

PRIORITIES



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PERSPECTIVE

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Violence against Women

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"The issues and demands raised by the Women's Liberation Movement are integral to the development of a democratic socialist society. The NDP actively encourages and provides support for women organizing around the demands of the Women's Liberation Movement and commits an NDP government to creating the legislation necessary to realize these demands."

— NDP Policy on Women's Rights

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Thanks to all the workers who have made the production and distribution of this magazine possible.

EDITORIAL

The source of violence

Early studies in the area of wife battering theorized that if battering did occur, the woman unconsciously provoked it by defying traditional expectations. The concept of "asking for it" was legitimized through the media, academia, and the criminal justice system.

Ironically, while women who were battered or raped were blamed for the crime, the very social standards of frailty, passivity and subservience that were promoted in our culture and social institutions set them up to be victims of this exploitation and abuse.

Marxist theorists, particularly Engels in *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*, identified the nuclear family as an institution promoting women's oppression.

It was, however, only within the rise of the women's movement in the late 60's that a clear parallel was made between the ideology and institutional structures that support patriarchy and the physical and emotional subordination of women.

As a result of this exposure by the women's movement, sociologists and psychologists began to look at family violence in a new light. No longer was the nuclear family heralded as a place of security and love.

In a 1973 article, sociologists Murray Steinmetz and Suzanne Strauss wrote: [While the] "family is mythologized as an arena of harmony and functionality (like other institutions) in reality it contains conflict and dysfunction including physical violence. Family can be seen as a training ground for violence beginning at an interpersonal level spread to engulf society at large."

While this orientation has been positive in that it has transcended theories that identified unusual behaviour or social reasons such as alcoholism as the motivation behind wife battering, the family is still viewed in isolation from the economic and political base of sexism. Rather, as it has become a politicized issue, it is being recognized, as are rape and pornography, as an integral aspect of sexual oppression, but not material oppression.

While the anti-battering movement has gained significant momentum, serious weaknesses do exist in the theoretical base. There is still a tendency to use reverse sexism to explain violent behaviour. Some groups emphasize irreconcilable differences between men and women and see no solution to physical abuse except to avoid contact with men. Others put their faith in the legal or criminal justice system to turn around and destroy institutionalized sexism.

There is, however, another more critical concern. The economy has a real impact on breaking up or resolidifying the family structure. During periods of economic growth, women are drawn by capital into the labour market and the state infrastructure provides greater services in education, health and welfare. During periods of recession, service industries, a major area of employment for women, reduce staff. Social service programs are cut and training opportunities are decreased. As a result, women often have to look to the family structure for economic security. The concept of the nuclear family could become idealized again.

We have only to look at recent moves against Manpower training and welfare programs to see that this process is beginning. As feminists and socialists we must fight to defend the gains we have won against patriarchal oppression, and see to it that cures for the recession are not imposed at our expense but at the expense of those who profit from women's inequality. ♀

CHAIRWOMAN'S REPORT



Plans for 1982

by Shelley Rivkin

The first steering committee meeting of the new year ended on an optimistic note as we defined our goals and objectives for the coming year.

Recognizing that there was a need to have a clearer statement outlining the present condition of women's rights and the aims and objectives the Women's Rights Committee sees necessary to pursue in order to attain a socialist-feminist solution, a proposal was presented to the committee. The proposal contained three components. The first section called for a manifesto defining the existing state of women's rights and the presenting of political solutions to be taken by the NDP to "fulfill the hopes of women and men who work for the establishment of an equitable, co-operative and compassionate society."

The second part of the proposal called for the setting up of policy committees that would propose concrete programs of action to be taken by the NDP around issues of childcare, technological change, welfare rights, Task Force on Older Women, Repeal 251 and job training and non-traditional jobs.

The third part called for the Women's Rights Committee to establish representation on and liaise with policy committees and caucus to motivate wider NDP participation and public visibility in activities around these issues.

While the steering committee acknowledges that the acceptance of this proposal means a lot of work for individual members, we believe the end result will provide us with a valuable tool both for raising the issues within the party and for providing us with a public platform on women's issues at the time of an election.

We need the help of all women to achieve this goal. Contact us if you have suggestions, ideas or energy. We want to hear from you.

Women members of the NDP are invited to attend the next Women's Rights Committee meeting, Sunday February 21 at 10 a.m. at the Provincial Office of the NDP, 517 E. Broadway. ♀

Don't be afraid to read this book. A woman locked into a battering relationship with her male partner is not a masochist. Neither will you be for reading it: Lenore Walker is not the Marilyn French of clinical psychology. *The Battered Woman* is a restrained and sensitive exploration of a widespread social evil. Its intent is to dispel many of the current myths surrounding the nature of violent family behaviour and to point to ways women victims may be helped.

Walker introduces her study by saying: "I believe it will only be through listening to what battered women say that we will be able to understand what happens to a battered woman, how she is victimized, and how we can help a society change so that this horrible crime can no longer be perpetrated upon women."

Her qualifications in this field are impressive. She is a professor of psychology at the Colorado Women's College and a widely travelled lecturer. She has testified before the U.S. Congress on the subject of battered women and has frequently appeared as an expert witness in trials where the battered woman has finally killed her batterer. Currently she is director of a research centre funded by the U.S. National Institute of Mental Health to follow up on the studies in this book.

Sex-role stereotyping

Out of hundreds of interviews with victims of battering by husband or lover, Walker chose a dozen or so to tell their stories in their own words. These women were not selected at random but sought out through her contacts as known victims of battering. They represent a mixture of all ages, races, religions, educational levels, cultures and socio-economic groups. But all had personal characteristics in common. Among them, a commitment to the feminine sex-role stereotype, a belief that she was to blame for the man's actions, and a despairing conviction that no-one could help her. The men in their lives felt much the same way: that a woman's natural role was to be submissive, that his physical violence was the result of her provocation, and that she did not need help — just occasional "discipline."

The psychology of the battered woman is well developed early in the book. Walker's chapter on myths and reality is particularly enlightening. Even a liberated woman may find some of the realities surprising: for example, the batterer may be a loving partner. One well-circulated myth which will *not* come as a surprise is that the battered woman need not put up with it all. Walker has

The Battered Woman

by Lenore Walker
(Harper & Row, 1979)

Reviewed by Kathie Robertson

developed a cycle theory based on learned helplessness to explain why the woman does not only put up with it, but may remain the victim through cycle after cycle over years or a lifetime. The cycle begins with a tension-building phase (ranging from a period of days to many weeks) which will be climaxed by an acute battering incident, and then followed almost invariably by contrite and loving behaviour by the man. In this last phase the woman finds it hardest to break off the relationship, and so the cycle begins again.

Behaviourist psychological theories are expressed in early chapters and do form the bases for her study, but more than half the book is devoted to the coercive tactics employed by the batterer. This is where the personal histories appear. Each one vividly illustrates one or more forms of abuse: physical, sexual, social, financial, threats to her children or other family members, and so on. Disturbing though they are to read, no one will finish this book without a deeper understanding of how that "refuge from the storm" — the family home — can become the setting for the most bizarre criminal behaviour. Perhaps most striking of all is the bewilderment of the women involved. Every one of them told Walker she would never have expected to find herself in such a situation.

Attitudes and values must change

Battering of women would end if the attitudes and values of the whole culture change. As Walker says, "a feminist perspective stressing co-operation among people must prevail." Among the present evils are the nuclear family itself, punitive treatment of children, sexual stereotyping, violence in the media, and legislation which cannot or will not provide protection for those so easily abused. It is obvious when she talks of "a new tomorrow" and uses the word "fantasy" that Walker has limited hope of that day arriving.

In "The Way Out", therefore, she places emphasis on short-term goals and immediate relief for these women. Among them are the identification and treatment of battered women so that, with the least amount of interference, they can resolve their situations: through clinics, counselling, support groups, available legal and financial advice, etc. That is, if the woman can bring herself to seek out the help she needs. If not, "safe houses" are essential.

Walker regards safe houses as the cornerstone of battered women's programs, though well aware of how desperately few they are. (Her research indicates there are probably no more than 60 such refuges in the United States — despite estimates of violence in up to one-third of American households). A shelter provides a sense of community and a support system. About 50% who stay longer than one week will not return to their batterers. But since only a minority stay that long, the shelter must remain open to those women who have returned home. The back and forth process may occur as often as five times before the woman makes a firm decision to break with the past.

