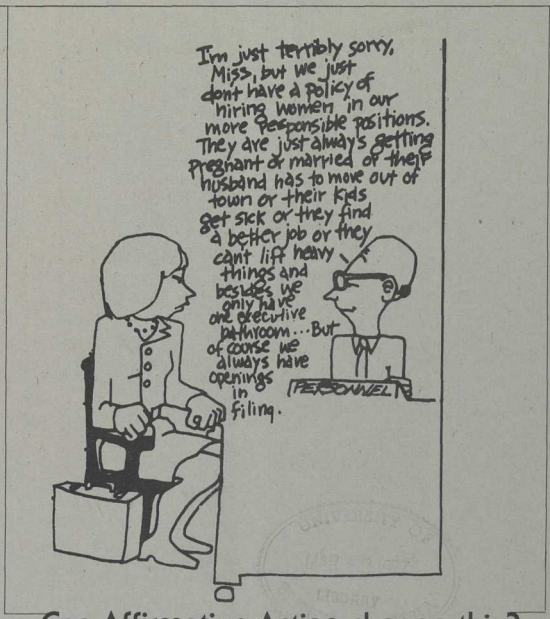
SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

KINESIS

FEBRUARY 77

vol 6 no 3

vancouver status of women

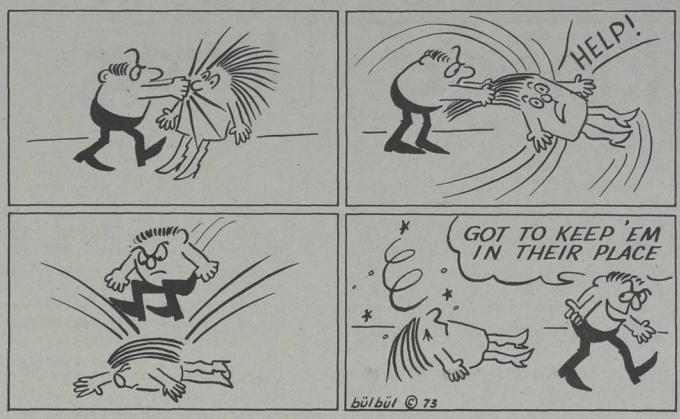


Can Affirmative Action change this?

Battered Women

at VSW, kinesis means change

BUT WHY DOESN'T SHE LEAVE HIM?



analysis

Until the women's movement raised the issue, wife-battering went unrecognized and unreported. Beaten women were forced into pretending that theirs was a non-problem. In this way, wife-battering has much in common with rape. Both were seen as personal rather than social problems until the women's movement raised consciousness about them. Both stem from the system of male supremacy within which women are pieces of property to be used/abused by men. But there are two important differences between rape and wife-battering. One is that the wife-batterer is supposed to be the very person to whom the woman can turn for shelter from the storm. The other, and this is vital, is that in the case of wife-battering (partner-battering might be a more accurate term), the woman is economically dependent upon the man.

Woman's position in the family as an unwaged worker is one which society has trained her for and encouraged her to enter. Her skills, those of home maintenance and child rearing, are not skills which she can easily sell, as society can conveniently pretend that these are non-skills. Stemming from this economic dependence is a whole network of emotional and psychological relationships between the woman who is being beaten and the man who is doing the beating. Then there's the kids. Even if the woman is working, she's earning less than the man 90% of the time. Her income is keeping the family above the poverty line. To ask a woman to walk out of this overnight (as in, "If a man ever struck me, that would be it..I'd be out that door so fast...") is to ask her to abandon not only her physical shelter and her arrangements for having something to eat, but also the whole social fabric she has been trained to accept. Betsy Warrior writes:

> "Women's economic dependence on males must be abolished and the family structure itself must be changed. Sexism, like racism...is a political philosophy of which wife beating is but one expression. Only when

turn to p.3

action

Throughout the last decade, feminists have been working upon public education to dispel myths surrounding wife-battering. When TIME, in September of '74, professed to enlighten us on the subject of "Wife Beaters and Their Wives" by telling us that the men were 'mother's boys' and that the beaten women were "aggressive, efficient, masculine and sexually frigid", we didn't let them get away with it.

