

the manitoba women's news magazine

# HERizons

A FOOD ISSUE

Price \$1.00

May, 1983

VOL. 1, NO. 3





LETTERS

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1436 CORYDON AVENUE,

Thank you for your letter and for the copies of **HERIZONS**. I respect your commitment as a journal to reporting on and describing women's struggles for justice. Yet, I want to say that it disturbed me that the only coverage of lesbian motherhood in your premier issue as a magazine consists of a critique of the lesbian community instead of an article on the discrimination against lesbian mothers in the courts, the intimidation of lesbian mothers by ex-husbands through custody suits, the problems lesbians face as single mothers, discriminated against as lesbians in the workplace—or any number other issues which lesbian mothers contend with in a homophobic world. It is certainly true that lesbian mothers need the support of a lesbian and feminist community. However, I feel a lack of sensitivity to the complex of issues surrounding lesbian motherhood led to your featuring this particular piece in your first issue and without a context.

I hope you will hear this criticism as coming from the heart and from a desire to see **HERIZONS** grow in strength and scope.

In sisterhood,

**Adrienne Rich**

I would like to comment on the article on International Women's Day. First of all, I feel it was incomplete and sketchy. Considering this is a local yearly event dedicated to education and celebration of women and women's issues, one would think Herizons could have made a bigger "production" out of it.

In response to the writer's criticism of the baby food quality of the Peace Workshop, I think it is unfair for the writer to assume that everyone there was Jimina Stark and that the seminar had nothing to offer an educated listener. The film "Atomic Cafe" was excellent. The words that struck in my mind from that day were uttered by Lynne Gibbing who had searched for a dictionary definition and found peace described as "the absence of war". The patriarchal vision of peace is one the women's movement will erase as we

struggle to create a new non-violent environment—one that starts with concepts and ends with realities.

I heard a woman commenting that she felt ignorant in the "Women in Central America" seminar. I told her that probably those people creating the seminar had been involved for years and this does provide a problem with balance for organizers in terms of making all happy (including roving reporters). I think perhaps next year, a beginners pot-pourri seminar room could exist and people could go there to get their feet wet on different topics during the day. The plenary (wrap-up) also could be held the same day as a culmination wrap up while energy, enthusiasm, and body count are still high.

Thanks for listening. Yours truly,

**Lynn McKee**

We are at a critical turning point in Manitoba for women's reproductive rights and freedom. We can take a major step toward giving women a real option in choosing if and when to bear children. Or we can slip back into an ever worsening situation where many have no choice—especially if they are young and poor. **Your support will make the difference.**

Abortion is legal in Canada, but only under extremely limited conditions. Many women who choose to have an abortion are denied access. In Manitoba 60% of women seeking an abortion are forced to leave the province—more than 2000 last year alone.

The Coalition for Reproductive Choice believes that every child should be a wanted child. In a democratic society no woman should be forced to bear children against her will because the law imposes the religious beliefs of others.

Manitobans have the opportunity now for a reproductive health clinic that will make access to safe abortions a reality for many more women. This service could, and should, be insured under medicare like other medical care in our province. But **this is possible only if you act now.**

There are many ways you can help:



# Is God a woman? . . . IWD coverage criticized . . .

## Take action on reproductive choices.

—urge the provincial government to legalize community reproductive health clinics which provide abortions.

—volunteer to help the Coalition, call us at 775-7774.

But most of all we need your financial support. The anti-choice forces have spent an estimated \$150,000 on advertising alone in the last two months. The Coalition for Reproductive Choice has raised \$17,000 and spent \$12,000 on its information program. We'll need at least \$30,000 more immediately to reach the majority of Manitobans we know support choice. A court case would cost as much as \$100,000.

**Now is the time to stand up for what you know is right.** We can't lose an opportunity that won't come again for a long time. Make a commitment. If you haven't already done so, please sit down right now and **send us a donation for as much as you can.** And ask others to join you.

Sincerely,

**Ellen Kruger, Chairperson  
Steering Committee**

"Careful, honey,  
he's anti-choice."



MS. MAGAZINE

### LETTER TO THE EDITOR:

#### Question

Is God a male or female. I suppose many woman must wonder especially the ones who are abused by men. Throughout history men have been a domineering factor in a womans world. In many societees this is still so but in ours woman have the oportunity to unite and help each other. Freedom of speech is still their greatest asset. A womans ability to understand and bear pain are truely gifts from God. In time and with the help of God she can forgive man as God did. Again is God male or female. My question is "Does it matter." Unite woman of the world we need your help for we are only men.

G.M. Currey

The Honourable  
Howard Pawley  
Premier of Manitoba  
Legislative Building  
Winnipeg, Manitoba

Dear Mr. Pawley:

I support a woman's right to choose therapeutic abortion. I urge you and your government to:

- 1) lobby the Federal government to repeal Section 251 of the Criminal Code because it is unjust.
- 2) not prosecute Dr. Henry Morgentaler under Section 251 of the Criminal Code.
- 3) approve Dr. Morgentaler's clinic so that abortions performed there will be insured services under medicare.

Sincerely,

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

THE HOUSE OF COMMONS OF CANADA,  
IN PARLIAMENT ASSEMBLED

THE PETITION of the undersigned constituents of the riding of \_\_\_\_\_ and other concerned citizens who now avail themselves of their ancient and undoubted right thus to present a grievance common to your petitioners in the certain assurance that your honourable House will therefore provide a remedy,

HUMBLY SHEWETH

THAT the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission Television Broadcasting Regulations do not extend to women the same protection against "abusive comment or abusive pictorial representation" as now exists for racial and religious groups,

THAT the concerns of citizens have been recently heightened not only by the so-called "adult programming" on pay television, but also by the proliferation of pornography in various media,

THAT the degradation and exploitation of women, children and men through pornography is abhorrent to all people,

THAT Communications Minister Francis Fox, has been willing to empower the CRTC to regulate broadcasting to ensure Canadian content, but has yet to intervene to ensure the protection of women against abuse,

THAT it is Parliament's responsibility, as provided for in the Broadcasting Act, to "strengthen, enrich and safeguard the cultural, political, social and economic fabric of Canada",

WHEREFORE the undersigned, your Petitioners, humbly pray and call upon Parliament to demonstrate its opposition to the denigration of women by enacting An Act to Amend the Broadcasting Act, as introduced by Lynn McDonald, M.P. for Broadview-Greenwood on March 8, 1983.

AND as in duty bound your Petitioners will ever pray.

Photo: Reproductive Rights National Network



Heriz 0715  
125 Osborne  
Winnipeg.  
R3L 1Y4



MAY

## 2 SERVICES FOR SENIORS

workshop sponsored by Cyril Keeper MP with panels on pensions, housing, community services, health services at 1-5:30 p.m. at Union Centre Auditorium, Main floor, 570 Portage Avenue (wheel-chair accessible).

## 4 PHARMACEUTICALS WORKING

Group will hold a meeting at 7:30 p.m. in the library of Westminster United Church at Westminster and Maryland. The Group is formed to share information, research and monitor the practices of the industry locally and internationally. Sari Tudiver 453-6231/475-4169.

## 5 6TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF

Planned Parenthood Manitoba Inc. at Lakeside Camp, Gimli, Manitoba. Topic: SEXUALITY—Attitudes, Influences, Understanding. Friday only \$85.00, total weekend price \$130.00 (includes meals and refreshments). For info. 942-0407 Winnipeg; 727-0417 Brandon.

## 6 HELP YOURSELF TO HEALTH

Conference sponsored by Consumer Health Organization of Manitoba. May 6, 7:30-9:30 p.m. Key Speaker will be Dr. Joe D. Nichols. May 7 workshops from 9:15-6 p.m. Location: University Centre Bldg. U. of M. For registration and information call 832-0943.

## 6 EFFECTIVE WOMAN AND THE

Changing Technology: a two-day conference at the University of Winnipeg. Speakers: Dr. Margaret Benston, Dr. Nora Losey, Heather Menzies. May 6 Hands-on Experience—May 7 How Technology impacts on us. Cost \$75 (one day) \$100 (both days). Info. 786-7811, Ext. 468.

## 9 "ONE MILLION HIROSHIMAS"

Film sponsored by World Federalists of Canada at All Saints Parish Hall, 175 Colony (off Broadway) a 8 p.m. "Bring your friends—It may save all our lives". Info. 475-4342/772-4851.

## 11 YWCA WOMAN OF THE YEAR

Awards Dinner at the Westin Hotel—6 p.m. reception; 7 p.m. Dinner—Guest Speaker: June Callwood, writer and broadcaster. Ticket price: \$20 members, \$22 non-members (parking at Trizac.)

## 14 BREASTFEEDING TODAY—

Language of Love a conference by the La Leche League Manitoba at University College on May 14 and 15. Registration Fees \$30 individuals (\$35 Mothers & Fathers). For information Sheena Brown, 715 Parkdale St., R2Y 0X5 Telephone (204) 889-7908.

## 18 STRESS MANAGEMENT

Workshops at Llyn's Basic Health and Nutrition Centre from 7:30-10 p.m. Limited enrollment. Open to public. Workshops deal with general stresses, not necessarily related to the working environment. For info call 284-9249.

## 27 CANADIAN ASSOCIATION FOR

The Advancement of Women and Sport Conference and Annual Meeting on May 27-29 at University College, U. of M. Conference starts Friday at 7:30 p.m. (residence lobby) and continues Sat. 9:30 a.m. Registration Fee: Members (none); Others (\$15 waged, \$5 unwaged). Info. Elizabeth Ready 474-8770.

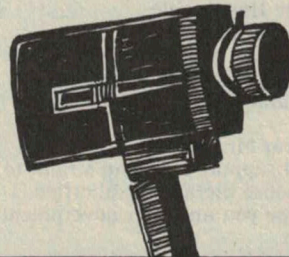
HERIZONS would like to hear from you. Please mail calendar events to 125 Osborne St. S., Winnipeg R3L 1Y4.

### WOMEN IN SCIENCE

and Technology plans first National Conference May 20, 21, 22 at University of British Columbia, Vancouver, B.C. A combination of papers, panel discussions and workshops will cover: math/science anxiety; job diversification; entering the market-place; innovative HS programs and developing a national network of women scientists. Presentations on innovations such as the British Girls Into Science and Technology and California's EQUALS which encourages girls into math programs. Registration \$100 (\$25 students) cheques payable to SCWIST; for info Hilda Lei Ching, PhD., Society for Canadian Women in Science and Technology, P.O. Box 2184, Vancouver V6B 3V7.

### THE VIDEO PROJECT IS

a new venture of the Brandon members of the Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women. Using the local community access studio to produce six half-hour video tapes. The project is looking for researchers, writers, interviewers, technical operators. Phone Brandon 725-2955.



## Bulletins

### PORNOGRAPHY IN

media is the focus of the Canadian Coalition Against Media Pornography (CCAMP). It is composed of concerned individuals who recognize that pornography and sex-role stereotyping violate the dignity and right to self-determination of women. They are particularly concerned with recent government and business sponsorship of porn on television and in the Canadian film industry. CCAMP's objective is to increase public awareness of the negative images inherent in porn and to pressure elected officials to strengthen and enforce the laws. Memberships (\$15) or donations can be sent to CCAMP, P.O. Box 1065, Station B, Ottawa K1P 5R1.

### WOMEN'S

Network "Keys to Success" conference with the theme of "Management Skills" will be held at The Chamber of Commerce, 8:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Featured speaker: Maureen McTier. Workshops will be conducted on topics such as: Negotiating Skills; Becoming a Manager; Changing Careers; Motivation; Starting a Business. Registration deadline: May 6. Phone Elizabeth Nosteadt at 946-6869. WINNIPEG

### WOMEN IN MUSIC, OP 2

examines women's contributions to music: past, present and future. May 5-8 at U. of Michigan, Ann Arbor. For info call 513-764-0594 Doris Humphrey, 1318-A Moore Bldg. U. of Mich, Ann Arbor, MI 48109.

### EMMA'S DAUGHTERS,

a book by and about anarchist-feminist women. Deadline for submission is June 1. Send 3 typed copies of non-academic, personal materials including poetry, fiction, art, articles to Elaine Leeder, 112 Bundy Rd., Ithaca NY 14850.

### IMMIGRANT WOMEN'S

Health Handbook is available in Portuguese, Spanish, Italian and English from the Immigrant Women's Centre, 348 College Street, Toronto M5T 1S4 or call (416) 924-7161. The handbook covers such topics as the reproductive system, conception, abortion, infections, cancer prevention and well-being.

### QUOTES BY CANADIAN

Women—If you have a favourite quote by a Canadian woman that was spoken, written or sung in the last 15 years, send it to: 135 McLeod St. Ottawa K2P 0Z6.

### TIGHTWIRE FUNDING

tight—editors of this bi-monthly publication put out by the inmates of the Kingston Prison for Women are requesting subscriptions or donations to "pull the paper back together". Six issues \$6.00. Send to The Editor, Tightwire, Box 515, Kingston Prison for Women, Kingston, Ontario K71 4W7.

### KLINIK NEEDS

volunteers in the Sexual Assault and Crisis Intervention programs. Training will be held in May. For info call 786-6943. If you are in need of sexual assault or incest counselling 774-4525; for crisis counselling 786-8686.



# ON THE HERIZON

"Taxation has historically been related to the financing of wars," reiterates Edith Adamson after an informal slide show on the peace tax campaign in Canada. The quiet chapel of Westminster United Church seems a suitable place to tabulate the ways people have refused to legitimize war.

"Why are you working for peace, praying for peace, protesting the Cruise missile, voting for disarmament, talking about a nuclear-weapons-free Canada, yet continuing to pay for war through your taxes?" asks the coordinator of the Victoria Peace Tax Fund Committee of her hushed audience.

Winnipeg is one of the stops on her cross-Canada tour to familiarize more Canadians with the upcoming legal challenge to permit **conscious objector** status to persons by redirecting the 10.5 per centage of their income tax which is designated for the Canadian military.

Adamson was one of a number of taxpayers who deducted the defence portion of her income tax and sent it to the Peace Tax Fund; a carbon copy of this cheque along with the remainder of her taxes to Revenue Canada.

## Taxes for Peace



On a cross-Canada tour, Edith Adamson, Coordinator of Victoria Peace Tax Fund, seeks formation of local Winnipeg Chapter. Photo: Brigitte Sutherland

After receiving a billing from Revenue Canada, Adamson prepared to dispute this appraisal.

Four lawyers, including former Deputy Attorney General of B.C. David Vickers, are working on the case and will invoke the Charter of Rights and Freedoms which imparts freedom of conscience, in her defence.

Adamson points to other historical precedents such as conscientious objector/alternative service status which has been granted to members of peace churches and ethnic groups. As well, in a number of provinces, people have the right to direct their school taxes to private or public sectors of the education system according to their beliefs.

"That persons who object to war on moral and religious

grounds be allowed a legal alternative for the direction of the military portion of their taxes to a peace fund," is the central argument in the case. Adamson sees possible legal fees running to about \$50,000 to \$100,000 of which \$20,000 has already been donated.

Pending the outcome of the trial, cheques amounting to over \$10,000 to date are sitting in a Victoria credit union trust fund. Adamson wants the money in the Peace Tax Fund used to research the causes of war and education to develop non-violent attitudes, which would go a long way toward the prevention of war.

"If we could use a tenth of one per cent of the money spent on arms for peace research, we could find alternatives to going to war."

Adamson, along with 25 others, formed the Victoria Peace Tax Fund in 1978. They felt it was no longer possible to ignore the large amount of their taxes that were supporting and ever-increasingly sophisticated technology of war.

The peace fund movement in the U.S. has been successful in introducing legislation into the Senate and the Congress. Pending passage, many individuals have chosen to live on non-taxable incomes, or are like the Bishop of Seattle who has withheld 56% of his income. The first person jailed nine months for this tax violation was a 63-year old grandmother, Martha Tranquilly. She has stopped nursing and now lives on social security in order not to pay taxes.

"Mr. Reagan has been a great gift to the peace movement," chuckles Adamson. "Actions such as the nuclear freeze referendum are important, but talking taxes is tougher since they are the lifeblood of government."

## Nelliegram

### GREEK LEGISLATION

abolishes male supremacy "Male supremacy in Greek society . . . is being abolished by law. Three decades after winning the right to vote and be elected to Parliament, Greek women will also have a say in the running of their own homes and the rearing of their children. The bill establishes full equality of the sexes and drastically reforms family law.

"The bill abolishes the tradition of the obligatory dowry, introduces divorce by consent and replaces paternal authority by 'parental care,'" said

Prime Minister Andreas Papandreou when he tabled the historic bill. Other clauses remove the husband as the head of the household; allow women to keep their own names; alimony will be payable by either spouse; each spouse is assumed to have contributed by at least one-third to the increment of the other's wealth during marriage; removes legal distinctions between legitimate and illegitimate children; the minimum marrying age is raised to 18 for both sexes when Greeks reach the age of consent.

WIN NEWS

Brigitte Sutherland





# The bitter truth about Taster's Choice

Women in poor countries are encouraged through massive advertising campaigns to use Nestle's infant formula instead of breastmilk. In these countries, there isn't adequate fresh water or refrigeration to use the formula correctly. As well, the cost of the formula, hailed in the ads as healthier for the baby, is far in excess of what a family in a developing country can afford to spend on such a luxury without suffering financially. Yet, they are persuaded that their child's health is at stake, so the formula often becomes a financial priority. Nestles' also hired women at one time to visit women in hospitals and clinics who had just had babies to persuade them to use Nestle's formula.

## It's mainly on account of the meat

Amidst multi-page grocery ads and four-color insert flyers for Dominion stores, the Free Press managed to include a 2-inch story hidden at the bottom of a page revealing that Dominion Stores was recently fined \$80,000 for 40

counts of false advertising. The largest supermarket chain in Canada was handed the largest fine ever under the Combines Investigation Act. Some papers just don't know a news story when they see one.

The Infant Formula Action Coalition (INFACT) has mounted a massive new campaign against Nestles' by focusing on that company's largest selling product: Taster's Choice Instant Coffee.

The six-year effort to force more ethical marketing practices of infant formula by Nestles' the world's largest producer of artificial breastmilk substitutes, has been effective. Millions of people in western countries are aware of the extreme poverty and malnutrition in other parts of the world and are challenging Nestles' and other companies. Nestles' is just beginning to consider more ethical marketing methods of its product though.

Taster's Choice sales represent more than 14 per cent of Nestle's sales in the States alone and represents close to 20 per cent of the company's profits. Join INFACT in its quest for justice: boycott Taster's Choice and all other Nestles' products and tell others that the freeze dried coffee brings in profit to a company whose product leads to the death of infants in developing countries.



### A Brief Questionnaire To Be Completed By All Interested Women''

AGE \_\_\_\_\_

OCCUPATION \_\_\_\_\_

MARITAL STATUS: Married \_\_\_\_\_ Single \_\_\_\_\_ Divorced \_\_\_\_\_  
 Separated \_\_\_\_\_ Living Together \_\_\_\_\_  
 Widowed \_\_\_\_\_

WHAT DOES THE WORD "FEMINISM" MEAN TO YOU?  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

DO YOU CONSIDER YOURSELF TO BE A FEMINIST?  
 NO \_\_\_\_\_ YES \_\_\_\_\_  
 WHY?  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

HOW DO YOU THINK THE FEMINIST MOVEMENT HAS AFFECTED YOU AS A WOMAN?  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Please return to: Viewpoint, 329 Guildford St., Winnipeg R3J 2J6.



## Women and Natives— Both 'moanin' over Chief Justice appointment

The name of Manitoba's outspoken new Chief Justice, A.M. Monnin, was one of 36,000 that appeared recently on a pro-life petition in the Winnipeg Free Press.

The ramifications of the judge taking sides with the anti-choice forces are tremendous. Women in the province could stand to have their reproductive rights even further jeopardized if Dr. Henry Morgentaler is charged with performing illegal abortions and if his case reaches the Manitoba Court of Appeal. As Chief Justice, Monnin heads the

appeals court, comprised of the seven judges who would ultimately pick at least three (and as many as 5) judges to review the findings of the jury.

Women who feel that Judge Monnin's publicly-stated beliefs on the issue of abortion should preclude him from sitting in the Court of Appeal for this review, should petition justice minister Mark McGuigan in Ottawa (no stamps necessary) and send a carbon copy to Manitoba Attorney General Roland Penner to voice their concern.

## Conception Concept Reborn

An over the counter contraceptive sponge will be on the market in the States in a few months, bringing back a barrier form of birth control used in similar form hundreds of years ago.

The polyurethane sponge, filled with spermicide when used, is reported effective for

24 hours and 85% effective in preventing conception. Like all new contraceptives though, the warning light is still on the sponge. Only tested on 2,000 American women for a few years, reports haven't established whether toxic shock syndrome might be caused by the sponges.

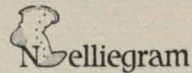
## Women Reclaim Medical Roots

The first health resource centre in Canada, staffed by nurses only and in operation for three years at the University of Manitoba, threatens doctors traditional monopoly over health care.

The good news was revealed by Dr. Helen Glass, president of the Canadian Nurses' Association, who says extending nurses' care outside traditional institutions such as hospitals, does not interfere with doctors' jobs.

Rather than the traditional

health care, which is disease-oriented and centres around becoming ill, nurses put the emphasis on health and preventing illness. If they discover acute or chronic illness, 'clients' are referred to a physician. Much of the ill health treated at the centre involves smoking, drinking and lack of exercise. Nurses in the province have recently been under fire from doctors, who fear nurses' interest in preventative health care threatens their interests.



ANTI-ABORTION FORCES DO not land on "Invasion Day". Seattle pro-choicers turned out in force to protect an abortion clinic from anti-abortion picketers who had planned to close down the clinic as part of their "Invasion Day" action. The "right-to-life" pledged to sabotage 300 clinics across the country. But over 250 people joined the spirited, day-long pro-choice action and although several carloads of anti-abortionists were seen circling the clinic, they did not once get out of their cars.

**National Women's Health Network**

## Funding negotiations SAC-ed

The Saskatchewan Action Committee on the Status of Women (SAC) is trying to get financial autonomy from Secretary of State and the federal government, so they've stopped negotiating for their next year's funding.

Claiming that 12 years of government funding has led to women's groups being pitted against one another for funding, SAC says extreme financial accountability to government "has led directly to demands for planning, record keeping and credibility that far exceeds the conditions of volunteer, community groups and goes beyond good faith financial accountability to political accountability."

