference cuz by the time they get to the letter carriers the proper order has been lost and they must be re-sorted anyway.

Actually, we've ("we" being the 18 of us female coders—now 17 plus 1 male) decided, in one of our many day long breaks, that the only reason that the Post Office instituted these machines is because ITT had some pretty good salesmen.

Did I say ITT? Yes, I did. ITT is making all sorts of money on these machines. Not only does ITT build them but ITT also provides the "technicians" to fix them when they break down at a rate of almost \$20/hr.

So, I would say that you use the code without fuss—it's not going to make any difference at all, in the delivery of the thing, or in any other step.

In Love, Sisterhood and Struggle
Von aka Barb Walter

ruled that "Nudity in itself is not offensive"! The offense is determined by the impact on the public. So (2) what this amounts to is that if the values of the public are so fucked up that they consider the bare breast immoral, then the owner of the bare breasts better be careful of where and how she bares her breasts. This is oppression. In court, perhaps, a lawyer can show that society has been trained to respond in discriminatory ways to women and therefore, the impact that an act of equality has on a sick society can not be valid grounds for a law suit.

These are only speculations about what might happen if the Brown Breast (and Bare Breast Brigade) issue becomes important enough to gain the disfavour of the police. And of course, if women do begin to bare their breasts in public because and when we feel like it.

LINDA

IN CALIFORNIA, IN 1967, THE STATE LAW WAS AMENDED TO READ THAT "TOPLESSNESS" WAS NOT INDECENT EXPOSURE WHETHER OR NOT THE WOMAN BARED HER BREASTS FOR ENTERTAINMENT PURPOSES.

So Sisters, the next time you're in California, Take Off Your Shirts!

S.O.S. (cont. from pg. 2)

It's three months later and I'm still working on the paper but I'm getting scared. We don't have enough help to get the paper out anymore. We don't have any articles coming in. Our energies are dwindling. Now the problem is my dream, my confounded dreams you know they can be so obnoxious telling me about life blood and love and community so what can I do my newly found and deeply loved sisters but tell you what these dreams are?

It seems that what the paper needs is the cooperation of the whole community. If all the women working for freedom on all the activities in Toronto felt that The Other Woman was their way of communicating to every other woman then maybe we would all see how important it is that this paper does not fail. Then also maybe we would use the paper to serve the community.

As the great god of cliches descends upon me threatening to stamp out my very existence as it were, I struggle to finish this article in my own words.

What if we became a community paper, a community collective composed of every woman in Toronto who cares about freedom. What if we all wrote articles to the paper about whatever was on our minds and needed to be told to our sisters. A community can only grow if we really are a community. We have to exchange all of our ideas.

If you want this paper then don't isolate it from the community.

OBITUARY

Feminist author Elizabeth Davis (The First Sex) was found dead in her home late Tuesday, July 30, of a self-inflicted gunshot wound.

The body of the 64 year old author was discovered in the bedroom of her home here by a neighbour. Ms. Davis was holding a .38 calibre revolver in her hand. She had been depressed for several months by illness.

Thanks to the Pedestal in Vancouver for this info.

SISTER SARAH SAYS: Please support the PEDESTAL - the OLDEST, LIVING, WOMEN'S LIBERATION PAPER IN NORTH AMERICA.

(The Other Woman's "big sister".)

See Page 18 for their address.

...A reliable source has informed me of just one more way in which we feel our daily oppression. The bank tellers at the Commerce Court Head Office can now wear pants to work but they *must* wear nylons underneath. Each teller is checked to be sure it is followed. How could the customers behind a waist-high counter possibly tell whether the women are wearing nylons, socks or bare-foot sandals? Or even care? All I expect from my local teller is the right number of bills given back to me. We are, however, compelled to follow feminine standards of dress laid down by men *even* at our workplace!

...Another reliable source informs me that someone from the Ottawa Women's Centre has been talking up the idea of a Federation of Women's Centres. *Hmmmm.....*

INFANTICIDE

Modern legal definition:

Only a woman can be charged and then only if: she is the natural mother of the child;
she is suffering from the effects of childbirth or nursing;
and the child is under one

Otherwise, the charge could be murder or manslaughter. The maximum sentence is 5 years because it is recognized in the Criminal Code that childbrith can create depression and mental disturbance in a woman.

GRAPE & LETTUCE BOYCOTT

Dominion Food Store President says, "When the consumer wants something, we have an obligation to give it to *her*." (How obliging!)

90% of consumers either are not interested in the dispute, or want the right of choice in the grape-lettuce question, according to a survey conducted this month for Dominion among 500 Toronto housewives.

Come on, women! since Dominion President identified *you* as the consumer, let's get **behind** the Dominion Boycott!



The new *
The original
gossip column
by **SISTER**
SARAH *send me your news and views!*

...The Toronto Central Library, CUPE Local 1582, has just won their first contract. They had a partial victory over the inclusion of "Sexual Preference". It was not written into the Contract but a reassurance of a no-change policy will be written in a Letter of Intent attached to the Contract. One significant change in the usual form of union contracts was: the word "she" was used in place of the usual "he" throughout. Congratulations! By the way, the Local President is a woman.

RAPE

WOMEN RAPED AT KNIFEPOINT IN EAST END

Metro police are searching for a man who twice raped a woman at knife-point yesterday in her apartment in the Broadview-Danforth area.

The women, 24, had the knife held against her throat after the intruder got into the apartment through an unlocked door.

The woman was in bed when the man entered her home.

WHAT CAN SISTER SARAH SAY BUT LOCK YOUR DOOR! AND KEEP THE RAPE CRISIS NUMBER HANDY - 487-2345.

COMMENT: The TTC Strike has helped news of raped hitchhikers to make front page of the papers. How can they, on the one hand, discourage a woman's freedom of movement during the strike while, on the other hand, encourage the general public to hitch rides to work. How can it safely be called a direct result of the strike when women who hitch during the evening would, as a rule, hitch anyway.

WORKING WOMEN IN CANADA

This is a selective bibliography of materials available for use in the Business Library. As much Canadian information as possible, and a few relevant American sources, have been included. However, this is by no means all that is available on the subject. Further material may be obtained by checking the library's card catalogue, periodical indexes and clipping files.

For a copy write to:
Metropolitan Toronto Library Board
Business Library
Central Library Annex
229 College St.
Toronto, Ontario

The issue of sex barriers to amalgamation of the affiliated teacher organizations was debated at the annual meeting of the Federation of Women Teachers Associations of Ontario.

Women elementary teachers from North York planned to try eliminating the bylaw which prohibits men from joining. Although the women teachers' federation as its official policy opposes any moves to amalgamate, a study committee on the pros and cons of amalgamation reported to the annual meeting.

Major reasons the federation cites to justify its existence: provides leadership training and opportunities for women; and a women's group is best able to defend the rights of women.

And here is the good news resulting from their meeting: we are still together, we are still separate! Fearing male domination in any unified organization, the Federation of Women Teacher's Association voted against joining any of the other 4 provincial teachers' bodies.

One teacher said men "need our intelligence, our sense of humour - and, most of all, our money." Another teacher said that although a unified body would present a stronger voice to the government, women teachers would lose their voice in such an organization and end up being its secretaries.

Keep up the fight! Men and women must preserve unity but not at the cost of forsaking our separateness. Teaching was once the only "respectable" profession for women. The Federation of Women Teachers' Association has a long herstory and let's be glad that it will now have a longer one still.

...For information brochure on International Women's Year, write to: International Women's Year Secretariat
Privy Council Office
63 Sparks St., Room 700
Ottawa, Ontario

...The Mayor's Task Force on the Status of Women in Toronto has a newsletter. To receive it, write to: 8th floor, East Tower, City Hall.

WORKING IN THE MAN'S WORLD, OR why WOMEN opt OUT!

Long ago I became a teacher as a means of upward mobility. Education was to be the vehicle by which I gained status and security. Four years later I took responsibility for myself and discarded the "security" and "status" based on my conformity to social values.

Until economics forced me back into the labour market, I worked quite happily as a free-lance writer and volunteer "community organizer", that strange phrase created by the bureaucracy to describe the concerned, hopefully competent, "non-specialist". This was my "druther", for which I was rarely paid. Free lancing is a dog-eat-dog arena. Obviously I had to choose something more lucrative.

Because the "helping professions" appealed to my need for social involvement, I applied for jobs in social work. My bachelor of education degree wasn't even good enough to get on as an assistant to an assistant's assistant in social work. Specialization had done its damage again.

Not to be driven back into teaching, I took a temporary clerical job to enable myself to look around for preferred work while managing the necessities of life. "Temporary" clerical can involve a five-day week at wages which vary between 2.85 and 3.30 an hour, doing filing/typing go-fer jobs for various ministries of the government. Statutory holidays mean the loss of a day's salary; there is no allowance for sick leave, and no/little chance for promotion. Government avails itself of the fact that for most temporary clericals this is a short term job and an additional rather than an only salary: most temporaries are married and hence "dependent" women, or students working part-time. However, many of us are long term workers shunted into temporary clerical by the nature of the job market and by the hiring practices of employers (men), who determine the "fitness" of women for menial tasks.

That the system also shafts men is not unpredictable. This is capitalism, run on wage captivity supportive of class lines. The system, however, still tends to give preference to males and to value their "competence" more. Men are more "reliable", less "flighty", better job risks, etc.

