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THE OTHER WOMAN

CANADIAN FEMINIST
VOL. 4, NO. 1

*Dec/Jan
76*



**PULLOUT ON: ABORTION
BIRTH CONTROL
STERILIZATION**

WAGES FOR HOUSEWORK

"Strike While The Iron Is Hot"

Housework is...getting coffee for your boss, making love, grocery shopping, mopping your floor, going to movies, serving others, changing your baby's shitty diapers, looking attractive, being a housemother to a co-op house...ad infinitum. Housework is not restricted to the housework done in your house (cleaning, cooking) but also work done on the job (getting coffee, managing tension, smiling) and in your so-called personal life. We cannot escape our role as houseworkers because we are women. That is the role assigned us, regardless of how we define ourselves. That is how others see us. Waged workers such as stewardesses, waitresses, nurses, teachers are all variations of the houseworker role. To maintain our job we must conform to this role in our appearance and behaviour, that is, serving others (men) in the office, looking beautiful and never raising our voices in anger.

Lesbians and unmarried women are obliged to take jobs to support themselves. tow wants to clarify that we do define these women as houseworkers. All women, gay or straight, do housework. Lesbians do housework in relating to women. Since society defines lesbianism as "abnormal", then lesbians must put a great deal of work into keeping their relationships together. First you have to find her, then you gotta be nice to her, put up with her idiosyncracies like bringing her tea in bed. And then she talks about "open relationships and non-monogamy" and then you know she's met someone...and what about who gets the outside of the bed?

All relationships, gay or straight, encounter these problems because of the restrictions capital puts on our lives. Capital regulates the amount of time we have to give to our relationships; it encourages us to be competitive and to establish power roles. Capital promotes jealousy, possessiveness and materialism.

"Our sexual relations are still work. They are work because we don't have time for them, because they



*are still cut off from the rest of our productive lives, because we are always tired, have no time, no place, no patience, because our personalities and our personal relations with everyone around us are shaped by and for capitalist production. Because we are housewives."**

Capital is the State, the patriarchy, class society in all its historical forms up to the present. Its manifestations are racism, sexism, ageism, heterosexism and imperialism (in actuality, a higher form of capitalism).

Wages for housework must come from the State, not only because the State profits from our labour, but also because it would be senseless to merely redistribute the poverty of the male working class. However, we do not want the State to regulate the quality or quantity of a woman's housework. We will ensure that the State does not exercise such control through strikes, demonstrations, and boycotts--much the same way as unionized workers do now.

The principle of wages for housework is that women are entitled to a recognition of their work in the form of a wage. It is not the money itself which will give women power, but the struggle to get the wage. We need power to choose our working conditions, including the power to refuse housework. We do not mean, however, that only the struggle is important and that the wage is a rallying point. Money is necessary in order to do what one wants to do, whatever that may be. But money will be useless if there is no consciousness of its meaning.

"Capitalism is a lousy lay!"

tow shares the above points of view with the Toronto Wages for Housework Committee. Wages Due (an autonomous lesbian collective within the Committee) has some additional premises on the struggle of lesbians within the wages for housework perspective. Wages Due's positions concern differences in the power structure between straight and lesbian women, the function of lesbian separatism within the feminist movement and even the definition of the word lesbian.

On the power of straight women over lesbians, Wages Due says (and we concur):

*"They can pretend we don't exist. They can pretend we are animals. They can ostracise us socially. They can expose us. They can get us sacked from our jobs. They can get us thrown out of our homes. They can sabotage our struggle. They can drive us into mental asylums. The power relation is even further also reflected in the fact that we are even further removed than straight women from access to any part of a male wage."**

Lesbian women do not have this same kind of power over straight

women, but lesbianism creates a power in and of itself.

*"In being lesbian we put ourselves in a relatively powerless position, in fact in a position where straight women have power over us, and yet we bring power to ourselves and to all women...it is an act of defiance --defying the mould into which capital wants to force you, and it is still a strength to the women around you. In fact it is precisely because it is a threat that you get all the repression...as we begin to fight off some of the forces that have repressed us, our ability to live without men, our ability to express ourselves and our feelings for each other are in turn a source of power, just as money, time, facilities, even laws that we win serve to increase our strength. The power created in this way by the movement of lesbians has particularly nourished the Women's Liberation Movement: the solidarity, the drive, the relentless need to organise as women, our feelings for each other that lesbians can often develop and express more fully than anyone else, have been a major victory of the WLM."**

This quote expresses our feelings about separatism as well. If we isolate ourselves from the rest of the movement, our power is lost. Autonomy is valuable as a strategy because it gives us space to build our strength, but creating divisions within the movement is only playing into the hands of capital.

Where we disagree with the Wages Due perspective is when they define lesbianism as the struggle against and refusal of the work of relating to men rather than women loving women. They say we have no choice in deciding to come out, that it is forced upon us in reaction to male oppression. We see coming out as a conscious, though limited, choice. At times, Wages Due seem to see coming out as an act of desperation. We see coming out as a positive declaration.

The lesbians in tow agree that we are lesbians because we love women. We do not equate lesbianism with man-hating. We do perceive that we are refusing the work of relating to men, but that is not our prime motivation. We gain personal power from being women-identified-women and we can use this power to achieve wages for housework for all women.

*Ruth Hall's paper from the London, England Wages Due Collective.

This is our long-promised editorial on the Wages for Housework perspective. As we mentioned in our last issue, we are sponsoring a special issue from the Toronto Wages for Housework Committee. This special issue will be available free to our subscribers, purchased at the newsstands and from the Toronto Wages for Housework Committee, P.O. Box 38, Stn. E, Toronto, Ontario.

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MEETING TIMES:

TH. 7.30 & SUN. 1.00
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ARTICLES, PHOTOS AND
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OUR ONTARIO ARTS COUNCIL GRANTMCLAREN MICROPUBLISHING
BOX 972, STN.F, TORONTO
PRINTED BY DUMONT PRESS
WORKER RUN & CONTROLLEDALL CONTENTS COPYRIGHT
ISSN 0315-8306
SECOND CLASS 2948
POSTAGE PAID IN TORONTO

BEAUTY CONTESTS

We are against Miss Canadas, Miss Worlds, Miss Universes, Miss Teen-age Canadas, Miss Grey Cups...All these beauty contests are a constant reminder that we have a role to fulfill, that we have to all the time set ourselves up to be judged. The great majority of us do not fit the physical requirements--yet delude ourselves that if only we buy (and use) enough of the right products, we can look beautiful. The function of the Miss Canada Pageant is to pick the "ideal" woman to use her as an example of the ultimate good consumer--our role as houseworkers under capitalism.

We are in no way, however, putting down the women who participate in beauty pageants. Beauty queens win scholarships, prizes and an opportunity to get an entry into something that they do want. Feminism means all women have the right to choose. We recognize many choices women make are for reasons of survival. However, under capital, we are given the illusion of choice so long as it fits into the framework already chosen for us.

We agree with the disruption of the Miss Canada Pageant by the 10 women involved (see Page 3). But we question their tactics. Militancy definitely has its place within feminist struggles but we must carefully examine its context and resort to it only under sympathetic conditions. Inevitably, splashy one-shot actions only result in

press distortion which confuse and mislead the mass of women as to the real intent. Although alternatives may be a lot slower and require more work, they are a lot more effective on a long-term basis.



STRIKES

We support the decision by rank and file members of any union to strike. Striking is the only effective way waged workers can exercise control over their working conditions. It is not the postal workers, the teachers, nor any other group in the public sector who should be the ones to be sacrificed, to shoulder public outrage when the blame for economic disorder rests with the corporate establishment.

posties

The postal strike was an inconvenience for everybody, to put it mildly. It nearly put us out of business since we had no revenue coming in. However, we fully support the struggle of the postal workers. A number of the issues surrounding the postal strike were not fully aired by the traditional media. 75% of the inside workers are women. Also the workers wanted more than increased pay, though this is legitimate, but they also want to have control over the technology that affects their jobs.

The 42-day old postal strike ended only when the workers discovered their powerlessness to continue. The most depressing aspect of the postal strikes is that they are never fully won. The unions are always forced to settle for less than they need, so we have strikes year after year over the same issues. The issues left unsettled after the most recent strike include: maternity leave, length of hours, temporary help and the workers' attempts to become a Crown Corporation.

The postal workers lacked support of other unions, support from the media and, most important, money to continue fighting the repressive government symbolized by Bryce MacKasey. In addition a number of the workers undermined the union leadership by returning to work, i.e., scabbing. The majority of the scabs were women. We can understand the position these women were in because most working women cannot afford to strike for long periods of time merely to show solidarity. The union had a responsibility to provide strike pay, which it did not do. We cannot, however, support the actions of those women who scabbed, as they lessened the strength of the entire union.

teachers

"Dedication doesn't buy my groceries, nor pay my rent" a teacher told The Other Woman. "Is it wrong to feel that the work that I do and the effort and energy that I put forward in my teaching, deserves a decent wage?"

Many mothers are upset because they have extra housework now that their children are out of school. Schools do little but babysit young people, people who would otherwise be wanting jobs and money. The intent of this editorial is not to say that teachers are nothing but glorified houseworkers but to state that the institution of education the way it is now forces teachers into this position.

BODY POLITIC

The Body Politic, a gay liberation journal, reports that they were turned down for an Ontario Arts Council Grant. The Ontario Arts Council cites: "low standards of writing, editing and graphic design" as reasons for the refusal. Ron Evans, literary officer, hastened to add that "the decision had nothing to do with the nature of the paper". The Body Politic applied for an OAC grant around the same time as The Other Woman. We learned that we received a grant in July, two months after application. The Body Politic learned after the provincial election in September that they had been turned down.

We deplore the Ontario Arts Council decision, and regardless of Ron Evans' statement, we believe it to be based on the sexual orientation of The Body Politic.

ERRATA

In Ruth Dworin's article on the Winnipeg Folk Festival in our last issue, the song "Show Us The Length Of Your Cock" was mistakenly attributed to the wrong group. The song was written by Bob Bossin of the Stringband. You can hear the song on their new album, National Melodies, available at 342 St. Clements Ave., Toronto (979-1984).

The number printed in the last issue for the Rape Crisis Centre in Guelph was incorrect. There is no Rape Crisis Centre in Guelph. Call the Kitchener Rape Distress Centre--743-RAPE.

NEWS

THE OTHER WOMAN SPEAKS TO THE MISS CANADA PAGEANT PROTESTERS

PRESS RELEASE

"This statement is an explanation of the action that took place at the Miss Canada Pageant on Monday night, November 3, 1975. The disruption of the Pageant was carried out by 10 women (and supported by many others across the country) to protest the degrading and sexist nature of the Miss Canada Pageant. We were not attacking the contestants but the big business practice of making economic gains through the exploitation of women. The winning women in the Pageant are given prizes or rewards for satisfying their judges. These gifts are then written off on the income taxes of the donors and Canadian taxpayers end up footing the bill. Miss Canada is the product, the image of womanhood which is peddled to the women of Canada by big business according to its needs and interests. In IWY, especially, big business and the Government of Canada have worked hard to coopt the women's movement and to confuse women in Canada about the real issues. We protest not only the sexism of the Miss Canada Pageant but the manner in which it, too, is being used to coopt the women's movement. Liberation itself has become a product, a fashion, yet another thing for women to live up to, to buy, to compete for. To quote Miss Canada 1975: "For the benefit of our newly-arrived guests, I have in the past year had an opportunity, as a woman, to express my views to thousands of people and I hope that I have been able to convey to these people that the Canadian woman is intelligent, motivated, aware and very much on the move." This year's product is woman on the move--the liberated woman. We will not buy. This product has been especially designed to confuse and pacify us in IWY and we will now swallow it. We protest. No woman today is liberated. Working women, housewives, women on welfare, sole-support mothers, native women, black and third world women are not liberated. Intelligent, motivated, creative, strong women remain oppressed today. The power structure has not changed. We will not be silenced."



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INTERVIEW

How interviewed 5 of the 10 women who took part in the Miss Canada Pageant Protest (hereafter referred to as MCP--ironic that it also stands for something else!) Below Ann Russell, Audrey Donaldson, Artemis, Helen Mills and Adrienne Potts give their opinions.

Artemis: The 10 women (who just incidentally happened to be lesbian) represented a coalition of women of varying views and they all participated in the action because they all had personal politics that motivated them to do so. It is a redherring to discuss lesbianism as the bourgeois press has brought out.

Adrienne: It was a coalition of many groups. The Toronto Women's Anarchist Group and the Radical Lesbian Group were, however, the ones to be reported in the press.

Q. WHAT LED UP TO THE PROTEST?

Helen: We spontaneously decided to do it. The reason that it was important for me was because it seemed like a really good place to communicate some of the things I think are happening in IWY to coopt the movement and also it seemed like a good opportunity to let everybody know that we are still alive and that we haven't been coopted.

Adrienne: I wanted us to start doing things again, to start saying that we are not going to be pacified.

Audrey: The reason I took part in it basically was because I have been lesbian all my life and I really haven't come out and it was something I had to do. I felt it was a very important step forward for me as a person to realize exactly who I am.

Ann: It's the sort of thing I have fantasized about doing for a long time, the same way I've fantasized on walking down the street and beating up pricks. When I had the chance to do it, I jumped at the chance.

Q. WHAT ACTUALLY OCCURRED DURING THE PROTEST?

We got into cars and drove out to a gas station and asked if we could park there. We phoned for taxis. We had taken the cabs because we thought it might look better. Nothing could make 10 dykes look better (laughter). When they arrived, we were driven to the CFTO gates. The guard said: What is your business here? The taxi driver said:

They have a bomb. He didn't realize what he was saying. We were telling all these stories about our equipment being inside and we were students and were late and we all had tickets. We were told to go away so we went back to the gas station for our cars and decided... (deleted by request). We got to the door, went past one guard and ran to Studio 6 with people running behind us.

We had a bunch of leaflets printed that said: Happy IWY and Smash Sexism. As we ran in, we threw these out among the audience. When we jumped on stage, they started to say: And here she is, Miss 1975 and we went up on stage. It was an incredible point to arrive. We were just hoping we would get there before the whole thing was over. Two of us were on stage for some time while everybody else was fighting in the aisles to keep the guards from getting us off. Finally, a cop led Adrienne off the stage. They picked on all the little women to hit. We were defending ourselves and fighting back.

Adrienne: I went up to the contestants while on stage making my statement and told them 'we are not attacking you'. An attempt was made to talk with them before being dragged off. I was walking around with my fist up making a speech about big business, how women are ripped off and we aren't here to attack women. I also grabbed the MC's mike but they cut the sound and turned up the music.

Q. WAS THERE ANY FOLLOW-UP AFTER THE ACTION?

Artemis: I have to explain something for the benefit of those who wondered why I was on W5. I was asked to be interviewed by W5 as just another lesbian in the country and they were doing this thing on gay oppression and when we were being taped they wanted to add on a bit about the MCP for another programme, they said. When they did the editing, the bastards started out my portion of W5 with a really dumb, passive remark which was completely out of context given the half-hour discussion before that.

Helen: In other words, you were ripped off.

Artemis: I was fucking well ripped off.

Helen: That is the kind of thing that we really have to work to avoid. I think it is really important to back up taking control of the media and using it as much as we can by using other media in as many ways as we can. Leafletting, alternative press, etc. **SEE PAGE 22**

FOURTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE WOMEN IN UNIVERSITIES

nov. 7,8,9 at univ.
of toronto

by cindy wright

It seems to happen at many women's conferences. There is an immediate polarization between women who assume that we are going to work within the system, in this case, the existing university structure, and those who feel that academic life today is irrelevant and unworkable for everybody, but particularly for women and the working class.