But safe houses have significant limitations. The sense of community is, after all, artificial — particularly where a support system in the community does not exist. There are funding and operational problems, inadequate resources to deal with disturbed children and, most important, limited potential for educational or vocational training: "without potential for economic independence, these women will still be at the mercy of the state or the man." We *must* find the means to overcome these limitations.

The Battered Woman should be widely read so that the victimization process will be understood and the public made aware of it. For the victim, there is new hope and direction; for the woman entering a new sexual relationship, obvious education implications — qualities common to potential batterers are well defined; and for socialist feminists, a valuable resource in the struggle for equality. ♀

OBITUARY

Margaret Livingstone -

Feminist — socialist — trade unionist

Margaret Livingstone died January 30 following a long illness.

With her death, we have lost a friend and a comrade — too soon.

Margaret made an immense contribution to the Women's Rights Committee. She had the ability to cut through the fog when discussions became confused towards the end of long meetings. She was a touchstone, a link with reality.

Born and raised in Scotland, Margaret worked for the British government in Africa before coming to Canada.

She was active in the NDP, the Women's Rights Committee, and the labour movement.

As vice-chairwoman of the Women's Rights Committee from 1979 to 1981, she co-ordinated the 1981 WRC policy conference and chaired the WRC sub-committee on family law. She held many

other positions in the WRC and NDP, giving service as president of Vancouver South federal riding; as candidate for the Vancouver Area Council and Vancouver Resource Board; as campaign manager.

Margaret was a member of the executive of the Office and Technical Employees Union, Local 15. Her activity in the labour movement also included three years as an elected trustee; membership in numerous trade union committees; and delegate to B.C. Federation of Labour conventions.

As a member of the negotiating committee in 1979, Margaret helped win the inclusion of paid maternity leave in the Master Agreement.

Margaret's example will be a continuing source of inspiration to all who knew and loved her as a feminist, a socialist, and a trade unionist. ♀



PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN COMMITTEE



*Margaret Thomson
POW representative for the
Yukon and Chairwoman of
the Federal Task Force on
Older Women.*

Margaret has worked for the recognition of native rights and served as chairperson of the Native Women's Association. Other activities include service as a Community Basic Education instructor and Community Health aide, free-lance broadcasting, Outreach work.

Federal Task Force on Older Women

by Hilda L. Thomas

The Participation of Women Committee met in Winnipeg on January 21. New officers elected were: Chairperson: Hilda Thomas (B.C.); Vice-chairperson: Chris Banman (Saskatchewan); Secretary: Barbara Levy (Nova Scotia).

Mary Humphrey, Women's Organizer, reported that the federal publication *Equal Times* was being published again. Women wishing to be on the mailing list should write to Mary at 301 Metcalfe Street, Ottawa, Ontario K2P 1R9.

POW is extremely glad that both Pauline Jewett and Margaret Mitchell take an active interest in the Committee, attending and participating in the meetings when their schedules permit.

An invitation is being extended to the federal caucus to meet with the POW Committee at its next scheduled meeting on May 14-15 in Ottawa.

Federal Task Force on Older Women

In the next several months, POW will be concentrating on the Task Force on Older Women established by a resolution at the 1981 convention. POW has agreed to take responsibility for the organization of the Task Force. A detailed draft proposal was discussed. The Task Force will follow the model established by the B.C. NDP. It will not set up hearings in B.C., using the B.C. provincial report instead.

Margaret Thomson, POW representative from the Yukon was chosen to chair

the federal Task Force.

A final report based on the information obtained from the hearings will be compiled for presentation at the 50th anniversary convention in Regina in 1983.

Shernaz Choksi (Quebec) is preparing draft policy on pensions for discussion at the next meeting.

Concern was expressed over the recent Supreme Court decision to give standing to Joe Borowski in his attempt to overturn the provisions of the Criminal Code which permit therapeutic abortion. The implications of this challenge are of grave concern to all members of the NDP. The POW will explore the possibility of co-operating with other concerned groups to defend the right of choice against this attack.

The Committee endorsed the resolution on world disarmament submitted by Pauline Jewett, chairwoman of the International Affairs Committee. It also drafted a resolution on parental leave and maternity benefits which was adopted by the federal council meeting which followed.

POW reminded everyone that International Women's Day would be celebrated on March 6 this year. Provincial and territorial sections are urged to mark this occasion and to encourage their members to participate fully in the activities surrounding International Women's Day. ♀

Rape: every woman a potential victim

by Joni Miller, Rape Relief

- Susan called about rape of one week ago. She was raped at knife-point by a man who picked her up hitch-hiking. Afterwards he drove her downtown and made small talk. He asked her if she'd seen any good concerts lately. She thinks he's crazy.
- A social worker called. "We have a woman down here who's having sexual problems because she was raped. We're very busy and don't have time to talk with her."
- Jane was picked up by a man at SFU who was not a student. After tying her up, he made her swallow four pennies. Then he felt badly about the whole thing and let her go. He said that he just had a need to do something like this.
- Val called for a reality check. She needed to hear that she is not the only woman who's ever been raped.
- Eileen called needing shelter. Her husband has been beating her.
- Violet was raped last night. When she went to the police for help, they called her drunk, stupid and hysterical and wouldn't believe that she'd been raped. They locked her in a cell overnight.
- Anonymous was raped by three friends of her boyfriend. It happened in her boyfriend's car.
- Karen was raped by her 17-year-old stepson. She wants to know how she can convince her husband that she didn't want it.
- Evangeline came in. She wants to charge her father with sexual assault. Her brothers blackmailed her when she was 12. The threat was either she consented to sex with them, or they'd tell their mother about the incest.

These are a sampling of calls that have been received by *Rape Relief*. (Names have been changed).

There is no such thing as an isolated incidence of violence against women.

Each woman's pain, each woman's story, is another piece in the intricate web of our oppression. In her book *Female Sexual Slavery*, Kathleen Berry calls it "colonization." Like a conquering nation, men around the world have colonized the bodies of women.

A few statistics

- A woman is raped every 17 minutes in Canada.
- 1 in 4 of us will be raped sometime in our lifetime.
- 1 in 8 female children will be sexually assaulted before the age of 18, usually by a male family member.
- 9 out of 10 women receive unwanted sexual attentions on the job.

The statistics about rape are startling. It becomes readily apparent that what we are talking about is not just a few women, and one or two "psychopathic" rapists, but many, many women and many men. Studies on rapists reveal that, for the most part, they are ordinary guys. Most are married and have "normal" sexual relations. Our experience at Vancouver Rape Relief tells us that 75% of the time women are raped by men they know — their father, brother, grandfather, husband, husband's best friend, boss, co-worker, the nice man from down the street. The first call I took as a neophyte rape crisis worker was from a woman who'd been raped by a close friend of 25 years standing. He waited until her husband, his best friend, was in the hospital dying before he attacked. The key factor seems to be vulnerability — we are attacked when we are alone or helpless.

The conclusion we have drawn is that every man is a potential rapist. Rape is learned behaviour, and a choice. Every man can choose to act out his frustration in some other way.

Where do men learn rape?

Where do men learn rape? If you haven't done so lately, check out a copy

STOP RAPE!



*"By day I live in terror
By night I live in fright
For long as I can remember
A lady don't go out alone at
night...
(Fight back!)" — Holly Near

of Playboy, Penthouse, Hustler, or one of the lesser known "men's" magazines. At their mildest, the women are shown as pretty, passive, young, sexually available and eager to please. At the other end of the scale, we see women beat up, tied, gagged, raped. The captions under the pictures will typically inform the reader that although possibly resistant at first, the woman is now enjoying her abuse.

Rape is the logical extension of male domination. In a country under martial law, people are beaten, murdered and jailed to ensure submission. In a society where men have most of the economic, political and personal control, women are beaten, threatened, raped and locked up in psychiatric institutions when our pain is too obvious — to ensure submission.

Even the everyday media — TV, radio, films and magazines — constantly barrage the viewer with the messages that women are either vamps (who are always slightly dangerous) or housewives (whose main

concern is cleanliness). Either way, we are told, women are here to service and pleasure men.

Every woman a potential victim

Every woman is a potential rape victim. The answer to the haunting question "why me?" is simply "because you are female." The abuse of women happens across all lines of race, class and age. Rape victims range in age from 6 months to over 90 years old. Women are most commonly raped either in the rapist's home, or in their own home, or in the rapist's car. But we are also attacked on the way to the store or the laundromat, in elevators, stairways, offices and our own backyards. We are attacked going about the ordinary business of our lives. There are no safe places.