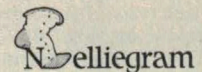
While SAC says it doesn't object to general accountability, it maintains that severing ties altogether to make its point makes it more accountable to women than to the federal government. To the Board of SAC, being accountable to women and being accountable to the federal government signifies a conflict of interest. The federal government, in identifying its own priorities for women is forcing women's organizations to comply with its own objectives in order to receive funds, SAC maintains.

HOME BIRTH SAFER THAN hospital birth says new data presented at the annual meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. The paper supports numerous other studies that have shown that midwife-attended home births have fewer cases of fetal distress, less hemorrhage, and a lower Caesarean section rate. Data from nearly 400 home births supervised by California obstetrician, Donald Solomon revealed a perinatal mortality rate of 0.4% and a Caesarean section rate of 4.8%. The national rate of perinatal mortality is 1.9% and 15% for Caesarean sections.

**National Women's Health Network**

WOODSWOMEN CANOED across Labrador following the route of Canadian Mina Hubbard took in 1907. The trip took thirty-one days in three Mad River canoes. Judith Nieme, of Woodsman (the women's outfitter's organization of Minneapolis) and the six other women on the trek felt their biggest problem was the cold. It seldom got above 40 degrees F. and the women suffered from "canoer's hand"—numb, sore fingers and cracked skin. "Labrador is beautiful, fabulous."

**Joan Baril/  
Northern Woman**



IRISH SOCIETY FOR THE Protection of the Unborn Child's spokeswoman, Loretta Brown, says about rape and the necessity of abortion for women who have been raped, "Rape is very horrible, but most women who are raped don't conceive," and "Men who go in for rape are usually not fertile."

She also maintains that the International Planned Parenthood Federation is responsible for the growing number of homosexuals in Ireland. "Let's say that in the last couple of years in this country we have seen an unprecedented rise in the number of people who call themselves gay. By natural law we couldn't have so many misfits in society."

**Spare Rib**



# Baby Daycare: Still in its Infancy

Under the present system of child care in Manitoba, inequities in money allotment prevent most day cares from offering adequate infant care. Waiting lists of up to two years are not uncommon.

Only four of the 150 day cares in Manitoba offer care to more than eight children under two years of age. Shortly, one of the four will be forced to discontinue its infant program. According to Lorraine Maskiw, director of Care-a-Lot Day Care in Winnipeg, "We want to provide the service to the community, but we are losing money on a daily basis. The rest of the day care suffers."

While infant care costs are approximately twice that of child care, the funds available from government grants and parent fees, including subsidy, are the same. For pre-schoolers from two to five years, the ratio is one staff to eight children; for infants up to two years old, the ratio is one staff to four children. As a result, the cost of staffing and therefore of offering infant care is almost double that for pre-schoolers.

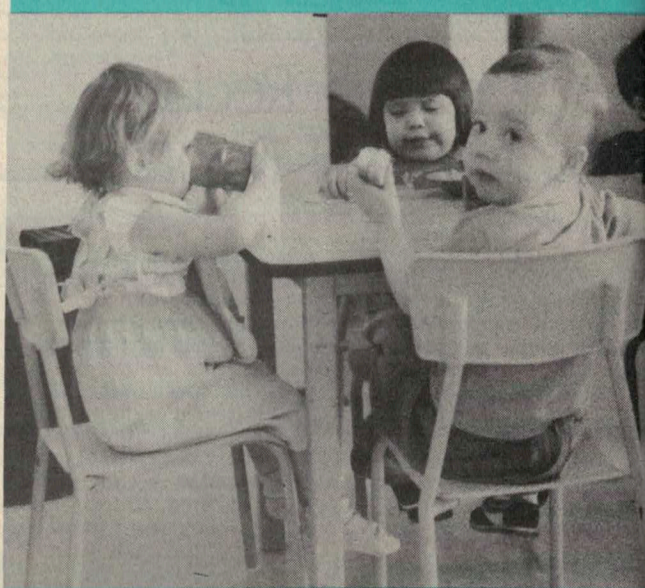
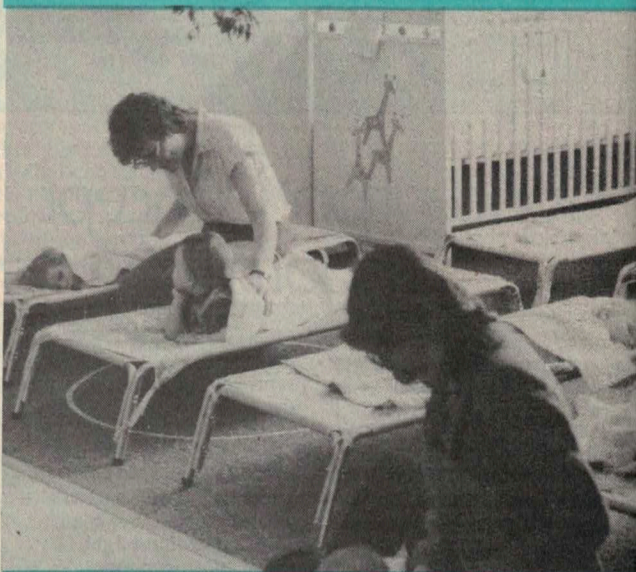
The directors of the three day cares who offer special infant programs estimated the costs. Wendy Bacon, director of the Health Sciences Centre

Day Nursery in Winnipeg, stated the actual cost of infant care is \$18 per day; Sylvia Carpenter of T<sup>2</sup> Daycare in Thompson estimated a cost of \$21; while Judy Olson, director of Wee World Day Care in Portage la Prairie placed the cost of infant care between \$20 and \$25 per day.

Besides the centres with a large number of infant care spaces, several centres outside of Winnipeg offer a small number of infant spaces within their pre-school programs. Many directors feel this sufficiently meets the needs within their communities; others, such as Fuzzy Bears Inc. in Brandon, do not. Fuzzy Bears' waiting list consists 50% of children under two years of age and it is unable to accommodate more than four infants due to space limitations. In every case, child care directors report that the infant section is subsidized by the pre-schoolers.

In Winnipeg, a by-law requiring that a registered nurse be present at any day care with infants adds an additional financial burden. Only one centre has been able to meet this criterion and only because of vastly different circumstances.

The Health Sciences Centre Day Nursery has become a





workplace day care, and is therefore governed by different rules than public day cares. In the past, the hospital covered the day care's operational deficit each year. As its budget was tightened, this became impossible, so the day care sought alternatives. As a workplace day care, the Health Sciences Centre Day Nursery charges parents on a sliding scale. As a result of their financial structure, the centre, which is licensed for 100 spaces, is able to reserve 32 for infants. Currently all spaces are filled and there is a waiting list of 50 children.

Wee World Day Care in Portage la Prairie depends upon a high level of parental involvement to cover the cost of infant care. Director Judy Olson says parents who are aware that they are receiving a rare service are willing to be actively involved in fundraising events such as walk-a-thons, flea markets, and socials. The centre is licensed for 50 children, 30 preschoolers and 20 infants.

In the spring of 1982, Thompson Toddlers' Daycare Inc., sought a license for a centre for 35 children, with a budget indicating 15 spaces for children under two. It was advised to lessen the number of infant spaces to balance the budget by the Child Day Care Office in Winnipeg. Since one of its major goals was to provide day care for the young children of single parents wishing to attend school, this would have defeated its purpose. The board members opted to find additional financial assistance within the community. Sylvia Carpenter, the director, explained how they have managed thus far: "Both the board and staff really believe in what they are doing. If it wasn't for the active board of directors convincing service clubs and other community groups of the value and need of our service, we wouldn't exist." Also, Carpenter says the staff have taken lower wages and bring things from home for the day care.

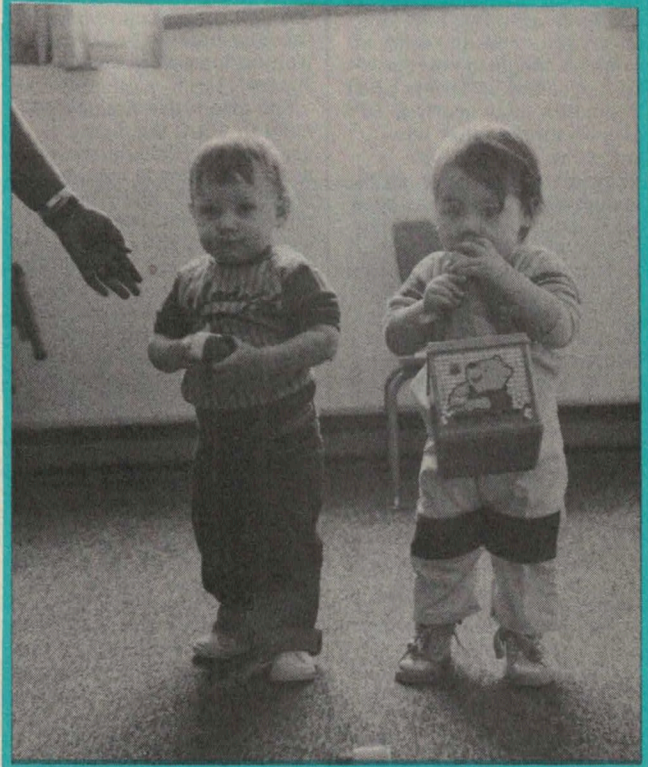
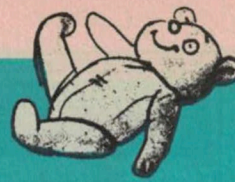
Increased mobility and the opportunities for a better salary in the paid work force have decreased the potential

number of home babysitters. Although the Manitoba Child Care Association (MCCA) has no policy statement, Mary Beth Kom of the MCCA says "Being a mother I would far prefer a licensed space to a babysitter." With babysitters there are many problems, the most significant of which is the lack of consistency. Laura Johnson, in *Taking Care and Who Cares* noted that the average sitter in Canada lasts only three months. Infants particularly need to develop close bonds. This is impossible when babysitters change frequently. Less than ten per cent of the infants of working mothers in Manitoba are able to receive licensed child care. Shirley Lapp of the Fort Rouge Co-op Day Nursery, which is hoping to have an infant program beginning in 1984, noted that half the calls she received were for space for children under two.


Since coming to power, the New Democratic Party has initiated the "Consultation Paper on Day Care Standards for Manitoba", initiated to make improvements to the day care situation in the province. While day care directors idealistically support most of the suggested day care standards, community services minister Len Evans hasn't committed the government to spending money to implement all the changes.

Judy Olson of Wee World Day Care stated, "Infant care has to be addressed as a separate issue. There should not be only three or four children in a pre-school setting." MLA Myrna Phillips who worked on the Consultation Paper, echoed the same thought. Sylvia Carpenter of T<sup>2</sup> Daycare emphasized the benefits of a separate infant program: "Staff working with either infants or pre-schoolers are able to concentrate their learning on either age group, and be able to assist and motivate the children through the various developmental stages. Also furnishings and toys may be purchased to meet the specific needs of infants. With only a few infants in a pre-school program, neither of these would be possible."

Elaine Martin






 Belliegram

ADVERTISING BIGGER—BUT better? Classified advertisers of the glossy feminist magazine *MS* were startled to get this letter:

"Dear Ms Advertiser: 1982 marked the 10th Anniversary of *Ms* Magazine and you are part of a success story that has made publishing history. . . .

*Ms* has increased **Liquor, Beer and Wine** advertising by more than 40% and now carries more alcoholic beverage advertising than any other women's magazine except *Cosmopolitan*. . . . **Drugs and Remedies** show nearly a 50% gain—a number that reinforces the fact that *Ms*'s editorial coverage of health and physical fitness has been consistently ground breaking."

Some of *Ms*'s health coverage is very good—yet the publisher and 'editor-in-chief' can boast about helping the alcohol and pharmaceutical industries whose aim is quite clearly **not** to help us help ourselves keep healthy. What the left hand gives, the right hand takes away.

*Ruth Wallgrove/Spare Rib*

## Civil servants' wages garnished

Women who's civil servant ex-husbands are negligent in paying maintenance can now have their salaries garnished to pay their owing family support.

In a little publicized provision called the Garnishment, Attachment and Pension Diversion Act, any federal civil servant owing money to someone is eligible to have their wages garnished, including retired civil servants (who are only accountable for family support payment garnishing).

A court judgement ordering the person to pay the money must first be obtained and then a Notice of Intent sent to the Department of Justice. After a 30-day waiting period, the person then applies to a court to have a garnish summons issued.

## Single parent families poor; gov't turns deaf ear

Vancouver MP Pat Carney encouraged the federal Government to amend the Divorce Act to collect child maintenance payments through continuing orders, but she isn't holding her breath waiting for government support.

She also urged the government to allow the courts to use Revenue Canada records to trace husbands who don't pay their child maintenance, noting a similar system is used in the U.S.

"The economic situation of single parent families today is so desperate that immediate government action is imperative," she told the

Commons.

. . . Earlier in the year, during a discussion in the Commons with MP Margaret Mitchell on poverty, the prime minister is reported as having said the following: "That (poverty) line is very much higher than it was several years ago. It is a moving line. It means that the people of Canada generally are getting richer. It means, since the average Canadian is getting richer, therefore the average poor person becomes poor at a higher level than he did ten years ago. So it is a conceptual notion which is debatable. . . .

## Harassed women only one in a million

According to a Canadian Human Rights Commission survey, 1.5 million Canadian women are sexually harassed on the job, but most of them don't know sexual harassment when it comes their way.

The survey found that half the 2,000 adults surveyed had experienced "unwanted sexual advances", but only fifteen per cent of the women and four per cent of the men considered the advances

harassment. Harassment was defined in the survey as "leering or suggestive looks, sexual remarks or teasing, subtle sexual hints and pressure, touching, brushing against, grabbing, pinching, repeated pressure for personal relationships or sex; forced sex."

Of the women who had been harassed, 17 per cent said they quit their jobs without having another one to go to.

## Saskatoon Kids get crisis care

A temporary refuge for children of families with serious problems has opened in Saskatoon, where parents breaking up or experiencing other problems can bring their children for up to 3 days.

The Saskatoon Society for the Protection of Children is being financed by a job creation grant for only 26 weeks, but the group is looking for money to make the nursery permanent.

### ISRAELI FEMINIST

Conference—Some 500 women from all over the country—from small towns, kibbutzim and moshavim (two kinds of communal settlements), as well as from Jerusalem, Tel Aviv and Heifa—gathered to raise their voices against violence in all its forms.

As women began to arrive for the Fifth Annual Conference, the feeling of excitement was running high. The reinforcement, the giving and gathering of strength, the feeling of power when we are 500 feminist women together, were almost tangible. Workshops on all themes of violence took place, but the workshop on Women and the War was perhaps the best attended, and spilled over into two sessions.

In her opening presentation, Graziella Daniel stressed the ways in which war particularly affects women. War—the legitimate and sanctioned use of violence—reinforces the value of violence as a means of resolving problems; conquering armies, throughout history, have raped the women of their defeated enemies—part of the legitimate booty of war.

Yet, women are part of the excuse for war. Wars are fought on our behalf, to defend us and our children. Men become heroes defending "the woman back home." But nobody ever asked us if we **want** men to wage war on our behalf. Daniel stressed that we **do** have a right to take a political stand against the war. And it is **not** our vicarious connection with the war—our sons/husbands/lovers/brothers, who are fighting at the front—that gives us this right. It is our inalienable right, to be involved directly with all the political processes that shape our lives. Our silence gives tacit approval to those who wage war; by not opposing it, we add our strength to the war effort.

Over and over, men were heard to describe the war in sexual terms—to "penetrate the enemy." (The Hebrew "Lehachnis lahem" is a crudity frequently used by men in reference to women—roughly meaning, to "stick it into them," to "let them have it".) War and violent sex are connected in men's language. And, as war is sanctioned, this gives legitimization to sexual violence and to the abuse of women.



## Stickin' to the union

The co-founder of the independent trade union movement in Poland, was given a suspended 15-month sentence last month for inciting a sit-in at the Lenin Shipyard in Gdansk.

Anna Walentynowicz, a crane operator, had been held without charge from December 18, 1981 until last July and arrested again in August. Women continue to play a major role in the country's union struggles, as they have from the union's inception.

## Has the Revolution Begun?

Ten days after a consultant released a report calling for changing in working conditions for VDT workers at Surrey Memorial Hospital, workers shut down their terminals to protest the hospital's refusal to improve conditions.

A dozen terminals were unplugged after the workers conferred with their union. The terminals emitted low-frequency radiation, according to the nuclear chemist who submitted the report.

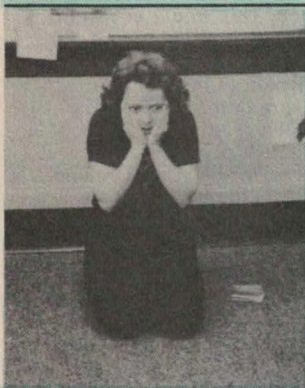
## Education Cutbacks threaten Women's Status

According to a report by the Canadian Association of University Teachers, (CAUT) women will continue to be trapped in job ghettos if universities cannot meet the growing demand for special education programs.

The most striking change in university populations has been the influx of part-time older women, the report says,

which allows them to escape their traditional low-paying ghettos. CAUT is afraid that federal-provincial bickering over fiscal transfers will lead to cuts in the funding of post secondary education.

"Women will, no doubt, be the major victims of such reduced accessibility," said CAUT president Ken McGovern.



## Jessica Barker's Workshop in Body Integrity for Nursery Children.



**A** At a recent workshop for nursery children at Grosvenor Elementary School, Jessica Barker of Wen-do International, women's self-defense, asks the children if they have ever felt scared.

**B** Jessica describes how she had to reach inside of herself . . .

**C** to find strength and self-confidence as a woman.

**D** For all assembled at the nursery, Jessica demonstrates a series of body movements called the **kata**. She explained that the **kata** was a way of feeling good about one's body and secure when alone.

**E** Elfie Sizeland and Julia Thiessen practice the **kata** yell, "Hut, hut!" as a way of drawing up energy needed to be assertive and confident in their bodies' integrity.





## Prostitutes Picket Politicians

"We are holding the first hookers march on city hall in North America," says Sally DeQuadros. Organized to protest against proposed repressive legislation against prostitutes, the women marched in Vancouver on April 20 under the auspices of the Alliance for the Safety of Prostitutes.

DeQuadros says the recommendations of the Commons committee would take us back to the dark days before the repeal of the vagrancy laws. These laws allowed the police to pick up any "suspicious-looking" women and lay charges. Speaking on behalf of ASP, DeQuadros points out that prostitution will not be abolished until there is general economic redress for women—until they have the same opportunities as men and make more than 53% of men's wages for their work.

The march was endorsed by the U.S. prostitutes' union COYOTE (Cast Off Your Tired Old Ethics). Because they see the proposed legislation forcing women underground with no protection from the law or access to safety, the marchers demanded the repeal of all prostitution laws. The women

want protection as citizens under the law—they want job training opportunities; day care facilities; affordable housing, increases in welfare payments; more shelters for women and youths. "We want alternatives, not bad laws," explains DeQuadros.

ASP received a letter from the mayor of Vancouver saying he wanted to meet with them for mutual cooperation. The mayor also informed them of a special police squad set up to make a safer city for prostitutes and women in general. Since he didn't respond to their phone call to set up a meeting, they went to see him en masse.

A major representative of Canadian women's groups has also responded negatively to the proposed changes. A resolution passed by 300 delegates of over 200 women's groups from across Canada calls for the decriminalization of all prostitution laws at a meeting of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women. Jillian Riddington, who heads NAC's justice committee says, "All references to soliciting and keeping a common bawdy house should be removed from

the criminal code immediately." And if the new recommendations are legislated, this will only result in more fines (\$500 or 15 days in jail) for women who will have to turn more tricks to pay for them and who will need more pimps to get them out of jail. Clients would likely have no trouble paying the fines and maybe this money should go to support alternatives for women.

The recommendation in regard to soliciting or accepting to have sex with anyone under the age of 18 calls for a jail term of up to two years. Lynn McDonald, NDP member of parliament sees it as a step in the right direction, but questions whether the two-year jail sentence is out of proportion for a charge of soliciting to buy sex when "child abusers don't even get these sentences."

DeQuadros sees no need for new laws on child prostitution. "Anyone under legal age is already protected under the child protection laws, but these laws are not enforced and men are never charged with child abuse and exploitation." McDonald wants to ensure that we don't criminalise

the kids and she recommends waiting for the Badgely Committee recommendations on child abuse.

"The definition of public place is a heavy-handed response of the committee in response to pressures by municipalities where there has been a nuisance problem," says McDonald. "Whereas some local politicians just wanted it (prostitution) off the street, now everything from cars to bars to back-yards is public."

According to McDonald, Justice Minister Mark McGuigan is considering attaching amendments to the obscenity laws to the legislation. This would put women's groups in a bind since they have been asking for the inclusion of laws against degradation—prohibiting violence, abuse and coercion against people in films and print media. These amendments to obscenity laws are badly needed but "what we may end up with again, as in the sexual assault laws, is legislation, part of which we like and part of which is unacceptable," McDonald feels.

by Brigitte Sutherland

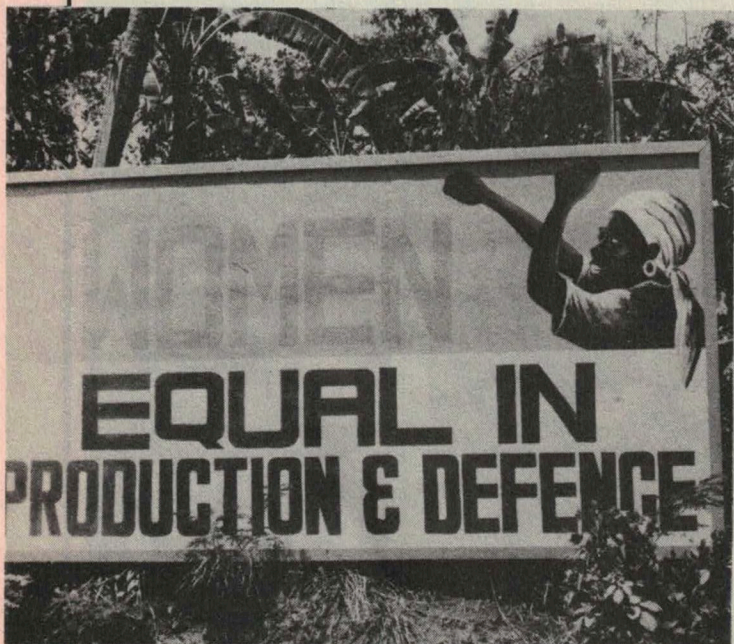
## International Connections

A solidary message from the Winnipeg International Women's Day Committee was featured in the national IWD rally in Grenada March 8th. It was read by the President of the National Women's Organization (NWO), Phyllis Coard, in her keynote address. The rally, organized by the NWO and the Ministry of Women's Affairs and broadcast live over national radio, was given very high priority by the government.