I am willing to assume some responsibility for placing myself in typically "female" occupations (teaching, social work, clerical). I am not willing to allow the system to escape the blame for these choices. Where the school did not "teach" me my role, other institutions did; and where I did not "learn" sufficiently the lesson of my female "inferiority", employers took over to teach me... my ultimate replaceability.

If I act cute, charming, sexually interested, I am rewarded. If I am conciliatory, helpful, non-aggressive, men are delighted. If I am competent, but demand privacy, I am called hard-nosed, unsociable, a "bitch".

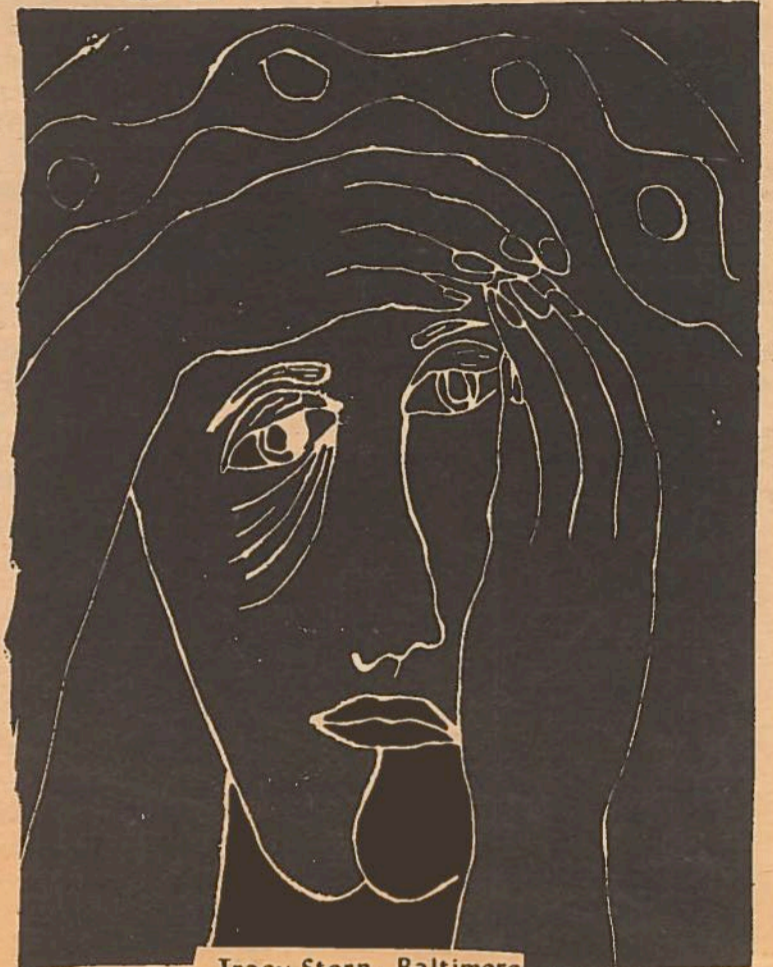
Paternalism in the work world is ever present. The other day a man I had never seen put his arm around my waist while explaining an assignment to his "inferior". I removed the hand and brought down the wrath of the director upon my head. He banned me from "his" office and told my boss to reprimand me for my rudeness.

As usual in his injured male pride he believed I was being an hysterical virgin. It did not occur to him that he had done something as rudimentary as invade my sense of territory. That I have the right to decide who touches me and under what conditions did not even occur to him.

The bureaucracy makes it hard to change jobs once one is set into a particular mold. My experience as a clerical wipes out and cancels my experience as a "professional". Two things mitigate against my establishment in satisfying work: (1) I move frequently and (2) I am candid about my commitment to myself. Employers want "stability", commitment to the company. Meanwhile I am desperately trying to find a way to develop my art, to write the novels and poems I must write, but haven't the energy for after a soul-destroying work day.

So the "alternative" is academic retraining. Perhaps I can earn enough as a social worker to again take a year off. Which makes my commitment to social work dubious as well. It is. Paternalism towards the poor and dispossessed is the continual bugbear of support professionals.

I must also be careful not to borrow any more money as a student. Debts commit one to repayment. I cannot afford to contract



Tracy Stern, Baltimore

further monetary obligation with this government. The patriarchy is a dubious giver.

Wage slavery is a reality. Regulation of one's day into hours parcelled out for work, food, and coffee; all at regulated times. Regimented work not chosen but impelled.

Oh I can still choose. Welfare for the single able-bodied person. Food and rent vouchers with my money all parcelled out for me by the institution. Daddy knows best and can budget for me. Or unemployment, while UIC officials judge whether or not my efforts to find a job are sufficient. Everywhere I look I am faced with the ultimate reality: There is no job I want to do within this present system.

No wonder women opt out. Even art has no "social" value unless it meets certain standards for art. Those standards are measured, like everything else, in terms of dollars. And dollars are only awarded where the artist does not seriously challenge the structure, the system; where artists use understood modes of expression and form. Where content is measured both in terms of what the "masses" want (sex, violence, shock, or romanticized love); or by a battery of elitists who call themselves critics.

This world has gotten too regimented for me to survive in. I have no more faith in its myth of individual worth and progress.

Gilleen Chase

THE WORK ETHIC pts. I and II

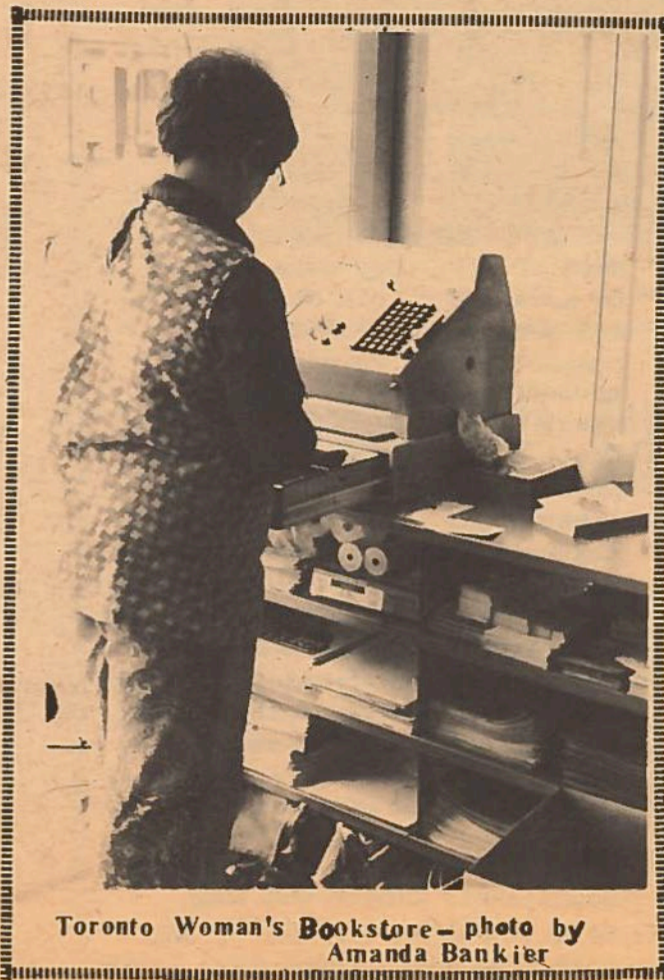
PART I

The work ethic is not a product of any Protestant way of life. This has always been a well-disguised cover for the truth. The real truth is this: the work ethic was invented as a philosophy at the beginning of the industrialization of society when crafts-women and men were taken out of the home and brought into mass workplaces called factories. Nationalism, patriotism & the work ethic (promoted by schools, churches and media) all serve to further the interests of the State machine, whether it be capitalist or socialist.

We have been fed for generations now on the "anyone can be President" idea (another American import). It tells us all we really need is some aggressiveness and intelligence, just a little bit of hard work and we will go far. Yes, how clever it is. The big men of Business can successfully dangle this reward, this carrot, in front of the people: the recent immigrants to Canada who work at grinding construction jobs in search of a more prosperous life for their families or the Nova Scotian coalminer who, after 40 years of the mines, dies of cancer secure in the illusion of upward mobility and holding a vain idea close to his heart that his son will become president of the local Liberal Association.

In an industrialized society, the work ethic manages to hide very well the nature of class. It is personal, it is individual, setting us all apart from each other. Those who use aggressive, competitive abilities to "get ahead" don't look beyond to see what mere chance helped them to step upwards and, in the process, distancing themselves on the social ladder from those less fortunate. It is the work ethic that makes lower-middle and middle income people look down upon those others as "lazy bums & cheaters". It is the work ethic that makes us work for ourselves, for our families, rather than for our class, our society as a whole.

For generations now, there have been strikes and riots with frequent bloody reprisals. The usual demand of the enfranchised workers was: "give us better working conditions, give us a living wage". These worker rebellions culminated in the battles of the depression: the angry marches and demonstrations from Vancouver to Halifax not only organized by workers winning their first union contracts but by large numbers of unemployed - all crying the same, "give us work, give us security". Even the revolutionary rhetoric of the day said the same and encouraged the unemployed to heroically further resist the State.



Toronto Woman's Bookstore - photo by Amanda Bankier

But no one questioned the idea that we all want work, we must have work. Naturally, we need work in order to survive but must we *work*? Our belief in the social value of work was fed to us privately in the institution of the family and later publicly in the educational institution, just as is our belief in the so-called democratic form of government under which we live. Even Mr. Marx has managed to help out the capitalists. The verbiage of Marxism all centres round production, surplus value and the value of labour which has fallen under the mystifying label of "science". To millions who believe in the infallibility of science, Marxists are given a certain undue credibility when they talk about the importance of work in their ideology.

