

Pedestal

25¢

VANCOUVER, B.C. 1975
LESBIAN-FEMINIST NEWSPAPER Vol. 7 No. 1



THIS ISSUE —

WAGES FOR HOUSEWORK

HERSTORY

VAGINAL ORGASMS

GROWING UP LESBIAN

RESOURCES

LESBIAN-FEMINIST

What is a Lesbian/Feminist newspaper? Why Lesbian as opposed to Feminist? Is there a need for such a paper?

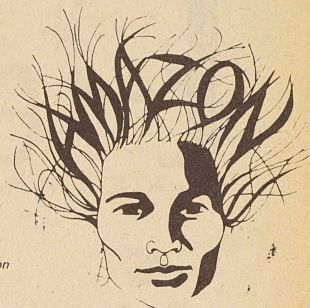
It seems to me that a definition of terms is in order. As far as the word "lesbian" goes, I refuse to use it in the context of pure sexuality or sexual preference. Lesbianism in itself is not necessarily revolutionary, but it does have the potential of being revolutionary. Defined solely in terms of sexual preference, it is not a revolutionary political statement to be a lesbian. However, sexual definitions are a male prerogative. In my opinion, a lesbian is a woman-identified woman, and, in a larger sense, sexuality is not even involved: all women fully committed to the cause of freeing themselves and other women from oppression are "lesbians".

"Feminism" and "Lesbianism" are in no way mutually exclusive terms. A true feminist is by definition a lesbian, in the political sense. Lesbianism is not just another issue of feminism; a lesbian is simply a full-time feminist.

"It is this commitment, by choice, full time, of one woman to others of her class, that is called lesbianism. It is this full commitment, against any and all personal considerations if necessary, that constitutes the political significance of lesbianism..."

"There are other women who have never had sexual relations with women, but who have made and live a total commitment to this Movement, these women are lesbians in the political sense."

*Ti-Grace Atkinson,
"Lesbianism & Feminism"*



*"Feminism is the theory;
Lesbianism is the practice."*

*attributed to
Ti-Grace Atkinson*

So all issues of interest to lesbians are of interest to feminists. That very statement is practically redundant. We are all women, with mutual concerns, and with much to say to each other. I don't think I have to put forth an argument for the necessity of having a feminist newspaper, obviously, we need a forum for self-expression and large-scale communication. If the people putting their energy into the paper are women taking a radical political stance for women, then it is called a feminist newspaper. If those people are lesbian feminists, i.e. totally committed to the cause of womankind, then it is a lesbian feminist newspaper. It is for women, written and put out by women. The people behind the paper have a collective political stance, and the paper is a forum for all women who find it useful.

This is not a case of factionalism, but rather a very direct statement of intent: we do not want a better deal from "our" men, or slow, token opening into the existing male power structure. We want change. Our status is valid only as it is defined by other women, because that is where our commitment lies: in mutual support, and in a growing knowledge of ourselves, each other, our oppression, our herstory, and our destiny.

A lesbian feminist paper is a place for women to connect, to teach and help each other. We need such a place.

Judi Morton

In the above article Judi has clearly expressed ideas and emotions we all share.

The Pedestal Collective

WHY ?

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THE PEDESTAL COLLECTIVE for this issue was: Marg, Deb D, Yvonne, Anabelle, Deb T, Gwen, Nym, Marymargaret, Pat and Betty.

Our thanks to the Northwest Passage Collective for EVERYTHING!

Children in East Vancouver daycare can do without a hot meal program according to Human Resources Minister Levi. This was the sentiment he expressed to 100 parents and children gathered at the legislature in Victoria at noon Thursday, April 17.

The purpose of the demonstration, was to insist on a hot nutritious meal program as part of the quality daycare promised by the N.D.P. government in its pre-election campaign.

The demonstration was organized by the parents and staff of South Hill Child Care Centre where a hot meal has been part of the daycare program since it opened in 1971.

South Hill is in financial trouble with a \$2,500 debt and will continue to have a monthly deficit of \$400 - \$500, because of the meal program and the extra person hired to implement it.

Mr. Levi had offered to absorb the centre's debt if they would agree to discontinue the meal and fire one of the six workers. The parents and staff of South Hill were unwilling to relinquish the Quality of care at the centre as they felt the services presently provided at government daycares were minimal.

Fearing the centre would be closed down the parent's board decided to demonstrate. The plan was to invade the MLA's dining room at noon hour and impress the members with their own hypocrisy as they munched on subsidized salmon steak or lobster tails in front of the horde of hungry little children with their hard boiled eggs and peanut butter sandwiches.

The attempt was foiled however by tough security guards who locked arms across the stairs. One guard carried out his duty to protect the parliamentary paunches by kicking out into the crowd and striking 4 year old Jessie Frank in the face. At this point it became evident that more children would be hurt if the group pressed on and

child-care workers shouted out "We won't hurt the children, let's have lunch here", which is exactly what happened. After lunch Mr. Levi condescended to meet with the group. The meeting was most disappointing to the demonstrators as Mr. Levi would give nothing but a flat no to the request for a subsidized hot

The daycare struggle is alive and thriving in Vancouver. For more news contact: Ellen Frank 876 - 7831



LET THEM EAT SANDWICHES

lunch program for South Hill. He said that "any daycare with hot lunch programs will have that program phased out." Mr. Levi repeated again and again "3 years ago there were only 2300 children in daycare and now there are 22,000." However as South Hill Parent, Tom Sandborn, put it this only means that the previous administration did not support daycare at all and did nothing to provide it. It doesn't follow that quality daycare exists.

Mr. Levi refused to answer many relevant questions put to him by the parents, such as "when do you think a 2 yr. old child of a working single parent eats a hot nourishing meal, when she goes to daycare at 8:30 a.m. and is picked up at 6:00, gets home at 6:30 and falls asleep at 7p.m.? Dissatisfied with this meeting the parents staff and 65 children continued on to the NDP caucus room where they were granted five minutes to present their case to the meeting.

One of the parents, who has a 2 yr. old daughter at South Hill summed up the demands of the group as saying, "The point is we are not asking for 8 million dollars, we are asking that a precedent be established here. That high quality, nutritionally sound daycare be available for all children in B.C. We feel that this is not a privilege or a luxury but a sociologically advantageous function of proper government."

Rosemary Brown, NPP MLA, for Vancouver-Burrard gave her support to the program. She stated that providing a nutritious warm meal at least once a day for children in daycare centres is a responsibility of the government. She went on to say that \$8 million was more than the government could undertake at the present time but asked for a commitment to implement such a program as a long term goal.

Mary Schendinger spokesperson for the South Hill group discovered in her research that in the economically deprived province of Nova Scotia it is impossible to open a daycare centre unless a warm nourishing meal is provided. "Surely," she said, "the government of B.C. can meet the same standards of quality in its centres."

Linda James





4.

The demand for wages has in itself an ideological impact. We are looking at our work in a new way. We have been taught to see that work as an expression of our femininity, in which, we are told, our finest quality -- generosity -- is fully expressed in giving others security and serenity. The fact that we now see work as a socially necessary activity, which must be paid for just like the work our fathers, husbands and sons do outside the home is already a big step towards achieving an attitude of detachment, towards destroying that naturally fixed role which society assigns us. (Women: A Journal of Liberation, Vol.3, No.3, Wages for Housework by Guiliana Pompei, translated by Joan Hall)

yes

This is the first in a series of columns. Please send your thoughts.

In the last ten years or so, the women's movement has done a lot to expose the exploitation of women in this society. We have discussed women's role in the home and in the paid work force and how all the institutions of capitalism--school, church, media, etc.--perpetrate that role. But the strategy of the women's movement until recently has been to try to attack those institutions as perpetrators of women's inferior position in society without completely coming to terms with the vital source of women's powerlessness--that we work for no wages in the home. All women are housewives, and our work is not recognized by men or by the state. It is hidden because it is wageless and it is called our biological role. We all work as housewives, whether at the office smiling and serving the coffee, or at home getting ourselves and men ready for work and getting children trained to enter the schools and then the paid labour force. Although we know that what we do is WORK, the state constantly feeds us propaganda to convince us that it is part of our natural role as women and that the fact that we do it shows how much we love those we do it for.

Until we attack this situation, then all the other single issues like equal pay for equal work, unions, and birth control, will not fundamentally change our powerlessness, or therefore, our role, which is to produce and reproduce (or service and train) workers. As long as we are conditioned not to demand a wage for this work, we can be forced to accept peanuts for all the other work we do. When we go outside the home for a second job, we are hired as cheap labour because the work we do is seen as service work, an extension of housework and therefore not essential--nursing, cleaning, waitressing, child care work, secretarial work, textile work, etc.

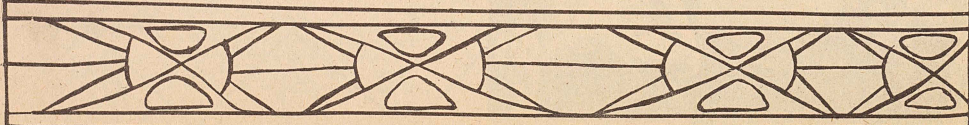
By not directly attacking women's role as housewife, many of the struggles we have engaged in have had the effect of further integrating women into capitalist plans. For example, when a woman has to take a second job outside the home, it doesn't mean that she is no longer a housewife and now is a "worker." It means that now she gets paid for a small fraction of the work she does. Small

victory. Similarly, the demand for day care centers, by being tied to the demand for women's entry into the paid labour force rather than the demand for women to have free time for themselves, only "liberates" women from their children so they can be further exploited in an office or factory. Like all unwaged workers--students, unemployed, third world people, those on welfare--we are demanding back the money and wealth that the state has stolen from us through our unpaid labour. We don't want a second job. We want more money and less work, and thus more time for social and political experience.

To get wages for housework is the only way we are going to have power to refuse that work, as well as any other work for which capital plans to underpay us. To get wages means we begin to break down divisions in the working class between the waged and the unwaged, and between men and women. Unless we have money in this society we are powerless and can't make any choices. We can't leave our husbands, we are forced to take second jobs outside the home, we are forced to have unwanted children because of the cost of abortions, or forced not to have the children we do want because we can't afford to support them.

By demanding wages for housework, we are beginning to build our power to refuse that entire female role that capital forces on us. We are demanding money from the state because we don't want to be dependent on individual men who don't make enough themselves and who only incidentally profit from our slavery. We think this demand is the logical culmination of all the work the women's movement has done towards uncovering our lives as women. It is time to go beyond descriptions and denunciations of women's roles and to organize to end the form of exploitation that all women endure as unwaged workers in the home. This will build our power to destroy the female role and the society to which it is so essential.