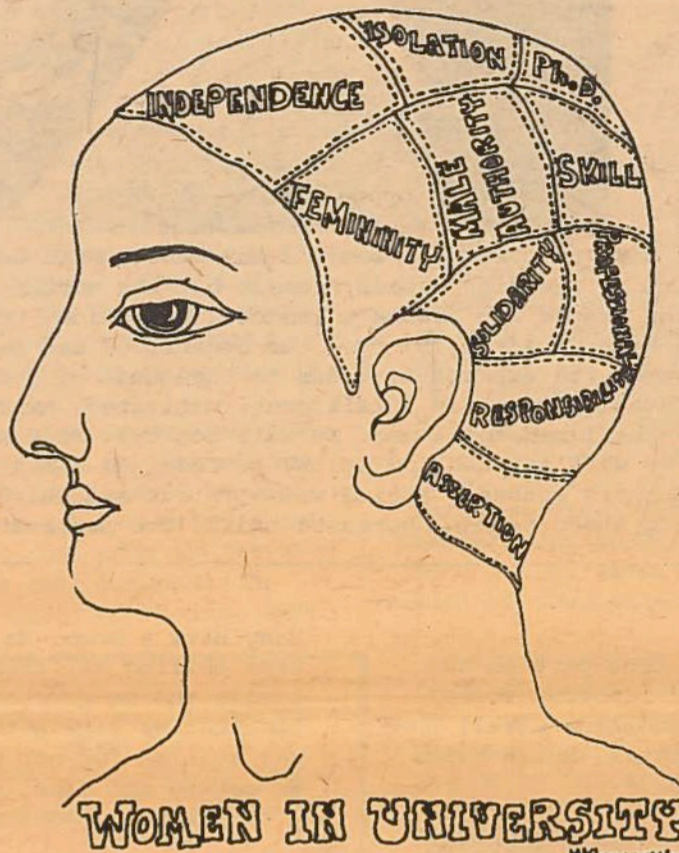
And so it happened that when Johanna Stuckey, an Associate Professor of English and Humanities from York University spoke on the topic "Elitism in University Women", she talked about everything else but elitism. Instead, she asks the question: Why don't women go into graduate school? She listed possible reasons--no daycare, no money, no confidence, no encouragement from society or family--and the fact that there is no place for a highly educated woman to go anyway. However, it was a woman in the audience who really focused on the issue. She rose and said that she wasn't going to go into graduate school when there was nothing the university offered that was relevant to her life, to her mother's life.

The question we should be focusing on is not: Why are there so few women Ph.D's, but: What is the university teaching and is it viable?

Stuckey feels that while there is much that must be changed for women in universities, these changes can only be made when there are enough women in important levels of the university to push for their needs and demands to be met. As the situation is now, she said, it is often literally a handful of faculty women who feel secure enough in their positions to demand women's studies programmes and to compile status of women reports.

Women's Studies was another workshop. Marylee Stephenson, a sociologist from McMaster University and editor of *Women In Canada* was the speaker. She mentioned that she had written *Homemaker's Magazine* a long response to their article "The Case Against Women's Studies" by Eileen Morris. (See article on Women's Studies.) Copies of this same article were mailed by the Dean of Innis College, which houses Women's Studies at the University of Toronto, to people who wrote him protesting the cutbacks in the Women's Studies programme there.

Stephenson talked about the content of women's studies programmes. To date, they have been mostly centred in areas such as English, social science and the humanities--fields where the majority of university women can be found. Other courses, mostly non-credit, focus on the per-



sonal--yoga, assertive training--rather than on politics and women's oppression. Women's studies courses at the graduate level are rare.

There is a division between those who feel that women's studies should not be ghettoized, but should be integrated into all departments of the university. She said that most women's studies programmes were initiated because of the demands of individuals and not because the institution saw it as a legitimate and necessary discipline. Indeed, many women's studies programmes collapse when one or two women faculty members transfer to another university or field.

Many academics call women's studies a fad, and think most courses to be of the Mickey-Mouse, group-grope variety, i.e., academically unsound. Stephenson commented that if studying half the human population is a fad then we're really in trouble.

Stephenson concentrated mostly on the research being done on women for women's studies courses. She stressed that research should ask new questions, questions which are often based on our own intuition of what it is to be a woman. All knowledge is political. Knowledge is literally power.

She says that research and methodology on women is really narrow. Far too little research concentrates on asking women about what is going on with them and their lives. This kind of "participant-observation" research does not receive grants, but research that merely adds to existing studies and hypotheses is funded.

After her speech a very interesting discussion occurred. Women spoke about all kinds of problems--that of the needs of mature women who want to go back to school and the fact that the university is not sensitive to their needs; many doubted the validity of women's studies, separated as they are from the community--they spoke of the need for moving women's studies outside, on the need for working on a grassroots level.

The issue of power arose--how do we get it, keep it, build on it. In fact, it was suggested that power be the theme of the next annual conference on women in colleges and universities.

Kay Armatage, a key (in fact, the only) woman carrying the women's studies programme at University of Toronto, midway through the discussion wanted to know "what are we going to do about it"--what should our tactics be. We are all aware of the situation of women in colleges and universities. Some suggestions were made--that women students should put their money where their mouth is--that they not pay the second installment of their fees if their money is not going where they want it.

Others suggested that academic women must get together with the support staff, i.e., the cafeteria workers, the secretaries, library workers and others, in order to build a power base.

On the whole, the conference was a disappointing one. The focus should have been on action, on power. We all know about the status of women--there has been report after report, the statistics are in--now we must begin to take action. And, as Marylee Stephenson says, a place to begin is by radical questioning. We must question the entire university structure itself--why learning must be separated from living, why everyone can't be engaged in learning, why we must have degrees and credit to make a person feel worthwhile. Universities don't serve anybody's needs, especially women's--they turn out a managerial middle class, from which all are excluded but white, middle class males. It is towards the end of this system that we must direct our energies.

WOMEN'S STUDIES: A FAD?

by cindy wright

Women's studies is "the hottest new campus culture kick...the latest putdown of women", says Eileen Morris in her article, "The Case Against Women's Studies", which appeared in *Homemaker's* magazine. Her position is that women's studies courses are Mickey Mouse and easy credits and that instead money should be channelled into "the difficult courses where the men students are", i.e., into science, law, engineering. Her attitude isn't original.

Yet women's studies is potentially the most difficult and dangerous discipline of all. Women are questioning the basic institutions and models of our society--and of all societies around the world. Feminists are not satisfied with the answer that things are the way they are because "that's the way it's always been" or that it's "natural". Challenging your culture, challenging the interpretation of history is hard work and what's more, it takes guts.

Morris writes that a woman would benefit more from an engineering degree than "from cozy seminars with the girls"--a remark that absolutely infuriates me. This carries in it

the male assumption that when women get together it is merely an extension of the kaffeeklatsch--women sitting around bitching and gossiping. It implies that women are powerless--that they need the association, and approval of men before they are legitimate. Further, she is accepting the traditional position that courses such as science and history are "hard core", whereas art and music are artsy-fartsy, i.e., trivial, often not quite legitimate. Sure, there are very, very few women in science. We know that science is often used oppressively. For example, women become guinea pigs in fertility control experiments. Nevertheless, I question whether women can be effectively integrated into the scientific world, as long as knowledge is controlled as private property, to be held only by certain classes and castes of people.

Morris criticizes women's studies for being "out to indocrinate rather than illuminate", and she writes that "the viewpoints of specialists which do not jibe with those of class leaders are dismissed as sexist or mistaken". This is ridiculous. The

amount of infighting that goes on in the so-called legitimate areas of study--particularly history, psychology, political science--is absolutely tremendous--everybody knows that. As they are now, universities encourage the trust and value of authority far more than the thought and judgement of the individual. Ideally, women's studies should provide the kind of supportive environment that gives women the courage and strength to radically question their society, the state, history--everything, including the university. But women's studies should also be more than consciousness-raising sessions. Awareness will lead to action and action to change.

The important question is: can all this be accomplished within the structure of high schools, colleges and universities? No. Feminism is not a course, it is a political theory and a way of living. As such, it belongs in the world, where it can be available to all women and not within a university structure which operates contrary to feminist values.

that was no lady...

the musician

(Toronto) Malvina Reynolds gave a concert here recently. Her music is always political, covering topics ranging from ecology to feminism. In addition to fine renditions of "We Don't Need The Men" and "Rosie Jane, Are You Pregnant Again?" (the anthem of the Berkeley Women's Health Collective) she told this anecdote: (paraphrased)

"The other night, I was waiting for a taxi, someone had called one for me. When a cab stopped near me, I opened the door, stuck my head in, and asked, 'Is this taxi for me?' The cabbie replied, 'I'm supposed to pick up a lady here.'

Without thinking, I answered, 'Well, it can't be for me then!' and shut the door."

the m.p.

(Ottawa) Liberal backbencher Simma Holt was upset because she was referred to in the House of Commons as a lady. The man who first used the offending word was Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau.

When Sean O'Sullivan (PC-Hamilton-Wentworth) rose to ask a question, he found Trudeau in conversation with Ms. Holt (Vancouver-Kingsway).

After O'Sullivan apologized for interrupting, Trudeau thanked him "for apologizing when I was speaking to a lady."

O'Sullivan then said he shared the Prime Minister's esteem for "the hon-

erable lady."

Ms. Holt, a former newspaper reporter, rose on a question of privilege.

"I hardly expect to be in this House and see the young gentleman, the handsome man in the grey suit... join the ranks of the front row of Neanderthals," she began, a dig at the men in Conservative front ranks. "I am here, gentlemen, as a member of Parliament and not as a lady of any description."

the other woman

After a hard day at the office, the other woman was waiting for the streetcar to take her home. This was rather late at night. A young man came up to her and announced, "I'm smashed", and continued to drunkenly make conversation. This was all in vain, however, as the other woman had been told to never talk to strange men, especially at night. Finally, the young man gave up. "Well, I have to go find a sandwich. So, goodbye, dear Miss Radclyffe Hall." The other woman thought it quite improper at this point to laugh at the irony of it all.

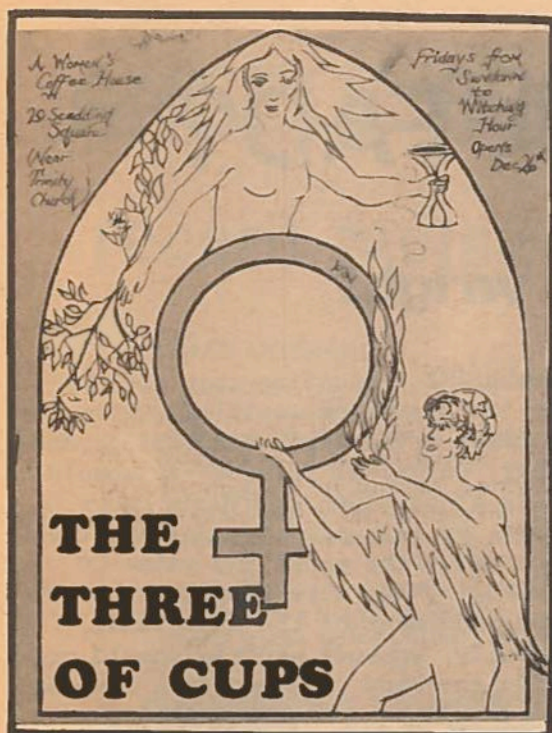


malvina



NEWS

COFFEE HOUSE



- ★ Contact us!
Now scheduling
events for Jan.
+ Feb. 76.

A new women's coffee house, The Three Of Cups, opened Friday, December 26th at 20 Scadding Square near Trinity Church. The Three Of Cups will continue to operate every Friday night for at least a month, longer if there is good response from the community. The coffee house will be open from 6:00 until midnight. There will be live entertainment and recorded music, and refreshments will be served. A small admission fee will be charged. You can call Dougal or Paulette at 532-9047 for more information.

The feminist community in Toronto has been sorely in need of a gathering place for a long time. tow would like to congratulate those women who have finally gotten it together. The Three Of Cups needs your support. See you there.

join us

The collective meets 7:00 pm Mondays (1st & 3rd @ Ma.)
If you want to sing, show a film, read poems, etc.
AND especially help as volunteer staff; contact 532-9047

OCTOBER 25 DEMONSTRATION

OTTAWA (FNS)--On Oct. 25th over 200 people gathered at the Supreme Court Building in Ottawa for a march protesting government inaction during IWY.

The Ottawa Women's Centre along with neighbouring women's centres and groups such as CARAL, Voice of women, Gays of Ottawa and Women's Career Counselling organized the march which protested government inaction concerning:

- equal pay for work of equal value
- access to free quality childcare for all
- safe, effective birth control for all
- equal job opportunities
- equal rights in marriage and property law
- removal of abortion from the criminal code
- equal custody rights for lesbian mothers
- the inclusion of sexual orientation in the Human Rights Code

Each organizing group provided a speaker. The general theme of the speeches was on the negligible change in the status of women during IWY; women's actual legal and employment status in society (which is incredibly low); the lack of government legislation to bring women's status higher, the importance of solidarity among women and other oppressed groups (native people, lesbians and homosexuals, etc.).

As a token gesture, a female RCMP officer was provided to help her cohorts 'guard' the Parliament buildings from damage lest the women protestors became angry. A plainclothes officer was also in evidence.

ON STRIKE IN THUNDER BAY

PORT ARTHUR CLINIC

In light of the recent OMA demands for a 35-50% increase in OHIP fees, we feel a review of the Port Arthur Clinic strike is very timely.

The average annual salary for Ontario physicians is \$43,000. A 40% increase would result in a \$17,200 pay hike. In contrast, our average annual income is \$5,400. The 15% increase we demand would mean an average of \$810 annually. There is no proportionate reduction in the price of food, clothing, housing and services for us. Our costs are the same as the highly paid doctors.

Doctors, who are also businessmen, receive returns on their clinic shares, and sundry benefits in the form of tax write-offs and government subsidies. Such dealings make it the concern of every taxpayer to press for a quick and just settlement.

The public and press have criticized us for withdrawing our vital health services, yet the doctors even now are threatening withdrawal of their services. Some doctors have already done so. The doctors are talking of withdrawing from OHIP and charging their patients directly. This will mean that doctors will be able to set their own prices above and beyond those set by OHIP. A patient will receive from OHIP a sum much smaller than the amount paid to the doctor.

50% of the strikers are single, or heads of family. Their wages mean survival for themselves and their

families, yet far too many people continue to believe that women have no real need to work. The press should not allow this myth to be perpetuated. Especially during IWY, the plight of working women should be explored.

SUMMARY OF DEMANDS

The following is a list of the major issues being negotiated between the doctor owners and the employees of the Port Arthur Clinic for a one-year contract.

1. A 15% Wage Increase

We feel that a 15% wage increase is a reasonable request in a first contract. The cost of living so far this year has risen 12% and is continuing to rise. Other unions are settling for increases of 30% and better. Our doctor employers are presently asking for a 35-50% increase. With a 15% increase our wages will still be \$150 to \$300 below the monthly wage of other workers in the same professions in this city.

2. 50% OHIP Payment by Doctor Owners

Most employers are paying up to 100% OHIP, and many are setting up dental plans. Is 50% OHIP payment too much to ask of a medical institution?

3. Union Security

We are negotiating for a union shop. A union shop means that all employees, as a condition of employment, will pay union dues. This does not mean that all employees, as a condition of employment, must join the union.

We believe that union security means job security, and that it is necessary in light of the Fort Frances situation. The striking Fort Frances Clinic returned to work without union security. Of the 22 original strikers, only 3 remain today.

The fact that there is a constantly available labour pool from which to draw cheap female labour, makes it easy for the Administration to hold out and break the women who are striking. Too many women need jobs and too few opportunities exist for women workers. Women, out of necessity, accept low pay and unsatisfactory working conditions.

Before the strike, Clinic Administration defined working conditions and set wages without the workers' participation. Salaries and benefits were markedly less than those enjoyed by male workers. No union protected the women from being fired without just cause.

When the women agreed to strike, there was little respect for their picket lines. Even the police worked to make it possible for the doctors to transport scabs to work. The public has not been vocal in its support of the strikers and trade unions could be much stronger in their support. The strikers have been harrassed and ignored on occasion, and have felt it is a sign of their sex. They feel men's picket lines are treated with much greater respect.

Please help us in our struggle to set a pattern for all Clinics to follow so that female support staff across the Province, and across Canada, can bargain more effectively for better wages and working conditions.