Then came unemployment insurance benefits, technological advances and a new generation out of which developed a new philosophy and outlook on life. Among my generation there has developed the idea that we no longer *need* to work. This rebellion against work and also remnants of the psychological need to work that keep some of us going has been implanted in our minds by the very real fears of our parents.

PART II

The work ethic is our own worst enemy. Women have always been doubly oppressed especially by the phrase "cleanliness is next to godliness" which is one aspect of the politics of work. Our house must not only be spotless but our children as well. We have learned how women throughout the past had been turned into martyrs by chaining themselves in every way to their men and children. Our foremothers sacrificed - for us, their children, and sometimes

for society in general - gaining a sense of self thru others rather than reserving their talents and emotions for their own personal benefit. And now, just as in other things, we have to free ourselves from self-sacrifice. That is, sacrificing ourselves for "the Cause", and putting down our own personal interests as mere petty matters. We cannot allow ourselves to progress (if one can call it that) from over-worked "housewife" to over-worked "revolutionary".

Women, in particular, very easily develop guilt complexes. The man comes home from his job and puts his feet up. The woman - well, she has the cooking, washing, and putting-the-kids-to-bed routine. Every free moment taken is a pleasure and a luxury for the woman but also can be guilt-ridden. It is a constant fight to not turn the pleasure into guilt. Guilt, in any form, has always been the penalty of striving for self-awareness in ourselves as women.

But let me caution you as to my real intention: This is not promoting the idea of individual liberation. As feminists working within an autonomous women's movement, it should be obvious how necessary it is to be committed to building *together* a strong women's community. Commitment is the key word here. We have to promise ourselves and others that we will be committed (in other words: dedicated, totally absorbed) to our involvement in a women's project for a certain length of time. Contrary to popular belief, money does not come from trees nor do concrete applications of *our* strategies. It takes hard work and mutual respect for those with whom we work. Commitment can also mean being paid very little or nothing at all for jobs that are not always much fun to do but have to be done.

But all this talk of commitment can be pretty wearing on our heads at times. Women working in the women's movement quite naturally allow room in their busy lives to *feel*. This, to me, is the essence of feminism. We explore our minds, attitudes and feelings, we examine our interactions with other women. We do not resist or repress when we feel a burden weighing on our minds; instead we either talk, scream or cry. When we allow ourselves to go thru an emotional experience, commitment is momentarily lost. Well, that's o.k., don't worry about it.

Our lives do not, or should not, revolve round the work ethic. Time enough there is to lay in the sun, watching the birds fly over, and thinking - just thinking. We need to relax, to renew ourselves, or we will be no good for anything. We need time in which to be honest with ourselves and not feel guilt for taking that time. The liberation of women will not happen tomorrow, I think that is a fairly safe assumption. It will wait for us. We can be whole women and revolutionaries too.

See our next issue for PART III of the WORK ETHIC.

Pat Leslie

Dear Linda,

I imagine you are waiting for this letter, so I'll write it today. I got yours yesterday and decided to think it all over carefully before sending you this note. First of all, you must want my opinion of your present situation or you never would have told me about it in the first place. I think it stinks. I think you are making a big mistake—one which can affect your entire future. Look at this thing honestly, Linda. Is this really what you want of life?

"love lives in women
loving each other..."

I've taken into consideration your disappointment and loneliness since the failure of your marriage—I suffer for you—believe me, but lesbianism is not the answer. It's not natural and down deep in my heart I don't think it is the answer for you. Men really aren't all that bad. I've known a few good ones in my time. They will be as bad or as good as you let them. They are defenseless against a wise woman. They are lovable and desirable with all their faults and very necessary in the scheme of things.

Your newspaper covered a lot of good points but if you really want to prove anything, women's lib can't be successful

with just women working on it alone. You know a woman can nag and nag and get nowhere unless the man is convinced she has a point. Men have to be convinced, shown, led to the right opinion of women. You're not going to have a liberation if the men still have their opinions. The women in my family have always been liberated. This they gained through various methods—the most likely and obvious were probably and in this order: good cooks, sense of humour, good housekeepers and willing bed partners. Most of all, they were willing to accept the role of housewife and mother while taking over completely the reins of the household (including the men, then) plus doing what they wanted. It's true women have been given the menial jobs and lower wages. This is all being taken care of through laws now. But the girls of today are their own worst enemy. They make themselves so available and cheap. They have no self-esteem. If they think so low of themselves how are men going to see any value to them?

In the arena of men versus women, the women are really wiser. They can wrap a man around their finger but they have let this sex freedom idea take over where their good sense used to be. Underneath it all, I wouldn't be surprised if men hadn't instigated this idea in the first place. Well, this is all for now. Please, Linda,

come to your good senses and start thinking of a more normal life for yourself—Keep the acrylics—You're getting more use out of them than I did. I can get more if I need to.
Love, Mom.

P.S.
Linda,

I'm sorry if this conflicts with your notion of things—but you asked me and I'm being honest as I can about it. Maybe this is the way of life for you now but I can't see it as a future way. It could only lead to your destruction. A person has to be a person, true—but one has to fit into the accepted pattern or social structure to be really accepted into society as a whole and that's what it's all about, isn't it? How can you be happy existing in the fringes of society—being laughed at, mocked and insulted—that's how it is where you're looking for happiness. I've said it before and I'll say it again—Come home—start again—you can paint here. You could lead an independent life here, too. Toronto has given you little—think about it.

Love, Mom.

P.P.S. I just have not had the heart to let your father read the letter you sent me. You will have to tell him yourself if you want him to know—Heart attack? No—but how about Heart break?

M.

COMING OUT: A LESBIAN TELLS HER MOTHER

Dear Mom,

I don't think Lesbianism "stinks" at all. I think men stink. I don't have to tell them anything that they'll never learn. And they'll never learn how to be good enough to take the place of women as friends and lovers. I have been so much better off since I stopped thinking I had to impress men. Since I've been relating to women I have doubled my self-confidence. I have found myself doing many more of the things I always really enjoyed doing. I have so much fun being with a woman—because we really like each other and we know it's not just because society says we're supposed to like each other or we're not normal—just the opposite! We work well together, too. Our interests are similar and our feelings blend. I love my sisters. I realize that I've always gotten along better with women. I don't feel that anything is lacking in my relations with women. My friendships with men were always compromising. Even men

that I was "close" to used to put me down and make fun of the things I really valued. I know life is full of this kind of hassle, but I don't think I have to go looking for hassles. I'm not happy about the way things are in the world. I wouldn't have gotten married in the first place if I didn't have faith in men. But my faith was broken by all the times that I was betrayed. I can't love men if they won't love women. It's a sad state the world is in when men are at war on all fronts, including thinking that women are their enemies. I can't waste any more time, energy, or love on people who won't believe I am an equal human being.

My faith is with my sisters. We all know the pain of betrayal and deceit. We're trying to replace the hatred and mistrust male society has instilled in us with love and faith in each other.

No, I don't think this "stinks" at all. I think it shows that love is not dead in this world. It lives on in *women loving each other.*

Love, Linda



Clara

LEARNING

To Other Women-

One night this week I was over at Rochdale and asked some lesbian friends of mine if they would consider actively participating in a program at CHAT that would be specifically designed to bring about more understanding between male and female homosexuals. This brought from them an emotional reaction that I'd not expected. They vehemently refused on the basis that they wanted nothing to do with men - let the males figure us out all by themselves.

I discovered that the anger and hostility against men (and directed at me), although slightly out of proportion, was justified by their experiences with men. There was also involved deep fear of physical injury (i.e., ignorance of self-defence) and fear for physical survival (i.e., "the means of production, and therefore survival, is in the hands of men.") This, apparently, is the basis of "sexual politics", another term that has had little meaning for me in the past. I've never dealt with men on a sexual level because 1) I've never been interested in them sexually and it shows 2) I've never, until recently, appeared attractive to men (or anyone else, for that matter) simply because I did not want to be attractive to anyone on any level, sexual or otherwise. I managed to get through my 25 years relatively untouched by "sexual politics", yet I've been very close to straight men, closer than I have been to women. Those straight men never even attempted to lay anything but friendship on me, nor did they attempt to patronize me.

The whole discussion upset me because of the intensity of emotion that came out.

On the way home, a man fell into step beside me. (Since forming an acceptable concept of myself as woman, I have somehow come to look more female, and a fairly good-looking one at that.) I ignored him. He said something about the weather so I answered him. I've always professed to be friendly and I was also unaware of the game, i.e. it's 11 o'clock at night, I'm a woman walking alone, if I answer him I'm "interested", he's on a sexual level already since society defines the situation as a sexual one.

