



**A WOMEN'S
LIBERATION
NEWSPAPER**

PEDESTAL ^{25¢}

VOLUME 4 NO. VII

VANCOUVER, B.C.

AUGUST 1972



PEDESTAL FUNDRAISERS AT THE AUGUST BEACH PARTY...

**INSIDE THIS ISSUE... WOMEN IN LAW
TRIALS
OF, BY, AND FOR
WOMEN**

INFINITY

FLASCO

BY CHERYL X

Infinity Fair (youth culture festival) offered free booth space to various community organizations. Some of us at the Women's Center decided we could use a little publicity in Vancouver, so I volunteered to respond to the invitation to participate.

My first step was to phone the woman who had contacted us originally. Well, of course, we all know a mere woman can't make any official commitments, so this lady had to refer me to the male program director. I would have to go for an interview with the gentleman to discuss whether we could take them up on their offer.

The woman had one of those slick Hollywood names with a ring, like Tippy Hedren, and the fellow had one of those third-generation, establishment, prep-school names like Chase Sanborn III. So automatically I expected programmed behavior. I never did meet Tippy but Chase turned out to be just what I had expected, only younger (about 25).

He asked me to explain the Women's Centre and to orient it on a political-social scale of the general Vancouver women's movement. I had only been in Vancouver 5 weeks, but that didn't stop me from rattling off a history and description worthy of ten women's organizations.

Why, I wondered, am I trying to sell HIM the Women's Center? The success of Infinity Fair depended on the participation of groups such as ours. He should have been selling me on the advantages for us in participating. But the salesmanship was infectious.

"Are you a women's liberation organization?" he asked.

"The Center," I said, "is open to and operated for all women in Vancouver." However, I told him "the women who are involved in the center to the point of staffing and operating it are generally personally committed to women's liberation."

"Then your organization is political rather than a social-action group?" he asked, meaning of course, how violent, aggressive and obnoxious might we be?

"Is women's liberation political in your terminology?" I asked.

So he tells me how when he was an undergraduate at York University there was a Liberation Week during which all liberation groups demonstrated and participated. A group of women's liberationists 'big as football players' formed a line with locked arms and marched across campus—mowing down anyone in their path.

"Now that's POLITICAL!" he bellowed.

Never having heard of similar actions on the part of the women in the Vancouver movement, I said, "Naw, we ain't political."

So we got the booth.

Midway through this interview a P.R. type came rushing in with the news for his 4 colleagues in the office that he had lined up a great belly-dancer, whose many talents he began to outline. With a great flourish and a lot of 'shushing', they made him aware that a 'WOMEN'S LIBBER' was in the room. I was surprised that my presence inhibited them so, surprised that they had any respect for my sensibilities. It sure didn't happen again.

Dear Chase kept talking about the 'girls' in the movement. Finally during our third conversation he caught on to my incessant use of the word 'woman'.

"If you and the girls...uh...er...the women..."

Meanwhile back at the Center: The press office was interrupting a collective meeting to find out all about us so he could write a fabulous press release about us and our participation in Infinity Fair. Obviously, they were desperate if they considered giving us any publicity. Of course, they were being boycotted by some radical organizations.

His manner, and his behaviour, as well as his in-

tent to use our activities to better the reputation of Infinity Fair completely alienated the women there.

On the day I went out to set up our booth there was general disorganization. The man with the chart could not be found to show me where our booth would be, so I asked around among the other fair staffers. I mentioned that our booth was to be next to the abortion petition booth.

"OH YEAH!" They knew right where THAT booth was. So following their directions across the auditorium, I arrived at the supposed abortion booth to discover that it was the Natural Childbirth Practice booth! It had photos plastered about of kicking, screaming babies, and one of a 9 month old foetus about to be born. The idiots couldn't tell the difference between a live birth and an aborted foetus—and besides, who is going to solicit abortion signatures with pictures of the aborted foetus?

Then I found a solicitous young man who offered to help me find the fellow with the chart. After I told him it was the women's center booth, he looked at my women's symbol button, and asked, somewhat incredulously,

"Are you really...uh...ardently in favor of all that?" "Yes," I said, BETWEEN GRITTED TEETH.

The next group of Infinity Fair gorillas I encountered had one member who attempted to make me, women's liberation in general, the butt of some snide, tasteless sexual suggestions.

So from all these encounters and the conversations I had with other women we decided not to participate at all. When I saw Chase I told him that a collective decision had been made that we would not set up a booth because of the sexist, condescending attitudes of the staff of the Fair.

"Well," he said, "you and I should get together sometime. What's your phone number?"

"I don't have a phone."

"Well, I'll get ahold of you through the Center."

"SURE."



DEAR READERS,
 AGAIN WE ARE APPEALING TO YOUR GOOD
 WILL TO HELP US THROUGH OUR FINANCIAL
 DIFFICULTIES. WE STILL SEEM UNABLE TO
 MEET OUR PRINTING COSTS. HOWEVER, IF
 WE GET ENOUGH NEW SUBSCRIPTIONS
 (AND DONATIONS!) WE CAN DO IT. SO GIVE
 YOUR SISTER A GIFT SUBSCRIPTION!

AND ONE MORE MINOR PROBLEM WE'RE
 ASKING YOU TO BEAR WITH US... WE SEEM
 TO HAVE MISPLACED A FEW CHEQUES
 SOMEWHERE IN OUR SMALL CLOSET
 SIZE OFFICE. SO IF YOU'VE SENT US
 A CHEQUE WITHIN THE LAST 2 MONTHS
 AND IT ISN'T WITH YOUR BANK STATE-
 MENT SOON, PLEASE ASSUME IT IS
 AMONG THE "MYSTERIOUS DISAPPEARANCES"
 AND SEND US A NEW ONE.
 COMBAT CONFUSION TOGETHER!

THE PEDESTAL COLLECTIVE



laying Guilt trips on women

by Donna Keck, Baltimore

Reprinted from *Women* vol.2, no. 4, 1972.

I have been politically active since 1960 when I marched on my first civil rights demonstration in support of the lunch-counter sit-ins taking place in the South. Since that time my politics have evolved through various stages from civil rights to anti-war to anti-capitalist to anti-sexist. At every stage of my development I have been faced by politically "more advanced" positions which challenged where I was at. In the beginning, if one were really fighting racism, one had to go South and endure the risks involved in the unfriendly territory of Mississippi, Georgia, and Alabama. During the anti-war struggle, I was challenged to put my body on the line by breaking the law to symbolize and prove my opposition to the war. As my understanding of capitalism developed, I was told that the correct way to oppose the system was to work in a factory and take on the worker's struggle. Now in the women's movement, I am confronted by demands that to be truly woman-identified and revolutionary one must cease to relate to men, directing all one's energies and emotions to women. Each of these positions is valuable in itself, but laying any one as an imperative for everybody is a guilt trip.

For a while it felt very good to be in the women's movement. For the first time in my life, I felt accepted and whole, I felt like a good and productive person. Women from different backgrounds listened to one another, supported one another and grew strong together. Differences based on class, race, sexuality and other areas emerged and began to be dealt with. But the level of struggle escalated so fast and now if one doesn't share all the worst oppressions, that is, if one isn't a third-world, working class lesbian, one feels isolated, inferior, guilt-ridden and politically paralyzed.

The point I want to make here is that sectarianism in all its various manifestations has been exceedingly destructive to the movement in this country. There simply is not just one correct way to revolutionize a

society as large, diverse and complex as ours. I want to speak out strongly against sectarianism in the women's movement because my guts are in it and because it's especially dangerous at a time when we have the opportunity to reach women at every level and throughout our society. Women advocating their version of the politics of purity are no different from the Progressive Laborites or the many other splinter groups each canting its own brand of Marxism-Leninism. The message is quite different, but the reality is the same: a small group arrogantly pronouncing the right way for us all to make the revolution. I left the Catholic Church when I was 19 and I have no desire to trade one catechism for another. Finally, intra-movement squabbling has always been pointed to by the powers-that-be as proof that we shouldn't be taken seriously. Sectarianism drains our energies because it is emotionally upsetting and because it forces us to spend more time battling it out among ourselves than talking to people out there potentially ready to listen.

I am actively fighting sexism and I am a woman-identified woman. To me that means that I am totally committed to understanding and exploring our common experiences and to working out our common future. Most of my energy is directed toward women because women are thinking about doing things I'm interested in. I love women, thanks to my experience in the women's movement, and I am happy that I am a woman. I am open to relating to women sexually, but will do that when it feels good and not because it is part of a political program.

None of this prevents me from relating to men, however. I can only view it as anti-human to suggest that all women refuse to relate to the other half of the human race. Certainly I don't waste my time with men who are antagonistic, chauvinistic assholes. I

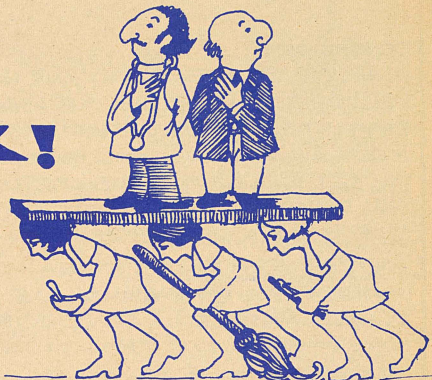
relate to men who respect me and who are trying as hard as I am to change. It is not easy for any of us to change and it is female chauvinism to suggest that women are categorically better than men. It is also politically suicidal to exclude men since realistically very few women can ever entertain such a possibility.