WOMEN'S CREDIT UNION

METRO TORONTO WOMEN'S CREDIT UNION
615 Yonge St., Suite 401
Thursdays only: 10-6pm
960-0322

The idea of a women's credit union originated from Women's Place 3 years ago. Last year several feminists met to discuss women's economic needs and decided to form a credit union.

WHAT IS A CREDIT UNION?

A credit union is a group of people with a common bond who save their money together and from these pooled savings make low-cost loans to one another.

A credit union is in essence a financial cooperative based on the principles of service rather than profit and on democratic control (one vote per member regardless of number of shares held).

A credit union seeks to offer the best return on savings and the lowest cost for borrowing.

HOW DOES A CREDIT UNION DIFFER FROM A BANK?

A credit union serves only its members, not the general public as does a bank. A credit union is owned and operated by its members, and annual profits are returned to the members in the form of dividends and loan rebates. A bank is owned by its shareholders and the profits are returned to the shareholders not to the customers.

WHY A CREDIT UNION FOR WOMEN ONLY?

We as a group are poorer than men. Women are paid less and have less access to funds. Credit-granting institutions discriminate against women, who, as a result, obtain fewer loans and build poor credit ratings. A feminist credit union will provide an alternative to the current unjust system, and will be more responsive to women's needs.

OPERATIONS

The authority to open a credit union is invested by charter, granted by the provincial government, and credit union operations are subject to The Credit Unions Act, 1970.

Each credit union is a limited company which conducts its own affairs, but most Ontario credit unions belong to the Ontario Credit Union League which in turn belongs to a national league, both of which provide services and materials to individual credit unions.

The main source of credit union income is interest paid by members on loans and dividends on credit union deposits in League Central.

A credit union is operated by a Board of Directors, a Credit Committee and a Supervisory Committee, elected by the members at annual meetings and responsible to the members.

IS YOUR MONEY SAFE?

Yes. Credit unions subscribe to a central stabilization fund which, in the event of bankruptcy, ensures that a member will not lose her money.

Each member of the credit union who handles money or has signing authority is required by law to be bonded.

A Supervisory Committee is also required by law to do internal audits and to oversee the credit union's operations. The Ontario Credit Union League and the government perform annual audits for each credit union.

SAVINGS

There are 2 kinds of accounts in credit unions: share accounts and deposit accounts. To start with, most credit unions accept only share accounts until a fixed rate of interest on savings can be set.

WHAT IS A SHARE?

A credit union share, usually valued at \$5, is simply a term to indicate a unit of savings placed in a credit union upon which dividends will be paid.

A credit union share is not an investment in the traditional sense --there is no risk involved and the share may be withdrawn at any time.

The members of a credit union declare dividends on fully paid shares, on the recommendation of the Board of Directors at annual meetings.

LOANS

Money is lent to members of a credit union "for provident or productive purposes", i.e., for any purpose of benefit to the borrower within the credit union's priorities.

Shares, wage assignments and co-signers may be used as security for loans although many loans are granted on the borrower's signature alone.

Most credit unions charge 12% per annum interest on loans. A rebate will be paid out of year-end sur-

plus, thus reducing the effective rate of 12%. The Metro Toronto Women's Credit Union has accepted this policy.

OUR PHILOSOPHY

Women have been consistently denied access to economic control and knowledge. We can gain economic power by withdrawing from male-dominated financial institutions and redistributing our resources among women who have suffered discrimination based on race, sex, class, sexual preference, religion, marital status or age.

OUR LOAN PRIORITIES

1. Organizational loans: for setting up self-sustaining food, craft, trade and housing cooperatives to provide job independence for women.
2. Educational loans: for women who want training in non-traditional jobs, trades, etc.
3. Personal loans: for emergency situations and personal needs.

HOW TO JOIN

Any woman in Metro Toronto is eligible. Membership in the Metro Toronto Women's Credit Union entails opening a share account of \$5 or more at our office (or by mail) and joining the Women's Information and Referral Centre (our common associational bond).

♀ WENDY

moon child, stars in your eyes
aquarian laughter took us by surprise
and your deeds, loving and so kind
caring enough to give to others
in these hard times.

something very special came our way
like a sparkle on a grey winter's day
and the snowflakes will fall softer
this december as we remember
the love you gave to us.

your song is not over
we hear it and are moved to further
the struggle to free women from
violence
to give our energy selflessly
where we know it is needed.

the day stopped for us when we heard
you'd died, hearts wrenched and
voices broken, a silent understanding
we gave each other and by nightfall
your sisters had gathered together.

Laughter and gladness shifting to
sadness

oh how the lights glowed that night
friends we did gather
to give our sister
all of the love we bear for her.

your song is not over
we hear it and are moved
we're filled with your light, sister
moon child, stars in your eyes
aquarian laughter took us by surprise.

Lynn Kirk



IN MEMORY OF WENDY GAMEY
BORN 1955 DIED 1975

men and liberation

by Bill Robinson

Ed Note: The Collective made a decision to request a man to report on the Men's Conference as we felt this would be of interest to many of our readers.

"The first National Men's Liberation Conference was held at Waterloo, Ontario on October 3-5. Present were over 150 men, representing groups from all over Canada and the U.S., who were concerned with the theory and practice of the newly emerging Men's Liberation Movement.

The objective of the conference was to enable men to examine their own lives--their relationships with women, with children, with marriage and divorce, with work and play, and with other men. This objective was accomplished by many workshops, some panels and lectures, a film, singing and dancing, and by numerous spontaneous discussions. It became apparent to all participants that now there really is a Men's Movement, arising as the long-awaited complement to the Women's Movement, and that it has a broad base of support from many different sorts of men across the continent." --excerpt from a press release written by members of the Saskatoon Men's Liberation Centre (SMLC).

What is this Men's Movement anyway and who is involved in it? As a participant in the conference, and as an outgrowth of it, I want to answer these questions by a quick look at history and by describing some of the details of my life by way of illustration.

It seems more and more evident to me that personal relationships in this society, especially sexual, can only be oppressive, regardless of how "liberated" either or both partners may be. So what do I do as a man, who has come to the realization that in spite of my good intentions and struggle with my own sexism and that of society, I am being destructive in my relationships with women?

I joined our consciousness-raising (cr) group last winter to try to get closer to the men in my life and to make the links between the "personal and political" aspects of the problem. Working in health at a level that is predominately composed of women, and socially and politically speaking, almost exclusively, with feminists, I have had to deal with these questions, intimately. And further, I consider myself very lucky in this because 1) it offers the potential for fuller, less exploitative relationships and 2) although the second wave of the women's movement may be passing, the crunch will come and I want to prepare for it. Acting out of such self-interest may seem crass but I don't believe that movements for change grow out of liberal "do-gooding", but rather out of the material interests of its members, combined with an understanding of our interdependence.

Meeting once a week for a few hours for CR is very useful but also

very limited. Forming larger groups that can actively struggle, politically, is crucial. But is it enough? My personal experience suggests that it is not. Refusing to depend upon women to "get my rocks off" seems more and more to look like a necessity for me. Does this mean that I should therefore become exclusively gay, at least for the next while? Or would that just be transferring this same pattern, which I am beginning to understand as destructive, onto my behaviour with men? Do I have the strength and commitment to actually follow through? Is it an appropriate response? If it is appropriate for me now, and I don't see myself as fundamentally different from most men, does that imply that other men will have to make the same decision?

I can't answer any of these questions yet; but these are the crucial questions for me, at this point, as a man.



Historically, the greater social power of men sprang from the division of labour between the sexes. Today, this is institutionalized in our power to command women's work because of their wageless state. The balance of power has shifted between us over time depending upon the level of technology and the relative productivity of different types of labour. Women were biologically given the function of childbearing and men socially that of defense. Early society was relatively egalitarian ("matriarchal"), however the Agricultural Revolution produced the surplus wealth which made possible the emergence of social stratification and private property. "With the rise of the state, because of their monopoly over weapons, and because freedom from childcare allows them to enter specialized economic and political roles, some men--especially ruling class men--acquire power over other men and over women....A distinct change occurred with the growth of individual and family property in herds, and in stable, irrigated farm-sites or other forms of inheritable wealth. This crystallized in the rise of the state, about 4,000 B.C. With the growth of class society and of male dominance in the ruling class of the state, women's subordination increased, and eventually reached its depths in the patriarchal families of the great

agrarian states." (Kathleen Gough in *The Origin Of The Family*)

Imperialism then is only one form of patriarchal society. It depends on private property, class divisions in the ownership of the means of production and sexual and racial oppression. The working class subsists by selling its labour power to the capitalists; the labour power of men is reproduced in two ways by "their" women through procreation and through domestic labour (feeding, fucking, cleaning up); only productive (i.e. heterosexual) relationships are condoned; and the competition between white men is within the framework of one never falling into the "underclasses" of women and racial minorities (or majorities).

Sexual oppression cannot be eliminated under Capitalism and further, the introduction of Socialism has not led to the immediate freedom from these bonds. It is however a necessary precondition to that end. Engels in the *Origin of the Family* said, "The lower the development of labor, and the more limited the amount of its products, and consequently the more limited the wealth of the society, the more the social order is found to be dominated by kinship groups." (Reich, *Sex-Pol*) Thus, the family should lose importance as an organizing unit as capitalism and technology develop and it will be even less important in socialist societies.

As a man within capitalist society my primary role is that of worker. Some men were born to parents who gave them the privileges and the roles of the bourgeoisie. Politically, they are not my "brothers". Their interests are directly opposed to mine on practically every issue. (Warren Farrell, popular author and speaker on men's liberation, is a very clear example of a man who has accepted bourgeois ideology but wants to reform part of it to stop certain "minor" inequities. A full analysis of this tendency within the movement is, I believe, a priority for the movement and cannot be dealt with here.)

The imperatives of work, under capitalism, heavily influence the male role. As a man, I am also a sexual being. A primary source of my energy comes from my sexuality (libido). Working under capitalism distorts this to keep me productive. Like a carrot on a stick, advertizing stimulates us as consumers: if we buy such-and-such a product we will be fulfilled; so we go out and work hard to make the money to purchase the product, the consumption of which only makes us hungry for more. At work however, in the office we are pushed to be manipulators of words, in the factory we are manipulators of objects, both devoid of sexual and emotional content (which of course is impossible). Even for sexual workers (housewives, prostitutes, actors, etc.) labour is alienated. When we are not at "work" male sexuality becomes a means of releasing tension and the sole means of expressing emotion. Women have shown us that this too

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margaret randall brings cuba to canada

by pat leslie

Margaret Randall, author of *Cuban Women Now*, was invited by CUSO (Canadian University Students Overseas) to do a speaking engagement in November. The groups in Toronto who were most interested in the progress of both Cuba and Cuban women were excited at the prospect of coming together to promote a cross-country speaking tour for her. The women in these groups felt this to be a valuable starting point for an exchange of ideas towards a more cohesive women's strategy. The ad hoc committee formed specifically for this occasion originally consisted of Canadian Women's Educational Press, the Latin American Working Group, World University Student, Student Christian Movement, Miles for Millions, the Cross Cultural Learner's Centre and individuals. It later grew to include the Development Education Centre, Ox-fam-Ontario, Toronto Committee for the Liberation of Southern Africa and the Toronto Women's Bookstore. This organizing committee was responsible for not only the Toronto engagement but for the coordination of the whole Canadian tour with the local committees set up in each city. After months of work, it was only three weeks before the event that the committee learned of the Cuban Government's indecision over the visit. Panic reactions were called off when she finally sent word of her arrival.

Margaret Randall (mother of 4 children) lived in the U.S. for 20 years, spent 8 years in Mexico editing a literary periodical until political repression closed it in 1969. From there, she went to Cuba where she has been living for the last 6 years and working with the Cuban Book Institute. Last year, at the invitation of the Vietnamese Women's Union, she travelled to both North and South Vietnam and this year participated in an international women's conference in Venezuela.

friday, nov. 14

"Buenos Dias, Companeras": Women In Cuba is a film made by Canadian women about Cuban women in January 1975 and has only recently been available. It looks at the lives of 4 women in entirely different circumstances. The film, in colour, was technically superb and easily transmitted not only the revolutionary enthusiasm of Cuban women but the progress of women's liberation under socialism. The committee raised a lot of money that night, as they had underestimated their publicity and were just amazed at the fantastic turnout for the film.

After Randall's short speech, questions put to her centred round the status of women in Cuba, although Randall was more than competent to answer anything to do with Cuban society in general. It should be noted that the first question on the floor dealt with the Cuban official attitude toward homosexuality. It was high time that it was brought out in the open as a "social pathology". Several important questions were dismissed in



A The award given to this woman in her union meeting reads, "XII Anniversary of the Revolution: 120 days of punctual attendance."

an off-hand manner; neither was there any room for constructive criticism. Margaret Randall was on the defensive. Actually, she was in a difficult position of not being used to a North American audience as well as having to answer to the Cuban Government on her return. Unfortunately, it was impossible to have any kind of dialogue after the film between Margaret Randall and 600 other people.

saturday, nov. 15

Saturday at the International Student Centre was another success for the organizers. First, there was a panel discussion followed by workshops on "Working Women: Socio-Economic Realities", "Racism and Immigration", "Women: Social Values and Class Identities" and "Women In Canada and The Third World: Common Interests? Differences? Links?"

The panel included Margaret Randall, Kathryn Peterson (organizing women) and Ana Alberro (immigrant women) with Louise Casselman from the Latin American Working Group as moderator. The focus of the second day was "a dynamic look at Cuba and Canada". Therefore, the panel members and participants were primarily concerned with the state of the women's movement in Canada. Kathryn Peterson, who had been part of the Toronto socialist women's movement, spoke of her efforts at day care and union organizing and of how the movement today has become middle-class. The single issues such as abortion and daycare affect working women much differently than the middle-class woman at which all the propaganda of going back to the work force is aimed. Working-class women never left the work force. She pointed out that University of Toronto has 5 day care centres while the Latin American immigrant group could not organize one centre be-

cause of the bureaucratic roadblocks that people from another class background cannot fight. Ana Alberro, who had emigrated from Spain, does not believe in the concept of sisterhood nor the concept of man as enemy. Alberro came across as very much against feminism because the brand of feminism given so much publicity by the press does not relate to the lives of her working-class sisters. Generally, participants felt that the women's movement needed more of a direction and a strategy.

Under Castro's Government (which is now in the process of becoming a democratically elected body), the participants felt that there was a direction for women to understand and analyse. Not only have women in Cuba been retrained from their former roles as prostitutes and domestic maids to take their proper place within the work force but their position within the family has been legally changed through the enactment of the Family Code. The machismo of the Cuban male is being attacked by public policy so that it no longer becomes a woman's individual problem.

It was not very surprising to discover no one at the conference questioning the entry of women into the work force because, as the theory goes, there is no revolutionary potential in women who remain at home. Very few people in socialist circles challenge the whole concept of the 'work ethic', i.e., women who are most revolutionary are those who cut the most sugar cane during harvest time at great sacrifice to their families. Also, no one questions the fact that, while this work may be necessary, women may enjoy the freedom of working with other women away from home.

...Compañeras



Youngest member of the Rosa La Bayamesa Brigade

A bit of irony from the Liberal Party Convention on November 7th. An embarrassed hotel official did not approve of a huge liberal poster of Trudeau proclaiming "The Canada That I Want To Build" being in such close proximity to photographs of Fidel Castro. Castro was immediately replaced with something 'more appropriate'--a photograph of Brigitte Bardot.

WOMEN IN PORTUGAL: STRUGGLE

WOMEN RISE UP

On January 13th this year the MLM held a demonstration. Their leaflets said:

"Women's situation, exploited and oppressed in every country in the world, gives us little to celebrate. But in spite of the discriminatory attitude implicit in International Women's Year, we are going to take advantage of it to denounce publicly the different ways women are oppressed in Portugal.

'And we're starting with a bonfire. We're going to burn objects which symbolize our oppression.'

After newspapers had heralded the demonstration as a 'striptease', thousands of men turned up to observe, mock, and physically attack it. Women were beaten, stripped, insulted; the children they had with them were attacked.