He turns down Avenue Rd. with me. I tell him "Look, I'm going home. I'm also going home alone." He insists he enjoys the simple pleasure of talking with a friendly Canadian. He's Czech and "it's hard to bridge the distance". So he walks me home and the conversation remains on general topics like his country and my writing and the movie he just got out of. We get to my home and I say "Well, it's been nice talking to you. Maybe I'll run into you again sometime." He asks me if I'd like to have a

coffee at the joint across the street and continue the conversation-he's really enjoying it. Up to that point, so was I so I said sure. It was a mistake but one I learned from. In the restaurant, he tried to lay the whole fantasy on me. He tried to use flattery on me. Unfortunately for him, I can't be flattered-I have too big an ego. He laid "love at first sight" on me. He tried "Feel sorry for me-I'm lonely." Then all that B.S. about a woman needs a man and vice versa. During this, I used the perspectives I'd gotten earlier that night from the women at Rochdale. If I hadn't, I would've been my usual kind self and would have spent half the night in that restaurant trying to show him what an ass he was, but oh so kindly. When he pulled the "Don't be afraid of your feelings-hold my hand" gimmick, I threw up my hands in exasperation and said to no one in particular, "Wow, this is really unreal." I eventually gave him a dead hand because

NOT TO TRUST MEN

he looked so damn lost. I took it back after a few minutes. But I shouldn't have done it in the first place. Coming out of the restaurant, he grabbed for my hand and said "Let's walk." I grabbed my hand back because I felt the ownership principle in operation. So he put his arm around my shoulder-same principle-and I removed it saying "Sorry, but that signifies a closeness that I don't feel for you." And seeing that the whole thing would continue to be nothing but a hassle for me, I apologized and headed home again. He followed me to the door where he attempted to kiss me. I dodged-I'm very good at that having had a lot of practice with sloppy aunts. Then, when he tried it again, it suddenly hit me that this huge fellow could beat the hell out of me if he wanted to and that I didn't know him well enough to judge whether or not he would. It didn't frighten me in the least but it made me suddenly understand what those friends of mine were talking about. He had 2 huge paws on my shoulders so on the second attempt I did kiss him, as he said, "Like a brother," to which I replied "Don't push your luck. You're not even at that level." Then I retreated into the house and subsequently decided that I've got a lot to learn, i.e. not to be friendly with strange men, or women for

that matter. And I can see how a woman in my position, but weaker than I, might have put herself in a lousy position with the guy. He was a nice looking fellow, about 30, "respectable" looking and well-educated. If I were someone other than myself, I could've chosen to encourage him in order to get the occasional free meal, movie, beer or what have you, and deluded myself into thinking I had control of the situation. But, ultimately, what is the point in being well-fed, well-entertained and well "in control", when I'd be emotionally miserable? I'd rather be hungry and content.

To avoid bull-shit, like the above, I will, at the outset, tell them, very politely, where to go. But the whole thing was extremely enlightening especially after the discussion I'd had earlier. I'm going to assume that this guy is typical of the heterosexual male. The only conclusion I can come to is that they are pathetically ill. (1) Their egos are extremely distorted. (2) They cannot function at optimum unless they've "got" a woman. (3) They can't be spontaneous. They go "by the book." (4) Their hold on reality is extremely tenuous and dependent on the degree of agreement and validation they get from their women, i.e. when I didn't give the man my hand at first (go along with the script, the supposed to of "How to Pick Up Girls") the look in his eyes was incredible. It was a traumatic experience for him. (5) They may be physically strong but are, for the most part, emotionally and mentally weak. This, in itself, is enough justification for women to be mistrustful of men, for men lack self-control.

The women at Rochdale said, in effect, to handle men you fight fire with fire. In other words, exploit and manipulate them before they do it to you. That only confirms the male's belief system. This man I had to deal with was completely unaware of what he was really doing, just as many women are completely unaware of the realities of their own situations. Men are the way they are because of conditioning just as women are. Men, and society in general, have become so removed from the original purpose of that conditioning that trying to point it out intellectually has little effect. But something like my not putting my hand in that man's does-it really blew his mind. I unwittingly nullified the effect though by later giving it to him. I did not force reality on him and I should have, the reality being that I've known him for one-half hour and that that kind of affection doesn't arise in one-half hour.

I now have a clearer understanding of why women are reluctant, in personal situations, to stand up for themselves. But, from my experience, I can't condone it.

Charmaine Laforest



AGEISM

or HOW MANY KIDS DID YOU DISCRIMINATE AGAINST TODAY?



Judging by the way they are treated, kids are not even second-class citizens. Apparently the current attitude is that kids are not people at all. They are "responsibilities", "cute", "sweet", "burdens", "brats", "expenses". But seldom are they "people" or "persons"

People (adults) will say they like kids or they don't like kids, and separate this from the idea of liking or disliking *people*. This is relating to kids as a *caste*, rather than as *individuals* and *persons*.

People (adults) think nothing of referring to *people* and *kids* as two distinct groups.

Adults will refer to other adults they wish to put down as "childish", "immature", and "infantile". This is very *insulting* to kids.

Adults think nothing of not responding to something a kid says or a question she asks. Or responding to it as being "cute" (HaHa. Did you hear what the little dear said?). Imagine the frustration of not being taken seriously much of the time! The frustration of having the person/adult you are talking to not respond directly to you, but turn to another adult present and comment "Jim, your little Joan just said the *cutest* thing."

I have often witnessed meal scenes and visits where kids and adults were present. The conversation was between the adults; the kids were expected to be quiet, to not "interrupt", were ignored (often when they were asking for something: the salt, a fork, more milk.)

When introductions are being made kids are often not introduced (along with the pets that *belong* to the family). Or the kid is introduced to the adult, but the adult is not introduced to the kid. Often a kid is introduced as "my daughter/son"-this implies *relationship/ownership* as opposed to (and it certainly is) *individuality*. How would you like it if you were introduced as "...and this is my wife/mother/lover/etc." And to add insult to injury, if they *are* introduced at *all*, often they are not introduced by *name* ("...and this is my daughter. PERIOD!").

Adults cannot grasp the idea that kids can be/must be *responsible*: responsible for themselves (dressing, cleaning their rooms, crossing the street alone), and to their community (being considerate of others, sharing skills, being co-operative, learning about their communities). Adults order kids lives, do their shitwork for them, and generally settle into Responsible Role (which they are then loathe to relinquish). And they lose sight completely of their real res-



ponsibility: to share their skills and knowledge so that kids can learn to order their own lives and be responsible for and to themselves.

Adults *expect affection* from kids, even from kids who don't know them and from kids who indicate that they are not interested. I have seen adults lift a kid they hardly know playfully into the air while the kid is protesting in frustration and anger. If an adult wishes to be affectionate or playful with another adult she hardly knows you can be damn sure she will gauge first whether that person is interested.

And adults *assume friendship* from kids as indicated by the fact that adults invariably call kids whom they have just met, by the *diminutives* of their names -even though the kid was introduced by her full name (Rebecca becomes Becky"; Richard becomes "Dick"; Jane becomes "Janie"). An adult would not *presume* to lay a nickname on another adult who is not a friend of some duration ("...and I'd like you to meet Elizabeth." "Well, hi there Betty...?")

When a kid goes into a public place (a street, a bus, etc.), she is often stared or pointed at, talked about in tones she can hear, talked to in cutesy tones, and patted on the head. (Men *insult* me and *invade* my *privacy* in similar ways when I am in public. I tell them to fuck off.)

Adults idealize childhood as a happy carefree time. And they *stereotype* kids into a "happy chillun" image, denying the human complexity of kids emotions and the legitimacy of their problems. They forget how their childhoods required them to deal with great frustrations, heavy adjustments and disappointments, and with the changing moods and whims of those who had power over them (parents, teachers, older sisters and brothers).

So, adults disrespect kids' moods, and often nag and *analyze* them when they are periodically unhappy/quiet/

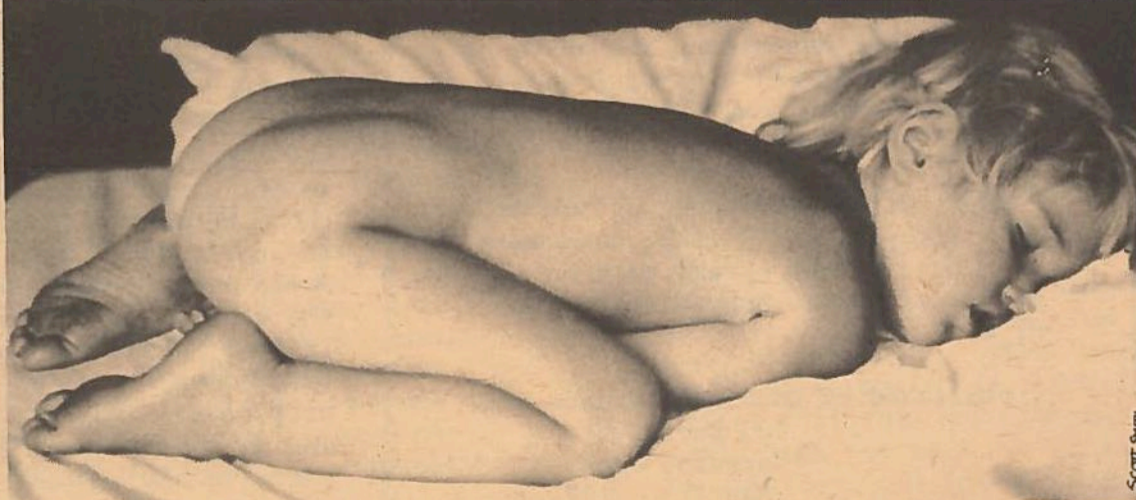


spaced out. Or take kids' moods personally as an affront to their efforts as parents (the "What can you possibly be unhappy about; we've given you everything you need" syndrome).

(Similarly, adults will seldom recognize chronic depression in kids as they cannot conceive of it.)

Adults flatly deny the existence of kids' *sensuality/sexuality*, granting it to them at puberty. Before this kids' lovemaking/masturbating is either laughingly observed by adults as being "cute" (this is ridiculing kids' sensuality/sexuality), or is called wrong or dirty and the kids are reprimanded or punished.