We estimate that only one woman in ten ever speaks up about her assault. Last year we received over 600 calls from women in crisis. Sometimes women call who were raped 10 years ago, or 20 years ago, and are only now willing to tell their story.

What we can do for each other

Ten years ago there were no rape crisis centres in Canada. Today there are more than 40, most of whom belong to the Canadian Association of Sexual Assault Centres, and come together once a year to exchange information, strategize together, and strengthen each other in our shared work. In B.C. there is a Coalition of Rape Crisis Centres, including centres in Vancouver, Victoria, Nanaimo, Prince George, Powell River and Terrace. Rape crisis centres can provide counselling, information, legal and medical advocacy, access to support/education/action groups and opportunities for organizing to fight back. But there is no possibility that we can end violence against women by ourselves. Ending rape needs to be the business of every woman — and every man.

When a woman has been raped, she needs validation — to be believed. She also needs to hear that she is not alone, and that it is not her fault. Men cause rape, not women. Because of the myth that women who are raped "ask for it," a common reaction is guilt and shame. Each woman has her own way of coping with rape. Whether a woman is openly upset or calm, there will be layers of anger, pain and fear. We need to be available to each other to ensure that we all get back on our feet again. When we are beaten back into silence or self-hatred, then the rapist has won.

To provide safety for each other, we can set up car pools or arrange to walk home together. We can also set up systems of checking up on each other. One

woman who called us had been held prisoner in her own apartment for a week and systematically tortured and raped. In all that time, no one came to call on her. Women living in the same apartment building can arrange signals that will bring aid quickly. Self-defence courses are useful for building confidence and providing options. It has been shown that the earlier a woman resists her attacker — either verbally or physically, the more possible it is to get away unharmed. Rapists are looking for an easy mark.

Men need to be confronted; individually and as a group. One of the things we can all do about rape is to challenge the men in our lives on behaviour that is abusive to women. Violence against women covers a wide range of behaviour — from harassment to sexist jokes to physical terrorism. We need to expose rapists. One of the things a man counts on when he rapes is the woman's silence. Sometimes he ensures this by threats of further violence towards her or her children. "I can kill you if I want," is a common taunt. Recently, a woman called me on the crisis line who was so frightened by the rapist's threat to kill her if she talked, that she wouldn't give her name or number. She was convinced that she was safer if no one knew who or where she was.

Conviction figures

The conviction rate for rapists in this country is 1.7%. Our statistics show that while all kinds of men rape, those convicted are most often either poor, work-

ing class, minority or immigrant. The maximum sentence for rape is life, but a typical sentence is a couple of years — with time off if he behaves himself. The convicted rapist does his time in an all-male jail where rape and violence are very common. Over half will rape again upon being released. For women, going to court is a grueling experience. Currently, at least two-thirds of the women who call us have already decided not to go to the police.

Increasingly, we have shifted our focus to looking for ways to deal with rape that provide women with direct access to power. For example, actions aimed at exposing a rapist — such as neighbourhood postering, newspaper ads and direct confrontation are often successful because they both inform women and at the same time let the rapist know that his behaviour will not be tolerated.

Frightened as a woman

I am frightened for women, including myself. One of the hard realizations I have made in the last few years is that being a rape crisis worker is no guarantee of safety. I am not immune — although I am well equipped. Robin Morgan says that to be conscious in this world is to live in a constant state of rage. Many of us in the anti-rape movement consider this work a lifetime commitment. The more I hear, the more I know, the more outraged and determined I become: and the more impossible it is to ever walk away from this work.



Shock and outrage reverberating far beyond the women's movement was the reaction to the Socred government's cancellation of grants totalling \$151,000 to four rape crisis centres in Vancouver, Victoria, Nanaimo and Terrace.

The outrage was intensified by the fact that this blow follows hard on the heels of the publicity surrounding the brutal, sexually-motivated Olson murders. This same government paid the murderer Olson \$90,000 for his so-called assistance in ending his crimes.

Rosemary Brown, MLA (Burnaby-Edmonds) correctly characterized this attack as an act of violence against women in addressing the January 22 meeting of the NDP Provincial Council on this issue. She was speaking to the following motion, unanimously passed by the Provincial Council, which had been submitted by the NDP Women's Rights Committee.

"Whereas the Social Credit government has revoked its contract with Rape Relief Centres in Victoria, Vancouver, Terrace and Nanaimo in a transparent move to save money at the expense of services to women,

Be it resolved that the B.C. NDP condemns the action of the Social Credit government in withdrawing funds from this essential service at a time when violence against women and children is on the increase;

Be it further resolved that the B.C. NDP calls for the immediate reinstatement of the contracted funds, and for the introduction in the next provincial budget of permanent, long-term funding for Rape Relief Centres, Transition Houses and Women's Centres which provide essential services to women."

Socreds assault Rape Crisis Centres - funding cancelled

by Joyce Meissenheimer

Access to confidential files

The Coalition of B.C. Crisis Centres was informed by the Deputy Attorney-General that the agreement under which the centres were funded had been cancelled because the centres has refused to make their case files available for government evaluation. Rosemary Brown said that she had discovered that one of the purposes of this proposed evaluation was to develop a profile of the kind of women who get raped.

This persistent idea, that rape results from the character, behaviour and lifestyle of the victims, is a bitter reminder that the rulers of this province regard rape victims as the main problem, rather than their assailants. Rape Relief has been asked to fill out a lengthy questionnaire for this evaluation. Three of the

questions relate to the men who rape. The remaining ten pages concentrate on the victims. Clearly the government does not believe that *all* women are potential rape victims. It reveals itself as part of the problem and an opponent of the burningly necessary solutions in this province.

The Coalition is determined to protect the confidentiality of its files. It considers that the blacking out of names of victims is insufficient to protect them, especially in smaller centres. The government's demand will simply reinforce women's reluctance to report and seek help in sexual assault incidents. As it is, only one out of ten sexual assaults taking place are reported.

Pitiful sum

Just as outrageous as the cutback is the pitiful sum involved. It is a disgrace that B.C., the home of the Olson murders, has only four crisis centres. It is a disgrace that they would not exist were it not for the years of voluntary effort and fund-raising by women reaching out to help their sisters who have nowhere else to turn. It is a disgrace that we have a government that takes no responsibility for the provision of such services, accessible to all victims in the province, adequately staffed and funded. It is a disgrace that this government sees its main role as harassment of the Coalition and putting the blame for crimes against women on the victims.

The women's movement, the NDP and the labour movement has in the past supported the work of the Crisis Centres. This support must be intensified to win government responsibility to protect, defend and assist victims of violence against women by making services such as Rape Relief every woman's right. ♀

RAPE: EVERY WOMAN A POTENTIAL VICTIM — continued

Recently, *Rape Relief* opened an emergency shelter for women in order to act on our commitment to provide concrete assistance. When your door is being kicked down, you need to get out of there — not to be counselled or do emotional work. This house represents nearly three years of diligent fund-raising. We decided to raise the money entirely without government assistance in order to retain autonomy — for ourselves as organizers, and for the women in the house. To that end, we have set up and operated a fund-raising committee composed of members of the community — some of whom represent other groups. It is apparent to us that when the government gives money, it can also

take it away. We have watched essential services crumble when their government grants ran out, and we believe that there is more security in the kind of broad-based community support that has gone into the opening of this house. At the same time, we firmly believe that the government should continue to provide funding for safe shelter. The need is very apparent. Last year, Vancouver Transition House was forced to turn away nearly 1000 women and children — as many as they took in. When shelter is not available, women are forced back into the violence; perhaps this time to be killed or permanently injured. In order to keep the house open, pay the mortgage, hydro, electricity and food

bills, we need nearly \$4000 a month. You can help our by giving one-time donations, on-going pledges, or donations of food, toilet paper, etc. We are currently in the middle of renovations and need labour, paint, cleaning supplies, area rugs, furniture, a vacuum cleaner, lamps, etc.

In the words of one of our supporters: "As a woman, the greatest security I can have is more transition houses." ♀

VANCOUVER RAPE RELIEF

872-8212

24 HOURS A DAY

Sexual harassment remains one of the biggest issues facing working women despite growing concerns over technological change and implementation of the equal pay for work of equal value concept. The B.C. Federation of Labour's Women's Rights Committee and the Vancouver Women's Research Centre launched a joint project on sexual harassment in the autumn of 1978. The project was to be a study designed to gather personal expressions of sexual harassment, descriptions of sexual harassment, experiences that had been encountered, manifestations of the experiences, solutions tried, results and suggested solutions to the problem.