I want to affirm the contributions that lesbian/gay women have made to the women's liberation movement, and I embrace lesbian/gay women as part of the women's movement. It is absolutely crucial for women to be free and to be encouraged to relate to women sexually. Consciousness-raising on the issue of lesbianism has been very important for all of us, and the concept of woman-identified women which originated with radical lesbians is fundamental to our movement. But it is one thing to say we must deal with heterosexual chauvinism and another to say that we must smash heterosexuality or that all heterosexual women oppress lesbians and all white women oppress colored women, etc. Such guilt trips get us nowhere because there is no way to eliminate privilege in this society. We can try to understand it and we can learn not to use it against one another, but our various class, race and sexual privileges will remain until our society is transformed.

Political criticism and analysis are extremely important to the development of our movement. I am not advocating that we allow ourselves to do whatever feels good, not that we support every woman where she is at. We need to challenge complacency and passivity among women; we need to push ourselves to be strong and active. But severing all ties to men is not the only way to fight sexism.

On one level, what we have to do seems quite simple. White men over 30 make up only 15% of the population and only a small percentage of them wield the power in our society. So the rest of us — over 85% of the population — black, brown, red, yellow people, women and young people — we need to identify the real enemy and get it together to remove him from power.

HOSPITALS ARE SICK!



BY HELEN POTREBENKO

The Hospital Employee's Union, Local 180, held its annual convention at the Coachouse Inn in North Vancouver June 26-29.

Like all B.C. labour unions, they feel "...victimized by government interference into the normal bargaining process," and therefore passed a resolution to set aside "...a sum not to exceed \$10,000 annually for the purpose of political education and political advertising." The original resolution wanted the money to be used to defeat the Social Credit government and this was watered down, so it's hard to tell exactly what this resolution will mean in practice.

The problem of the HEU, however, is not one which will be significantly helped by a change of government. The only significant changes in HEU can be made by the membership. HEU is the usual top-heavy union in which the executive decides what is good for the members without much room allowed for members opinions.

Practical nurses, orderlies, aides, cleaningmen and women, laundry and kitchen workers, maintenance staff, clerical staff are in the Hospital Employees Union, the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) or they are unorganized in B.C.

At the convention, constitutional amendments and resolutions were passed in the prescribed manner. Many of these seemed trivial; none were designed to make the union more democratic and responsible to the membership. Some were designed for exactly the opposite purpose. Resolution no. 5 submitted by the Provincial Executive Committee is for the purpose of bringing "...a greater degree of expertise in all of the Union's dealings." This means that if "qualified personnel cannot be found within the union membership to fill posts then an 'expert' should be hired from outside.

There were other resolutions which were quite nice. One such resolution directed that a history of the union be written and sold cheaply to members. Another asked for a guaranteed income for the aged and the unemployed. Another expressed the Union's displeasure with France's nuclear tests. Also, the resolution, which has become traditional since the last B.C. Fed convention was passed asking that the minimum wage be increased to \$2.50 per hour.

They didn't talk much about women in spite of the fact that 80 percent of the union membership are women. One resolution would prohibit male employees from accepting female positions until the discrimination against female employees is ended, but the Union did not say that it intended to do anything about ending the discrimination.

Everyone I asked agreed it was a convention, all right and some even said it was a nice convention. For many women workers, from small towns, it's the only proper holiday they'll get so they get dressed up in their finest and after a few days, everyone shows symptoms of late parties.

The resolutions did not deal with the problems of hospital hierarchies or their affect on the general health of the population.

Hospitals are caste systems with a well-defined place for each member. There is no communication between different layers except in the form of direct orders from superiors. There is no promotion within

the system. Kitchen staff cannot learn to become aides; nurses can become head nurses, but they cannot become doctors.

Most of the work in hospitals is done by the people (mostly women) who are at the bottom of the hierarchy, and lowest paid. Their work is essential to the welfare of the patient. The people at the top, who are well-paid, do little of the work involved in looking after patients. They keep the workers in the hospital divided: divided by sex (men generally better paid than women) and divided by status, so that every one feels that they are a bit closer to the top of the hierarchy than someone else.

Much lip service is paid in hospitals to the importance of everyone's work in the care of patients and yet in no way is this recognized in either the pay scales or in the power a small group wields over the other workers.

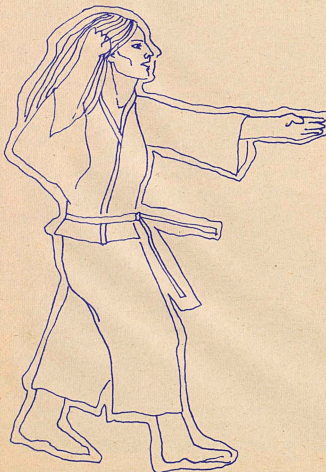
The VGH unit is planning a meeting to discuss equal pay for equal work in the fall. The object is to get more women involved in the union as it is only the involvement of rank and filers which will make the union more democratic. Women will become involved only if they see that the union can be made responsive to their needs. The present contract with management is for two years; between contracts other kinds of action can be taken such as appeal to the Human Rights Commission.

In the B.C. Hospitals which are organized by the Hospital Employees Union 180:
MEN IN THE POSITION OF:
 Orderly \$665.50
 Kitchen Helper 1 \$638.50
 Cleaner \$630.00

WOMEN IN THE EQUIVALENT POSITION OF:
 L.P.N. \$529.75
 Kitchen Maid \$463.00
 Housekeeping Maid \$463.00

WOMEN'S PATROL

by Barbara Roberts



In our society, women are visible targets. Every day, women are assaulted on the streets by men. In its perversity and perversion, society quite often assumes that it is somehow our fault, that we invited attack simply because we are in the wrong place at the wrong time, because we are women. And we, because being attacked is so unexplainable and irrational, often feel that what society claims is true — that we are somehow guilty. Guilty because we have been made victims.

But we can do nothing about this. Women cannot be hidden indoors, secluded like hothouse plants. This is our world too and we have the right to walk in it. We cannot stay off the streets at night if we have jobs to go to. Yet no one seems to be interested in changing the circumstances in which we are the victims. If women are to be visible targets no longer, we must make the changes ourselves. Women's liberation through working to change the society we live in, can accomplish this, but that will take a long time and what can we do in the meantime?

A group of women, interested in this problem, have suggested the institution of a Women's Patrol, composed of women who are capable of taking care of themselves, to perform a variety of functions. Women who work at night in unsafe areas (is there any other kind?) can be provided with an escort, or put in touch with other women working there to

form an escort pool. Women who are harassed or attacked on the streets will have a better chance of being left alone if there is a possibility that the attacker might find himself in an unpleasant situation because a Women's Patrol exists. Women who are raped could be given the proper kind of help and support in going through the often nightmarish legal and medical procedure. Perhaps an active Women's Patrol could be an influence in changing the disgraceful attitudes of cops and court in rape cases. (The acquittal rate for crimes of violence other than rape is 15 percent. The conviction rate for rape is 15 percent. And not more than one-third of rapes are ever reported and prosecuted.)

The project is a rather staggering undertaking, and could not be done unless large numbers of women were willing to become involved. It is all quite nebulous at this stage. Because of the nature of the problem, it seems likely that groups composed of women of all sorts of outlooks would be interested and cooperative, and also that some sort of funding might be available to start and maintain it. Please give us some feedback on this. Let *The Pedestal* know your reactions and your interest. It would be a wonderful feeling to walk down the street without being afraid or uncomfortable. This may be one of the ways we can make it possible to do that.

EQUAL PAY FOR EQUAL WORK

BY ANNEHOGAN AND WENDY TRAPP

For the past twenty-three years, the Vancouver Board of Trade has been publishing a confidential detailed guide to clerical salary discrimination for its member firms. This year's annual informative report on the member's illegal activities was diverted through a copying device by an outraged discriminatee (who was supposed to file it away loyally without looking at it). Thanks to her daring, the annual "Clerical Salary Survey" fell into the hands of the Working Women's Association and the Status of Women Council. As a result, on Thursday, July 13, many female Vancouver office workers received a leaflet on their way to minister to the wheels of commerce. Although some women had their leaflet grabbed by male companions before they could grasp it, the following message reached well over two thousand women:

Equal Pay for Equal Work

Not so, says Vancouver's Board of Trade.

So you think your firm pays you for equal work? Well, think again. Especially if your company is one of 409 member firms who contributed to the Board of Trade's 23rd Annual Clerical Salary Survey.

This report is confidential, so you may never see it, not even if you ask.

COMPARE THE SALARIES ON THE CHART BELOW



This Board of Trade report is important because member firms can refer to it before granting salary increases to their men and women employees.

For a copy of the Board of Trade report, try calling the Vancouver Board of Trade, 1177 West Hastings. 681-2111.

Twenty-five clerical occupations in which both women and men are employed are listed for salary ranges and weighted average salary. Without exception, the weighted average salary for each position is lower for women than men. Here are these figures, taken from the report:

For these twenty-five positions, the salaries of 3866 female and 1525 male employees are tabulated. The Board of Trade has stated defensively that its report is purely and simply an unbiased factual survey. Right on! At last, exact figures are available, from an unquestionably reliable source. The word is out. Employers are so self-assured in their blatant discrimination against a majority group as to allow a printed survey of their violation of the Human Rights Act to be compiled.