The women's movement has consistently opposed the ideology of the church and of psychiatry which rationalizes the oppression of women. ("Women are like the masses in wanting to be mastered and ruled." - Freud) Myths surrounding female masochism have been widely brought into doubt.

Along with public education, the women's movement has demanded social, economic and legal changes which will make it easier for the battered woman to escape her husband. For an excellent account of these demands, and of the current parlous state of Canadian justice with respect to battered women, read Violence Begins at Home, which appeared in "The Canadian" (The Province's weekend supplement) on November 2, '76. VSW member Arlene Gropper and Joyce Marvin investigate the alternatives for the battered woman. Where can she go? The police consider 'family disturbance' calls trivial matters. In a recent six month period in Vancouver, they bothered to make written reports on only 17% of such calls. And locally, only a few cases ever do reach the court. Gropper and Marvin quote a JP's remark: "Most charges by battered women are withdrawn at a later date, and besides, these are private matters between a man and a woman."

Where can a woman go? An extensive study of wife battering in the Vancouver area in the fall of '76 indicated that well over half of the women contacted Emergency Shelters, Transition Houses, Crisis Centres and the Vancouver Status of Women. Almost a quarter of the cases in this Vancouver study contacted Vancouver Transition House. Of the 330 women contacting the Transition House, 180 had to be turned away due to lack of facilities. turn to p.3

what it's like

My name is Jamie. I'm an ex-battered wife and I'm a feminist. I didn't have enough money to leave my husband when he started beating up on me. I was dependent upon him, period. I've said it before and I'll be saying it again: it all comes down to dollars and cents. If I could have left him then, I would have. I didn't have many job skills. Typing: 30 wpm; working in a store. Three kids under four. I couldn't leave. When I hear people say, "Why doesn't she leave him?", well, I want to scream: she can't, you dummy, because she's got to eat!

I got married when I was 18 because I was pregnant. I had my first two children one year apart. The first time he beat me up I had one four, one three and one just a baby. I'd found that I could either do the housework, or look after the kids. Not both. So I opted for looking after the kids. My husband wanted a clean house. I did, too. He'd just been fired from his job, and the only thing he could get was driving a truck in the afternoons. That first time I did tell somebody, although later I learned to keep quiet about it. My neighbour saw my bruises and my black eye - he used to go for my face, first - and asked me if I'd run into a book. I said, "No, my husband beat up on me." She said: "Isn't that funny!!", and laughed. She was under society's pressure not to admit that such things could happen, I guess.

Another time he beat me up, he got me in the bathroom, and he flipped me backwards into the bath. I got out of the bath and went into the bedroom to get dressed. Next thing I knew he was grabbing me by my feet and dragging me out the front door. No way I was going to be locked out of my own home, so I got round the back and crawled through the basement window. He was sending the kids around to lock all the doors and windows.

The fifth time he did it, I called the cops. They took their time arriving - I could have been dead by the time they showed up. My husband turned to pudding when they finally came, however. It took me

turn to p.3

kinesis letters

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kinesis costs 35 cents a copy in bookstores.

kinesis is published monthly by the Vancouver Status of Women. Its objective is to promote understanding about the changing position of women in society today.

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kinesis-warmly welcomes all letters of discussion, debate and principled criticism.

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Special thanks again to Jerrylee Cerny for her graphic work on this issue. Some of the briefs on p.6 are courtesy of BIG MAMA RAG, an excellent publication from 1724 Gaylord, Denver CO.

KINESIS:

In connection with an article which appeared in the November 1976 issue of Kinesis, the Rights of Lesbians Subcommittee of BCFW would like to clarify our position with regard to the statement read on our behalf at the 4th Annual Gay Conference in Toronto.

Your article was reprinted from a gay liberation journal, The Body Politic, in which we were badly misquoted.