No sooner had the proposed study been announced than the personal accounts began to come in by telephone, letter and private conversations. The Federation's Committee quickly developed a policy paper for presentation at the approaching annual convention.

The policy paper was debated by an astounding number of brave women and supporting men. It passed. Publicity followed and the project was on its way, backed up by the policy paper — a firm commitment to do further work in this area.

Video — "The Hidden Price"

Meanwhile, the Women's Rights Committee began preparing a 12-minute video entitled "The Hidden Price." Next, the Committee organized a conference on Sexual Harassment which was held in the spring of 1980. Community women's groups, government human rights officers and union affiliates discussed the subject at length, were made aware of resources and legislative solutions, and learned of individual union work in this area.

As each phase of the Women's Committee work was announced or accomplished the news media jumped on the news story. Every time the issue was discussed publicly, a new onslaught of "cases" would be brought to the Federation's attention.

The report *Sexual Harassment: A Discussion Paper* was released in the spring of 1980. Close to 8,000 copies of the report were, and continue to be, distributed across Canada, the U.S. and as far away as New Zealand.

Union record

More than three years have passed since the Federation's Women's Rights Committee decided to do something about a common but virtually unpublicized problem. To date, to our knowledge, sexual harassment clauses have been negotiated by the B.C. Government Employees Union, Canadian Union of

Sexual harassment is not part of the job

by Astrid Davidson
Director of Women's Programs
B.C. Federation of Labour



FINANCIAL POST

Public Employees and the International Ladies Garment Workers. Educational work has been done by those same unions as well as the Carpenters, Marine Workers, United Steelworkers, Ferry and Marine Workers, Telecommunications Workers, Public Service Alliance of Canada, and Airline Flight Attendants unions. Other unions have sought assistance in grieving cases or in presenting the issue at the bargaining table. Several unions have reported success in handling sexual harassment grievances under their "no discrimination" or "personal rights" clauses. Non-union management personnel employee assistance program coordinators have requested information. Members of the Women's Rights Committee have spoken at a number of schools, colleges and universities about sexual harassment.

Human Rights Code

Although the B.C. Human Rights Code does not specifically exclude sexual harassment on the job, the Branch does investigate cases under the "no discrimination" on the job section of the Code. The Federation has made several representations to the government to have the legislation made explicit. Some unions without contract language on sexual harassment are advised to use the Code route for solution. Unions have reported that this ammunition, backed by the Branch's pamphlet on sexual harassment, has assisted in resolving cases quickly. Individuals not represented by a union are referred to the B.C. Human Rights Branch or the Canadian Human Rights Commission, depending on whether their occupation falls under federal or provincial jurisdiction. Besides referral in these cases, the Federation feels a more important aspect of its work is to be the listener and give moral support.

Personal rights

Why has this issue remained a top area

RESOURCE MATERIAL ON SEXUAL HARASSMENT ON THE JOB

Sexual Harassment on the Job, a Discussion Paper, by Women's Rights Committee of the B.C. Federation of Labour and the Women's Research Centre. Copies are limited but available from B.C. Federation of Labour, 3110 Boundary Road, Burnaby, B.C.

The Hidden Price, a videotape produced by the Women's Rights Committee of the B.C. Federation of Labour. Available from the Canadian Labour Congress Labour Studies Education Centre, 4925 Canada Way, Burnaby, B.C.

It's Not Your Imagination, a film; available from Women in Focus, 45 Kingsway, Vancouver.

Policy papers, bibliographies, clause examples and other information is available from the Director of Women's Programs, B.C. Federation of Labour, 3110 Boundary Road, Burnaby, B.C.

Victims of family violence

by Diana Ellis

Resources for battered women in British Columbia are much more available now than they were five years ago. In 1973 there was one Transition House in the province, in Vancouver. Today, we have 22 such shelters, five in the lower mainland and others in communities like Fort Nelson, Trail, Sechelt and Quesnel.

However, despite the increased number, it is important to remember that each shelter has a maximum capacity for four to eight women (with children), so there is still only space for a hundred or so victims at any given time. Most Transition Houses operate at full or near full capacity all of the time. In 1979, Vancouver Transition House took in a total of around 700 women and children — and had to turn away 990.

The work of organizing Transition Houses has largely been undertaken by individual community women and women's groups concerned about the victims they know who have nowhere to go for shelter and counselling.

Resource-gathering

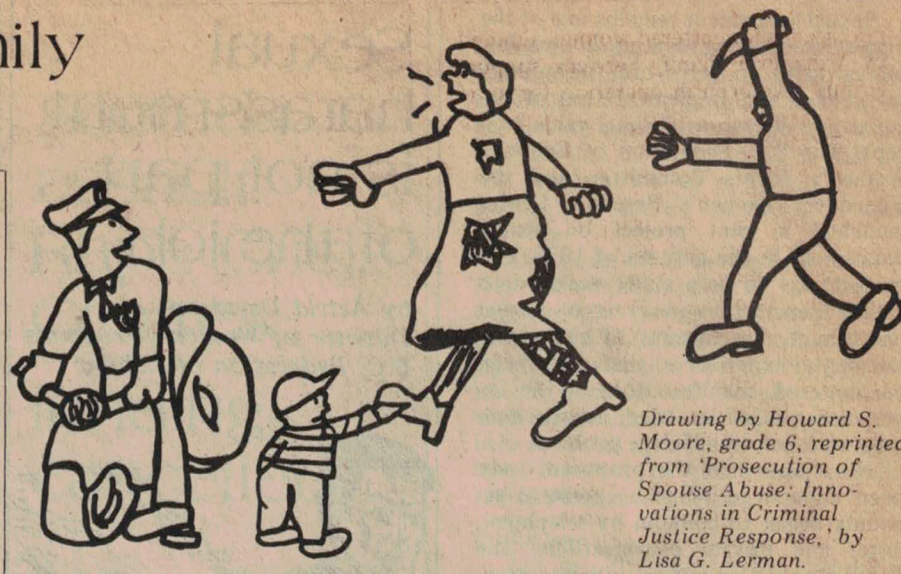
The organizing process usually takes about two years. It begins with a couple of women deciding something has to be done. So, they talk with the Ministry of Human Resources, find out that they have to collect statistics to prove need — and the work begins.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT IS NOT PART OF THE JOB — Cont'd.

of concern? There are many reasons: the issue involves one's personal rights. Personal rights issues appeal to and cross all political, age and sex boundaries. Well, women are more aware of their rights and are more assertive in demanding justice. Publicity has been widespread and supportive, thus encouraging people to speak up. Male union members have encouraged action by their support. Examples of successful action abound.

Another reason that the issue is still a major one is that the problem is more widespread than anyone could have imagined. A small proportion of what is actually happened has been uncovered. Sexual harassment is so entrenched in society's values that the issue will continue to be a priority for years to come.

Finally, an informal network of women has developed and is supplying needed resources, friendship and support to a great many women who are not "joiners" or who no longer belong to a women's group.



Drawing by Howard S. Moore, grade 6, reprinted from 'Prosecution of Spouse Abuse: Innovations in Criminal Justice Response,' by Lisa G. Lerman.

Some groups receive support from the powers that be. In Sechelt, a new Transition House was organized in four months after concerned women were told by the local MHR that start-up monies had been applied for and received by the office without a women's group having to present them with the usual numerous briefs.

In other towns there is a long struggle to get operating costs and a sufficient per diem to feed the occupants of the House. In Fort Nelson, the women got tired of waiting and took \$1,000 out of a women's centre account, found another woman who had a house to rent — cheap, got the community to donate furnishings, and opened their door to battered women in the far northeast. They proved the need was there alright — and have since signed a contract with the Ministry.

Most houses do receive moral and "in kind" support from their communities. The Women in Need Society in Trail pride themselves on their good working relationship with the RCMP, COMINCO, and local elected officials. Emily Murphy House in North Vancouver has a large corps of volunteers who help to run the house, do weekly grocery shopping, and organize church drives for acquisition of expensive but needed items such as a good supply of Pampers!

Government policy development

In 1981, the Ministry of Human Resources struck a special policy committee charged with developing policy on the funding and operation of Transition Houses. While some people are concerned that definitive policy could end up being very restrictive, many women working with battered women have had some input and hope for some appropriate guidelines to help deal with each MHR region's varying attitudes and practices towards the funding and operation of Transition

Houses.

Another important resource is the Society of Transition Houses in B.C. This group acts as a communications network for women working in shelters and receives funding to allow workers to meet twice a year to share information, skills, and resources.