If you are not getting equal pay for equal work, you are not alone. For support in obtaining your rights, why not call SWC or the WWA at the above phone numbers? The sad fact is that women must speak with a united voice to be heard at all in our controversial demand for full human status.

In case you had any doubts, it shows that women do NOT earn EQUAL PAY FOR EQUAL WORK.

Are you tired of being taken advantage of by employers who pay larger salaries to men for the same work performed by women? Are you tired of firms which will not give pay increases and promotions to women as readily as to men?

If you want to do something about this, why not lay a complaint with the Human Rights Commission under the terms of the Human Rights Act which is supposed to prevent discrimination on the basis of sex? The Status of Women Council and the Working Women's Association are attempting to make this Act more effective in protecting women's rights.

For information, moral support and assistance in laying a complaint, call us at:

Status of Women Council, 1045 W. Broadway. 733-1421 or 733-3838

Working Women's Association, 511 Carrall. 684-0523.

All requests for help will be kept strictly confidential.

If you want to do something about this, come to a meeting of the Working Women's Association on Tuesday, July 18 at 7 p.m. at the YWCA, Dunsmuir and Burrard. Only by working together can women improve their working conditions and salaries.

WOMEN'S REFERRAL SERVICE

At a meeting I attended recently, I discussed with a group of women various ways and means of getting women together to help other women in trouble. One of the ideas brought forward was providing a women's referral service. The service would provide women with a place to stay, either overnight or for a few days; a place where they would be welcomed with no questions asked; a place where they would find comfort and support; a place where they could have a bed without paying exorbitant motel prices; a place where they could get away from all their problems at home for a night; a very necessary place.

As we discussed the idea all of us were infected with the excitement of the idea. How many times had we wanted and tried to leave, but stopped on the porch after slamming out of the house, suddenly realizing there was nowhere we could go. Our friends were just that - our friends - and we didn't want them taking sides in our quarrels. Where could we find a place to stay, with the change from last week's grocery money all that was left in our pockets. So, after a resentful walk around the block, we return home.

We have two ideas about how a program of this sort should be initiated. We could associate ourselves with the Crisis Centre now available in Vancouver - who receive calls every day from women needing a service such as the one we are proposing.

In working with the Crisis Centre we would be using their trained personnel to deal with those women with severe psychological problems, as we're definitely not trained to deal with suicidal persons. However we could have them refer to us those women needing the support we can offer.

We hope eventually to have lists available around Vancouver, arranged by particular areas and particular nights people are available. We're thinking very strongly about applying for a LIP grant, or to a foundation, as we will be needing money for advertising, phone bills, and hopefully for salaries. We want to be able to provide women with decently paying jobs as well - jobs that many of us need.

Another possible way of approaching this job is to start out entirely on our own. We could rent a phone and advertise the number heavily, perhaps eventually getting enough money together to rent office space, and working from there. We definitely don't want this to become an elitist project. We don't want to reach women already involved in the Movement - though they need this service as well. We want to reach all women living in all parts of Vancouver. We want to make our service as well known as the Crisis Centre. We will need to advertise our service everywhere - in libraries, in laundromats, in community centres. Hopefully by reaching women through this action, they will get involved with other women in rap groups or in other political actions, and they will get involved with their families in one of the various counselling services available. We're still very much in the planning stages. We need women to write us through the Pedestal with their ideas about how this project could be organized. If you have an extra room in your house, if you want to help coordinate addresses and people, if you are good at writing grants - write to us. Maybe we can all get together and make this work.

BY LYNN ALWAY

POSITION	WOMEN		MEN	
	SALARY RANGE	WEIGHTED AVERAGE FEB. 1972	SALARY RANGE	WEIGHTED AVERAGE FEB. 1972
CLERK - JUNIOR	\$305 - \$455	\$ 374	\$ 305 - \$505	\$ 418
CLERK - INTERMEDIATE	\$355 - \$ 555	\$ 457	\$ 425 - \$715	\$ 570
CLERK - SENIOR	\$ 425 - \$ 645	\$ 533	\$ 555 - \$875	\$ 714
COST CLERK - JUNIOR	\$ 385 - \$ 525	\$ 460	\$ 435 - \$705	\$ 575
COST CLERK - SENIOR	\$ 445 - \$ 725	\$ 581	\$ 585 - \$895	\$ 750
ORDER CLERK	\$ 365 - \$ 675	\$ 474	\$ 485 - \$765	\$ 629
BILLING & SHIPPING CLERK	\$ 395 - \$ 575	\$ 475	\$ 405 - \$625	\$ 618
MATERIAL RECORD CLERK	\$ 345 - \$ 525	\$ 439	\$ 445 - \$ 765	\$ 640
FILE CLERK	\$ 305 - \$ 415	\$ 347	\$ 325 - \$ 555	\$ 401
MESS ENGER - OFFICE BOY or GIRL	\$ 275 - \$ 455	\$ 378	\$ 305 - \$ 435	\$ 380
BOOK KEEPER - JUNIOR	\$ 345 - \$ 535	\$ 441	\$ 425 - \$ 655	\$ 539
BOOK KEEPER - SENIOR	\$ 435 - \$ 685	\$ 560	\$ 575 - \$ 905	\$ 715
ACCOUNTING OR BOOKKEEPING MACHINE OPERATOR - JUNIOR	\$ 325 - \$ 495	\$ 405	\$ 405 - \$ 655	\$ 535
CASHIER	\$ 365 - \$ 565	\$ 450	\$ 435 - \$ 765	\$ 626
TELLER	\$ 345 - \$ 485	\$ 400	\$ 365 - \$ 655	\$ 468
EMPLOYEE RECORD CLERK	\$ 435 - \$ 555	\$ 502	\$ 435 - \$ 805	\$ 648
PAYROLL CLERK	\$ 405 - \$ 605	\$ 511	\$ 535 - \$ 755	\$ 657
TIMEKEEPER	\$ 325 - \$ 545	\$ 441	\$ 525 - \$ 785	\$ 635
TABULATING MACHINE OPERATOR - JUNIOR	\$ 475 - \$ 595	\$ 538	\$ 475 - \$ 755	\$ 610
TABULATING MACHINE OPERATOR - SENIOR	\$ 520 - \$ 850	\$ 635	\$ 605 - \$ 755	\$ 669
BILLING MACHINE OPERATOR - JR.	\$ 345 - \$ 475	\$ 419	\$ 355 - \$ 515	\$ 470
BILLING MACHINE OPERATOR - SR.	\$ 385 - \$ 555	\$ 470	\$ 615 - \$ 695	\$ 648
COMPUTER OPERATOR - JUNIOR OR TRAINEE	\$ 355 - \$ 495	\$ 435	\$ 405 - \$ 715	\$ 545
COMPUTER OPERATOR - INTER-MEDIATE	\$ 455 - \$ 655	\$ 555	\$ 505 - \$ 755	\$ 623
COMPUTER OPERATOR - SENIOR	\$ 555 - \$ 725	\$ 638	\$ 605 - \$ 875	\$ 748

women in law

Vancouver People's Law School
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732-0222

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INTRODUCTION

The Vancouver People's Law School was established to make information on the law available to laymen. "Women and the Law" is taught by two women law students who, with the help of two lawyers and a law professor, have researched the areas of the law they felt were of special interest to women and written a set of course material which outlines each area.

The course material is designed as an outline only and therefore may be confusing where a section lacks sufficient explanation.

The course will run four consecutive nights. In preparation for the following lecture, read the materials and write out your questions about the confusing areas. If your questions are not answered during the talk, either ask them yourself or write them on paper available and they will be answered the following night.

MARRIAGE LAW

1. *In General:* When you agree to marry, you enter a legal contract. You agree to be sexually faithful and available in return for your husband's legal obligation of support. When parties contract, the law requires they be old enough and sane enough to understand the significance of their act.

2. *Consent:* If you are not widowed, you must be 19 years old or obtain the permission of both parents. If one parent is dead or does not have legal guardianship—i.e. is divorced—then only permission of the other is required. If a parent refuses to consent you may apply to a Judge who will decide whether the refusal is unreasonable in light of your maturity, financial resources, education plans and pregnancy.

3. *Licence:* For a \$5 fee and an affidavit that you are of age and not related to each other you can obtain a licence authorizing a marriage by a registered clergyman. You must wait 2 days from the date of issuance to marry. The licence requirement may be circumvented by publishing banns at one or more services on each of two consecutive Sundays in a parish where at least one of the parties has resided at least 8 days immediately preceding the ceremony.

4. *Procedural Irregularity:* If you fail to get the proper consent, do not obtain a licence or are not married by a registered clergyman, there will be a question as to whether you are married. The Marriage Act provide that an irregularity in a licence obtained and acted on in good faith will not invalidate a marriage. In the case of other irregularities the Court will often hold the marriage to be valid if the parties thought they were married, especially where intercourse has taken place following the marriage.