As the MLM pointed out in a letter to the government: 'Until yesterday, every demonstration has been peaceful, orderly and respected. We had no warning that all this would be changed by the simple fact that the demonstrators happened to be twenty women.' (Our emphasis)



BEFORE 25 APRIL

'I've worked at "Coats and Clarks" for 19 years. All this time, I've suffered and seen a lot of my companions suffer. Some of them couldn't take any more, they left. Others had to put up with everything because they had a lot of difficulties at home and unsympathetic husbands. All us who've worked here for some time know which are the rotten ones in the factory. But everyone keeps quiet. Unfortunately, it's always been the same. And I know why: it's because they're afraid. They're afraid of being attacked; they're afraid of the men. And then there are the others, who cover up because they're in with the bosses, which means higher rates of pay. The ones who earn more keep quiet too. And it's a shame, because it should be all for one, and one for all!

'I've got 3 kids and plenty of problems--otherwise I would have left long ago. This is what I'm suggesting: let's form a women's group which will stick together and defend each other, and if necessary give a good lesson to those pigs, because that's what they need.'

This letter to a left-wing paper from a woman worker in the North of Portugal brings up a whole range of the problems confronting women in Portugal: oppression at work and at home, fear of husbands and of bosses, the burdens of childcare; barriers to getting together to fight. The fight that is beginning is on every front: against material exploitation in an underdeveloped but rapidly industrialising economy; against legal and political repression in a country only recently freed from fifty years of fascism, and against the ideological power of the Catholic and fascist tradition, through which women have been seen as submissive to God, man and family.

LEGAL OPPRESSION

A woman from the Women's Liberation Movement (MLM) pointed out how the fascist conception of the family is built into Portuguese law: 'The family group, according to the

law, is a fascist cell: with a boss, the man, who has the right to make all the decisions. The woman is left with the sphere of childcare; just about the right to bring them into the world and bring them up.' In law, a man has the right to repudiate his wife's employment contract. Some women never get as far as a work contract. I met one who did two mornings a week sewing for an architect's family because her husband wouldn't let her work in a factory.

A journalist, Maria Antonia Palla, tells a story which illustrates the different treatment of men and women in the law: 'A little while ago, I went to a poor area: a woman of thirty had been arrested. She had tried to poison her husband. She has two children. I talked to her neighbours and relatives. This woman was married very young, her parents made her because they thought she'd slept with her future husband. I saw her mother, who told me very calmly: "We thought it was with him, but in fact she'd slept with her husband's brother." After the wedding, the young woman moved into a tenement with the whole family: her mother, her father, her husband, his brother and wife. The husband was jealous, because he found out, obviously, that he wasn't the first. In the tenement, she couldn't stand her husband any longer. She tried to divide the flat in two, but the family wouldn't let her, and told her she ought to obey her husband in everything, including making love even if she didn't want to. So she went off into Lisbon and wandered around all day; sometimes she begged. Her husband was furious and ordered her to stay in the house to look after the kids. A house with no water and no electricity. She tried to kill him.

'The Court decided she was a little feeble mentally, but quite responsible for her actions. She got a 13 year sentence. The husband's doing fine. They talk about it in their street: some people say the husband was a good father, because he used to bring fruit for the kids as well as his wages. Others argue that a woman's not an animal, that she had the right to refuse to sleep with him, and anyway, her husband beat her. In Portugal, a man is untouchable. He has the right to kill his wife if he finds her "in adultery", or his daughter, if he finds her sleeping with someone. If he is sometimes brought to court it's for a minor offence, like using an unregistered weapon! Six months!'

WOMEN AT WORK - AGRICULTURE

This legal oppression, as always, is built on a system of severe exploitation of women in their working lives, in their work as rural labourers, factory workers and housewives. In the South of Portugal a few powerful landlords own large estates which are worked by landless labourers. The majority of these are women since many of the men are immigrant workers in France, Germany and Britain. Women's wages average fifty escudos a day (less than \$2), and are fifty per cent lower than men's. Employment is seasonal, mainly during the harvest. The older women are taken daily in lorries from their villages to the fields, while the young girls live in primitive dormitories attached to the landowners' haciendas. All rural workers are employed on a day to day basis, with no pensions, disability or unemployment benefits, and no help with medical expenses. Earlier this year the agricultural workers' union in the Alentejo district issued an appeal for help for the women of Mertola, a small village where they were dying of hunger. Out of 10,000 unemployed in Alentejo, 8,000 are women. The women of the Alentejo have a long tradition of struggle against these conditions--strikes, arrest, imprisonment. The symbol of their fight is Catarina Enfemia, assassinated by the National Guard during a strike for a 8-hour day.

WOMEN AT WORK - INDUSTRY

Over the last ten years large numbers of women have been drawn into the industrial workforce. They have replaced the men away fighting the colonial wars or working as immigrants abroad, and they have done so as cheap labour. In 1972 the average daily pay of women ranged from 1/2 to 2/3 of that of men. Now, they are supposed to get equal pay, but this will not be easy in a situation of the return of the colonial army, unemployment, economic instability--and male attitudes to working women. A leaflet put out by the MLM highlights these problems:

from the
pedestal

ABORTION CAVALCADE



How many of us remember May 9th, 1970 as an historic moment in our lives and in the emerging women's movement in Canada? To gain some understanding of our origins in an historical context (to which the present is ever linked), we should remember our victories (and learn from our defeats). May 9th was one of our victories. It was the culmination of our first nationally coordinated action. On April 28th a car caravan left Vancouver scheduled to arrive in Ottawa on Mother's Day, where they protested Trudeau's 1969 so-called "liberal" abortion law. Meetings were held in all of the major cities by local women's groups as the caravan passed through. This not only gave support to the abortion caravan but provided the impetus for women's liberation to make itself more widely known through the method of educationals. The Caravan grew larger and larger on its way to Ottawa from Calgary, Edmonton, Saskatoon, Regina, Winnipeg, Lakehead, Sault Ste. Marie and two days in Toronto. For the first time, women's liberation made the national newspapers due to its militancy and guerilla theatre tactics. Angry at being denied an audience at Parliament Hill, they went over to 12 Sussex carrying their black coffin and wearing their black clothes to demand a meeting with Trudeau. They were met by police and a wall of silence.

The west coast, just before the Caravan, had actions and demonstrations in support of Dr. Robert Makaroff who was arrested for "conspiring to procure an abortion", plus two further charges. Oddly enough, this case received very little notice in the press (outside of an article in the Canadian Weekly supplement magazine) as compared to the Morgentaler case in Montreal which surfaced 3 years later.

ARCAL (Association for the Repeal of the Canadian Abortion Law) was established in Ottawa in 1969 after

abortion was liberalized for counselling and referral work and, in 1970, changed its name to CARAL. From 1969 onward, abortion referral and counselling clinics and phone lines were set up in almost every major city by either feminists or concerned women. There were the more politically-oriented groups who, after the Caravan, continued to pressure the provincial and federal governments. Most of these demonstrations were small and low-key affairs. Don't forget that 1970 was also the year of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women which diverted a lot of energy into briefs and presentations.

The original participants in the Caravan were realizing a mistake. Abortion, only one of the many central issues of the women's liberation movement in North America, was fast becoming a single issue demand. This meant that the entire focus of everyone's energy went into either law repeal or providing a service which should have been a function of the State. Very little time was left for women to analyse their actions. Further strategy was needed to link up with the original socialist theoretical structure of many of the cross-country women's groups.

The movement failed to connect the first slogan coming from the Caravan --Free Abortion On Demand--to the general struggle for liberation. Energy was dissipated and women turned to day care and union organizing, leaving the abortion movement to liberals and trotskyists.

It was in the summer of 1971 that the slogan "Free Abortion On Demand" was entirely dropped from all further mention to be replaced by "Repeal The Abortion Law--Freedom To Choose". Unfortunately, this involvement of women was on the lowest level possible since this strategy provided no integration with other liberation movements. This was a defeat. The movement to repeal the abortion law finally became respectable enough--meaning bourgeois--for even the renowned Pierre Berton to attach his name to it. The original intent of the abortion movement had been perverted from the idea of feminists working within a socialist definition of the repressive nature of population control on a world scale to the "freedom to choose". For the great majority of women in Canada today, there is no freedom and there are no choices. We demand not only control of our bodies but control of the whole State structure which, under capital, works against our own self-interest as women.

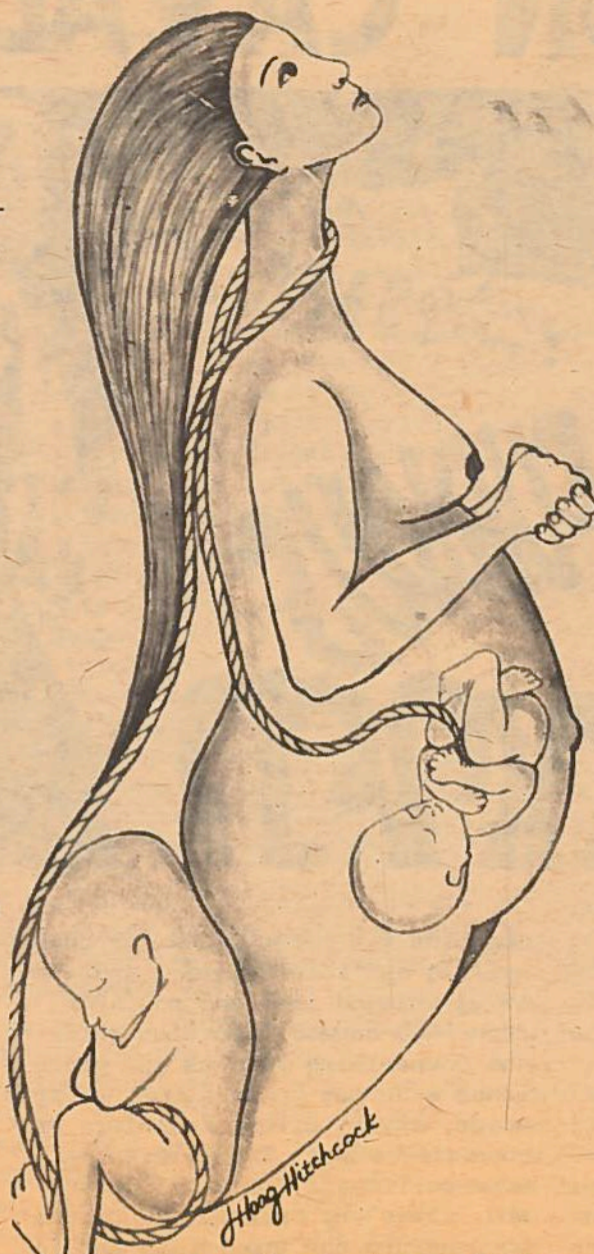


HISTORY OF BIRTH CONTROL

Until about 50 years ago, methods of fertility regulation throughout the world were more often a matter of folklore and tradition than of medicine and science. Information was passed from mother to daughter and from father to son while local granny midwives, herbalists and apothecaries provided various potions to the community. Medical practitioners were involved primarily in performing abortions, which, although usually illegal, were demographically effective, and in dealing with complicated deliveries.

Commercial distribution of various contraceptive products flourished in the late 19th and in the 20th centuries as people moved to the cities and began to feel the pressures of urban crowding. Local inventors and entrepreneurs, aware of community needs and sales to be made, often both developed and distributed their own products. At least one of these, Rendell's spermicide suppositories, invented by a London chemist in 1885, is still, with modifications, on sale today. Peel's study of the British retail trade in contraceptives found that many "rubber" or "surgical" shops around the turn of the century vigorously promoted and sold condoms, spermicides, and sponges and other vaginal occlusive devices. In 1912 a report from the north of England indicated that contraceptives were on display "in the most bold-faced manner on the counters of local chemists' shops so that no one can miss seeing them." It has said that in one city "on the announcement of a birth in the newspapers, the parents received by post circulars giving very free and unveiled advice and suggestions about the limitation of the family with full particulars of a long series of remedies."

With similar ingenuity and entrepreneurship, in contemporary developing countries folk methods and abortifacients have been devised from locally available materials. Also, mass-produced Western contraceptive



products have become increasingly available commercially, although they have not totally displaced folk methods. In 1968 Sollins and Belsky estimated that 40% of the modern contraceptive supplies used in developing countries--mainly condoms, spermicides and oral contraceptives--were distributed by over-the-counter sales. Since then, government funded, clinic based programs have been greatly expanded, but the local to-

baconist, pharmacist, bazaar or street vendor remains a convenient source of contraceptive supply and advice in most developing countries. The price of the supplies, however--pills are usually \$1.50 (US) or more per cycle--puts them out of reach of many women.

The first family planning clinic was opened by Dr. Aletta Jacobs in Holland in 1882 to provide some privacy and a place where a trained person could fit a woman with the proper size cervical cap or diaphragm. Dr. Jacobs' clinic served as a model for Margaret Sanger's clinic in the USA and Marie Stopes' in the UK, and established a pattern associating clinical examination and care with the use of the diaphragm.

The shift from over-the-counter sales to clinics and greater medical involvement in the distribution of contraceptives came about not only in response to new methods like the diaphragm and cap, but also as a reaction against the public commercial promotion of ineffective or even dangerous products and because of religious censure of family planning. To insure acceptance of the concept of family planning, birth control services came to be provided by physicians in clinical facilities--usually private offices or maternal and child health centres--where they were associated with routine medical care.

Medical supervision was also considered appropriate and necessary for the care of the IUD user. Early suspicions that IUDs carried a great risk of introducing bacteria into the uterus were difficult to overcome. Even those who favoured IUDs felt it necessary at first to have the devices inserted only by physicians and only in clinical settings.

When oral contraceptives were first introduced, beginning around 1960, the formulations were relatively strong and the likelihood of turn over

My Horror Story

Most articles you read about birth control are full of statistics: the Pill is 99% effective, 15% of women got infections from Dalkan Shields, 4% of women have side effects from the Pill, etc. But these statistics don't mean too much to me, because every woman I've ever talked to who's used birth control has some sort of horror story to tell. Here's mine.

I guess it all started when I was 16. I wanted to fuck men, but I didn't want to get pregnant. So I got myself down to my local clinic, lied about my age, sat for 3 hours in a filthy waiting room. After a cursory examination (no medical history taken) and a moral lecture on the evils of premarital sex, I was issued a three month's supply of pills. Because I experienced some spotting, when I returned to the clinic I was given another, stronger kind of pill--this time two year's worth.

By the time my supply ran out, I was living in another city. I went to another equally filthy clinic, where I was told that the pills I had been taking had been removed

from the market because they were too dangerous. No one had the time to answer my questions as to why they were too dangerous, I was just handed another two-year supply of another brand of pill and sent on my merry way.

Several months later, I missed a pill one night and, as I was accustomed to doing, simply took two the next day. About 36 hours later I began to bleed very heavily, although I'd had my period only a week before. I let it go for a couple of days, but I was in so much pain and bleeding so much that I began to worry. (I was going through a large box of Tampax and one of kotex daily, running to change every hour or more often.) So I went to the local emergency, where an intern informed me that my hormone dosage was too low, and I should triple my pill intake until it stopped. This I did, but the bleeding only increased.

A week later, when the bleeding hadn't stopped, I heard that there was a woman doctor at another hospital, so I went to see her. I explained that I felt I had been misdiagnosed. After an angry lecture

about the sanctity of medical profession and my morals, she jammed her cold speculum into me as hard as she could, looked at my cervix, and handed me a package of "sequentials". After telling me to take them only in the morning, and not less than 3 hours before or after eating, she slammed the door in my face. When I opened her door to ask "why", she said, "Because if you don't, you'll get very sick", and pushed me out of her office. I walked away from the hospital crying, and threw the pills away.

I ended up in bed, exhausted and bleeding for a month before I had enough sense to stop taking the pills and not start again until my period finally stopped. I realize now that all those hormones were causing my uterus to work extra hard to build up a lining, while at the same time I was losing it as fast as it grew.

