

THE PEDESTAL

Vol. 1 No. 1

Published by Vancouver Women's Caucus

Fall 1969

10 cents

WHY PICKET TRUDEAU?

By MARCY TOMS



Vancouver Women's Caucus member confronts Trudeau at Seaforth Armories, Vancouver, August 8, 1969. — cartoon by Susan Dubrofsky

The reason that the Vancouver Women's Caucus picketed Prime Minister Trudeau when he visited the city recently was, in fact, twofold. The primary reason was structural — it concerned the nature and diverse functions of every institution in our Canadian social system. The secondary reason was Trudeau himself. As an individual he uses women so exploitatively to enhance his personal image and further his political career that he has become a symbol of this sort of exploitation.

Canadian women, from the family to the factory, is constructed to keep women in inferior positions. In the family situation women are kept financially dependent on 'their men', forsake their independence and identity, and are given sole responsibility for raising children. However, when it comes to controlling these bodies which produce and carry children, our society (led now by a party that boasts of its 'social radicalism') refuses to acknowledge the fundamental rights of the producer — the woman — to control her own body.

It is still only possible to obtain an abortion for 'sound' physical and psychological reasons — and these reasons are not determined by the women involved. The 'new' abortion laws are a farce — they demand that women suffer the degrading experience of justifying their *humanness* to an elite group of men, who can never understand the mental pain of unwanted gestation and childbirth. Women must have the right to bring *wanted* children into the world. The Liberal government refuses to grant this right and by their inertia they allow thousands of women to mutilate and murder themselves each year.

Free birth control information and devices are a step in the direction of eliminating the need for abortion. Birth control, however, is still difficult and embarrassing to obtain, especially for working class women who have neither the medical facilities nor the finances to be familiar with the newer technology of birth control. In the very basic areas of the body and children — which all women have been socialized to concern themselves with exclusively — it is men, and men who represent the interests of only a small section of our society, who formulate and pass the laws. **contd. on page 2**

HUMAN RIGHTS...

but not for women

Attorney General Leslie Peterson in June 1969 announced a Human Rights Bill would go into effect on June 16th, 1969 — by an Order in Council of the B.C. Government.

This Bill was to prevent discrimination against people — it stated that a woman would not be discriminated against because of her SEX. Yet Mr. Peterson does not practise what he preaches, for he discriminates against women in his own department by allowing the B.C. Civil Service to carry on economic discrimination against women.

In one of Mr. Leslie Peterson's own Attorney General Offices, here is a look at the salaries paid MALES and FEMALES:

The lowest salary paid a MALE is \$580.00.

The highest salary obtainable is 1,060.00.

Average length of time employed: Male, approx. 10½ years.

The lowest salary paid a FEMALE is \$317.00.

The highest salary paid a FEMALE is \$461.00.

Average length of time employed: Female, approx. 20 years.

In the same office a man is *Office Manager*, however, the office is in fact managed by a woman — who is paid \$461.00 after 48 years of service.

Discrimination — Yes — Right in the Attorney General's own offices. If he wants others to stop discrimination — he should be the one to follow his own advice and stop "economic discrimination"

The following are excerpts from the full-page advertisement in the Vancouver Sun on Saturday, August 16, 1969, placed by the British Columbia Human Rights Commission, Department of Labor.

The Act makes it unlawful to:

Discriminate in hiring, continuing employment, membership in a trade union, because of race, religion, sex, colour, nationality, ancestry, place of origin, or because of age if between 45 and 65. Discriminate in seeking or advertising for employees.

Discriminate by paying women lower wages than men for substantially the same work, done in the same establishment.

Incidentally, did you notice that that same issue of the Sun which carried that full-page ad, continued to advertise jobs as HELP WANTED — MEN; HELP WANTED — WOMEN. . .

By a B.C. Civil Servant

against women — for in our society standards of living are based on economic income.

