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HERizons

The Manitoba Women's Newspaper 60¢

VOL. II NO. VI

DECEMBER 1, 1982

Women Shortchanged As Economy Flounders

The economic status of women is falling by the wayside as the economy continues to flounder. Many hard-won gains in women's struggle for economic equality are being shelved or relegated to the status of luxuries.

Women's struggle in the workplace and in society may be further hampered if women are forced to sacrifice their gains for the supposed good of all.

Social Services are one area where women's economic status is being slowly degenerated. As the prime beneficiaries of social programs, women could suffer even further setbacks if the concept of universality is sacrificed.

Although Health Minister Monique Begin has come out against the idea, there is a growing pressure within the federal Liberal party to channel money out of social programs, like family allowance, which mainly benefit women, into job creation, which largely benefit men.

Jeopardizing the economic status of women in order to benefit men reinforces the age-old myth that women work just for "extra money" and that their husbands will take care of them. This theory is easily disputed by Labour Canada figures which indicate that forty percent of working women are heads of household (either single, divorced or widowed), and another 20 percent have partners earning close to the poverty line.

Despite the fact that women work out of economic necessity, there has been a historical pattern of encouraging and discouraging women from working when it was convenient for men.

Roberta Ellis, Co-Chairperson of the Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women describes how women were welcomed into the labor force during wars to replace absent men. Afterward, she says, they were ejected from

their jobs and told "now get back to the family and do what you're supposed to do."

She says the attitude that "working women are taking jobs away from men — as if men have some sacred rights to the jobs" exists even today. She cites a recent interview in an American magazine where United States President Ronald Reagan was quoted as saying "times are tough and you women have to look at what you're doing to the economy."

"The ability to make waves (about unfair labour practices) takes a lot of courage at the best of times," she says, and economic insecurity greatly diminishes that courage.

According to the Women's Bureau of the department of labour, three times as many women than men are employed part time. Ellis says that when lay-offs are made, part-time workers or those in term positions are the first to go. Part-time workers who work less than an average of 15 hours per week are prohibited from collecting unemployment insurance benefits, further weakening the economic situation of predominantly female part-time workforce labourers.

A Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women (CACSW) report on part-time earners states that: "Part-time workers are confined to the lowest level jobs with little chance of training or promotion."

Because the majority of women work in clerical and service occupations (according

to federal government labour statistics), where wages have been traditionally lower than male-dominated occupations, the deterioration of the economic status of women is especially significant, according to Ellis. Because women had less to begin with, the 6 and 5 percent wage restriction policy of the federal government punishes women disproportionately.

Manitoba Minister of Economic Development Muriel Smith agrees that women's progress in the labour movement has been greatly impeded in the recession and is therefore likely to recover at a slower rate than the overall labour movement. She is optimistic though, that the struggle for equality in the workplace will be won as long as women don't discard their vigilance.

"Any recovery is going to be slow. There is no room for complacency."

Unlike Ellis, Smith finds reassurance in the fact that women haven't been blatantly driven from the workforce.

"I don't think there's a rapid backlash as there would have been 30 years ago," she says, admitting that "the subtle temptation to favour the man" may exist in hiring practices.

To Smith, the hopelessness of economic uncertainty is best known by those who have ebbed from the paid labour force.

Women collecting unemployment insurance benefits are yielding less than their unemployed male counterparts, be-

cause on average they earned 40 percent more than the average woman while employed, according to CACSW figures. As a majority of welfare and pension recipients, women, at the best of times, represent two thirds of Canada's poor.

Another problem is the lack of union representation among women workers. Women's Bureau statistics reveal less than 30 percent of union members are women. While unionized workers are having to make concessions in order to keep their jobs, those without collective bargaining power are in an even higher risk situation.

Leslie Spillett of the International Ladies Garment Workers' Union argues that because high unemployment has been adapted by the government as necessary to fight inflation, "it interrupts the whole collective bargaining process."

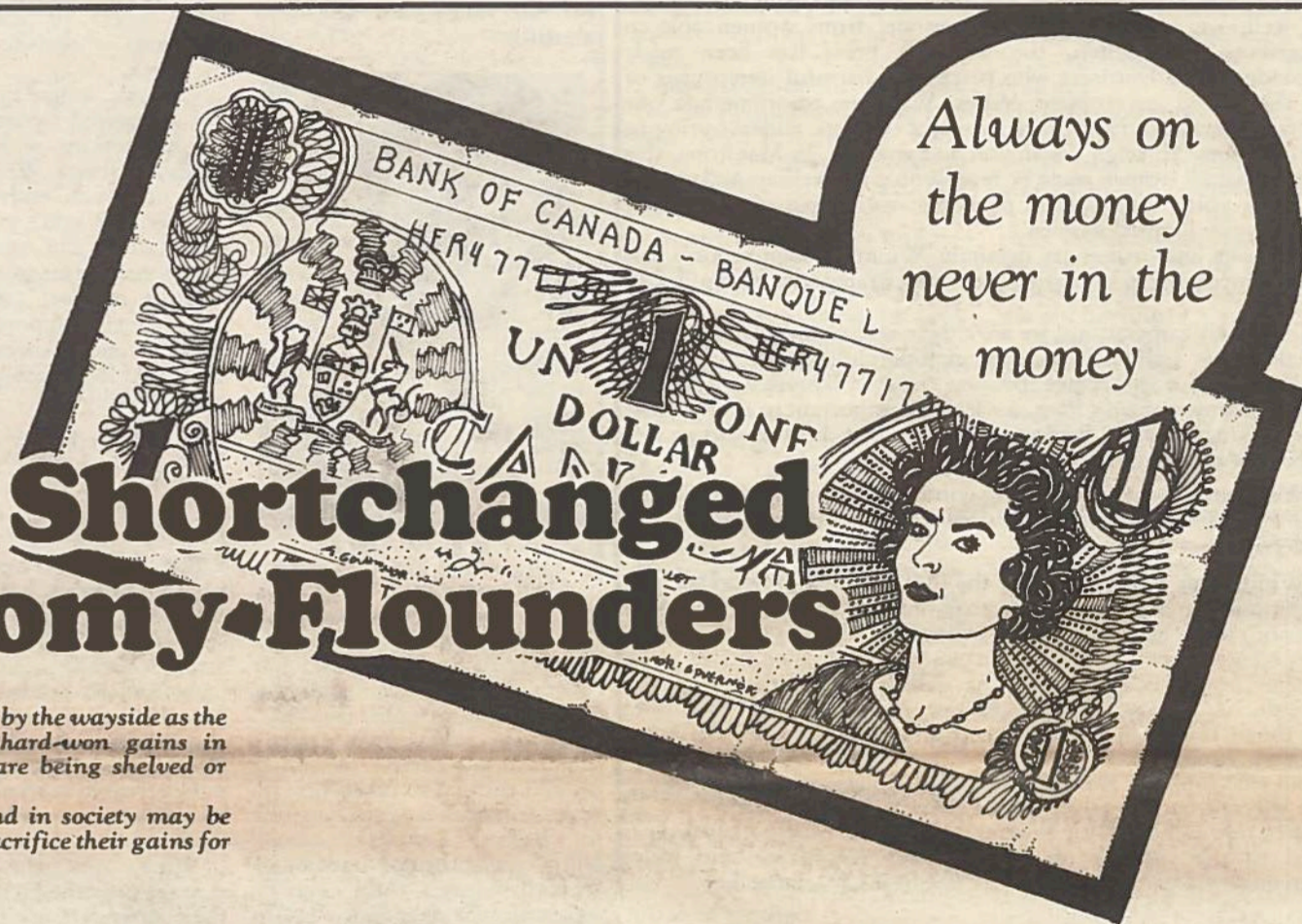
When there are one and a half million people out of work, the reality of workers' rights vaporizes.

"Do you think that anyone who had a free choice would take a 10 percent cut in pay? They have no choice. They have no rights."

Especially for women employed in the garment industry, the struggle is difficult. Spillett says immigrant women are easily intimidated since they are insecure about being in an unfamiliar country working for minimal wages, and are devastated if they lose what little income they earn.

"I have people sitting sobbing in my office who don't know

Always on
the money
never in the
money



how to deal with not having a job," she says.

"To me, it's really god-damned depressing."

Spillett is further disheartened by workers who are starting to agree with their employers that technological changes in the workplace are good for them, when in fact those changes are being implemented to reduce labour costs.

"There's not going to be jobs to go back to," she says.

For single parents, the labour situation is uniquely critical. Ellis describes it as "a survival situation." Child care costs are rising and wages aren't keeping up to inflation.

Spillett says labour issues like equal pay for work of equal value, maternity leave and access to affordable child care are falling by the wayside as the entire labour movement deteriorates.

"Those are things we should already have. Now those (issues) are put on the backburners or taken off the stove completely."

Despite evidence suggesting that women are subject to severe economic setbacks during times of economic stress, Ellis says the attitude that "it's too bad, but that's the status quo" lends itself to further ideas and practices that cause women to suffer unjustly. Changing the acceptance of these setbacks into outrage will help ensure that women won't have regressed irretrievably when the dust settles after the recession.

by Penni Mitchell

EDITORIAL

Where We Are Now

Dear Readers,

After three years of sweat, struggle and strife, the Herizons collective has pulled the stunning coup of establishing an office, procuring full-time staff and launching a thoroughly professional operation.

Our dedicated readership is aware of our past intermittent publishing schedule and the attendant problems — finances and energy — that Herizons has laboured under.

This issue marks our first, as full-time publishers. You will see us monthly until May and then once every two weeks. This accelerated publishing schedule reflects the interest and confidence of the community in women's issues and acknowledges the need for alternative coverage.

In the coming months, we will continue to be a forum for the women of Manitoba, exploring our concerns, overlooked in the traditional media.

We continue to depend on feedback and input from our readers. As well, we need the financial support from women able to contribute. Too often, the women's press has been made dependent on advertisers who perpetuate harmful stereotypes or on short-lived government grants. We hope to strengthen our roots as part of a national network of women, endeavouring to create change through discussion and analysis. In Manitoba, this means that all women must be represented in Herizons and given a place to voice their special concerns: rural, native, immigrant, lesbian and disabled women.

Herizons also makes its debut in Winnipeg high schools this issue. The energy of young people is vital to achieving an egalitarian society.

In our daily operations, we are able to realize our ideology of the "personal is political" and we include children as a welcome addition to our workplace. Because children represent an integral part of many women's lives, we feel it is important to reflect those interests in our office. Right now we have one child on staff and are expecting three more in the spring.

We invite emergent writers to contribute to our newspaper and will be offering training to women interested in joining our collective.

While some would consider the idea of embarking on such an ambitious venture in times of economic stress to be a kamikaze mission, we're not suicidal. We believe our newspaper is just what the women healer ordered. Our contributors' perspectives make articles more thought-provoking and analytical than those of traditional news outlets. Herizons is a unique medium. Since times are tough, the tough have to succeed and that's what we are going to do with your help.

So pass long the paper, help us spread the word. Subscriptions are still the bargain — basement price of \$5 per year — for 18 copies (an inexpensive Christmas present). Your participation is vital to the survival of this women's newspaper and we're convinced we can grow — SUCCESSFULLY — together.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Friend,

I am writing to you on a matter of great urgency. You will undoubtedly be as concerned as I am with a real and pressing threat to the civil liberties of many Canadians — women and men, medical professionals and their patients.

A legal action brought in Saskatchewan by an opponent of abortion could ultimately deny safe, medical, legal abortion to Canadian women. It could, if successful, make it impossible for health care professionals to counsel their patients about abortion and to provide them with access to abortion.



many flaws in Section 251 — our present abortion law — but should the courts decide that a fertilized egg is a person, even the limited access we now have will disappear.