The only "second-stage" house for battered women in Canada — Munro House — is also available as a resource for battered women in B.C. Operated by the Vancouver YWCA and funded by MHR, the house contains six self-contained suites for battered women and their children. They can stay at the house for three months. This house is an important bridge between an emergency stay at a Transition House and starting a self-sufficient life away from a battering marriage.

Vancouver Rape Relief House

Vancouver Rape Relief has also raised money to purchase a house to act as a safe centre, a residence and a centre for organizing women against sexist violence.

Battered Women's Support Services in Vancouver develops and sponsors educational work on wife battering. Their workshops focus on women's groups, professionals, and the general public. They have been able to do work in the east and west Kootenays, northeast and northwest B.C.

The Community Programs Division of the Justice Institute has co-sponsored workshops for cross-system professionals in Trail, Fort Nelson, Powell River, Chetwynd, Dawson Creek and Fort St. John.

The National Film Board's "Loved, Honoured and Bruised" and several of the productions by Peg Campbell are popular educational tools used by these groups.

Battered Women's Support Services has also developed and sponsored sup-

port groups for battered women. Funded by Vancouver Family Services, support groups have been in operation for some years. As well, BWSS offers intensive on-going training for support group leaders. Limited funds have confined this work to the lower mainland, but there are hopes that 1982 will bring extension of this work to other areas.

The Women's Research Centre has published two major works on wife battering in the past two years — all action research based on looking at battering from the victims' own experiences.

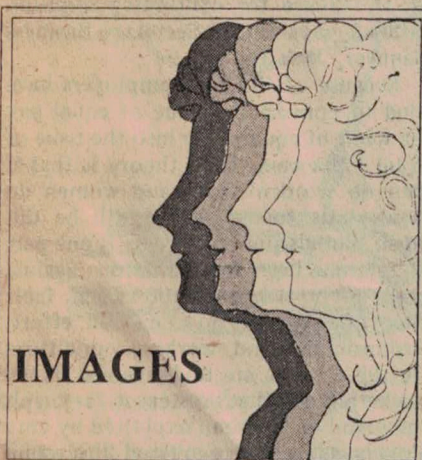
The first study, *Battered and Blamed*, was done together with a committee at Vancouver Transition House. The second was a review of Munro House and the third takes a look at what protection for battered women could and should look like.

Much work remains to be done. There may be more resources for battered women, but even more are needed. And, the resources that *should* be there in the criminal justice, social service and health systems are few and far between.

The policies and practices of helping agencies have to be re-written to take into account the needs and realities of battered women. There needs to be more material on wife battering in the training curriculum of social workers, nurses, doctors, police, court personnel, and lawyers too.

And, finally, much needs to be done for batterers themselves — for a few, group work or counselling does seem to make a difference. ♀

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Fact sheet on battering

The following information on battered women and violence in the family is taken from publications produced by the Battered Women's Support Services which produces a newsletter and study papers as well as providing support services for women who have been battered. In addition, the service organizes educational workshops for women who want to develop services for battered women, and for professionals and the public.

- Wife-battering is a widespread but often hidden crime. The best estimates available indicate that one in ten Canadian women are assaulted each year by their husbands or by the men with whom they are living. It has also been estimated that 4,000-5,000 women are beaten to the point of serious injury each year in the lower mainland of B.C. alone.
- Wife-batterers come from all socio-economic groups, all educational levels, and all cultural and ethnic groups.
- It is men who beat women. There are exceptions, but men who are in danger or in abusive situations have the economic option of leaving which is less available to women.
- Wife-battering has very little to do with the actions of the woman involved. While many women do try to change their own behaviour in order to avoid being beaten, it later becomes clear to them that there is little or nothing they can do to avoid the attack.
- A woman does not deserve to be beaten, no matter what she does. Nobody deserves beating, ever!
- There are very real pressures, not only *on* the family but *in* the family, as a result of what 'the family' has come to mean and is expected to do in our current society. These pressures are enforced by the institutions which make up our system in such a way that 'the family' can become a trap, especially for women, and more especially for women with children. The dimensions of the trap are seldom visible when the family is not in difficulties, but becomes apparent when family relations break down. We need to understand the demands and expectations which society makes on the family and how these are sanctioned by the law, social assistance policies, police action, employment and housing situations, and so on. These aspects are as much a reality as the internalized feelings and experiences of the individuals concerned.

• Women stay in abusive situations for a number of reasons:

— they do not perceive the situation as avoidable, or remediable.

— they do not see any real alternatives outside the family.

— there are very few alternatives and the institutions of society are not set up to provide alternatives but to reinforce the family as such). This includes many counselling and therapy services).

• At this time, fewer than 20% of the families in Canada are 'traditional' (father-breadwinner; mother-homemaker; two children). In offering support and assistance to women in, or leaving, abusive situations, we are not seeking to break up the family but to maintain the part of the family which is a viable unit — the mother and the children. A man who beats or brutalizes his wife and/or children is not a viable part of a family unit until such times as he stops. ♀

RESOURCES AND SERVICES FOR BATTERED WOMEN

Information on resources and services available for battered women can be obtained by contacting:

Battered Women's Support Services
301-2315 Burrard St., Vancouver
Phone: 734-1574

Vancouver Status of Women
400A West 5th Ave., Vancouver
Phone: 873-1427

Women's Research Centre
301-2515 Burrard St., Vancouver
Phone: 734-0485 Phone: 734-0485

Rape Relief Phone: 872-8212

Society of Transition Houses in B.C.
c/o Munro House
P.O. Box 33904, Stn. D, Vancouver
Phone: 681-9126/7/8

A pamphlet, *Battered Women, a List of Emergency and Support Services for Women who are Battered, Vancouver and Lower Mainland*, may be obtained from the Vancouver Status of Women, listed above.

The pamphlet also lists all the Transition Houses in the province. ♀



by Jean Swanson
Research Analyst
Hospital Employees Union
Local 180

The discrimination gap

for equal work in B.C. hospitals.

In addition, the Union and the NDP government of the day negotiated an agreement which resulted in a \$37.50 per month anti-discrimination adjustment for about 8,400 hospital workers who earned less than the Cleaner rate of pay.

But, the discrimination gap remains. August 1, 1981, H.E.U. monthly rates show the lowest paid female category, Clerk I, is unacceptably below the lowest paid male category, Cleaner. Clerks start at about \$1,100 per month. After a four-year increment progression, they are still \$200 below the base male rate of \$1,500.

As a result, at the Union's 1981 Wage Policy Conference, the H.E.U. Executive made the following recommendations which was adopted by delegates:

"a non-discriminatory base rate of pay based on the Cleaner rate shall be established with existing departmental differentials to be maintained."

"Rough justice" for women

The Cleaner is, historically, the lowest paid predominantly male job in the hospital industry. H.E.U.'s logic is simple. If men in the industry do not work for under \$1,500 per month, there is no reason women should. This will not include a complex, expensive job evaluation system, but simple "rough justice" for women.

H.E.U. is the first B.C. Union to demand equal pay for more than one category of women workers. Most B.C. Unions, who have acted on equal value, have only the clerical staff to raise to equality with men's rates. H.E.U. has clerical, dietary, housekeeping, laundry, and nursing departments, all of which have historical differences between them which members intend to maintain — at least for the present.

When discussing equal pay for work of equal value, the question of how you measure value always crops up. The Canadian Human Rights Commission says you design a job evaluation system which measures the skill, effort, responsibility, and working conditions required for each job. H.E.U. has tended to stay clear of the method for a number of reasons. Job evaluation has a tendency to provide only modest increases for

women and reductions for men. It is an expensive, complex, time-consuming procedure. It pits worker against worker. And, in the hospital industry, where the vast majority of workers are women, comparing under-valued women's jobs to other under-valued women's jobs would not eliminate wage discrimination.

Cost cannot be an excuse

Employers have measured job "value" by the wage they pay to get a certain job done. In an extreme free market economy, this generally means that the more vulnerable the workers are who need the job, the lower the job's value or rate of pay. Women workers have usually been vulnerable workers because their socialization has funnelled masses of women into only a few job categories where they compete against each other; because women's alternatives to low paid employment are often unpaid employment in the home, and because women in the job ghettos are, for the most part, unorganized.

The anti-discrimination adjustment, plus the overall wage increase of \$3.00 per hour demanded by H.E.U., would increase wages of the lowest-paid Clerk by 80%. For the industry as a whole, millions of dollars will be required to eliminate discrimination based on unequal pay for work of equal value. But cost will not deter the Union from pressing its equal value demand. "Cost cannot be an excuse for continuing discrimination," says Union Secretary-Business Manager, Jack Gerow.