Some years ago a "male" position in the British Columbia Liquor Control Board Office in Vancouver became vacant. It was a Grade 3 position. This position was never "posted" and was filled by one of the girls already working in the office. However the position was reduced to a Grade 2 and the salary was reduced also to the Grade 2 level.

For a few years the girl tried to fight for pay equal to that the males had received for doing the same job — but in vain. She then joined the British Columbia Government Employees Association and they looked into her case, and the struggle continued, but in vain.

Now several years later she has received promotions but she will always be one grade behind the salary that would have been paid had she been male.

The original reason for her demotion was that the position did not rate a Grade 3 pay. However, it must be remembered that when several men held the same position it was worth a Grade higher pay.

The desk she works on — by herself and sometimes with a helper — handles all beer sales for the Province of British Columbia.

Of what value is it to have the B.C. Government pass a Human Rights Bill, if their own Civil Service discriminates against women.

See also page 3 —

JOIN WOMEN'S CAUCUS

Vancouver Women's Caucus is an organization of women students, workers and housewives, attempting to bring women together to discuss and organize around the problems we face as women in this society.

The women's caucus was originally organized by university students involved in the movement for student control on campus, and a university dedicated to the interests of the working people rather than corporations.

As women, we recognized that we too have little control over the forces that shape our lives in this society, that we face specific problems because we are women, and that women must be organized independently to struggle for solutions to these problems.

Today, Women's Caucus includes many working women and housewives, as well as students. As well as monthly general meetings, we have small groups meeting to discuss specific areas of concern, and to carry out specific projects.

If you would like to participate, or receive further information, contact: Women's Caucus, Rm. 6, Labor Temple, 307 W. Broadway, or phone 298-1732, 198-8430, or 298-9638.

WOMAN AGAINST MYTH IN THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

WOMEN AS TEACHERS ...

"How shall we get good teachers for our district schools, and enough of them? While we should encourage our young men to enter upon this patriotic, and I had almost said, missionary field of duty, and present in it such higher inducements to engage them to do so, I believe every one must admit, that there is but little hope of attaining the full supply, or anything like it, from that sex. This will always be difficult, so long as there are so many other avenues open in our country to the accumulation of property and the attaining of distinction. We must, I am persuaded, look more to the other sex for aid in this emergency, and do all in our power to bring forward young women of the necessary qualifications to be engaged in the business of elementary school instruction."

Connecticut Common School Journal, 1860.

Historically, women became important to the teaching profession with the rise in the movement for universal elementary education.

The strongest objection to free elementary education was the expense to the taxpayer. Women were brought into the profession because they were the cheapest source of labor. The quote at the beginning of the article argues this point clearly. Voluminous arguments appeared — chiefly the expression of the enthusiastic promoters of free elementary education and those interested in the progressive emancipation of women — to the effect that women were the natural teachers of youth, could do the job better, were therefore to be preferred and, eventually, that they should receive equal pay for equal work.

Many progressive women, hoping eventually they would get equal pay for equal work, supported these arguments claiming that teaching is "women's natural profession." These women argued that because of the greater intensity of the parental instinct in the female sex, their natural love of the society of children, and the superior gentleness and forbearance of their disposition they would make better teachers of the young.

Teaching ability was related to biological inheritance. Similar arguments were used to keep women out of positions of leadership or decision-making in the schools. Men were said to be biologically programmed to take political leadership.

These myths linger on to haunt women teachers today. Despite the fact that teachers in Canada now get equal pay for equal work, and the median years of experience is higher at all levels for women than for men, women predominate in the lowest categories on the pay scale. In 1966-67, 80% of the teachers earning less than \$2,400 were women, while only 22% of the teachers earning more than \$10,000 per year were women. Women do not have equal access to jobs with authority. Here in Vancouver, for example, the first woman principal since 1935 was appointed this year. In the British Columbia Teachers Federation there are equally

By MARCY COHEN

astounding anomalies: 55% of B.C. teachers are women, yet only one woman is on the 18 member executive, and all the committee heads are men.