After about 2 1/2 more years of the Pill, I decided perhaps it was time for my body to take a rest. I consulted several (male) doctors, all of whom said, "No, keep taking the pill. Don't want any little ones running around, do you?" But by now,



STERILIZATION

*"In Latin America it is cleaner and more efficient to kill the guerillas in the womb than in the mountains or in the streets."--Eduardo Galeano
Uruguayan socio-
logist.*



In Chile under the junta the womb has indeed become a battleground, the casualties of the war--the future generations of the Chilean working class.

Since the murder of Allende the military junta has launched a massive campaign of birth control through sterilization, contraceptives and legal abortion. The targets of the campaign are the poor and working class women of Chile.

"We are preparing a new four-year family planning programme, concentrating on targets selected on the basis of high rates of maternal and infant illness and death, low income, lack of family planning services, and high birth rates," explains Enrique Onetto Bachler, Chile's Deputy Chief of Maternal Programs and a Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology at the University of Chile.

The importance placed on birth control by the junta is reflected in the budget of the Ministry of Health, where a full 40% of available funds are spent on family planning programmes.

The junta has also retained the services of high-powered international experts on birth control, notably Dr. Hugh Davis of Johns Hopkins University. A co-inventor of the Dalkon shield IUD (now removed from the U.S. market but still in use in Chile), Dr. Davis has taught special courses on sterilization to Chilean doctors.

Upon his return to the States, Dr. Davis was tight-lipped about the purpose of his courses. "The (Chilean) Health Ministry requested that I do not give any information on my project in Chile because it would be taken politically."

Sterilization appears to be the most intensive in one of the poorest and most desolate areas of Chile, the northern nitrate region of Antofagasta. There sterilization is a daily routine, carried out on mothers with large families.

Dr. Onetto insists that the sterilization policy is not coercive, despite the fact that Chilean women must accept the government's planning measure to receive even minimal maternal-child health care.

When the shortage of jobs, soaring inflation, and lack of health care are considered as well, it becomes evident that family planning programmes are far from voluntary.

When combined with a reactionary educational system that promotes the belief that poverty and underdevelopment are caused by overpopulation, Chile's new birth control programme can be seen as an important part of the junta's fascist ideology.

That same ideology can be expected to become an integral part in the education of every Chilean under the junta, from the cradle to the grave. For every Chilean, that is, who is fortunate enough to make it to the cradle in the first place.

(OOB)--San Juan, Puerto Rico: Puerto Rico has been subjected to the most intensive sterilization campaign in the world. It has the world's high-

est incidence of sterilization, with 35% of Puerto Rican women of child-bearing age sterilized. Sterilization is free in Puerto Rico, with the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare (HEW) paying the majority of the costs.

The capacity of the 18 sterilization centres now operating in Puerto Rico has increased to 150 sterilizations per month, according to Antonio Silva, assistant secretary for family planning of the Department of Health in Puerto Rico.

In an interview with Claridad, Silva reported that 5,000 women were sterilized on the island in 1974. With the increased capacity of the sterilization centre, 6,800 women could be sterilized during the coming fiscal year.

Silva said that the sterilizations have not only reduced the birth rate in Puerto Rico, but also the reproductive potential of the Puerto Rican people. As for zero population growth, Silva believes that it can be reached in 75 years, a little more than two generations.

According to Maritza Arrastia, coordinator of the Committee to End Sterilization Abuse (CESA), hysterectomy, the most dangerous form of sterilization operation, is offered to Puerto Rican women by the family planning department as a method of birth control..."something like offering to cut off your head to cure a headache".

Arrastia recently returned from Puerto Rico where she was informed that one of the clinics there was being used to train personnel to do laproscopic sterilizations. This procedure is commonly known as the "band-aid operation" and was developed as a faster, more efficient method of sterilization where hospitalization is not necessary.

(NWL)--Bolivia: Food provided by the U.S. for school breakfast and lunch programmes contains oral contraceptives and sterilizing agents. The Bishop of Oruro confirmed reports that such agents are in the food, especially in supplies of powdered milk. When questioned, Bolivian government officials refused to comment.

(NWL)--Guatemala: Experiments in sterilization techniques are being conducted on indigent women who are encouraged to participate by payments for transportation (the women are not hospitalized). Part I, which has been completed, according to reports from Hospital General San Juan de Dios, consisted of injected paraformaldehyde into each cornual (tube) area of the uterus. Parts II and III will consist of injections at various time intervals before hysterectomies. Women's groups are protesting the exploitation of poor, illiterate women by those who want to control their fertility.

real herstory cont'd.

Control can be turned on for conception and off for contraception by a simple surgical procedure performed in a doctor's office.

A revolutionary method of birth control is the 'period extraction'. Not only would it do away with the nuisance of having a period, but also make all forms of birth control, including abortion, unnecessary. The device includes "a small collection bottle to which two tubes are attached. At the end of one tube is a plastic syringe about 6 inches long; at the end of the other tube is the Karman cannula, whose 4-mm diameter makes it narrow enough to be inserted into an undilated uterus. Pumping the syringe creates suction sufficient to draw material out of the uterus." I don't recommend that you run out and try to get this device thoroughly convinced I've solved all your problems of birth control. I haven't.

The period extraction device has not been tested thoroughly. There is no way of knowing the effect of tampering with your uterus every month.

Two controversial methods of birth control are abortion and sterilization. To obtain an abortion you must prove the pregnancy would damage your health; both mentally and physically. To obtain a sterilization the woman often has to prove she has earned her right not to have children by first producing some. Many doctors go by the formula of multiplying a woman's age by the number of children she has and if the sum is at least 120 she is eligible; ex. (30) x 4 children = 120.

For men, the only requirement for sterilization is that he must be 21 years old.

Sorry to say but there is no perfect method of birth control unless you consider abstinence or lesbianism.

history cont'd.

severe side effects was unknown. All women using them were therefore advised to remain under close medical supervision. Now time has passed, the hormonal content of the pill has been decreased, and the relative safety of these preparations has been widely studied and measured.

Excerpt from Population Reports, Series J, Number 5, July 1975, Washington, D.C.

THE REAL HERSTORY

by grace scott

The report from Family Planning Programs brings up several points which are inaccurate. Not only are they inaccurate but they further emphasize how women are being exploited by the medical profession.

The article tries to make us believe that birth control has somehow become magically safe and effective totally. It also puts doctors in the realm of Marcus Welby, always there, understanding and taking care of all our health needs.

The report states: "Early suspicions that IUDs carried a great risk of introducing bacteria into the uterus were difficult to overcome." Put this way, it leads us to believe there is no longer this risk. This is completely untrue!

The vagina contains bacteria, the uterus on the other hand contains none and is maintained by the body in an almost perfect sterile condition. When the IUD is inserted it may carry bacteria into the uterus. This is not a result of improper sterilization of the IUD but by the simple transference of bacteria as the inserter passes through the vagina. Sometimes the bacteria will spread to the fallopian tubes and ovaries and cause infection. It results in inflammation and is called Pelvic Inflammatory Disease or PID. PID aggravates the other IUD side effects of cramps, back ache and abdominal pain and can become extreme resulting in nausea and vomiting.

To say that "now time has passed, the hormonal content of the pill has been decreased, and the relative safety of these preparations has been widely studied and measured" is a vast understatement.

Again the report glosses over the true situation. The pill is far away from being the safe and effective method of birth control that the medical profession would like us to believe.

One pamphlet I came across (current methods of contraception by Edward and Johnston, M.D.) listed



24 side effects of the pill. These included: nausea and vomiting, breakthrough bleeding, menstrual changes, weight gain, severe weight loss, breast changes, tiredness, depression and irritability, chloasma, cervical erosion, non-specific vaginal discharge, acute vaginal infections, migraine headaches, non-specific headaches, effect on diabetes mellitus, hypertension, thromboembolism, jaundice, loss of scalp hair, hirsutism, amenorrhoea after pill is discontinued, anovulation again after pill is discontinued and relationship to cancer.

All the facts are not yet in either. The pill is a relatively new method and its future effects on offspring has not been discovered.

As for its effectiveness it has been found to have a 5% pregnancy rate, or one in 200. Which isn't terribly comforting considering should it happen to you; you're 100% pregnant.

Another point the report fails to mention is the "slam-bam, thank you ma'am" attitudes of doctors.

There is a certain mystique that surrounds the medical profession

which is very hard to combat. It is hard to question someone's methods when they are dealing with your body and your health. But the fact remains women are badly exploited when it comes to looking after their own bodies. A striking example of this is the sale of vaginal sprays. Ellen Frankfort in Vaginal Politics says it perfectly: "How many men, do you suppose, would douche their genitals with benzethonium chloride even if advertisers had them convinced they were smelly and called the coverup Cupid's Quiver, which according to the dainty accompanying brochure, is a uniquely personal expression of you..." Separated from the promotional part of the brochure and written in small print is the line, "Keep this out of the reach of children."

Doctors have two favourite methods to deal with women's complaints. They either prescribe tranquilizers or tell you you're hysterical or both.

Male contraception seems to be a practical solution to the problem of safe and effective birth control. A pill for males would be simpler to invent because there are no menstrual cycles or menopause to contend with.

The problem is the attitude of many men. It is a huge responsibility to remember to take a pill, when you should. Women put up with this because the result is an unwanted pregnancy. But for men; they do not suffer the consequences of their forgetfulness.

A new device which is still in the experimentation stage is the Bionx Control. It is the first totally reversible contraceptive device to be inserted in men. The Bionx Control is less than an 1/8 of an inch long; made of gold and stainless steel and looks like a miniature clasp in the shape of a "T". It works like a faucet that turns the sperm on and off. Although more complicated than this, the Bionx

turn over

by ruth dworin

my trust in the medical profession had diminished considerably and I decided to stop taking birth control pills for two months anyhow. I was living communally at the time, and after the first month, my housemates started saying to me. "Gee Ruth, you've been so much easier to live with lately. What's happened?" With some shock, I realized that when I stopped the pill, a 5 year long depression had lifted, and I was much less insecure and much less tense. I had grown up assuming that that was what my personality was like, that I was a really fucked-up person. But it was mostly chemical.

I spent the next few months alternating between feeling rotten on the pill, and being terrified of getting pregnant off the pill. So I decided it was time for an I.U.D.

At the time, the Copper-7 had just come on the market and was touted as the greatest thing since abstinence: 99% effective, no adjustment period, no risk of infection. Well, now we know better, but at the time...

Anyhow, I had one inserted, most painfully. About 2 weeks after the

insertion, the pain had not subsided, but was in fact getting more intense, and I was running a low fever. I called the doctor who had done the insertion, but she was on holiday, so one of her associates saw me. He put me up on his table, felt around for a minute or two, and said, "I think it's all in your head. Take these." and handed me a prescription for Darvon. Luckily, my regular doctor returned the next week. She listened to my story and got me an appointment that afternoon with a gynecologist. By this time, my ovary was so badly infected that it was 4 times its normal size, and I was put to bed for 3 months and on antibiotics for four.

A month after I got off the medication and returned to work, a routine examination indicated that my infection had returned, along with a mysterious lump in my breast. I went to a surgeon for a breast examination. She informed me that I had not one lump, but 40 or 50 small ones. My condition is called fibrous cystic disease, and, she informed me, it's a very common side effect of the birth control pill. "They

don't tell you about that when they prescribe the pill, do they?" I asked. "No." "They don't tell you about the depressions, either?" I again asked. She answered, "No, when I took the pill, I got so depressed I had to stop after 3 months."

I wish this story had a happy ending, but it doesn't. My pelvic infection returns whenever I dance, ski, go for a long bicycle ride, or sleep less than 8 hours a night. At this point, I'd like to have a baby, I've even found a doctor who could get me artificial insemination. But, apparently, I'm sterile. One fallopian tube was blocked a year ago, the other one probably is by now. The infection is chronic and incurable.

One good thing's come out of it all though. Through trial and error, I've found an excellent doctor. She listens to what I have to say, takes me seriously, and is completely competent in her diagnoses and referrals. If any woman who reads this needs a good doctor, write to me care of The Other Woman and I'll give you her name.

GLING AGAINST OPPRESSION

"Working women, watch out!

"equal pay for equal work..."

That's what the law says, but it doesn't always happen in practice. We women must demand the enforcement of this law, and fight the mentality which considers our work inferior to men's (and which unfortunately many of us share).

'Take the examples of the Via Longa Brewery and the Pao sugar factory: In the brewery, once they'd won the minimum rate (the same for women and men), the male workers felt insulted. They immediately demanded an increase to maintain their differential from the women. When it's not the bosses who are exploiting us, it's our own "comrades" who are demanding this exploitation. The same in the sugar factory, where the workers refused equal pay. The MLM calls on all women workers to fight this sexist discrimination.'

On the other hand, one of the most important demands of the strike wave after 25 April was for equal pay: something which reflected the large proportion of women workers especially in the multinational companies. The strike at Timex, a light engineering factory near Lisbon, is a case in point. There, one of the first moves was to set up a workers' strike committee, with a majority of women. The women pushed for equal pay as one of the main demands and received the backing of the men.

WOMEN AT WORK - IN THE HOME

Housing conditions in Portugal are as bad as any in Europe. Only 20% of dwellings have a kitchen, lavatory and bathroom. A further 20% are 'deficient' and 60% 'hopeless'. Only 40% of houses have running water; a further 27% have access to pumps nearby, and 33% have none at all. All over Portugal you see women carrying cans of water on their heads, up steps and hills, or doing their washing in streams. 82.7% of dwellings have no sewers and 61% have no refuse collection service. In these primitive conditions, coupled with the almost complete absence of nurseries, it is women who suffer most.

Women in the MLM are trying to reach women working in the home:

'Last year we had a meeting for "housewives". More than 400 women from all backgrounds came. They all complained of their lack of education--some couldn't read and write (58% of Portuguese women are illiterate), many never got beyond primary school. It was the first time that they could talk about themselves.'

A 'housewives' group now meets every Monday at the MLM women's centre (a house they have occupied in Lisbon). But often it's difficult for women to get out. They're kept in the house, their husbands stop them coming to evening meetings, in the afternoon they're busy with the kids and in the morning they have to do the housework and cook lunch.'

In the women's centre, to raise funds, they sell aprons embroidered with 'Que se Lixe a Lida da Casa'--Fuck Housework.

BIRTH - AND DEATH

The French journalist Blandine Jeanson describes the situation created by poverty and lack of maternity and medical services:

'In Villa-Franca de Xira, on the edge of the river Tagus not far from Lisbon, the fishermen often have nothing but their boat; they live in the boat. Lots of women work there as well, going out to fish in all kinds of weather to provide for themselves and their children. One of them has already lost five children. They died of cold, damp, hunger. Their mother had neither the time nor the means to take them to the "Casa de Povo" which provides a meagre medical service. Her son of fifteen is always ill and very behind at school; she doesn't have time to take him to school. While she is fishing, they stay behind in a shack, left to themselves. Twice she has given birth in her boat.'

Portugal has the highest infant mortality rate in Europe: 58 children in a 1,000 die at birth. 13% of babies are born with some sort of handicap. 'There are no maternity hospitals in Portugal', said a woman from the MDM. 'The

four private maternity homes in Lisbon are obviously reserved for the rich. You pay 11,000 escudos (\$440) for a confinement. My mother paid 20 escudos for my birth, in a communal ward. That's how working class women have their kids.' As many as 58% of births have no medical assistance at all.

NURSERY CAMPAIGNS

This appalling lack of provision carries through into pre-school services. In 1910 the Republic instituted official pre-school education, but this was removed under Salazar. In 1973 there was a total of a 165 nurseries in Portugal, of which only 16 were state-run. The others were private, and too expensive for working class women. The MDM is organizing a nursery campaign. Working with local councils and community groups, they find empty houses, train childminders, and set up creches. 'We don't squat, we get the approval of the council', a woman from the MDM told me. 'We think you should take the legal way. Eventually we want to see national system of creches linked to the national health service. But we can't ask too much from the government at present, because of the country's economic problems.' Other groups of women are taking direct unofficial action. A newspaper article describes how a group of 'working mothers' from a government department have occupied an old tobacco factory and intend to set up a nursery.