In attendance were several government ministers including Jacqueline Creft, Minister of Education and Women's Affairs, and Acting Prime Minister Bernard Coard who also addressed the rally. Messages of support for IWD, the NWO and the women of Grenada were heard from representatives of the national Trade Union Council, the armed forces, the Grenada Peace Council, the Federation of Cuban Women, and the Young Pioneers.

A garment workers rally celebrating the Fourth

Anniversary of the Grenada Revolution on March 13 saw another expression of Winnipeg solidarity. A message of support and a token gift of "union label" bags from the International Ladies Garment Workers Union (ILGWU) in Winnipeg were presented by Susan White of OXFAM-Canada. In return the shop steward, Doreen Lewis, presented a book on Grenada signed by a number of workers for Susan to carry back to Winnipeg. As in Canada, these garment workers are predominantly women. They are members of the island's largest and most militant union, the Bank and General Workers Union (BGWU). The BGWU grew from the successful struggle to organize workers in three Canadian banks (Commerce, Scotia, and Royal) and the British Barclay's Bank. The Grenada book was presented to the ILGWU Executive on May 3 and plans were made to continue the communication between the unions.





## Nelliegram

Our strength lies in the extent to which we can work with Palestinian women. We must start talking to them, listening to them, hearing what they really want. So that together we can break through the barriers of strangeness, of distrust, of hatred; together we can destroy the stereotypes that we are all brought up with. As women, we can build a common language of trust, that men have not been able to do so.

*Condensed from  
Nomi Sharron's report in  
Off Our Backs*

THUNDER BAY SURVEY ON male attitudes to working wives—Finding by Confederation College business students are contradictory. On the one hand, husbands in Thunder Bay strongly approve of wives working and in fact are proud of their wives careers. On the other hand they dislike the idea of their wives attaining a higher position than their own, working at manual labour, working at the same jobs or working when the children are young. A rather shackling set of restrictions.

Of those surveyed, 80% expected to share housework with their working wives BUT 100% of them like to have their dinner cooked and waiting when they arrive home and the amount of housework they actually do is negligible—a bit of dusting, cooking dinner once a week and so on. Perhaps Thunder Bay men believe that somehow for women housework is fun and 'easy work'?

*Joan Baril/  
Northern Woman*

DOWN WITH HIERARCHIES! *Unione Donne Italiane* (the Italian Women's Union) was set up in 1944, and is a nationally-based association of women which until very recently was tied to the left-wing parties (Socialist and Communist Parties). It has around 200,000 members and publishes a weekly "Noi Donne". After its 11th congress, the UDI eliminated its vertical leadership organs and organised itself along horizontal lines, in territorial groupings. It is going through a period of great change and re-thinking.

*Women's Building  
Turin, Italy*

## Manitoba officially "nuke dump"

Peaceniks are mourning the loss of any hope of keeping Manitoba from becoming a nuclear dump site. Construction of Atomic Energy of Canada's Lac Du Bonnet 'research laboratory' began a month ago.

The site will be the place of 'research' into nuclear fuel waste 'disposal.' (Nuclear fuel wastes have a half-life of a few hundred thousand years.) AECL plans to store the wastes underground in Manitoba rock bodies. Now anti-nuke advocates in the province officially have their own back yard to try to clean up; since it has become a dumping ground for everyone else's.

NEW EQUALITY LAW IN France (named the Roudy law after the minister of women's rights) passed 327-0 with the opposition abstaining. The law gives a new definition of 'equal value' in the area of equal pay with evaluation being based on formal qualifications, practice and experience. The amendment puts the burden of proof on employers who have to justify any difference in pay. Besides wage discrimination, the law deals with discrimination in training, job seeking, working conditions, recruitment, casual labour, promotion, redundancy and unemployment.

Still, women's groups feel it highly unlikely that the law will effect change in certain low-paid industries (food-processing, textiles) that are job ghettos for women.

Except for laws relating to maternity, all clauses favouring one sex over the other have been abolished. And, for the first time in France the law introduces the concept of positive discrimination and allows for appropriate action: "Temporary (?) measures may be taken for the sole benefit of women with the aim of establishing equality of opportunity between men and women."

*Center for Research on  
European Women*

## NAC NAC (Who's There)

Bread not Bombs was a major theme of this year's National Action Committee on the Status of Women conference in Ottawa. The umbrella organization of 200 Canadian women's organizations recommended that the federal government cut its \$7.8 billion military budget in half to redirect money into job creation. Half the jobs should be reserved for women.

The women also voted to refuse testing of the cruise missile in Canada and urged the federal government to declare Canada a nuclear free zone, including the

withdrawal from NATO. They also criticized the fed's latest job creation program, NEED as being biased in favor of men.

NAC President Doris Anderson was also re-elected for a second year as president at the weekend conference.

... meanwhile in Ottawa, defence minister Gilles Lamontagne reveals that he would be almost as dangerous as the cruise if he had any brains.

... He's quoted in the *Globe and Mail* as saying of the cruise missile tests: "It's not a weapon, it can't harm anybody, it's not dangerous."

## Women Need a Party

The founder of the German Feminist Party recently told a United Nations seminar of feminists that traditional party politics still dominate and devalue women and that women need their own parties to make sure their interests

are represented.

Eva Rath, founder of *Frauenpartei*, said: "Men will never renounce a milligram of their power until we obtain equal power through our own strength and endeavours."

A SEXUALLY ABUSED Patients' Defence Fund has been set up by six of many women who have been sexually abused by a Toronto psychiatrist (male) still practising today. In the process of contacting each other, we have become aware that this doctor has imposed this abuse on his female patients on a habitual basis for over twenty years.

Because of the humiliation and trauma this doctor has caused and is causing many women today, we feel it necessary to call to the attention of The College of Physicians and Surgeons his gross misconduct (sexual relations with patients is strictly forbidden by the medical code of ethics) and to demand the revocation of his licence. Due to the skepticism with which the medical profession views women's complaints of sexual

abuse by psychiatrists, we have been strongly advised by those familiar with the College's complaints procedure to engage legal counsel.

We want to provide an example to women patients that such behaviour need not be tolerated and to their doctors, that indulgence in this practice is to put their livelihood in serious jeopardy.

In the name of all women who have been and continue to be sexually abused by doctors, the Fund appeals to you for financial support of this cause. Please pass the hat at your next staff, membership, or board meeting, and make donations payable to the Sexually Abused Patients' Defence Fund, c/o Toronto Rape Crisis Centre, P.O. Box 6597, Station "A", Toronto. If you have questions, call (416) 964-7477.

*Broadside*





**THE POPE MUST HAVE MADE** a mistake. It can't be otherwise. Or he has come under the harmful influences of feminist thinking. Why else would he declare Theresa de Ahumada a saint.

Theresa, the raging nun said at the height of her career: "I did not become a nun out of undying love of god, it was more due to my fear as an un-free human being." This is the voice of a Spanish nun of the 16th century. She founded convents to liberate more women from this fear. All the while imparting such jems as: "If god spares a woman the tyranny of a husband—what clemency."

To correct this unforgivable error at least in part, the Pope made recent pronouncements in favour of marriage, the family and motherhood and against all such perversions as homosexuality and abortion. It was, according to the knowledgeable opinion of observers, his most severe sermon on this theme ever. No wonder, he had to backtrack real quick.

*Translated by Brigitte from EMMA*

**CONSCIOUS OBJECTOR** dismissed—Dee Kraij is an English student nurse who was suspended and then dismissed when she refused to participate in electroconvulsive therapy (ECT) at the hospital.

She refused to take a patient to receive shock because "as a result of both personal experience (talking to recipients) and reading books on the subject, I've come to the conclusion that ECT is not ethically justifiable. I believe the damage caused in many individual cases far outweighs the possible good effects." Evidence from many studies has shown that many earlier claims for the efficacy of ECT have been refuted and its use has consequently decreased in recent years. However, its continued use is still the subject of much debate and argument.

Two other student nurses have resigned because they too feel unable to compromise on the issue of ECT. We hope that ECT may at last become officially recognised as an ethical issue. That is, the right to refuse, on grounds of conscience, to be complicit without having to forfeit our jobs.

*Spare Rib*

**WOMEN ORGANIZE AFTER** gang rape at Big Dan's Bar in New Bedford, Mass. A 21-year-old woman was held down and raped by four men while approximately 12 other male bar patrons watched and cheered. According to police, the woman was in the bar to buy cigarettes, and then stayed to drink with a friend. When she tried to leave, a man dragged her to a pool table where the men raped her. One of the rapists pulled out a kitchen knife and threatened to kill the woman when she screamed.

After two hours of rape and forced oral sex, the woman broke free and ran outside. She returned with police to identify her assailants for arrest. Police sergeant Ronald Cabral reported that the witnesses in the bar said they did not intervene because they were scared "they would get beaten up."

All four were indicted by a Bristol County Grand Jury and are in jail after pleading innocent at an arraignment. In addition, the Grand Jury indicted two of the witnesses from the bar, and the men were arrested and charged with being "accessories before the fact of rape."

It is unknown whether the six men will be tried together or separately. Supporters of the rape victim hope that she will not be forced to participate in more than one trial, as she was experiencing "rape trauma syndrome" and was not sleeping or eating well.

The rape has caused the New Bedford women's community to mobilize in an unprecedented show of protest and solidarity. They organized the Coalition Against Sexist Violence and held a protest march on Monday, March 14 which drew about 3500 people (about 25% male). Rose Amado of the New Bedford Women's Centre said the women involved in the Coalition cut across race and class lines and are of all ages. Amado said that many women who have been rape victims have called the centre to get involved or just to talk.

Gloria Steinem sent a telegram which said, "What happened to the woman in New Bedford happens to all women. We will not rest until those men are punished and all women are saved."

*Jennifer Skurnik/Off Our Backs*

**POLICE CAMPAIGN TO** recruit women in San Francisco was launched with a poster campaign showing a picture of four smiling police women saying: "We're doing the job, you can too. Salary \$23,000." This is part of a major effort by police all over the USA to drastically increase the percentage of women police to 30% by the year 2000.

Within days of the appearance of the posters, stickers were slapped up across them carrying the message, "We don't want equal rights to be killer cops—support Black and Chicano and Mexican struggles." Women Against Imperialism claimed responsibility and stressed the fact that the police kill hundreds of

Third World people across the USA each year. "In Los Angeles alone they average one killing a week (80% are Black or Mexican people). The first murder of the year was carried out by a woman cop."

Women Against Imperialism say, "We are not fooled when the police make 'feminist' slogans like 'Women, take command of your future: join the Police', because we understand that when women join the police, they are joining the enemies of all women. Police protect the porn industry, act as strike-breakers, beat up lesbians, and accuse us of 'provoking' men who rape and batter us. We must oppose police recruitment in our communities and take our stand on the other side."

*Big Mama Rag*

**MALE BIASED SOCIOLOGY** in Germany got a little surprise when women brought a robust lady up the learned podium during a conference—a large stuffed puppet, her hair turned grey in the service of academia. She comported herself with silent dignity and this too for a reason: all speakers, all international experts, all presenters on this day of sociology were exclusively male.

While the lady at the podium stared silently at the audience, women distributed a leaflet throughout the hall which, among other things, invited participation in a skill-testing contest: "Who can remember a time when a woman last occupied the Chair of a department of sociology?" The prize—a package of smarties.

*Translated by Brigitte from EMMA*



## LLYN'S BASIC HEALTH NUTRITIONAL THERAPY CENTRE\*

a centre that is concerned about good health, good skin care and good nutritional eating habits for anyone of any age.

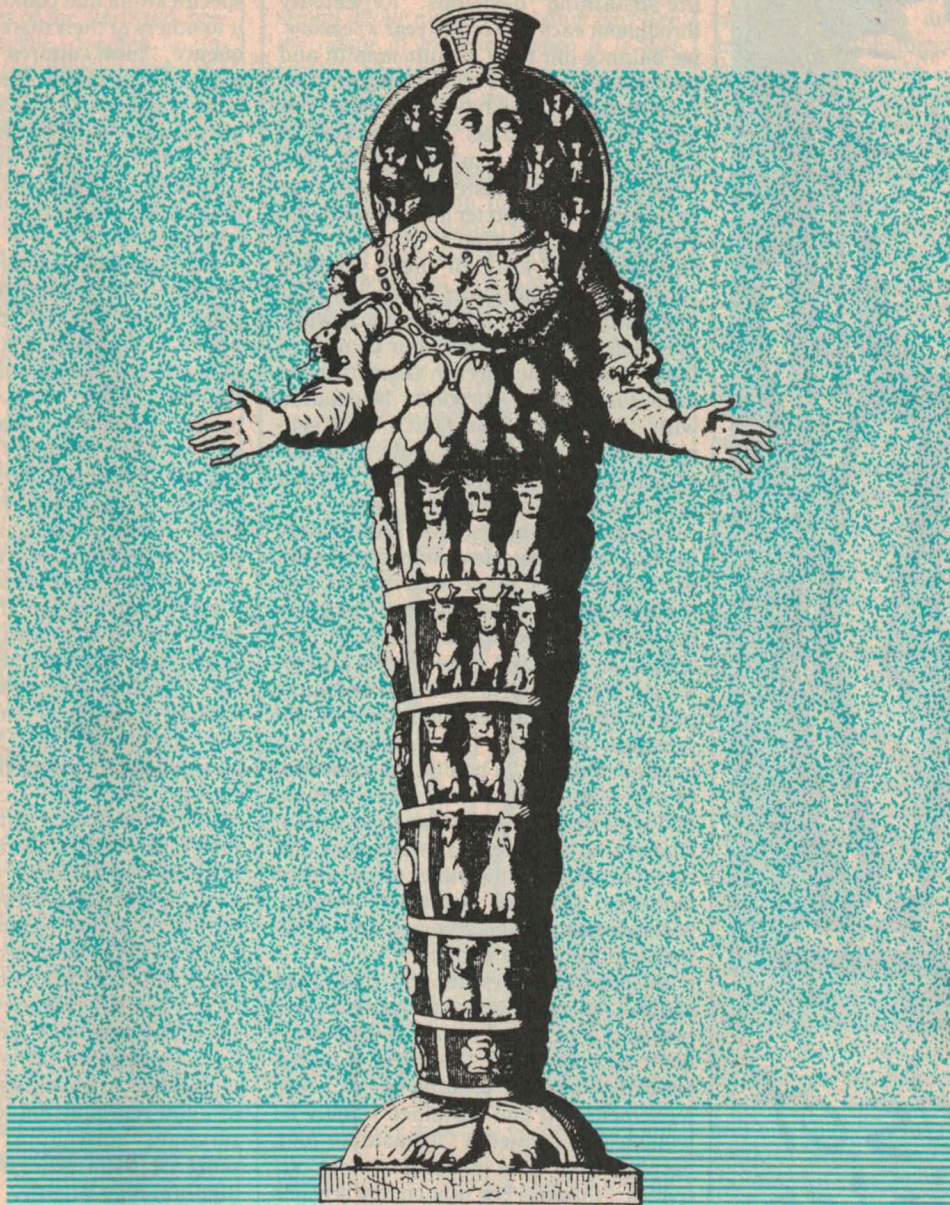
### NUTRITIONAL AND SKIN CARE COUNSELLING

- 1 hour, private weekly visits • suggested exercise program • development of positive mental attitude
  - prevention and/or treatment of skin care problems
- Improve your health. Call Florence at 284-9249 or visit The Nutritional Therapy Centre at 525 Kylemore Ave., Winnipeg.

\*Approved by  
The Manitoba Department of Health



# HARVESTING OUR POLITICS



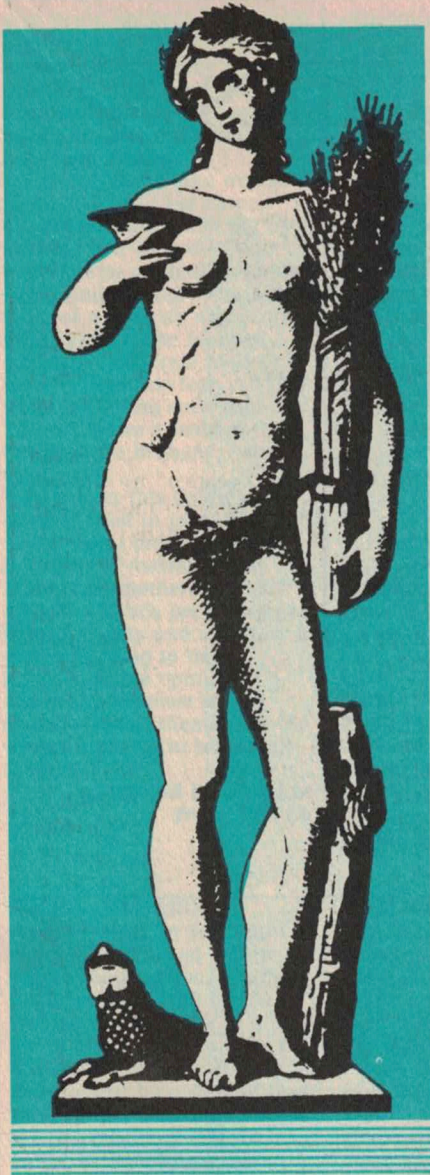
**Women and food are inseparable.**

We have fed ourselves, our offspring  
and the rest of the world.

We have grown and  
gathered, shopped for and  
prepared the majority of the  
daily diets of our  
clan, village and family.







Seeds of  
feminism  
rooted  
in  
regeneration!

Brigitte Sutherland

Whether we have dug up sweet yams from a garden mound in Papua New Guinea or deliberated over the brand of freeze-dried coffee in a suburban supermarket, women are continuously making life-sustaining decisions. Repeatedly throughout each day or the year's seasons, we balance our time, health, wealth and life experience in our relationship to food.

As long as women have performed their body nurturing tasks isolated and in silence, eating has remained like a work of art—a matter of taste. Few people care or comment if you prefer a McDonald's Big Mac to a Burger King's Whopper or a Salisbury Nip. Just tell them you're a vegetarian and the burger bunch link arms and patty themselves on the back while they defensively ridicule your choices of food. Where's the threat? Vegetarianism does question the corporate fascination with "Over 40 Billion Sold". Such self-satisfaction can appear only a trivial endeavour as compared to the running tally of carrots consumed to date.

Present-day feminists are increasingly looking to the historical connections with our foremothers, those women who over the millenia have cyclicly participated in the same nutritional dilemmas. In particular, as more and more women are suffering both physical and psychological pain in their struggles against sexual oppression, feminism has focussed upon healing. There is "a healing of ourselves, of our relationships with other women, and with nature. Many women have concluded that meat-eating imbalances and threatens this healing either physically or morally." (Adams) For many women, vegetarianism has become one way of putting feminism into action.

This process of evaluating their food choices, specifically vegetarianism, has revealed a personal source of empowerment. In many ways, the threat of global extinction and the upsurge of the peace movement, led and sustained largely by women, has created a "distaste for food derived from and causing violent activities." (Adams) For women, the seasons have become more than the spring opening of the local soft ice cream hut. There is a sense of having survived another violence-ridden winter; beginning the sensual cycle of deliberate self-renewal and nurturance through food.

SPRING—All Food of the Goddesses

*Yoni: a sanskrit word for altar, sacred place a symbol of the female organ of generation as an object of veneration. In nature worship all natural orifices were revered as representing the mother earth/goddess.*

(Ripening)

A root-fine network of symbols binds us to a distant spring. Feminist historians are

remembering a woman/goddess-focused past. With our foremothers' role as food gatherer, food producer and food preparer, came the power of controlling food at the source, preparing it according to their specification, and cooking and allocating it to others at their discretion. As a consequence, "most cultures, at one time, worshipped a creator who was a Great Mother. She was all things . . . Because of the nature of early agrarian societies, she was particularly associated with agriculture and animals. Often she was an animal herself: a cow, a horse, a bird. (Fight Back).

The goddess Isis of Egypt (the Mother of Wheat) was worshipped with sacred rituals that utilized "molloy cakes, the honey and sesame that was shaped and baked in the image of that sacred part of the body from which each and every human life emerges, that which is possessed only by women." (Stone) In other regions, excavated shrines, murals and statues at early Greek habitation sites show Demeter holding sheaves of wheat, her arms outstretched, around which coil the ever-present snakes.

Independent of any direct influence by these ancient Mediterranean cultures, the great Aztec Corn Mother of the Americas was Chicomecoatl, the savage snake woman in charge of nourishment. "Some say that this ancient Mother, Her skirt covered with white flowers, Her face covered with red ochre, Her shield emblazoned with the sun, the knife of obsidian in Her hand—was the First Mother of the people of the valley of Mexico." Seven ears of corn were presented to her as a thanksgiving for making it grow. (Stone)

The powerful bond between goddess and the greatest of grandmothers contributed to very symbolic means that facilitated the transition from food gathering to cultivation. Throughout the world, the goddess is believed to have imparted the wisdom of plant reproduction to women and this resultant agricultural knowledge empowered them with more reliable and plentiful food supplies. "Bearing in mind that in the earliest written records, this gift was attributed to the Goddess, not a god . . . strongly suggests that it was women who first observed that barley, wheat and enner began to grow in the areas in which their gathered wild grains were stored." (Stone) Women's major contribution to gathering and farming translated into political power within those densely populated and sedentary cultures, and was made possible by their discoveries. Iriquois women not only controlled their large nation's food supply, but along with that, could veto any decision to war. SUMMER—Cultivating the Healing Connection

*Her affection and admiration for the plant*



itself were evident as she caressed its straight stalk, delicate leaves, and fine white roots, reluctant at the last to part with it. (Densmore)

The recent appearance of fancy wrapped "gift" boxes of camomille or peppermint teas within the heart of the sterilized, pre-packaged supermarket, denotes an increasingly visible connection with the ritual summer gathering of healing herbs by the knowing medicine woman. The world-view of matrilineal peoples (societies respecting descent through women) are providing a deeply rooted defiance to dominant western curative practice. Matrilineal, agricultural people such as the Hopi of the south-western regions of North America do not distinguish between animate and inanimate objects. All things have a spirit that connect them to one another: "trees, insects, rocks, people, water, are all part of a living whole . . . Mother Earth is a living being . . . thought is a vital, viable, powerful force that affects things in the world." (Heresies)

Giving strength and health, food in particular, the plants of the healing woman's surrounding environment occupied a critical focus in this pattern of living connections. From generation to generation, women's acquired knowledge of curative plants was expanded and passed on to other women healers. Through centuries of observation, these women "laid the foundation of diagnosis, botanical pharmacology and the empirical method." (Witches Heal) Even if unfamiliar with a certain plant, the medicine woman recognized something symbolic in the appearance of a medicine root. A divided taproot was highly valued for its medicinal value. Being on intimate terms with plants, berries and roots empowered women's use of them as healing agents.