Nor is the situation improving for women teachers. Women are being forced out of teaching and into lower paying jobs because of the increase in salaries paid to teachers and the professional status now given teachers, the profession is becoming more attractive to men. In 1921 in Canada only 16% of teachers were men, 84% were women. In 1967 40% of teachers were men, and 60% were women. The gap is rapidly closing. With the job shortage problem growing, school boards have a wider choice of whom they will hire. School officials themselves admit that men will be hired over women.

Women teachers must respond to this challenge. We must organize. There are many women who accept the myths of the traditional role of the woman teacher; elementary school positions are seen by many as those of substitute mothers, gentle and kind, and of course womanly.

Man is a cultural animal. His culture changes and can be changed. Anthropological evidence shows that the range of permissible behavior for women in other societies often includes just those attributes we call "male." Teachers must be made to recognize that myths about the "nature" of women have been used to keep them out of positions of authority, so that they have no control over their status in the profession. *

SHELLBURN OIL REFINERY Fall, 1967 By **BARB FINLAYSON**
At time of attempted application, personnel manager said the policy of the refinery was not to hire women, because shift work was necessary, and they would "not be held responsible for what would happen to several females getting off duty at midnight along with several hundred men."

B.C. Department of Corrections Probation Service, Spring 1969.

While applying as a probation officer, was told that the policy of the department was to limit

AS HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

By SYLVIA LINDSTROM

High schools reinforce the training girls receive in the home. We are channelled, first through particular courses and, secondly, by the varying methods by which males and females are instructed in the same subjects.

Girls in secondary school are encouraged to have a career, perhaps. But only for a short while — the ultimate goal for all is assumed to be the wife-mother role. Even the job information supplied to girls in high school is biased towards domestic services, all to ensure that women will be skilled housekeepers by the time they decide to marry.

Research is done into vocational institutes (nursing, hairdressing, stewardessing, secretarial work, etc.) and statistics are distributed showing the percentage of women in fields of service but the only result is to encourage girls to enter those fields where women predominate — any others are taboo.

This channelling can be shown by several examples, the most obvious of which are the courses which students entering grade eight are forced to take — home economics for the girls and woodworking for the boys. Even in the electives there is a division. Girls are not allowed to take the agriculture course (the rationale being that boys are not too interested in art or singing) yet the option to take these courses is still open to boys. In Physical Education the emphasis is placed such that to achieve different goals with males and females. Boys are

encouraged to develop aggressive personalities through rough competitive sports; girls are given training in dancing and exercises designed to make graceful feminine creatures out of us.

Similarly in the Guidance courses (the objectives of "guiding" are only too obvious) — while boys discuss family budget planning and more commonly sports and game rules, girls are learning how to dress properly, what cosmetics to use, etc. Discussions center around what sort of girl boys like to date — "No rans in your nylons, ladies, and don't talk too much." Models are often brought in to demonstrate the feminine way to walk, sit, tilt your head, in order to captivate and attract men. Lessons are given on etiquette (i.e. what is the proper attire for hitching across Europe as opposed to visiting the Queen).

Generally girls are treated differently than boys which creates in us tendencies towards submissiveness. In math and science girls are ignored and/or patronized. We have to ask and receive special permission in order to take such traditionally male courses as "draughting." And when teachers insist on lecturing girls (in a general classroom situation) on neatness and advise us to take advantage of our "full bloom of youth in order to catch our man" and inform us that women's only creative role is the "urge to motherhood" no wonder so many girls accept stereotypes of themselves.

This sexual channelling and discrimination has to stop in order for women to participate equally in society. It is only through elimination of this degrading, conditioning process that women can be free enough to liberate themselves completely. *

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Marcy Cohen is a graduate student in the Faculty of Education at Simon Fraser University. She was active in the Women's Caucus education action project around the UBC Summer School this summer. The project held a public meeting, with a panel including the first woman principal to be appointed in Vancouver since 1935, and spoke to several classes of teachers on women in the educational system.