Because of the cost, employers have tried to convert the issue of equal pay for work of equal value into the issue of equal job access. Their theory is that if men do women's jobs and women do men's jobs, the wage bill will be the same. While equal job access is one part of eliminating discrimination against women, it totally ignores one fact: jobs women usually do when skill, effort, responsibility and working conditions are the criteria, are under-valued in the marketplace. That's because women's vulnerability has been exploited by employers who have pocketed the wages women should have been getting.

Women getting militant

Gerow says that women workers are getting militant about their own jobs. "Many women won't use equal access.

The 25,000 member Hospital Employees Union is going after equal pay for work of equal value for members in 119 B.C. health care facilities.

About 80% of the Union's membership are women, many in the traditionally women's jobs of food preparation and service, housekeeping, laundry, clerical and nursing.

H.E.U. began its attack on wage discrimination back in 1973 when an arbitrator ruled that twelve women practical nurses employed at Kimberley and District Hospital were discrimination victims because they performed duties substantially similar to male orderlies, but were paid \$144.00 a month less.

The Kimberley decision was followed by a succession of arbitration awards in other hospitals which recognized that licensed practical nurses and orderlies should get equal pay for equal work. Following those decisions, a collective agreement setting out equal pay for practical nurses and orderlies, and reducing the difference in pay between traditionally women's jobs and men's jobs in other categories was signed.

Bill Bennett's 'cornerstone'

You may recall the last Sacred convention where Bill Bennett proclaimed that equal pay for equal work would be the "cornerstone" of their new, improved, 1981 women's policy. Bennett had some trouble understanding the difference between equal work and equal value and quickly backed down from the equal value concept (perhaps after the cost implications to his own government and the private sector were pointed out to him).

By contrast, in 1975, H.E.U. and the B.C. Health Care Employers, with the encouragement and support of the NDP government, had established equal pay

The reaction of Minister of Employment and Immigration Lloyd Axworthy to the Public Forum on Manpower Cutbacks held November 13, 1981, in Vancouver, was immediate. His affirmative action program targeting women, minorities and disabled persons as future critical skills tradespeople would be in jeopardy if all avenues for training were eliminated.

The three-year bilateral agreement between the provincial and federal governments (which was extended to four years this time around) will end on March 13, 1982. The negotiations will probably see the federal government having more control over manpower developments.

Don Henslowe, acting manager for institutional training for CEIC (or Manpower as it is more commonly called) has confirmed that "all previously sponsored pre-employment courses which CEIC buys seats in have had their funding reinstated."



Manpower funding restored

by Suzanne Gerard

Usually, half the seats in a course are bought by CEIC for \$30 per day per space from the training institutions that make the courses available, and who in turn receive their funding from the provincial government.

Confused? In layperson terms, it means that you will have your course paid for and given a living allowance while you take the course.

Courses now funded

Cliff Worthy, training consultant for CEIC pre-apprenticeship programs, has confirmed that "all pre-apprenticeship courses previously sponsored by CEIC have also had funding restored for January, February and March, except for four courses that have been dropped by schools or have been redefined as pre-employment courses."

Eight seats are now sponsored by CEIC in the Women's Exploratory Apprenticeship Training Program (WEAT) and funding has been reinstated for upgrading programs.

Two spaces will be held open for women in the pre-employment and pre-apprenticeship courses until two weeks prior to the starting date of the course. However, if only one space is taken and there is another woman on the waiting list, she will not automatically get the space. To quote Cliff Worthy: "If it is a matter of days they will choose the student who they know will fill the seat regardless of the waiting list." This goes against former manager for institutional training Doug Stead's decree of 'first come, first served.'

Both Don Henslowe and Cliff Worthy agree that the two-week period should be extended to three weeks or a month.

How funding works

Here is how the funding works. The course is paid for plus a living allowance of:

- single and alone, \$70 per week
- woman with one child alone or with non-working spouse, \$90 per week
- woman with two children alone or with non-working spouse, \$105 per week
- woman with three children alone or with non-working spouse, \$120 per week
- woman with four children alone or with non-working spouse, \$135 per week

There is a dependent day care allowance for children under school age of \$20 per week for the first child and \$15 for each additional child.

There is a commuting allowance of 7½ cents a mile after the first 15 miles away from your home.

There is a living-away-from-home allowance of \$40 per week for a course of under two months in duration, if you are maintaining yourself and the residence you left.

Also, there is a grant of 7½ cents per mile to get from Point A to Point B if you must live away from home.

You can collect UIC benefits while CEIC sponsors your course. ♀

THE DISCRIMINATION GAP — Continued

They don't want men's jobs. They want fair value paid to them for the jobs they do now."

Winning equal pay for work of equal value will not be easy. Employers fight against it "on principle" because of the enormous cost. Gerow believes that public sector Unions will have to lead in

the equal pay for work of equal value fight because few ghetto jobs in the private sector are organized.

Women in H.E.U. will not be satisfied until wage discrimination is eliminated. An 83% strike vote has been taken and negotiations continue.

Equal pay for work of equal value: is it the solution?

by Hilda L. Thomas

In its current negotiations with the Hospital Labour Relations Board, the Hospital Employees Union is pressing strongly for the up-grading of low-paying jobs within the health care system through the process of base rate equalization. This would bring the lowest classifications in the clerical area up to the same rate as cleaners. It would mean a significant increase in the base pay for many types of work which share one feature: they are performed mostly by women.

This demand, which has been widely interpreted as a call for Equal Pay for Work of Equal Value, has the Employers Council of B.C. scared out of its wits. And no wonder. In the words of their own position paper, quoted in practically every newspaper in the lower mainland, "The increasing demand for equal pay for work of equal value is caused primarily by the wage gap between men and women" — a gap which has been widening in real terms in the last few years.

How can the Employers Council oppose the concept of equal pay for work of equal value, which to quote their own statement once more, attempts "not only to resolve the male/female pay inequity among people performing similar work, but attempts to establish a non-discriminatory pay relationship between similar jobs?" The Council complains — wrongly — "that there are as yet no generally accepted plans or procedures for evaluating totally dissimilar jobs." (In fact, procedures have been developed and applied in the federal public service — see *Priorities* May-June, 1981). They also envision a situation in which human rights commissions would become involved in every collective agreement in a way that "could have an impact on wage determination throughout the entire economy." You bet your three-piece suit it could!

Union rights?

But organized labour is no more anxious than the employers to see wage negotiations removed from the bargaining table and handed over to the bureaucracy. The effect would be to weaken the appeal of the trade union movement among the growing body of female workers, many of them still not organized, and to slow the whole process of identifying and correcting inequities to an intolerable degree. Some members of HEU are still awaiting the outcome of a



reclassification process which went to arbitration after their last set of negotiations. Meanwhile, they have received no increase in wages and are forced to subsist on a take-home pay that is, in many cases, well under \$10,000 a year.

"Value" definition

Another difficulty which arises in connection with equal pay for work of equal value — one which is recognized by both employers and labour — has to do with the assumption implicit in the concept of "value." If, for example, Licensed Practical Nurses receive a raise in pay in recognition of the "value" of their work relative to that of other employees. RN's, whose work demands more training and imposes greater responsibility, will immediately seek an increase to re-establish the wage differential between themselves and the less "valuable" LPN's. Doctors, in turn, will insist on maintaining their wage superiority over nurses (and everyone else!). The efforts to maintain this hierarchy of "value" thus could serve to reinforce inequities, leaving some jobs at the bottom of the heap to be filled by workers with the least bargaining power. Guess who that means!

But if equal pay for work of equal value is not a solution, what is? According to the Employers Council, "the desired goal of equitable treatment can be achieved by ensuring that women have equal access and equal employment

opportunities to all jobs." Very nice. More women doctors! More women executives! More women architects and lawyers! More women in trades! These are goals which the women's movement has been pursuing, and continues to pursue, not only in Canada, but in the U.S., Great Britain, and Europe, with varying degrees of success. In Canada the number of women in managerial roles have increased by 13% in the last decade, but this represents only 5% of all working women. Women make up 49% of the "professional" category (which includes nurses and teachers) — an increase of 1% in 10 years. In the same period there has been an increase in the percentage of women in the clerical field — from 68% to 78%, and nearly two-thirds of all women workers are in the clerical, sales, and service fields. In other words, women in Canada are increasingly concentrated in low-paid occupational ghettos.