Ellen (with revisions by Pat)

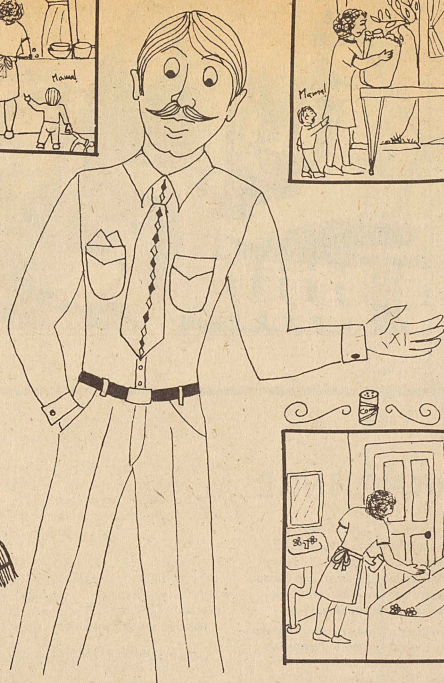
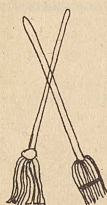


The Toronto Wages for Housework Committee is made up of two collectives. Most of our work together has been general propaganda on wages for housework—holding public meetings and educational, talking to the media. On May 2, we're having a wages for housework rally at City Hall.

For further information, correspondence, bibliography of wages for housework literature, write to: The Toronto WFH Committee, P.O. Box 38, Station E, Toronto, Ontario.

wages for housework

"What's wrong with being a house wife? You're paid for it, aren't you? What me do it? Don't be ridiculous! I'm not a woman! Besides I work hard all day!"



no

Wages for Housework! Financial recognition of women's work! Fine rallying cries to unite women, crossing class and cultural lines, appealing to women in all walks of life. At last an issue is not just a woman's demand, but one that is recognized as basically valid by most economists & political/social leaders. After all, as far as government and business are concerned, it's a damn sight easier and cheaper to pay women for housework than training millions of new workers, set up decent universal day care and so on. Besides—someone has to do housework.

Therein lies the problem. The only advantage I can see to this scheme is that it would give us access to our own money. This is admittedly a much needed access if we are to ever have any power over our lives. All women desperately need their own incomes but is this the best way to reach that goal? Let's take a closer look at this plan. Wages for housework is seen by its proponents as THE cure for all social evils. We live in a society based on the continual oppression and exploitation of one half the population by the other half. Are women still considered so gullible as to really believe that any one issue, any one step will ever solve all our problems? I think we've moved beyond that kind of simplemindedness. Slowly and certainly painfully we've learned that no matter how important any single issue may be, each one is still only ONE step on a long road.

As one of these single steps, just what does Wages for Housework promise to do for us? Well, we are assured that it will break down the divisions between men and women by seeing that all work is paid work. Sounds good but the reality—to my way of thinking—is that the basic lines of sex role stereotyping would not only NOT be broken down, they would be strongly reinforced. The social pressures on young women to become wives and mothers—already nearly impossible to resist—would multiply tenfold. It would still be women stuck at home all their lives, doing the mentally stagnating, boring tasks that come under the term "housework." Given the fabric of our society, the low pay and status of other traditional "women's work," it seems unlikely that the mere fact of wages being paid for housework would serve to encourage men to take over the job. If sexism was only a bad memory—then yes of course—but as long as wages for housework will be used as a tool to keep women in their place—then NO. We'll have to find another means of getting women independent incomes—guaranteed annual incomes perhaps—but not bribery for remaining members of a vast servant class.

Yvonne

Feminist News Service



A Canada wide feminist communications network now exists! The Feminist News Service working conference in Winnipeg from March 28th to the 31st set up the mechanics of a news system. The four day conference was exhausting. Even the excitement of meeting women from newspapers and newsletters from the Atlantic provinces to B.C. didn't make up for the fourteen hour conference sessions.

The most exciting concept of the conference for me was the realization that the women's movement in Canada is now sufficiently large and well organized to support an internal communications system. There are about 15 women's newspapers and over 50 women's newsletters now being published. In fact a Canadian Feminist Press does exist. FNS will simply ensure that women working in any one geographical area are up to date on what is happening in other areas.

FNS will work as follows: For a sliding scale fee as yet to be determined ANYONE can subscribe to FNS and receive a monthly news packet. Potential subscribers would be women's centres, alternative papers, libraries, establishment media organizations, etc. Anyone who wanted to know what was happening with the women's movement could and should subscribe. In keeping the collective non-hierarchical principles of feminism, FNS policy and operations will be worked out by a collective of delegates from member groups. Member groups must be working Canadian all women press collectives and must be willing to take on member responsibilities of attending conferences plus promoting FNS in their area.

Canada has for now been arbitrarily divided into ten regions. Each has a regional rep. who will receive all newsletters and newspapers printed in her region and will funnel news on to FNS head offices. The two head offices one in western Canada and one in eastern Canada will receive news and stories from across the country and will send out a monthly news packet. Head offices will also research trends in the movement, 'hot' news items, etc.

In British Columbia we're trying to set up a group of women to work with the regional representative to:

1. get subscriptions for FNS
2. Publicize FNS and solicit articles, newsletters, etc.
3. Set up communication between various feminist press groups within the province work with women from the feminist press in the other western provinces to organize an FNS head office in the West.

Some of the questions coming out of the Winnipeg conference need answers. How do we retain the collective structure of the small group in a Canada wide organization? How do we keep accurate regional viewpoints? What about the power of most Canada wide organizations being centered in the East? What constitutes a 'feminist' press group?

I think that the creation of FNS is a signal that the women's movement in Canada is growing stronger and we have to start taking ourselves seriously. We have to start thinking not only of what we are doing locally but how that ties in with what is going on elsewhere. What we do and how we do it matters.

Any women interested in more information about FNS or interested in working on FNS implementation in BC should contact:

Dryme Doll FNS Regional Rep.
552 Pandora Street
Victoria, BC



WE ARE PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE

Press Gang, a feminist printing and publishing collective, is offering a series of offset process workshops this summer. The workshops will centre around the preparation of camera-ready copy with emphasis on printed media as an economical and effective means of communication. Areas that we are prepared to cover include the preparation of newspapers, flyers, posters, pamphlets and small books. Participation in the workshops is open and interested women and women's groups should call us at 253-1224.

Over the past several months, the collective has been working hard to establish a distribution and publishing house for feminist literature on

the west coast. We invite women to send us manuscripts for consideration. Of particular interest at this time are articles and analyses dealing with the situation of women and Canada and works of poetry and prose exploring our growing awareness of ourselves as women.

We realise that much material has been produced by women, only to be relegated to basements for want of an effective distribution system. Press Gang would like to expand our distribution to include the self-published works of women authors and poets and material produced by women's collectives throughout the province.

Material should be sent to:

Press Gang Publishers
821 E. Hastings St.,
Vancouver, B. C.
253-1224

Please include a stamped, self-addressed envelope for return.





lesbian caucus

At the B.C. Federation of Women founding convention in October, a group of lesbian/feminists met to create B.C.'s first up-front political lesbian group. Since that time the Lesbian Caucus has met regularly to develop and articulate a feminist analysis of the rights of lesbian women. Policies on lesbian rights written by the Caucus for presentation at the next BCFW policy convention have been hailed as "breaking new ground in the Canadian women's movement". Our policy preamble reads:

"Society defines women in relation to men. Women who choose not to relate to men in traditional ways, or who choose not to relate to men at all, are regarded with contempt and fear. All women who do not fit the 'approved' female stereotype suffer severe consequences, especially those who deviate the furthest, that is, lesbians.

Women's fear of themselves and each other clearly divides our strength as a group. Until such fear is no longer used to control and manipulate us, women will not be free to choose alternate and varying lifestyles.

We therefore fully affirm lesbianism as one of a variety of strong and free life choices for women, and recognize that the struggle for acceptance of lesbianism as a valid lifestyle is the struggle for the right of any woman to define her own life.

The goal of the feminist movement is to create a society where women are free, full human beings without being defined in relation to men; sexually, economically, politically or socially."

The Lesbian Caucus is interested in building a strong sense of community among lesbians in British Columbia. We need contact and feedback from women across the province. We will soon have available copies of our complete policies, a resource list for lesbians in British Columbia, a bibliography, and a booklet of original lesbian feminist writings.

For more information write: Lesbian Caucus
205 - 918 East 8th Ave.
Vancouver, B.C.
V5T 1T8

WOMEN'S MUSIC PROJECT



The British Columbia Women's Music Project has just received funding for this summer. Our plan is to travel around BC to small towns, villages, cities and reserves in order to catch women's music on tape.

We are looking for women who sing, play an instrument, or write their own music. We want to hear women singing about their everyday lives -- this isn't a project to tape professionals.

We will be bringing the tapes back to Vancouver to edit them and set-up a women's music library. The tapes will be available -- free of charge -- to community groups, women's centres and native groups.

WE NEED YOUR HELP. We need you to rap with women who might be into doing a taping session. We need names, addresses and phone numbers of women who would be interested in sharing their music.

For more information, tour schedule, etc. contact:

BC Women's Music Project
412 - 207 W. Hastings
Vancouver, BC

WOMEN in DELTA interested in getting together to share experiences and problems and maybe do something about them -- set up consciousness-raising groups, day cares, etc. -- please contact:

Sylvia Slade
127 - 11944 92nd Ave.
DELTA, BC
(596 - 4562)

WOMEN AND THE LAW

Pamphlets on Women and the Law available from:

People's Law School
610 - 207 West Hastings St.
Vancouver, B.C.
681-7532

\$.25 to independent women's groups (plus postage),
\$.50 for individuals.

A WOMEN'S DIRECTORY is being compiled by Women Together -- a Richmond group. The directory will list women who own their own businesses -- ie. -- artists, dentists, flowershops, garages - doctors, etc. The group may receive a grant in which case listings in the directory will be free. Consent forms will be sent out to all possible candidates for the directory. If you know of any such self-employed women please forward the information to:

D. A. Trotman
206 - 621 E. 6th Ave.
Vancouver, BC
(876 - 8570)

BENEFIT DANCE for the Vancouver Emotional Emergency Centre will be held Saturday, May 31 at Kits House, 7th at Vine 8:00 PM Fine food and Friendly folk -- Music and Dancing !!!!