Within this network of healing interconnections, even certain animals were respected because of their close relationship to important plants. The bear, which eats berries and digs for roots was held in high regard because it pointed the way to powerful medicine. Hunting people also "understood the vegetable world as a pharmacopeia." (Holstein Lopez) They called meat "medicine", feeling that by "taking the plant indirectly, concentrated in the form of meat from herbivorous animals; the hunter also indirectly partook of the plants' power to cure and soothe." (Holstein Lopez) In contrast, cattle introduced by Western settlers "had no animal masters (no connection to the local healing plants) and therefore "it was not sacred to hunt them, and on that food you could perish" (Holstein Lopez). Pre-patriarchal societies exhibited a much greater understanding of the interconnectedness of all things and the repercussions and responsibilities that were in-

herent in these relationships.

#### FALL—Harvest in a Sudden Frost

*At harvest time she worked in the fields with the men. When we brought her water she straightened from the earth to loom above us, curving against the sky; a strong odour would come from her, like the odour of the earth when it is just turned; her yellow hair would glisten round her face and we thought it grew from her head exactly as the wheat grew from the earth.*

*Persephone, Meridel LeSueur*

Women's connection to food extends to their bodies being actual food: Our wombs nourish the growth of the fetus; our breasts feed the newborn. "We alone can make



food and give it directly through our bodies." (Kaplan) This creative, transformative energy has at times brought the envious wrath of the male sex, in the form of control over women's bodies and their fertility.

This struggle for control centred around the ritual practice of eating meat. Where previously hunting only complemented the gathering of food by women, increased killing for meat translated into political power for men. Eventually, the domestication of animals for slaughter set a precedent for the control of women.

Deliberate opposition to meat-eating or even being in the company of meat-eaters can be traced to women of different times and cultures. Historically, "women instigated taboos against murder and cannibalism precisely because it made no sense to use their energy to create and nourish life only to have men carelessly destroy it." (Holliday) Although "meat may have become the property and

prerogative of men in patriarchal society, in the matriarchal period women decided for themselves whether they would eat meat, and usually they did not." (Reed) Steadily with the rise of the patriarchy, the male power, symbolized in the eating of meat, became the dominant factor in defining relationships between humans, plants, and animals.

**WINTER—Freezers, Frozen Foods and Fear**  
*Talking of hunters: "If they didn't kill birds and fish they would have killed us. The animals die that we may live, they are substitute people . . . And we eat them, out of cans or otherwise, we are eaters of death, dead Christ-flesh resurrecting inside us, granting us life."*

*Surfacing, Margaret Atwood*

Between the closing years of the fifteenth century and the conclusion of the sixteenth century, the healing connections of Europe were violently severed with the slaughter of nine million witches, aged women, midwives and women herbalists. A rising class of male healers combined with the Christian Church leaders throughout Europe to destroy these women healers in the name of "professionalizing" medicine and cleansing the societal body of Christ. These violent upheavals profoundly affected the relationship of women to food, principally driving their accumulated knowledge underground, or symbolically into the underworld from which Demeter had to rescue her daughter Persephone.

In contrast to the beliefs of matrilineal peoples, the predominant Christian view of the present day does not attribute spirituality to either plants or animals. Scriptures and biblical teachings are full of references that everything here on earth is for man to literally have 'dominion' over. Christ had 2000 pigs jump off a cliff to prove his healing abilities. Christian philosophy sanctioned Pope Pious IX's insistence that "humans have no duties to animals who are put on earth for our use." (Holliday) A Jesuit priest severed all connections and responsibilities to nature by stating: "Brute beasts not having understanding and therefore not being persons cannot have any rights. We have then, no duties of charity nor duties of any kind to the lower animals, as neither to sticks and stones." (Holliday)

Not being considered persons is something women can identify closely with. Although having been legally defined women "persons" for over fifty years now, male culture still views women as something to be hunted, tamed or controlled. Just like the other victims of the hunt, women are to be trapped, tied, and trophied. "The sexual subjugation of women, as it is practiced in all the known civilizations of the world, was modeled after the domestication of animals, and extends to control over women's reproduc-



tive capacity." (Fisher) Sport hunting necessitates a specific philosophical process of violent amputation. Animals are defined as **them**, "killables" (women being defined as "the other") and **us**, the "killers". From this point, it is an easy progression to killing anybody labelled as "gooks", "commies"—anyone designated a non-person.

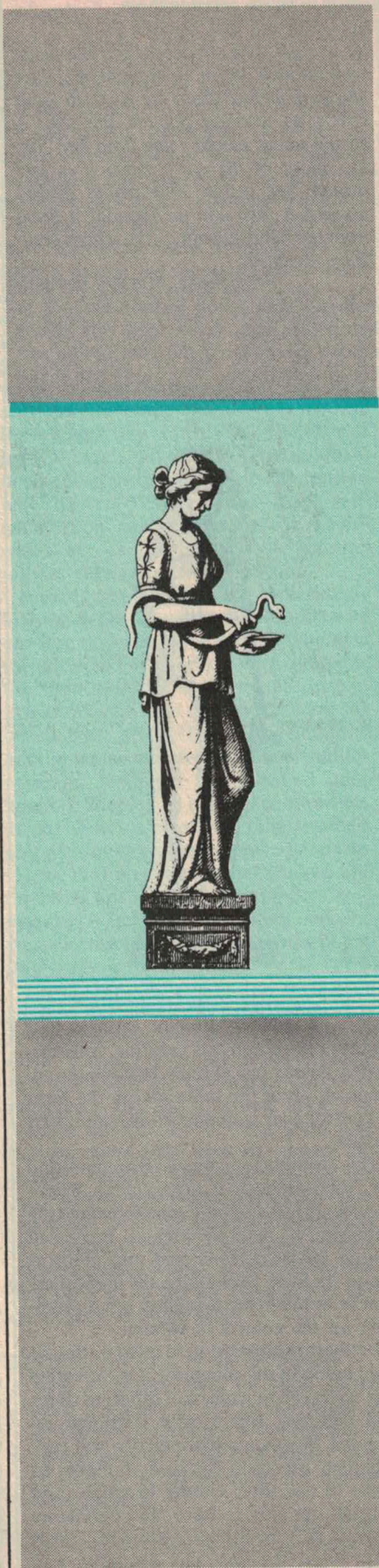
Women are also labelled by many names that suggest they are edible: they are food to be fragmented and devoured. "Men are the predators, the wolves in pursuit of 'the edible women'—a chick, a piece of meat, pussy, honey, sugar, dish, cookie, pidgeon, bird, kitten, lamb, doe, broad, hen, bitch, vixen, peach, biscuit, rib, poundcake, bobtail, rooster, beaver." (Adams) In turn, "economic security is tied to food and bodyshape. The way to a man's heart is through his stomach. We reinforce kitchen and food as symbols of solace and safety." (Kaplan) With the threat for women of becoming overweight, there is the grave possibility that women will define themselves as the "killables" (non-person). "Dieting is a personal solution not too different from suicide: removing the offending body." (Aldebaran) This process also extends to produce an entirely new category of non-foods. "We have the anomaly of food created for no other reason than to take the place of other food. A diet cookie replaces a cookie, a diet soda replaces a soda. Our ingenious culture invents ways of dealing with eating too much by creating still more food: synthetic food (chemicals, dyes, synthetic sweeteners, preservatives)." (Kaplan)

#### SPRING—Thaws for Future Plantings

*Sitting at the table, after a while she began to eat, chewing the meatloaf a bite at a time. A trapped animal eating a dead animal. She chewed and swallowed. He was willing to trap her . . . The revulsion toward eating flesh from the night of the meatloaf remained. It was part superstition and part morality: she had escaped to her freedom and did not want to steal the life of other warm-blooded creatures.*

*Small Changes, Marge Piercy*

Recent waves of feminism have made women's distant intimacy and bond with food and vegetarianism part of their political awareness. The 1830's Popular Health movement in the United States called for comfortable clothing, body knowledge, outdoor activities and whole grain foods to improve on societal restrictions suffered by women and affecting their general health. Spiritualists and religious reformers "embraced the feminist cause, and spoke to audiences of the need to eat non-flesh foods." (Adams) Even going back a few hundred years [within the Christian context] one finds that "many medieval nunneries were vegetarian."



(Witches Heal) Suffragists and pacifists as well combined both feminism and vegetarianism. The editor Agnes Ryan of "The Women's Journal" in writing against World War I, connected war with meat-eating and sexism in her articles. The Vegetarian Society of New York included such notables as Margaret Fuller, Louisa May Alcott, Victoria Weedhull, Mary Shelley, and the Grimkes. Even Ottawa, in 1910, boasted a vegetarian restaurant run by suffragists.

Today women continue to link militarism with the factory killings of animals to supply meat for human consumption. One woman writing to a Canadian official about why she will withhold the military portion of her income tax, explains: "I am a vegetarian because I feel that I do not have the right to eat an animal that I could not kill. Are human beings, of whatever background, less important than animals? How can we have peace when we are preparing to kill others to show that killing is wrong?" (Julie A. Campbell R.N.)

Still other women, through cookbooks, re-echo the connections of the medical woman with the local healing plants. Frances Lappe, in the widely used cookbook, *Diet for a Small Planet* declares that "eating in an ecologically sound way means eating locally grown food in season." In the introduction of a feminist vegetarian cookbook, the collective explains what living their feminism means for them: "We are opposed to the exploitation, domination and destruction which come from factory farming and the hunter with the gun." (Bloodroot Collective) Their recipes are structured according to the change of season and locally-available food. Books describing different herbal cures and body strengthening regimes, much like the pioneer familial recipe books, continue to flourish.

Many women authors and poets give cultural expression to the empowering process of renewing connections between themselves and food. Some portray their modern heroines in situations that vividly link the victimization of animals with our oppression as women. Others simply describe the ordinary, but exquisite, pleasure that can be gained from the personal experience of this basic human need.

*The sun is three-quarters, I have become hungry. I head for the garden and prowl through it, then squat, wrapped in my blanket. I eat the green peas out of their shells and the raw yellow beans. I scrape the carrots from the earth with my fingers. There is one late strawberry, I find it among the matted weeds and suckers. Red foods, heart color, they are the best kind, they are sacred; then yellow, the blue; green foods are mized from blue and yellow.* Surfacing, Margaret Atwood



Women and food are inseparable. For one woman poet, food and women's political power are closely bound:

*In her bottled up is a woman peppery as curry, a yam of a woman of butter and brass compounded of acid and sweet like a pineapple, like a handgrenade set to explode, like goldenrod ready to bloom.*

To Be Of Use, Marge Piercy

But as women retrieve and revive our history, they are also regaining a blend of ancient and new skills for incorporating plants in the self-healing process of thawing the winter of patriarchal oppression.



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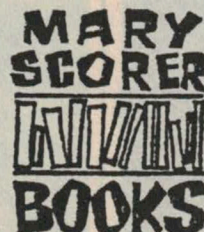
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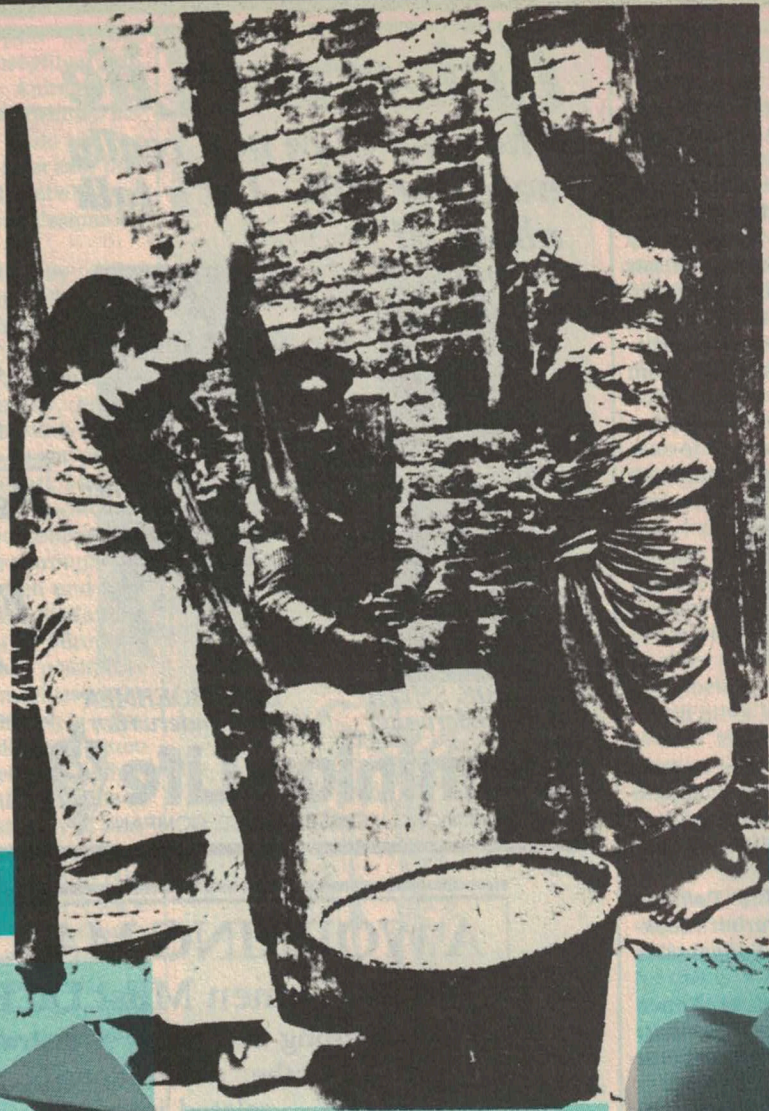
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## The political economy of food.

Until recently, the majority of developing countries had been part of one European colonial system or another—and some still are. What exists today is largely a product of the colonial past. During that era, the European countries reshaped the political, social and economic organisation of their colonies to suit the needs of the "mother country."

For the colonisers, agriculture became a means to extract wealth. Peasants were forced to replace food crops with cash crops. Unfortunately, political independence has not reversed these effects. Too often, power is transferred to a local government elite, trained and supported by the colonial power and sympathetic to the same political and economic objectives.

The introduction of export crops meant the divorce of agriculture from nourishment, as the notion of food value is lost to market value in international trade. Crops such as sugar, tobacco, coffee and tea are grown for profit, instead of feeding.

Following western patterns of male dominance, the colonizers absorb only men into the economy, as producers of cash crops for export, or wage earners on the plantations or in the mines. These men are exploited, but women have to carry additional burdens. As more and more land is put into cash crops, women have less land to grow their families' food, no one to help them produce it, and no independent source of income needed in the new money economy.

According to a UN survey of 83 countries, approximately 3% of all landlords control 80% of the land. The penetration of modern agribusiness into these social systems is riddled with power inequalities, inevitably benefiting only those who already possess land, money, credit "worthiness" or political influence. This is because the new technology of machinery, fertilizers, pesticides and high-yielding seeds, which are supposed to increase food production to help alleviate hunger, are expensive.

As profits rise from higher yields, land values and rents soar. As a result, peasants are not able to keep up, and they lose their land. In Mexico, for instance, the number of landless peasants increased from 1.5 million in 1950 to 14 million in 1980. The options for the many thousands forced from the land are bleak and few. Some migrate from region to region looking for seasonal farm work. Some are drawn to the larger cities and towns, where unemployment is already high.

Global  
Gluttons  
milk the  
Poor.

Norah Richards

The effects of the spread of agribusiness have been much worse for rural women. Men are trained to use the new technology, own the land and have access to credit. Women who work as agricultural labourers or in factories in the cities are paid only one-half to two-thirds of male wages. Since they are desperate, they are forced to accept inhumane working and living conditions and are vulnerable to sexual harassment by their employers.

It is the multinational corporations that benefit from the new agribusiness. In spite of this generation of wealth, the workers are still living in oppressive poverty. Companies like Massey-Ferguson export a large percentage of their machinery to developing countries. Oil and chemical companies export fertilizers, pesticides and the new seeds. Food processing and marketing companies such as Del Monte and Dole make fortunes exporting pineapples, mangoes, bananas, etc. from Latin America, Asia and Africa to the West. Even during their years of drought and famine, soybeans and green beans are exported from the Sahel to Europe.

The bitter reality of the vicious cycle of the international food chain is that hunger exists in the face of plenty. Right now, the earth is producing more than enough to nourish every human being, on a global level and in the very countries we associate with hunger and starvation. The ever-increasing control of the world's food supply by large agribusinesses is creating scarcity and poverty. The majority of people in the developing countries are suffering because of this, but the poorest and hungriest are women.

Women make up half the world's population, do two-thirds the world's work hours, receive 10% of the world's income and own less than 1% of the world's property. Women often bear all the workload

of growing, preparing and cooking the family's food, as well as bearing the children, gathering fuel, collecting the water, tending the domestic animals, and taking the produce to and from the market.

For millions of women in Africa, Asia and Latin America, the working day begins at 4:30 or 5:00 a.m. and ends 16 hours later, because most women have 2 jobs, one in the home and one in agriculture. Yet this involvement does not mean that women control food production. On the contrary, their work has been invisible, because they are engaged in subsistence farming while men are engaged in growing cash crops. It is the men who make up the statistics on agricultural labor and it is their production which figures in a country's Gross National Product.

According to the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation, women are responsible for at least 50% of all food production. In Africa, women do 60 to 80% of all the agricultural work, 50% of all animal husbandry and 100% of the food processing. In the Bukoba Region of Tanzania in the local Haya language, "to marry" literally means "the man gets a hoe".

It is the same story in India, where women do more than half of the subcontinent's agricultural work. A study in Haryana state found that in one family, the workload of the three adult women and one 12-year-old girl totalled 58 hours a day—12 hours doing household chores, 9 hours tending cattle, and 37 hours in agriculture. In a second family, a woman of 75 was putting in a 10-hour day.

Women are the universal water bearers, spending between 1 and 4 hours every day in its collection. Usually women carry it in heavy buckets or jars on their heads or backs. The distance from their homes to the clean water source is crucial to the standards of health and hygiene in their families. Less than 10% of rural Third World women have easy access to a safe water supply.

Preparing food for the family's meals is time consuming, hard labour. In some countries grain has to be sifted, winnowed, spread to dry and then pounded to remove husks or ground into flour before cooking begins. In others, crops like manioc tubers have to be prepared. They must be soaked to remove toxic substances, then dried before pounding. Pounding these tubers into "fu-fu", a kind of porridge, is one of women's most back-breaking tasks.



Eighty percent of all illness in the developing world could be prevented by better nutrition, water supply, sanitation, immunisation and preventative health education—the responsibility for all of which is usually taken by women. But 80% of health budgets are used to cure the illnesses of a minority through the training and equipping of doctors who are usually men.

Nearly two-thirds of the world's illiterate population is female. Boys are seen as potential "earners" and are sent to school while girls are needed in the home to help with the mountain of chores.

Women are involved in all areas of food production: growing food, tending animals, transporting food to the markets and selling it there, the processing of food both in the home and in factories in the cities.

Women agricultural labourers are relegated to labour-intensive tasks like weeding, transplanting and harvesting. These tasks have come to be considered as "women's work" and pay only 40-60 percent of male workers' wages. In the absence of day-care facilities, women must either carry their babies on their backs in the fields or leave them to be cared for by older children or the elderly. Women go from housework to fieldwork, back to housework. Men do virtually none of the many chores necessary for feeding and caring for the family.

Many women take the food they grow themselves to the markets to sell. These markets can be up to 25 kilometers from their home, and it is a rare sight to see a woman with a bicycle or a wheelbarrow to relieve her burden. She carries the food on her head, often with a baby on her back or a small child at her side. Some women cook food they have produced at home and sell it on the street. Some buy the food they sell. Although some women do very well at this trade, for the majority the profits are very small.

The day begins before dawn for these women as they have to make it to the market in the early morning to claim a good spot. When they return home in the late afternoon they start their second workday, caring for husbands and children. Women traders, like all women workers, constantly worry about their younger children. If there are no female relatives or friends to take the children, many women have to lock their children in an emptied out room in their house, praying there will not be a fire.

#### Women and Development Projects

In spite of the last two development decades, poverty among the majority of the world's people is increasing, especially for women. This is evidenced by higher rates of unemployment, infant mortality, illiteracy rates and by lower wages. In

India, the effect on women has been so strong that the number of women per thousand men has been falling continuously during this century. Women are fed poorly, have a higher rate of malnutrition diseases and get less health attention.

Even well meaning, non-governmental organizations have ignored the needs of women in their programs. Development programs that are supposed to give women more economic power tend to



F. BOTTS/FAO

channel women into work that is essentially an extension of their domestic tasks, which cater to a low-paid, and uncertain market. Agricultural extension workers visit only the men with their advice about new tools and fertilizers; training programs in modern technology are for men; intermediate technical innovations for making bricks, better ploughshares, etc. have almost all been directed at lightening male workloads.

Development planners have to respond to the needs articulated by Third World women. Some of these are: inclusion of women in decision making about development projects in all stages, including leadership roles; ensuring up-to-date and appropriate technology and training for women to enhance their economic independence in areas where they traditionally carry the major workload, as well as in new areas of work; equality in ownership of resources, and equal access to credit. Providing literacy, training or jobs to women should always be undertaken with the awareness that child care will be needed.

For far too long, the issue of women's rights has been treated as a problem entirely distinct from economic development, isolated from matters such as overpopulation, unemployment, and hunger. But if women are continually denied equal access to land, jobs, education, new ideas and new technology, development across the board is being held back.

Recently, as development workers in the Third World ponder the issues of women, power and development they are finding that their own agencies at home are built on inequalities for women. Women workers, concentrated in clerical and lower level administrative jobs, or as the

vast majority of unpaid volunteers, are demanding more participation in project selection and program planning. And as they move into decision-making, their awareness of the problems in their own lives leads them to ask more questions about what "development" means to Third World women. Thus they join a growing number of women in the "developed" world who see their lives linked with the women of the Third World and who are prepared to struggle together.