Women, though, will continue to have unplanned, unwanted and unsupported pregnancies, and, in their desperation, seek ways to terminate them. Canadian women will again be driven into back street abortions, and possibly be maimed or die as a result.

The Canadian Abortion Rights Action League, of which I am an honorary director, plans to take legal action to counter Joe Borowski's threats to turn back the clock.

CARAL, unlike Borowski, is not supported by large powerful institutions with virtually unlimited funds. We are dependent upon you, and other individuals like you, to fight the battle which our legal advisors tell us could run to six figures.

Your interest, participation and financial support can make the difference. You can stop Joe Borowski from turning back the clock. Will you?

Yours sincerely,
Margaret Laurence

Dear Editor:

For the past 8 years I have been involved in both research and working with victims of sexual abuse in my community, a mere 20,000 population and have regularly released statistics for the community to read about what is happening here. Every day I hear tales of unbelievable horror suffered by victims of men such as Olson.

Where are the cries of outrage over the fact that when these offenders are brought to trial they are rarely convicted?

Where are the cries of outrage for the government's lack of funds towards groups such as a self-help group for victims of sexual abuse?

A report in a Vancouver newspaper last year stated that in the past twenty years in the lower mainland, there have been less than a dozen cases reported and few make it to court. In Campbell River since August 1980 to December of 1981, I personally am aware of seven cases going to court and six convictions.

To what do we owe this? To the excellent co-operation of the Campbell River RCMP and the change of attitudes of the community. We know the justice system stinks, but it is the only one we have and unless we are willing to use it and fight for much needed changes, we will continue to have men such as Clifford Olson in every community.

I deal with what is left of males and females after men like Clifford Olson finish with them, yet victims receive little support — only someone saying "I'm sorry," after they are told and someone walking away muttering "Thank God, it wasn't me!"

Maybe next time it will be you or someone you love unless you begin to help groups such as ourselves who are striving to work not only on rebuilding our lives but to teach others how to prevent sexual abuse of children. Don't blame the Attorney-General or the RCMP, put the blame where it belongs, on our laws and direct that energy of outrage towards something more positive — a change in our laws and methods of prevention.

Thank you,
Linda Halliday
Sexual Abuse Consultant



HERizons staff from right to left: Patricia Rawson, Debbie Holmberg-Schwartz, Brigitte Sutherland, Marnie Pastuck, Penni Mitchell, Kim Ross.

MOVEMENT MORES

FEMINISM — is an ideological commitment to the legal, economic and social equality of the sexes. It does not seek to replace male supremacy with female supremacy or patriarchy with matriarchy. Rather, a feminist is any person, female or male, who envisions and works toward equal rights, opportunity and human dignity.

LETTY COTTIN POGREBIN

Author of *Growing Up Free* and founder, editor and writer for *Ms.* magazine.



the manitoba women's newspaper

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Y.W.C.A. Resource Centre
and other women's organizations.

The aim of this newspaper is to provide an alternative means of communication with a feminist perspective in order to stimulate, to inform, to effect change, and to unify women's strengths, serving as a forum for the women of Manitoba.

HERizons, The Manitoba Women's Newspaper, is currently operating out of 125 Osborne Street S., Winnipeg. For further information, call 477-1730. Views expressed in this publication are those of the writer and do not necessarily reflect The Manitoba Women's Newspaper policy. Submissions are welcome. Editing rights are reserved and submission does not guarantee publication. A self-addressed stamped envelope will ensure that submissions will be returned to the writer. Published 18 times a year. Price: \$5.00 per year, 60 cents per issue. For institution or business: \$12.00.

Be a distributor . . .

HERizons is presently looking for distributors. We supply an attractive news stand and offer a 20% commission on sales. Please call Debbie Holmberg-Schwartz at 477-1730.

Remolding Therapy in Our Images

The development of a feminist framework around counselling services such as psychiatry and social work is essential to the fair treatment of women in counselling situations, according to Helen Levine, a professor of Social Work at Carleton University in Ottawa.

In the past, Levine says, counsellors forced women to fit into rigidly-defined molds of "traditional female happiness." Now therapy must include examining those molds as well as who created them.

Addressing a 2-day conference for professionals in the helping professions, Levine said that traditional definitions of "normal male" and "normal female" behaviors are based on a presumed normalcy of the subordination of women.

Despite class and personality differences, women have historically been expected to be demure, mothering and selfless creatures who worked for nothing but the love of a man, Levine says. She pointed out that women's oppression has often led them to seek help from that oppression from a mainly unsympathetic profession.

Prior to the contemporary Women's Movement, Levine says, people in counselling professions "dealt with the family as a must and as a sanctified institution and tried to help people fit the mold."

In counselling situations, women were treated with "punishment, blame and pathology." When they finally broke down and were admitted to hospitals, they were commonly regarded as trying to get out of doing housework and of neglecting their husbands.

"Women's anger has to be seen in its political context. Our rage is a very healthy reaction," Levine says. "We are underpaid, trivialized, objectified and abused. No wonder we are angry."

Classical female responses such as depression are natural responses to oppressive conditions, according to Levine.

"The rationale is that women's work is demeaning for men, but somehow natural for women."

Motherwork, Levine describes as the only labor of love. In a society which places such a high value on monetary reward, women's accomplishments out of the paid workforce "tend to become invisible."

Men are entitled by virtue of their sex to work and be parents, but women are expected to bear the extra burdens of running a household when they work for money, according to Levine.

The discriminating societal attitudes of what is acceptable in male and female behavior, bias the way men's and women's problems are treated by those in the helping professions.

The results of these biases are clearly seen in counselling professions as well as in the rest of society. In incest cases, Levine says, men are frequently seen as the victims, rather than the perpetrators of crime. Men are absolved from blame with attitudes such as 'he was forced to turn to his daughter because his wife wasn't performing her wifely duties.' The blame is conveniently shifted from a man who has raped his daughter, on to the wife, who had no part in the crime, or on to the daughter, who is often seen as "seducing" the father, even though she may only be a few years old.

Wife beating is another crime seen as a "family" problem rather than a man's problem, where the focus should be on treating or prosecuting the man for his actions, rather than imply that the wife somehow drove him to beat her.

People in the helping professions must realize the risk of perpetuating these dangerous attitudes, Levine says. They must also avoid distinct power situations in therapy, where the professional controls the communication and the person is subordinated. Since 90 percent of psychiatrists are men, Levine warns, they must be especially aware of avoiding male-dominated situations in therapy.

by Penni Mitchell

Clinic Opens Choice



Morgentaler: a hero?

Physicians performing abortions is limited and is currently being cut back, says Kruger. Hospital administrations defend this by citing financial restraint as a reason.

"Since 1969, the number of abortions being done has increased annually by ten per cent. Last year, that figure dropped to between six and eight per cent. That means that women have less access (to abortions). It doesn't mean women are unexpectedly pregnant less often," Kruger said.

Under current federal law passed in 1969, abortions can only be performed at an accredited hospital after approval by a therapeutic abortion committee.

According to the 1977 Badgeley Report on the Operation of the Abortion Law, only 20.1 per cent of the 1,348 civilian hospitals in Canada had established therapeutic abortion committees. Eight therapeutic abortion committees exist in Manitoba, three of which are in Winnipeg at the Health Sciences Centre, Victoria Hospital and Seven Oaks Hospital.

The process of obtaining an abortion in Manitoba is often long and tedious. When a woman decides to have an abortion, the counselling service can refer her to a physician who conducts a medical and social assessment of the woman, routinely getting a second opinion. If the two concur, the physician performing the abortion fills out an application which will be put before the therapeutic abortion committee, which meets weekly. A

refusal means no appeal. If the physician can't fit the woman into the operating schedule before the twelve-week limit, she will be refused also.

The system itself creates inordinate delays to women and endangers their health, Kruger says, noting that Canada has the second highest rate of second trimester abortions in the world.

The Badgeley Report states: "The major factor contributing to the delay by most women obtaining abortions in Canadian hospitals occurred after an initial consultation had been made with a physician. An average interval of eight weeks between initial medical consultation and the performance of the abortion procedure not only extended considerably the length of gestation, but increased the risk of associated health complications."

In 1980 a Manitoba Medical Association study of abortion facilities and procedures, chaired by Dr. T. Roulston, estimated that at least 60 to 70 percent of 3,340 women requesting abortions in Manitoba in 1979 had to leave the province.

Kruger feels it is up to individuals to educate themselves and others about the necessity for better abortion services in Manitoba. She suggests people lobby their MLA, the Attorney-General and the Health minister. She points to a 1982 Gallup poll that found that 73 percent of people in the prairie provinces support a woman's right to choose in the event of an unplanned pregnancy.

by Gerri Thorsteinson

Briefly — on the HERizon

Wimmin ignite

Protesting what they called "hate propaganda" against women and children, The Wimmin's Brigade of Vancouver nearly gutted three hard core pornography stores in the Vancouver area last week.

In a letter sent to United Press Canada, the group said Red Hot Video "sells tapes that show wimmin and children being tortured, raped and humiliated. We are not the property of men to be used and abused."

The most serious attack was in the Surrey store, where a gasoline bomb destroyed the outlet. Damage was not extensive at either of the other two outlets. No one was in the buildings at the time the attacks were made, at around midnight, November 22.

Women's groups in B.C. have been protesting the sale of hard core porn at the 10 outlets in B.C. since last May. North Shore Women's Centre representative Donna Stewart said recently that her group viewed videos from Red Hot and found "all of them extremely violent." Red Hot Manager Ted Emery said in a radio interview that there was no rape scenes depicted in the videos, but Stewart called this "a complete lie."

In Winnipeg, Red Hot's pornography is available via the Winnipeg Sun. The paper has been running ads in its classified section of the newspaper promoting "guaranteed uncut U.S. version" XXX Rated Video" for several months, despite an article in Wednesday, October 13 edition saying that hard core pornography is available from the Kelowna outlet.

B.C. Women's organizations who are in agreement with the Wimmin's Brigade criticized the B.C. Attorney-General's department for not enforcing existing laws on obscenity which prohibit the distribution of pornographic films which use violence.

Paid parental leave urged

The British Columbia Federation of Labour is calling for nine months' paid parental leave, a minimum 10 days a year paid leave for parental responsibilities and the protection of reproductive capacities for men and women in hazardous work environments.

The policy paper, passed recently at a labour convention, was part of the women's rights committee report. It also recommended that any system of parental leave should include accumulation of seniority and maintenance benefits.

Porn and violence linked

A recent survey of American and Canadian men at the University of Wisconsin and UCLA showed that 35 percent of men said there was some chance they would rape a woman if they could be sure they would not get caught.

The report, based on research presented at the American Psychological Association in Washington, found a significant minority of adult men had attitudes similar to those of convicted rapists.

The study, in which men were shown films exhibiting violence and sexual violence, showed that exposure to violent pornography increased men's willingness to "administer pain to women."

Violent pornography encourages violence against women, according to the researchers, who noted that erotic material alone (non-violent) did not increase violent attitudes toward women.

According to the chairperson of the National Coalition on Television Violence, "sexually violent entertainment is like a nicotine habit. The viewer needs stronger doses to keep getting the excitement."

Bill flawed

Bill C-127, the new sexual assault bill, is "so flawed that it offers no guarantee of increased justice for victims of sexual assault," according to Megan Ellis, a Rape Crisis Centre worker who appeared before the Standing Senate Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs with vice-president Jillian Ridington of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women (NAC).