Our actual statement, ready by Gloria Geller, was, however:

"We, the B.C. Federation of Women, Rights of Lesbian Subcommittee, believe lesbian oppression and women's oppression to be more aligned than lesbian oppression and gay male oppression. As lesbians we are equally oppressed as women. We feel that the oppression of lesbians is the ultimate extension of women's oppression. Lesbians are oppressed less for relating to women than for refusing to relate to men in the approved female roles. The struggle for lesbian rights cannot be separated from the struggle for women's rights. The gay fight for equal status with heterosexuals does nothing to change our patriarchal society where men have power over women. Until women have equality with men, the fight for equality with heterosexuals merely gives gay men equal status with heterosexual men and reinforces the oppression of women. Our fight is not only for the right to relate to someone of the same sex."

It seems peculiar that you would choose to reprint an article from a 'Gay Liberation' journal, when feminist papers, like Toronto's The Other Woman, carry such accurate reports of these conferences. (You do not need to go so far for information. The Rights of Lesbians Subcommittee meets in Vancouver regularly, usually right in your basement!)

We appreciate the coverage of Lesbian events and issues in Kinesis; this is an important step in building a strong, united women's movement. We would be pleased to send reports directly to your paper, knowing now, that information we send is used.

Please, please though, approach us on matters concerning statements allegedly made by the Rights of Lesbians Subcommittee. (We are busy enough taking responsibility for statements we actually do make, let alone misinterpretations!)

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Yvette Perreault for
The Rights of Lesbians
Subcommittee of the B.C.
Federation of Women

KINESIS:

With reference to the unsigned article entitled VIGIL AT THE PEN on page 14 of your January 1977 issue, Vol. 1, #2, it is noted in a box statement that this purports to be "Facts from the Prisoners' Rights Group. Find out more about their work by phoning 299-7178 or 922-7598."

Please be advised that this article did not emanate from the Press and Publicity Committee of the Prisoners' Rights Group, the only authorized source for such a release.

In view of the nature of the article which contains several errors, omissions and distortions, as well as the unwarranted inclusion of my telephone number, it would be appreciated if this correction be published in the next issue of KINESIS.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Yours sincerely,

Claire Culhane
for PRISONERS' RIGHTS GROUP

Editor, Kinesis.

Dear Sister (if I may so address you):

Dulce Oikawa's article, "Women and Religion", gives a wrong impression of the Anglican conception or recognition of sacraments. As an Anglican I should point out that the article confuses Roman Catholic and Anglican beliefs when it asserts, "Other sacraments in the Church include baptism, confirmation, marriage, holy orders (ordination), penance (forgiveness), and death". (I don't think death is regarded as a sacrament in either Church, but we'll let this pass!)

The 25th Article of Religion of the Anglican Church says, in part: "There are two Sacraments ordained of Christ our Lord in the Gospel, that is to say, Baptism, and the Supper of the Lord.

"Those five commonly called Sacraments, that is to say, Confirmation, Penance, Orders, Matrimony, and extreme Unction, are not to be counted for Sacraments of the Gospel, being such as have grown partly of the corrupt following of the Apostles, partly are states of life allowed in the Scriptures; but yet have not the nature of Sacraments with Baptism, and the Lord's Supper, for that they have not any visible sign or ceremony ordained of God."

Theology is not a speciality of mine, but I can at least quote Article XXV!

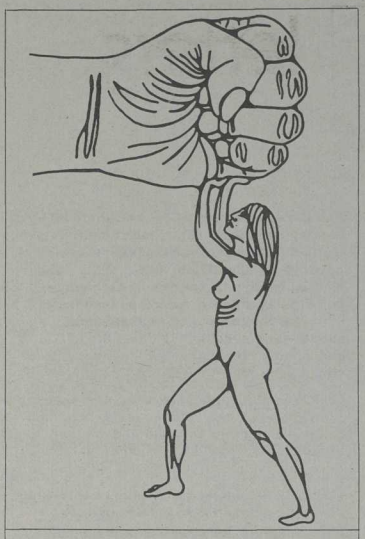
Sincerely yours,
Geoffrey B.Riddlehough

analysis(cont) from col 1, p.1

This political crime is not simply a matter of male-female sexual politics but reflects the domination of our society by those who exploit the many for the profit of the few. As long as our social decisions are being made on the basis of what is profitable rather than what is humane, the wife-beater has a whole arsenal behind him. As a feminist lawyer puts it, "A judge isn't going to put a guy who makes a living in jail and his wife on welfare. In terms of the respective values of our society, his earning money outweighs her possible injury."