VEEC is a short term supportive environment for people going through emotional crisis. VEEC is relatively non-sexist and provides the "safest" space in Vancouver for women trying to come to terms with themselves, their lives, their choices. Contact: 220 W 6th
872 - 7914

DOES VANCOUVER NEED A WOMEN'S CULTURAL CENTRE?

I think we do and I would like to get together with other women interested in forming a committee to:

- contact other women's groups as to whether there is in fact such a need.
- prepare briefs etc. to approach the government for substantial financial support.
- approach private industry for financial backing.

and generally all else that is required to make such a building possible. Any women interested in working on such a committee please contact Donna Fillion at 325-7383. Thank you.

THE PEDESTAL all by herself and as part of the Feminist News Service wants to set up an extensive system of exchange subscriptions with women's publications in B.C. and the rest of the country. If your women's centre puts out a newsletter a paper please write us or send us a copy and we'll send you a Pedestal.





"... there was a serious error in my basic premise of where I might find fulfillment."

My autobiography, should I ever write one, might well be titled 'My Endless Search'. At least to this point in time. Most of my adult life has consisted of the search for 'feminine fulfillment' which I initially thought would be found in marriage and motherhood. I married, mothered, divorced, singled, common-lawed and singled again my way through ten years of life. At which point it was beginning to dawn on me that there was a serious error in my basic premise about where I might find fulfillment. Actually, it had been coming to me slowly over at least five of the ten years but I am not one to give up easily and clung desperately to a dying dream for the latter years. Anyway, at 27, armed with nothing more than the knowledge that 'mommy' and 'Mrs.' just weren't doing it for me I packed in my Knight in Shining Armour and Picket fence, took a deep breath (more like a prayer) and set out to find the Women's Movement I'd heard so much about.

grow with, but I had no idea where to look for them. Fortunately, I had subscribed to the Pedestal and had given my phone number along with my address. A few weeks later, Carolyn called and asked if I'd like to do some work on the paper. Would I? Indeed I would. For the next few months I attended Pedestal meetings, collated, licked stickies, and did Pedestal work. Pat and Carolyn (then the key people by right of having been there the longest and most consistently) were very friendly and a great help in filling in some of the social gaps which were very sadly lacking, but they were very busy and when the Pedestal stopped happening a few months later, I was back to the books.

"... I began to wonder both about me and about the so-called women's movement."

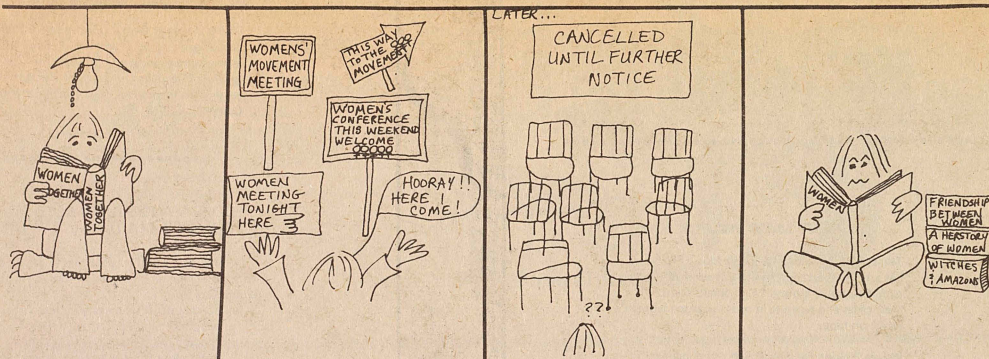
In the meantime, a womens social club had opened in Vancouver and I was grateful for what I hoped would be an opportunity to meet other women with whom I might have mutual interests. This was not so. Oh there were other women there to be sure and we might even have had something in common

"... I came to regard the whole thing as a game of hide and seek."

out and out rejection but for the most part it was not a friendly or fun place to be and soon a good book was much more inviting than an evening at the club.

By now I was really confused. What to do? Return to the male oriented and dominated social circle I had come from and in which I knew I was welcome? or invest in an encyclopedia. I compromised. I renewed my library card.

In January, still not ready to abandon my idea that there was a friendly womens movement somewhere, I went to the Womens Resource Centre at U.B.C. and volunteered my services with no restrictions. I was willing to work in any area where help was needed and hoped only to stumble upon the womens movement. I knew they were there somewhere and came to regard the whole thing as a game of hide and seek. They were hiding and I was seeking. At the Womens Centre I was told that they had all the volunteer help they needed but I should call another number and leave my name..... just in case. Several busy signals and no answers later I gave up.



Everything I'd read or heard about the movement had interested me; there was talk of sisterhood, unity, strength, and assorted other attributes I had heretofore never associated with my feminine fulfillment theory & I was now eager to explore these new possibilities. The problem now was — where were they?

On enquiry, I learned of a womens studies course being offered at a local college and I enrolled for the next term. The course was terrific! For four months we discussed, argued, agreed and disagreed about women and their roles in society. Best of all we liked and respected each other and it was an exciting time with hope for the future. In April, however, the course ended, and with it my hopes. Every one went their separate ways and I took to reading a lot of books.

I was sure there were womens groups in Vancouver that I could work, socialize and

had we ever met, but for the most part I would go alone, sit alone and leave alone.

Being a fairly persistent person I determined to overcome this barrier and on two occasions threw caution to the wind and approached a group of women engrossed in lively conversation. The first time the conversation ceased immediately following my introduction of myself and one by one the women trickled off to refill drinks, go to the bathroom etc., and within 10 minutes I was alone again. However, I did gain a table. On the other occasion the women were not to be chased away so easily. They acknowledged my introduction with a fleeting smile and then never glanced my way again. At that moment I think I fully appreciated the 'alone in a crowded room' theory. Now while I might never have been accused of having charisma, neither had I ever encountered such a cool reception and I began to wonder about both me and the so-called womens movement. Not every visit to the club resulted in

Then in March an exciting thing happened. I accidentally learned of a convention to be held in Victoria in April and quickly forwarded my registration fee. Ha ha! at last I had found them. Not even my blurring vision could dampen my excitement now. It had been a long search for the womens movement; the friendly one that is — the one in which the very fact that I was a woman gave me automatic membership in the club. The 'sisterhood' I'd heard so much about in connection with the womens movement would become a reality for me too. I was ecstatic.

The second week in April the notice arrived. It didn't say much — just 'Victoria Action Cancelled' and a bit more.

OK, OK, I give up. Womens movement — come out, come out, wherever you are.

Donna

i'm writing this out of a feeling of confusion.
i hear rumours, women ask me questions.
i hear that the bookstore is having trouble finding
enough volunteers to keep running, three femi-
nists from the east tell me they have been
in vancouver for six months and still don't
know what's happening or how to get involved.
a woman speaks to me after a meeting at UBC
she says she's just coming out and wants to know
if there's a lesbian group she can talk with.
i feel awful because i can't tell her anything.

that is one reality in my mind.

then i also hear that there are extremely exciting
things happening. BCFW is trying to pull togeth-
er feminists all across the province, press gang is
flourishing, western C Canadian Women's News
Service has just published the first comprehensive
listing of all womens groups in BC, there is a womens
self-help therapy collective somewhere.

this is another reality.



the movement in vancouver

i am a lesbian feminist living in vancouver. i
am actively involved in about three areas -
the BCFW, the lesbian caucus and the pedestal.
i'm also a gossip and i try to make it a point to
know 'everything' that's going on, but i don't.
as far as i can tell there's no one in vancouver who
knows 'everything' that's happening.

i have some questions: does there exist or should
there exist such an amorphous entity as the
'women's movement in vancouver'
--as an individual feminist what is my responsi-
bility towards women who want to 'get 'involved?'
-- do i have the right to be frustrated and confused?

i am struggling with my feeling that there must
be someone - some strong wise experienced
feminist - somewhere in vancouver who KNOWS
ALL and ought to TELL ME the ANSWERS.
until such time as she comes forward.....

the women's movement in vancouver started
six/seven years ago with the women's caucus.
the number of women involved was small, every-
one was committed and everyone knew every-
thing that was happening. since that time the
movement has spread out diffused and gone off
in different directions. women have come
into the movement in varying ways and with
varying levels of awareness and political cons-
ciousness. however, even in the sense that i could
not write the preceding sentence without using
the term 'the movement,' and that i know there
are many women in vancouver who consider
themselves part of the 'women's movement',
i am forced to the conclusion that the womens movement
- undefined and politically diverse as it may be, does in
fact, exist.

" We have effectively eliminated any sort of
centralized access mechanism for women
interested in getting 'in' ... "

it is however also true that it has become extremely
difficult for women who are not already involved
to find out
- what the movement in vancouver actually does/is/
consists of and where/how they can become part
of whatever it is.

" ... it is much easier to work in groups of women
who share the same basic feminist assumptions..."

i think part of the reason for this situation
is the fact that for the past couple of years
many active feminists have been working very
hard in specific separate collectives and projects.
there has been very little energy put into evaluating
the movement as a whole/or into tying to-
gether and encouraging communication between
our constituent parts. we have effectively el-
minated any sort of centralized access mech-
anism for women interested in getting 'in'.
most of our collectives are functioning at a quite
high energy political level. none of us (and quite
understandably) have the time and energy to de-
vote to women who need somewhere to go and
someone to talk with. if we fulfill that sort of
social function in our working collectives it
becomes difficult if not impossible to accomplish
the work we want to do.

" ... as a political movement we have a respon-
sibility to ensure that more and more wo-
men are attracted to feminism ... "

i may sound elitist. this is not really my intent
but i'm willing to risk the charge in order to
point out formally what i think is in effect
being practised in vancouver. the women's
movement has been in existence long enough
for us to recognize that, yes, there is a pro-
gression in awareness and yes, it is much easier
to work in groups of women who share the
same basic feminist assumptions. practically
speaking a great many women's groups like the
bookstore and the lesbian caucus expect women
to be able to function at a level of revolutionary
feminist thought. i think this is a valid and
necessary assumption, however, i think that
as a political movement we have a responsi-
bility to ensure that more and more women
are attracted to feminism. i think we must
recognize that an 'attracting and radicalizing'
function and an 'information sharing and sup-
port' function are necessary to the women's
movement and that both are sadly lacking in
vancouver. as individual feminists and as a
movement it is our responsibility to set up
structures to meet these needs.

much of the problem may simply be communi-
cation. i know that there are several groups
such as the women's center in the 'Y' who are
running consciousness raising, support groups.
perhaps just an easily accessible listing of what is
already happening would be a start. i do seem
though to be coming back more and more to
a woman's centre concept - a friendly, supportive
environment, meeting space, comprehensive
listing of women's resources, some sort of social
space.