CONTRACEPTION AND ABORTION - A 'PRIVATE' PROBLEM

Writing in the newspaper *Liberdade*, a woman from the MLM said: 'Countrywomen, working women, lower middle-class women--most of them have been to hospital in a critical state at least once. Most abort themselves, with a knitting needle, duck feathers, pointed sticks. A woman of 44 told us: "I work in the fields. I've done 30 abortions all alone." A midwife said to us: "Sometimes I do as many as ten, thirteen abortions a day". She was speechless when we worked out that made an average of 200 abortions a month. The Portuguese population doesn't know, or pretends not to know, about these things. In fact abortion is a huge problem for the less privileged women in our society. But the political parties won't approach the subject directly.'

Most men prevent their wives using contraceptives because, they say, it could make them impotent. Women have to take the pill in secret. We women must have right to decide what we do with our own bodies.'



There are now about 40 family planning clinics in Portugal, financed by the IPPF. And some of the political parties are beginning to talk of legalising abortion, but on very restricted grounds. The measure of entrenched attitudes against abortion and contraception can be seen from the very guarded attitude of the MDM, a left women's rights organisation. An MDM worker told me, 'We're not in the contraception and abortion movement. We're not against it, but we don't think it's a priority. We have to be careful--after all, Portugal will need more people to industrialise successfully. We feel contraception is a very private affair. It's up to the couple themselves to decide about it.' As long as deaths and illness from illegal abortions, with men physically preventing their wives using contraceptives, are regarded even on the left as a 'private affair', women will face enormous obstacles.

Reprinted from *Portugal--A Blaze of Freedom*

CENTRE DES FEMMES DISSOLVED

(The following is a statement issued by Centre des Femmes this summer, explaining the dissolution of the centre to the leftist and women's groups they worked with.)

In March 1975, Centre des Femmes, formerly at 4319 St.-Denis, ceased to exist, at least in the way it has functioned for the past 3 years. Many things brought us to make this decision--to understand our reasons, you must know a little of the Centre's history. This text has no other purpose than to explain to the groups with whom we were in contact, the political evolution that led to the dissolution of Centre des Femmes.

In the beginning, there was only the will of a few militant women to mobilize around specific women's problems, to analyse the reality of our exploitation and oppression, and to clearly identify the interests they serve. It was a question of organizing the struggle from a feminist perspective and identifying this struggle with the struggle of all workers against the capitalist system. Of course, the project was ambitious, but let us remember that at the time, the militants of Centre des Femmes were not the only ones to dream of the coming revolution, one fine day..... Very quickly, the birth of an autonomous group of women became very important; for the first time in Quebec women themselves were organizing a political group around women's issues, issues that concerned the Quebecois left very little at the time.

ACTIVITIES OF CENTRE DES FEMMES

The 'Clinic'

From the start, circumstances forced the militant women of Centre des Femmes to concern themselves with the crucial importance of the issues of abortion and contraception in the fight for women's liberation. And they were concerned not only with theory--it was mainly to fill the needs of more and more urgent calls from women who wanted to have an abortion at any price that the "clinic" was first formed. We directed our energies towards directly referring these women to Montreal doctors* who were performing clandestine medical abortions at reasonable prices; at the same time we held weekly information meetings ("clinics") in which we discussed abortion and contraception with these women. This service took an enormous amount of work; some weeks, up to 60 women came to the Centre for this service. On the other hand, in meeting thousands of women under these circumstances, most of them working class, we were able to begin to see the political and social significance of the right of all women to control their own bodies. Once we win, by our struggles, the freedom to bring only wanted children into the world, it will still be up to us to fight for the freedom to control our daily lives, to put an end to all the forms of exploitation that have victimized us. In our fight for the right to free abortion on demand, the "clinic" had to become an efficient tool, however, it was hard to get past the "service" stage.

The Newspaper

It was important for the women of the centre to acquaint a greater number of women with the analyses and general theories they were developing. Quebecoises Deboutte was created with the aim of making it a vehicle for publicity and education. Being the only feminist and socialist newspaper in Quebec made it an enormous success in terms of popularity (circulation 2,000). Quebecoises Deboutte published nine editions in a 15-month period. Analyses, in-depth articles, reports, chronicles, accounts of women's personal experiences--we talked about everything.

The reaction to the paper wasn't long in coming. While its reputation grew, the Centre was rapidly becoming overextended. Women from every part of Quebec were urging us to answer questions as much about our theories as about organization of other women's groups.

* When these doctors were arrested for having performed illegal abortions, the service continued to function differently. Women who contacted the Centre were referred to New York.

Although Quebecoises Deboutte promised a lot in this sense, no one at the centre was in a position to answer even a few of these questions and needs. In the beginning, it quickly became obvious that to provide our other services and publish the newspaper was clearly more than we could handle, even in terms of physical capability; the daily tasks of the Centre constantly demanded our attention, and so it was impossible for the newspaper group to stabilize and consolidate Quebecoises Deboutte. But above all, the Centre could not be used as a tool for mobilizing and organizing women in the way that the clinic and the paper could.

Isolated, we did not recognize the reality of our work. Though we could have described certain aspects of the exploitation of women clearly enough, we could not have answered the question, "What can we do about it?" as clearly. Except in the issues of abortion and contraception, the positions that Quebecoises Deboutte defended were supported only by limited experience, and consequently, had few links with the daily realities of women. Little by little, it became evident that Quebecoises Deboutte had to cease publication while these problems were dealt with. Nonetheless, we do not reject the idea of another feminist/socialist newspaper, produced under different circumstances, given the impact of our newspaper as an educational tool.

In addition, other feminist activities developed outside the centre: new core groups of women organized in a few other places, animation and community work became more and more important, other women's centres opened in the area, and a feminist theatre group was born.

The existence and development of these groups brought up many questions and underlined many contradictions for the women of the Centre. To try to resolve them the Centre went into a period of review, a period which brought out even more evidence of divergent ideas and opinions within our group. From September 1973 to August 1974, most of the militant women of the centre left to work on other activities, without having resolved the issue of the orientation and future of Centre des Femmes. In September 1974, a new group of women took up the call, three from the original group, and five new women, who, without ever having taken part, were very close to the Centre for some time.

September 1974 to March 1975

The first task of this new group was to take up the work on the unfinished review, to try to identify the achievements and the errors of the Centre, to draw lessons from them, and to re-orient the work to come. Actually, nothing was very clear to us and though we eventually finished the resume, we were aware that it was not every explicit about our future perspectives.

One thing was certain: in the matter of abortion and contraception the Centre had acquired a tremendous amount of experience which was not being used to advantage, largely because of our isolation. Convinced that we were necessary to the organization of the struggle on a wider basis, we regrouped about 30 women around this question. From this group, the "Comite de Lutte pour l'Avortement et la Contraception Libres et Gratuits" (Committee for the Struggle for Free Abortion and Contraception on Demand). Linked to a large movement, the clinic began to find less obstruction in getting past the 'service' aspect of the clinic, and it could become a real instrument for struggle. (After some months of transition, the Centre des Femmes clinic is now officially the clinic of the Comite de Lutte.) And since Quebecoises Deboutte had ceased publication, a special edition on abortion and contraception was undertaken, representing, in some ways, a review of the clinic's work in the previous 2 years.

Such a publication could also become an efficient instrument of information and education. It was therefore necessary to finish it and distribute it as soon as possible. It was published March 8th under the name of "Dossier Special sur l'Avortement et la Contraception Libres et Gratuits."

While these activities were going on, we still had to return to the question of the political existence of

Centre des Femmes, and with all urgency. In effect, the reputation that Quebecoises Deboutte had acquired became a heavier and heavier burden to carry; we were constantly pursued as the nucleus of the feminist movement in Quebec, although in reality, we were not. Whenever a women's centre was formed somewhere in Quebec, it was identified as a kind of "branch-office" of the "headquarters" in Montreal, even if we had not contact with it. We were continually isolated by women in all parts of Quebec to pass judgement on subjects which, often, we knew nothing about.

The women's groups with whom we were in contact, and who were often identified with Centre des Femmes without wanting to be, were urging us to make our orientation clear, and to clarify our situation to the public. Thus the Centre was left with numerous but fragile contacts, a documentation service that was almost never used, and a group of women whose priorities were not yet well defined. Since it was impossible to answer these questions and clarify these ambiguities, the members of Centre des Femmes decided that it was more positive to abandon the name which no longer corresponded with what we hoped to do.

Among our members, two militants now work full-time at the clinic and the other activities of the Comité de Lutte in order to consolidate it. The others support the work and the ideas of the Comité de Lutte but they wish also to form a feminist group whose first priority is to determine their structure and the kinds of action

the group will be involved in. They are now maintaining the documentation service which must be entirely revised.

The dissolution of this "myth" that was Centre des Femmes became necessary, but we are not denying the need for this type of organization; rather, it was a necessary part of the processes of evolution of feminist groups in Quebec.

Autonomous women's groups have their *raison d'être*: the consciousness-raising and liberation of women has scarcely begun in Quebec, some groups are already working along these lines, and, finally, many groups are forming all over the province which are concerned with the exploitation of women in a capitalist and patriarchal society. It is important to these groups to maintain feelings of solidarity among themselves, to better carry on their struggles and maintain a feminist/socialist movement with a solid base in Quebec.

The "Dossier special sur l'Avortement et la Contraception Libres et Gratuits" mentioned above is available for \$1.00 (postage included) from Quebecoises Deboutte, 4800 Henri-Julien, Montreal, Quebec.

Reprinted from Feminist Communication Collective, Vol.3, No.2, Montreal.

THEATRE DES CUISINES



MANIFESTE DU THEATRE DES CUISINES 1975

Pour présenter la pièce "Nous aurons les enfants que nous voulons", on avait pensé écrire un court texte d'introduction sur le Théâtre des Cuisines. Cette idée nous a amenées à nous définir davantage. Nous avons précisé nos objectifs politiques, notre méthode de travail et nos idées sur le théâtre. Nous espérons que notre manifeste pourra servir aux femmes qui ont envie de monter la pièce et de travailler ensemble.

HISTORIQUE DU GROUPE

A la fin de l'automne 1973, une militante du Centre des Femmes, ayant fait du théâtre professionnel dans le passé, puis du théâtre de combat (pièces créées avec des travailleuses en grève...) contacte plusieurs militantes de différents groupes (en particulier du Centre des Femmes et des A.D.D.S.) et leur demande si elles sont intéressées à créer un groupe de théâtre de femmes. Toutes les militantes contactées sont effectivement très intéressées, bien qu'elles aient déjà beaucoup de travail dans leur groupe respectif. Nos premières réunions ont lieu en décembre '73. Nous sommes alors six femmes sans enfants, travailleuses ou chômeuses, dont quatre qui n'ont jamais fait de théâtre (amateur ou professionnel). Nous discutons brièvement de nos objectifs. En gros, nous voulons faire du théâtre de combat avec des femmes, traitant de l'exploitation spécifique des femmes. Nous nous adressons à différents publics mais nous voulons prioritairement rejoindre les femmes les plus exploitées, les plus isolées aussi. Le théâtre est pour nous un instrument d'information et de combat mais c'est aussi une façon de se détendre, de développer des formes d'expression nouvelle qui nous enrichissent chacune individuellement autant que collectivement. Au début janvier '74, nous ne savons pas exactement comment fonctionner. Nous travaillons par improvisations durant deux ou trois semaines - aurythme d'une fois par semaine-

ce qui a l'avantage de prouver à celles qui n'ont jamais fait de théâtre qu'elles ont quelque chose à dire et qu'elles sont tout à fait capables de le dire. Puis, à la mi-janvier, nous décidons de commencer à préparer un spectacle. C'est un travail concret qui nous permet réellement d'essayer de mettre en pratique nos objectifs. Nous choisissons de faire une première pièce sur le problème de l'avortement.

Pourquoi l'avortement? Pour des raisons bien simples. Quatre des militantes du groupe travaillent de proche ou de loin à la lutte pour l'avortement et la contraception libres et gratuits (que ce soit au Centre des Femmes ou au Comité de Défense de Morgentaler). Depuis plus de deux ans, nous rencontrons quotidiennement (au Centre des Femmes) des femmes aux prises avec ce problème. *Nous connaissons donc très bien le sujet, non seulement théoriquement mais pratiquement.* De plus, la lutte pour la libéralisation de l'avortement est plus que jamais actuelle, après l'acquiescement de Morgentaler en novembre '73. C'est une lutte qui nécessite une propagande très large et nous savons que, par le théâtre, nous sommes capables de toucher des gens qu'aucun discours ni aucune conférence ne sauraient convaincre. Le théâtre nous apparaît un instrument privilégié pour traiter d'un sujet si délicat. Aussi, le Comité de Lutte pour l'Avortement et la Contraception Libres et Gratuits se met sur pied à l'époque, et deux d'entre nous y participent. Nous espérons pouvoir diriger vers ce nouveau comité tous les gens qui, après avoir vu la pièce, sont intéressés à travailler à cette lutte: il nous semble important en effet que les énergies que nous dépensons pour faire un spectacle soient mises au service d'une organisation menant une lutte sur le problème dont nous traitons dans notre spectacle.

Nous décidons alors que cette pièce doit être prête pour le 8 mars, Fête Internationale des Femmes. Nous nous réunissons alors deux à trois fois par semaine. Avant de la jouer le 8 mars, nous la présentons devant une trentaine de femmes, dont une grande partie sont membres de groupes populaires. Nous voulons avoir une première critique. La plupart des critiques sont bonnes, ce qui nous encourage évidemment beaucoup. Donc, le 8 mars, devant près de 3,000 personnes, en majorité des femmes, dans la salle paroissiale Saint-Edouard à Montreal, nous présentons enfin notre premier spectacle. La pièce est très bien reçue.

Après le 8 mars, nous ralentissons un peu notre travail au Théâtre des Cuisines à cause de toutes les activités que nous avons aussi ailleurs. D'autre part, après nous avoir vues le 8 mars, quelques femmes nous demandent de venir travailler avec nous tandis que trois militantes du groupe originel partent parce qu'elles ont trop CONT...

THEATRE DES CUISINES CONT.

d'activités à la fois. L'équipe change donc quelque peu et elle ne cessera de changer jusqu'en octobre '74.

Entre mars et juillet '74, nous jouons relativement peu. Au mois d'août, après un mois de vacances, nous reprenons les réunions une fois par semaine. Nous sommes alors dix dont trois de l'équipe de départ. Nous décidons de commencer à préparer un deuxième spectacle. En septembre, après de longues discussions, nous choisissons comme thème de notre prochaine pièce: "le travail ménager". Pendant le mois d'octobre, cinq d'entre nous quittent le groupe, une à une, pour diverses raisons: surcharge d'activités, mésente politique, départ en vacances, etc.

Fin octobre, nous ne sommes plus que cinq, une seule du groupe originel, deux arrivées en mai et deux en août. La composition du nouveau groupe est différente de celle du tout premier groupe: sur les cinq, une seule n'a jamais fait de théâtre et pour les cinq, c'est le Théâtre des Cuisines qui est notre principale activité militante. Nous décidons alors de continuer le spectacle sur le travail ménager mais de recommencer à jouer la pièce sur l'avortement pour nous stimuler et nous faire sentir que nous formons une équipe. Nous décidons d'avoir deux réunions par semaine. Depuis novembre, nous avons surtout joué la pièce dans les CEGEPS. A partir de janvier '75, nous voulons jouer le plus possible devant un public de ménagères dans les quartiers, par l'intermédiaire des groupes populaires. Nous préparons la pièce sur le travail ménager pour le 8 mars '75. Pour répondre à cette échéance du 8 mars, quatre femmes nous aident aux décors, costumes, accessoires, masques, musique.



POURQUOI LE THEATRE?