5. *An Annulment:* a legal concept which means that the marriage contract was never completed. Either the parties were too closely related (i.e. you can't marry a niece's husband), or there was duress or a mistake as to identity, or there was no intercourse due to physical or mental incapacity; or one party was mentally incompetent to the extent he did not understand the nature of the Marriage Act. The Court will also say your marriage never took place if it was not publicized and solemnized in the manner required by the Act. Very occasionally a native ceremony has been considered a valid marriage ceremony, but never in B.C. Now that the divorce grounds have been expanded, parties seeking a judicial dissolution of marriage rarely turn to annulment.

CHANGE OF NAME

1. *Married Women:* cannot apply to change her name—i.e. her maiden name—while she is married. However no Act requires a woman to ever take her husband's name; once she does, it is her legal name. A woman can use any name she wishes, however, provided her purpose is not to defraud.

2. *Husband:* can change his name, and his wife's given name, with her consent.

3. *Children:* their father can change their name provided he has lawful custody and their mother's consent. A man can also change the names of children of his wife's former marriage; he needs the consent of their father and mother. A divorced woman can change her children's names if she has lawful custody and their father's consent. If a child is over 12, his consent must be obtained.

4. *On Divorce:* a woman can apply to change her name as part of divorce proceedings. If she has lawful custody, she can also apply to change her children's names, provided the father consents.

5. *Lack of Consent:* if you cannot locate a person whose consent is required, or if the person refuses, a judge can order his consent is not required.

6. *Procedure:* You do not have to go to court to change your name. You must publish once in the Gazette (a government publication) and in your local newspaper, your present name and intended new name. You must also send an application to:

Director
Department of Vital Statistics
Parliament Building
Victoria, B.C.

and include copies of the published notice. The Department can supply you with the application forms and the correct wording for the newspaper ad. The total cost will be approximately \$27.00.

DOMICILE

1. *In General:* your domicile is the place where you intend to live permanently — i.e. you have no definite plans to move to another province in the future. Residence is where you live now. Domicile is important for some legal purpose, such as contesting a will.

2. *A Married Woman:* loses her right to a domicile and for all legal purposes her domicile is the place where her husband lives permanently. A separated woman still has her husband's domicile. Two provinces, Quebec and Alberta, will grant a woman a separate domicile on application following a judicial separation.

Note: a married woman is required to live with her husband, i.e. if she refuses to follow him to a new job, she has deserted him.

3. *Divorce proceedings:* fortunately the 1968 Divorce Act has made it possible for a woman to have a separate domicile for the purposes of divorce proceedings. She no longer must travel to her husband's domicile to bring an action.

4. *Contracts and Torts:* do not depend on domicile for the Court to have jurisdiction. You can bring an action where you reside or where the contract or tort took place rather than having to sue in your husband's domicile.

PASSPORTS, CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION

1. *Passport:* marriage automatically invalidates a woman's passport. You must apply for a new passport in your husband's name. You can request that your maiden name remain on the passport but your married name will also be shown and your marital status. If you decide to keep your maiden name, continue to sign that way i.e. Passport did not change it.

2. *Citizenship:* prior to the Canadian Citizenship Act of 1947 a Canadian woman marrying an alien — i.e. an American — automatically lost her citizenship and took the nationality of her husband. The Act allows her to now keep her citizenship but it does not restore the status of a woman married prior to 1947.

The alien spouse of a Canadian woman does not enjoy any special status when he applies for citizenship; the wife of a Canadian man need only reside in the country for 1 year.

Also: a child born outside of Canada to a Canadian man is automatically Canadian. But where the mother is Canadian, the child does not take her nationality unless he is unmarried or, of course, if she is married to a Canadian. Likewise, an adopted alien child becomes a Canadian only if, in a joint adoption, the male adopter is Canadian.

3. *Immigration:* in practice when spouses apply for admission, the wife's application is not considered until the husband is examined. If he qualifies, she is allowed in as his dependent. If he does not qualify, she is automatically rejected without her abilities being considered. Therefore her status depends on her husband's ability, not only to support himself but also his family. Likewise, his deportation, for whatever reason, will also include her and any family, as she was only let in as a dependent, not in her own right. However, she would have a right of appeal.

more change of name

by Barbara Roberts

In British Columbia it is illegal for a person to change their surname except in a clearly outlined set of circumstances. A person *other than a married woman* may change their surname; a change of surname by a married man (his wife must consent) causes a like change in the surname of his wife.

So for all practical purposes, a married woman cannot change her last name. Most people react to this fact with indifference. When they learn I am in the process of trying to change my surname legally to one different from my husband's, many are hostile. "If you didn't want to take his name, why did you marry him?", I was asked recently by a worker in the health service office at the university I attend. Surprisingly enough, in a province supposedly devoted to the perpetuation of the nuclear family, the easiest way to change my name legally would be to get a divorce. And while we are both rather horrified at the legal and social implications of being married, we do want to stay together; there is no way we can get divorced and keep living together. So here we are, legally wed, with my name legally his, apparently stuck with the situation.

The fact that my *legal* name is his does not mean that I cannot continue to use any name I choose. I use my name at school, at work, on my social insurance card, and so on. I am in the process of attempting to change my driver's licence (by sending in a change of name and address, hoping they will assume I have gotten married or something and just crank out a new licence automatically) and after that my car registration and insurance. The only problem I will be left with, as far as I can determine, will be my immigration papers. Unfortunately, this is a problem that disturbs me deeply. I find that I

still have reservoirs of sentimentality and I am horrified by the prospect of becoming a Canadian citizen and getting my passport as Mrs. Myhusbandname; I think of myself differently and find it a deliberate assault upon the way I see myself to be forced to use another name.

Then too there is a question of whose name I am desirous of using. The name I am known by is my father's name. If I were to choose my mother's maiden name, it would be *her* father's name. Women do not have names. I have no last name. Logically, I would prefer to choose a woman's name for my last name...my middle name, Ann would do quite nicely. But because I have been married twice, and used a few other names for reasons which include the work I used to do (most counsellors in employment agencies use pseudonyms) I find the prospect of getting used to *another* name appalling. I have justified my choice of my father's name by telling myself it is my family name and that I like my parents and my sisters and do not object to being identified with them. I was born with this name, even though it is, as a man rather condescendingly joked, my "slave name" and I would prefer to die with this name. I am so tired of getting new last names whenever I get a new owner.

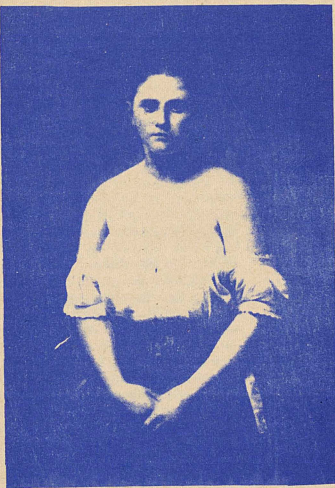
Ironically, because I cannot change my name legally, my husband had to petition to change my last name. We received a letter from the Department of Vital Statistics informing him that "this change is not acceptable under the Change of Name Act". This attempt was the result of a suggestion of a lecturer from the People's Law School at the MacGill Library Women's Studies course recently concluded.

The Status of Women Council has lawyers retained, but they are too busy with serious cases of abuse and so on to initiate legal action on behalf of women who want to use a name different from their husband's, they told me. We are both students, have children, and cannot afford a lawyer.

Although I realize that my problem with my name is a petty one compared to the other sorts of inequities and oppression women face in our society, I cannot help but feel it keenly nonetheless. It seems to me a symptom, a symbol of the situation of women. The custom of a woman taking her husband's name at marriage (it is not a law, but a custom, but once you sign anything with or use his name, you are stuck with it) is a relic of the days when women were literally the property of their husbands, and became civilly dead, legally non-existent upon marriage. Many of the social and legal institutions surrounding marriage itself are reflections or relics of those times. So it seems to me that being forced to bear a name I do not wish to use is a visible sign of the oppression of women. I am no one's property, but I am named as if I were. I am faced with the grim realities of our position every time I am addressed by his name. I will still be faced with the same grim realities if I change my name, but at least I will be known as who I think of myself as being.



If you want to change your name, or try to, send for the forms to the Director of Vital Statistics, Parliament Buildings, Victoria, B.C.



VANCOUVER PEOPLE'S LAW SCHOOL
 ALL COURSES ARE FREE
 PRE-REGISTRATION 732-0222
 DIVORCE AND MATRIMONIAL LAW JULY 31, AUG 1, 3, 4
 7:30-9:30 P.M. AUDITORIUM
 VANCOUVER PUBLIC LIBRARY, 750 BURRARD ST.
 WOMEN AND THE LAW AUG. 21, 22, 23, 24
 7:30-10:30 P.M.
 Y.W.C.A., 580 BURRARD ST.
 CIVIL LIBERTIES AUG. 14, 15, 16, 17
 7:30-10:30 P.M.
 Y.W.C.A. 580 BURRARD
 FORMING CO-OPS, CORPORATIONS, SOCIETIES
 AND DAY CARE CENTRES AUG. 28, 29, 30, 31.
 VANCOUVER PUBLIC LIBRARY
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FEELINGS

BY B. THOMPSON

We were going to write a collective article about small groups — and we still are, some issue. The plan was that we would each write a tiny little bit about a small rap group we had been in, and bring it to a Pedestal meeting, and then talk about groups and what they can do for women and for women's liberation, and eventually amalgamate our tiny articles and the conversations into one article, such as the one we had about Anger in the May issue. I started to write my article and found I couldn't stop — at tiny and just had to write more and more and pretty soon it wasn't an article about small groups. This preamble is to explain the beginning of the story. And the reason the big collective article is not in this issue is that it's not ready yet.