" i am positive that there are enough women in
vancouver who see a women's building as
worthwhile that we could make it happen. "

some vague suggestions:

- for a start the pedestal will try and print as
comprehensive a list as possible of what is
actually happening now. Send us all the infor-
mation you've got.
- toronto has a collective of women who are res-
ponsible for taking names of women interested
in support/c-r groups, organizing meeting times
and sending two facilitators to the first couple
of meetings. i can see this idea working here
especially in setting up lesbian c-r/support
groups. groups could possibly for now meet
in the women's bookstore.
- after the closing of vancouver Ms. a group of
women apparently got together to investigate
the possibilities of a new women's club run
collectively. i don't know if that group is
looking at any sort of a women's centre con-
cept or just a social space but perhaps the two
ideas could be combined? i am positive that
there are enough women in vancouver who see
a women's building as worthwhile that we
could make it happen. we need SOMETHING!!!
send your response to these suggestions, con-
crete proposals for action, etc., to the pedestal
and we'll print them, call a meeting, start talking
to each other.
get organized!!!!

NYM



As a former poet/preacher and indiscriminate loudmouth, I am wary of writing anything pretentious about myself—I am unclear as to the point. The deciding factor was my contention that 'personal' is 'political', and for the lesbian this is doubly true. So my 'point' here is to offer a statement of intent as to who I am and how I got there, in the hope that it is of some use in clarifying the composite image of Lesbian Women.

I am reluctant to go into a testimonial of early experiences, memories, and confessions for fear of becoming a story-teller, which is not my intention. But I will say that, having had a typically traumatic and action-packed childhood, I did go through the predictable phase of questioning my upbringing, my genes, and my mental stability—or lack of same—to find the culprit cause of my 'abnormality'. I didn't know I was oppressed because I still believed wholeheartedly in my oppressors and I didn't yet believe in myself. I read all the horrendous library books, dutifully (but briefly) plumbed the opposite sex for a comfortable niche in the world of normal folk, and later contemplated celibacy and suicide.

"lesbians as individuals must have or develop great psychological strength to even survive whole into adult awareness."

Then, as now, my exploration of my discomfort with the heterosexual model was inextricably tied to my discomfort with the social, cultural and political pressures which were trying to define who and what I should be, to me. The heterosexual model is a contributor to each of these things. But I had no political consciousness. It took a long time for me to reach the point of having collected enough self-assurance to like myself, and from there to know more of myself, and allow myself to grow. I think that lesbians as individuals must have or develop great psychological strength to even survive whole into adult awareness, considering what they must pass through first. When I became strong enough to see outside the opinions and rules surrounding me, I experienced a great sense of anger and bitterness at the time I had spent 'adjusting' to my oppression—actually adjusting my dealings with people to incorporate the likelihood of their prejudice and thus condoning that prejudice as 'only natural'.

"If I hold hands with my lover I am 'flaunting' myself—never mind the explicit heterosexual contact that floods us in the media and in public."

It was then that I began to read. I read lesbian fiction both old and new, and much of the new wave of material on lesbian identity, feminism, and woman-culture. And after I read, I began to reach out for contact with the Women's Movement.

I soon realized that the lesbian woman is the vanguard of the feminist struggle. Her personal decision to live her life in the way that is most fulfilling to her puts her in direct opposition to every major institution in the society which sits on her—church, school, government, and culture—and to the men who control them. In other words, she has withdrawn her services from the world of men: she doesn't bear and raise their heirs for them, keep their houses, or support in any of the usual myriad of ways their busy perpetration of the system. Her personal life is a revolution. To her the oppression of women is graphically apparent, for she is no longer bound by the view that her worth as a woman depends on and is defined by the man she attaches herself to.

For most men, and at this point even for many women, this is a fearful smashing of the idols. Hence the fear and discrimination which we consistently encounter whenever we choose not to be 'discreet' about our lives. If I hold hands with my lover I am 'flaunting' myself—never mind the explicit heterosexual contact that floods us in the media and in public. Men say 'What a waste' because my body is no longer up for the highest bidder. If in my job or my social life I choose not to restrict my contact only to other lesbians, I must constantly deal with abuse, ignorance or aggression. The line to political identity is very short from here.

"It is womankind who are the most deeply and subtly oppressed people of the world."

When I C

My predilection is to the society womankind—and it is womankind who are the most deeply and subtly oppressed people of the world. My sexual orientation seems to be spotlighted when it comes to relating to straight women, but I am a whole person and I cannot separate my sexual love for women from the rest of me which is also involved—and the 'rest' is just as interesting, complex and often as typical as the 'rest' of anyone else. It seems, however, that sexual (and other) relations between women have the important potential of relating to another person as an equal. Women together can be free of stereotyped models.

Lesbians have infinitely more in common with other women than with gay men, whose struggles in a society which already recognizes their apparent manhood, if not their lifestyle around it, are entirely different, and who by and large are still as inherently anti-feminist as most other men.

"I want legitimate status defined by women..."

To me, a lesbian is a woman-identified woman. 'Lesbian' is a political term because I don't take my identity or any part of it from a man. I am fully committed to women—therefore I am a feminist. I am not interested in 'equality'—whatever that is—with or to men. I want legitimate status defined by women, not laws that tell me I am a criminal or people who tell me I am sick. I unite my personal and political choices to free women. And that's who Women's Liberation is for.

There can be no separation between the liberation of women and the liberation of gay women. A gay woman is one who is acutely conscious of her womanhood and who is fighting for the cause of women by simply daring to be who she is. A lesbian is the most radical feminist. She is the woman's woman.

JUDI MORTON

Grow Up I Want To Be a Lesbian

The reason I feel I can affect peoples' attitudes toward
Lesbians
Is because I feel so happy
Being one myself.

MARG



Photo Vito P. Pellegrini

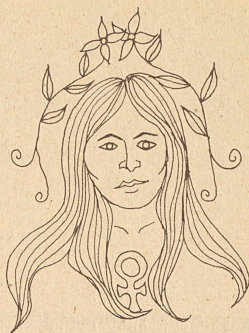
" THE
PERSONAL
IS
POLITICAL ;
AND
FOR
THE
LESBIAN
THIS
IS
DOUBLY
TRUE "

dream page

These dreams are three of my favourites. I doubt that I'll ever forget the details or how I felt while I was dreaming them. My dreams are rarely explicit. They tend to follow my mood, which is often so jumbled in thoughts that my dreams are too scattered and abstract to piece together. These three seemed to fit clearly into episodes of my life. They are thoughts of my waking situation that became distinct while I slept. My inner voices tend to emerge at times when I cloud over what I want -- faced with someone wanting me to be different.

The "Marriage Dream" recurred for three years while I worried about not wanting to marry. When I finally listened to my dream, and realized that in fact I did not want to marry, and therefore wouldn't, the dream stopped. My dreams always remind me, that it makes more sense to respect my own wishes rather than be swayed by indictments of selfishness and warnings that I'll never feel fulfilled.

I'm fascinated by my own dreams, and by those that other women have told. We could gather our favourites, and piece together what it is that women dream, every issue of *The Pedestal*. Eventually we could publish a book of women's dreams, with chapters of our fantasies, our fears, images of ourselves, and of our existence. marg



Marriage Dream

Each time the dream began with a long, serious discussion between myself and a man. Sometimes he was known to me, someone from my waking life. Other times he was familiar in character, but some one I'd never met.

The relationship was always clear. We are lovers and he now wants to marry. I don't want to marry. What I try to express to him is a strong sensation that I will no longer be "me", that people will regard me as his wife, and that anything that I do with my life, apart from marry him will be looked upon as unexpected, not much more than a nice addition to my fulfilled role of married woman.

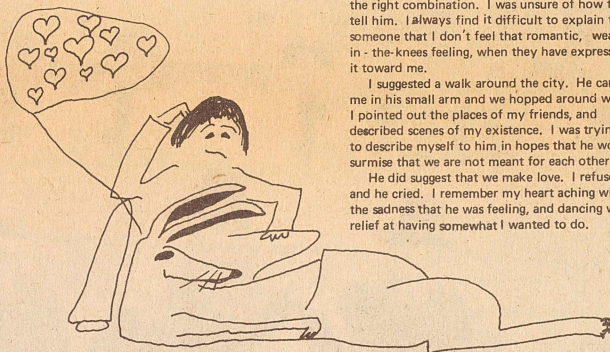
When I express this to him, he assures me that nothing will be different, and that I shouldn't allow others' impressions of me to direct what I want to do. When I ask him why he wants to marry instead of continue in an undefined relationship, he claims that it's for the convenience, merely a piece of paper, and that I shouldn't take it all too seriously.

Against the advice of my inner voices I agree to marry wanting to believe that the situation won't change, not thoroughly understanding why I agree to do this, except that he wants it so much. I wonder why he wants to marry, that perhaps he thinks he's gaining a wife. I feel as though I'm heading into a trap.

We go ahead with wedding plans. I tell my family, and my mother in particular becomes very excited about the event. As aunts, uncles and grandparents send congratulations, my suspicions are confirmed that woman becoming wife is a phenomena beset with traditional meanings. They begin to project onto me a new concept of what I am, and I become increasingly worried, that marriage will have a vast effect on the events of my life. I'm afraid of not leading the life I have in mind. I think about the assurances that I've been given that nothing will change, and see changes happening all around me before the wedding takes place.

The day arrives, and I'm walking in a dress down the aisle of a church, with a very sick feeling inside. Everyone around me is radiantly happy. Just as my father is about to give me away, I break loose and announce that I'm not going through with it. Then I run out of the church, into the sunshine.

Kangaroo Dream



A kangaroo fell in love with me. He came from across a lake, laid his head in my lap and looked up at me with big, loving brown eyes. I knew that he wanted to make love with me, and that I didn't want to enter into such an intimate relationship with him. Voices inside told me that it just wasn't the right combination. I was unsure of how to tell him. I always find it difficult to explain to someone that I don't feel that romantic, weak-in-the-knees feeling, when they have expressed it toward me.

I suggested a walk around the city. He carried me in his small arm and we hopped around while I pointed out the places of my friends, and described scenes of my existence. I was trying to describe myself to him in hopes that he would surmise that we are not meant for each other.