The bill is still unacceptable to NAC because the admissibility of evidence regarding the past sexual history of the victim is still allowed in some cases, and the fact that "honest belief" in the victim's consent can still be used as a defence.

"Given the fact that men are constantly bombarded with pornography that tells them that women 'really want to be raped', any man could claim to believe such lies about women," Ridington told the committee.

"Those of us who work in Rape Crisis Centres and Transition Houses know that these are not merely legal fine points. What we are talking about is real women's lives."

Buffoons guffaw in house

Conservative MP Gordon Taylor (Bow River) resorted to a verbal sexist attack on Mines Minister Judy Erola recently in the House of Commons after he didn't get an appropriate response about her mailing expenses in the summer.

"I admit the minister has a nice body but it's too bad it's connected to her mouth."

In keeping with unwritten tradition, the predominantly-male House reinforced the attack with resounding guffaws.

Erola, who is responsible for the status of women, said "It is sad and ironic that on the eve of this 53rd anniversary of the Persons Case, women are still not treated as whole human beings."

Erola said the comment was typically sexist.

BULLETINS

DECEMBER

CANADIAN ABORTION RIGHTS ACTION LEAGUE — INFORMATION MEETING

to discuss need for abortion services in Manitoba. December 7th, 1982 at 7:30 p.m., 271 Manitoba Hall, University of Winnipeg, 515 Portage Avenue, Winnipeg.

WOMAN — A CALL FOR RESEARCH on and by Women in Manitoba — especially on the status of the provincial recommendations made by the Royal Commission on the Status of Women in 1970.

Applications for contracts must be submitted by December 10, 1982. A list of areas of inquiry and contract applications are available by writing **WOMAN**, 5 - 222 Osborne St. S., Winnipeg, R3C 1V4. For further information, call Lil McIlwain 944-3476 between 8:30 - 4:30 p.m.

 We are a group of women who have been invited by **FIREWEED**, a Feminist Quarterly to edit a special issue on *Women of Color in Canada*.

Send us personal stories, political writings, poetry, fiction, drama, social and cultural writings — pictures you've painted — photographs you've taken or personal stories about

yourselves as women of color in the Canadian society. We want to share records of our own experience that have previously been articulated by others. We want to talk about our sorrows, celebrate our victories — recount the good and bad experiences. We want women of color to speak out. Our deadline is December 31, 1982. Please contact us if you need an extension. The Editors, Women of Color Issue, Fireweed, P.O. Box 279, Station B, Toronto, Ontario M4P 1L6.

THE COMMITTEE FOR THE INCLUSION OF "SEXUAL ORIENTATION" IN THE MANITOBA HUMAN RIGHTS ACT urge Manitobans to endorse this reform by sending a letter of support.

Sample letter:
 Manitoba Human Rights Commission
 200 - 323 Portage Avenue
 WINNIPEG, Manitoba
 R3B 2C1

Dear M.H.R.C.:
 I believe that now is the time to protect the civil rights of gay people in the same way that the rights of other minorities are protected; by adding "sexual orientation" to the prohibited grounds of discrimination in the Manitoba Human Rights Act.

Yours truly, (signed)
 cc: your MLA

Canada's only women's university is asking one dollar from every woman throughout the country to support scholarships and bursaries for deserving women of all ages and to fund neglected areas of research into women's studies.

Mount administrators are confident the women of Canada will help them to do this by sending \$1 along with their name, to the university to build up the **BIGGEST NETWORK OF WOMEN HELPING OTHER WOMEN** Canada has ever seen.

Send contributions (anything over \$5 will get an income tax receipt) to: Development Office, Mount Saint Vincent University, 166 Bedford Highway, Halifax, Nova Scotia B3M 2J6.

JANUARY

WOMEN AND WORDS is a country-wide conference to be held in Vancouver, B.C. in early July, 1983. It will be a gathering of writers, editors, translators, booksellers, typesetters, librarians, publishers critics and printers.

Please contact us with ideas for papers, workshops or panel discussions you wish to offer or participate in.

Your support is needed so please join the "West Coast **WOMEN AND WORDS** Society" and receive mailings, further information on the



conference, registration information, etc. Send membership fee (\$5 Ind., \$10 Supporting; \$25 Sustaining/Institution; or Donations) to **WOMEN AND WORDS**, Box 65563, Station F, Vancouver, B.C., V5N 4B0.

As well, we need submission of unpublished prose, poetry, critical work and short one-act plays for an anthology to be published in the fall of 1983.

DEADLINE in January 1st, 1983. Maximum prose length 3000 words, only one piece. Maximum poems, five. Send typed manuscripts to Anthology Committee at the Women and Words address.

Please submit upcoming events of interest to Manitoba women to **BULLETINS**, c/o HERizons, 125 Osborne St. S., Winnipeg R3L 1Y4.

NELLIEGRAMS

IN VANCOUVER THE NATIONAL "TAKE BACK the Night" March ended at city hall where Sally De Quatros, a former prostitute and member of the Alliance for the Safety of Prostitutes, discussed the role of powerful men and institutions as the "pillars of prostitution". She indicted the pimps for exploiting the insecurities of girls and women who are often fleeing sexually and emotionally abusive environments. Police, lawyers, and judges who often derive their livelihoods from the harassment and confinement of prostitutes were also criticized. Sally pointed out the inadequacies of the "solution" of "concerned citizens" who want to bar prostitutes from the streets, and emphasized the links between prostitution and basic social inequities.

from Kinesis

CANADA EMPLOYMENT AND IMMIGRATION AND its minister Lloyd Axworthy have been charged with discrimination in a formal complaint laid with the Human Rights Commission in Montreal by Action Travail des Femmes. The complaint is a result of women in Montreal being refused entrance into welding courses by CEIC. The complaint uses the refusal to train women as welders as an example in a broader context of systematic sex discriminatory practices. Action Travail is asking for support to speed up the HRC process

— Write a letter urging the HRC to view the complaint laid by Action Travail as speedily as possible.

Address to Gordon Fairweather, Commissioner, Canadian Human Rights Commission, 257 Slater Street, Ottawa.

from Kinesis

WOMEN WORKING FOR PEACE IS NOTHING NEW. What is new is that we have reached a point in human history when the lethal mix of our unprecedented high state of technology and our "masculine" values-dominated system threatens to destroy us all.

What further becomes evident is a most ironic fact. When "push comes to shove," those on the liberal left and centre who speak of freedom, equality, and disarmament continue to see sexual equality and other women's issues as peripheral concerns — something for action after more important things are done. But those on the right, who relentlessly work for hierarchical orderings, authoritarian controls, and increased armaments, correctly perceive the sexual inequality is the cornerstone of the system they seek to impose on us all, and therefore also work relentlessly against sexual equality.

It is totally absurd and structurally impossible to try to bring about world peace within a system in which aggression and conquest are considered synonymous with manliness or masculinity, and in which the half of humanity to which

nurturance and bonding is relegated is excluded from social governance.

From Women's International Network News

DEPO-PROVERA: ANOTHER TIME BOMB? The Quebec Public Interest Research Group (QPIRG) has just released a publication which discusses the current uses and risks of the drug Depo-Provera, an injectable contraceptive for women. (Depo-Provera: A Shot in the Dark, QPIRG, 2070 Mackay St., Room 399, Montreal, Que. (514) 879-4510, 16pp. \$1.00) Depo, for short, is manufactured by the Upjohn Company of Kalamazoo, Michigan. It is the latest in a long line of contraceptives that have been tested and used mainly on third world women, despite the fact that these drugs have not been approved for such use within the United States. There is in fact a ban in the U.S. on the export of Depo to other countries; to avoid this ban, Upjohn manufactures this drug in Canada, sells it here, and exports it from here.

Possible risks of the long-term use of Depo (based on animal studies and observation in humans) include temporary or permanent infertility, anemia, diabetes, uterine diseases, deformities in offspring, and cervical, endometrial and breast cancer.

Women who were given Depo as a contraceptive or for any other reason, please contact QPIRG. from Communiqu'elles

LONDON, U.K. — **WOMEN LIVE!** ('LIVE' AS IN 'STRIVE' rather than 'give', that is) is the title given to the culmination of over a year's extraordinary backroom work by Women In Entertainment and, as their programme says, 'launches our drive to transform entertainment in Britain' — to take into account that the species who hold up half the sky would like to do other things as well.

'Women Live' — a month organized by and dedicated to women's work in the arts. The full program is eclectic, nationwide and largely, of the fringe. Given a budget of 4,000 pounds, placid manly brows in high places remained unfurrowed. Ironically, in the great tradition, this has meant that many women have given their time for nothing in between making a living and running their private lives. The rich, rambling result is thus even more an extraordinary phenomenon. There is wonderful theatre, world class music and scores of films. Out of the woodwork have come technicians and performers who have never before realized each other's existence let alone the possibility of finding work together — and transforming entertainment.

from Performance Magazine

NOW THAT WE KNOW IT'S "SAFE"! A team of New York doctors is investigating a new method of birth control for women that requires only yearly attention and could do away with side effects associated with

taking the pill. Central to the study is a tiny time-release pellet about the size of a grain of rice that the doctors have been implanting under the skin of volunteers.

The implant pellet is a new method of delivery of an already known substance, norethindrone (NET), a synthetic form of the hormone progesterin, which has been used in the United States for more than 20 years in birth control pills.

Phase one of the clinical study was conducted on 10 women in New York, Texas, Chile, Brazil and Mexico. NET pellets were implanted underneath the skin of the forearms of the women. After collecting a blood sample per week from each volunteer, the doctors said that among the original 10 women in the study, "the NET pellet produced no significant reactions or side effects."

from Globe and Mail

CLASSIFIEDS
 Two U. of M. Early Childhood students are looking for seniors willing to volunteer weekday afternoons at a nursery at Grosvenor Elementary School. We want the children to live and play with the aged from whom they are generally segregated. Will pay costs incurred while volunteering. Please call Grosvenor School office or 477-6407.

P'd Off At Conference

Personal and Political Untouched

INCEST:

Let's Talk About It 'Cause Its Not Going Away

According to Dr. Derek Jehu of the University of Manitoba Psychology Service Centre, 12,000 Manitoba women suffer from the long-term effects of sexual abuse as children.

"This very common problem impacts on one out of four girls who will have some kind of sexual contact with an adult while under the age of 18," according to Lorna Grant of the Toronto Committee on Sexual Abuse, who says abuse starts between the ages of five and nine.

Conference . . . disappointingly mediocre.

Why were none of these incest survivors heard from at the November 14, 15, 16 Conference on Sexual Abuse of Children held at the Winnipeg Holiday Inn, wonders Cate Harrington?

She attended the conference, as a woman, a feminist and a sexual assault counsellor, looking for answers to this crisis and found it disappointingly mediocre, and upsetting for its lack

of a feminist perspective.

"I did not hear the word 'power' or 'oppression' once."

Harrington, who counsels rape survivors at Klinik, feels that despite the presence of keynote speakers Dr. R. Summitt and Lucy Berliner, both considered experts in this field, the proceedings lacked political and social analysis.

This lack of analysis was evident in the absence of any discussion of how the socialization of men makes them dominant and aggressive people who go on to gain societal respect for being in positions of power over others, including other family members.

The workshops focused on the offender and what therapy might motivate him to stop his behavior. Great emphasis was placed on incest as a sexual dysfunction, with treatment goals set on sex therapy for "Mom and Dad".