Barb Finlayson has a General Science Degree from a prairie university. Now at SFU as an unclassified student and TA in chemistry, she is making up requirements for entry into graduate school as a regular student.

Alice James has a Commerce Degree from UBC, but is not working for the reasons outlined in her contribution to this page. She is active in Women's Caucus.

Sylvia Lindstrom graduated last spring from Burnaby Central High School, and her article is based on her personal experiences as a student.

AND IF YOU DO GET A DEGREE ...

their female staff to approximately 12%, for the province.

When I inquired as to the possibility of being placed in the Greater Vancouver area after the five-month training period, Mr. S.T. Madley informed me that of the group presently being chosen, none of the female applicants could hope to remain in the area.

The Federal Government By **ALICE JAMES**

When I graduated from UBC with a B.Com. I found that

women with this training were not even considered for jobs in industry.

The federal government, which advertised that they treated men and women employees equally, employed me and a large number of my classmates. All male B. Coms. were hired at a 55% higher rate of pay than all female B.Coms. At first they justified this and giving the women an easier job, but this was soon followed by work promotions without pay promotions and soon the women were doing the same work as the

men with the original pay differential.

Further work promotions without pay followed and more and more of the women became discouraged and quit. Finally two and a half years later, the last two of us were doing the same work as men paid three times as much as we were. This men saw us as a threat to their jobs and at least one tried to falsify my work.

There was no way for me to deal with this situation. I have not worked since this unfortunate experience. *

MORE TRUDEAU ...

contd. from page 1

Trudeau and his cabinet have stated that they are reforming abortion laws and divorce laws. But are they? Divorces continue to be expensive and involve lengthy processes — and they are not available upon single or mutual request. And these problems are human problems, not only female problems. It is true, though, that fundamental to the continuance of this sexual channelling. And women demonstrated to expose the unchanged reality behind the rhetoric of reform that Trudeau represents. Women demonstrated to demand their rights as human beings and as a structurally oppressed group. Women demonstrated because our situation has not changed since suffrage and it must change — NOW.

Also, in terms of female employment, Trudeau and his government reinforce the myths and traditional beliefs about the capabilities of women. Women are systematically denied access into most areas of the labor market. The educational system is also fundamental to the continuance of this sexual channelling. And where women are permitted to enter the labor force they are legally discriminated against. Women who do the same work as men are paid less, are given no maternity leave, and are not provided with on-the-job day care for their children. Women are not given promotions and are relegated to jobs like nursing, teaching, and waitressing, which are only extensions of their housework. The Trudeau government has not changed the minimum wage laws, it has

not attempted to equalize existing pay scales, and it continues to legitimate the discriminatory provincial educational systems. All of this negligence affects women adversely. By doing nothing at all, Trudeau, the Liberal party, and all the legislative bodies of this country contribute to the oppression suffered by Canadian women.

As a man, an individual, Trudeau also reinforces unjust and repressive social laws. He actively contributes to our structural oppression by behaving socially as a male chauvinist. He uses women and presents them as mindless bodies. His leadership campaign and his federal election campaign were built around his sexual attraction and his use of women, and were illustrated with stories of his love and women companions.

Women were used like commodities, as political pawns. And the most frightening thing was that many many women allowed this to happen to them. The ideology which surrounds and engulfs us as women is so powerful that it must be struggled against collectively and publicly. Writing letters to a personality is just not enough to begin the basic social change that is necessary — social action is.

It was social action that members of the Women's Caucus took part in when they picketed the Prime Minister. He is symbolic of the government and of the existing discriminatory social order. By demonstrating against him we were indicating our opposition to both these entities and publicly inviting other women to become involved in our activities.

YES, LET'S FIGHT BACK...

... The Attorney General asks that we "fight back" by asking him to defend us. Yet, as we can see from our own experience (above), the Attorney General's office itself is responsible for discrimination against women.

In fact, the experience of women through history, and of other groups that suffer discrimination in this society — especially the recent experience of Black people in the United States, the experience of Native Indians in Canada — demonstrate that little is gained through pleading with the authorities for justice.