But let me tell you about my experience with small rap groups. I was in two small groups in succession, Encounter groups, 3 or 4 years ago, at a church. A friend, Martha, who brought me along to the church, had explained that one of the groups had too few members so they might consider letting me join even though it was mid-session. I was introduced to the "facilitator"; Martha went off to her group, and the facilitator then sat down and talked earnestly with me, explaining the purpose of "encountering." She then left me and went over to the members of the underpopulated group, who had been warned in advance and had not gone off to their allotted room in the church. The group occasionally glanced over at me, sizing me up I supposed, and I smoked two cigarettes.

It was agreed that I could come conditionally, which seemed fair. If I had totally disrupted their rapport I would have been ejected. Needless to say I kept pretty quiet the first session, and tried to the second week, but I remember blurting out at a time when I knew I should still be on best behaviour, "This sounds like a game of LET'S GET HER." My interjection did not seem to bother or deter them — they were pretty intent on what they were doing, zeroing in on someone for whom several did not have kindly feelings.

The facilitators made drop-in visits on all the groups — like the principal calling on an unsupervised honour class — and I noticed that our behaviour was more circumspect with that added presence and relaxed when she left.

You've probably read all about encounter groups, which seemed to be the vogue a couple of years ago. Our group wasn't as far out as the groups depicted in the film *Bob & Carol & Ted & Alice* (we were amateurs and so were our facilitators) and the members of our group definitely felt that they were the unwanted remnants of the total mass of applicants. Initially there had been choosing up for the groups, like baseball teams choosing players in elementary school, or the NHL draft, and these people in my group had been left over. The facilitators had told them to go together and be a group, and they told me that they had spent the first two or three weeks discussing their feelings about being leftovers, and drawing some solace from each other eventually. With one exception, the members of our groups were women.

An absent member was occasionally mentioned by the group. She had been taken sick and was in a psychiatric ward in Lions Gate Hospital. The group castigated itself for not having noticed her silence and for not drawing her into its warm arms, metaphorically speaking. Before the group disbanded permanently, the missing member returned, still quiet, and was greeted with genuine friendliness and restraint, and deep curiosity (which most of us kept in check). One of the women who had talked a great deal during the sessions and who had an annoying habit of mother-henning every single one of us, came flat out and asked the returned chicken if she wanted to talk about her experience in the hospital. She didn't.

None of us knew anything about each other except our first names, and we made valiant efforts to stay in the Here & Now, so as to examine our own and others' true and immediate reactions, and to get feedback. Just like Fritz Perls said. As we talked, in that uncomfortable little Sunday School room in the church sitting on baby chairs or on the floor, some people cried, some got angry and some tried to boss the group. In the protection of anonymity we did our best to say what we were really feeling; for instance, to tell the bossy person that she was being bossy. The most severely inhibited of us tried to placate everyone. And were told by other members of the group what we were doing.

In our efforts to stay in the Here & Now, we would have long, puzzled silences, sorting out leftover reactions from our week or remembrances of the previous encounter session, and long, erudite conversations on whether a certain expression of opinion might be allowable, even though based on some past occurrence, because it had some relevance to what was now happening or had been triggered by the sight of something in the room, right then in the Here & Now. Although I am now ridiculing those seemingly pointless manoeuvres, and did then too, privately, I found I was looking forward to each week's session. On Sunday I would think, "Three more days till the encounter group." Those people were at least TRYING to be real with each other and to drop masks, as they put it, masks that made them strangers in ordinary life, isolated actors playing roles that they felt helpless to alter.

One day during those weeks, in my lunch break, I met a former boss on the street downtown. "We miss you terribly in the typing pool," he said, "you were always so HAPPY." I stared at him, the extent of my own role-playing sinking in. The happy worker he remembered had kept in check a variety of psychosomatic symptoms of anger by pills and the placations of a shrink, had struggled and wept over poverty, had worried from the distance of the office about the care the children were receiving, had borrowed money she could not return, had abused herself to get the child support money every month from the husband who would not agree to a divorce. Well what do you do — you pretend at work, at least, that you can cope, and they keep you on. And you do cope, even sometimes feeling quite cheerful because you can.

Back to the group. As Spring approached, one by one members left the group. Only one person, a woman, left dramatically in mid-meeting — made an emotion-charged speech and fled. She was frightened of the real person who was emerging from herself at the sessions. The lone man finally told us he felt drained and inadequate for a group comprised entirely of women; that the imbalance was more than he could rectify. He left, and two others said that Wednesday night was a bad one for them, they had other commitments coming up, and our group disbanded.

I told this to Martha, the friend who had originally taken me to the church and who gave me lifts home in her car each week. She was still deeply involved in her own group, and said it was the most important thing in her life. She said that two people had left her group and the others might agree to take me in; she would approach them. They had no intention of stopping for the summer, they were all too buoyed up by each other. That group sounded a lot livelier than mine had been. For one thing, Martha said they had gone into the area of "body awareness," which sounded intriguing from what little she told me.

I had been blotting out awareness of my own inferior body ever since the overwhelming unavoidable awareness of puberty. Then, I had worn big heavy sweatshirts all the hot summers in order to counter those many eyes riveted, so I thought, on my skinny chest. The Sweater Girl was a phenomenon of my generation, with Lana Turner stuck to the walls of army barracks and garage grease-pits. If you were hep you didn't wear a blouse, at my school. The day I turned sixteen I told a teacher at the school that it was my birthday, and she rattled off, "Sweet sixteen and never been kissed!" and the shock reverberated for days in me. I wondered how she had known, and was it obvious to everyone. Later on, a statement in Havelock-Ellis became seared into my mind — not scared quite deeply enough because the exact words escape me — but the statement was about big boobs boding well for the bedchamber. I figured I was beaten before I began, and when Mr. Wrong asked me, a virgin-sure, to marry him, I thought I was very very lucky to find *anybody* who had not read Havelock-Ellis and did not really know what he was missing in marrying me. I stuffed kleenex into my bra on my wedding day just as I had all through college and high school.

Well, since then I had come a little way, and decided I was just not going to care about being thin and had left Mr. Wrong (two children late) and was carving out a stunning career as a clerk in an office, by working a calculator, with occasional boyfriends over the years, most of them wham-bam-zip-away. A nice young man of the cloth had reassured me once when we were discussing the possibility of bedding down and I forewarned him of coming disappointment in my mammary endowments: "My dear lady, I am interested in quite a different part of your anatomy." I was delighted to hear this.

Some other bloody psychologist that I read in those years had written that typical occupations chosen by lesbians were: nursing supervisors, physical education instructors, bus conductors,



typing pool supervisors — TYPING POOL SUPERVISORS — that's what I was working at when I read that book. I allotted and checked the work in the typing pool, and did a share of the work too, working with women who were worse paid even than I was. One girl regularly ran out of food by the end of the month, and on three separate months keeled over from hunger. Another girl had had two epileptic seizures (from the tension in the place, we murmured to each other) and had been fired, with the boss over-ruling my pleas with, "We are not running a charitable institution here. This is a business." Was it ever.

So what I wondered when I read about typical occupations of lesbians that this guy had decided on, could I be working there because I subconsciously latched for those poor girls' bodies and not, as I had thought, for the \$250 a month that supported me and the kids?

Back to the Encounter Group. They told Martha SURELY I could join them and WOW that was a far different group from the other one. For one thing, there were more men than women in this one. I should maybe level here, at great personal risk, and say that one of the main reasons I had gone to any group in the first place was that I was between boyfriends (that is, without one) and really hoped to find one in the group. I did.

The first encounter session with the second group, I was introduced all round after the initial greeting of the group members of each other, hugging and happy cries and warm handclaps. Them, not me. That old stranger on the edge feeling crept in on me.

They were a remarkably aware bunch of people, Martha was right, and they sensed my unease and did their best to alleviate it. Just talking about it made it better. One of the few things that talking about makes better.

We did a body awareness exercise which was to form two circles, one within the other, a wheel within a wheel, one turning clockwise and the other counter-clockwise. As we moved, we touched each other at specified places. That is, for the first spell we would touch hands with each person we passed. Then feet, a complicated exercise then elbows, then shoulders. We never got to the interesting parts, and I relaxed a little, deciding it wasn't going to be an orgy and I would be able to deal with it. We sat in a circle and talked a bit, and then fell silent.

"I want to give Sam a neck-rub," a young girl cried, and ran over to give Sam a neck-rub. That was all right with Sam. The conversation picked up again as the massage was in progress and Sam's head lolled.

One week, I remember, we sat on the floor touching feet to feet. It really is very tough to be formal and wear your mask if you take off your shoes and touch your bare feet against the holey sock of the man across from you. Especially in a nice simple Sunday School room with cut out baby animal pictures pinned to the walls.

The purpose of the sessions was to intensify sensitivity to other people, to tell those there what we were feeling about them, and to find out a little about ourselves. If we could talk truthfully about

how we were reacting right then, in the Here & Now, and get feedback from the group, maybe we would not be in the position of exile from our fellow human beings that most of the people we knew (even we?) were in.