Disputing this approach, Harrington quotes Rene Frederickson, a respected therapist and author of *Incest, the Family Secret*: "to say that the incest is done for the sexual gratification of the perpetrator, is to say that the alcoholic drinks because he is thirsty."

The political did not get airing, neither did the very personal. Few of the workshops made the victim of incest a priority. Those that did, focused on helping incest survivors adjust and adapt to long-term heterosexual relationships, says Harrington.

A useful workshop gave indicators of children's behaviors that could identify possible sexual abuse. Harrington

"I did not hear the word 'power' or 'oppression' once."

adds that beside resources at Klinik, there are established teams to assist in sexual abuse cases at the Children's Hospital, the Children's Aid Society, the Winnipeg Police Force, and the Child Guidance Clinic.

For many of the 550 professionals registered, this was their first exposure to the problems surrounding the sexual abuse of children.

Nevertheless, Harrington felt that the large turnout was encouraging. Especially if this leads to increased awareness, as well as advocacy and protection for the helpless.

by Brigitte Sutherland

Screaming Silence Unleashed

SELF-HELP INCEST GROUP

"No, I didn't say incest or incense — I said INCEST, but no one hears me."

Why don't we know who they are, the terrified little girls living in our neighborhood?

Recently, Lal, Ronnie and Sheila — grown up and part of an incest survivors self-help group in Winnipeg shared their experiences.

They insist on a right to their anger and rage after the long enforced silence of their life experience and the social pressures that exist to continue to deny their reality. The pain and the terrorism that has been a constant in their lives still permeates every moment and every relationship.

Their group, of eight women, was formed to give each other support and validation — to help each of them speak out. Ronnie says "My father did a good job on me, I'd still keep quiet but I have to do it for the others." They know that men, including possibly their fathers, continue to victimize children.

Ronnie resents the emphasis and the accompanying monies made available to 'cure' the offenders, while she has to suffer silence.

"Instead of removing the

A right to anger and rage

child from her home, get the men out and prosecute them, but ensure financial support to the rest of the family," she insists. Sheila agrees because one of the most effective silencers of children is the threat they feel of being blamed for family break-up.

Lal wants people to realize the craziness that is inherent in the situation of years of abuse and far beyond that time. The all

pervasive self-blame that you must have done something to cause this to happen. The victims all learned from threats and manipulation to keep the secret. The constant lying and hiding, while at the same time screaming silently for help.

As children, Sheila and Ronnie "would vacillate between screaming and acting out with hate to periods of total passivity and withdrawal."

"This caused my family to call me crazy", says Sheila. Instead, Ronnie says, she learned to behave "normal" and "obedient", but felt crazy. Sheila resents the fact that only as long as children and women are

The oppressed should be the leaders

humble, compliant, submissive and quiet people 'love' them. They all feel that the changing social patterns that have emerged from women fighting for their rights have helped them draw on these resources.

Justice is something they all seek: in identification of perpetrators and in prosecution for their crimes.

The fight against this war of sexual violence against children should include financial reparation to the victims. Ronnie says care needs to be taken that it does not take on a detrimental aspect. The man can claim: "there now everything is all right — I've paid for it."

Rather, the women feel the money should be used as a power, such as a foundation to help incest survivors.

Lal thinks she has a right to money, but would only take it "if it doesn't shut me up." Ronnie feels payments would only be useful if at the same time these expenditures would goad governments to enforce changes in legislation and make

drastic changes to social agencies dealing with incest.

Lal said the recent government-sponsored conference held in Winnipeg on Sexual Abuse of Children was 'dangerous'. She objects to the use of abstract theories from books to prevent a problem that no one has a comprehensive understanding of yet.

"The oppressed should be the leaders," in the search for solutions, she insists.

To be able to give their version of the events and to help the community understand, victims must be able to speak in public, not be forced to continue as victims because they are at risk to being sued by their father for libel if they speak out.

Ronnie no longer hides her slashed forearms as she punctuates her powerful statements with gestures. Their self-help group of eight women has been a success story. Not one has killed herself since they started.

During ten-week sessions, they meet to instill the idea that

Not one has killed herself

their meeting and talking about their experience is a progressive process for themselves. They entreat that meetings by similar groups are needed every night of the week, as they are well aware that some days they can't make it alone from week to week.

If you are someone who needs them, call Women Incest Survivors Encounters (W.I.S.E.) at 947-0002/786-2691.

All of us must let these women help us to hear the screams — to see the smoke rising out of the privatized concentration camps of the incest perpetrators. We must intervene.

by Brigitte Sutherland

THE LEGAL COLUMN

House Buying

by Jennifer Cooper

The federal government recently announced that the \$3,000 grant for buyers of new homes will be extended to April 30, 1983. The provincial government is providing 12 3/4% mortgages for a 5-year term for qualified buyers. As a result of these and other incentives many people will be purchasing new homes in the next few months and will be meeting with a lawyer who will draw the transfer documentation and perhaps your mortgage.

One of the first questions your lawyer will ask you is how you wish to take title. If you are married or living with someone, you may have the house put solely in your name, solely in your partner's name, or in both names, either jointly or as co-owners.

Joint ownership is often favoured because it best reflects a spirit of equal partnership. Most lawyers will recommend that the home be put into joint names for ease of administration in the event of the death of one of the joint owners. In the case of joint ownership the house will devolve into the name of the survivor. This restricts you if you would prefer to leave your interest in the house to someone other than the joint owner.

Certainly, it is very important to be on the title as joint owner if you are living together. This is because you will otherwise receive nothing at the death of your co-vivant unless he/she leaves it to you in a will. Contrary to popular myth, your living together arrangement does not "turn into" a marriage after a period of years so that one person is automatically able to benefit in the event of the other's death.

Sometimes, partners will choose to put the home in one name in order to protect it from the creditors of the other. This is particularly useful when one of the partners is in business. Since the Marital Property Act gives spouses a right to 50% of the value of the family home, there is no need to fear that, upon separation or divorce, the legal owner will get everything. A spouse can also seek exclusive occupancy of the family home upon separation even though she/he is not named on the title, providing that there are good reasons such as not wanting to move the children from a familiar environment.

One other point to discuss with your lawyer is how you will be described on the legal title. In the past, couples were almost always described as follows: "John Doe, carpenter, and Jane Doe, his wife". Women eventually rebelled against being described as a mere adjunct or chattel of the husband and sought to have their own occupations inserted. The Winnipeg Land Titles Office was at first reluctant, especially to describe women working in the home as a "homemaker" (which many people don't really believe is an occupation), but it is perfectly legal and proper. Be sure to insist that you are described on the title as you want to be, even if your lawyer would rather that you follow the old fashioned methods. It's your right.

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Women Hold Up Half the Sky

Because development efforts have done little to better conditions under which women live and work in Third World countries, the Women and Development project of the Manitoba Council for International Cooperation recently brought together a number of Canadian and Third World women.

The conference entitled "Women Hold Up Half the Sky: Perspectives on Women and Development" held workshops on October 15 and 16 on the following topics from an international perspective:

- Women, Development and Political control
- Women and the New Industrial Revolution
- Women as Agriculturalists
- Women and the Pharmaceutical Industry
- Population Control and Reproductive Freedom
- Women and Foreign Aid: Evaluating Overseas Projects.

Resource persons with varied experience in international agencies primarily around issues of women's health and work shared their information and experience with delegates. The conference provided an exciting forum for the discussion of global problems.

Saralee Hamilton, Program Coordinator of the Nationwide Women's Program of the American Friends Service Committee in Philadelphia said, "all issues are women's issues." It is important to examine the negative impact made on women in the world by large systems such as multi-national corporations. Hamilton sees a need for global information-sharing on the success and failures of strategies used to engage the social power of women to affect positive change in our lives.

Khushi Kabir of Bangladesh added that "women have the same problem of oppression and many similar issues exist in different geographical locations." Women gain strength from building informal networks between women in developing countries and women in developed countries.

Birth Control Empowers Women

The ongoing struggle between reproductive freedom as defined by women and population controls implemented to serve the interests of economic masters was the topic of one workshop at the 'Women Hold Up Half the Sky' Conference.

Since the world and its resources are finite, it can only hold so many people. So in order for some of us to survive, some of us have to get off. These are the historical ideas behind the global family planning programs of the last thirty or so years, Anita Anant informed workshop participants.

Proponents of such theories are called neo-Malthusians, who display a definite bias with regard to what sections of the population are to be controlled. The poor and the uneducated become their primary targets.

Birth control devices and voluntary sterilizations have been offered free or for pay by U.S. Aid, the World Bank and International Family Planning.

"At the same time", Anant says, "there was a parallel movement, mainly headed by women. It brought out many questions about birth control safety and the issues of reproductive rights."

Control is the Key

"Women have realized that being able to control their fertility gives them control not only over their bodies but over relationships."

This, Anant feels is an empowerment for women, giving them more control over

society.

"But we have learned that something that is liberating can also be oppressive if we have no control over it and if birth control is taken out of the context of the whole — this whole must include adequate food, adequate income and adequate sanitation."

Anant claims women have had "very little control over research into contraceptive technology, over funding made available by pharmaceutical companies and big governments, and over how these contraceptives should be used."

Harriet Rosenberg, an anthropologist from the University of Toronto addressing the workshop on social reproduction said industrial capitalism is the context in which women in Canada make their reproductive choices.

Our economic system has implications for our social relations. Before this, society was put together to make people, now everything is geared to make profits she says.

"Having kids is a private hobby, just like raising begonias — you either do it or you don't — it's got nothing to do with society", we are told constantly. But, Rosenberg asserts, "industry could not function without a refreshed worker every day, nor without a continuous reproduction of new workers."

Her research on 'motherwork,' 'wifework' and housework shows that the split of spheres where men work and where women work is so great that it causes both men and women to feel they are being

exploited by one another.

She explains how "one of the struggles of the real women's movement, as opposed to the media-created one, is to say what women do in the home — childcare and domestic labour — is work." Capitalism and other forces pressure women to see it as their function to provide for the emotional and sexual needs of men. For this women get little credit, no money, and lose a sense of their own needs.

If women don't fulfill these expectations, Rosenberg warns, "whether by their own definition or by that of others, they open themselves up to abuse: verbal, physical and sometimes murder."

Housework is hazardous

While doing housework, women encounter reproductive hazards that enter via the workplace environment.

"Chemical and radioactive dump sites near your home suddenly take your reproductive choices out of your hands."

Rosenberg points to the dangers from products produced by industrial capitalism and promoted by large advertising budgets that invade our homes.

Kepon, barred as an insecticide when it was found to cause tumours, now enters in the shape of little ant and roach traps. Captan, a fungicide spray that causes birth defects, had its test results falsified, along with hundreds of other products, so it could be labelled safe for use

in Canada.

Small children are extremely susceptible to lead and low-level radiation only to receive doses of these from evaporated milk cans and televisions.

Industry blames victim

"What industries, pharmaceuticals and governments are saying to you, is that if there is an accident in your home it's your fault — you're a negligent mother."

Judith Radoran, trained as a midwife in Chile, worked with isolated Indian women to improve high mortality rates of both mothers and babies. She movingly recounted to workshop participants how she tried to give women information on childcare, nutrition and how to make water safe to drink, "but they were not very interested and did not seem to listen very well."

The election of the Allende government brought about a number of changes for the people in her area. Agricultural reform gave people land to farm, as well as seeds and fertilizer. Daily milk rations were distributed to pregnant women, nursing mothers and children.

Radoran found that women then became interested in other ways to improve their lives. A family planning clinic was opened that served three hundred people. Soon, requests from local women's groups came fast and furious, including those for running water, immu-

nization and outhouses.