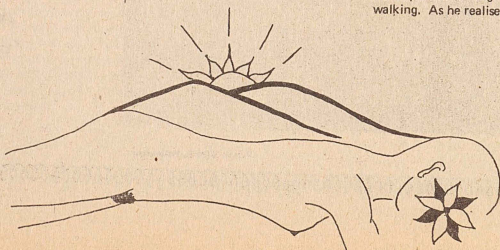
He did suggest that we make love. I refused, and he cried. I remember my heart aching with the sadness that he was feeling, and dancing with relief at having somewhat I wanted to do.

Cave Dream

I was in a dark cave, where I had been living with my elder brother for some time. It was musty and damp. I felt emotionally and creatively stifled, and thought of nothing but leaving the cave. At the same time, I was poignantly aware of how much my brother wanted me to stay - primarily, I thought, because of my housekeeping abilities. Every time I started for the door, he would call me back to help him with some task. I finally one day decided to ignore his pleas, and keep on walking. As he realised that I was going he began

to call after me, but his calls grew faint as I neared the cave entrance. I held the thought in my mind that he would call me back forever, if I let him. The moment I emerged from the cave, sunshine flooded me, and warmed me to the bone. I was in a beautiful green forest, as I walked through it, every breeze, every smell was new and delightful.

After about 15 minutes, a beautiful woman appeared. I recognized her - in my waking life I was in love with her. We walked along together, arm in arm, sharing stories, happy.





HERSTORY

The Origin of Lesbianism (A Short and Incomplete Herstory)

I.

It was with great difficulty that I researched this topic. I admit that I expected, in this liberated day and age, to find much of my work done for me. I found instead that few of my sisters have concerned themselves with attempting to construct a herstory of lesbianism. I also found out why. The idea of women carrying on relationships without men, it seems, sufficiently threatened historians since the beginning of the patriarchal era for them to neglect to mention its existence. Worse than that, some of those forefathers felt it necessary to twist the facts to suit their preferred conception of the way things were. Thus it has happened today that thorough researching of such a topic would involve a great deal of back-breaking, eye-straining, nit-picking work.

So it is that I haven't been able to bring to you anything that I could truthfully call comprehensive on the origins of lesbianism. Nobody really knows where or when women began loving women.

Today, we have the benefit of such enlightened herstories as *The First Sex* by Elizabeth Gould Davis (Baltimore, Md., 1972) and *Mothers and Amazons* by Helen Diner (Garden City, N.Y., 1973) to let us know that men did not always control government and society. But even these books do not discuss the existence of lesbianism in more than brief and passing fashion. They essentially ignore its presence even when discussing the great Amazon tribes who lived entirely without men except for use in reproduction (and there is some question whether men were even used for those purposes in the very distant past).

This article is not being written to chastise either author for her exclusions but rather to point out precisely how much our herstory has been ignored. There can be no doubt that a correct story of one's past is important, to which fact the Blacks and the Indians can certainly

attest. Such a story can help one to get in touch with one's identity and to take pride in that identity. I ask, then, as many have before me, "Where is our story?" I intend, in this and future columns, to begin to tell some of it as best I can.

II.

Probably the earliest reference to lesbians commonly known today is Sappho and the island of Lesbos, upon which the famous lyric poet made her home in the early sixth century B.C.¹ Even this reference is not sacred, however. Historians and analysts of literature have battled for years over the question of whether Sappho was or was not a lesbian. One of her translators has even suggested that her innumerable love poems to women were the product of a rich fantasy life and that, in truth, she was happily married with several children. What then of the legendary cult of lesbians on the island of Lesbos? Were these women and girls merely students in a school instituted by Sappho on the island, as some others suggest?² For myself, I find both theories hard to swallow. I have read several translations of Sappho's poetry. Different though the wordings of the poems in each translation has been, they remain infused with a joy and tenderness towards the subject of loving women. How truly could she have expressed these feelings, feelings I know well, unless she had experienced them herself?

Sappho was not the inventor of lesbianism, however. It has existed before history began its record. Del Martin and Phyllis Lyon in *Lesbian/Woman* (San Francisco, 1972) tell us that "archaeologists have discovered prehistoric cave drawings of female figures engaging in homosexual acts together."³ I remember

reading not long ago that some archaeologists had uncovered the remains of a primitive Amazon tribe near the Amazon River in Brazil. This tribe had apparently lived according to the rules of their Amazon sisters in the Mediterranean region. They used men (captive warriors) only for reproductive purposes and killed all male offspring. There were symbols on the cave walls that indicated that lesbianism was prevalent among the women of the tribe. Lesbianism then, has probably been around since the dawn of homo sapiens as we know it.

But Elizabeth Gould Davis raises doubts that the dawn of homo sapiens was as we think it may have been. She is among many who have questioned the traditional conceptions of creation, ranging from Genesis to Darwin. She suggests that our predecessors were a race of women who had a civilization vastly superior to anything that exists on earth today. She goes so far as to suggest that there were only women on earth at one time, that they parthenogenesized to reproduce, and that man was the result of a mutation in chromosomes.⁴ Helen Diner basically supports this theory. She begins her book with the statement "In the beginning, there was woman."⁵

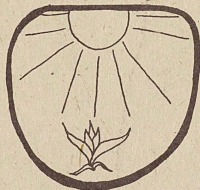
If in the beginning there was only women, how could there have been heterosexuality? Indeed, such a theory leaves little room for any type of love and/or sexual relationships other than lesbianism. Of course, it would not have then needed such a label. It is an interesting suggestion. Better than that, it is tentative proof that lesbianism is more than biologically natural. It may have been the first expression of love between humans to exist on earth.

FOOTNOTES

1. Lyon, Phyllis and Martin, Del, *LESBIAN/WOMAN* (San Francisco, 1971), p. 20.
2. *Ibid*
3. *Ibid*.
4. Davis, Elizabeth Gould, *THE FIRST SEX* (Baltimore, Md., 1972), p. 34-35.
5. Diner, Helen, *MOTHERS AND AMAZONS*, trans. John Phillip Lundin (Garden City, N.Y., 1973), p.1.

I invite comments on the content of my columns. Address remarks to THE PEDESTAL, 6854 Inverness, Vancouver, B.C. Future columns will be a variety of topics: Amazons, the Bloomsbury Group, hillbilly women, Sappho and much more.

—Peregrine Adams



WESTERN CANADIAN WOMEN'S FESTIVAL

The Kootenay Women's Council is sponsoring the Canadian Western Women's Festival June 13 to 16. The festival will be a cross cultural forum of the arts with music, dance, arts and

crafts and puppets. There will be workshops of all kinds including massage, climbing, chainsaws, women's psychology, drying fruit, lesbianism, gestalt, women's rights and family law, withcraft, childbirth etc. etc. It's a four day festival - two days will be women only and two days women plus invited guests. Only women will be performing. We will be camping out with water, and toilet facilities and for those who can't handle that there are motels and cabins in the area. If you or any one you know would be interested in presenting themselves and their work let us know: For more information on exact place, directions program - contact your local women's centre or library or write: Kootenay Women's Council Box 1200 Castlegar, B. C.

WOMEN'S FESTIVAL



THE VAGINAL ORGASM LIVES!

BOOK REVIEW

by Pat Feindel



The Nature & Evolution of Female Sexuality by Mary Jane Sherfey, M.D. Vintage Books, Random House, Inc. New York, 1973, 188 pages, \$2.15.

"...not just the couples with sexual problems and most of the educated public, but almost all psychiatrists and physicians (excepting gynecologists and endocrinologists) are still committed to the belief in the existence of the vaginal orgasm as distinct from the infantile clitoral orgasm and consider the vaginal orgasm to be a vital sign of normal feminine development." (p. 27)

The myth of the vaginal orgasm continues to thrive with healthy vigour amongst the mental health professionals of North America. The fact that psychiatrists and psychoanalysts continue, on the basis of erroneous concepts, to treat "frigid" women who have failed to complete a successful "clitoral-vaginal transfer", is what prompted Mary Jane Sherfey to publish a detailed work on the nature of women's sexuality. A psychiatrist herself, she writes, "...to dispel these erroneous concepts, we must first dispel them from the minds of psychoanalysts and psychiatrists. To accomplish this requires indisputable proof that the vaginal orgasm as distinct from the clitoral orgasm does not exist and that what does exist is compatible with the many observations on female psychosexuality as we know it." (p. 28, emphasis mine) **The Nature & Evolution of Female Sexuality** is Sherfey's attempt to provide that proof and indeed, on a theoretical level, presents a convincing case in defense of clitoral erotism and an aggressive "masculine-like" sexual drive in women. To what extent this will affect psychiatrists, their patients, or women in general, however, is open to question.

Nevertheless, in terms of biological information, Sherfey's work provides more detail than I have run across anywhere else, and for this reason alone it is worth reading. Her discussion of orgasms is the first I have read which described the role of all parts of a woman's genitals -- the clitoris, the labia, the lower third of the vagina, various related muscles, etc. -- and how they function together as one unit. This I found a welcome deviation from what now seems an overemphasis on the clitoris as some kind of isolated orgasmic button. Furthermore, she describes in detail the dynamics of multiple orgasms and the physical conditions which are conducive to them. Almost all of this information was new and fascinating to me, and although most of it comes from the research of Masters and Johnson and is probably available in their published works, it has the advantage of being presented here in the context of a rather interesting theoretical framework.