Better abroad

The picture is somewhat brighter in Great Britain and Europe, where the wage gap has been narrowed — to 73% in Britain, which passed an Equal Pay Act in 1970; to 65% in the U.S.; and to 87% in Sweden, where a number of legislative initiatives specifically designed to overcome discrimination have been undertaken. But as the labour market softens and monetarist policies are adopted to "solve" the growing crisis of capitalism at the expense of workers, progress has come to a halt. Moreover, in Great Britain, where the Equal Opportunities Commission has admitted that the effectiveness of the Equal Pay Act is now "all but exhausted," women are still concentrated in service, clerical, and unskilled shop jobs.

Sweden more encouraging

The situation of women in Sweden is somewhat more encouraging, partly because of the long-term commitment of all Swedish political parties to the principle that all people, including the elderly, the disabled, and married as well as single women — have the right to a job, and because the Swedish government has used positive instruments such as the Labour Market Board to maintain employment and bring about equality

between men and women.

In a paper given at the Annual B.C. Economics Conference in Parksville in November, 1981, Art Kube (Director of Education, CLC) examines the legislative strategies developed in Sweden, beginning in the 50's, to alter the traditional attitude towards women in the work force and to create concrete opportunities for the education and employment of women. He quotes a Swedish report to the United Nations in 1968 which states that "to achieve complete equality. . . a radical change in deep-rooted traditions and attitudes must be brought about among both women and men, and active steps must be taken by the community to encourage a change in the roles played by both."



Kube's paper details the positive role played by the Swedish Labour Market Board in the breaking down of traditional ideas about sex roles in the job market, the provision of non-discriminatory job training, and the continuous monitoring of equality programs. He describes a pilot scheme introduced in 1974 which offers state support to new or expanding firms which agree to recruit on the basis of sex quotas (at least 40% from each sex). The paper also outlines other projects, such as the model program begun in Kristianstad in 1973 which aimed at encouraging women to train for and enter non-traditional jobs, and the development of "guidance groups" to assist job-seekers in choosing training and occupations.

Importance of school counselling

Kube also stresses the important role played by school counselling, and the major significance of child care as an enabler of equality in Sweden, where neighbourhood care is available from infancy to age twelve, and 40% of child care workers are male.

The conclusion which Kube draws from the Swedish experience is worth quoting in full. After noting that through "wage solidarity" in negotiations — that is, bottom loading, which has the effect of compressing wage rates and thus in-

creasing job satisfaction and job location over money as a motivation in choosing certain jobs, Kube concludes:

"The question should be asked now, have women achieved equality in Sweden? The answer is no, and it is questionable if they will achieve it in our lifetime. But there is no question women in Sweden are moving towards equality. Women constitute now 45.2% of the Swedish labour force. Women in Sweden now earn 90% of what men earn and these percentages are steadily increasing. A healthy change in attitude can also be detected. You don't hear the statement in Sweden any more, "That's not a fit place for a woman to work." What you hear in Sweden now under the new working environment law is, "That's not a fit place for people to work, let's change it." During my recent visit to Sweden, I made it a point to talk with Swedish trade unionists about the proposition of equal pay for work of equal value. They pointed out to me that in their eyes this was a bourgeois concept based on the market-place. They stated the obvious, that when certain skills were in short supply and big demand, their value would increase in the market-place. However, when there was a large supply of certain skills and no demand for such skills, the value of such skills would decrease in the market-place. They reminded me that Wage Solidarity was designed to abolish value setting by the market-place. To Swedes "Equality is a better symbol. . ."

Kube's examination of the Swedish experience is extremely valuable. However, the dilemma faced by Canadian

women is that our governments have demonstrated no such commitment to equality. In all the areas identified by Kube as essential to equality — job training, counselling, child care, labour market policy and initiatives — governments in this country have either refused to take any responsibility, or have introduced minimum programs only to cut them back or eradicate them the moment the economy shows signs of weakening. Faced with rising unemployment, cutbacks in training programs (280,000 training days in 1981-82), wholly inadequate and unaffordable child care, and the prospect of the elimination of thousands of jobs as a result of technological change, Canadian women are reaching the point of desperation.

The continued exploitation of women workers, the stepping up of propaganda which represents the traditional male-female relationship of subservience and domination as "natural," the increasing violence against women — all these are characteristic of a system in which the abuse and denigration of women serve the interests of profit and privilege. We are not willing to wait a lifetime to change it.

Needed in the short term

As a long-term goal, wage solidarity achieved through the determined efforts of a united labour movement is clearly the best solution to the problem of inequality. In the short term, however, the slogan "Equal Pay for Work of Equal Value" can serve to draw attention to the injustices of the present system, to awaken in women a recognition of the need to organize in the fight for equality — and to scare hell out of the bosses! ♀



INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY — SATURDAY MARCH 6

RALLY — 11 A.M. AT VICTORY SQUARE

MARCH — TO OLD COURTHOUSE, ROBSON STREET — 12 NOON

WOMEN ONLY DANCE — SATURDAY MARCH 6 — 8 P.M.

WEST END COMMUNITY CENTRE, DENMAN STREET

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NOT A LOVE STORY

Film reviewed by Shelley Rivkin

Not a Love Story — a film about pornography — is billed as an investigative journey into the world of pornography, through the eyes of two women: film-maker Bonnie Sherr Klein and stripper Linda Lee Tracy.

Klein and Tracy come from different perspectives but join together in a common goal — to determine what pornography is, why it exists and the various forms it takes.

Their investigation is a gruelling one, taking on a variety of forms. Makers of pornographic material are interviewed, movie theatres are visited, live performances are viewed, and critics of pornography are questioned.

The presentation is graphic, explicit and hard hitting. The film makes no pretence of being neutral or objective. It operates from the premise that pornography is an outrage and every effort is made to appeal to the viewers' emotions and sensitivity. It does not offer strategies or suggest solutions. It just lays pornography on the line, in its ugliest and grossest dimensions.

Raise public awareness

The producers state that the film is not a call to action, but a mechanism to raise the public's awareness to the harmful nature of pornography. By clearly identifying the violent and exploitive character of pornography, the producers hope viewers will define strategies for positive personal action.

Not a Love Story is a difficult film to review. Difficult, because to be objective and analytical, the reviewer should separate herself from the graphic and emotionally wrenching scenes and evaluate the content.

Difficult to review, because in the process of watching the film, one gets caught up in the anger and outrage expressed by the critics of pornography and ignores the lack of political or eco-

nomonic analysis or the discussion of alternatives.

The response becomes so personal. It is your body on the screen being rearranged, spread out, pulled apart, strung up. It is the body of a sister, an aunt, a mother that is the object of a range of violent, coercive or exploitative actions. It is us as women that become a receptacle of verbal and physical abuse.

In my opinion, however, it is precisely this ability of the film to provoke such strong, personal feelings that is both its greatest strength and major weakness.

It is its strength as it clearly portrays pornography as the ugly and violent industry it is. It is its weakness because it goes no further. The film fails to clearly identify why pornography is such a lucrative and growing industry. It barely addresses the economic aspects; who contrives this 550 million dollar a year industry in Canada or who finances or fronts the publishing houses, the movie theatres. There is no connection

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ON
SEXUAL ABUSE OF CHILDREN
IN THE FAMILY**

THURSDAY, MARCH 4, 1982
7:30 P.M.

LORD BYNG SECONDARY SCHOOL
AUDITORIUM
(OFF CROWN & 16TH)
3939 WEST 16TH AVE., VANCOUVER

GUEST SPEAKER
DR. ROLAND SUMMIT
HEAD PHYSICIAN
COMMUNITY CONSULTATION SERVICE
ASST. PROF. OF PSYCHIATRY
HARBOR-UCLA MEDICAL CENTRE, CAL.

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CONTACT: KIM ISAKSSON 228-9771

made between "respectable" corporations who choose to advertise in the magazines and an economic system that uses any method to sell or exploit a product.

Klein misses an ideal opportunity when interviewing David Wells, publisher of five of Canada's most profitable "men's entertainment" magazines. Rather than try and determine his economic motivation, she asks him why he believes pornography exists. Wells replies that "magazines [now] are more explicit, possibly because of women's liberation. Men have started to feel emasculated. . . they would prefer to dominate these women." Rather than challenge his statement or pursue his motivation, the film moves on.

What about the audience?