When she first came to the area, most of the thirty babies delivered per month were under 5 pounds. Soon they were 6, 7 and 8 pounds and women would come to the clinic and say, "I don't think I'll have a baby this year."

by Brigitte Sutherland

Mechanistic Medicine

Jim Harding, a researcher on the pharmaceutical industry in Canada and the third world at the University of Regina School for Human Justice describes medicine as "mechanistic, need-ignoring and male-dominated."

Speaking at a discussion group of delegates at the recent conference on women and development he said, "medicine itself needs to be scrutinized" because drug companies often dictate medical practice.

As an importer of drugs, Canada is in a particularly vulnerable situation because we rely on company-produced or outdated product research.

Harding said the field of medicine is similar in structure and style to the military and is "far removed" from any ecological base. The solution, said Harding, is an entire revolution involving the medical profession to stop the exploitation of the ill, involving patients' rights, freedom of information and a boom in independent drug research.

by Penni Mitchell

Pharmaceuticals Guinea Pigging Out

The low social status of women in third world countries makes them prime guinea pigs for pharmaceutical companies' unscrupulous marketing methods, according to Virginia Beardshaw, the European Coordinator for Health Action International.

In the keynote address at a conference on "Women and Development" in October, Beardshaw says the more than \$100 million pumped into fertility control in underdeveloped countries is spent on high estrogen birth control pills that are banned in developed countries, obsolete and dangerous IUD's, and the controversial fertility injection Depo-Provera. Inadequate information and choices about the often ill-effecting fertility products, makes women more instead of less vulnerable when they are persuaded to take them, says Beardshaw.

Perhaps the most blatant indication of the pharmaceutical companies' intent to make

profits under the guise of "helping" third world nations limit their population growth is

Fertility programs fail

that birth rates in these countries are not declining. Beardshaw explains that religious taboos against birth control and pressure from men not to use the products play a large part in the failure rates of fertility programs.

In a society where children's labor is an economic necessity and where a family's wealth is measured by its number of sons, Beardshaw asks, how can you expect people to choose fertility control, regardless of a product's safety?

When these societies' economic problems are solved, Beardshaw suggests, people will be ready to assume responsibility for limiting their population growth.

Another malady infecting developing countries is their adoption of "western concepts

of hierarchy in health", Beardshaw notes, in which attitudes such as "brain surgery first, public health second" have been mimicked from Big Brother countries like the U.S. and Britain, who place more prestige on highly technological surgery and downplay public health as an important accomplishment.

Unfortunately, contributing to the many problems of third world countries are products such as Clioquinol, marketed as a diarrhea remedy (made by the German-based conglomerate Ciba Geigy), and banned in developed countries for causing permanent paralysis and blindness. Widely marketed in many third world countries, because gastric ailments are widespread, the demand for such products continues despite the fact that Clioquinol has yet to be proven to treat diarrhea.

Another dangerous medicine, Dianabol, is widely distributed by pharmacists in developing countries, where information

on its side effects is not readily available. Marketed as a children's medicine, Dianabol contains anabolic steroids that cause irreversible sex changes in children.

Vitamin supplements, also produced and marketed by multi-national chemical companies in third world countries, contain mostly alcohol, according to research publicized by Beardshaw.

Dangerous dumping ground

But the problem is not solely the practice of using third world countries as "dumping grounds" for dangerous drugs, Beardshaw says. So-called development aid from wealthy countries isn't being channeled into training doctors and opening community-oriented health clinics.

Governments misuse funds

Beardshaw says governments often misuse health care funds to build prestigious-looking hos-

pitals in major cities, where only the rich can afford to purchase health care. In places where one doctor serves tens-of-thousands of people, drug companies "sell" doctors and pharmacists on their products, who in turn prescribe potentially dangerous drugs to patients.

Millions for multi-nationals

Much-needed tariffs from drug imports go a long way to soothe what ails developing countries' governments, but does little to improve people's health care. While such countries have no money to research the drugs produced by foreign drug companies, governments can be pacified by the tariff or tax dollars that enter the countries along with the drugs, which Beardshaw estimates brings in tens of billions of dollars to the first world drug multi-nationals.

by Penni Mitchell

Working More for Less

A Korean woman works in a microchip factory that makes stereo components for \$2.50 a day. She feels lucky. Two of her seven boarding mates who work in a Mattel toy factory earn even less. The factory where she works up to 16 hours a day is air-conditioned — not for the workers' comfort — but to ensure that the delicate computer parts aren't damaged by high temperature.

In a slide film researched by Souad Sharabani, one of three panelists at a labor and technology workshop at the recent "Women and Development" conference, corporate propagandists are quoted enticing multi-national companies to set up shop, where countries boast of their "oriental girls who are naturally adept" at doing assembly line work. One worker produces enough profit in one hour to pay 10 co-workers' salaries, including supplies and overhead costs, according to Sharabani's research. Cost: \$2.50 a day.

Young, single women are prime sources of labor for the foreign-owned textile and electronic industries in Korea, Taiwan and Indonesia. They work for cheap wages and are more enduring than men, whose more varied choices enable them to refuse these oppressive working conditions. The products of the First World Technological Revolution are manufactured in these countries, because unemployment and poverty force single women into the city-factory jobs to earn money for their families. According to the film, foreign companies are wooed by the promise of exemption from labor laws and anti-union governments offering entrepreneurs' dream come true.

Sharabani said chronic eye strain, fatigue and exposure to toxic elements compound the basic labor issues of underpay and overwork.

In factories unionism is either provided by the government or outlawed by the government.

The almost exclusively female workforce is pacified with company sponsored beauty pageants, in which Western standards of femininity are effectively used to take the women's minds off their work and at the same time promote company loyalty. By reinforcing values of female passivity and powerlessness, combined with a long line of young women waiting to take their place if they don't keep up or are ill once too often, these companies can maintain what would otherwise be intolerable working conditions: overtime without pay, little or no chance for advancement, strict workplace regulations and workplace hazards.

While these conditions seem unimaginable to most of us, Terry Hanley of the International Ladies Garment Workers' Union told delegates that many garment workers in Winnipeg have worked double shifts without pay and are continually oppressed by their workplace environment. Because many of them fear deportation if they lose their jobs, the mainly foreign labor force does not complain to the labor board about workplace conditions. The provincial department of labor will not act on a complaint unless workers are willing to be identified.

"There is no way that the labor laws are in any way benefitting workers," Hanley said, "as long as the burden of responsibility rests with the individual worker."

One reason why the garment industry continues to thrive on the exploitation of immigrant women in Canada is because of the myth that the garment industry is a fledgling industry and needs all the breaks it can get. According to Hanley, this isn't true, but garment companies continue to take government grants, get public sympathy and make profits "hand over fist" without putting money back into the factories or the workers' pockets.

by Penni Mitchell

Women Homework Bound

Laura C. Johnson,
The Seam Allowance.
Industrial Home Sewing
in Canada.

Toronto.
Women's Press, 1982.

I've seen photographs of immigrants in New York 100 years ago — whole families sitting around tables, on beds, on the floor, sewing buttons on cards, seams on trousers. Little kids took the baby buggies to the contractor's to pick up the bundles and bring them home. In Montreal in the 1870's, homework was an important way for women to keep kids alive and families afloat.

Homework is still thriving in Canada.

No daycare - must earn money

Why do women do homework? Because they have small kids, no daycare, can't get decently paid work and must earn money. Why do employers like homework? Because they can get away with paying less than the minimum wage, no benefits, holiday or sick pay. There's no factory, no equipment, no union, no government, no hassles.

The new technology — the chip, the microcomputer — is likely to create a homework boom. In the U.S., employers are trying to get homework made legal again so workers can work at home on computer terminals. Even the kiddies can join in, they say. *Deja vu.*

Home version of runaway shop

In Canada, homework is quasi-legal and regulated. In Manitoba you need a permit, but it is up to the worker to get it, and she pays the fine if she is caught without it. A homeworker with a permit demanding the bare legal minimum of pay may not get the work, when so many others can be had for less. It's mostly the garment industry that uses homeworkers in Canada. Homework is a sort of stay-at-home version of the runaway shop.

The Seam Allowance is based on interviews by Laura Johnson

and her colleagues with 50 women in Toronto, other southern Ontario cities, and Montreal. It is an expose in the finest sense of the tradition, combining a clear discussion of the legal, economic, and political aspects of the system with compelling personal accounts of the lives of the women who do the work.

Homework originated in pre-industrial cottage industry and was changed by machinery and the development of the factory system, which initially boosted homework. This is where the sweating system originated. There were early feeble attempts at reform and regulation of homework, a period of decline in the 1920's followed by a homework boom in the Thirties, and the gradual rise of more effective regulations of homework.

Johnson begins with an overview of industrial home sewing in Canada. Home sewing is an extension of the garment industry which is itself notorious for low pay and abysmal working conditions. Not coincidentally, it is usually immigrant women behind the sewing machines whether in the factory or at home. The number of homeworkers is uncertain, but it is probably nearly equal to the 120,000 workers employed in the garment industry.

Little legal protection

Homework forces the woman to do two jobs at the same time, and it creates extra housework because of the mess of fibre dust and threads. There is little legal protection for the homeworker. Most homework is unreported, undetected and unregulated. Although in some provinces registered homeworkers are covered by labour standards legislation, most homeworkers never benefit because the employer violates the law and nobody ever checks up. Because most homeworkers are immigrant women, they are less likely to complain to authorities. The book's discussion of the permit system of labour legislation, and of the failure of governments to enforce protec-

tive measures is excellent.

The same methods of cheating workers, cutting pay, the same insecurity, the dust, chemicals, stress, aches and pains and pressures of the garment industry are present in homework, without the few safeguards and benefits of working in a factory. Homeworkers can't bargain, can't protest, can't even talk to each other to compare notes. They pay for their own machines and their own supplies.

Conditions worsen

In theory, she says, governments could regulate improvements. Employers should pay higher wages than in the factory, pick up and deliver, provide machines, pay proper benefits, and so on. But in practice, regulation will not work. Supervision is virtually impossible, and unscrupulous employers will operate much as they do now, whatever the regulations. Nearly twenty years ago, the International Labour Organization advocated the abolition of homework and conditions have worsened since that time. Short of abolition, there is a crying need for the enforcement of the regulations that do exist: raising the cost of fines for violations would be a small start.

There are lessons for all of us in *The Seam Allowance*. Our work and lives are going to be changed, and not necessarily for the better, by the impact of the new technology. If the large corporations have their way, we may be slogging out the work at home, absorbing low level radiation from VDTs, suffering from back and eye strain, and a host of new ailments, while the terminal keeps track of our productivity.

This book is, in many ways, a model study. It deals with complex issues clearly, and it keeps us remembering that there are women out there doing these jobs.

Because it may be ourselves or our daughters in the same position a decade from now, we should all read this book.

by Barbara Roberts

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THE MEDICAL COLUMN

Cap on Conception

by JoAnn Johnson, M.D.

Since June 1981, the Women's Health Clinic and Klinik, Inc. in Winnipeg have been fitting women with the cervical cap, a barrier method of birth control. With roots which precede recorded history, in its modern form, the cap was widely advocated in the late 19th and 20th century Europe.

Based on the principle of occlusion of the cervix, the cap appears effective and risk-free, particularly relevant as women become increasingly hesitant to accept the risks associated with hormonal and invasive methods of birth control.