As for Martha, her attachment to the group was so intense that glands started working that had malfunctioned for a long time. All her hair had fallen out bit by bit years before. The phenomenon is called alopecia and Ron Basford has experienced it. She had no eyelashes or eyebrows or hair on her arms or (she said) pubic hair. She wore a wig, carefully subdued false eyelashes, and faintly brushed--on eyebrows.

Well, with all that body awareness and acceptance and stimulation, her hair had started to grow, faintly, like wispy baby hair, under the beautiful wig. She spoke softly of "taking it to the group" and "sharing her thoughts" but it was several weeks before she could bring herself to tell them her hair was growing. More understandably, it had previously taken her months, she told me, to get around to telling them that she had no hair and wore a wig, and that was why she hesitated to take part in some of the "trust" exercises. Martha is beautiful, there's a kind of warmth and friendliness that comes from her and she seems to glow with health. And she is very smoothly well-groomed. The "trust" exercises involved a slight bit of manhandling, and her wig might have fallen off or gone awry. She would not do the exercise of standing, eyes closed, in the centre of the circle and falling in any direction and trusting that the group would catch her, until she screwed up her courage to tell them her reason, and they lovingly told her that they would protect her, and not mind, or laugh.

Martha needed that group very badly. She was married to a young executive who sometimes resented the fact that he had produced no male children, only two daughters. His shrewish mother was still very much on his mind and Martha had over the years spoken to me (and only to me, lest you think she was a steady complainer) of his "hitting out." At first I had thought she meant verbally, but she had eventually explained that when she said "hitting out" she meant "hitting me."

I had "hit out" too, and told her so, but we both knew there was a difference. The person I hit was 40 lbs. heavier than I and 6 inches taller, and could hold me off at arms length, laughing.

Martha dearly loved her home, her "nest" she called it, the physical fact of her home and possessions and had put as much distance as possible between herself and her wretched old Cockney dad, a miser who had put his two daughters in a state orphanage rather than pay someone to keep them after their young mother had died of T.B. Martha had been five then, and her sister six. This was in pre-war England; for some reason or lack of reason the authorities had placed the girls in separate orphanages, and Martha had pined for her sister.

Her most vivid memory of the orphanage was the punishment for bed-wetting. Children who wet the bed were made examples of, and compelled to stand

in a corner of the cinder playground, holding up as high as they could the wet sheets until they dried, so as to be shamed into continence. Anxious five-year-old Martha had been one. An aunt eventually took her home and kept her, along with her sister. At 13 she had gone to work as an apprentice and eventually learned a trade as a hairdresser in London. When she grew up she paid a visit to that orphanage she remembered, wondering if memory had exaggerated the harshness of the matrons. As she entered the now-asphalted yard, she saw standing in a corner of the playground a tear-streaked little boy holding up a wet sheet.

Martha's husband's English childhood had been differently deprived, by his mother's carping against his dad, and meanness with simple materials that the boy had needed to make things. He was punished for using his mother's scissors, for designing patterns with her pen and her paper and her thread and her everything. The brilliant little boy was blocked at every turn by his vigilant, angry mother. The wonder was not that he occasionally hit Martha, but that he kept in check so well the anger his childhood had produced. ("Things aren't always that simple with people," my friend is saying, "there can be many reasons." Who is telling this? Me. And I might be leaving out too much.)

Martha now lived in a lovingly-furnished, meticulously decorated home, and felt a measure of security in the things that made life pleasant.

At this stage in her life then, when she was finding people who accepted her in the group, she blossomed and glowed and was happy, and back home in the mortgaged split-level, her husband's uneasiness increased. She remained in high spirits, she told me, even after he scolded her in front of the two little girls. On our trips to and from the church every week she would say she felt she was walking a tightrope and that now her husband was asking her to give up the group but she could not, and told him she could not. Pressures at home mounted and she fell in love with one of the men in the group, a gentle lawyer (married, four kids).

"I'm in love with his mind," she said, "but it could so easily be something else if we were not careful. It would be enough for me if we could just talk forever. It would be nice if it could be something else. I know you won't understand this because you left your husband but I CANT. I have a marriage, and that means something to me."

Martha's platonic infatuation was reciprocated. I could understand it, almost. I had endured similar nowhere yearnings in my life. In the distant past. Just then it seemed a kind of screwy thing since they were both near forty; it seemed to me more like a 19th century romance than in the Here & Now. My remarks were too sardonic for Martha's fragile confidences to continue very long. The two were always agonizing (she whispered over the phone and on the trips from the church) about how to live their love openly without hurting their respective spouses — how to remain true and open and honest and fine, and still glory in their shining love. Or were those phrases used by another person in the group, telling about his dilemma with his parents when he went on

a holiday with his girlfriend? Have things changed that much in three years, or is it just that my children are so much milder and less vulnerable? I suggested to Martha that they just quietly meet on the sly in a motel like other married couples did who wanted both a raging love affair and no fuss at home.

This vulgar, tawdry and insensitive advice was rejected. Instead, they both eventually told their spouses honestly of the wonderfulness of what they were experiencing, of their *feelings* till unspooled by final plunging physical contact, but unbearably stimulated and titillated by all those touching exercises and body awareness experiments. Martha and the loved one wondered why all hell broke loose when husband and wife knew what wife and husband truly felt. The sensitivity training had not extended as far as empathy with a less-loved one.

Martha was the first one to leave the group after I joined, having decided for the sake of the children not to give up her North Vancouver mortgaged manor and beautiful garden and view, and to stay with her husband on his conditions. There followed, for her, months of hellish anguish and depression and lethargy. Her wispy curling growth of hair and faint real eyebrows fell out and she was clean bald again. She was not allowed to see or speak to me as I was a divorced person and therefore a bad influence. Both she and her husband lived a bad dream. Every so often I would hear from her — a phone call to my office from a pay phone; she would gasp out a few words of misery.

"Leave him," I would say, "you can do it."

"He might hurt the children," she would say. "Take them with you."

"Oh, I couldn't, he would have nothing then, it wouldn't be fair. You see, I must love him."

One time she phoned me at home and said he had hit her, stopped the car on the road and turned and hit her and hit her and hit her until her wig had come off, because she had talked about the loved one insistently. "Phone the police and make a charge," I said, fired up from a women's liberation meeting.

"How could they help?" she said.

"They couldn't, but it might scare him into behaving if there was a threat his name would appear in the paper. You must not submit to this! NO ONE SHOULD ACCEPT ABUSE," I shouted.

This was too much, or my angry tone of voice was too much, because I didn't hear from her for months and months after that. Then things began slowly to get better. She said the two families had agreed to some joint ventures together. Picnics. The theatre. Lectures at the Y.

The next summer I was invited to a party at their home along with all their nearest and dearest friends. In amongst their nearest and dearest friends in the lanterned garden that I saw the platonic lover and his rigidly composed wife. Martha's husband greeted me as always with cries of joy, a big hug and kiss. We were friends again. The people at the party talked about trips, both head and airplane; they seemed to know all the dances that their children knew, and we were dancing with varying degrees of ease to the records that we had borrowed from our children and brought along. I felt like a plodding prole visiting rich neighbours. The clothes were groovy, long, vivid, stylish, expensive; the hair was casual, clean, woven, loose, sunbleached, shining, healthy. The kids showed us the playhouse their dad had made, and the gerbils and mice in their cages. The two little girls were very tidy and careful, shyly smiling through the gaps and braces.

The next summer there was another party and this time Martha had so far mollified her husband that as many members of that old encounter group as she could contact were invited, with their wives or husbands or lovers, as well as some of the nearest and dearest friends. Another effusive hug and kiss, another disorienting tour of the perfect home with two tiny daughters and profusion of tidy pets and delicious food and soft stereo music. I was unhappy that night over a personal problem of non-communication with the man I loved, and after a couple of glasses of wine went off into the dark vegetable patch and had a boozy weep near the compost heap. Then dried off, blew my nose and came back in to the guttering candles and unreal snatches of conversation. For some reason I got wordlessly angry at those people and since I was already angry with my boyfriend I strode down the hill to Marine Drive and waited for a bus. "Oh hell, this is childish," I thought, went back up, sat next to my boyfriend, felt again some (imagined?) impervious coldness, found Martha, said goodbye politely and virtuously, and stalked down the hill once more. Stalked, in fact, almost all the way home to East Vancouver over the Second Narrows Bridge. Got a ride from the P.N.E. home.

A phone call to Martha the next week when she said, "You don't like people," and I made awkward apologies.

Martha and I lost touch again for over a year, and then she appeared in East Vancouver. The two families were working it all out, she said. They have both sold their homes and together bought a house on Wall Street in the area where I live, and are remodelling it to suit 4 adults and 6 children. We made some jokes about Vancouver's financial district, Wall Street (where several communal houses exist and worldly goods are shared). She said they still have a fine view — this one of commercial vessels unloading and the life closer to "the people."

They really *do* seem to be working some things out. Martha's husband, who loves carpentry and painting and designing, is doing all the remodelling of the house and has resigned his deadening job. The loved one can earn, as a lawyer, enough for all of them. Martha is now expert in Hatha Yoga and body awareness and gives classes in it. The wife of the loved one takes part in the long, soul-searching discussions and endless planning and voting meetings about the house; she says they seem to sit for hours. She is now taking teacher training and plans to get out of the house more. Now that I know her better I like her better; in fact they are all likeable. The teenagers intimidate me because they seem so very composed and mature. But that's my problem.