#### Breaking the Oppressive Links in the Chain Finding Solutions

We have to 'unlearn' a lot of our assumptions about the causes of hunger. The first myth to dispel is that hunger is caused by rapid population growth; that people are poor because they have too many children. By having children, poor peasants are fulfilling two absolute survival needs that their socio-economic system fails to provide: the need for sufficient income and the need for security in their old age.

As early as age 10, a child can produce more than he or she consumes. Children can fetch water, carry wood and herd animals in societies where these tasks can take up to 12 hours a day. In the absence of machinery, children are needed to work on the family plot. If a family is landless, its income can depend on the number of children who can be hired out to work. In the absence of government social security plans, when parents get sick or old, their children are their only security. Where infant mortality rates are high, many children are necessary to ensure the survival of some.

But the population "problem" is as much a problem of regulating resources as it is of regulating births. The average person born in the industrialized world will consume and pollute about 30 times as much in his or her lifetime as the average person born in Africa, Asia, or Latin America. This means that the developed world's 16 million babies consume 4 times that of the developing world's 119 million a year.

Family planning programs that claim to alleviate hunger by limiting population growth carry the message that the poor themselves are to blame for their hunger. An improved quality of life, viable income levels and old age security, more secure land tenure, a more reliable food supply and better health care will meet needs that have previously been met only by bearing many children.

Many Third World women also point out that population control programs are promoted most strongly by American and European governments, and their allies among local elites, who fear political unrest among the poor and hungry. This is combined with a racist targeting of peo-



ple of colour for population control, even within the more wealthy countries.

Another link between food and population, as well as a major cause of infant deaths in the developing countries over the last two decades has been the aggressive marketing of baby formula by firms such as Nestles'. To create a market where none seemed to exist, the companies found they could play upon the natural desire of parents to ensure a healthy baby to sell their product. Billboards, newspaper ads, coloured posters in clinics and radio ads equated a happy, healthy baby with a can of Lactogen. In some countries, Nestles' hired nurses to promote their products and gave free samples to hospitals to give new mothers.

But feeding an infant on formula is far too expensive for the vast majority of families in these countries. So mothers stretch the formula with water, making a 4 day can last up to 3 weeks. Formula feeding requires uncontaminated water, sterile conditions and refrigeration, which do not exist for most families. Besides nourishment, breast milk provides immunization from infection, which is especially important in unsanitary conditions. Baby formula, used under these conditions, leads to malnourishment and exposure to bacteria, causing the deaths of thousands of babies.

International campaigns of education, lobbying for marketing regulations and boycotts have been launched to stop the "baby killers" and some concessions have already been won.

#### Women and Development

In some Third World countries which have liberated themselves to form colonialism, a new path to development has been taken. These countries have made the provision of food, clothing, shelter, employment and education the focus of their development.

Many women participated in the liberation struggles in these countries and their full participation on reconstruction is recognized as necessary. Therefore, we see in countries like Cuba, Chia, Mozambique, Nicaragua, Grenada, that women have begun to enter the workforce in large numbers and are being trained for jobs previously exclusive to men. Adequate maternity benefits and day care are being introduced for female workers. The spread of free primary education and health care has been of special benefit to women. New legislation gives women equal political rights and they are encouraged to become politically active.

The 1970's began to recognize the important role women play in food production throughout the world. Development planners now talk of "integrating" women into the development process; a notion that ignores the fact that women already

play a vital role in production—but it is one for which they get little or no wages. Women do not need to be integrated into development, rather the whole socio-economic situation in the developing countries needs to be assessed in terms of meeting the needs of the majority of the population, especially those of the poorest of the poor—women and children.

But these countries are still strongly sexist, a heritage of their colonialism and pre-colonial structures. Though progress has been made, the position of women, as in North America and Europe, is still the bottom level of society. Through various women's organizations, and with the encouragement of the new governments, women continue to struggle for their equality, and for the first time they feel they have a chance to achieve.

*The information for this article was drawn from "Food First" by Frances Moore Lappe and various articles in the "New Internationalist".*



#### Sugar Cane: A Case in Point

As sugar prices rose in the early 1970's, more and more land was used to grow sugar cane in Central America. First to benefit were the larger landowners, but new jobs also opened up in planting, cutting and loading the cane and the average wage tripled.

But as more and more men took jobs in the sugar industry and more and more land was planted with cane, local food production steadily declined. In one year alone, consumption of local food staples maize and rice declined 15% and wheat imports rose 62%.

It is the women who have paid the heaviest price as less and less food is brought into the house. Previously, this food was jointly owned by the family. Its preparation, storage and distribution were the responsibility of women and formed the basis of their social and economic roles. Women stored part of the crop to be eaten before the next harvest and another part they sent to needy relatives as insurance against the time they might need similar help.

The part of the crop which was spoiled women fed to pigs, turkeys, chickens and pigeons. These animals did not only provide food but provided women with an independent income. But as less food becomes available, there is no longer enough food for the animals.

Women have become totally dependent on men, yet the men's incomes have not risen enough to pull them out of poverty. With decreasing food supplies, men are fed first because they are the wage earners, while women and children often go hungry.

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**W**omen who are involved in the primary production of the world's food and fibre work long hours at a multiplicity of tasks; yet their very major contribution to agricultural production is not recognized in terms of economics or control of the land.

As well, farm women's old age security is limited by the devaluation of their years of farm and domestic work, their exclusion from pension plans and the questionable rights to the fruits of their labour upon the demise of their husband or their marriage.

Farm women are rarely paid wages for farm work. Housework is not considered productive labour and is normally waged only as a luxury for those who can afford domestic help. Women's work on farms and in homes does not figure in the GNP nor in the calculations of agricultural production costs. As a result, farm women's work is doubly devalued—both in terms of the home and of the farm.

As has happened before in times of economic crisis, farm women are beginning to organize, analyze and make demands on established farm organizations and governments. In some cases, they are establishing defensive organizations of farm women.

For most of Canada's farm women, (about six percent of the adult female population) lifestyle and economic survival are tied together in the institution known as the family farm. Women's work traditionally, and still commonly, is focussed on the home. Farm homes, however are not only places to live, but also the centre of an independent production unit.

As the conditions of family farm production change, both external and internal relationships are also altered. The declining number of farms and increasing farm size further isolate the farm family, as smaller rural communities lose their cohesiveness. Social, educational and commercial services are concentrated in fewer and larger centres. Bussed to and from school, children are away from home for longer periods of time during the week.

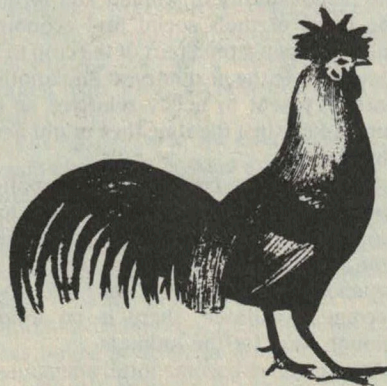
As well, farm women work with and around their men and their men's work to a degree rarely found in an urban setting. They are more likely to be called on to help out—with no reduction in their own work-

# Farm Women cultivate a living.

Liz Willick

load, nor much hope of reciprocation. Weather conditions, breakdowns and the price of grain are not only experienced directly, but also through the reaction of the farm man. When all else fails, he can take a break, cross the yard and find a captive listener in the woman who brings his cup of coffee.

One indicator of the mounting external pressures on the farm family is the fact that in the first seven months of 1982, there were 246 legally declared farm bankruptcies in Canada, an increase of 60 percent over the previous year. A 1980 rural health study indicated that increasing numbers of women may be turning to alcohol and tranquilizers to cope with



stress. Another study is underway in Ontario to investigate rural violence—such as rape, battering, child abuse—which we tend to think of as urban crimes; but which may be increasing, but remain less visible in the country.

Farm mechanization and specialization have increased the productive capacity of farmers. They have also decreased food self-sufficiency of farm families and drastically increased the capital investment in most farm operations. Land prices that bear no relationship to productive capacity and inflationary interest rates mean mortgage and loan payments that are inflexible in the face of normally erratic incomes—not to mention droughts, floods, the grasshopper cycle and the price of cattle.

As if that's not enough to worry about, census statistics indicate that between 1949 and 1979, Farm Cash Receipts in Canada rose by 400 percent—while total Farm Operating Expenses increased by 600 percent: the infamous cost-price squeeze. In the 25 years following 1950, 315,000 Canadian farms disappeared from the census. Behind that simple statistic are hundreds of thousands of men, women and children whose option for farm land was cancelled by forces beyond their control.

Larger farmers cannibalize their small neighbor's operations and are, in turn, preyed upon by agribusiness and transportation corporations and the lending institutions. The shrinking rural community has less and less clout with provincial and federal governments (which tend to prioritize industrial, capital intensive efficiency in agriculture and cheap food for the population at large). Pollution of the water table and depletion of the soil's life-giving elements (for the semi-arid prairies especially) may be portents of long term disaster resulting from short-sighted policies.

## Farm Women Work

Farm women bear and care for the children (and tend to have more of them than the statistical norm). They care for the household, are responsible for cooking and cleaning. Their families are larger, farms tend to have more readily moveable dirt than urban homes, and more daily traffic. On the whole, farm houses have



fewer modern appliances and labour-saving gadgets. A 1975 Saskatchewan rural housing study indicated that 77 percent of respondents did not consider their homes warm enough, almost 20 percent had water supply problems and 45 percent had less than 1,000 square feet of space for an average of 4.9 people.

Most farm women also have responsibility for the vegetable garden, often a large one. Much of their time is spent canning and preserving foods and they use fewer 'convenience foods'. They also tend to produce more of the family's clothing and household articles than most women.

Farm women share a certain heritage with their urban sisters. They both live with sexist attitudes, institutions and laws all their lives. But farm women often lack the supports that are available to city women—day care, birth control counselling, crisis centres, women's groups, alternative life style choices—not to mention recreation, education and entertainment opportunities.

Young women in rural areas have few non-traditional role models. From observation of small town prairie life, they appear to marry and have children younger than the statistical average. If they don't marry very soon after high school, they head for the city—for university, skills training or in search of a job.

Young, single farm men tend to end their formal education earlier and are less likely to leave their home area. It's the sons and not the daughters who grow up with the expectation that they will be the next generation of farmers. It's interesting that 71 percent of the farm women in the NFU survey come from farm backgrounds; and that 68 percent of them list farming as the main occupation of their fathers, but only 17 percent did so for their mothers.

In 1924, an American study showed that farm women averaged 52 hours a week at household tasks. While most farm homes have the major labour saving devices, a Council for Rural Development Canada (CRDC) Study done in 1977 showed that rural women not employed at wage labour were still putting in 54.7 hours per week at housework.

Women also play an integral and vital role within the agricultural production of the family farm system. Using the most

recently available figures, those of the NFU's survey of the economic role of women on family farms, the accompanying table will give some idea of the most frequently reported farm tasks of women.

**Farm Tasks Performed by Women**  
(Figures represent percentage of respondents who report doing specified farm tasks regularly or occasionally.)

Task	regularly	occasionally	Total
Perform farm errands	61%	36%	97%
Maintain farm books and records	64	22	86
Drive truck as farm work	28	54	82
Care for farm animals	27	38	65
Harvest crops with machinery	21	35	56
Supervise farm work of other family members	18	38	56
Perform milking chores	18	12	30
Deal with sales people re: farm purchases	15	35	50
Field work without machinery	8	32	40
Plowing, disking, cultivating, planting	9	29	38
Deal with consumers re: farm products	9	23	32
Deal with buyers re: farm products	8	22	30

From: *Employment Practises of Farm Women*; by Susan Koski for the National Farmers Union. pp. 32-33.

These figures represent the percentage of respondents (202) in the survey who do these tasks relative to the total survey. This can be misleading. For example, only 18 percent of the women surveyed do regular

milking—but 54 percent of the women surveyed reported that milking is not done on their farms. In other words, on farms which have milk animals, women regularly do milking chores on about a quarter of them. (Similarly, 32 percent never deal directly with consumers or do field work without machinery and 25 percent have no animals to care for.)

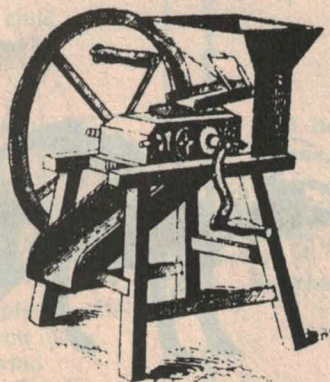
The CRDC study reported that 92.4 percent of farm women are actively involved in the farm operation. Averaging out the normal seasonal variations in farm work, the NFU finds that women who do not work off-farm perform 30 hours of farm work per week. For those working full-time the average drops to 11 hours.

In addition to the workload inside and outside the farmhouse, many women have joined the waged labour force. In 1979, almost 28 percent of rural women surveyed had paid jobs and a further 30 percent would have liked wage work.

The NFU report indicated that 31 percent of the farm women surveyed worked off of the farm, 11 percent of them full time. Over 80 percent of them work at professional, service and clerical jobs. Their spouses also worked off farm in much the same proportion—31 percent with nine percent full time.) Despite the similarity in employment patterns between farm men and women, the men's wage income accounts for almost twice as much of the off-farm earnings as the women's (61 vs 34 percent).

Overall, 45 percent of the farm families reported off farm work, accounting for just over a quarter of their total income. Two thirds of the women reported that at least three quarters of that total family income is re-invested in the farm. Over half said they worked to provide household necessities, support the farm operation and/or maintain or improve the family's standard of living. In most cases, women's pay cheques subsidize the farm. They do not necessarily mean economic independence or a greater role in farm decision-making.

In addition to their double and sometimes triple workload, farm women also do volunteer work—ranging from 29 hours per week for on-farm women to 17 for those with full time jobs. The CRDC study, which examined this question more





closely, found that volunteer involvement tended to be in social and religious groups much more often than in organizations which focus on political or economic development within the rural community.

Overall, farm women do over 85 percent of household tasks and over 16 percent of farm tasks, according to the NFU study. Their husbands average just under 7 percent of the household work and over 65 percent of farm work. The men did 6.17 percent of the housework when the women were home and 11.58 when the women worked full time. The remainder is done by children and hired help.

In spite of it all, for many farm families, living on the land is where they want to be. Looking again at the NFU survey, 90 percent of the women said they were completely or generally satisfied with the tasks they performed on the farm. About 73 percent were satisfied with their household labour. Eighty-eight percent were satisfied with their role in the decision-making concerning the home, 76 percent with decision-making on the day to day running of the farm and 70 percent with their role in farm purchase decisions. Fully 83 percent were fully or generally satisfied with their overall lifestyle.

The women also indicated areas with which they were generally or totally unsatisfied. At the top of the time-for-a change list, claiming 65 percent of the respondents, was the "recognition received from society for your work contribution in terms of such things as pension benefits, legal protection and government assistance". Forty-two percent of the women did not feel that they would be able to maintain their present standard of living on the farm. Fifty-three percent were dissatisfied with the opportunities available to improve their standard of living.

Most of the women did not answer questions on adequacy of compensation for farm accidents and availability of day care. Of those to whom the questions applied however, dissatisfaction about compensation was slightly higher. On the question of availability of day care, 28 percent considered rural services in their area inadequate as compared to only six percent who were satisfied with day care availability. Fully 47 percent indicated

concern over occupation hazards on the farm, citing problems ranging from back and hearing disabilities to increasing allergies and chemical-related problems.

The CRDC's "Rural Women's Study—Their Work, Their Needs and Their Role in Rural Development" does an admirable job of summing up many of the issues and problems facing rural women, on the farm and off.

"... it should be clear that many (rural women) would like to be involved in work within (their) communities. However, because they live in low-employment areas or have small children to look after, or because they have regular duties in the family enterprise; their access to the labour force is curtailed. In other words, rural communities are frequently structured in such a way that the limited occupational opportunities, the lack of support structure (day care, transportation, etc.) and the preponderance of traditional attitudes, combine to frustrate the desire of rural women to be gainfully employed in jobs of their choice.

"It has also been demonstrated that the majority of women who are interested in taking further education (40 percent) are not currently doing so. These women report that the chief obstacles limiting their involvement in further study are house and child care and physical distance from learning centres ...

"... it was pointed out that rural communities fail to meet the needs of rural women in a number of ways. It should also be apparent that these communities

are themselves being short changed—to the extent that women are uninvolved in the development process. It is thought to be in the best interests of the community and undoubtedly of benefit to individual women that concrete steps be taken to identify, improve and utilize their talents in this process ...

"... If women are to play a greater role in the rural development process, they not only need to be familiarized with the kinds of roles open to them, but changes must be made which increase the amount of free time they have at their disposal. For this reason, the installation of child care centres and the provision of local transportation should be high among the priorities of all concerned women's groups. ..."

Rural women are beginning to move out of their rural isolation to organize on their own hook for recognition, for legal rights, for a say in the future of a way of life that seems to be slipping away from them. If rural women are to become an active part of the incredible diversity that is women's movement toward equality, solid and concrete support in large doses will be needed—among ourselves, from active women whose lives are based in the cities, and most particularly from their families.

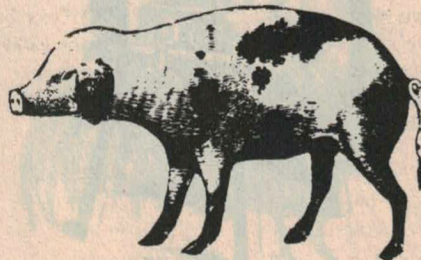


Much of the information in this article is from three resources: "Rural Women's Study—Their Work, Their Needs and Their Role in Rural Development". Council on Rural Development Canada, 1979. The survey sample included 908 rural women, of whom 36.2 percent were farm women. All provinces were represented. The CRDC was a victim of federal budget cuts, but its files are at the Univ. of Guelph, Ont.

"The Employment Practices of Farm Women" by Susan Koski for the National Farmers Union, 1982. The survey included 202 farm women, all NFU members. There were no participants from Quebec or Newfoundland and less than ten from B.C. and N.S.

"Women and Agricultural Production" Resources for Feminist Research Vol. II #1, 1982. Appears quarterly. Theme issues with articles, abstracts, bibliographies. Interdisciplinary and international Available from the Dept of Sociology, OISE, 252 Bloor W., Toronto.

Liz Willick is a prairie farm woman and an active member of the National Farmers' Union. She has extensive experience as the rural development worker for the South Saskatchewan Centre for World Development and as a journalist.





I have heard two versions of the origins of Mother's Day both of which were anything but sentimental. One is that it started during the Franco-Prussian wars and the women agitated to end the useless continuance and killing. The second was that it started during the American civil war as women again attempted to get the men to declare peace.

In any case, women have a proud heritage of agitation in the "Peace Field", seeking to make peace a true and viable state in our civilizations, not just "a lack of war".

Women, Women  
 Standing strong  
 Today is Mother's day.  
 Thru the years  
 you've stood for Peace  
 Stand for Hope today

Little Johnny goes to war  
 and sweetie stays at home  
 And sweetie works in factories  
 And cuts the wheat  
 and keeps the home

Woman, woman  
 you are meek  
 but you live your life so well.  
 You don't know it  
 cause no one's said it  
 but now it's show and tell

We all want liberty and life  
 and lives of all our men  
 If steps aren't taken very soon  
 . . . devastation wins

Women, Women,  
 everywhere  
 today we celebrate  
 thru the years  
 you've stood for peace  
 stand for hope today  
 . . . for the human race

peace . . .

lynn mckee

pray it's not a woman child  
 for they feast themselves  
 on our daughters

They tell us what we should be  
 they tell us what we're not  
 they tell us what they want  
 but they'll never say the truth  
 for they know nothing of the truth  
 only their wants

they'll cut you up into pieces  
 and then they'll blow you away  
 and like paper in the wind  
 you'll never find rest again

you'll try to hide inside yourself  
 but you're so afraid  
 you can't find yourself  
 and the emptiness inside  
 is like a never ending pain

Ruby R. Reske-Naurocki

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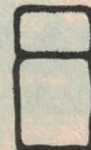
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## Indian Life

uprooted. Then thanks was given to the Creator. Prayers and nutrition were closely related.

Prayer had always instilled spiritual strength to the Indian people and there is now a new surge of returning to prayer. Contrary to what Prime Minister Trudeau believes, the Indian leaders in the televised Constitutional Conference were not grandstanding when the Indian leaders rose to pray at the First Ministers' Conference. It was a demonstrably childish tactic for the prime minister to become annoyed and employ his own prayer solely as a retaliatory measure. Many non-Indian people might have been appalled at his attitude, but it is sadly indicative of how the greater number of Canadians feel, and it's one that has been prevalent ever since the coming of Europeans.

A primitive lifestyle? There was acknowledgement and worship of the Great Spirit. There were prayers from the rising of the sun, to the setting of the sun and in between. There was life-giving nutrition from the land. The people were hardy, rugged and HEALTHY in a physical, mental and spiritual sense.

Then came the great disruption that spread throughout the Indian lands. Indian people soon found themselves a minority in their own lands. Their lifestyles (primitive and historically propagated as such) changed and soon Indians found themselves branded (like so much cattle) by treaty numbers and confined to very small plots of land.

With the wholesale slaughter of the buffalo, their diets changed. Forced to give up their nomadic ways of searching for foods, the Indian peoples were reduced to accept whatever the Canadian governments gave. From the early 1700's up to early 1900, there were frequent periods of widespread starvation and illness. The first germ-warfare waged was on Canadian soil when large numbers of native peoples died from foreign germ infestations with the advent of European settlers. Entire villages were decimated, the people having no immunological defenses to resist these infections.

In 1980, statistics on health conditions of Status Indians under the Wardship of the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, approved by John Munro, then Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs, were presented to the public a comprehensive study-report, entitled 'Indian Conditions—A Survey'. The majority of the Indians social problems are alcohol-related, and in conjunction with

## B.C. Oracle

**B**efore the coming of Europeans, the Indian people—men, women and children—daily exercised their bodies as they traveled, hunted and worked at obtaining their food. It was a hard but vigorous life, especially for the women. It is often referred to, even to this present day, as a primitive lifestyle. But was it primitive to tie spiritual ceremonies with the taking of food offered by Mother Earth?

To the Indian people, all animal and plant life had a spiritual counterpart. And before game was taken or plants were used, the hunter or harvester talked to that spirit beforehand, carefully explaining the reason it was to be killed, moved or





## Nurturing a Native Culture

this is malnutrition. Incredibly, in this modern age, in this very country, starvation by the Indian people is still going on!