The cap was first described as a contraceptive device in 1838 by Berlin gynecologist Friedriche Wilde, although the principle has been around since primitive humanity. Ancient writings are full of interesting information about the types of barrier methods used by both men and women, from pessaries made of crocodile and elephant dung, pomegranate seeds, bee's wax and numerous other plant and animal material to caps of gold and silver. The principle of barrier methods was handed down from generation to generation and society to society until the latter half of the 19th century when the first modern barrier methods were developed — condoms, diaphragms, cervical caps and spermicides — simply updates on the ancient modes.

Over 200 women have been fitted with the cap in Winnipeg, and a follow-up study is being carried out to determine how well it is working. The cap is a thimble shaped bowl made of rubber. It fits closely over the cervix and is held in place by suction and by its circular rim, which embeds itself in the vaginal muscle tissue. It serves as a mechanical barrier, preventing the passage of sperm through the cervical canal into the uterus. Physically, it is less bulky than the diaphragm.

For use, the cap is filled one third with spermicidal cream and inserted with the thumb and forefinger while in a squatting or reclining position. The labia (vagina lips) are parted and one hand and the thumb and forefinger of the other hand squeeze the cap and slip it sideways up the vagina as far as it will go. The forefinger guides the cap's rim around the cervix, thus covering the opening. This can be checked by feeling the position of the cap by sweeping the finger around the rim and feeling the tip of the cervix through the dome.

To remove the cap, the suction is broken by slipping a finger under the rim. The cap is then withdrawn to be cleansed with mild soap and water and rinsed. It can then be re-inserted at any time and left in place for up to three days. Removal is primarily for hygienic purposes, as collections of secretions may lead to odour. Estimations vary as to how long the cap should remain in place after use — a minimum of six to 24 hours to a number of days.

The use of spermicide is also controversial. The low rate of spermicidal activity after several days of cap use suggests the cap may protect without it. I recommend to leave the cap in for a minimum of six to eight hours, up to a maximum of three days and to use spermicide with each insertion.

It should be noted that the lifespan of a sperm is approximately six to eight hours in the presence of spermicide whereas it is up to 48 hours when no spermicide is used.

Use of the cap appears to be risk-free. In addition to improvement in cervical erosions, it has been shown in a study in Boston in 1981 that abnormal pap smears were actually found less in cap users than non-users. Whether this means the cap may reduce the risk of cancer of the cervix has not been proven. In any event, no women in this study developed abnormal pap smears. No injuries to the cervix, other than fingernail scratches have been reported and no increase in urinary tract infections or vaginal infections have occurred. Also the contact of spermicide with the cervix has not been shown to have any harmful effects, nor does there appear to be any risk of T.S.S. (toxic shock syndrome).

Effectiveness rates vary from 85% to 98%. This aspect is very difficult to study, as the method is dependent upon user motivation, understanding and manual dexterity.

The most common reported cause of failure of the cap is dislodgement. This can be improved by proper fitting or development of new better fitting devices such as that being developed by a gynecologist in Chicago who has developed a technique to obtain a personalized reprint of the cervix by means of a dental mold to make a snugly fitting cap that may be left in place for long periods of time. Dislodgement occurs less frequently with the cap compared to the diaphragm because it is held in place by suction as opposed to spring tension.

Some women cannot use the cap. These include women with allergies to rubber or spermicide, temporary infections or inflammations of the cervix, ovaries or fallopian tubes (may be fitted after the infection has cleared), cervical lacerations, unusually long or short cervixes, or inability to insert or remove the cap (due to long vaginas or short fingers or discomfort with self-examination). Partners may be taught to fit the cap in the latter instances. Cervical caps are suitable for more women than the diaphragm. Conditions such as uterine prolapse, or relaxed pelvic muscles preclude use of the diaphragm but not of the cap.

The cap is not a high profit item — it lasts for years and requires little spermicide, if any. Also, many doctors, especially recent graduates, are reluctant to prescribe barrier methods since they lack the necessary training and proficiency in fitting them. The lengthy time involved in educating and fitting women make it easier and more cost-effective to prescribe pills or IUD's. The cap is a natural and risk-free contraceptive. Interest is growing, and the enthusiastic responses we have seen at the clinic bears this out. The provision of caps however will probably remain in the hands of feminist health facilities and other practitioners willing and able to take the time and care essential for proper education and fitting.

We have come a long way since the humble beginnings of the cervical cap and it has gained considerable local use. The cap has not only returned but it is here to stay.

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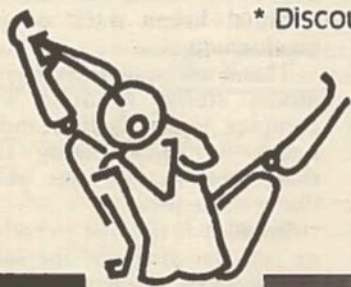
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Caldicott calls for Cruise Cancellation

The production and deployment of new first strike weapon systems including cruise missiles by the United States will destabilize the world situation, making nuclear war inevitable, according to Helen Caldicott, president of Physicians for Social Responsibility.

The weapons, impossible to detect and intercept once launched, are so small and portable that arms reduction verification will become impossible.

"We have a window of opportunity open for one year before these weapon systems are to be built," said Caldicott, head of the 16,000 member organization.

She recently addressed a crowd of 800 in a public meeting sponsored by the Manitoba government, the University of Manitoba and the Winnipeg branch of the World Federalists at Young United Church.

Caldicott alluded to the power of women who, because they bear children, are deeply involved with life. She said that the world is run by old men stuck in pre-nuclear thinking. She quoted Einstein: "The

splitting of the atom changed everything, save man's mode of thinking."

Lynn Gibbons, a full-time volunteer for the Winnipeg Coordinating Committee for Disarmament was inspired by Caldicott's address, however, she favours a closer examination of the patriarchal value system which led to the arms race build-up.

"It's not just the arms themselves but that whole mentality," Gibbons said.

The new technology means that deadly accurate Pershing missiles based and launched in Europe can reach their targets within six minutes.

The Boston physician said that Canadians are living in incredible jeopardy and that "to do nothing is to practise a form of passive suicide."

In his introduction, Premier Howard Pawley said that if the cruise is allowed to be tested in Canada, our words at the United Nations will sound hollow and hypocritical. He urged Canada to push for a global freeze of nuclear arms.

"It is not enough to keep the peace; the peace must be

vigorously waged" he said.

The U.S. has 30,000 nuclear weapons compared with Russia's 20,000 and President Reagan wants to build 17,000



more, she said. The U.S. can destroy the Soviet Union 30 times over while Russia can kill

North Americans 20 times over.

Caldicott said "I've only ever seen a human being die once."

There can be no winners in a nuclear war, said Caldicott. Deputy Undersecretary of Defense for Research and Engineering T.K. Jones disputes this. In an interview, last fall, with journalist Robert Sheer he said the U.S. could fully recover from an all-out nuclear war with the Soviet Union in just two to four years.

"If there are enough shovels to go around, everyone's going to make it." A hole in the ground covered with a couple of doors and three feet of dirt somehow thrown on top would provide adequate shelters for the millions evacuated to the countryside from the cities. "It's the dirt that does it" he said.

Shaking her head, Caldicott described the effects of a 20-megaton bomb landing on Winnipeg, which is a prime target both as a transportation centre and because of the intercontinental ballistic missiles situated in North Dakota.

"Up to a radius of six miles

every building would be flattened, every person would be killed. Many would be vapourized. We're mostly water and we'd just turn into steam."

Many would die agonizing deaths from burns without any medication. Those within 26 miles of the blast would become human torches, ignited by the intense heat. A glance at the blast would cause eyes to melt, and as far as 40 miles away people would be instantly blinded. A firestorm of 3,000 square miles would suck air from fallout shelters converting them to crematoriums, she said.

In an interview in *New Age*, November 1978, Caldicott said "I used to hate nuclearists... But I've learned that what I have to do is get into their frame of reference, so I can go with them and understand where they're at and love them for it and teach them to move on... I think we ought to get them on our side instead of making them angry or annoyed. You can get them to listen sympathetically by appealing to their goodness."

by Gerri Thorsteinson

If I Should Die Before I Wake

If I Should Die Before I Wake
by Michelle Morris/
J.P. Tarcher,
Inc., Los Angeles

While I was reading this novel, and considering how to deal with it, Winnipeg hosted a conference on the sexual abuse of children which is the reality this book addresses.

The jacket cover describes the author as a social worker who has dealt with child abuse victims, and so I was anxious to learn about this crime from someone who has a wide range of experience.

I wanted to know how it can happen. How does the girl-child deal with her private hell and with the world outside her home? What sort of man can victimize his child?

Although Morris definitely deals with these questions, this book is not a case history, not a cold recording of brutal facts, not a titillating whodunit, like so many novels which glorify the calculating mind of the criminal. This novel is an exploration, a weaving of memories and nightmares from the consciousness of a young woman who has been the victim of her father's sadism, contempt, and physical abuse for twelve years.

The main character is Carla Hughes. The story opens with her in a position of power — holding a gun on her sleeping father — in a state of confidence with a bitterness that is rational and articulate.

The author lets Carla tell her story with the extravagance that writing allows and the casual intimacy that first person narrative implies. The first person narrative of the novel keeps the reader in touch with the narrator as victim, which contrasts with the tendency of media to objectify victims, ignoring their experience in favour of the actions of the victimizer.

At first I was uncomfortable with the format: journal entries,

letters written to a crisis counsellor, and italicized thoughts. I asked, how can a seventeen year old be so articulate? But the information is given quickly enough, and in such a way that I did not feel barraged by "background", only satisfied that the author had created a character, not just a mask.

The one freedom Carla has been allowed is access to libraries, and this enables her to cultivate a perspective which battles with the reality her father has imposed her. She learns the words which describe her experience (rape, incest), but until she begins to question her father's version of her life history, she holds on to him as her only link to her past.

Each chapter begins with the original scene of Carla with the gun, and then goes on to explore, reveal and conjure up a chaotic existence full of pain, terror and humiliation for a girl who can never accept her horrific prison because of powerful memories of a time when things were secure, and happy.

Carla's ignorance of her own history is shared by the reader who believes what she believes: that she is an only child, motherless since birth.

Carla projects her anger and sense of injustice onto her puppets, and uses them as an escape from home by doing shows for children. Her struggles in the dark are tragic and tormenting, especially in the passages which revert to child perspective.

Carla begins her real rebellion once she gains the friendship of a boy at school. Dean's gentleness and sympathy are soothing, but his curiosity is disconcerting. Eventually, his good intentions encourage Carla to begin an earnest attempt to substantiate either her father's claims or Dean's suspicions. Her search for the truth of her past leads her to the calm rage we find her in at the novel's beginning.

The book abounds in powerful images and metaphors, in small clues and indications of the truth which will later unfold. Carla is at the same time misinformed about so much, and knowledgeable in things not thought comprehensible to a child.

The correlation of the novel's central theme with a very real social plague which demands attention and analysis suits well my contention that good art cares about life.

As fiction, Morris' novel creates a multi-level revelation of Carla's years of suffering and struggle to keep her memories of that golden time alive, but also includes the contributing factors in this crime of all crimes. The assailant uses alcohol to ignite and excuse his brutality, pornography to legitimate his perversion, and his position as father to justify his oppressive authority.

The privilege of privacy accommodates the secrecy which perpetuates the crime, and the isolation of personal life prevents Carla from being rescued by those who may search for her without assistance from any public service. The ironic religious concept of suffering as an integral and even necessary component in the attainment of righteousness and/or peace encourages Carla to blame herself for her predicament, because she had let this all happen to her instead of fighting to the death.