The kids go to a variety of schools and classes and zoom around on their ten-speeds. There is incredible affluence in this counter-culture set-up, and although the two families think of themselves as pioneering and defying convention, they are well insulated by money and position from any horrid outside interference. Social issues do not much concern them; they have an awful lot to do just working out all the permutations and combinations of interaction between the ten of them. As for the babies napalmed in Vietnam and the welfare recipients queuing up for their cheques in the hot sun at the whim of Walter Boyd — those things are very, very remote to Martha.

"Really, it's lucky they are so far away," Martha confides, "things are just so difficult to work out in one's own life." Her hair has not yet started to grow again but her husband stopped "hitting out" long before the families moved together. Martha urges me to try Hatha Yoga for the psychosomatic symptoms that linger on. She looks on tolerantly as I say, "My children have grown, now I can begin anew — I want to write, and I go to meetings and it's interesting to write in a political party." She could not restrain a laugh at the rantings of some of my fellow party members at a canvass meeting at my house when once she dropped in. "They care so much, I explained, keeping my voice down. She smiled and nodded.

"I'm into mysticism," she said after the others had left, and I continued with the India ink on a poster at the kitchen table, "and I can't seem to get interested in other things. I want to explore the whole realm of FEELING." At the time, I was exploring the feeling of exhaustion and did not reply, and she understood perfectly; she is a good friend, one of the best. Some time when it is not so damn late at night with a work day looming ahead, I'd like to talk honestly with Martha. There are not many people you can talk honestly with, I find, and I cherish those few I know. For two years now in order to remain friends with Martha I have kept my tongue in check. Mystic or not, she is a good and kindly person, as deeply bewildered as most of us.

What are we here for? What is happening to our world? Why do we do the things we do? What is going on here? I suspect that we don't have enough time on our poor Earth to straighten out every single head. But I think a damn good elected mayor could tell his police commission to tell the whole police force to bloody well stop harrasing the young people in Kitsilano and that would be more effective than five years of Zen with each policeman. I think a good government could instruct welfare administrators to behave as though the recipients were honourable people who are temporarily or permanently down on their luck. When I talk about this to Martha I get kind of loud and it frightens her.

Just one last word about that group three years ago. The loved one said something to me in that second group that was pretty good. I thought. I had said I felt boxed in by my poverty and my job and my responsibilities to my children; that I lived in a box. Then I had sobbed like a child. The group moved in and held me, and I stopped and heaved and blew my nose. One heavy lady said, "Do you want to talk about what just happened?" and I said "NO!" because I was embarrassed about being a baby in front of them. The group spoke of other things and sat around on the floor touching hands and toes and so on. And then Martha's loved one said, "I'm still thinking about how it must be to live in a box, and I get a very bad feeling. I've been wondering what you could do about that airless little box."

I was flippant; said I might cut a window onto the world; but the loved one was dead serious. "Would you be able to make a door, and so be able to go out once in awhile? You could go back in when you had to, if the box is really where you are now."

For some reason, that suggestion eased the pressure then, and later on when I thought about it, every time I thought about it, I felt things were not hopeless and I could make a door.

So that was my experience with small groups.



POEMS BY NORA D. RANDALL

this panic has been with me before
i have the sense of having failed it
i can see the footprints
leading away from the inevitable
all done so silently
no one knows, even yet
i deserted

i'm here
in pieces
coming together

she is sitting
not far off
unapproachable

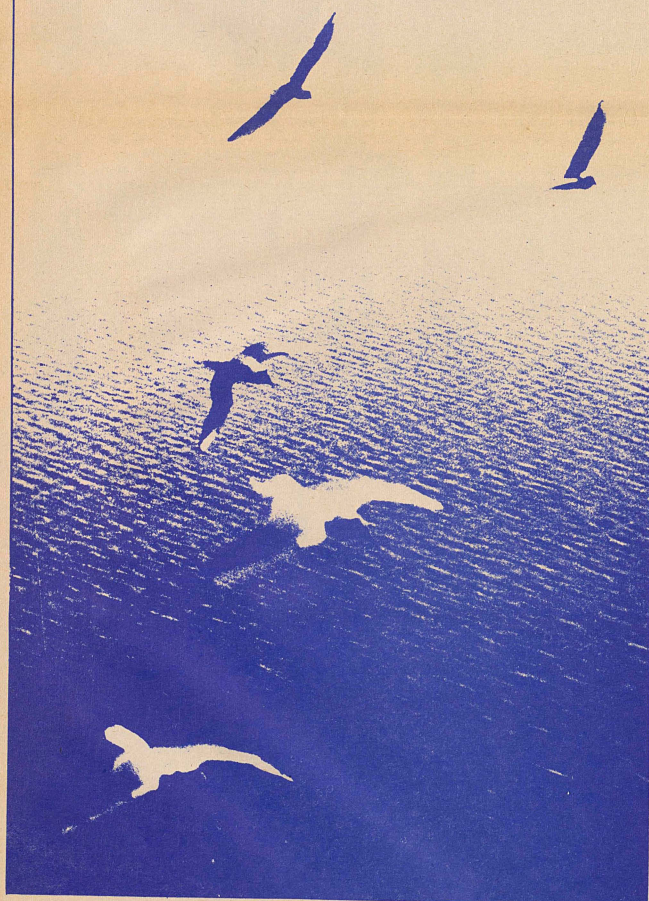
each time i leave
she says "come see me"
as if she does not mind
my failure very much
perhaps next time
i will

"you have your writing
what more do you want?"
a friend says, counting
on me not to say
"you"

why not
i came
rather than
i went away

she sits quietly
it is the water moving
between us
that makes me think
she changes

perhaps i should wait
for calm water to
look at her
but when i go to get her
my body will shatter the water
anyhow, i want her



POWER RELATIONSHIPS

I was going to write an article about my life and coming out and stuff like that, but in the process III realized that what was really bothering me was all the different power relationships between me and other people/organizations. It seems that my life is a constant vibrational battle. Either I am being vamped on or I am pushing someone else around - the balance of power of people being hurt in personal relationships is just excruciatingly confusing. I am either being left or having to go away from somebody; groups are full of people trying desperately to be "stars", be heard, be respected, be heavy. People only listen a small part of the time. More time goes into composing their next position statement, because their lives are all tied up in what they have to say. All these situations seem to be part of what capitalism has done to us - the need to possess each other, be famous, be a leader, be better, the best: all are *power* relationships of one kind or another. A sort of consumer attitude to people and organizations.

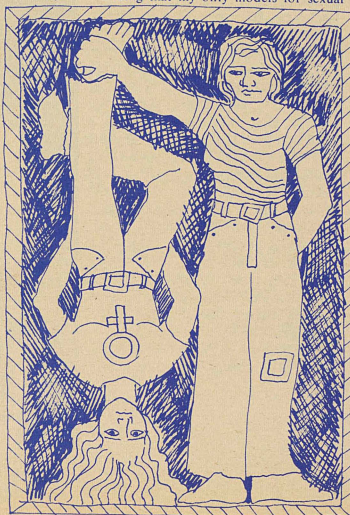
Some really basic power arrangement exists between men and women; that of the oppressor versus the oppressed. A woman working within a mixed group spends a huge amount of time dealing with her oppression. Pushing for space, feeling incapable and all the rest, often terribly isolated from other women and feeling as if no one else is as incapable as she. I am part of a food co-op (a cheap way of getting vegetables and an alternative to supermarkets). I spend a lot of time pushing myself to be as capable as

the men in the group - a competitive situation at best. You know, carrying huge crates around, tottering as I go.

My personal relationships with men are also in a similar pattern: proving my own capabilities, making sure I know I can do something, always trying to deal with that huge well of dependence.

Having not so long ago discovered that I was gay, I have been spending time with gay women. It is really fine finding a situation in which women treat each other as terribly important. There is some common basis of equality, perhaps coming from our op-

pression. No woman has any real economic power over another woman. Economic power is pretty much in the hands of men. The implied power men have just by *being* men does not exist for women. Yet, I am finding that my only models for sexual



need for being pushed fits in with other people's need for being important and so the dynamic of a hierarchy gets set up so quickly it's unbelievable. I am also in a rap group with eight or so women. Often I catch myself using my feminist militance to ego trip or to look "heavy" - sort of mentally swaggering around with people. Using my feminism this way seems another way to get points in this competitive system.

Okay - I spend a great deal of time with just women now - working on the paper, women's liberation Educational, spending time with gay women. A huge relief at not having to deal with that basic oppressive pattern between men and women. Yet I still find hierarchies existing. Just because a group is only women doesn't seem to eliminate ego trips of one kind or another. During a newspaper meeting I can feel myself trying competitively to be important on the one hand, and wanting to be pushed on the other. My wanting to be pushed comes from having been pushed for so long that it's nothing but frightening to have to really act for myself. My relationships are based on the heterosexual world. All the ways I have ever seen people trying to love each other have been power struggles: my parents, my relationships with people in University. Even with the basis of equality among gay women, all my instincts are to try to possess or let myself be possessed. It is hard to think in terms of anything but couple relationships for a start. My feeling of overwhelming dependence on people doesn't magically go away.