Where health problems did not relate directly to alcohol, where then did the responsibility lay? Lack of running water and sewage disposal is still a major problem with Manitoba reservation housing. Of those who do have running water, there is a danger of unsafe water supplies. "A larger proportion of post-neo-natal mortality (deaths from one month to 1 year) in the Indian population is attributed to respiratory ailments and infections or parasitic diseases, reflecting poor housing, lack of sewage disposal and portable water, as well as poorer access to medical facilities. Many people still have to be flown to Winnipeg for medical treatment."

"There is increasing evidence and awareness of environmental damage, pollution and disruption of Indian ways of life by industrial activities and recent major resource projects." It is well-known that the entire population of the Whitedog Indian Reserve has been suffering from mercury poisoning as a result of contamination of its fish resources. It was well-known for a long time, but no one pushed for the rectification of this deplorable situation. Recently, when attempts were made by the federal and provincial governments to settle these wrongs, opposition was strenuously voiced because possible settlements were not self-serving to the surrounding communities, the very communities who had contributed their share to poisoning the aboriginal peoples of the White Dog reserve.

While the mortality rate of infants can be attributed to non-alcoholic reasons, there is recognized a high Fetal Alcohol Syndrome rate among Indian women. Malnutrition also produces childbirth complications. The high rate of violence and death are directly related to the Indians' present diet of alcohol as a food and acquired social norm. In addition, deaths by motor vehicle accidents, by firearms, by drowning, by poisoning, overdose and by suicides is statistically high in the Indian population.

The major causes of Indian deaths and illnesses appear to be associated with poor housing and living conditions and a rural lifestyle. This is quite a statement coming from Indian Affairs.

First of all, they are directly responsible for Status Indians living on reservations. Therefore it follows that they are responsible to a significant degree for the poor

housing and living conditions. And to blame their rural lifestyle? Should we construe this to mean that all Indian people should abandon their reserves and move en masse into the cities? Or does it mean that the Indian people would fare better if they took shelter where the best food and health care are afforded to them—the penal institutions? "The healthiest off-reserve Indians in B.C. were those living in prisons!" according to the report, **Indian Conditions: A Survey**.

Indian leaders are working harder than ever to bring changes to their lifestyle today. So far they have never been given a real chance to do so. They've been given funding, but the terms have always been dictated by Indian Affairs. As long as changes for the better do not take place, the report '**Indian Conditions—A Survey**' will never need to change. Indian Affairs can give the Indian people the money it took to make this kind of study, reprint this report inserting the new years, and send it out again and again.

With the nomadic hunting ways gone forever, the land claim base is one by where the present-day Indian people could put greater effort into traditional food production, while incorporating modern technology. Development and administration of education in many areas are handled by Indian Councils. Combining modern medicine and traditional medical practices to the extent of using native healers should be enforced by the Indian people. It should be noted that many of the medicines used today are as a result of prior research done by the native healers, who were in fact pharmacists and doctors.

The restoration to Indian women of their rights to remain Indian all their lives should restore to them a better self-image. Indian organizations are moving to self-determination and there is an improved self-image in general for all Indian peoples. Some tribal councils have already begun to establish independent economic bases or they are turning to wealthier reserves for their funding instead of the usual route via Indian Affairs. The greatest hope lies with the children.

The national population is more aware and supportive of Indian culture. Still, it is up to the Indian to turn away from alcohol and direct themselves to spiritual and bodily nutrition and this comes through education and support through appropriate programs geared to this end. It does not come with stereotyping, finger-pointing or indifferences from the larger segment of society. ▼

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# Shopping Hungry for a Change

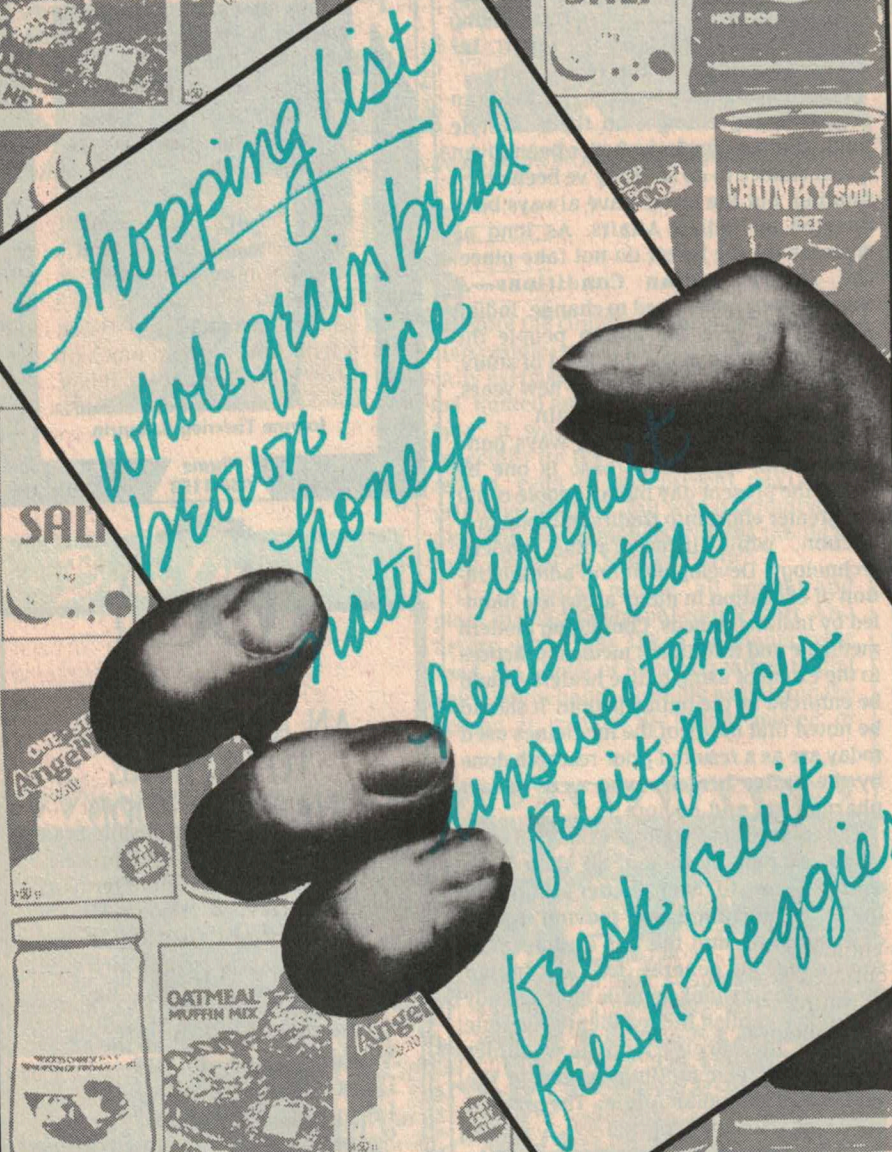
Before I tell you what some people have chosen as alternatives to shopping in the big supermarkets and how they have changed their eating habits, I invite you to come with me on a quick tour of a supermarket. A supermarket can be much more than a place of consumption. It can be a classroom where we can explore the complex food problems that face us today.

We are all victims of the food crisis. As workers we have had our wages frozen; as consumers we pay more for less; as primary producers we have been forced to give up our land; and people in the Third World continue to suffer from malnutrition, poverty, and exploitation in the hands of agribusiness multinationals. It is becoming more difficult everyday to meet a basic human need—that of adequate nourishment.

*Nancy Martens*

On this tour I hope to dispell the "blame the victim" mentality by bringing your attention to the structure and control of food production and distribution in Canada and the world. Through this, you will see that the problems we as consumers, workers, farmers and third world people experience around food are inter-related.

Over the past few decades, our food system has gone through some drastic changes that do not satisfy the needs of people. A basic understanding of these changes indicates that people have lost control over the food they eat. Food production has been centralized in what is



Shopping list  
 whole grain bread  
 brown rice  
 honey  
 natural yogurt  
 herbal teas  
 unsweetened  
 fruit juices  
 fresh fruit  
 fresh veggies



known as the agribusiness company. Or in the more familiar slogan, food is being produced for profit not for people.

There are four major food chains—Dominion, Safeway, Weston, and Steinbergs—which control over 75% of the supermarket chains in Canada.

They spend millions of dollars on advertising to try to convince us that supermarkets are in great competition with each other. This just isn't so. When a few companies dominate an industry, they no longer compete with each other on the basis of price or quality. But they do compete in areas such as advertising, promotion, cost reductions (not price reductions), automation, search for cheaper labour and materials, government deals, etc. Consumers don't benefit in an oligopoly market, but end up footing the bill.

As we enter the store we should be warned to view it as a hostile environment. From the instant we arrive we are being manipulated. The store layout is designed so that we will have maximum exposure to items in the store. The more we are exposed to them the more we will buy.

Much research has been done to determine ways consumers can be encouraged to buy more higher profit items. As an example, since the greatest traffic flow is around the outside aisles, store managers are told to "locate the high profit departments around the periphery of the store" (according to *Food Merchandising: Principles and Practices*, a trade text for the food industry). The supermarket is designed to encourage us to buy as much as possible, especially on impulse in the high profit margin areas.

Quite often in these large supermarkets, one of the first things we pass may be the plant section. The mark up on these items is much higher than the mark up on food. Plants are an "impulse" item and set the desired purchasing mood. It is especially important to set the mood for impulse shopping as quickly as possible when one considers the fact that between 50% and 70% of purchases within a supermarket are impulsive in nature, according to *The Supermarket Four: A Handbook for Education and Action*, published by the Ontario Public Interest Research Group.

Produce items are often bought on impulse and since they are perishable the store wants to move them as quickly as possible. As a shopper, it doesn't make sense to select produce first and then continue through the store filling my cart by putting other items on top of my fresh vegies and fruits. But, of course, this makes "cents" for the company. "Produce is an impulse department, it starts the buying habit."

While we are in the produce section, you may notice excess packaging which serves

no purpose to the consumer. Buying two green peppers on cardboard and wrapped in cellophane when I only want one isn't to my benefit. But from the store's perspective, it prevents picking over of the best quality items, it reduces the amount of in-store labour (wages), and it encourages us to buy more than we need.

I must also mention an important myth about food production that revolves around third world countries and the notion that there are just too many people to feed from the available land. To counter this, I suggest that a more probable reason is that third world countries are locked into producing crops for export rather than for domestic consumption.

In Central America as much as 50% of the best crop land is used to grow food for export while as much as 70% of the children are malnourished. The Bajio Valley in Mexico once was used to grow food for the Mexican people. But companies such as Del Monte, Campbell, and General Foods now control the valley which is used to grow sweet corn, peas, and asparagus—none of which is promi-

«Food  
is being  
produced  
for profit  
not for  
people»

nent in the Mexican diet. The land is concentrated into large landholdings which are controlled by a very small percentage of the landowners. Peasants are no longer self-sufficient since being forced off the land and migrating to urban centres where they are unemployed or can't earn enough to live on.

Importing food from other countries isn't good for Canada. Instead of producing our own products here, many are being imported. This means that Canadian plants that once processed Canadian food are operating at a lower capacity, which in turn forces small companies out of business. It also affects farmers whose products no longer have a market, and workers who either become underem-

ployed or unemployed. Yes, importing to Canada and exporting from developing countries are two sides of the same coin.

Have you ever noticed the "Muzak" in the supermarkets? Have you ever wondered why it is different at various times of the day? Don't be fooled—it's not played for our enjoyment. It is programmed according to "Stimulus Progression" charts. During the slower periods, the Muzak is usually peaceful which encourages us to relax and to slow down, thus increasing our chances of buying on impulse. But at busy times the Muzak is quite fast, to get us to move through the store as quickly as possible. The president of Muzak has said that if a complaint is made about a particular piece it will be erased from the tape. The Muzak is designed to work on our subconscious—we're not supposed to like or dislike it—just react to it.

Another way consumers are manipulated is the purchasing of non-food items. Sure it's a lot more convenient to buy everything we need or want in one shop. But the general merchandise and non-food items in food stores have a much greater profit margin than food items. It has been estimated the non-food items comprise between 12% to 15% of a family's weekly food bill.

Continuing on through the store we come to maple syrup. This is a perfect example of paying more for less. Over the years the 'natural' content of food products has declined while the prices have risen. To earn a larger profit, food corporations can do two things, raise prices or cut back on costly ingredients, or both. The process of substituting artificial ingredients for natural ones is what modern food technology is all about.

One way many shoppers try to keep their food bills down is to buy the retailer's own brand name items. The use of store brands is one of the first steps on the process of vertical integration. In simple terms this means the big companies control most of the food-processing steps. Retailers are buying out the processing companies, thereby selling to themselves and compounding their profits. Sure, the store brands are a bit cheaper than the nationally advertised competitors, but they return a greater profit to the retailer. This trend has great significance to supermarkets. If it continues, supermarkets will soon be stocking only the nationally advertised products and its own. This will lead to greater and greater economic power accruing to fewer and fewer companies. In short, it will reduce consumer choice, wipe out small companies, increase unemployment and increase the cost of food.

Enough has been said about supermarkets to paint the picture of why many



people have chosen alternatives to shopping in these stores. What alternatives exist in Winnipeg? There are several food cooperatives and a food collective in the city. As collectives and cooperatives they share two basic ideas—that of their buying power and philosophy.

Many people join food collectives or cooperative because they provide their members with some much sought after control over the foods they eat. How is this done? Many food collectives and cooperatives purchase food that is locally grown whenever possible, and by purchasing food which has a minimum of additives and extra packaging. All collectives and cooperatives do not believe that food must be natural and unprocessed, so before you decide to join a food collective or cooperative, first visit the store to see whether it will provide you with the type of food you want to eat.

Although some food cooperatives and collectives function differently from the traditional supermarkets, the products they carry may vary little. They will carry canned foods and frozen foods that are similar to supermarket items but in a cooperative or collective you probably won't find lots of extra packaging, advertising, and high mark-ups.

Depending on how a collective or cooperative is structured, you may find yourself in a very different situation when you purchase your food. Some collectives and cooperatives are buying clubs. This means that on a regular basis you will give your food order to a particular person who will then compile all the orders taken and buy the food for the entire group. When it has arrived, those people who placed orders will be notified and a time will be set as to when everyone will meet to divide up the orders. Buying food like this can really save you money. Many people who live and work in northern Manitoba who want food with less processing and fewer additives buy in bulk like this and keep their food bills down. Many people who buy their food like this are also people who either eat very little meat or are vegetarians. Thus, the foods that are bought in this manner are often whole grains, legumes, nuts and flours.

Some collectives or cooperatives may be what is known as a direct charge co-op. This means the costs are kept to a minimum by eliminating waste and frills. The expenses are shared between a very low margin and a direct charge in the form of a weekly fee paid by members. Members of this type of collective or cooperative probably are shareholders of the business. Buying shares may interest you since the total fee for the charges can appear large. Usually you can purchase the required number of shares over a period of time, making it easier to become

a member.

Another option to joining a food collective or cooperative is becoming involved in the actual operation of the store. After paying a set membership fee, you are required to work so many hours a month for the collective or cooperative. This requirement varies according to the needs of the organization. My experience has been in this kind of a food collective or cooperative. The work commitments were not only beneficial to the collective or co-op but challenging to me. I find personal satisfaction in working with other people to get the kinds of food I want. I found joining a collective upon arriving in Winnipeg an excellent way to meet people who shared a similar philosophy. Becoming involved with a food collective or co-op is a great way to get economical, high quality food, and being with other people who share like ideas can be very rewarding. These organizations don't have to just include ideas about food or food issues but often incorporate all kinds of community and world issues.

An important goal of many food collectives or co-ops is educating the members about the foods they eat. Seminars and workshops are often planned around the interests of the members. If you have never been in a food collective or co-op that caters to providing natural whole foods, you will probably be overwhelmed by your visit to the store. Many of the foods will be new and you will wonder how to prepare the foods and what their nutritional qualities are. Don't be afraid to ask questions. The people in the store most likely were in your position at one time. Most people are quite willing to share their ideas on nutrition.

If you have been reading or hearing about living a more healthy life the material probably mentioned changing your eating habits. This is not an easy task. Nor should it be done with little thought. If you decide to cut down on your consumption of meat, investigate new ways to meet your protein needs. A food collective or co-op is an excellent place for gaining this new information and providing you with support as you change your eating habits.

Two of the items I found most helpful in changing my eating habits are the "Beginner's Checklist for Changing to a Natural Foods Kitchen" and "A Practical Approach to Changing Your Diet."

Changing my diet and kitchen was a long gradual process. It probably took me at least a year to finally arrive at what is considered a natural foods kitchen. I must admit that I am not dogmatic about my diet, it feels right for me, I'm comfortable with it and feel great even though I still use some products that fall under the category for the standard kitchen. I don't

feel my diet has to be all or nothing.

The next time you decide to have some friends over for dinner try a meatless meal . . . I found the following menu to be a tremendous success with my meat-eating friends and family. One of the reasons it works is probably because the food can be easily identified according to the standard idea of meals . . . meat, potato, vegetable, salad, etc. The menu is as follows: nut loaf with a mushroom sauce, baked potatoes, vegetable salad and dessert.



### Nut Loaf (serves 6)

1 3/4 cup whole wheat bread crumbs  
1 cup chopped nuts, (almonds, cashews, pecans)  
1 cup grated cheddar cheese  
3/4 cup milk  
a few grains of cayenne  
1 teaspoon marjoram  
1/2 cup onions (finely chopped and lightly saute'd)  
2 tablespoons parsley  
1 egg beaten  
Mix together all ingredients in a bowl. Pack into a greased loaf pan or greased muffin tins. Bake at 325° oven for about 35 minutes.



### Mushroom Sauce (2 cups)

Saute in 2 tablespoons of butter 1/4 pound sliced mushrooms. Remove mushrooms from pan and rub the pan with a garlic. Melt 2 tablespoons of butter and add 2 tablespoons of flour. Stir until well blended. Add one cup of vegetable broth with seasonings according to your taste. Cook until bubbly and slightly thickened. Add mushrooms and serve.



There are numerous natural foods and vegetarian cookbooks on the market. I would suggest that you consider the amount of resource material in a new cookbook with regards to vegetarian meal planning if this is the path you want to take. Ask people who have cooked this way for some time what their favorite cookbooks are.

While talking with people about alternatives to healthier eating, I realized there is much interest in holistic health care and herbalism in Winnipeg. Although this is new to me, I quickly learned about two organizations that could provide vital information regarding herbalism and holistic health care.

Last fall the Manitoba Consultant Herbalists Association was incorporated and



approved by the government. People with a degree or diploma from a herbal college are eligible to join and become licensed to practice herbalism. Yvonne Desrosiers at 257-5599 has more information.

Consumers Health Organization of Manitoba (CHOM) is dedicated to encouraging a holistic and preventative approach to health care for everyone. Incorporated in this is good nutrition, exercise, and improvements in lifestyle. CHOM is having their 14th Annual "Help Yourself to Health" Convention on May 6 and 7 at the University of Manitoba University Centre Building. For more information about this conference phone 832-0943.

Hippocrates told his medical students that "Thy food shall be thy remedy." The therapeutic use of herbs preceeds recorded history, yet this science receives little attention today. Herbs are used as nutritional substances since they provide minerals necessary for absorption of vitamins and other nutrients in the body.

Remember from history class the lesson about how men and boys went out hunting while women and children gathered berries, roots, wild fruits, etc.? Well, the women also gathered a lot of information about herbs and healing, which eventually was passed from generation to generation of women. Long ago, women had domain over natural healing, home remedies and midwifery. But somewhere in the development of society, men ended up getting the educations while women stayed home. As men became doctors, women were forbidden to participate in healing and attending births. Women gradually lost touch with natural health care and started going to male doctors for help. Thank goodness this trend is changing. There are alternatives to conventional health care. One of those is the use of herbs. *Hygieia A Woman's Herbal* by Jeanine Parvati covers the entire spectrum of women's health and the use of herbs.

*Nancy Martens has a bachelor of science degree in home economics and family environment and is an active member of the peace and co-operative movements. Nancy is currently working as a self-employed clothing designer.*

**Beginner's List for Changing To a Natural Foods Kitchen**

Standard Kitchen	Natural Foods Kitchen:
White flour for baking	Whole wheat flour, graham, rye, soy, buckwheat, or corn flour, corn meal, etc.