The story is haunting, because it is realistic. It is illuminating because the imagination can attempt various explanations for the crime which transcend any one particular case of the crime. I think it is a very important novel, a well-written and sincere analysis of life for truth's sake. It was truth, and the sweet taste of it after all, which gave Carla the strength to discover herself and end her terror.

by Katherine Szadkowska

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A Nation of Addicts

Millions of people in the U.S. alone are hooked on a powerful central nervous system stimulant with substantial addiction potential. When deprived of this drug, users often experience withdrawal symptoms: throbbing headaches, disorientation, constipation, nausea, sluggishness, depression and irritability. As with other addictive drugs, users develop a tolerance and require higher and higher doses to obtain the desired effect.

This drug causes a dramatic increase in blood pressure, muscle tension and the secretion of stomach acid. It produces a marked increase in the basal metabolic rate (the rate at which oxygen is used by the cells) and reduces the amount of oxygen available to the brain, and has been implicated as a possible contributing factor in birth defects and fibrocystic breast disease.

Individual reactions can produce symptoms indistinguishable from anxiety neurosis: extreme nervousness, irritability, tremulousness, chronic muscle tension, difficulty falling asleep or sleeping soundly, sensory disturbance, rapid heartbeat, extra heartbeats, increased frequency of urination, frequent loose stools, gastrointestinal upsets and palpitation.

The surprising drug in question? Caffeine! Caffeine can be found in coffee, tea, cola drinks, over-the-counter drugs (Anacin, Dristan, Midol, and Vanquish, to name a few . . .), chocolate, and cocoa. In moderation, caffeine can be a useful, safe stimulant for most people, but if you are experiencing any of the above symptoms, try reducing your caffeine intake by substituting herbal beverages and juices. Drinking a half-caffeine beverage will also reduce your daily caffeine intake, although decaffeinated beverages may have their own inherent health hazards.

We hate to do this to you, but drinking a decaffeinated beverage may not be particularly healthy either.

Chemical solvents are commonly used in the decaffeinating process. In recent years some decaffeinated coffee products have been found to retain traces of toxic chemicals. According to Consumer Research Magazine (63:20 '80), a dangerously poisonous solvent (trichlorethylene) used until the mid-seventies has since been found to produce liver cancer in mice.

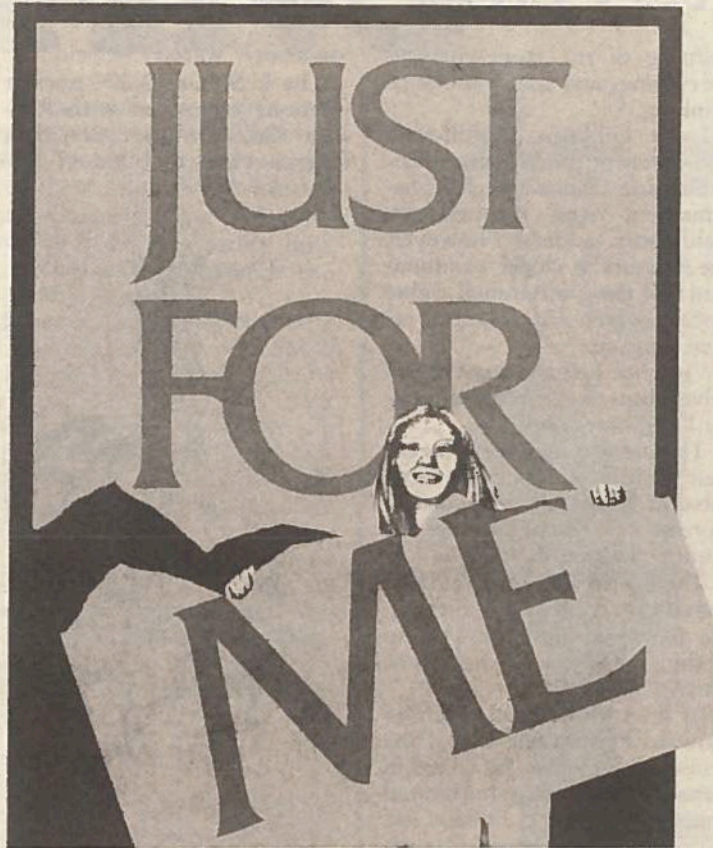
Methylene chloride, the solvent adapted to replace trichlorethylene, has also been under suspicion as a possible carcinogen. Methylene chloride solvent is now undergoing a three-year study by the National Cancer Institute. Residual-solvent danger is such that the FDA has set a limit of 10 parts per million, and even that small amount is said to involve some risks to users who might consume a great deal of decaffeinated coffee. Safety tests have not been completed, but the solvent is certainly open to suspicion.

In addition to solvent danger, there may also be an increase in the risk of aflatoxin mold contamination, one of the most potent carcinogenic substances now known. It has also been shown that decaffeinated coffee stimulates acid secretions in the stomach, which in itself may cancel out any positive benefits of lowered caffeine levels. Decaffeinating processes also modify and adversely affect the flavor of the coffee. Because of this, many companies are using less expensive Brazilian and African beans as their basic material.

Certain coffee companies utilize the Water Process of decaffeinating, which steams caffeine out of green beans using no chemicals. Despite the flattened taste, this process is probably the safest method.

Reprinted from Duluth Community Health Center Newsletter

Women Activate Fitness



Women are encouraged to be selfish in a recently released National Film Board Production "Just For Me."

The film, commissioned by the federal Fitness and Amateur Sport Women's Program, demonstrates that time for physical recreation is not merely a personal indulgence. The benefits of fitness should be an integral part of our daily lives.

While women have pushed for equality in other areas, they are still behind in involvement in physical activity, the accompanying program notes reveal. Health studies have shown that women between the ages of 20-30 years, whether married or single, working outside the home or not, are the least physically fit members of society.

Stereotyped views of femininity often dissuaded women from engaging in sports, but now women are conscious that mastery over their minds and bodies is enhanced by being physically active. According to the film, women's participation in the fitness movement can be instrumental in heightening their awareness about themselves and in transforming the conventional attitudes about them held by their families, friends and employers.

As such, it documents the experience of three women who want to do something for themselves — become more physically active — and the difficulties they encounter.

Helene, a young mother at home with two pre-schoolers has no time for herself. While her husband stayed in shape, she gave up on herself during her second pregnancy. Then, not wanting to go out until she had lost a few pounds she stayed at home where food was the only treat. She became depressed, then scared that she had "lost herself and what it was to be a human being." Her major concern was what to do with the children when she needed time for herself.

Marie, a young secretary, is new to a large city and lonely. Involved in fitness at high school, she now finds participation in such activities expensive and inconvenient. She also feels awkward about trying something new.

Jane, a 32 year old teacher, finds her demanding full-time position, along with family and household responsibilities, leave her exhausted at the end of the day. Her biggest problem is a husband who objects to being obligated to stay at home with their 12 year old son two nights a week while she works out. He protests that she's not fat and that she gets enough exercise chasing after kids at school.

Happily, each woman is able to resolve the problems and improve her physical and mental well-being. Gradually skills, endurance and muscle tone improve and the women find that they are relaxed and have more energy after a workout to face the demands of daily living.

After each showing, problems are shared and information is distributed about fitness programs available locally. Other low-cost alternatives suggested are walking or exercising along with television programs. A minimum of three, twenty-minute sessions a week at a brisk pace is required to be effective.

Lack of facilities is a problem in some rural areas. Several women voiced concern about the availability and standard of childcare offered at some recreational facilities. The sharing of household and parenting responsibilities by the husband, as well as his own level of involvement in physical activity, were seen as contributing factors to a spouse's fitness.

The film's message applies to male and female alike. Perhaps if more men saw it they would gain an understanding of women's situation and respond more co-operatively and supportively.

Gail Schnabl, a social worker and mother who jogs daily said, "It has to become a priority, something you do no matter what. Others can and will adapt once they are aware of your needs but they won't unless you tell them."

by Gerri Thorsteinson



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Scandal in the Schools

Invisible Women

(extracts from the book *Invisible Women: The Schooling Scandal* by Dale Spender)

In her recent study in Cambridge¹, Michelle Stanworth asked the students who it was who received the attention in class . . .

In classroom discussion, said the students, boys predominated: for every four boys who participated, there was only one girl. When teachers asked questions they asked two boys to every girl, and when teachers provided praise and encouragement three boys received it to every one girl. And in these classes there were more girls than boys.

The students themselves provided the data that the boys asked twice as many questions as the girls and made twice as many demands of the teachers' time. And both the boys and the girls stated that teachers are more concerned about boys, they consider boys more conscientious and capable, they get on better with the boys, they enjoy teaching the boys more and are twice as likely to consider boys the model pupils . . .

One reason is that sexism is so pervasive and embedded in our ways of looking at the world that we are sometimes unaware of the extent to which it controls our actions so that even when we feel that we are being just and fair, or even showing 'favouritism' to the girls, empirical evidence can indicate otherwise. Because we take it so much for granted that boys are more important and deserve more of our time and attention, giving the girls more than 35 percent of our time can feel as if we are being unfair to the boys . . .

'I was so conscious of trying to spend more time with the girls that I really thought I had overdone it,' one teacher said in amazement when she listened to the evidence of the tape and worked out that in her interaction with the students only 36 percent of her time had been spent with the girls.

She always asks the girls all the questions,' said one boy in a classroom where 34 percent of the teacher's time had been allocated to the girls. From this it would seem that in a sexist society boys assume that two thirds of the teachers' attention constitutes a fair deal and if this ratio is altered so that they receive less than two thirds of the teachers' attention they feel they are being discriminated against.

Many exercised pressure on their teachers in the classroom but some went even further and complained, or threatened to complain, to those in authority, about the preferential treatment girls were receiving when allocated more than one third of the teachers' time.

If boys do not get what they want then many of them are likely to be uncooperative and in a sexist society their lack of co-operation is often expressed in sexist ways. In a society where males are expected to be aggressive, to be authoritative, forceful and masterful, then in many respects boys are only doing what is expected of them if they act in an aggressive manner when registering their protests. Many teachers and

students see it as quite legitimate for boys to make trouble to prevent others from participating, to impose their values on others who may not share them, if they do not get what they want.

'The boys get upset if we try to talk about girls' things,' said one female student, 'I suppose it's only right really.' When I asked her whether the girls got upset about having to do only boys' things she said, 'It's not the same. We don't mind doing their things. Sometimes we get upset but we don't say much.' When girls are required to do 'boys' things' they don't make as much noise, they don't mount the same disruptive protests. Girls do not impose their values on the boys, nor do they manipulate the teachers in this way.

When Katherine Clarricoates interviewed primary teachers they provided clear evidence that they geared their classes to the interests of boys (despite the fact that they also claimed they treated the sexes equally) because that was the only way the class could be controlled.

Boys are more difficult to control', said one teacher. 'Yes', said another, 'They're ever so lively and boisterous.'

'It's important to keep their attention . . . otherwise they play you up something awful.'

'It's a bit hard to keep the boys' attention during a lesson. . . at least that's what I've found so I gear the subject to them more than I do the girls who are good at paying attention in class'.

The students know that girls are expected to be quiet and docile (and this has numerous consequences) and when Angela Parker questioned students, both sexes stated that asking questions, challenging the authority of teachers, demanding reasons and explanations — in short behaving in an active way in the classroom — was a masculine activity.

It is not expected that girls should act in an independent manner, and if they do, their behaviour is frequently seen as inappropriate, is viewed negatively, and in many cases is classified as 'a problem'.

If talking about one's own experience is essential to learning then it must be stated that girls have very reduced opportunities in mixed-sex classrooms — both because of the restrictions placed on their talk and the restrictions placed on their experience.