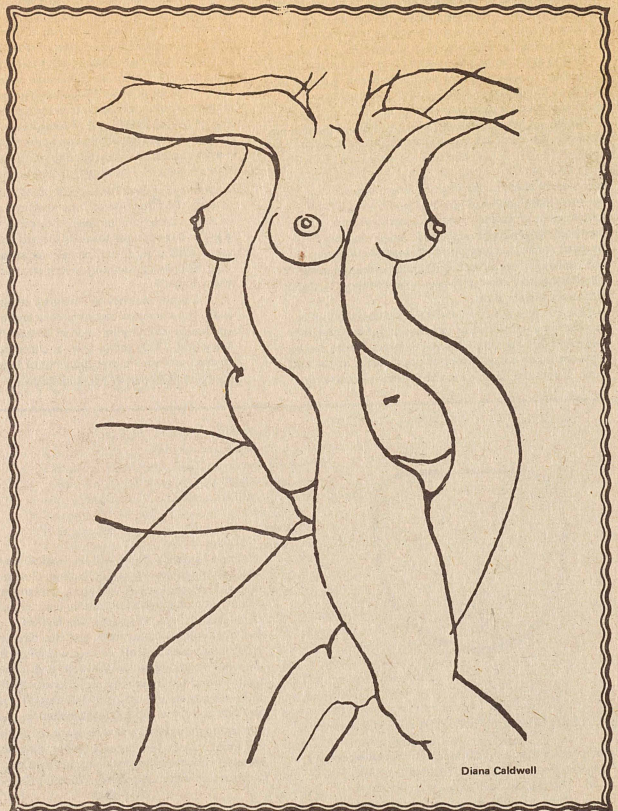
One condition Sherfey discusses which is vital in the sexual arousal of females is what is termed perineal edema. This is the condition in which the entire pelvic area fills with blood and fluid to become congested or engorged. It is visible externally as swelling in the genital area and felt as sexual tension in the pelvic region. Several factors may increase the degree of engorgement -- the number of children a woman has had, the length of time of stimulation,

the amount of sexual experience in general, and the timing in relation to menstrual cycle (the last two weeks tending to be more conducive to increased edema). One function of the orgasm is to create strong muscle contractions designed to expel the increased amounts of blood from the pelvic area. However, with full engorgement there is also a large amount of extra fluid in the pelvic tissues. Immediately following orgasm, this fluid conveniently moves back into the pelvic blood vessels to restore the engorged state. With continued stimulation, another orgasm soon occurs. This observation has led Sherfey to conclude that women have a somewhat paradoxical sexual nature which she describes as "satiation-in-insatiation" -- that is, that theoretically, the more sexually satiated a woman becomes, the more orgasmic potential she develops and the more insatiated she also becomes. According to Sherfey, the only biological mechanism which could interfere with this cycle is physical exhaustion.

Apparently because this description of women's sexuality might understandably meet with resistance in traditional medical circles, Sherfey goes to great lengths to support it with explanations as to how

and why it makes sense. To do this she relies heavily on evolutionary theories and data. In the second chapter of her book, *Embryology and the Nature of Bisexuality*, she draws attention to the relatively new discovery that fetuses are not originally bisexual as Freud thought, but are in fact innately female. This is a fairly recent development in the evolution of primates, and one result of it is that females and males respond differently to sex-related hormones -- females remain much more highly reactive to the "male" hormone androgen than males are to the "female" hormone estrogen. Sherfey explains that this androgen reactivity in females is closely related to clitoral erotism, aggressive sexual drive, skin erotism and increased levels of perineal edema. Her contention is that all of these sexual characteristics of human females have evolved recently, with the androgen reactivity, precisely because of their advantage in assuring the reproduction of the species.

The reverse contention, that clitoral sexuality represents a primitive stage in the evolution of female primates -- simply because the vagina and clitoris



Diana Caldwell

happen to be separated -- has often been held true. Not far from this view is the Freudian belief that clitoral erotism and sexual aggressiveness in women are signs of psychosexual immaturity and the inability to relinquish "masculine" qualities in favour of the more mature and natural "feminine" qualities indicated by vaginal receptivity. It becomes clear here that Sherfey's view of the clitoris as a structure of "high biological destiny" (p. 29) rather than a symptom of "retarded development" (p. 49) forces a total reevaluation of traditional approaches to women's sexual nature and development.

You might well be wondering, at this point, why, if women are supposed to be so insatiable, are many of us still struggling with achieving one orgasm, let alone dozens in a row, with openly acknowledging our sexuality, and with giving free rein to our sexual aggressiveness. We need to remember here, that evolutionary development takes place over thousands and millions of years. The "recent" evolution of androgen reactive characteristics in women took place long before the arrival of patriarchy as we know it.

...primitive woman's "insatiable" sexual drive would have been too disruptive to the monogamous marital structure, and her erotic needs too likely to interfere with reliable maternal care to be tolerated.

Sherfey takes us back historically to man's (very literally man's) transition from a nomadic lifestyle to a more settled agrarian culture. During this transition, survival became much more deeply rooted in "the extended family with its private property, kinship lineages, inheritance laws, social ordinances, and ...many surviving children" (p. 137), all of which came to rely on certainty of paternity. She concludes that in this type of settled, stable society, primitive woman's "insatiable" sexual drive would have been too disruptive to the monogamous marital structure, and her erotic needs too likely to interfere with reliable maternal care to be tolerated. For this reason, over a period of several thousand years, women's sexual demands were forcefully suppressed. Thus our "insatiable" sexual drive amounts now to not much more than a physiological potential rather than a social reality, except perhaps in rare women who, upon pursuing inordinate amounts of sexual activity, have promptly been labelled nymphomaniacs.

Where I seriously begin to question Sherfey's logic is in her conclusion that this forceful suppression of the female sexual drive was a "prerequisite to the dawn of every modern civilization and almost every living culture." (p. 138) That she can regard present civilization as a "triumph of the human condition" (p. 140) while acknowledging that it has taken place at the expense of not only the sexual, but the emotional and intellectual needs of half of humanity, is somewhat baffling, to say the least. Furthermore, she adds that if women's aggressive sexual nature were to be significantly liberated under present trends of relaxed moral standards, a resurgence of suppressive forces would be "inevitable and mandatory" (p. 140). This attitude appears to be based on several assumptions, none of which seem particularly imaginative. Among them is the belief that women would be totally incapable of choosing whether they want to run around furiously seeking orgasm after orgasm -- that they would be utterly irresponsible and unable to control themselves sexually, should they liberate their potential. A further assumption appears to be that maternal care (that is, breastfeeding, by Sherfey's usage) and sexuality are incompatible, and that there are no "other patterns of infant care and adult relationships" (p. 140) which might adequately improve on or substitute for the present biological family. Here it seems that Sherfey has been studying apes too long or perhaps has simply sold out to the prevailing attitudes of her colleagues, and has forgotten that human beings -- even women -- do seem to have the capacity, if not always the willingness to take responsibility for their actions. Unfortunately, her discussion of this whole area is incomplete in this work, but in the introduction she has indicated that she will be publishing a second volume dealing more specifically with the cultural and physical evolution of female sexuality.

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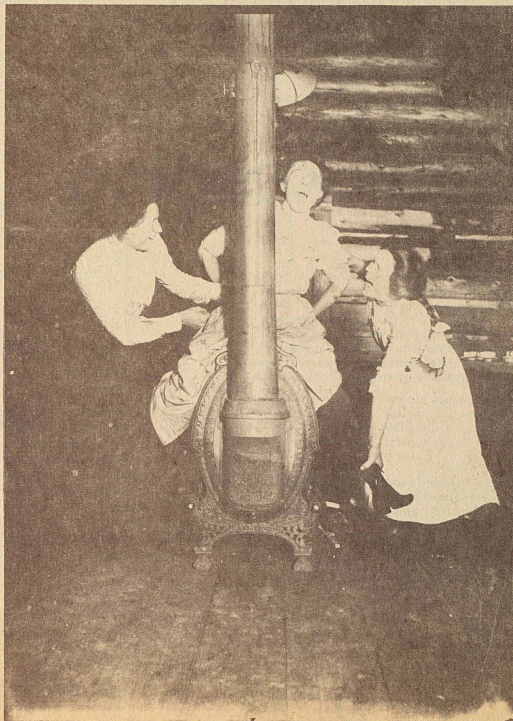


Photo by Mattie Gunterman

Thanks to the B.C. Photographer, March, 1975

...women would be totally incapable of choosing whether they want to run around furiously seeking orgasm after orgasm... they would be utterly irresponsible and unable to control themselves sexually...

A further bias which seems to be apparent in what Sherfey calls a discussion of sexuality, is a concentration almost exclusively on orgasms, and primarily vaginally induced orgasms at that. This to me is a rather narrow view of sexuality, but her bias may be more apparent than real, simply because of the specific goals of her work here. She runs the risk of being misinterpreted, though, as Carmen Kerr, in her article *Feminist Sex Therapy*, points out: "According to public interpretation Masters and Johnson proved that women can have as many orgasms as they want at any time, and that they are sexually insatiable creatures. This erroneous deduction has been perverted by the public to mean that the sexually liberated and healthy woman is freely and multiply orgasmic." With the Freudian camp on the one hand and the Masters and Johnson camp on the other, "women are left with little opportunity to decide for themselves just what they want in the way of sexuality." (*Issues in Radical Therapy*, Vol. 3, No. 1, Winter, 1975.)

Unfortunately, Sherfey's work is no attempt to reach these women, but is very definitely directed to the medical profession. In fact, her book reads like a court case at times -- a vindication of women's right to clitoral orgasms and aggressive sexual drive, supported by masses of evidence and presented to the male judges of the psychiatric world. The only value I see in this tactic is its possible effect in lessening the damage (which, admittedly, may be considerable) that these professionals might do to

the women they are treating for sexual disorders. But when the author insists that in order for others to accept these new concepts, psychiatrists and psychoanalysts must accept them first, she only further entrenches the power of professionals to define us.

In general, I would recommend this book mainly for its wealth of factual information rather than its political implications. (It is unfortunate that Dr. Sherfey presents her material in such complex medical language, for it is information that certainly more women should have access to. There is a glossary at the end of the book, but it is still by no means easy reading.) My reservations relate mostly to its value as a social document and to Sherfey's apparent acceptance of patriarchal culture as the only road to progress, and of the medical profession within that culture as the only instrument of enlightenment. May Hera protect us if she is right!

Suggested concurrent readings:

Liberating Masturbation -- A Meditation on Self Love by Betty Dodson, Bodysex Designs, 121 Madison Ave., New York, N.Y., 10016.

Issues in Radical Therapy, Volume 3, Number 1, Winter, 1975. Special issue on *Sex and the Left*.

Amazon Quarterly, Volume 3, Number 2, March, 1975. Special issue on *Sexuality*.

Basic Bookkeeping

Most women and women's groups are fairly poor. We may have enough money to get by but we certainly don't have enough to throw any away. Yet it is quite possible that many of us are losing up to fifty cents on the dollar through clerical errors, not checking bank and charge statements, not keeping accurate records and consequently overpaying income tax, etc.

Unfortunately women can't afford the services of accountants and tax experts to explain the ins and outs of bookkeeping and filing tax returns -- so we end up getting screwed -- as usual.

I will be running a column in the *Pedestal* regularly aimed at explaining some basic points and will also try and answer specific questions you send in.



WHAT IS A SET OF BOOKS?

In its most basic sense, a set of books is simply a record of

1. money received (income) and where it came from
2. money spent (expenses) and what it was spent on.