Nous avons choisi de nous exprimer au moyen du théâtre pour deux raisons principales, aussi importantes l'une que l'autre: parce que nous aimons le théâtre et parce que le théâtre est un outil de propagande très efficace (propagande: "tout ce qu'on fait pour répandre activement une opinion"- dictionnaire Larousse). Nous avons des choses à dire sur ce que nous, les femmes, vivons quotidiennement. Notre opinion sur les causes et les conséquences de notre exploitation, sur nos espoirs de changer la société et sur les moyens qu'on peut utiliser pour le faire, nous voulons donc la "répandre activement". Et nous savons que le théâtre est un bon instrument pour le faire. Avec le théâtre, on informe, on dénonce, oui mais on fait sourire et rire, on chante, on danse même! Et, au Théâtre des Cuisines, nous aimons cet instrument qu'est le théâtre parce qu'il nous permet de sourire et de chanter tout en découvrant de nouvelles façons d'exprimer notre colère et notre révolte contre une société qui nous a trop longtemps fait taire.

Le théâtre, c'est toujours fait pour dire quelque chose. Mais dire quoi et à qui? Nous croyons que le théâtre doit servir de moyen d'expression à celles et à ceux qui, par leur travail, font marcher les usines, les entreprises, donnent des services (qu'ils soient payés ou pas payés, comme pour le travail ménager), ceux-là qui, en fait, font marcher un pays. Le théâtre doit être un moyen de conter leur vie, leurs problèmes, leurs luttes, leurs espoirs. Le théâtre ne doit pas endormir les gens dans des rêves (rencontrer le prince charmant, gagner le million à la lotto, etc.) ni leur faire oublier ce qu'ils vivent tous les jours pour qu'ils ne pensent pas à le remettre en question. Au contraire, il faut poser des questions. Ce n'est évidemment pas par le théâtre seul qu'on trouve les réponses; mais s'il pose bien les questions, le théâtre peut contribuer à découvrir certains éléments de réponse.

Pour que notre théâtre réponde à ces exigences, nous observons certains principes que nous pourrions appeler notre politique théâtrale.

Dans nos pièces, on part toujours d'un problème concret et actuel. Une fois que le sujet de la pièce est

choisi, on interroge notre expérience personnelle et on fait des recherches pour connaître ce sujet le mieux possible. Par exemple, avec la pièce sur l'avortement et la contraception, on cherche à savoir quelle est la situation de l'avortement au Québec, comment les femmes vivent cette situation, qui a intérêt à ce que les femmes ne contrôlent pas leur corps et pourquoi, quelles luttes menant les femmes pour régler ce problème, etc. Cette recherche doit être autant pratique que théorique, c'est-à-dire que la recherche dans les livres et documents doit être faite simultanément à des rencontres avec des femmes qui ont vécu le problème traité dans la pièce. En bref, on ne peut parler convenablement d'un problème que si on le connaît de façon approfondie.

La forme du spectacle ne doit pas l'emporter sur le contenu. Nous faisons un spectacle parce que nous avons des choses bien précises à dire et nous voulons les dire de façon claire pour qu'elles soient comprises sans ambiguïté. Pour ce faire, la forme théâtrale (mise en scène, décors, costumes, jeu des comédiennes, etc.) ne doit pas prendre une importance telle qu'on oublie le contenu de la pièce. Les "effets" du théâtre doivent servir à faire mieux passer le contenu. Ceci ne veut pas dire que la forme n'est pas importante, ce qui serait absurde. Mais nous nous attachons d'abord à définir le contenu de notre spectacle puis à trouver ensuite une forme adéquate et efficace pour présenter ce contenu, sans l'étouffer.

On n'attend pas le public: on va là où il est. La majorité des femmes sont ménagères, qu'elles travaillent à l'extérieur ou non. Elles n'ont généralement ni l'argent ni surtout le temps "d'aller au théâtre". D'ailleurs, les théâtres sont généralement des lieux réservés à l'élite de la société, élite qui va au théâtre pour se distraire. Certaines pièces de théâtre pourtant ont un contenu révolutionnaire; mais le fait de les présenter dans les théâtres leur fait perdre tout leur sens combatif et elles n'ont l'air alors que d'un nouveau genre de théâtre, sans aucun lien avec les luttes que mènent les femmes et les hommes dans leur milieu. Donc, nous ne jouons pas dans les théâtres (il ne faut pas jouer sur les mots: si dans une petite ville, la seule salle disponible pour jouer est le théâtre de la place, nous ne refuserons pas d'y jouer si le public auquel nous voulons nous adresser y vient!). C'est à nous d'aller rencontrer les femmes là où elles sont: dans leurs quartiers, dans certaines assemblées syndicales, dans un lieu de travail en grève, dans les cafétérias de Cegeps et d'universités... Quant au lieu théâtral proprement dit, toute place -salle paroissiale, salle d'école, local de groupe populaire - est assez bonne pour y jouer, du moment qu'on peut s'y faire entendre. A nous de savoir adopter notre spectacle au lieu qui est mis à notre disposition.

On n'a pas besoin d'avoir fait une école de théâtre pour faire du théâtre. Quand on a quelque chose à dire, on trouve les moyens pour le dire. Il faut les développer ces moyens, il faut répéter, travailler, cela nous ne le nions pas. Il faut aussi développer les techniques, oui. Mais tout cela ne doit empêcher personne de faire du théâtre. Or, à l'heure actuelle, on nous présente les comédiens comme les quelques privilégiés qui ont appris à en faire. Cela condamne le reste des profanes, soit à ne pas oser faire de théâtre qu'ils pensent trop inaccessible, soit à singer le théâtre professionnel qu'ils pensent être le seul vrai théâtre. Ce qui compte avant tout, c'est la motivation.

Nous ne voulons pas être des professionnelles du théâtre, c'est-à-dire que nous ne voulons pas vivre uniquement par le théâtre. Si nous ne faisons que du théâtre, le danger est grand de re-crée une petite élite, à notre niveau, coupée de la réalité quotidienne. Notre théâtre risquerait lui aussi de s'éloigner de la réalité que vivent la majorité des femmes, et donc d'être beaucoup moins efficace. Nous essayons donc de trouver des "jobs" qui nous laissent assez de temps libre pour répéter et jouer, ce qui est très difficile, il faut l'avouer. D'autre part, nous tentons d'obtenir des subventions qui nous permettent de faire des extras: jouer à l'extérieur de Montréal, peut-être faire une tournée pendant l'été... Pour le financement régulier du groupe (achats pour les décors, costumes, essence pendant les déplacements...) nous avons comme principe de demander de l'argent à ceux qui en ont (syndicats, services aux étudiants...) afin de jouer gratuitement là où il n'y en a pas (groupes populaires, employées (s) en grève, etc...).

MY PEOPLE SHALL LIVE!

BY PAT LESLIE

Ed Note: While all members of the Collective do not necessarily agree with the political perspective contained in Khaled's book, we encourage women to read this book.

MY PEOPLE SHALL LIVE
Autobiography of a revolutionary
by Leila Khaled as told to George
Hajjar
New Canada Press
\$4.00
229 pages with photos

Because of the subject matter (terrorism, Anti-Zionism), this book has been, and will continue to be, the source of much controversy. The title, *My People Shall Live*, has also been the positive affirmation of the spirit of the Jewish people as well as Khaled's own people, the Palestinians. Khaled, however, does not propose that her people should live at the expense of the Jewish people; she is waging a fight so that both may live together in peace.

The release of this book came 4 years late to Canada (as well as the U.S.) due to pressure from liberals in North America while other, more politically safe, countries have seen its release for commercial distribution. It is such an emotionally explosive issue that the publication of this book is equated with anti-Semitism. To take a personal stand against Zionism conceivably means the loss of Jewish friends who, along with the rest of the Western world, are responding to the guilt and horror of the Second World War. Zionism--the need for a Jewish homeland--and the leaders of the Zionist movement took full advantage of this horror and every Jewish woman of my generation has had instilled in her the cultural/religious separateness of the Jewish people as an oppressed race. Who can deny it, who would dare? On the other hand, the Arab women of Palestine were forced out of their homes and into exile in either refugee camps or neighbouring Arab countries. The concept of sisterhood falls flat for some women who find themselves in the position of being, at one and the same time, both the persecuted and the persecutor.

Leila Khaled was one of those Arab women expelled from Haifa, along with 80,000 other people of Arab descent. The book about her life from child to woman is rhetorical; there is no doubt about that. But then, how many have taken a look at Zionist literature lately? (Masada, the Zionist student quarterly in Toronto, in speaking of the UN Mexico City IWY Conference, had this to say: "...only poor Leah Rabin, brave wife to the Israeli Prime Minister..."). Rhetoric, as well as being political, is also meant to appeal to one's emotions. In Khaled's book, such phrases as "quiet despair" and "sordid living" and "I charge the world for its acquiescence in my destruction" are common. In between things like "I was crucified and redeemed at the same time", she speaks of her growing awareness during her schooldays and the relationship between her life and that

of the people living in the Palestinian refugee camps.

She was 9 when she took part in the parade on the 5th anniversary of the creation of the Israeli State. When she was 14, she had earned the right to membership in the Arab Nationalist Movement. "My mother strongly disapproved of the political activities of the girls in the family. She felt that now that the civil war was over the girls should stay at home and leave the politics to men...She said she was also afraid of scandalous talk in the neighbourhood about women in politics. Mother knew that social ostracism would result if any one of us stepped out of line..." When she had attended political meetings in her pyjamas to deceive her mother as to her plans, she felt discrimination from her comrades this time. "They were shaken by what they regarded as immoral behaviour. I was blasted for violating Arab decorum and polite womanly behaviour. They were almost ready to pass a motion of censure and perhaps expulsion. Some of the reactionaries thought my appearance in pyjamas was a tradition-trampling, sex-enticing episode. Tradition-trampling it might have been; sex-enticing it was not. I was terribly disappointed by their male chauvinism and self-righteousness. I stayed through the meeting and left still angry, because my commitment to the cause was not appreciated and the personal difficulties I encountered at home were not taken into account. How could we liberate Palestine and the Arab homeland, if we ourselves were not liberated? How could we advocate equality and keep over half--the female half--of the human race in bondage?...It took the ANM nearly a decade to start tapping to the full the human reservoir of women."

When she was 18, "I once again had to face the problem of being a Palestinian Arab woman. My sisters in the West speak of two kinds of oppression: class and sexual. I had to face four kinds of oppression: national, social (the weight of traditions and habits), class and sexual." It was her brothers who had priority for higher education. She finally attended the American University of Beirut without scholarship though she was entitled to one. She "wanted to enroll as quickly as possible before I got railroaded into some uncreative role like office work or marriage and baby-production". She finished university and became a teacher, working only on the periphery of the Arab movement until the decision was made to no longer stand on the sidelines. She entered training to become a guerilla to free Palestinians from the nationalism of the Arab states and American imperialism.

Leila would never have come to world notice if not for her bravery and dedication to the cause of freedom for her people. Ironically enough, enroute to her first mission to divert a TWA aircraft to Damascus in 1969, sexual advances were made to her several times, i.e., Arab women travelling alone are considered "loose". In 1970, after face-surgery to hide her identity, she

and another comrade made an abortive attempt to hijack an EL-AL aircraft. After the Israelis had needlessly killed her male comrade, the British Government intervened and took Leila to Britain from which she later returned to the Arab countries to continue her fight.

Terrorism is a tactic used between a power with unlimited supply and a people armed only with determination and love of country. This has parallels between all the many "undeclared" wars, such as, the Vietnamese vs. the U.S., the IRA vs. the English, the Algerians vs. the French. How Khaled feels about women is another matter. Perhaps she should be organizing with women, for self-determination as a woman? One thing is for sure: rhetoric aside, I gained a lot of valuable information about this so-called Middle-East conflict from Leila Khaled's personal involvement. And that is exactly what we have all been lacking. The unfortunate point to remember is that this book, published in Canada 4 years after the fact, is now outdated politically.



Khaled explains the Zionist concept: "It was at the outset a religious idea...Zionism as a word was coined in 1886 by Ben Acher, a European Jew who had never been to Palestine. It was Herzl who started the political side of Zionism in his pamphlet "The Jewish State" (at the time of the Dreyfus Affair in France). The first Zionist Congress was convened in 1897 at Basle to form the World Zionist Organization. Herzl went to the British Government with the proposal "that a Jewish state would be a great bulwark against Arab revolution and a local sentinel to guard Britain's vital interests in the area which included the Suez Canal and the trading routes to the Far East. From the very beginning the idea of an Israeli state was sold to the Western powers as a wedge to keep the Arabs divided..." "By 1917, when the Zionists extracted the Balfour Declaration from the British, the Jews constituted less than 10% of the population of the area, but the draftees of the Declaration had the temerity to refer to our people as the 'non-Jewish population' rather than referring to the Jews as a minority which could have religious rights in Palestine." "...Meanwhile, the Zionists proceeded to establish a racist, exclusive society where East European Zionists, Polish and Russian, dominated the Government, political parties, trade unions, bureaucracy, and business. Afro-Asian Jews were the target of discrimination, class exploitation and European contempt. The Arab inhabitants, the rightful owners of Palestine, were placed under military administration and used along with the Arab Jews as a cheap labour supply." (Page 55)

ANGELE ARSENAULT -- PREMIERE

record review

by margaret murray

ANGELE ARSENAULT

Angele is an Acadian singer from Prince Edward Island who now lives in Montreal. She sings in both English and French and has composed over forty songs in French and over twenty in English, along with a large number of traditional style Acadian songs. She covers many topics in her songs from women's lib to reincarnation and spiritualism. She recently recorded several programs for the Ontario Educational Television Network.



The immediate problem with which i am faced when approaching a review of Angele Arsenault's first record, *Premiere* (SPPS inc, PS-19901), is that of the language barrier. Canada prides itself on being bilingual, on paper at least, and therefore the majority of Canadians should be able to thoroughly enjoy this album. This is obviously not the case. I am an anglophone and while my french is sufficient to grasp the main thrust of the lyrics, i miss the subtleties of the french canadian experience, i cannot do justice to Arsenault's work.

Angele has appeared at a variety of folk festivals, including Mari-rosa where her stage presence carried english audiences beyond their incomprehension of the french language. Some of this vivacity filters through on her album but mainly orchestral arrangement and back-up have taken the place of facial expression and voice level. The music has been well laid out and is technically quite sound; so much for the incidentals.

Should wages for housework ever erupt as a political force among les quebecoises, it will find the way well prepared by Angele's com-

positions. Her themes are the lives of the average women--the house-workers, the welfare mothers struggling to make ends meet. And from these she has spun excellent scenarios so familiar to us all. In "Toc Toc" there is the woman battling with creditors, landlords, and nousey neighbours, trying to come up with money to prevent her family from being tossed "dans la neige froide". In "Maman Maman" we glimpse the single parent experience while "Bois ton cafe" could be the eternal anthem of women who repair the damage done by capital to their loved ones. And on and on. Angele offers us a spectrum of our own real lives, truly a woman's "artist".

i could continue to dissect each of the songs on this album and translate them into our own native tongue yet to what avail? Such a treatment of a sensitive and well-rounded work would not go down well with me; i enjoyed the music, the lyrics, and her overall style. Angele Arsenault is definitely a feminist songwriter and she deserves credit for combining personal and political statements with good quality folk music.

BOOK REVIEW by cindy wright

The Two-Thirds Minority: Women in Canadian Education, by Sybil Shack, published by the Guidance Centre, Faculty of Education at the University of Toronto.

Reading The Two-Thirds Minority is like reading The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie. It's a pleasant enough book but seems to be from another century. Shack offers no criticism of the educational system, other than that there aren't enough women in it taking positions of authority and that guidance counsellors and textbooks are often sexist.

The book is rather naive. Nothing about why kids hate school, why most fail, why we have such a high drop-out rate. If you are looking for an analytical discussion of women in Canadian education, this book is not it. This is a subjective account of one woman's experience as a student and as a teacher. She also writes of the women teachers she knows and

"...and what did you learn in skool today, dear little girl of mine?"

of their conception of themselves. Unfortunately, however, she tends to romanticize women teachers, their work, dedication and spirit. A chapter is devoted to young women in school and how they are discouraged from developing to their full potential.

The book is not a complete loss. The chapter "A Tradition of Teaching" is a brief history of the beginnings of formal education in Canada, showing that the early schools were almost completely the creation of courageous and dedicated women, a fact that a lot of people don't realize.