The growing movement which demands an end to wife-battering also recognizes that the violence expressed by the man upon the woman is an expression of a violent society. He's taking out his anger upon her which is produced within him by having to compete for his job, by being pressured by his boss, by lay-offs, speed-ups, etc. Instead of fighting back against this exploitation, he finds it easier to release his frustration by kicking his wife around. It's one step up from kicking the cat. The battered wife is thus a casuality at the end of a long line of abuse and alienation which is integral to our capitalist system.

Transition Houses are a necessary step in combatting this brutality: women must have a safe place away from their attackers. But finally it's a temporary Band-Aid solution, as are more sensitive responses from the legal system. What we are really opposing is the violence of a whole society.



action cont. from col 2, p.1

Clearly, battered women realise that their greatest chance of support will come from other women. The establishment of Transition Houses, and their staffing by feminists is a priority of the women's movement. Throughout B.C., the struggle for funding for these Houses is an acute one. We now have Transition Houses in Victoria, Vancouver, Langley, Kamloops and Prince George. None of these has funding which is adequate to meet the needs of battered women. In Maple Ridge, (from col 2, this page.)

Chez Nous, a transition house, had to close its doors when its LIP funding ran out. Ishtar transition house, now in Aldergrove, was forced to close its doors for several months in '76, but has been able to reopen. Port Coquitlam women are currently battling with Human (sic) Resources Minister, Vander Zalm, for a transition house in their area. VSW URGES READERS TO WRITE TO VANDER ZALM IN SUPPORT OF THE REQUEST BY THE PORT COQUITLAM WOMEN'S CENTRE FOR A TRANSITION HOUSE IN THEIR AREA.

In New York City, a class action suit is under way against the New York Police and the Family Court. It is being filed by one of 12 married women who were seriously beaten by their husbands and then refused assistance by the police and the family court. This the first time, ever, that such legal action has been taken by women. The National Congress of Neighborhood women and other women's groups who were active in organising the suit are also demanding funds to provide shelters for battered wives. They insist that these shelters must be controlled by women's groups, not by the state. This class action suit follows on the heels of a large speak-out in NYC by battered wives: most of whom were poor and working class, nearly half of whom were Black.

In Vancouver, a research group sponsored by the United Way has just completed an extensive study of Wife Battering. Included in their Recommendations are the establishment of Transition Houses. We must ensure that such new Houses are staffed and controlled by feminists.

jamie's story

(continued from col.3, p.1)

a whole week to actually make up my mind to press charges, but I did it. Then the lawyer got me to see a marriage counsellor. My husband kept telling me that if I went ahead with the charges I would give him a criminal record and jeopardise his job, and his job opportunities. The counsellor went along with that argument. I was swayed by that, because my own future depended on his job. And the kids' future did, too. So I dropped the charges. I really regret that now. Another thing was that my 12 year old daughter would have had to go to court as a witness and it would have been really ugly for her.

I joined the Women's Liberation Alliance in Vancouver in 1971. My husband felt that I was really threatening his authority. He was 'very liberal' about it when I told him that I had become involved in the women's movement. But underneath he was afraid. And still is. He feels very strongly that he has lost his authority, and that I have pressured him to change. And in 1971 none of the other men at work had wives who were into women's liberation.