White bread	Whole grain breads without sugar or chemicals (preferably homemade)
White rice	Brown rice
Refined sugar (white, brown, etc.)	Honey, molasses, sorghum, maple syrup, barley, malt
Sugar-coated cereals or high in sugar content	Granola made with honey, unsweetened familia, or cooked whole grain cereals (not "quick cereals")
White flour noodles	Whole wheat, soy, spinach, artichoke, and sesame noodles
Peanut butter with sugar and preservatives	Natural peanut butter with nothing but peanuts, and maybe a little salt
Commercial shortenings and oils	Unhydrogenated, unrefined oils
Milk, homogenized and pasteurized	Raw milk from cows and goats
Supermarket (factory) eggs	Fertile eggs (free-running hens),
processed cheeses, cheese snacks and spreads	natural cheese without preservatives, preferably raw milk cheese
Supermarket meat	Meat organically grown, fresh-water fish, organically grown poultry
Commercial yogurt made with sugar and additives	Homemade yogurt or a quality brand that is totally natural
Coffee (regular and instant), teas such as "Lipton", Chinese teas	Coffee substitutes, such as "Cafix" and "Pero", herb teas such as peppermint, hibiscus, or chamomile
Soda, including low calorie types, and fruit drinks	Spring, well, or distilled water, unsweetened fruit juices
Fruits packed in sugar syrup	Fresh fruit (organic and in season if possible), fruits packed in own juice
Refined, iodized salt	Sea salt
Dried fruits packed with sulfur	Sun-dried fruits without chemicals
Canned vegetables with salt	Fresh organic vegetables, sprouts
Jello	Unflavored gelatin, agar agar

**A Practical Approach to Changing Your Diet**

Prepared by the Cotton Top Co-operative

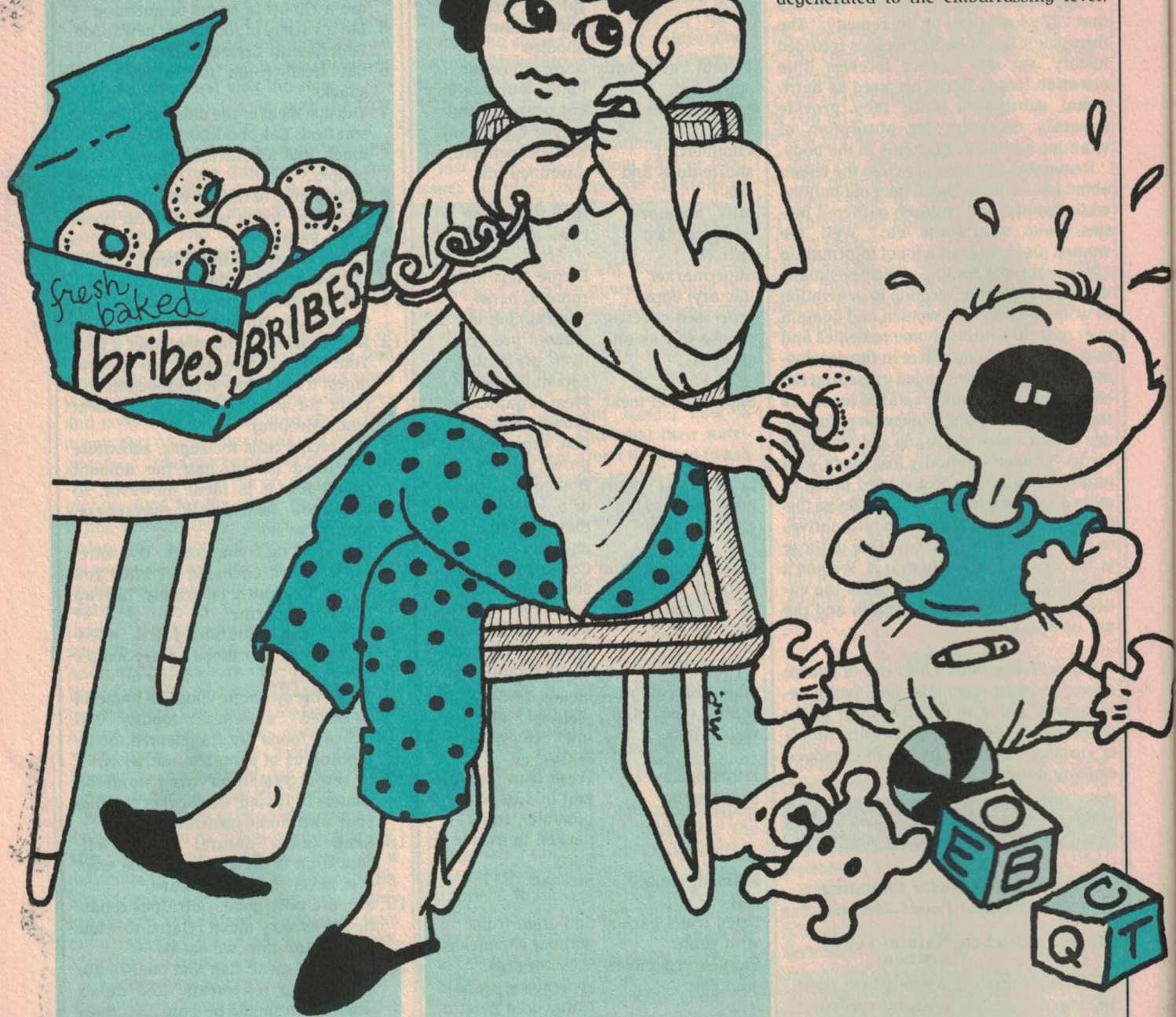
1. Read labels. Avoid additives, including sugar, salt, food colouring, artificial flavouring, preservatives.
2. Select and purchase only high quality, nutritious, natural, organic foods.
3. Wash and peel produce if unable to buy organic produce. Even this will not eliminate all of the harmful chemical sprays and poisons.
4. Prepare your foods from scratch. Bake your own. Prepared convenience foods are a rip-off in terms of nutrition.
5. Eat a variety of foods. Try new foods. Experiment. Create your own.
6. Eat fresh fruits for desserts and snacks.
7. The last meal of the day should be the smallest. Eat breakfast like a queen, lunch like a princess, dinner like a pauper.
8. Take plenty of time to eat. Eat slowly and chew foods very well. Sit down while eating.
9. Eat in a happy atmosphere.
10. Eat fresh foods whenever possible.
11. Eat raw fruits and vegetables daily. Cooking destroys nutrients.
12. Refrain from eating meat after 2 p.m. Your body has to work too hard to digest it after that. It is especially difficult for your body to digest meat while sleeping.
13. If a recipe calls for sugar, substitute unrefined honey, half the amount called for. It is ideal, however, to eliminate nearly all sweeteners, natural or not.
14. Cut down on frying foods. Use unrefined, unhydrogenated oil when you do fry. Use butter (sparingly) instead of oleomargarine.
15. Avoid all imitation foods (oleomargarine, processed cheese, coffee creamer).
16. Avoid the synthetic vitamins found in so-called "enriched" foods. "Enriched" foods are fragmented foods, robbing us of complete nutrients.
17. Be resourceful in surviving Manitoba winters by drying, freezing, or canning your own home-grown foods.
18. Read about natural foods. Self-education is the necessary first step. It is never too late to learn.
19. Prepare only good, nutritious foods. Health is very much related to what we eat and how we eat it.
20. If you eat meat, fish and poultry are better than red meats. Red meats when eaten should be lean. And, most meat purchased commercially contains chemicals, and medications, including poultry and fish. Beware. ▼





# food

When I was pregnant with my first child, I made the decision that now was the time to change my eating habits. I began removing processed foods, canned drinks and most reluctantly, refined sugar from my diet. By the time my baby was born, I could boast of a "politically correct" diet—but something has since gone wrong in my master plan to better health through eating. I must confess that I've now degenerated to the embarrassing level.





## As a Babysitter

where I use corn syrup on a soother to quiet a crying infant, dill pickles to soothe the pains of teething and yes—refined sugar in any of its wonderous forms as the great panacea. I've discovered when at the end of my rope—food makes a wonderful babysitter.

**7:00 a.m.** It's Saturday morning and in the distance I hear three pairs of feet scurry down the stairs. Usually this same sound evokes groans from my spouse and I, but not this morning. We were careful planners and left a box of crackers and pound of butter on the coffee table, knowing full well this simple act will buy us at least another hour of blissful sleep. I roll over and try not to think about the crumbs that will be left behind.

Saturday mornings weren't always like this. There was a time, two children ago, when we would hop out of bed and rush downstairs to prepare a wholesome breakfast of freshly squeezed orange juice, fried potatoes and scrambled eggs. Instead of watching cartoons, we all got dressed and went to the zoo. Now the rationale is why bother squeezing oranges for juice when your two year old does it so well by herself and why drive all the way to the zoo when you can have all the same sounds and smells right in your own living room?

**8:30 a.m.** I dream I am being suffocated by a tribe of pygmies, but wake up to discover that it is only my son sitting on my head. "Up Mommy, I'm hungry," he says, spitting crumbs all over my face. "Hungry? . . . how can you be hungry, you just ate half a box of crackers," I reply. My six year old joins in to say, "I'm bored, get up you guys!" "Can't you play with your brother and sister for a while?" my husband asks. "No," she replies, "I'm tired of playing with small stinky people, I want to play with big people!" We all laugh and roll out of bed not knowing what horror awaits us downstairs.

**12:00 noon** The crumbs have been vacuumed, apple peels picked up and spilled orange juice wiped up off the table and floor. We are now ready to make lunch. Feeling guilty about the crackers, I decide to make a nutritionally correct lunch. My husband passes out delicious tomato, cheese, and alfalfa sprout sandwiches. "Why is there hair in my sandwich?" asks the six year old. "It's not hair, these are alfalfa sprouts and they are very good for you," I reply. "It feels like hair, I don't like it," she continues. "It's good to try all different kinds of food; it makes you a healthier person," my husband says. "I don't want to be a healthier person if I

have to eat hair," she argues.

Frustrated with the situation, I break another dietary rule and say, "If you don't eat your sandwich, you will not get your chocolate pudding." She stuffs the sprouts in her mouth and I reward eating food with more food and spoon out glorious globs of chocolate pudding.

**2:00 p.m.** The two year old is tucked away for her nap and the oldest two are playing. My husband and I exchange knowing romantic glances and he says to the children, "Mommy and Daddy are tired; we are going for a nap now; please don't bother us." We'd saved doughnuts for this occasion, since doughnuts provide the greatest babysitting potential next to potato chips and jelly beans. The children attack the doughnuts and we scurry up the stairs in anticipation of semi-spontaneous lovemaking.

**5:30 p.m.** We've decided to treat ourselves and take the whole family out to dinner—this is, of course, a contradiction of terms, but we are eternal optimists and drive to the proverbial family restaurant. We order drinks immediately. The drinks allow us and the rest of the patrons 15 minutes of quiet conversation. The children become impatient while waiting for their dinners and we contemplate giving them those tiny little packs of refined sugar, but reject the idea immediately, embarrassed that we could have thought of such a good/immoral idea. At last our dinner arrives and the oldest children rush for the ketchup bottle. My husband takes the bottle and pours the ketchup on the plate beside the French fries, rather than on top of the fries, so that the children will have to dip them, which takes longer. (Every minute counts.) Halfway through the meal, we order fresh fruit which we are convinced will counter any ill effects the cheeseburger and greasy fries might have on the children's stomachs and our consciousness.

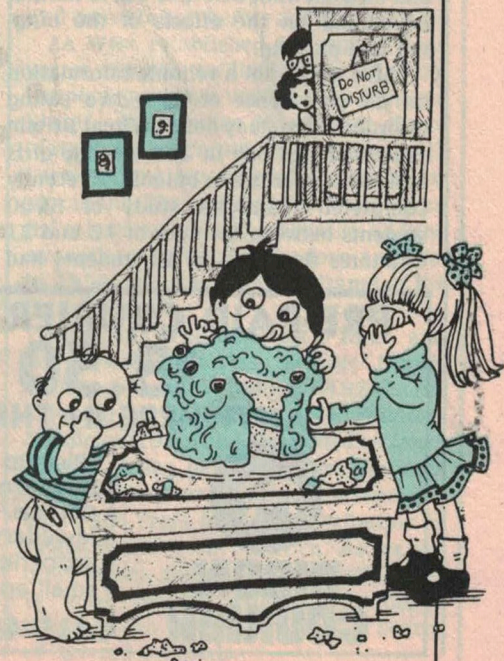
**8:00** Bed time at last! The children plead to stay up for another minute and we give in. I tell them they can have a glass of milk and a cookie and then they must go to bed without a fight—they agree. As soon as they've finished, they are bargaining for another minute, but this time we are firm. We tell them that if they go to bed immediately, we'll take them out to McDonald's for breakfast tomorrow. They dash up the stairs and into their beds.

I stretch out on the couch and breath in the smell of freshly popped popcorn wafting from the kitchen . . . my reward for a busy day.▼



ILLUSTRATIONS BY MARNE PASTUCK

## Flora Fedora





## health

## Anorexia Nervosa and Bulimia

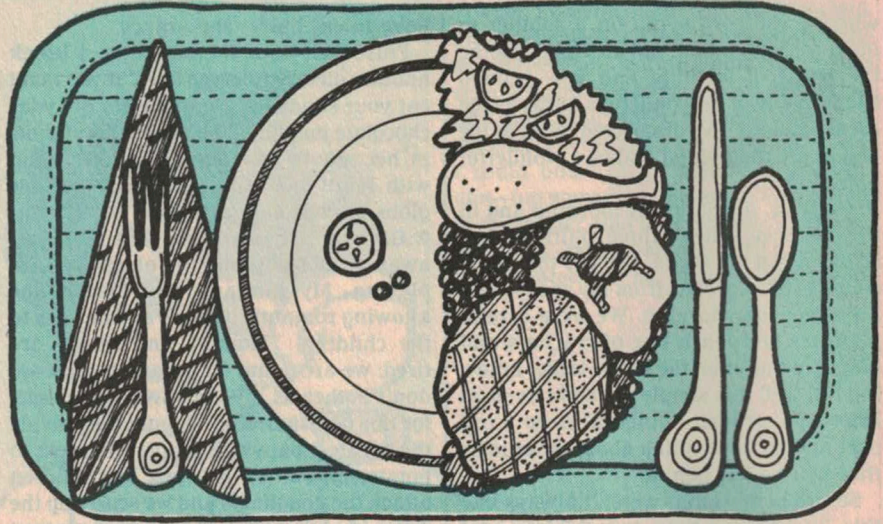
It is ironic that in our affluent society, some people starve themselves out of apparent choice. Others adopt a style of binge eating, in which they eat excessively large amounts of food and experience great guilt and remorse afterwards. These people may vomit after they eat or abuse their bodies by habitually taking large amounts of laxatives. Ninety-five percent of these people are women.

Anorexia Nervosa is characterized by an intense fear of becoming obese regardless of the person's weight. This fear is accompanied by marked weight loss and a distortion of body image i.e. the person sees herself as larger than she really is. There is a refusal to maintain a normal weight.

Bulimia in turn is characterized by recurrent episodes of binge eating. The binge eating is generally done alone and the food is high calorie and easily ingested. There may be weight fluctuations of 10 pounds or more due to alternating bingeing and fasting and there are repeated attempts to lose weight by severely restrictive diets, self-induced vomiting, and laxatives or diuretics. The individual is aware that her eating pattern is abnormal and fears not being able to stop eating voluntarily. Following a binge the person generally feels guilty and critical of herself.

A person can have anorexia with bulimia or can have anorexia followed by bulimia. The person who has bulimia is generally of normal weight but can be somewhat below or above normal depending on the effects of the bingeing and purging.

There isn't a lot of reliable information on the prevalence of these two eating disorders. One study done in Great Britain estimated that one in 200 teenage girls had either anorexia or bulimia. A recently completed Manitoba study of 5000 students between the ages of 12 and 21 estimates that 14% of all students had



## The Deadly Obsession.

unusual or extreme concerns about eating and weight. Twenty-two percent of females had unusual concerns and 4% of males. Four percent of all females and 1% of males surveyed had unusual or extreme concerns and were the lower 25th percentile for their weight and height. People working in the area report the incidence is increasing. Traditionally, anorexia and bulimia have been thought of as a middle and upper class illness of teenagers, models, and dancers but this is not the case. It can affect women from adolescence to post menopause. It is not uncommon to find anorexia in women over 30 and it is common to see bulimia in women in their 20's and 30's. Although there is a greater incidence in areas such as dance and modeling, women who have

sought treatment at the Health Sciences Centre have represented a wide variety of ages, life styles, and backgrounds.

Due in part to the increasing incidence of these two disorders and the lack of sufficient treatment facilities in Manitoba, the Anorexia Nervosa and Bulimia Foundation of Manitoba has recently been formed at 697 McDermot Ave., Room 445 (787-3063). At this time its goals are to work towards better treatment, support for families, public education and fundraising. ▼

*Daryl Johnston, R.N.*

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• BONDED PERSONNEL



## REVIEWS

## Mama Quilla II: Vintage Vinyl Rocks at Parties

Toronto-based feminist band Mama Quilla II's debut vinyl release is a must for record buyers looking for punchy music and intelligent lyrics.

Formed four years ago, the band has proven its merit as an important band on the Toronto music scene.

The band's lyrics clearly express they are not in the mood to provide senseless drivel to the apathetic masses. Toronto airplay of their three-song, 12 inch E.P. is an indication that Mama Quilla II is giving the discriminative listening audience what they want to hear.

*Women chained to kitchen, kids and church*

*to cater to the Master Race*

*Boys scouts trained to kill*

*Klan enemies like Reds and gays*

*Bigots are not hidden by their sheets*

*They're hidden by complacency*

*Till they wipe us off the streets*

*in the name of 'decency'.*

from the song "KKK"

Susan Sturman

The politically lyrical statements of the band are strongly backed by a combination of what the band calls "upbeat rock/funk/blues/reggae/latin rhythms."

Ruth Markham



In a telephone conversation with Nancy Pole, Manager and Sound Technician for Mama Quilla II, Nancy said, "the musical aim of the band was to combine non-sexist lyrics with extremely danceable music,"—a feat the band definitely accomplished.

The band went through a number of changes in the last four years but remained an all female band until the recording of **Mama Quilla II**, on which Billy Bryan, the drummer, is the lone male. "Billy added a latin slant to the music and a strong sense of percussion," says Nancy.

Jacqui Snedker's strong bass playing and the guitar riffs of Susan Sturman and Lorraine Segato add further impact to their music. The band is completed by the rhythmic saxophone-playing of Linda Robitaille and the keyboards of Lauri Conger.

The vocals of Lorraine Segato demand attention and she angrily belts out the band's statements.

The band has unfortunately dispersed for the time being and all are presently working on individual projects. The only member currently touring is Lauri Conger who is doing a western tour with Heather Bishop.

If, for no other reason, pick up the album for its priceless cover.

**Mama Quilla II** (the E.P.) is available at Liberation Books, 160 Spence Street, Winnipeg.

### TRIBUTE TO A FOREMOTHER:

Rebecca West, feminist writer, died March 15th of this year at the age of 91. She was born Cicily Isabel Fairfield in 1892 to a London family; her mother a Scot pianist and her father an Irish journalist. She was the youngest of three daughters. Throughout her long life she was acclaimed for her incisive feminist critique of sexual convention and injustice. By fourteen she had published a letter to the editor, passionately demanding the vote for women. At the start of her writing career she assumed the pen-name: Rebecca West, the name of a strong-willed woman character in Isben's social drama, *Rosmersholm*, in which, at the age of sixteen, she had once performed on the London stage. By 1912, Rebecca West had become famous for her columns of social and literary criticism in the feminist journals, *Freewoman*, *The New Freewoman* and in the socialist weekly, *The Clarion*.

Her first novel, *The Return of the Soldier* (1918), an anti-war novel, used a psychological study of shellshock amnesia to contrast the deathly order of war and the society of the English upper class with



the nurturing power of a middle-aged woman of the lower classes. Before her second novel was published in 1922, Rebecca West had traveled extensively throughout Spain and Great Britain, participating in dock strikes, marching in suffrage demonstrations and writing for large circulation newspapers in Europe and North America.

The novel, *The Judge* (1922) brought Rebecca West critical acclaim and the notoriety of artistic scandal. She had dared to portray an unwed mother as the major focus of a literary work of art. Some critics found the novel revolting. She describes with care and understanding, a woman who loves her illegitimate son far more than the child of a legally defined marriage. Still, other critics were impressed by the novel's power and sense of social in-

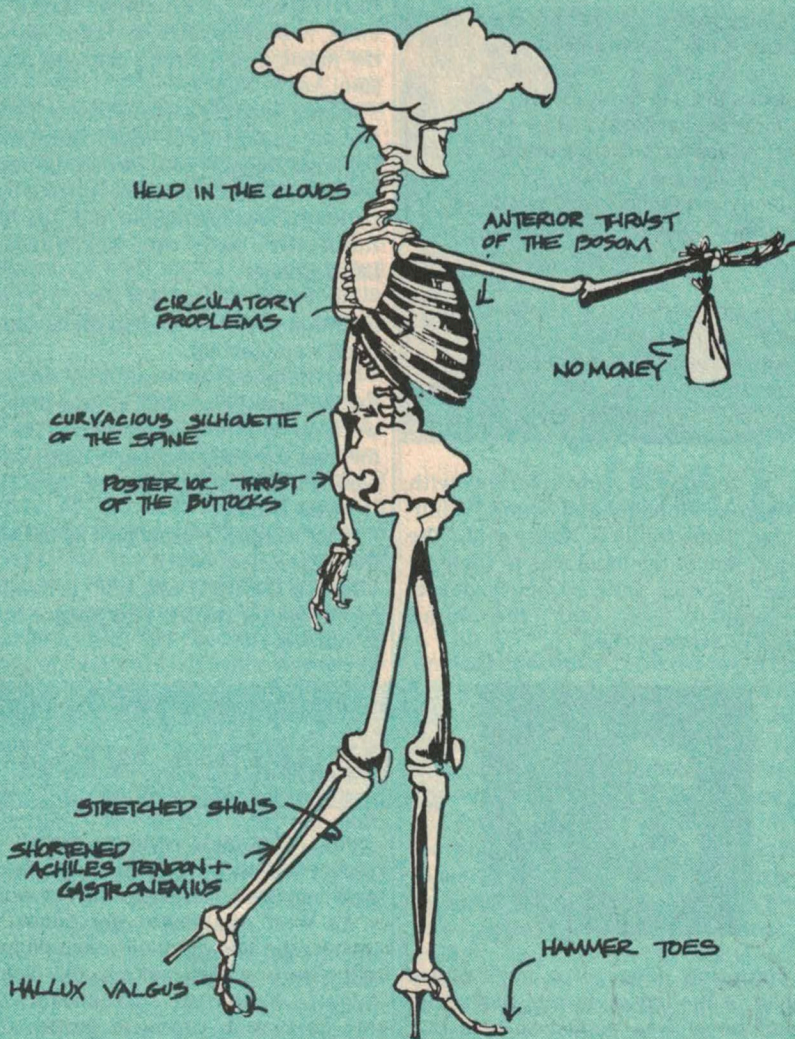
### REBECCA WEST

justice. One male reviewer stated, "She (Rebecca West) puts the male into the dock and convicts him before a jury of women.

As West established her power as a writer, she was credited along with contemporary women writers, like Virginia Woolf, Katherine Mansfield, Rose Macaulay and Dorothy Richardson, with "showing the way to men" in literary explorations. She continued to write about the injustice of sexual inequality and the strengths in struggling for love and life. In 1959, she was named a Dame of the British Empire.

Some of Rebecca West's later and better known novels include: *Harriet Hume: A London Fantasy* (1929), *The Thinking Reed* (1936); *The Fountain Overflows* (1956) and *The Birds Fall Down* (1966). In the past two years, Rebecca West's earliest novels have been reprinted by Virago Press for wide distribution in England and North America. As for her other novels, they remain accessible only to those readers willing to scrounge libraries and used book stores in search of tattered originals.





*fashion*

**Foot fashions shackle females.**

*Lynn Suderman*

The history of shoes across cultures and centuries is a fascinating reflection of the human perception of beauty and how it has literally enslaved women. Shoe fashions portray the attitudes of a particular social system to women and men and their actual, or imposed sex differences.

The Chinese customs of foot-binding, the chopines of the late 1500's in England and the modern day high heel are all extremes in shoe fashions that have rendered women slightly or completely physically weakened. (Needless to say, it has never been fashionable for men to cripple themselves to a point of absolute dependency.)