Generally, however, the book is disappointing. It's too bad because there is still a lot of room for a feminist perspective of education.



Reprinted from Shrew

FLASH!!

GAY WOMEN

..... is the name of a happening that will take place every Monday evening at 201 Church Street

is a new and totally independent organization of gay women for gay women

is an attempt to provide fun, fellowship, and service to any and all gay women in Toronto

UNLIMITED

is a place you can come to be yourself and talk to someone who cares about you and any problem you have

is an alternative to dances and clubs

is a place to help sort out and cope with problems of loneliness, problems with a lover, problems "coming out", problems with parents, problems with role-playing

REVIEWS

WOMAN OF LABRADOR

WOMAN OF LABRADOR
by Elizabeth Goudie
\$4.95

Published by Peter Martin Assoc.
Available at the Toronto Women's
Bookstore

Woman of Labrador by Elizabeth Goudie is unusual not only for its subject matter--a woman's life in Labrador--but for its writing style.

Armed with only a grade four education Mrs. Goudie sets out to describe the rugged and often harsh life of a woman in the backwoods of Labrador. Her writing style is extremely simple. Once accustomed to it though, you find yourself listening to the rhythm as well as the words. Such a vivid account could not be portrayed without this rhythm and style.

Mrs. Goudie is a trapper's wife. This is an extremely hard life. Her husband goes out on his lines for two 3-month periods. For 3 months the women do not see their men and have no way to contact them. After a few days rest and replenishing of supplies, the men return to their lines for another 3 months.

The winters are long and very lonely but far from idle for the women. The children had to be cared for, clothes were to be made, there was knitting and sewing and boots to be made.

A minister or doctor would be seen about once in the winter. Outside of this the women acted as their own doctor.

"October passed by and Jim went setting his traps again. The first evening he was gone I was alone cleaning my floor. I looked around

for my children. The girl Marie and the second boy Bruce were sitting by the stove watching the fire burning. I checked them to see if everything was all right and went on about my work. About ten minutes later, the whole house lit up with fire. I jumped to my feet and I was by Bruce's side in a minute. I did not know what to do; I saw a big coat close by and caught it and smothered out the flame. For a few seconds, he didn't move. I picked him up and the minute I moved him he went into a "rock of pain". I was a whole hour trying to keep him on my lap. That was between five and six in the evening; at about six-thirty, he fell asleep...I looked over his body as carefully as I could and I saw his right arm was burnt right to his body and one cheek, one ear and both his lips were burned, so I knew I had a terrible task on my hands. I tried to eat but couldn't. I walked the floor and the other children were afraid that their little brother would die and they were crying. Their daddy was not home yet.

About seven o'clock I heard the boat coming and I was there with my little boy all burnt. I did not know how his dad would take it. I thought that he might think that I had been careless and got him burnt so I just sat by my little boy and waited for Jim to come into the house. I told him what had happened. We sat beside our child and when he woke up he again went into a rock of pain. We walked the floor with him the whole night taking

by grace scott

turns...The only thing we had in the house was a bottle of castor oil.

I said to Jim, 'You better get me a juniper stick and I will boil it and use the liquid to bathe the burns.' I had no dressing. I had a couple of sheets and I tore them up for dressings. There was a small wound of open flesh on his elbow and I was really afraid that would become infected. I hoped and prayed it would be all right. Jim got the juniper stick. I went to work and boiled four hours and started to bathe the wounds in the liquid.

On the second day, the spot on his elbow looked a bit red and infected. I took a piece of the stick and peeled the outside bark off and took the inside, the gummy bark of the stick, and beat it to a pulp. I sterilized my dressing by browning it on the stove and I placed a piece of the gummy pulp on his elbow. I greased the poultice with the castor oil and after six days he seemed to be getting a lot better... Jim brought him (the doctor) up the bay the next morning. He looked at our boy and at what I was using and he said he was over the worst. He told me to carry on with what I was using. He gave me some dressings and I was very happy about what he told me. He said I had done a marvellous job so my mind was at ease then."

This book is a must. Not only is it the first book written about Labrador women, it is also the first written by a native-born Labrador woman.

It is a thoroughly enjoyable book and comes highly recommended.

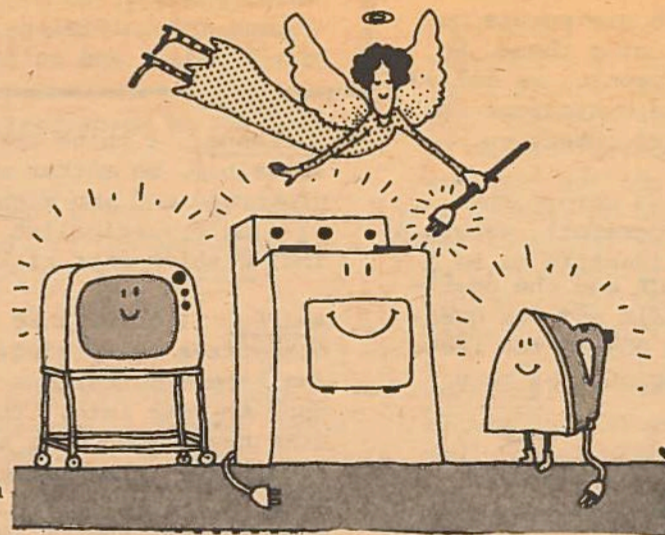
ALL WORK & NO PAY

by pat leslie

ALL WORK AND NO PAY
Women, Housework and the Wages Due
Published by the Power of Women
Collective and Falling Wall Press,
England.
127 pages, \$1.95
Available at the Toronto Women's
Bookstore

The 23 articles in this anthology (representing Italy, England, Canada and the U.S.) deal with the housework done by welfare women, women doing waged work, women doing unwaged work and lesbians from an international perspective. "Some people say women don't get enough job training, but in reality we have the longest and most meticulous training of all. We are being trained to work 'for love'." This excerpt from the Introduction--If Women Were Paid For All They Do--is the best description of what housework is really all about.

The second section--All In A Day's Work--speaks generally of housework (single housewives, lesbians, shoplifting, etc.) while the third section--This Is Nursing--deals more specifically with the nurses' struggle in England. The last section--General Strike--as the title suggests, talks of women organizing (on welfare, in the com-



munity and at our "second" job) and threatening to strike.

The following quote from "Women And Their Unions", one of the more theoretical pieces in the book, was written by Selma James in April 1972 and still is relevant to our situation as women today; in fact, even more so. "You will see by now that I believe in order to have our own politics we must make our own analysis of women and therefore our own analysis of the whole working class struggle. We have been taking so much for granted that happens to be around, and restricting, segregating ourselves to speaking and writing about women, that it looks like we are only supposed to analyse and understand women after others (men) have analysed the class 'in general'--excluding us. This is to be male-dominated in

the profoundest sense. Because there is no class 'in general' which doesn't include us and all the wageless."

The last article to finish the book is part of a speech made by Mariarosa Dalla Costa at a demonstration in Italy in March 1974. She says, "No strike has ever been a general strike. When half the working population is at home in the kitchens, while the others are on strike, it is not a general strike."..."we put on the agenda our working hours, our holidays, our strikes and our money." That is a positive message for us all, a proper finish. It is, however, no coincidence that these two women in different countries think alike, as only through an international feminist theory of women and class, as Selma suggested, could lead one up to the idea of a total general strike.

The book may do well at presenting us with an international perspective on the wages for housework campaign but, with only two articles coming from Canada (neither of which generally speak to the issue), a woman coming across it in the local library might not get too far into it. That is not to say that information on women internationally can't be useful but how many of us, for instance, have a real background on the National Health Service in England? I have a feeling that this book will appeal to a limited audience and that's too bad as it has been a long time coming.

NEWS / VIEWS

Men - cont'd.

is a job under capital much like any other. "Earning a living" demands that we sacrifice most of our eroticism and emotionality. Thus, "slam, bam, saturday-night sex" and rape. Wives clearly resent this but they are put in the position of deriving their status, wealth and power from the "breadwinner" and therefore support this pattern to survive. Our love then is used to keep us in chains.

We must love, though; we need to raise our consciousness; assuming greater responsibility for domestic labour is necessary as well; and these are all political acts. I am however sure of the necessity of moving beyond these things. How should this be done and what kind of potential does a movement of this sort have?

The strategy developed at the conference is to get a broadly based communications network established through a national newsletter, regional conferences such as the one coming up in Thunder Bay (which will be open to women), local organizing and another national conference next year. We are also trying to expand the links with the U.S. (primarily through the Men's Awareness Network) and overseas.

Men in Victoria/Vancouver will continue to have regular potluck supper gatherings; the Saskatoon Men's Liberation Centre will be expanding to include "a men's crisis line, a speakers bureau, aids to forming CR groups, bake sales, dances, potluck suppers, public meetings, joint actions with women's and gay liberation groups, a newsletter and a resource centre"; two tasks have been taken up by men in Toronto: the first issue of the national newsletter (the second issue will probably then be done by the Saskatoon group) and the beginning of monthly potluck suppers.

These suppers are being used as an organizing tool for many of the same reasons as CR groups and they have many of the same problems. Men not yet involved in CR could meet others in the same situation, though, and start a new group or join old ones with space. It can provide for a coming together of men in a non-work setting so as to interact in more intimate and less competitive ways than

M.C.P. - cont'd.

Ann: Another way is to establish contacts with women already in the media. There are a lot of women working in the media that are doing it to survive. They are certainly our allies.

Adrienne: It should be backed up with statements because after we did this action we didn't stop there. We made a statement to every newspaper in Toronto, we called and got the statement recorded on the radio stations and a lot of them played it. We did a good CBC interview.

Artemis: When we were making collect calls across the country to radio stations (operator to operator), we would explain to the operator that you should identify me as a member of the group that disrupted the MCP and the operator would go--wow! fantastic! and then talk and ask questions. We called everywhere and at least 95% of the radio stations accepted the calls. The only person that said absolutely not was the New York Times.

Q. DO YOU HAVE ANY FEEDBACK ON THE SUCCESS/FAILURE OF YOUR PROTEST?

Ann: I don't see what we just did as a particularly valid political action. I see it as a piece of theatre and I see it as something now that has probably created a great deal of division among women and, so for that reason, I would never do this type of action again. The sort of political action I see as valid is organizing WITH women and we are not doing something that the media can use to create divisions among women. Between MCP women who are struggling to make their lives by participating in the pageant and the so-called radical lesbian, between lesbian and straight women. The media has taken the lesbian issue and blown it out of proportion. Any straight woman who might feel that, at one point, she might want to come out would feel immediately threatened by the violent action. The media has just taken it and manipulated it. Women vs. women is the media coverage.

Helen: I don't think the media has blown up the lesbian issue. I've got all of the press clippings and I can think of only one newspaper that has really pushed the lesbian thing and that was the Toronto Sun and all the other newspapers, if they mentioned it at all, mentioned it as one of several groups participating in the action. I don't think that I was manipulated by the media.

would normally be the case. That is, we can "play at" (as opposed to work at) breaking down these old patterns and build some solidarity based upon caring, as well as our class interests.

"Undoubtedly the most significant feature of the conference, for all the participants, was the tremendous energy and love which was shared by all the men at the conference. That men could share such a basic emotion was felt to be a major achievement in itself." (SMLC) That same sharing is the attraction of CR groups and potlucks. While beneficial, it can be used to stifle conflict, and it by no means provides an adequate basis for a movement.

The movement seems to have been primarily the result of two interrelated factors: the refusal of women to continue to service men, as a result of the Women's Movement, and the growth of the Gay Men's Movement. Neither of these were predominately composed of the industrial proletariat, the traditional revolutionary sector.

The men's movement is composed of the most privileged sector of the class. It has been this group that has been the most organized. I don't think that those individuals involved at this point have had much experience with either party politics or unionism. It seems to be primarily a middle-class phenomenon, i.e., professionals (especially academics), freaks, gays and independent leftists. While blacks and women have of necessity functioned autonomously, I think that only by working closely with other groups can this movement have any legitimacy. One of the very real fears of feminists is that this movement will be used against them, that is, men will only gain more power over them. I have heard rumours that this is already the experience of some women in England. This is one reason why we must have constant input from other sectors as we go along. I think it will be very difficult to get, though. Men, undeniably, have more social power than women. Because of this, their fear of cooptation or subversion is valid.

I think that it is especially important to solicit feedback from lesbians; having no investment in our continuing chauvinism, they could be the most critical. I want to be very clear that I am in no way implying that any group has an obligation to offer us much of anything, except when we can help further their liberation. Our only option is to begin concretely supporting other groups and initiating actions to raise the level of our own struggle and solicit criticism of our practice.

Adrienne: I think that the media has always been irresponsible. No matter what you do, or how, everything is distorted and you might as well get used to it because it is a male, capitalist press and that is what we are fighting. I think that risks have to be taken.

Audrey: I think that anybody can realize that the paper dramatizes everything; such as, the report of women charging from 4 directions because obviously there is only one door to come into. That should be pointed out. I would like them to give us a chance to speak how we feel, why do we have to be violent?

Ann: I think what's important is that a lot of women from a lot of differing views were united. I think that shows that different women can get together over issues.

Adrienne: I think that's probably one of the most important things that happened too. I also think that it was one of the best actions that happened during IWY. It got coverage right across the country. I think that that's really important, that women know that we are still out there doing stuff.

Artemis: We were accused on one of the radio shows of patronizing the contestants because what right do we have to say that they should not participate in pageants like that. They were implying that we, as women's liberation, were telling those contestants what they should be doing with their lives.

Helen: I don't believe women have those kind of options so I don't believe that that is what I am telling them. I really believe that it is an attack on big business and the men who run those things. I agree with Miss Canada that women in Canada are intelligent, articulate and aware--herself included.

spreading across the land

N.B. If you would like to be listed, please send us your address.

has a newsletter

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NOTE: There are many more women's centres across the country. We cannot list them all. For further information, you might try the Women's Programme, Sec. of State in Ottawa as they have just put out a Directory of Women's Groups in Canada in French and English.

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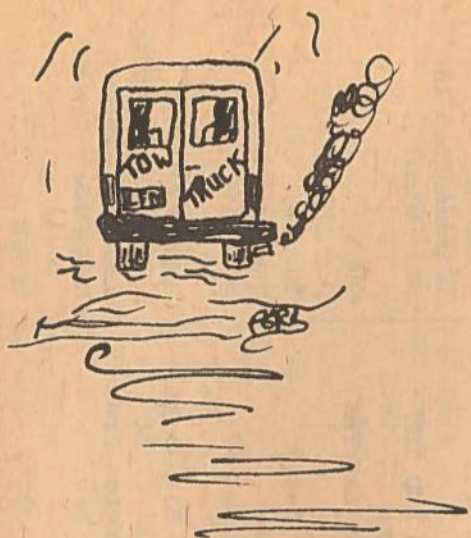
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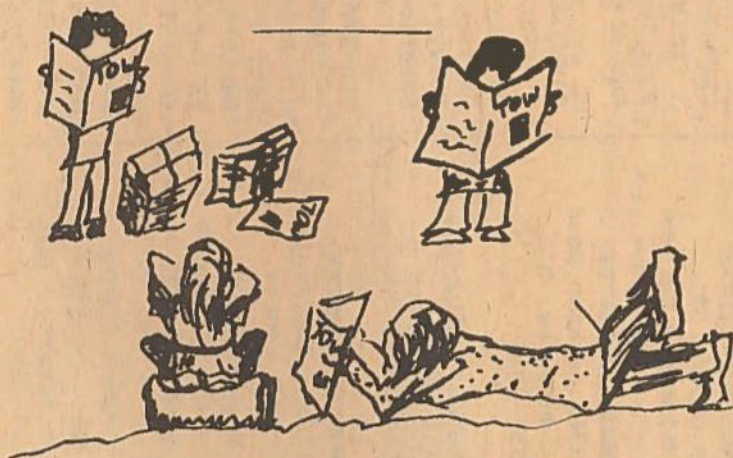
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