Adults view kids as the future leaders/workers/citizens of their society but do not make provisions in their laws for *adequate wages/training allowances/food* and living accommodation for them. Furthermore, we refer to kids' learning occupations and devices as "play" and "toys"/"games". We go so far as to call certain of these *tools* "educational toys" (which is a redundant term), but we do not respect kids' occupations as *work*.



Adults call kids who don't *demand* respect and attention/who don't *object* to the *discrimination* against them: "nice" kids. And refer to kids who react against parents/teachers/other people who patronize them/vent their frustrations on them/disrespect them, by defending themselves/avenging themselves/turning inside themselves, as "problem children"/"bad"/"abnormal"/"hyper"/"delinquents"/"brats"/"ungrateful".

Whether good intentions/love/concern are involved is irrelevant. The

overwhelming fact remains that *we are all-powerful* in the lives of kids (we are physically bigger and stronger; we have money—they have none; and we have skills and knowledge—which we withhold from them) and that *we abuse our power*. We have laws which say we must not abuse kids, that we must provide for them. But we are abusing them if we do not respect them as individuals/persons. And we are not providing for them adequately if we do not share with them the skills that they would use to control and shape their own lives.

ADULTS,
STRUGGLE WITH YOUR AGEISM!

POWER TO KIDS!

elaine

anne szumigalski: woman reading in bath

Analysing poetry is like performing surgery without a license. One risks being a very bad bungler. There are only two safe comments that can be made by a reviewer: one is 'I like it'; the other is 'I do not like it'.

For Anne Szumigalski's Woman Reading in Bath I have only praise. Here is a woman who is deeply concerned for the people around her, stripping them of their pretensions and disguises without leaving them humiliated. In the first poem of her volume, for example, she deals with the difficult subject of the mutual resentment of mother and daughter, the first for giving birth and the second at being held responsible for causing pain to her parent. "Where Are You Arthur Silverman?" reveals a woman growing old, in all the trials of her reaction to life-pain; deserving still a peaceful and dignified aging.

Woman Reading in Bath is laden with the sense of a dying god, filled with the poet's desolation at the destruction of religious systems and ideas. In "Letters From Home" she uses the image of Noah's ark to describe modern desolation:

'When the walls split we fell
into this trap
And we are stranded in the
Bitter Lakes...



Prow between boulders-- keel
hanging out...'
And again, in the poem for which
the volume is named, she says:
'I am swimming alone on the dark
sea
When before me looms the great
stout chin of god...
...his hands are clutching the
slippery wet sides
The edges and hems of his bung-
led universe...'
The god means to roar but only squeaks,
a ludicrous figure heaving up 'on
stick legs like a fat bird'; yet that
god still has the power to cause rip-
ples, hurtling a pebble into the un-
known with a dying hand.

In the powerful imagery of "A Short Season", Szumigalski indicts the opportunism of those who make a profit from human gullibility, describing a "trick" to walk on water, while her 'Dad the Promoter (drives) up/ In his old-fashioned megaphone truck...' collecting the donations of people who want to believe in miracles and legends and hope.

On a similar motif is "Ergot and After"; comments on the mushroom God:

'...it is good for us to drink
the juice that trickles from
the torn side of the Lamb
and don't pass up this opportunity
to save Save SAVE
at the great Precambrian post-
Christian sale...'

Human isolation, lack of belief, commercial aspirations lead to passive violence, against ourselves as well as others. In "Pay Day", Szumigalski tells us:

'It's that time again
when even our simplicity
must be sustained'
and launches into the image of convalescents accompanying one another for strength across a park. Some become mad, as in "Visitor's Parking", some are merely desensitized and mechanical, as in "Bertha", keeping wives on hand for when they 'get tired of bitty skirt/ And big titty'.

A sense of the destructiveness of human relationships is both social:

'Mr. B is a known madman a sus-
pected murderer
I think the cops are after him
for being himself
For not sobbing
For not beating his breast' (Victim)
and intimate:
'I was murdered last Thursday but
even so
The heat of his groin
And all the fumbling that goes on
there
Is disturbing my final rest'
(Victim)

and in poems describing the waste-land of our lives: "Out of Town", "the Meditation Look", and several more.

A poet aware of rhythms, of sounds, Anne Szumigalski is rich, deep and meaningful. She speaks to some spirit of honest appraisal in all of us.

(published by Doubleday Canada Ltd.
105 Bond St.
Toronto, Ontario
M5B 1Y3, 1974.)

* available in hardcover for \$4.95 or in paperback for \$2.50.

Gilleen Chase

love me enough for me
to make it without you.

Marguerite Seinen

CUBAN WOMEN NOW by Margaret Randall.
(\$5.5.0)

\$5.50) On Sale at the Toronto
Women's Bookstore.

The author, formerly American, has
been living in Cuba for about 10 years.

woman's press: cuban women n o w

Cuban Women Now can help us to not only understand women's struggles in other countries but to understand the importance of the socialist impact on women's lives. As Women's Press says in the Preface, "Cuban women could not have begun the long road to liberation without the Revolution. No discussion of social equality could ever have taken place without a radical change at the very base of society."

A lot of feminists seem to forget that each country subjects its women to different conditions. North American society and theory cannot be applied everywhere nor, from the other side of the fence, can the Cuban reality be applied to us. It cannot be applied to us because we are living in a highly industrialized nation. As oppressive as it may be, we are a lot better off than were women under the pre-revolutionary Cuban Government who serviced the American military, diplomatic and tourist machine. Socialist revolutions have been a good thing, in general, for those women living in Cuba, China, North Vietnam, North Korea, etc who had never experienced the sort of freedom that is permitted women in a capitalist society.

We should also be reading this book with eyes open to the particularly Latin aspects of women's liberation. The changes in the condition of Cuban women since the revolution must be judged not only according to Castro's programme on women but also according to the historical reality of Spanish machismo to be overcome by the younger generation of Cuban women.

Before 1959, women were mainly illiterate, living and working as peasants, domestic servants and prostitutes. The minority from the Cuban upper class were trapped in the home, and only a few of these became suffragists after the first war. But there were also women whose demands were tied to the general social struggle, "In 1869, a Cuban woman patriot, Ana Betancourt, stood up in the Constitutional Assembly at Guaimaro and demanded equal rights for women in the new set of laws."

As far back as 1868, the rebel army was filled with nameless black women who fought alongside the men. And the 1959 revolutionary forces also included strong female participation, who were subject to torture by the Batista dictatorship along with the male fighters.

"I had a lot of trouble with prejudice on the part of many men and I had occasion in those circumstances to see how, for many men, women were inferior. Because they said: 'What's a woman doing with an M-1, while I have a shotgun?' And I told them: 'Well,

that woman's going to be a better soldier than you are!' Because there were men who ran, M-1 and all, but we don't have a single example of one of the Mariana Grajales women who ever ran from combat."

Fidel Castro (Feb. 6/59)

Not all has been settled in such a short time round the equality of male/female roles. Castro has not dealt with the nuclear family nor homosexuality in a "classless society" preferring to follow the example of Soviet Russia and China. And any total revolution must deal with these two and more.

Margaret Randall has given us a "before-and-after" picture of women's lives in Cuba which is essential for us to understand in order to further the idea of Sisterhood. One can begin to see from the interviewed women that the grassroots enthusiasm does not come from the official Communist line in Cuba but rather from the women themselves. It was well worth my time and money to read of this enthusiasm from young and old, peasant and revolutionary.

"The most revolutionary aspect of this Revolution is precisely this: the revolution that is taking place among the women in our country."

Fidel Castro (Dec. 10'66)

We might note that Patricia Hearst is named after one of the heroic female figures of the Cuban Revolution - Tamará Bunke or "Tania the Guerrilla".

Pat Leslie

born a woman: rita macneil song- book



picture by Annette Clough

BORN A WOMAN is the first songbook to emerge out of The Canadian Women's Movement. Rita began singing and composing when she became involved in the Women's Movement. Her lyrics and melodies sensitively combine the energies of the time with her own Cape Breton experience. Illustrated with the photographs of ten women artists, BORN A WOMAN captures the joys and strengths of the Canadian Women's Movement.

ORDER from: The WOMEN'S PRESS
#305, 280 Bloor St. W.
Toronto, Ont. (962-3904)

AVAILABLE - October 1974



Carol Rowe & April Kassirer sing
at Women's Place Benefit

lavender jane loves women

1974 Women's Music Network
(Women's Wax Works)

In the past few years one of the few groups which dealt with sexism forthrightly was Joy of Cooking (Closer to the Ground). The lyrics were my first experience of women writing popular music and addressing other women as someone sharing a common reality.

But as much as the words of Toni Brown encouraged women to take control of their emotional, sexual and social destinies

*I got to get my life together
Can't keep on dreamin'
Got to learn to face deception
and understand the schemin'**

*(Brown, Bear, Publ. 1969, ASCAP)

her lyrics never struck me as becoming the vanguard of sexual consciousness. Lavender Jane Loves Women, however, comfortably celebrates the cultural identity of the "woman-identified-woman". In the words of Alix Dobkin who composed most of the songs on their first album, "my music comes from and belongs to women experiencing women."

The three members of Lavender Jane are women. The combination of Alix Dobkin singing and playing the guitar, Kay Gardner playing flute, and Patches Attom on bass backed up vocally by the Great Matriarchal Reunion gives the entire album a mellow, flowing quality.