For me, there were other problems with the film. The film purports to offer insights and perspectives from men and women from inside and outside the business. But the interviews come out polarized — between the "goodies" and the "baddies." One the one side, an impressive array of feminist writers, poets and artists giving their views on why pornography exists; on the other, a selection of sleazy, insensitive photographers, publishers and porn theatre owners taking the film-makers to task for being down on pornography. Caught in between are the products (strippers, performers) and the consumers (men). One doesn't get a sense, from the film, that there are a whole bunch of ordinary people out there, men and women who are angered and appalled at the growth of pornography. Or conversely, that there are intelligent, caring people who express the liberal view that to ban pornography is to interfere with freedom of expression.

By zeroing in primarily on two groups of people, the experts and the perpetrators, the film starts to become distanced from the audience's emotion and experience.

Women dehumanized

Not a Love Story effectively illustrates how pornography dehumanizes women. It demonstrates a clear and overt relationship between sexuality and violence and it stimulates some extremely deep emotions.

While it is simplistic and, at times, superficial in its exploration of the issues, the producers are to be commended for taking such a clear stand.

Given the potential power of this film, it is unfortunate that the sole objective was to raise awareness and not a clear call for action. ♀



block print by Kathe Kollwitz

New attack on abortion rights

by Ann Thomson

The Canadian equivalent to the U.S. Human Life Amendment, which would outlaw all abortions and classify some forms of birth control as murder, has been launched. It is the Borowski challenge to the validity of the abortion laws.

On December 1, 1981, the Canadian Supreme Court agreed to hear a suit brought by Joseph Borowski of Manitoba against the 1969 amendments to the Criminal Code. Those amendments made it legal to perform abortions so long as they are done in hospitals and follow very restrictive guidelines. Borowski wants the law declared invalid on the grounds that the Bill of Rights protects fetuses.

Presumably, he will bring in doctors and scientists to testify that human life begins at conception. Should the suit succeed, the door would be opened to prosecuting women who have abortions, and doctors who perform them, for murder. Use of birth control such as the IUD, which prevents the implantation of the fertilized egg, might also violate the law. And, of course, there would be no more abortions performed in hospitals.

Borowski is well known for his anti-woman actions. He was named Highways Minister in the Manitoba NDP government but resigned this position in 1971 to devote himself to an anti-abortion crusade. He went to jail for

withholding taxes in protest against the abortion laws. In 1981 he went on a hunger fast. These flamboyant gestures now give way to a serious threat against Canadian women because of the Supreme Court's December ruling.

The December 1 ruling

There are several alarming features to the thinking of the justices who will hear and rule on Borowski's challenge. While the phrases quoted here follow the strictures of legal language and are used to convey precise legal meaning, their broader implications for women are also evident.

The justices are emphatic in viewing abortion as principally illegal. As the Majority Opinion, written by Justice Martland, puts it, "The legislation under attack here . . . provides that in certain specified circumstances conduct which otherwise would be criminal is permissible." The justices make no apology for the intentional inequities in the application of the law. They speak as though some Canadians are already getting away, one is tempted to infer, with murder.

The crux of the December 1 decision is to confer legal "standing" on Borowski, thus entitling him to present his case in the Court. The rule of standing excludes a person from bringing an issue to court unless he has "the most direct interest" in it. Of course, Borowski can neither get pregnant nor perform abortions and therefore is not directly affected by these laws.

Only twice before has a member of the public been allowed to challenge the validity of adopted legislation which did not directly affect him. Most of the 25-page text of the December 1 ruling is an examination of these two precedents and of how various groups of Canadians 'stand' in relation to the abortion laws.

The groups given consideration are doctors who perform therapeutic abortions and doctors who do not. Similarly, hospitals that appoint therapeutic abortion committees and those that do not. None of these, in the justices' opinion, have reason to attack the abortion laws.

However, a view that can only be regarded as sympathetic is taken toward "the husband of a pregnant wife who desires to prevent an abortion which she desires." But the justices conclude that the pregnancy would progress faster than the court system, and that such husband would be unable to challenge the law as Borowski undertakes to do.

Women's rights ignored

Nowhere in the ruling are women spoken of as human beings with basic rights. Feminists have challenged the

validity of the abortion laws since the 1969 amendments were adopted, but this challenge is not acknowledged.

The justices exclude the possibility that women might challenge the validity of the law by choosing to ignore all but the woman who is pregnant and who manages to surmount the bureaucratic obstacles to obtaining a legal abortion. "There is no reason why a pregnant woman desirous of obtaining an abortion should challenge the legislation which is to her benefit."

But the women's liberation movement demands the right of women to control their own bodies and defends this as a fundamental human right. This demand requires the repeal of the present anti-abortion laws; i.e. the removal of all legal and bureaucratic barriers to obtaining abortion. Women of all ages and classes are supporters of these demands — not only when they are pregnant.

Further, the justices close their eyes to the well documented fact that the majority of Canadian women do not live anywhere near a hospital that performs abortions, and that millions find legal abortion unobtainable.

Morgentaler trials

This is the same court that twice held hearings and handed down rulings in the case of Dr. Morgentaler. So it cannot claim to be ignorant of the existence or arguments of the pro-choice movement. Morgentaler was prosecuted for operating a clinic, rather than performing abortions in a hospital, and for failing to route his patients through a therapeutic committee. He was acquitted three times in jury trials. The first acquittal was overturned by the Quebec Court of Appeals which, without ordering a retrial, replaced the acquittal with a verdict of guilty. That action was upheld by the Canadian Supreme Court.

The justices have this to say about fetuses:

The legislation proposed to be attacked has a direct impact upon the unborn human fetuses whose existence may be terminated by legalized abortions. They obviously cannot be parties to proceedings in court and yet the issue as to the scope of the Canadian Bill of Rights in the protection of the human right to life is a matter of considerable importance.

There is no reasonable way in which that issue can be brought into Court unless proceedings are launched by some interested citizen.

And thus the door was opened for Borowski and the anti-abortion movement to go to the Supreme Court.

What must be done

The strongest and best defence against the Borowski challenge is to mobilize all our supporters in a massive, continuing expression of support for a woman's right to choose.

We do not know when the case will come to Court, but it is vital to use the time ahead to good advantage to show that the majority of Canadians support women's right to choose and call for repeal of all anti-abortion laws.

Organizations such as the Canadian Abortion Rights Action League in Toronto (CARAL), are investigating applying to make presentations to the Court. The NDP, whose history of fighting the unjust anti-abortion laws dates back to Grace MacInnis's Private Member's Bill in the early 70's to repeal the 1969 amendments to the Criminal Code, should consider applying to intervene into the Court as well.

More immediately, the NDP should help organize protests such as that being planned in B.C. for the weekend of Mother's Day, May 8-9, 1982. The province-wide weekend of actions for abortion rights was first adopted by the November convention of the B.C. Federation of Women, after a proposal put forth by Concerned Citizens for Choice on Abortion (CCCA) in Vancouver.

CCCA and the BCFW call on NDP women's and constituency associations across the province to contact them about launching an action in their localities. The form of the protests should be chosen locally, in the light of local resources and needs. The demands of the actions are to be: *Defend a Woman's Right to Choose, Repeal all Anti-Abortion Laws.*

Attend the Planning Meeting

In the Lower Mainland, a Planning Meeting has been scheduled for Saturday, February 13, from 1 - 4 p.m. at Trout Lake Community Centre, Vancouver. All are urged to come and decide the format of the Vancouver area actions and get them underway.

CCCA can be contacted at P.O. Box 24627, Station C, Vancouver V5T 4E1. Telephone: 876-9920.

PACIFIC CINEMATHEQUE

MARCH 15 7:30 and 9:30

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'PRIORITIES'

Editorial Committee meetings are held at 8:00 p.m.

THE FIRST WEDNESDAY OF EVERY MONTH

at Provincial Office
517 East Broadway
Vancouver

All NDP women are invited to attend and discuss, plan and contribute to upcoming issues of *Priorities*.

Contributions, letters and suggestions may also be sent to *Priorities*, NDP Provincial Office, 517 E. Broadway, Vancouver, B.C. V7T 1X4.

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WOMEN FACE THE 80's

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 - Mar. 1 Reproduction - Women's Health Collective
 - Mar. 8 Violence Against Women International Women's Day
 - Mar. 15 Politics and Government
 - Mar. 22 Sexuality - Women's Health Collective
 - Mar. 29 Pornography & Prostitution
 - Apr. 5 Organizing women: Film "Willmar 8"
 - Apr. 19 Occupational Health
 - Apr. 26 Surviving the Reality
- Fee \$3.00/ session or \$20 series.
MONDAYS 5:30 - 7:30

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- THE EAST IS RED, THE WEST IS BENDING
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