The difference between these is your profit or loss. The simplicity or elaborateness of your bookkeeping system is governed solely by what kind of information you want from it. Books are usually kept on a monthly basis. It's an obvious time period and most bills and government reports are sent monthly.

If you were running a bookstore you'd probably want to know how much of your INCOME came from:

1. books, magazines, and newspapers
2. records,
3. posters and postcards
4. miscellaneous sales (jewellery, buttons, etc.)
5. donations

Accurate bookkeeping is important not only for businesses and groups on government grants but also for individual women. For example:

Are you aware that if you make any money from such things as crafts, painting, photography, music, etc., you may be able to claim legitimate business expenses. Such things as rent, heat, light, phone, auto/bus/cab expenses, entertainment, advertising, supplies and so on can be deducted not only from that source of income. If your expenses are greater than your income, you can deduct the remaining expenses from other income (like a job) thus lowering your taxes. It is obviously to your advantage to keep accurate and complete records! Don't ever throw your papers out as soon as you've filed your tax form as you have to keep all financial records for a period of seven years.

I would strongly suggest keeping all medical records. You may easily end up the year with more than your basic \$100 deduction. Valid

medical deductions include such things as:

- all prescriptions -- yours and your children's
- laboratory examinations
- psychiatrists and psychoanalysts
- registered and practical nurses
- chiropractors
- Christian Scientist practitioners
- Naturopaths
- dentists - including x-rays, braces, fillings, etc.
- crutches, hearing aids, orthopedic shoes and more

If you move and end up 25 miles closer to your job -- or new job -- you can deduct all moving expenses, travel expenses, temporary food and lodging at your new location and other goodies.

It really can save you money to keep receipts -- it's hard to be certain in May how much you'll spend by December. Without receipts you'll have no proof that you ever spent any of it. Try to do as much as possible by cheque. Cancelled cheques are almost as good as receipts and usually allowed as substitutes. I keep my cheques and receipts in large brown paper envelopes labelled by category -- ie. 1975 car expenses January -- May or 1975 Medical. When tax time comes they are all right there.

Personal Medical Exp 1975		
1/1	Susan Rx For Pen	7.50
		3.75
MAR	JOHNNY DENTIST Fillings Etc	75.00
	Susan	79.00
JULY	Me - Rx's for flu	17.50
AUG	Susan - Crutches - Broken leg	25.00
		30.00
SEPT	Johnny - Glasses	40.00
OCT	Me - Glasses	70.00
NOV	Me - Chiropractor	50.00
DEC	Me - DENTIST MISC	
Total 1975 Medical		

DATE	Books	Records	Post cards	Pins	Papers Mag.	Donations	SALES TAX	TOTAL
MAY								
1	15.00	15.00	-	2.50	2.00	15.00	80	~
2	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	~
3	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	~
4	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	~
Total	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	~

Your sales journal for the example of a bookstore might look like this. You would also need to keep a list of each book sold so as to keep track of stock.

Your EXPENSES would probably be:

1. purchases (books, magazines, papers, etc.)
2. overhead (rent, heat, light, phone)
3. supplies (postage, stationery, gas, coffee)
4. assets (furniture, adding machine, cash register, car)
5. sales tax

If you had paid staff you would also need to keep track of wages, tax withheld, UIC, CPP, etc.

A breakdown like this would allow you to see at a glance whether you made or lost money, where your income mostly came from, how much of your expenses were in each general area. If you lost money, you could easily see where and why.

With minor differences due to the type of business or group, that is all there is to a set of books. Without such accurate records it is impossible to know how a business is doing financially, and even more important, impossible to take advantage of legitimate tax deductions. One of the most important things to remember is to keep all receipts, invoices, and bills even if you aren't certain that they are necessary. It's a lot easier to throw away the extras than to find yourself missing one.

YVONNE



WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS & ACTION GROUPS

3

BC Federation of Women, Box 46233 Postal Station
G, Vancouver

Vancouver Status of Women, see Legal/Financial

BC Native Women's Society, 1501 - 1775 Bellevue

West Vancouver, 922-0990 (Kitty Maracle)

Daycare: Child Care Federation, see Daycare, Single

Parents

Abortion: Canadian Women's Coalition to Repeal

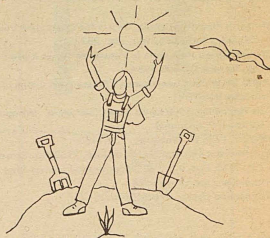
Abortion Laws, 512 - 207 W. Hastings St., 688-7133,

685-7407

Also: BC Committee to Defend Dr. Morgentaler, Box

35567 Station E, Vancouver, 921-9457, 874-3050

BC Women's Studies Association, contact Chris Wardell at
756 W. 7th Ave., 874-2094, or Jane Gaskell, UBC Faculty
of Ed.



MEDIA & ARTS

Women's Bookstore, 804 Richards St., 684-0523

Press Gang, 821 E. Hastings St., 253-1224

Room of One's Own, 9 - 2520 Prince Albert St.,

879-8783. Feminist journal of literature. Sub-

missions welcome. \$5/yr (4 issues), \$1.50/issue

(\$1.75 in US)

Western Canadian Women's News Service, 2029 W. 4th

Ave., 736-3746

Reel Feelings, c/o Metro Media, 3006 Cambie St.,

876-8610 (Nomi Promislow)

Video-Inn, 261 Powell St., 688-4336

ISIS/Women in Film, 3006 Cambie St., 872-1945

(Mo Simpson)

Women's Theatre Coop, 1630 Trafalgar, 731-9496

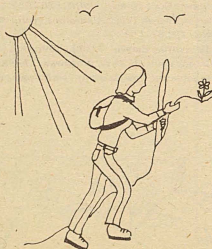
(Svetlana Smith)

Royal Canadian Aerial Theatre Co., 4574 W. 8th Ave.,

228-9874, 684-3591



47.



SURVIVAL

Carpentry, Edge City Woodworking Coop, see Educ.

Country Alternatives, 1520 W. 6th Ave., 738-6515.

Info on land and its use in BC, help looking, etc.

Garbage -- Recycle! at City of Vancouver Manitoba

Yard, 250 W. 70th Ave., 327-8121. If you have alot

X-Kalay may pick it up for you - 253-4368

Greenpeace Foundation, 2007 W. 4th Ave., 738-3032

Mom's Repairs, garage behind 4465 Quebec St., 876-0635

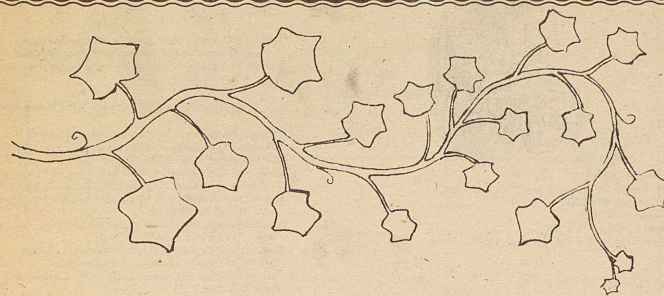
or Jane at 876-5863 for help with car repairs.

Society for Pollution & Environmental Control (SPEC),

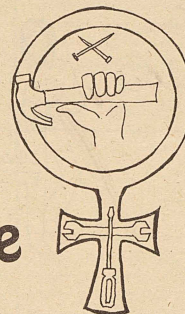
2007 W. 4th Ave., 736-1822

Any corrections, additions, or comments on
this list appreciated. Let us know if you've
heard of any useful organizations!

-- Pat

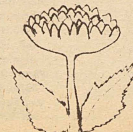


IUY AND MARIGOLDS

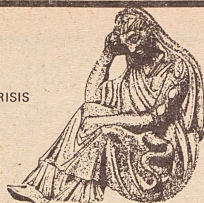


resource

recourse



CRISIS



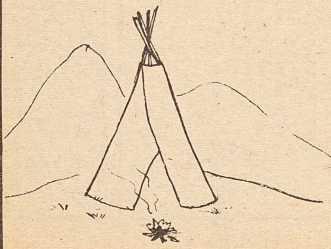
Crisis Centre - 733-4111
F.I.S.H., emergency homemaker service, - 299-4824
Poison Control - 874-5000
Rape Relief - 732-1613
Transition House - 874-5116
Vancouver Emotional Emergency Centre - 872-7914

HEALTH AND CHILDBIRTH

Birth Centre, 1520 W. 6th Ave., 731-0621
Vancouver Childbirth Association, 212 - 1088 W. 12th Ave., 263-7910
La Leche League, (breastfeeding), P.O. Box 35232, Postal Station "E", 980-9655 or 736-4713 (Gillian Russell)
Pine Free Clinic, 1985 W. 4th Ave., 736-2391. Hours: Mon - Fri 9:30 - 12:00 am, 1:30 - 4:00 pm, Mon & Thurs eves. 7:00 pm
Reach Health Centre, 1144 Commercial Drive, 254-1354.
Medical and dental clinics.
Women's Health Collective, 1520 W. 6th Ave., 736-6696
Women's Self-Help Clinic, same office as Health Collective. Clinic on Tuesday eves, 5:30 pm at Pine Free Clinic.

HOUSING

Temporary
YWCA, 580 Burrard St., 683-2531
Jericho Hostel, off W. 4th Ave., at foot of Discovery St., 738-3128, 224-3208. CYH member \$1.50/night, non-member \$1.74/night
Permanent
HARK, 2325 W. 7th Ave., 736-3588
Lifestream bulletin board, W. 4th Ave. & Burrard
YWCA Rooms Registry, 580 Burrard St., 683-2531
Rental Aid (Red Door Information Centre), 4804 Main St., 873-1671
Women's Bookstore bulletin board, 804 Richards St.
UBC, Student Union Building - bulletin boards
SFU, Housing Office and bulletin boards
Information Centres



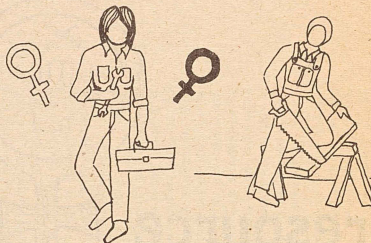
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EMPLOYMENT

Canada Manpower - various offices (See phone book)
Job Development, 2245 Commercial Drive, 254-2531
Women's Employment Boutique, 1129 E. Hastings St.