In most women's music, to break down the de-humanizing qualities of macho-music the lyrics are the most obvious place to start. Traditionally, women's lyrics have coveted the subject of pain as one of the few legitimate expressions of themselves. Lavender Jane, however, exalts in the positive energy of loving other women.

*Glory to Her for the joy in living
and praise be Her power
Her tender care
forever ni beauty
Her light shines upon me
the blessing of precious woman love.***

These lyrics are powerful without being abrasive, even graceful

*Because she's a woman
she doesn't try to change me
she knows and understands a woman's ways
I feel so free
to be what she sees in me
it's so easy to be her lover
because she's a woman ***

But the real gut issues come across in songs such as Talking Lesbian and View From Gay Head where we are told

*If you want higher consciousness
I'll tell you what to do
you got to talk to a woman
get her to talk to you
you got to build you a union and
make it strong
and if we all stick together
girls it won't be long... ***

The lesbian-feminist politics of Lavender Jane are intertwined with their music - they make demands.

*the men are them
the women are we
they agree it's a pleasure to be
a lesbian
lesbian, lesbian, any women can be
a lesbian ***

** (Women's Music Network, Women's Wax Works, 1974)

Their musical versatility is expressed throughout the album, eg., speakeasy-jazz in Fantasy Girl, and Scottish and Macedonian ballads in Eppie Morrie and Jovanno. Alix Dobkin's vocal exercises in Yells and as a prelude to Beware Young Ladies seems to enlarge rather than define the expressive qualities of the album.

For me, the album is as easy to listen to as breathing; it could be danced, it could be sung, its clarity is perfect. This women's collective, the Women's Wax Works, Great Matriarchal Reunion et. al. have challenged mesmerizing, savage male music with a positive alternative - Lavender Jane Loves Women.

(Lavender Jane Loves Women is available from the Toronto Women's Bookstore, 12 Kensington Ave., Toronto. 862-0414. By mail order: \$5.25 plus 37¢ tax, 20¢ for handling plus postage - send \$6.00 and be safe!)

Pat Normington

ARTMOBILE



In February 1973 a group of women at the Ontario College of Art organized a show of "Women's Work" at the student gallery. The show was not juried and any woman student at the college could submit any piece of her choosing. The show was a tremendous critical and educational success. Collectively, the works in the show seemed to express a female aesthetic that was somewhat different from the "normal" or male aesthetic to which we are accustomed. The essential difference was difficult to label, but the importance was that there was a difference. The question of a female aesthetic was one that warranted further exploration, so in 1974 the women students again had a show. This exhibition did not produce the same kind of feeling. OCA is a very male-oriented institution, so neither result was conclusive.

Commercial galleries have been discriminating and are continuing to discriminate against women artists. More women than men graduate from art colleges yet the percentage of men showing in galleries is far greater than women. If the crux lies in the quality of women's work, and if women's work is of a lesser quality than men's, the reason could be that in art colleges women students are not taken seriously, and even ignored. There is a noticeable and inexcusable absence of female art teachers at the college level. Women are met with the same attitudes after graduation.

It is essential that women in the arts form solid liaisons from which they can draw strength, encouragement, and criticism, especially considering the male-dominated art world as it now exists. Women artists are unlikely to gain anything constructive from these men in the artistic power structure, when the men have only to lose. If the galleries continue to discriminate then we must form our own.

The Women's Art Mobile is presented as an alternative to the traditional art structure which has been urban and male. Rural communities are lacking in gallery facilities, so artists living outside the larger cities are unable to show their work. As a result the rural population is largely unexposed to artistic efforts of any nature. The inhabitants of these communities are less biased by urban attitudes to art, yet they have a bias of a different kind. In the country art is considered to be something dabbled in by women who have little else of import to do with their time. This is, of course, just another male attitude.

The resources for the Women's Art Mobile were drawn from many women in southern Ontario who are involved in artistic work of all sorts. A few had teaching experience, some had had no previous shows, and many were involved with their work on a personal level only. The women were contacted by a grapevine, through friends or people who knew of them. Many women heard of the project through local newspapers and contacted us personally. They were all eager to show their work and most were interested in the prospect of sales and recognition. One woman contacted made two pieces especially for the show after a two-year artistic stale-mate. Another told us she rushed home after seeing the show and finished a painting she had had trouble with for months. Still another said that on seeing what other women artists were doing she was less afraid to experiment and deviate from the norm her local critics had set for her. Obviously the need for such a show was great. Women artists need criticism and encouragement in order to succeed in infiltrating the present art hierarchy, or preferably to establish a new approach to art presentation. (Male artists are more likely to get this necessary feedback, and therefore to gain recognition and survive as artists.) The Women's Art Mobile is the beginning of a change.

Over 40 women contributed art work to the exhibition, which included about 70 pieces and 150 slides. 14 communities in southern Ontario hosted the show in whatever facilities were available. The work was transported in a small VW van, which was slow but reasonably dependable. The show stayed in each town for 2 or 3 days. This may not have been a long enough showing, but we wanted to get to as many places as possible.

It is difficult to estimate the value of the exhibition to the general public but the response was good. Some locations were better than others for display purposes, and others were better in terms of actual numbers of viewers. The exhibition looked great in a gallery but in a shopping mall hundreds of people were exposed to it.

When the project was getting underway hundreds of letters were sent to libraries, schools, newspapers, artists and craftspeople. This effort produced little result with the exception of a few newspapers who printed an article which led to contacts for us. Overall, personal contact was by far the most successful means of communication and publicity.

The form letter sent to these places looked rather unprofessional and people may have treated it with skepticism. They may have been unwilling to participate in something that looked amateurish and improbable. Had there been more time to organize and more funds available for proper printing and publicity the response might have been better. The project was not given notification of funding until very late and therefore some may have been put off contributing to the show because of insufficient notice. However, when we spoke to people their confidence was restored and they were more willing to participate in the project.

We did manage to collect a tremendously varied body of work which explored various media. There was modern and traditional work, including drawing, painting, print-making, photography, sculpture, batik, ceramics, glass work and weaving.

Many women we talked to expressed to us the need for group discussion. They seemed grateful for being able to talk about their work with us. We were in fact surprised that there were not more groups of artists meeting in the communities, and we hope that this book will make it easier for women to contact each other for mutual support. Many communities did have art groups, and several of them discussed the possibility of continuing to have shows throughout the year. Perhaps this book will be of assistance to anyone interested in having inter-community shows. Women have got to start working together, for there is a lot to be done to improve the possibilities for women in the arts.

One of the most important changes that must occur is the representation of women professionals in community colleges and post secondary art institutions. Women need role models and sympathetic colleagues in the schools. We have been too long taught to please male instructors. A pretty picture of a naked lady is meaningless to any thinking female art student. Male dictated subject matter, technique and evaluation is irrelevant to a woman artist. If there is a female aesthetic then let's explore it thru our minds and through our art.

There are already successful galleries and workshops run by women for women. They are still too few. If we as artists do not want to participate in the male gallery system then let's start building a better system. You need the help of other women artists and they need yours.

....goin' to the Country

a group of films about working mothers

Though popular mythology would have us believe that mothers are women who get married, soon have babies and settle comfortably into the occupation of mother and housewife, we all know that many mothers have jobs outside the home. The working mother is an important part of our collective identity as women.

As an initial exploration of their problems (and the solutions they found), Kathleen Shannon's working mothers films are excellent. Formatted in a collection of shorts each about a woman (one is about a commune in which several women live) whose backgrounds, cultural and geographical realities are representative of many Canadian working mothers. Though Shannon started work on a single one hour film, she discovered as the film evolved that "I'd use really powerful sequences but...you'd just be getting involved with one person when it would jump to another one. And when you'd (listen) to the next person, you'd be forgetting the earlier one." * So she decided to break it down to 8 segments of 7 to 15 minute films each dealing with a particular set of related problems each dealing with the lifestyle of one woman (several women in extensions of The Family).

This is especially effective. The viewer can relate to each film as an entity in itself. One can grasp easier the realities portrayed, the problems posed in each film. Also, this enables groups to concentrate on, perhaps view only those which are of particular interest to them.

The first 8 films were released early this summer (a brief description of them follows). Four more are in the works and are scheduled to be released this fall.

•••

LIKE THE TREES is one of the several in the collection I especially liked. Rose is a Metis woman from Northern Alberta who has reconciled the discriminations facing her as a Metis, as a person without marketable training, and as a mother who for the most part raised her kids as a single parent by returning to the land and to her people. She talks of the hardships of her earlier years attempting to support her kids waitressing and working in factories, about in frustration turning to alcohol, of rediscovering her people and organizing with them.

LUCKILY I NEED LITTLE SLEEP, is an interview with Kathy, a woman who had been a nurse in her native Greece and continued her profession when she came to Canada. She lives with her husband and kids on their farm in northern Alberta and works on the farm and as a nurse as well as maintaining her home.

WOULD I EVER LIKE TO WORK drew perhaps the strongest reactions from people I met or heard of who saw the films, as Joan's situation was one of the most blatantly and immediately oppressive. Of the many women interviewed she is the only one who does not work outside the home. She is the mother of 7 kids



from Like the Trees

and lives on welfare and though she would like to get a job she would not be able to afford the expenses of daycare arrangements. Shannon says of her "...her situation was impossible. When I phoned her, she said '...You can come anytime. I'm always here'. I could literally come anytime during any 24 hours, 7 days a week."