So, I have been trying to think of some way to go with all this stuff. Power for so long has been equated in my mind with maleness. It is hard to know what female power really means, how to have a power that is strong without being manipulative. I do know one thing - women have to be powerful because this capitalistic world is certainly not going to grant women freedom on the basis of "good behavior". AND WOMEN ISOLATED HAVE NO POWER. Some kind of groups are necessary - some kind of women's new untried groups where women are really trying to deal with all their desires to be best, really trying to do things collectively. I think two things should happen in any kind of organization.

The group should fulfill its purpose but also we should watch all the time what is happening between the women, try to notice ourselves being "heavy" and talk about such imbalances all the time. Realize hierarchies will happen before we even overtake it - some people always leading, and others always being led.

Reprinted from *The Other Woman*, Vol. I, no. 1.

PEDESTALS CONFISCATED!

As the three of us started on our trip to California, we flashed on all the good times we would have in San Francisco. The border was only a few miles ahead and we were confident that three young women would have no problems (after all, we were just visiting relatives).

When we arrived, waiting in the car to stop for routine questioning, an elderly official came and asked us our citizenship, (two Canadians and one landed immigrant) and if we had anything other than personal effects, etc. For some unknown reason, he decided to check the ashtray, where he found (to our chagrin) the butt of a hand-rolled cigarette made of an herbal smoking mixture known as John Bull. However, he called it grass, and asked us to pull in for questioning.

The other customs employees proceeded immediately to search the car, and asked us to empty our purses and pockets. I had a little piece of hash stashed in a matchbox in my purse - a gift for the road, from a friend. Somehow I managed to transfer the matchbox into an "invisible" pocket in my Navy-cadet surplus pullover, while we were left alone on the Group W bench. So although they checked arms for needle tracks, and went through everything, they didn't find the real dope.

This happened the day that Wallace had been shot and all of the U.S. Customs people were hyper-active and nervous. They kept interrupting their hassling of us to make phone calls to check out Wallace's condition.

All they had on us was the butt of a John Bull cigarette. However, everyone there was convinced that what the old guy found was really marijuana, so they began to take the car apart. They checked the hub-caps, the motor, took the seats out, everything. They took our 4 bottles of beer (which we hadn't thought to declare, since the old guy hadn't asked about anything but personal effects) and made the car owner pour it down the sink.

They confiscated 250 copies of *The Pedestal* which were left over from the previous week's distribution around Vancouver. They suspected it was "Communist" literature, and that we intended to sell it in the U.S. They muttered under their breath about women's "lib" and the nude picture of two women in that issue.

Still we were not allowed to leave. Still they had not run a routine test on the herbal smoking mixture. We had already been there an hour. They left us sitting along on the bench while they rummaged some more through our things. All were positive that we had more dope, and that all they had to do was find it to arrest us.

I began to get worried - after all the hash was in my pocket! I had to get rid of it. I wandered into the hallway, searching for a washroom or someplace to stash it. Luckily the hall was empty. There was an ashtray of the type which flips open and then closes when you press the lever - a fantastic stash! So, again, I manoeuvred the matchbox without anyone seeing, from my pocket to the ashtray, and sauntered (my knees shaking) back to the bench. In the time we had

been there, many other young people had been called in and their bags searched, so there had been plenty of traffic in the hall. I thought, moreover, that they'd never check their own ashtrays!

However, 10 minutes later, a guy walks in and asks which one of us put the dope in ashtray? (The other two women didn't know quite what had happened, and I was too frozen to say anything! So he got no response).

So - downstairs we went as soon as two matrons had been called, and were separately asked to remove all of our clothing. Also in this state of undress, we were told to do the "walk over there and touch your toes" routine.

Well, we were clean.

But they still believed we had dope even though they hadn't found any on us. So they decided to "document" us, taking our names, addresses, descriptions and getting our signatures, etc.

So then, after we had been detained two hours and twenty minutes, they tested the John Bull. They asked us, finally, what it was but *told* us that it was tea! Then they turned their backs, walked across the room from us and yelled that we could go. After that we didn't even want to see the States, and we wished Wallace the worst.

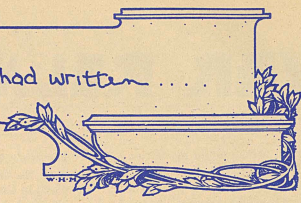
It is worthwhile to note that the people detained and questioned or searched were young, long-haired, female, or black. How American customs employees can harass, search and detain without any evidence to support their suspicions two Canadian citizens and consider it within their duties, is beyond me.

It is true you have no rights at the border. Nobody has any rights at the border unless they are middle-aged, middle-class and naive.

by Suzanne Gautreau



LETTERS if anyone had written



Selling newspapers is one of the traditional ways for a young boy to build an empire from a shoestring, according to the legends of our culture, but how about a young girl? Not so, says the *Vancouver Province*, when contacted last weekend in response to a circular seeking 'young ambitious boys' as carriers. They referred to a policy against hiring girls, and tried to infer it was a policy that had not originated with them. When pressed, they explained that some of their carriers had (perhaps) been molested so it would not do for girls to deliver papers (presumably they do not object to young boys being molested). The fact that this sort of discrimination appears to be in violation of the Human Rights Act (as sex is not a bona fide qualification for riding a bike and delivering papers) did not seem to impress them.

Perhaps a series of cancellations of subscriptions accompanied by an explanation would do so. There is a possibility of legal action being taken against the *Province*, but a test case would be more likely.

Anyone interested in further information or action on this can contact J. Weiss, Psychology, S.F.U., B. Roberts, Peak Office, or the Status of Women Action Committee.

WOMEN'S FÊTE

A GROUP OF WOMEN FROM VARIOUS WOMEN'S GROUPS ARE PLANNING A WOMEN'S FÊTE TO BE HELD AT THE ART GALLERY ON NOV. 25. THE OBJECTIVES ARE TO GET EXISTING WOMEN'S GROUPS TOGETHER AND TO INVOLVE NEW WOMEN. WE'RE ANXIOUS TO HAVE ALL INTERESTED GROUPS (ACTION OR RAPOR WHATSOEVER) PARTICIPATE. FOR MORE INFO CALL INGRID MARG OR SUE AT 733-3838 OR 733-1421 OR NIKKI AT 255-0357, NEXT MEETING (OPEN TO ANY INTERESTED WOMEN) - SEPT. 6, 7:30 P.M. 1045 WEST BROADWAY.



BILL'S—OLE—LADY

Hey is that you

Bill's-ole-lady

Sashaying down the street

Brillo frizzies flying copper in the sun

Yee-owling

Marchin' off with all those war-painted ladies

To smash the State?

You never looked so tall before

Five-foot Bill's-ole-lady

You were the only woman I called friend

Three years ago in San Francisco

You and me, we played hostess

To the Revolution games they fought

In your Fulton Street parlor

They liked Polynesian chicken

And tacos with their tactics

So we stewed the birds

And ground the beef

How clever they are, I thought

How happy we are we said

Hey, is that YOU, Bill's-ole-lady?

I catch your eye

You dash through a street-ful of our friends

Throw strong arms around my heart and whisper

"My name is Judith"

by Karen Kearns reprinted from "Women" vol.2, no.4, 1972.

There's a collective of women that will be working on a women's music tape for parties and maybe radio. If you've got any suggestions as to what you'd like to hear on it call and leave a message for Jane at the Women's Centre 684-0523.

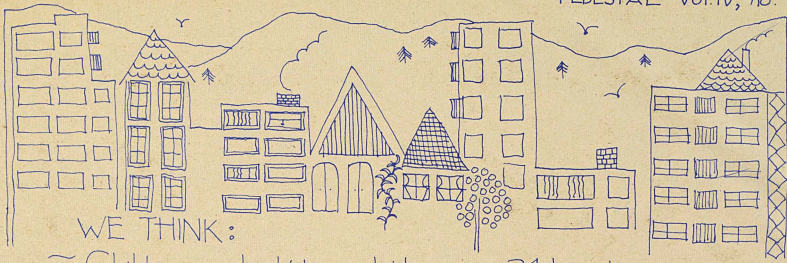
The Corrective Collective (Women's history collective) is working on a history of women's work in Canada, and wants to interview older women who've lived and worked in Canada for a long time. If you know anyone who would like to talk about their life, have them call Pat at 731-5412 or Collette 738-0164.

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Institutions: \$5.00 please

Pedestal staff (Trials of, by and for women): Josie, Beverly Davies, Anne Goldstein, Kathleen Lachance, Nora D. Randall, B. Thompson, Honoree Newcombe, Barbara Roberts, Carol Dear, Cheryl X, Diana Kemble, Terry Haughian.



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WE THINK:

- ~ Child-care should be available on a 24-hour basis.
- ~ Child-care should not be limited to only children of working mothers.
- ~ Child-care should be community-controlled.
- ~ Child-care centers should be staffed by both men and women.
- ~ Child-care should include the elderly, not separate them.
- ~ Child-care staff should be well paid.

Children should have a warm environment, where they have the freedom to learn about themselves and others, and are reminded that **THEY** are responsible for their lives.

There should be flexible space for child-care where children can be together in apartments, supermarkets, stores, et cetera.

We must get together to discuss what would be the best kind of care for our children.

Women have spent enough time putting each other down!
LET'S HELP EACH OTHER UP!

~ If you agree with any of the above, please give us a call.

681-7848 or 681-1695-

Sandra, Barbara, Evelyn, and Hilda