Bowing to the wishes of the boys in their classrooms, teachers find that there is no shortage of material which is designed to cater for boys: most textbooks assume that the average human being is male, the male experience is the sum total of human experience, and that the activities of males are inherently more interesting and significant . . .

But what is learned in the classroom is not confined to the material presented in textbooks. Many insights and understandings can be forged within the classroom which do not depend on received knowledge. First of all, students can find out things for themselves — they can ask questions, make new connections, describe and explain the world in new and different ways; and if girl students were free to make such

explorations, to articulate and validate their own experience, then the fact that most encoded knowledge was sexist would not be nearly so significant.

But such a possibility is usually blocked: the dynamics of the classroom are such that it is males who are in control and the opportunity to make their own knowledge about themselves rarely exists for girls. Instead they are constantly subjected to the lesson that they do not count.

First of all I don't think that such male behaviour is admirable and I see no reason to emulate it. While logically it is perfectly proper to suggest that it would be more productive if boys were to emulate the behaviour of girls, this suggestion rarely arises in a society where male behaviour is assumed to be the best behaviour. But secondly, it is in some ways 'artificial' to suggest to girls that they should act in an autonomous, effective and legitimate manner when every other piece of evidence they gain from the society around them suggests that they are not autonomous, that they are ineffectual and illegitimate.

This is because boys can not only make trouble for the teachers — and get results — they can also make trouble for girls. They can use the evidence readily supplied by society that girls are inferior and debased, and they can use it against the girls with social sanction.

Where this form of behaviour has been documented in the workplace it has been called *sexual harassment* and it has been analysed as male behaviour, designed to intimidate women and to reinforce their inferior status. It is endemic in mixed-sex schools, and applies to females as a group and not as individuals.

Michelle Stanworth asked the students she interviewed, 'Who would you least wish to be like?' and with the exception of one girl, they all named a girl.

If space for single-sex discussion can be made available, so much the better for the girls, who, without having to defend themselves to a hostile audience, can explore and express their own experience in a male dominated society.

Once women begin to ask questions, male authority becomes problematic. Girls quickly perceive that it is unfair that boys should dominate classroom interaction, that they should determine the dynamics of the classroom, and by challenging the structures of the classroom, and by challenging the structures of the classroom they are removing many of the means by which male authority is constructed. The floodgates are open.

One of the reasons that male control continues in mixed-sex classrooms is because its operation has not been exposed. Instead of waiting for the repercussions that are bound to result from trying to allocate more time to the girls, it can be profitable to set for the class the task of determining who gets the teacher's attention. Not only does this help to preempt the complaint of unfairness when boys receive less than two thirds of the time, it starts to provide girls with the evidence that they need and which they can use.

Maggie Kuhn: Free to Raise Hell

Imagine hundreds of grey-haired women — arms extended — hands clenched into claws — a ferocious growl coming from deep inside of them. Outrageous? That is exactly what Maggie Kuhn wants women to be.

This is how the Winnipeg Convention Centre recently experienced Grey Panther power when its 77 year-old leader, Maggie Kuhn, spoke to the public and to health care professionals during a Winnipeg Health Organization conference entitled "Focus on Aging".

Impressing on her audience that the fight against agism is in large part a women's fight, Kuhn's determined stance on social justice for the aged was greeted with enthusiasm.

Agism, like sexism and racism, results in despair and discrimination and therefore, Kuhn believes, must be abolished. She condemns the "wrinkled babyhood" created for the aged by a lot of health care industries who paternalize people and render them dependent. She is a convincing picture when she assures us that there is "post-menopausal zest".

Urging society to accept the challenges of an aging population, Kuhn points out that women outlive men by 8 years. At the end of this century, women over 65 will outnumber men in the same group by 2 to 1.

Kuhn says, "this large number of women, who are the survivors, are impoverished."

- *4 out of 10 women are divorced
- *1 out of 10 women are widowed by age 50
- *3 out of 10 women are sole support mothers
- *1 out of 10 women will never marry
- *Of these, 8 out of 10 will receive no money from a private pension plan &
- *6 out of the 10 will live in poverty in old age.

She believes in the absolute necessity of making pensions portable and in the continuance of spousal benefits to the survivors. She expressed surprise that Manitoba, so enlightened in the health care field, has not made this mandatory.

Housewives must be included under the Canada Pension Act because inevitably poverty becomes the punishment of "women who have worked in their homes beside their husbands."

We have not recognized the economic factor of women's labour," she says.

Economic justice is one of the issues addressed by the Grey Panthers, whom Kuhn describes as inter-generational, radical activists committed to get to the root of a societal problem. She emphasizes the

need to persuade a large number of women in their mid-life who have not been part of the women's movement, to become involved in their future.

Women must not be left to say "we've got good marriages, we don't need that — only to discover late in life that they indeed have been shortchanged."

The increasing number of women continuing their education is seen by Kuhn as an encouraging trend. She feels that discrimination against the hiring of older women can be countered by human rights legislation and by monitoring employers' hiring policies.

The greatest present need, she sees, is the safeguarding of our social security system and the creation of jobs "that are uniquely appropriate to the skills of older women" such as jobs in the service sector and those generated by home health care and patient advocates.

When prodded to give advice on how to age better, Kuhn cheerfully admits that people need motivation and a goal, and that with age comes also "the freedom to raise hell".

She sees the aged performing many essential roles for society such as:

- monitoring city government, courts and health care institutions to ensure that these are accountable to the community;
- monitoring the care and safety of those who need institutional care, as well as working on de-institutionalization;
- ensuring the provision of home health care on demand to prevent disease and dysfunction in the aged;
- becoming patient advocates;
- being social historians/critics who help governments with long-range planning;
- being futurists who devise new systems for the 75% of people who hate their jobs; including testing and restyling workplaces, trying sabbaticals with pay for everyone, suggesting childcare in every workplace, sharing jobs and leadership, being mentors and mentees for apprentices.

Kuhn believes we cannot expect to achieve a world of peace and social justice if we scrap pile, warehouse, retire and waste "the enormous resources of our experienced ones."

Kuhn encourages the redefinition of relationships amongst people and says, "today we are learning that there can be families that are not kin-related. In Gray Panthers' terms that means, "a family unit is two or more persons who share resources, goals, values and lifestyles over time; a network of shared responsibilities and decision-making that transcends blood and legal ties and marriage."

by Brigitte Sutherland



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Winter Solstice: Life Re/Cycles

Winter is upon us, and December, corresponding to the zodiac time of Capricorn, is marked by the winter solstice, the longest night and shortest day of the year.

As nature becomes dormant, people observe the season with Christmas, Chanukkah, or Saturnalia (the old pagan festival). Taking time to pause, reflect or celebrate, we consider the significance and draw from Geraldine Thorsten's definitive book of matriarchal wisdom and myth, "God Herself".

Babylonia and Sumeria worshipped the great Mother, central deity of matriarchies. A triad form duplicated the moon's three visible phases, especially dominion over birth, life and death.

Males figured as sons and lovers until the marriage contract was instituted, and once fixed, lovers became husbands. Marriage led ultimately to patriarchy or father-right, paralleled by a religious shift wherein the Goddess is either entirely obliterated or survives tenuously as wife or sister (reduced to the inconsequential).

It is astonishing how widespread symbols and ideas associated with Capricorn are. Western zodiac features goat, Oriental zodiac show same sign as dolphin, correlated with swastika/wheel of life, cowrie shell, equi-armed (Celtic) cross, cornucopia, medicine, and architecture. It is a mystery how symbols occur in remote areas — Great Britain, Japan, North, Central, and South America, and Australia.

China's lunar zodiac also fea-

tures the crescent horns of the moon (cornucopia). In earliest times, the moon was "greater mother", T'ai Yuan, the "Holy Woman", "Great Original". Versions of her survived despite patriarchy; one of the most common resembles the Virgin Mary: Shing Moo. Even the strongly antifeminist Buddhist could not eradicate her image, so she was absorbed into their myths as the incarnate principal of self-sacrifice. The story was, that just as she was about to achieve Buddhahood and shake off the miseries of the world, She heard the cries of suffering humanity and turned her back on nirvana to minister to the needs of people instead.

Another blessing of Kuan-Yin and her counterparts the world over was medicine; the care and relief of the sick. People took their troubles to midwives, priestesses, and medicine women, until females were barred by the rising class of physicians in the seventeenth century.

Throughout Asia and Japan, the connection between women and medicine is evident. They revered the willow tree and the mistletoe as the mother deity's most sacred tree and vine. Mistletoe was a cure-all, employed to ease childbirth and promote fertility. These same symbols, rituals, and medical treatments occurred among the ancient Gauls, Italians, in Senegambia Libya, and among the Germans, French, Swiss, Welsh and Swedes.

As in Asia Minor, the symbols of the Celtic Goddess were wheel/swastika, equi-armed

cross (Celtic cross) and the colours white, black and red, for silver moon, black moon (new moon), and menstrual blood, and fire. The willow and particularly oak, plus the mistletoe which hung from it were sacred. Celtic shrines were located in oak groves, visited in moonlight to cut the mistletoe in a highly ritualized ceremony.

The mistletoe was believed so potent it could cure anything. Celtic women developed medicines, drugs, and hallucinogens as sacred substances, as part of the processes of feminine transformation, just as they produced milk from their breasts and babes from their wombs.

The Goddess, and the human women on whom she is modelled, bestowed so many gifts; the first was life itself.

This was symbolized by the Cowrie Shell, similar in shape to the vagina. So important were these shells that from Paleolithic through Stone, Bronze and Iron Ages, they have been found in grave sites from Asia, Cape Horn, Pomeii, and Australia.

She was represented by a goat, for its nimbleness and milk producing, and her priestesses specialized in medicine. They wore aprons of goat skin ornamented with Cowrie Shells and serpents (emblem of dominion over inner earth).

It is ironic that under patriarchy, Asclepius is established as "Father of Medicine" no less, and the staff entwined with serpents, usurped from priestesses is his emblem throughout the medical world.

The word medicine originally meant "knowledge of the wise woman". The root *med* in medicine comes from the root word for moon, the Goddess of women. In her name, women have healed, delivered babes, developed a pharmacopia and nurtured the wo/man race.

by Marnie Pastuck

non-christian cultures, many who worshipped nature.

When the Church started gaining power, the pagan celebration was outlawed. Although countless people were killed for taking part in the annual tradition, the celebration of Solstice wasn't quashed so easily. It was centuries before the Church decided to take over the holiday, after its attempts to obliterate if failed so miserably. and a few centuries more before it was proclaimed as Christ's birthday.

Even today, remnants of the Solstice celebrations have made their way into our annual winter celebration. By decorating evergreen trees, we are imitating our foremothers and forefathers' worshipping of the perennial aspects of nature; the cycle of life. Mistletoe, symbolic of the fertility cycle of the earth, represents the longevity of Solstice which has survived against all odds. Solstice, by its very nature a cyclical return to growth and prosperity, has survived because of Mother Earth's hardy perennial nature.

by Penni Mitchell

CHRISTMAS ORIGINS

It wasn't until more than 500 years after Christ's death that his birth date was first thought to be on December 25th. Before a Latin chronographer in 534 A.D. described a feast held in Christ's honor on December 25th, the date had fluctuated between January 6, April 19, May 20, March 25 and November 3.

It had been known for certain, however, that pagan and other non mono-theistic cultures celebrated the Winter Solstice at roughly the same time. The Winter Solstice, which marks a time when days become longer and the arrival of Spring imminent, was celebrated throughout the world by

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