TIGER ON A TIGHT LEASH is an interview with Cathy, a university department head at a Halifax University. She talks about the problems of inadequate childcare facilities and the effect of the same problem on the work those of her women students who have the same problem.

EXTENTIONS OF THE FAMILY is about a commune of several adults (man-woman couples) and several kids. They collectively own their house in a large western city and the adults work at professional and semi-professional jobs.

I was disappointed and confused by this film as it was based largely on interviews with the men in the house. Though the women answered some of the questions the men answered many of the important ones and at length. I would much rather have heard the women's viewpoint on how breaking down homemaking and childcare roles in their "family" affects their ability to function as effective and creative individuals. I was left feeling like I'd gotten a picture of their

working mothers films print material

Information going out with all films will include a poster, information sheets, discussion guide, resource list of women's centres, provincial women's committees, women's newspapers, newspaper clippings sheet. Additional print materials include:

- An Overview of Challenge for Change and Working Mothers Films, by Doris Mae Oulton
- Simultaneous Shooting of Film and Videotape during making of Working Mothers Films, by Kathleen Shannon
- Questions You may be Asked, by Doris Mae Oulton
- Things I have Learned, by Doris Mae Oulton
- No. 12 issue of Access containing an article about Ann Claire Poirier and En Tant que Femmes. (See P. 12).

NOTE: for those wishing to work intensively with the films, other background materials are available at Challenge for Change Regional Offices c/o NFB in the following centres: Vancouver, Regina, Toronto, Ottawa, Montreal, and St. John, N.B.

lifestyle primarily from the men which I think inexcusable (and unnecessary) in a collection of films about women.

MOTHERS ARE PEOPLE is about Joy, a widow and mother of 2 school-age children who came to Canada from her native Jamaica. She is a research biologist in a large Canadian city and talks about the discrimination she encountered in getting a job

*Quoted from an article by Shannon in the NFB publication *Pot Pourri*.

("I had to lie: Say I'd never let let my children come between me and my job."), as well as about the need for universal daycare and the problems of bringing kids in Canada.

THEY APPRECIATE YOU MORE is about Aliette, a Montreal woman who began work outside the home after having been a full-time housewife and mother. She talks about the adjustments that had to be made in the structure of their family life, about her husband and the kids taking more responsibility for housework. Her husband was also interviewed but I felt that was unnecessary and distracting and that Aliette was not at ease at such times when together they were asked various questions that demanded honesty and space to consider.

IT'S NOT ENOUGH is the introduction film. It deals with the statistics of "working" mothers, of the reasons why we work, of our incomes, and of the jobs we occupy.

Whether you intend to view all or only certain of the collection show this film as well. It is important that we understand that the problems that face these women are not just "personal" problems. These are problems shared by many women in Canada and are not unsolvable. Working mothers (& kids) in Canada need free universal parent-controlled daycare; kids need a state paid adequate income; the mothering and homemaking roles must be shared by men and the community; women (and men) must be state paid for their childcare (parental) responsibilities, job discrimination against mothers must be outlawed, alternatives must be found to the isolation of the traditional nuclear family and the single parent family. Women (and men) must have free and ready access to birth control information and devices.

The beauty of interview films is that the subject themselves tell you their stories. Granted, they still reflect the filmmakers ideas and conclusions: she asks the questions to people she has chosen to interview and she does the editing Shannon's skill and perceptiveness in these areas produced very coherent stories of the lifestyles of the 12 women filmed. Different people's reactions have been, will be different (while my own reaction to Rose's solution excited me as a woman who feels that I must return to the land one day to lead an uncrazy life several women I talked to felt that this was a personal solution, that not many women could do it if they chose to, and to therefore is not a solution per se. I spoke to women whose reactions to Tiger On A Tight Leash was that, yes, Cathy had problems in common with other working mothers but she does have a well-paid fulfilling job and another person, her husband (also well-paid) to share the responsibility and expenses.

elaine

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★
(As T.O.W. goes to press we received word that the proposed women's film crew (english) has been formally announced, with Kathleen Shannon as its head.

More about Kathleen Shannon, the women's film crew, and other NFB women in our next issue.

GAY PRIDE ? WEEK

Homosexuality. Is it a common denominator for "Gay" men and women? Can we 'join hands against the world, unite hearts in defiance against the oppression of "straights", march in the strong sunlight together', etc. etc. If the rhetoric reminds the reader of hollywood movie scripts, it is meant to. I think it is very romantic to believe that sexual preference, whether "straight" or "gay", determines one's identification with a similar group.

I for one do not identify with the issue of homosexuality but with the issue of gender. I am a woman, and it is with women's condition that I am concerned. And I cannot allow gay males to determine for me what my priorities should be or where my commitment lies.

Women are dropping out of the gay pride march. Women are disappearing from gay dances where males predominate. Does this mean that women lack the courage to come "out of the woodwork", to publicly declare their sexual orientation and face social ridicule or censure? Does the predominance of male homosexuals at dances mean more men are gay? I argue "no" to both questions. Gay women know instinctively, even if not yet politically, that they are being oppressed; and that they are being oppressed by their so-called homosexual brothers.

Gay clubs are not political places. They are sexual places. So it is not surprising to see both men and women into game playing, cock or cunt teasing as the case may be. And it is not surprising that the behavior of the oppressed lends itself to extremes. So one could say sympathetically: "Of course. It's a fucked-up world".

But. I'm not prepared to be nearly so liberal. I believe we are all responsible for our behavior and for how we oppress each other and ourselves. It is not accidental that male organizations for gays provide travelogues about where to get laid from town to town -- an index of places to go for possible sexual adventures. It is not



Photo: Vici de Cuenca

Photo: Hanna Takashige



accidental that "The Body Politic" prints pictures of pretty boys and personal ads for "desirable" companionship. Few women feel comfortable with such blatant sexual orientation. Few women flaunt their bodies with one another the way gay men do. Does this mean women are more up-tight? Granted it is great to be "loose" (physically relaxed); but not when there is sexual manipulation going on. If one elicits the hard, quick come, one is not soliciting love, but merely soliciting.

Male exhibitionism in terms of drag shows, transvestitism and so forth may, if you're charitable, be explained in terms of "breaking down" sex role hang-ups. I maintain that such behavior consolidates and promotes sex role. There are many "Queens" wanting to be women, spending their whole lives searching for wrinkles, and jocks to be mean to them, so they can get off on their "women's" role.

If this is their perception of women, that we are primping, posturing empty-headed creatures hiding behind our dresses, our make-up and our sex, it is no wonder that "queens" often feel a great deal of self-hatred and of loathing for women. It is the maximum in masochism that leads one continually to pretend to be the sex that one can never be, when the very reason one is homosexual is that one loves the sex one is.

So there are truck driver dykes and women who talk about their wives and have duck-tail haircuts. There are butches who beat up "their" women, drink hard and curse loud and mimic male mannerisms. Why are they less responsible?

Because this is a man's world, where men make the conditions for sexuality and where men's fantasies determine what women are. Even in gay clubs, men determine how women should behave with each other. Part-time homosexual males stand and snicker at women showing affection for each other, gay males dominate the dance floor oblivious that they are crowding female couples, tell "in" jokes that women are expected to find funny: in short men act in gay clubs as they act on streets.

Like women are their property, that women loving women are kinky and must be interested in at least friendship/approval from males.

And women, apolitical women, do seek their approval, do mimic their exhibitionism and their "toughness".

"Toughness" is based on concealing one's fears from the world, to the point where one does not recognize what one is feeling. That is, appearing "tough" (competent, poised, defiant) is based on a process of dissociation from oneself--denying and invalidating one's perceptions because of fear. Fear of vulnerability and of "defenselessness".

Are women less defensive, then? No one is less defensive who is not in touch. No one is in touch who doesn't struggle to be real, to have an identity apart from role and apart from role identification. Being an individual hurts, because there are no models.

So where men dress like women, is this worse than women wearing men's clothes? Not unless we believe that men's and women's clothes are equally freeing and comfortable. Nothing is freeing which binds one in, straps bosom or legs into a circle too restrictive for free movement. Women's gowns may look roomy and hang loose, but gloves don't hang loose, or bodices, and walking in a full-length gown limits one's step and calls for attention to hem-lines, etc.

Women are concerned for their appearance because it is the only commodity they have; that and youth. Marketable goods must be attractively wrapped. The need of men to objectify women in order to fuck women is the same need of the gay male to objectify men in order to fuck men. Ageism and sexism are ancient beasts, long long time oppressors.

So. I will not march in gay pride week nor exhibit my sexual orientation en masse. But I will hold hands on the street and kiss my lover in public parks or theatres. I will resist the ridicule of street males and their cock orientation which defines every woman as potential property and grants permission for passage only if a woman abides by their expectations for woman-behavior.

And I will remember what it means to love freedom in a way that does not oppress others. To my few gay brothers, I recognize your struggle is similar to mine; against being objectified and supportive of feminist goals.

Gilleen Chase



PSYCHOSURGERY

Cindy

Psychosurgery may be defined as brain surgery used to correct mental and behavioural disorders. In this article I am not prepared to present the conflicting evidence about the effectiveness of brain surgery. This is partly because I feel I do not have the background knowledge in neurology to evaluate the evidence and partly because psychosurgery raises grave social and ethical problems which deserve more attention.