EDUCATION/PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRAINING

Community Memory, 1877 W. 4th Ave., 733-8310
The Learning Exchange, 1320 Commercial Drive, 253-8113
Computer run information and learning exchange system.
Vancouver City College, 100 W. 49th Ave., 731-1131
Vancouver Vocational Institute, 250 W. Pender, 681-8111
British Columbia Institute of Technology, 3700 Willingdon Ave., Burnaby, 434-5722
Douglas College, 8th Ave. & McBride, 588-6404. Includes Women's Studies courses.
Simon Fraser University, Burnaby Mountain, Burnaby, 291-3111. Women's Studies courses available.
University of British Columbia, Centre for Continuing Education, 228-2181
YWCA, 580 Burrard St., 683-2531. Offers variety of courses and programs.
Edge City Woodworking Co-op, Carpentry class/workshop for women. Mon & Thurs eves. 7:30 - 10:00 pm, Sat 10:00 am-5:00 pm. \$5/month. Contact Sharon, Coordinator, at 253-0126 or 253-2778.
Vancouver People's Law School, 610 - 207 W. Hastings, 681-7532. Free public courses on various aspects of the law.



LEGAL, FINANCIAL & OMBUDS SERVICES

BC Association of Social Workers Task Force on Sexism in Social Work, 2515 Burrard St., 738-5311, 738-1516
Budget Aid, 1530 W. 8th Ave., 731-5727
Consumer Action League, 253 E. 11th Ave., 873-1939
Legal Aid Society, 195 Alexander St., 687-1831
Rape Relief - see CRISIS
Women's Employment Bureau, BC Dept. of Labour, 613 - 4211 Kingsway, Burnaby, V5H 1Z6, 434-5761, Locals 298, 326, 327. Info & help about training, discrimination complaints, labour standards.
Women's Legal Advisory Centre, 4 - 45 Kingsway, 872-0271. Mon & Wed. 7:00 - 9:00 PM
Vancouver Status of Women Council, 2029 W. 4th Ave., 736-3746

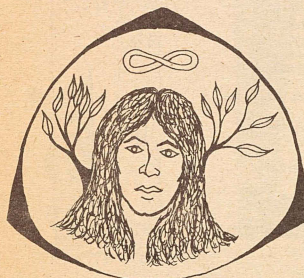
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EMPLOYMENT & LIFE PLANNING COUNSELLING

Women's Resource Centre, Centre for Continuing Educ., UBC Duke Hall, 228-2181, Loc. 252
Women's Resources Centre, Vancouver Public Library, 750 Burrard St., 685-3934
AIMS for Women, c/o Women's Programme, Capilano College, 980-7511
The Workshop, 1068 Davie Street, 687-4914. (Manpower Outreach Programme)
Orenda, 1976 W. Broadway, 736-1151
Employment Orientation for Women, 2750 Oak Street, 731-4614, Loc. 52. (VCC Special Programmes Div.)
Manpower, see phone book.
Counselling Depts. of most schools.

INDIVIDUAL & FAMILY COUNSELLING

Post-Partum Counselling, 1946 W. Broadway, 736-2501
YWCA Counselling Services, 580 Burrard, 683-2531, Loc. 252
Unitarian Family Life Centre, 949 W. 49th Ave., 263-0624
Family Service Centre, 1616 W. 7th Ave., 731-4951
Family & Children's Service, 1675 W. 10th Ave., 733-8111
Community Care Teams, several branches - see phone book.



PERSONAL GROWTH & THERAPY

Women's Self-Help Counselling Collective, 1520 W. 6th Ave., 736-6696
Cold Mountain Institute, 3076 E. 49th Ave., 433-9956
Gestalt Studios, 139 Water St., 688-7533
Whole Person Society, 1835 Pandora St., Vancouver.
Self-help supportive environment with Primal Therapy orientation.
Capilano College
Douglas College
SFU
UBC
Synergy, 1837 Larch St., 738-2333
New Age Community Centre, 1962 W. 4th Ave., 738-9815. Offers variety of activities, also publishes a newspaper and has comprehensive list of spiritual communities in and around Vancouver.



SUPPORT, FRIENDSHIP & INFORMATION

Lesbian Drop-in, Women's Bookstore, 804 Richards St., 684-0523. Weds. at 8:00 PM.
Lesbian Drop-in, Pine Free Clinic, 1985 W. 4th Ave., 738-7586
Post-partum Counselling, see Indiv. & Family Counselling
Women's Information Centre, 3rd Floor, YWCA, 580 Burrard St., 683-2531. Consciousness-raising groups.
Women's Resource Centre, Vanc. Public Library.
Noon-hour drop-in, Thurs.
Women's Health Collective, see Health. Women's health groups.
Family Place, 2505 - 2521 Dunbar, 731-2719. Drop-in for mothers and families.
LIFE, at YWCA, 683-2531. Support groups for widows and older women newly on their own.
Vancouver Status of Women, see Legal/Financial. Orientation meetings every 2nd & 4th Thurs of the month.
UBC Women's Office, Room 230, Student Union Bldg., 228-2082, 228-6228. Drop-in, library, etc.
SFU Women's Centre Collective

DAYCARE, SINGLE PARENT SERVICES

Day Care Information Centre, 45 W. 8th Ave., 873-3767
Child Care Federation, c/o Neighbourhood Service Assoc., 2108 W. 4th Ave., 731-6511
Family Place, see Support, Friendship, etc.
Crossreach Single Parents' Group, Canadian Memorial Church, 1811 W. 16th Ave., 732-3245, 736-1817, or 738-7727
ASPS (All Lone Parents), New Westminster, 536-9338
North Shore Single Parents, meets at North Shore Neighbourhood House, 988-4969
Burnaby Single Parents Club, 438-1926
Single Mothers Coop Homes, YWCA, 683-2531, Loc. 247
Single Parent Services (Vanc. Resource Board), 1675 W. 10th Ave., 733-8111
Ruby's Babysitting Bureau, 3038 E. 59th Ave., 433-7621
Foster Grandparents, 1734 W. Broadway, 736-8271.
Matches volunteer "grandparents" with single parent families.



Sunday

Monday





Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

<p>8 PM > Lesbian Drop-In Pine Free Clinic 1785 West 4th Ave. For info 738-7586, evens.</p>	<p>7:30-9:30 PM > 2 CRIMINAL PROCEDURES - 4 days, INST. Leo Mc- Grady, KITS Library - FREE, VAN People's Law Sch. 7:30-10:30 PM > Awareness & Exploration, 4 Mondays, J. Black- man, I. Kravenhoff, Gestalt Studios, 159 water Street 4th floor \$25</p>	<p>11-3 PM > The Clinic - Day 3 Drop-In Tues & Wed, Gestalt Studios < 7-11 PM > Gestalt FOR WOMEN & MEN - 6 Tues. B. Johnson - G. STUDIOS - \$25 < 8 PM > Women's Lives Film Series, "Adam's Rib", "Lucky I Need A Little Sleep", "I Would I Ever Love To Work", 828 West 10th Ave. \$3</p>	<p>7-9 PM > Problems Of Hunger & Malnutrition In Developing Countries, 4 weds Spkr. Dr. M. Singh - RM 303a Van. Pub. Lib. - FREE < 7:30 PM > Open Women's Gestalt & Support Gr. - Dorrie Isobel - 325-5573 \$5 < 7:30-10:30 PM > The Woods, Night Drop-In Group Therapy, Gestalt Studio #7</p>	<p>11:30-1:30 AM > 5 Drop-In - 1st Thurs. every Mon 9's Resource Centre 3rd fl. V.R. Lib. < 7-11 PM > Gestalt for 9 6 Thurs. B. Johnson & S. Wendell 6.5. 8:30 7:30-10:30 PM > Dream Workshop 4 Thurs. I. Kraven- hoff, Gestalt Studios \$25</p>	<p></p>	<p>10:30 a.m. - 12:30 pm > 10 Spd Bike Clinic - No Bikes Reg. Early, YMCA - 4th fl. - 600-1100 Co-ed < 11 am > Tarot - Gestalt, Sat & Sunday, J. McIntyre & B. Malanich - G. STUDIOS #25</p>
<p>8 PM > Lesbian Drop-In Pine Free Clinic</p>	<p>7:30-9:30 PM > 9 Law, INSTRUCTORS C. Gibbs & R. Germaine, B.C. Labour Fed. Bldg. 517 east Broad- way - FREE, Van P.L. School</p>	<p>8 PM > 9's Lives Film Series, "Gertrude Stein: When This You See, Remem- ber Me" \$3</p>	<p>8 PM > Lesbian Drop-In 9's Bookstore 804 Richards St. < 7:30 PM > Open 9's Gestalt Support Group</p>	<p>12</p>	<p>7:30-10:30 PM > Seeing The Obvious, J. Blackman & I. Kravenhoff, G. STUDIOS \$35 KOOTENAY WOMEN'S FESTIVAL - 4 DAYS KASLO, B.C. </p>	<p>10 am - 6 pm > Seeing The Obvious (con't)</p>
<p>10-4 PM > Seeing The Obvious (con't) < 8 PM > Lesbian Drop-In Pine Free Clinic</p>	<p>7:30-9:30 AM > 16 Immigration Procedures Inst. D. Rosenbloom, 3 days VAN. PUA Lib - FREE, VAN. PLSA SUMMER I - Schedule of courses at YUCA begins Thru July 20th. Schedule Avail. at YUCA.</p>	<p></p>	<p>7:30 PM > Open 9's Gestalt & Support Group < 8 PM > Lesbian Drop-In 9's Bookstore</p>	<p>19</p>	<p>20</p>	<p>10-5 PM > Discover- ing Ourselves Through Sound & Movement, C. Kenny & N. McMaster - G. STUDIOS - \$15</p>
<p>8 PM > Lesbian Drop-In, Pine Free Clinic</p>	<p>7:30-9:30 PM > 23 Consumer Protection, 3 days, INST. D. Mossop, YMCA, 955 Burrard - FREE VAN. P.L. School</p>	<p>24</p>	<p>7:30 PM > Open 9's Gestalt & Support Group < 8 PM > Lesbian Drop-In, 9's Bookstore</p>	<p>26</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>10-6 PM > Day-long Group, I. Kravenhoff & J. Blackman, G. STUDIOS #15</p>
<p>8 PM > Lesbian Drop-In, Pine Free Clinic</p>	<p>7:30-10:30 PM > 30 Awareness & Exploration (Repeat) 4 Mondays, I. Kravenhoff & J. Blackman, G. STUDIOS. \$25</p>			<p></p>		

JUNE



'PRAY FOR THE DEAD AND FIGHT LIKE HELL FOR THE LIVING'.

MA JONES

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