This is not because the authorities are unreasonable, or because they do not understand the situation, it is because very powerful interests in this society *have something to gain* from the subordinate position of women.

Leaving aside the question of all the unpaid work that women do in the home, the fact that the 250,000 women who work outside the home in B.C. will work for about half of what men earn is very important to the people who employ those women, to the corporations who make profits out of low-wage labor.

The fact that only 12% of women workers in B.C. are in unions (compared to 60% of men) makes it easier for women to be used as a pool of cheap labor, to keep down the wages and threaten the jobs of everyone working in B.C.

Women have tried for many years to solve these problems as individuals. Some of us have got university degrees, and then found that we are *over-qualified* for any jobs open to us as women. In Canada, in most occupational categories, women with university education earn less than men with elementary school education.

The problems are general — the statistics tell the same story as case histories tell. We can only solve these problems by working together, by developing an understanding of our situation as women in this society, and building a movement of women strong enough to take on the corporations, and their government, which benefit from our oppression.

This newspaper hopes to play a role in building this movement. Through it, women are asked to tell their own stories themselves — and discuss together the problems that we all face. Through it, we hope to achieve what women have never had in this society — a voice of our own, an organization through which we can realize the power that we *can* have as half the population and one-third of the work force.

FALL CONFERENCE PLANNED

The Women's Liberation Movement has been growing rapidly throughout North America. Many new groups are springing up across Canada and the U.S.

Women from groups across Western Canada, meeting at conferences of the student movement and other organizations, have agreed that it is important for us to exchange our experiences and ideas. A Western Regional Conference has been called for Thanksgiving Weekend in Vancouver.

The theme of the conference is Women: Reform or Revolution. Workshop discussions will cover everything from day-to-day organizing experiences to an analysis of the social situation of women, long-term strategies for the women's movement, and the relationship of our movement to the radical movement as a whole.

If you would be interested in receiving the papers that will be presented at the conference, or participating in the discussions prior to and at the conference, contact: Women's Caucus, 307 W. Broadway, Rm. 6; or phone 298-1732, 298-8430 or 298-9638.

WE'RE PEOPLE TOO!

By MARGARET DOUGLAS
ANGELA HAMILTON
DOREEN BOAL
FRAN DINWOODIE

drawing by Susan Dubrofsky

The following article was written by women who work in the offices of the Political Science, Sociology and Anthropology Department of Simon Fraser University. The Department has recently been placed under trusteeship by the administration of the university who claim the department has "gone too far" in instituting democracy. The article is reprinted from a special edition of *Issue*, publication of the Canadian Union of Students, explaining the position of the Political Science, Sociology and Anthropology Department in the current controversy. (Copies of that newspaper may be obtained from Mordecai Briemberg, c/o PSA Dept., Simon Fraser University, Burnaby 2, B.C.)

Do you work in an office with a rigid authority system? "Yes, Mr. Jones. Of course, Miss Smith." Do you get frustrated, mumbling to one another about your work loads, working conditions, needing medical certificates for a half day's sickness? Are you leery about complaining or discussing your gripes with a supervisor, fearing that he or she will "get you in bad with the boss"? Are your salaries increased (or not increased) merely on the say of your supervisor? Are you bugged by those few workers who try to get their security by being "friends" with the supervisor?

This is not an exaggerated picture; it is typical of conditions in many offices in private industry, government offices and, yes, perhaps in some sections at Simon Fraser University. But not in the PSA Department. Although our hours of work, sick leave, length of vacations and basic salary rates are set down by the university administration, *our working conditions* in the Department are what you might expect where staff can participate openly and directly in making decisions that affect them.

We don't have to mumble to one another about complaints. We can talk freely. Not because faculty "let us", but because we elect three staff members to look after our interests on a six member joint staff-faculty committee that resolves grievances. We don't at present have a student-staff relations committee, but this we are considering.