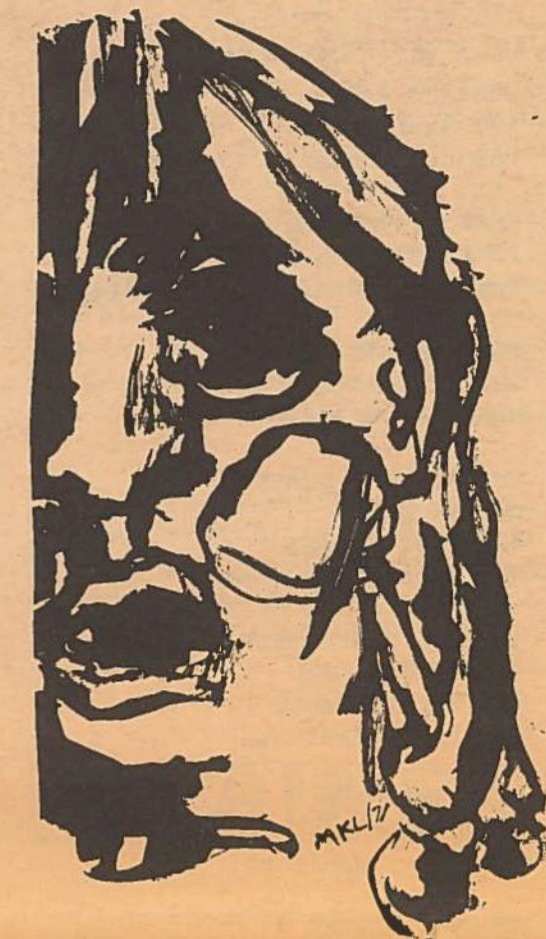
It is important to make clear at the beginning of this article that those against psychosurgery are more vocal than those who favour it. The argument for psychosurgery is not as well known. However, I have tried to present both sides as fairly as possible, even though it will soon become apparent that I side with those against psychosurgery.

The first thing that needs to be said is that psychosurgery is a woman's issue. Since more women than men "go crazy", women are therefore more likely to be considered for brain surgery. This I want to discuss in detail, but further on in this article.

Let me turn to the argument for brain surgery. Vernon H. Mark, writing in his article "A Psychosurgeon's Case for Psychosurgery" in *Psychology Today* magazine (July 1974), is certainly correct in stating that the present controversy over brain surgery boils down to the old split between psychiatrists who favour the medical model of psychiatric disease and those who follow social and political theories of behaviour. Psychosurgery, of course, rests on the medical model.

Mark writes, "...the greatest threat to a more holistic view of behaviour...lies not in the possibility that social considerations will be slighted by neurologists, but rather that neurological considerations will be left out entirely." He goes on to condemn the rejection of the medical model of psychiatry as responsible for a number of horrors. He cites the case of 18 mental patients who died because they had had tumours of the limbic system of the brain. Some of them died because the real nature of their illness was misdiagnosed. I can appreciate Mark's argument. However, there are two points I want to raise here.

Mark does not fear that neurologists ignore the social causes of psychiatric disease and, indeed, it does not matter so much whether they do or not for it is psychiatrists who largely determine who is mentally ill. In a decision whether or not to try brain surgery the opinion of the psychiatrist who has spent much more time with the patient will no doubt outweigh that of the neurosurgeon who comes into the picture at a much later date. Therefore, I will discuss psychiatrists and their role shortly. In any case, most incidences of mental illness do not



result from purely physical causes such as tumours, excess spinal fluid accumulations and the like. Thus, contrary to Mark, there are much greater dangers than the misdiagnosis of structural diseases.

Now is the time to bring psychiatrists under fire. According to Phyllis Chesler, there are more female mental patients than male. In fact, her book, *Women and Madness*, is indispensable to any discussion of psychiatry. Basically, Chesler's thesis is that the system creates unhealthy women and the psychiatric establishment keeps them that way. She points out so-called mental illness in women is likely to manifest itself in self-destructive ways, i.e., depression and suicidal behaviour, a reflection of women's passive role in society. Chesler holds that "neuroses" in women and the result of discrimination and women's role and not mental illness in the individual. She writes that the patriarchal relationship between the therapist and the patient "reinforces a system of beliefs and attitudes that is psychologically damaging to the patient and psychologically rewarding to the doctor." In short, a woman transfers her needs for "salvation" from one man, a husband or lover, to another, the therapist.

And what is 'mental health' anyway? Psychiatrists seem to disagree violently amongst themselves on its definition. As Thomas Szasz, author

of *The Myth of Mental Illness*, says "...a normal person is one whose beliefs and conduct coincide with those of the examining psychiatrist." The good Dr. Szasz himself has been quoted as saying that he thinks mental health is either a four-sided triangle or a square circle.

But it is time to return to Vernon Mark and the argument for psychosurgery. He states that if psychotherapy and drug therapy fail, then psychosurgery should be tried if the situation warrants it. However, what he doesn't say is the reason why these methods so often fail is because there exists a basic contradiction in psychiatry...that is, the resolution of a problem within the environment that creates it.

It is important to make clear the fact Mark does not favour psychosurgery in every case where drug therapy and psychotherapy fail. He lists various organic abnormalities such as large tumours and temporal-lobe epilepsy which have been known to result in "abnormal" aggressiveness as responding

mental health is either a four-sided triangle or a square circle

to surgery. But again, even in cases where there are organic disorders the relative importance of environmental factors must be examined. Separating the environmental from the organic can be extremely complicated. We just don't know enough about the brain.

Near the close of his article, Mark writes: "There has never been a society or culture without mental illness. From the right-wing government of Nazi Germany where mental patients were often killed, to communist countries where political psychiatry is a fine art, mental disease has remained a persistent phenomenon. And yet it is the avowed intention of some anti-psychiatrists to work for the overthrow of the establishment in favour of a new political system that they presume would abolish mental illness." Mark's argument here does not work because the two systems he mentions do not make a good comparison, for essentially they agree in practice if not in theory. They are both totalitarian, militarist and, not incidentally, patriarchal.

A NOTE ON PSYCHOSURGERY IN CANADA:-

A clipping from the July 18/74 *Globe and Mail* revealed that no lobotomies, a type of brain surgery, have been performed since 1972, though they are still legal. Previously, about 13 were performed at Kingston Psychiatric Hospital.

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pg. 18 spreading across the land

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M E D I A

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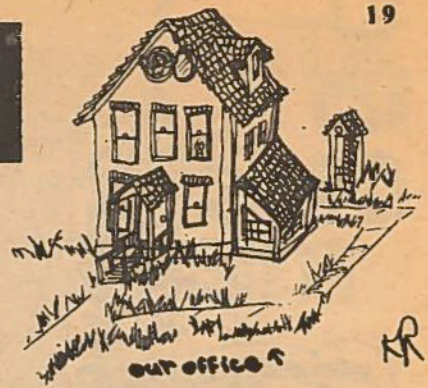
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women's press

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A Women's Press was able to enlarge its operation with an OFY Grant. But, thanks to the temporary nature of OFY itself, they may have to shut down if they cannot find more money. They unexpectedly lost women's business due to the OFY-supported print shop which could get away with charging even cheaper rates to women's projects.

They need more women for the collective to take responsibility for the future/direction of the press and/or do printing jobs. Let's give it our full support. We need full control of the media in every way possible.

The second annual Montreal National Lesbian Conference will be happening this January, so if you have nothing else planned, here is what will be happening.

As last year, we will be having workshops and discussions, but unlike last year, this Conference will be much larger than the last. We will also be providing entertainment in the body of at least one lesbian feminist band, and one folk rock group. Also we will

showing, so you can attend workshops and not miss anything. All in all we want this to be a long remembered affair (nothing intended). Since there are more dykes than ever in Montreal, there will be even more accomodation, and hopefully we will have room for everyone. Last year's conference had a few organizational problems (not enough time to organize properly) so this year we are starting now. If anyone has any ideas, suggestions or whatever, please write care of me and we'll see what we can do.

Last year we got women from as far as Saskatoon, and some groups from the States. This year we would like all of Canada to be represented, as well as, as many Americans who can come. Could anyone who is interested please give me an idea as to how many people we will have to deal with. The admission price will be a bit higher than the \$2 of last year, to cover the food and entertainment.

Hope to see you then, and I will forward the list of speakers etc. when I have it. Also the price.

In Sisterhood, Leslie Orchard
Women's Information and Referral Centre
3595 St. Urbain



try and have a large dinner, with vegetarian food, as many women complained last time about the meat in the soup. We will be having guest speakers, and a gay revue, as well as a large dance. Films and video tapes will also be available (God willing) for continuous

CORA, the Women's Liberation Bookmobile, will be trucking around throughout the fall. If you or your women's group would like it to come to your town, write to:
Women's Liberation Bookmobile
195 Seaton St.
Toronto, Ontario.



women's Place

The Women's Place has decided to break itself down into 3 main areas:
1) Cultural-this means a cafe that would be separate from the rest of Women's Place... a place for artists to display their work and women to congregate in comfort. (Since it's International Women's Year there is lots of money available for this kind of thing and we are also proposing a cultural festival on the island for next summer.)
2) Educational-a speakers bureau newsletter combination to reach out into communities
3) Referral Resource Switchboard-self-explanatory.

Meanwhile we are investigating how to establish a Women's Credit Union. And we thought it would be great to have a junk store where we would sell things that we got for free.

All the money from the cafe, the festival, the credit union, the junk shop, the speakers bureau, etc. etc. is money that will be freed up for the "movement"...for the services and organizations that we are already operating as well as the ones we have yet to foresee. We're trying to get free of government funding...right!?

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