There is a strong correlation between social attitudes and footwear, particularly women's footwear. The less relaxed and liberal a society becomes the more likely women's footwear becomes restrictive. Before footbinding was incorporated in Chinese culture, and before it appeared, women enjoyed a relatively high position in the social structure. Art and literature of the T'ang dynasty show women of the court involved in athletic activities such as horseback riding and ball kicking. Not only were the women healthy physically, they were encouraged to learn to read and write. Courtesans of the courts wrote extensive amounts of poetry on the enjoyments of physical love. If a woman was widowed or divorced, she did not remain single, she remarried, often two or three times. Women were not subjugated physically or mentally by either the social system, or their husbands and lovers. In fact, the footwear employed by the upper class women, as portrayed by art, closely resembled the shoes used by the upper class men; sensible and comfortable.

By the twelfth century, women with natural feet were considered to be both lewd and an object of ridicule. The predominant male opinion in the Sung dynasty, which followed the T'ang dynasty, was "a woman of virtue should be a conventional lady of little talent", according to Howard S. Levy in *Chinese Foot-binding*. So not only were women crippled with three or four inch feet, they could no longer learn to read or write. Advocates of the lotus foot believed that women should be kept dependent on their families and husbands. Not being able to read or write kept women from being relatively free thinkers, and bound feet kept them in the home.

Footbinding was simply an indication of social status. The wealthier and higher



class women had feet bound so tight that they were incapable of walking. Lower class women, while they did have the lotus foot, were able to walk with the support of a cane. The extremely small foot of three or less inches proved that the woman was purely a decorative object. She was not needed to perform menial tasks or useful tasks and had to be supported by her husband or owner. "Binding was as highly regarded for the proper woman as learning was for the cultivated man, and conservative families transmitted the saying: if you care for a son, you don't go easy on his studies; if you care for a daughter, you don't go easy on the footbinding."

Movements to outlaw footbinding appeared almost as early as the custom itself, but it wasn't until the beginning of the 20th century that Chinese officials were able to abolish it completely. Like its beginnings, women of the higher classes were the first to bring about the change. If the bones in their feet were not broken, they slowly loosened the bindings until they achieved almost normal foot-size.

In England, heeled shoes for men and women first appeared as a fashion during the reign of Queen Elizabeth (1558-1603). For so long, shoes had been heelless, so the wearers were unaccustomed to the relatively low heels of 1" or 1½". Often people had to have their legs treated or bandaged because their legs were so painful.

High heels never developed to any extreme for men, but the lifts on women's shoes were taken to ridiculous heights. These shoes were called chopines, and never had the extensive influence in England that they did in Venice, where they originated, but they were fashionable for about forty years. Initially, clogs or pattens had been used by the lower class to raise the wearer off the dirt streets. Women of the upper class also adopted this idea, and often took it to heights of 24". The lift part of the shoe was elaborately adorned with silk, brocade or kid leather, with jewels and embroidery in a design on the fabric and the slipper at the top would also have lavish embroidery on it. Sometimes, an artist would be commissioned to paint scenes on the lift.

Because of the absurd height of chopines, the woman wearing them had to be accompanied on either side by a servant, so she could place her hands on their heads for balance.

"They (chopines) restricted a woman in her walking, which was impossible without the assistance of a servant, or even two, and this in itself was a status symbol; they rendered her stance unstable and therefore added to the men's feelings of superiority." *Footwear*, by Iris Brooke.



Thus, the beauty of chopines to western men was much like the Chinese men's attitude to the lotus foot. The inability to function as an autonomous being gave the women a subordinate position.

Chopines were neither comfortable nor practical for a woman who needed to work, so they became an obvious indication of wealth and prestige. Only an upper-class man could afford to have servants whose job was just to help a woman walk. They also showed that the woman was completely dependent on her husband, and was not needed to earn money to survive. This attitude is much like the upper-class Chinese who would bind the woman's feet until she was crippled if they didn't need her to work.

Chopines were the first real attempt in western society to add height by using heels. They were a relatively short-lived fashion, but their influence can still be seen today in shoes such as clogs or wedges. The most interesting aspect of chopines was the contradictory opinions about them; they were a status symbol yet they were ridiculed. This phenomenon repeats itself with the modern high heel; women are mocked and satirized if they are clumsy in their shoes. Both women and men laugh when they hear of someone who "fell off her heels", yet high heels are considered to be far more attractive and sophisticated than flat or low heels.

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Shoes dated as early as the mid-1600's were similar to the modern high heel, but its real ancestor is the court shoe of the early 1900's. As the court shoe developed into sling-backs and pumps, they became the dominant dress-shoe for women. Flat shoes made only rare appearances in high

fashion, and usually only as an alternative to the higher heel.

Heelless shoes seem to be the dominant fashion for women only when women were very active, politically and socially, such as the 1920's, or during a very practical era, such as World War II. Whenever women become conscious of their subservient position in the social structure and make strides towards equality, they seem to take on more comfortable footwear. During the 1950's when a woman was expected to get married and have children, the pump, the scissor-point and the winkle-picker became high fashion. These shoes had a very dainty, small heel and a toe point that extended as much as three inches beyond the toe. During the mid and late 1960's, women again became more active in the social structure, and high, thin heels became obsolete as flat shoes and boots made their appearance.

With all shoe fashions, there is a socially accepted reason for a particular style, as well as an often unconscious motive to continue it. Like the high heel, footbinding was considered to be attractive, but it could only be incorporated in the culture with the suppression of women. When strong opposition to bound feet arose, women earned the right to have more social freedom, as well as natural feet. If a modern woman accepts the male-dominated fashion industry's insistence that the high heel is stylish and comfortable, they accept the attitude that women should attract men by adopting uncomfortable clothing and shoes, use make-up, hair spray and other devices that reflect modern standards of beauty. High heels are just a part of the total look a woman is supposed to have to gain male attention. It is not a natural beauty, rather it is a false and ridiculous adherence to a conception of a frail woman, who cannot even stand comfortably. Not only do high heels help women achieve the 'leggy' look, it makes them defenseless. Women are not able to have a confident stride while balancing on two thin points, nor are they able to adequately protect themselves in a dangerous situation.

Style and sophistication are important to a woman who wishes to have a career, but she shouldn't have to accept uncomfortable and often dangerous footwear to achieve her goals. More importantly, a woman should not feel she must dress for success and give up freedom of movement. After all, men wear flat shoes.

In comparison to the Chinese custom of footbinding and the Elizabethan fashion of chopines, modern women are allowed much more freedom in choosing footwear, but they have still not gained enough respect to wear shoes as comfortable as their male counterparts.



# NOTIONS AND POTIONS

## PMS: Periodic Discomfort

There are a multitude of women who suffer from a condition that doctors and other medical professionals are beginning to recognize and refer to as PMS—Pre-Menstrual Syndrome.

Studies being carried out in scientific and medical communities show that the possible cause of this condition is an abnormal drop in the level of progesterone prior to the woman's period. The drop in the level of progesterone is so drastic in these women that it can be compared to drug withdrawal.

The symptoms of this illness are many, ranging from physical discomforts such as sore and tender breasts, headaches, backaches, low blood sugar, bloating, allergies and general weakness, to psychological conditions: depression, anxiety, paranoia, crying spells, extreme behaviour and thinking patterns, inability to relax or concentrate, to suicidal thoughts or actions.

Having suffered these symptoms, the immune system becomes weakened so a woman may have to contend with a cold, the flu, or a vaginal infection as well.

It has been generally believed that women who suffer from PMS do not usually have dysmenorrhea. However, some women do experience painful cramping during actual blood flow. The severity of the premenstrual syndrome symptoms varies. Approximately one half of women exhibit mild symptoms but only a very small percentage experience a severe form of PMS. Even fewer women experience all of the symptoms.

The timing of PMS generally follows a pattern. There are a few stressful hours or days at ovulation (ovulation usually is the 15th day from the first day of blood flow). The individual may then be symptom-free until 4 or 5 days before her period, or may continue to experience symptoms until

**Phyllis Dzikowski and  
Marilyn Wolovick**

menstruation begins. Some women experience relief from PMS symptoms when blood flow starts; for others, symptoms continue until the end of the period. The severity of symptoms varies each month. Many women seem to experience a "bomber" every few months when symptoms become more intense and last longer: there is no relief in that month.

Women with a tendency towards alcoholism are particularly susceptible to drinking bouts during times of stress brought on by PMS. Some women suffer from toxicity. As women approach the menopausal age, symptoms increase but seem to disappear about two years after menopause. Pregnancy for some is a wonderful, symptom-free period.

The normal part of the PMS woman's life reassures her that life can be good. A symptom-free week follows menstruation. In that week, not only is she usually symptom-free but often feels marvelous. She may become very active during this week because she feels she must make up for lost time. She is also painfully aware that the symptoms will re-occur in the near future.

During her symptom-free time, she may want to forget her negative experiences and convince herself that her symptoms were purely imaginary. However, it is important for her to face the reality of her situation, using this time to consider positive ways of coping with PMS.

Some women have undergone hysterectomies, having been told it would help. However, this is not the case. Birth control and fertility pills appear to worsen PMS. To date, doctors have had a difficult time in attempting to treat PMS and are

baffled as to how to help. Consequently, tranquilizers are often prescribed.

There are self-help approaches that have been identified and are recommended by women who are afflicted with PMS:

- \* Keep a daily chart of your emotional and psychological symptoms on a calendar. You will begin to see a monthly pattern develop. Include a record of any treatments you may try. Use your chart to gain a positive understanding of your own body rhythms. Learn to trust your own perceptions.

- \* Improve diet—eat more fruits and vegetables; use whole wheat flour (not white) products; eliminate sugar and caffeine as much as possible.

- \* Eat five small meals a day rather than three large meals; do not go for long periods without food.

- \* Stop smoking.

- \* Limit liquid intake.

- \* Maintain a protein and calcium enriched diet to increase energy and reduce menstrual cramps.

- \* Exercise and fresh air are important: have fun and enjoy life!

- \* Try natural progesterone (this must be under a doctor's guidance); synthetic progesterone is not recommended.

- \* Try natural diuretics (such as herbal teas) instead of prescribed diuretic pills.

- \* Try a vitamin program tailored to your own particular needs. You must be prepared to do a fair amount of research and reading to determine what vitamins could be effective for you. Vitamins often used are B6, B complex, magnesium, calcium, efamol, trace minerals, pantothenic acid, ovary and pituitary concentrate, plus a digestive acid.

- \* Educate your friends and relatives about what's happening to you. Doing this will relieve a lot of pressure as families and friends learn to give support and understanding.

- \* Join a self-help group; meet with others with PMS who can provide support during your stressful time.

- \* Try to find what will help you: there are many new articles and publications being released on PMS regularly. Read them; they may pinpoint something that will alleviate your symptoms.

There is a need for a strong organization to assist women who experience the premenstrual syndrome. The Women's Health Clinic is offering assistance in the formation of a self-help support group.

Anyone who would like more detailed information, or would like to join a self-help group, please contact the Women's Health Clinic at 947-1517.

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# BREADWINNING

## Starting Your Own Business

Even in today's tough economic times, there is still room for the entrepreneurial spirit. The small business operators have contributed both economically and socially to their communities. In order to ensure that the contribution continues, today's small business should be well-managed and based on a firm foundation.

If you have decided to embark on a business venture of your own, there are a number of factors to be considered. As in any successful endeavour, proper planning is a must before proceeding.

### Viability of the Business

Before forging full steam ahead, a feasibility study is necessary to determine if the business is viable. Whether this is done on a formal or informal basis, the key components in a study will still be the same. These may be summarized as follows:

**Demand**—No matter how wonderful you believe your product or service to be, if no one is willing to purchase it, your business is doomed from the start. Therefore, it is necessary for you to determine if there is a need for what you are offering and if so, whether it is being satisfied by someone else. Your potential customers should be identified and quantified, and if possible, surveyed to find out their exact wants and the price they would be willing to pay to satisfy them.

**Market Analysis**—In order to be able to select the optimum location, pricing policy and other marketing methods for your business, it is essential to analyze your potential customers and competitors in great depth. For example, answers should be obtained to the following questions: where do your potential customers live, what is their income range, what are their buying habits, where are your competitors located, how does their product compare to yours, what share of the market do they cover, how large is that market, is the market stable, and so on.

**Projected Profit or Loss**—To enable you to ascertain whether or not your business will provide you with a satisfying livelihood over the long run, it is essential that you estimate your future revenues and expenses to determine if the result is an overall projected profit or loss. These estimates should be based on the data you arrived at in your market analysis.

**Start-Up Costs**—Virtually, all business ventures require an initial investment of capital to "start-up" operations. It is therefore necessary for you to determine whether you have the financial resources available, either through savings or borrowings, to sustain you during this period.

**Paula Gardner, C.A.  
Arthur Andersen & Co.**

If the results of your feasibility study are positive, and you have given yourself the green light to proceed, the next point for consideration is the form of ownership your business should take.

### Form of Ownership

There are three basic forms of ownership available to the small business; sole proprietorship, partnership, and corporation. Each one has various implications for financing, management, administration and taxation. The form you select should be the one which best suits your particular needs.

The following is a discussion of the general characteristics of each of these forms:

**Sole Proprietorship**—As the name dictates, this is a business owned and operated by one person. It is the easiest and least costly form of business to establish and administer, as outside of the general legal principles governing persons, property and obligations, there are no other legal requirements with which to comply.

On the downside though, since the law does not distinguish between personal and business assets, the proprietor has unlimited liability. This means that should the business fail, personal assets such as houses and cars may be seized to cover any business debts.

For income tax purposes, the proprietor and business are also considered as one. Consequently, this eliminates the need to file additional income tax returns. However, whether or not this yields an optimum tax result is dependent upon the individual's other sources of income. For example, in the earlier years of a business, losses may result. Should the individual have other sources of income as well, these losses may be offset against the income, thereby reducing the overall tax burden.

**Partnership**—For those who wish to pool their resources and carry on a business with two or more persons, a partnership may be used. It is similar to a sole proprietorship in that the concept of unlimited liability exists. In a general partnership, all partners are personally liable for all of the partnership's obligations. In a limited partnership, this risk may be reduced somewhat as a limited partner is liable only to the extent of equity invested. However, the limited partner may not actively participate in the business. (It should be noted that in a limited partnership,

there must be at least one general partner who retains personal liability for all debts.)

A partnership is somewhat more complex to establish than a proprietorship. A partnership agreement should be drawn up to cover such matters as business purpose, capital contributions, profit sharing, rights of management, and procedures for terminating the partnership. In addition to drafting this agreement, the partnership must also register with the provincial government.

The partnership's income is taxed as part of each partner's personal income. Except for somewhat more complex rules of calculating income, the tax implications of a partnership are generally the same as those of a proprietorship.

**Corporation**—A corporation is a legal entity apart from its owners. It has two significant characteristics which distinguish it from the other forms of ownership; limited liability and the existence of a separate taxable entity.

With limited liability, the creditors of a company may only look to the assets of that company for settlement of any unpaid debts. Therefore, the owner's personal assets are not at risk. However, it should be pointed out that often times in financing arrangements involving a small business this advantage soon disappears, since the lender virtually always requires the owner's personal guarantee.

Certain tax advantages may exist under this form of ownership. A corporation may be subject to reduced rates of tax on specific types of income. In addition, a corporation may also provide flexibility for tax planning. However, as most businesses incur losses in the initial stages, the corporate structure may actually be more of a disadvantage.

As illustrated previously, where a proprietor or partner sustains a loss, it may be offset against any other sources of income. However, if a corporation incurred a loss, it may only be offset against the corporation's profits. Consequently, in the first few years when profits are lean or non-existent, it may be best to use an unincorporated ownership structure, and postpone incorporation to a later date.

As an additional point to note, the corporate form of ownership is typically the most costly to register and to administer on an ongoing basis. In addition to the initial incorporation documents, there are certain annual filing requirements which may require you to employ the services of an accountant and lawyer.

This is the first in a series \*



# CONSUMER WISE

## Food Additives Subtract from Health

A 1979-1980 opinion survey conducted by Health and Welfare Canada entitled *Food Additives What Do You Think?* indicated an ever-increasing consumer concern about what goes into the food they eat. Some of the significant findings of the consumer opinion survey indicate that:

- \* 87% of the respondents were concerned about the possible health effects of eating additives
- \* 60% want additive-free food enough to say they are willing to pay more for it.
- \* 76% said they made an effort to eat food containing less additives
- \* 69% did not agree food colours were justifiable as a food additive
- \* 70% believe that food additives do not improve the quality of food
- \* 91% expressed a desire for more information on food additives and many thought labelling of additives was less than adequate.

### Susan Morton

In the survey, 67% indicated that magazines and newspapers were the main sources of information with 46% indicating T.V./radio as the sources. These sources however have often been found to be incomplete and misrepresent information. The concerns of consumers are based on reality as many past experiences with food additives have shown.

With the results of the survey as a backdrop and information about various additives to follow including two important case studies, a few of the concepts and controversies which surround the subject of food additives can be examined.

The general definition of a food additive, which is thought to be any substance added to a food in the course of production, processing, packaging or storing, differs from the legal definition set by the

Canadian Food and Drug Regulations which states: "any substance including any source of radiation, the use of which results, or may reasonably be expected to result in it or its by-products becoming a part of or affecting the characteristic of a food". Salt, sugar and starch along with vitamins, mineral nutrients, amino acids, spices, seasonings, flavourings, agricultural chemicals, food packaging materials and veterinary drugs are included. The Canadian Food and Drug Regulations as set out by the Canadian government differ from those defined by the U.S. FDA. This is an important point to remember when reading information about food additives.

In an attempt to help consumers read labels and understand what additives are in food and why, the following table helps to summarize some common food additives.

### SOME COMMON FOOD ADDITIVES

CLASS	FUNCTION	SOME EXAMPLES OF SPECIFIC ADDITIVES	FOODS IN WHICH THESE ADDITIVES ARE USED
ANTICAKING AGENTS BLEACHING AND MATURING AGENTS	keeps powders free-running hasten the natural process of whitening and maturing of wheat flour	magnesium carbonate chlorine	icing sugar flour
CARRIER OR EXTRACTION SOLVENTS	used to dissolve flavours, colours and spices	ethyl alcohol	vanilla extract
COLOURS (natural and synthetic)	give food an appetizing appearance	carotene	butter, cheese
FOAMING OR WHIPPING AGENTS	enable pressure-packed products to be dispensed in a whipped state	nitrogen	dessert toppings
FIRMING AND CRISPING AGENTS	maintain the texture of fruits and vegetables	calcium chloride	canned vegetables
FOOD ENZYMES	act as catalysts to initiate desired chemical reactions	rennet	curdling milk in the making of cheese
HUMECTANTS	maintain desired moisture levels	sorbitol	shredded coconut, marshmallows
pH-ADJUSTING AGENTS (acids, alkalis and buffering agents)	control the acidity or alkalinity (pH) of foods; modify flavour slightly	sodium bicarbonate	baking powder
PRESERVATIVES -antimicrobial agents	inhibit the growth of moulds, yeasts or bacteria	sodium diacetate	bread
-antioxidants	prevent rancidity and oxidative discoloration	butylated hydroxytoluene (BHT)	cooking oils
RELEASE AGENTS	help food separate from surfaces it touches during manufacturing or transport	mineral oil	baked goods (to remove from baking pans without sticking or crumbling)
TEXTURE MODIFYING AGENTS (emulsifiers, gelling agents, stabilizers and thickeners)	impart and maintain a desired consistency in foods	mono and diglycerides	ice cream



In Canada, control of food additives is the responsibility of the Health Protection Branch. Food additive tables lay down provisions which food manufacturers must abide by; amounts are specified and those additives which are not on the permitted list cannot be used. When a manufacturer wants to introduce a new additive, an application must be submitted to the Branch, including reports of controlled studies indicating the additive will be safe for human consumption at proposed levels of use. A 'no effect level' must be determined in the most sensitive species of animal tested. At the present time, the concept of ADI (Acceptable Daily Intake) is used to provide a qualitative expression of safe amounts of intentional food additives. The ADI is defined as the daily dosage of a chemical which may be consumed by humans for a lifetime without discernible risk on the basis of all the facts known at the time. The 'no effect level' is then divided by 100 based on the premise that people may be more sensitive to a certain additive than the test animals and certain individuals may be more sensitive than the norm (people with allergies for example).

Why then, if food additives are seen to be rigidly controlled and the introduction of new additives means extensive testing and regulation, is the consumer continuing to express such concern about food additives? The question has many facets, such as the fear of 'chemicals,' big business and profit motives of large food manufacturers, but even more concerning is the past experiences which have shown that additives which were once thought to be safe, have been found to be hazardous to health, which was determined as more sophisticated testing methods have been found. Some have been banned in both the US and Canada. Some have not. This alone leads the consumer to become extremely cautious of food additives in general. An examination of two food additive case studies will elaborate on these points. Cyclamates, a sugar substitute once thought to be safe was found to be carcinogenic (cancer causing). The public did not protest the banning of this substance as an additive. However, when it was also discovered that saccharin, the only other sugar substitute, was also a carcinogen and was to be banned, the ban was protested by the public. In the U.S., the ban was lifted, but in Canada, over-the-counter sale of saccharin is prohibited. Aspartame is well on its way to becoming the Number One artificial sweetener. Xylitol which had once looked like a promising substitute, has also found to cause tumors and has been voluntarily removed.

It has also been proven that the anti-bacterial additive, nitrite used in cured meat and other products was a carcinogen and should be banned. Again in the U.S.



the ban has been suspended but this time for a different reason. The argument for continuing to use nitrate is one of risk vs benefits. Nitrite prevents the formation of botulism toxin, a deadly poison produced by bacteria that grows in meat, poultry and fish and it cannot be destroyed by heating the food. Its use means that food which has been treated can be processed, transported and sold without the fear of botulism. There is no other additive available and it cannot be eliminated from the diet. The body produces nitrite (it's found in saliva) when bacteria acts on

nitrites, found as an inorganic salt, in many vegetables.

The decision to continue to use both saccharin and nitrites was based on a perception that there were benefits involved; freedom of choice for saccharin and overwhelming food safety considerations for nitrites.

However, the risks still remain with these particular food additives and others as well. Who determines when risks outweigh benefits and vice versa? And what about the additives which are used strictly for esthetic purposes? The colour additives for example? Are they necessary even if they do not constitute a risk?

An informed consumer can begin and should begin to examine alternatives, question the regulations, determine what the real risks and benefits are and to whom, read labels and use the food additive pocket book now available. A personal strategy becomes necessary as one becomes more informed and begins to choose foods which do not contain additives and maintains a balance in the diet which is so necessary for optimum health. But the personal strategy must be carried further to include other consumers who as a group can share information, speak out together and become effective in their organization. A closer look at Aspartame would be an excellent place to begin. ▼

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