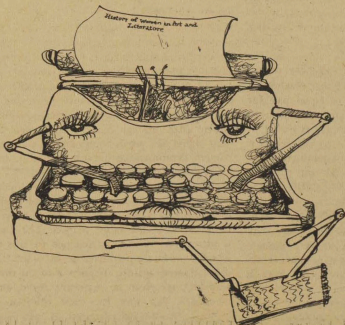
Take an example of our way of solving problems by free discussion and cooperation. On

July 1st all members of the staff in the University received an annual cost of living increase. The University also allowed a small, set amount to be allocated on a merit basis — secretly — with reasons for receiving (or not receiving) an increase to be verbally given to each employee by his or her supervisor. To say the least, this procedure allows room for a lot of manipulation by employers, and it creates jealousy, favor-carrying and splits in the offices. There was no manipulation in PSA! No divide and rule. The members of the staff in the PSA Department met together openly, discussed the situation and agreed to use these funds to eliminate differences among our salaries. Not to increase inequalities, but to erase them. Those people doing the same level of work in this department now receive the same salaries. Would you be able to solve such problems openly and in cooperation with each other in your office?

The more the Department becomes democratically organized, the more we find we are treated as people — not just typists, secretaries, or women.

Some administrators don't think we have the brains for much besides saying whether somebody's nice to work for or not. Like the Chancellor of the University once said: waitresses only need a grade 2 education ... That's all he thought was necessary to serve him.

We're people too. And not as stupid as they like to think.



WOMEN'S CAUCUS GENERAL MEETING

DAY CARE

The Problem and
The Alternatives

SPEAKERS:

Mrs. Maycock
Prov. Health & Welfare
Melody Kilian
SFU Co-op Nursery

THURSDAY, SEPT. 4, 8:00 p.m.
LABOR TEMPLE, 307 W. Broadway, Van.

MOTHERHOOD:

the myth and the reality

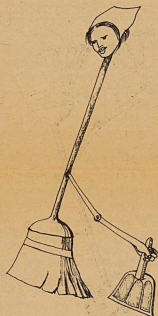
By LIZ BRIEMBERG

drawings by SUSAN DUBROFSKY

Why should a woman with young children expect to spend time working and taking part in activities outside the home?

After all, it is said, her children give her fulfillment and they need her constant presence at home. Motherhood of this type is said to be 'natural' and is always invoked as the basic factor in keeping the kids from 'getting into trouble'. It is also used by the husband who, denied control and satisfaction in his job, wants to retain power over 'his woman' so that she is dependent on him for everything.

The entire society supports 'motherhood' so what can a woman do? At first she believes the argument; but as the children grow she realizes more and more how she has been trapped. Her interests and friends from the time before marriage are cut off. She and her children are caged together. Finally the children escape but the mother is left.



To destroy this myth of 'motherhood' it is only necessary to think about what goes on in this cage called home. The years in which a woman is housebound with young children effectively break her earlier bonds with the working world. She gradually loses the friendships she made while working; in many types of work her skills become outdated; the boundary of her world shrinks to the house and immediate neighborhood and she experiences everything else about the world secondhand through her husband, his friends and the TV.

The very real drudgery of the work entailed in looking after young children and the house has the effect that all repetitive, boring work has — the woman's independent spirit slowly dies; her confidence in her abilities is sapped; to salvage some self-regard, the trivia of the household becomes all important and obsessive with her and the children are the be-all and end-all of her existence.

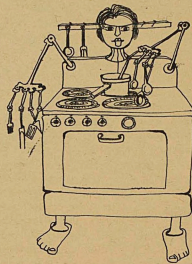
These children are the captive audience and the unwilling victims of the frustrations, loneliness and anxieties of the mother. For example, the mother, who has been getting fed-up with the constant demands of the child and tired of having no time she can call her own, nags and nags a three year old to be careful about spilling food — the child, being very anxious to please, gets more and more nervous about this and finally through being so jittery, knocks over her milk. The mother blows up, the child is terrified and sent to her room screaming. The mother thinks she has disciplined the child and her anger has helped to relieve her frustration so she feels good. But then, as the child continues to yell, guilt sets in as the mother realizes that she manipulated the whole scene so as to 'get back' at the child for pestering her all day long.

Scenes like this happen in all homes frequently and in some homes the child is hurt seriously by the mother. What is most important is to understand that this behavior on the mother's part is *not* her fault; it is not that she is a *bad* mother; it is that the situation in which she is placed is *intolerable*. In addition, the

child is in an *intolerable* position. A young child is finding out so much and communication is so exciting to him that unavoidably he will pester those around — too often, that means his mother. At no other time in our lives do we find ourselves in such a close and continuous relationship with another person, and that person, the mother, is all-powerful.

The child is the victim of whatever the mother is driven by her loneliness and boredom to do, and since the mother has power over only one very small part of her world — her children — she uses it to demonstrate to herself that she is in control. Therefore the child is socialized in a way that results largely from the mother's reaction to her own situation rather than in a way that would contribute to the health of the child and the society. The child's attitude towards possessions is formed by his mother's preoccupation with furnishings, clothing and the objects of home life. The child becomes the 'possession' of the parents and is expected to compete and achieve outside the home to boost their self-regard.

This all adds up to a picture of home life which we can all recognize, and which destroys that concept of 'motherhood', supposedly the corner-stone of family life. In other words, maybe a mother can and should exist in quite a different way. She should exist in a way which not only enables her to be part of the larger community and the work world but also enables her to have a richer and growing relationship with her husband rather than a stunted, frustrating, nagging one. The husband will be spared from coming home each evening to face a barrage of tension that has mounted during the day between his wife and children. The relationship between the mother and child will be much healthier since the mother is not totally dependent on the child for her self-regard and dignity. The child will have a much richer experience relating to people outside of the home. It is simply not true that the best relationships between parent and child depend upon them being constantly together. What makes a relationship good is what each person can contribute to it. The richer and more satisfying the life of each member of the family, the better the relationships are.



If this is what we aim for then we require a society in which both men and women have control over their lives outside the home as well as within. Right now, most people have control neither outside nor inside the home. Mothers are trapped into the role of 'motherhood', not by their own deficiencies, but by the system in which we live. This system has defined woman's role as in the home — it is an economic necessity that she stay in the home — and the system conspires to deprive her of educational opportunities and job opportunities for working outside the home, and it pays her abominably low wages and provides very poor conditions for the care of her children if she does work.

For a woman to exist as a mother in the alternative way, I suggest, participating fully in the world outside of the home, and with much richer and rewarding relationships within the home, *availability and excellence* of day care facilities is fundamental. The situation in the greater Vancouver area is that while there are sufficient places for those *now* asking for daycare, their quality is poor. In effect, they are mainly custodial centres. The staff working at these centres are paid low wages and have few promotional possibilities. The fees are subsidized by the Provincial Government but a means test is required, and in Vancouver itself this test is administered by a social welfare agency. Many people dislike the 'snooping' of the agency and would prefer to simply submit a financial statement twice a year. In addition the centres are frequently a great distance from the mother's workplace and home so that travelling is a burden. Obviously the situation is totally inadequate.

Each neighborhood should have its own daycare centre with the community it serves controlling it and having responsibility for promoting its interests. It should have a regular, well-trained staff, both male and female, as well as volunteers from the neighborhood — maybe older people could be of great use here.

For hundreds of years women have done unpaid labor in the home. It now seems appropriate to demand that some of this back pay owing to us be poured into a day-care centre program as outlined, where excellence in the provision of pre-school enrichment experience is the aim.

THE PEDESTAL is published when possible, by Vancouver Women's Caucus.

We welcome criticisms, articles, letters, financial contributions, and sales help. Lay-out etc. for this issue was done by Diane Shrenk and Jean Rands.

Type set by Peak Publications Society. Printed by union labor.