I felt really stuck with raising the kids, and until I joined the women's movement I had absolutely nowhere to go for help. Being at home with them all day was really hard. I had a few Christmas jobs - one year I worked in pyjamas. I got home at 6.45 and had to start picking up after the kids; it was really exhausting. Then I worked at the Bay in china and I nearly went round the bend. Finally I got a job as a coordinator of a gift shop and it was a bit better. But the kids were still all my responsibility. When I did turn to my husband for help with them, he would say that I was being "too goddam lenient" and wade in with hobnail boots to show me the 'right' way to raise kids. He was beaten as a child himself. He says that he deserved it. He really believes that.

Being in the women's movement was the first time I felt I had any support behind me, and that my ideas were being given any credence. I felt more confident, and I learned better how to stand up for myself in an argument. One of the things I did shortly after joining the movement was to go on strike at home. I didn't do any housework for four months. After that time (and there were fights along the way) my husband said that if I started doing housework again, he would give me an allowance.

Because he is making good money now, and has ample job security (he works for a crown corporation), I have been able to leave and get a 'good' separation allowance so that the kids and I can get by.

The very last time he started hitting me, I jumped on him and started fighting back with all my might. He was really surprised (drunk, too, which is usual when he's attacking me) and I was able to really let him have it. I think he'll never try to beat me again. I have no special fighting skills. I just laid into him, punching and kicking and pulling his hair.

Now that we're formally separated, I still see him sometimes. You don't just take a large chunk of your life and throw it away, no matter how bad it was. Just before I left him, he was being a little less of a John Wayne. Maybe more Henry Fonda. But now he's hard at work embracing the male stereotype: 39, with a good job at last. Into sailing in competitions. Making a suave come-on to younger women. His last desperate attempt to prove that he's a real hero.

If anyone is in the situation that I was in, I would advise you to leave, if you are at all able to, in any way. Do it. Don't stick around. It took me eighteen years to make the move and twelve of those years were most unhappy. After spending that long a time in that kind of repressive atmosphere, I became more and more unsure of myself. Often I felt ashamed for staying, and very guilty. Any self-esteem I ever had had shrivelled down to next to nothing.

CANADIAN HUMAN RIGHTS ACT:

a feminist critique

The Canadian Human Rights Act (C-52) is a Federal Act which is being read in the House this session. It has already passed First Reading and is approaching Second Reading. Now is the time for feminists to respond to the Act and to have our voices heard, before it's too late.

We recognize that the effectiveness of the human rights legislation depends on three elements being fully met: adequate legislation, suitable appointments as Commissioners and funding and commitment from the government for Commission to implement legislation.

The Canadian Human Rights Act should begin with an adequate preamble affirming the unalienable rights of citizens to participate fully in society. We feel that it is important for this legislation to promote rights and not merely oppose discrimination. The difference between recognizing rights and freedoms and providing economic and social conditions to exercise them must be acknowledged. The legislation should be broad, positive and aimed at enhancing the dignity of all human beings as well as improving their quality of life. It must have supremacy over all other federal legislation.

The legislation must state positively and clearly that discrimination can occur only if reasonable grounds exist. Any definitions, exceptions or elaborations should enhance this concept. It should encourage and facilitate the individual's access to remedy as a matter of right and provide a unified clear and free avenue of recourse for victims of discrimination.

The legislation must give the Commission independence, making it responsible to parliament similar to the bilingualism legislation. The Commission should have wide powers to promote human rights through education and affirmative action programmes to investigate and mediate actions. It should be able to appear before tribunals and other parliamentary committees in the role of amicus curiae. It should also make itself available to persons and groups wishing to make presentations. It must have the power to review existing legislation, regulations and practice and advise the government, and make recommendations for changes in laws, etc. which contradict the legislation. Finally, while recognizing that education and mediation should be the first objectives of the Commission, the Commission must have the machinery to enforce orders and the discretion to make awards in those cases where individuals have suffered financial loss or humiliation.

The effectiveness of the Act will depend on the quality and integrity and commitment of the persons appointed as Commissioners. The HRC should be appointed by Parliament to whom it should also be responsible. Members of the Commission should not necessarily be lawyers and should realistically represent the male/female ratio in Canada.

Lastly, it is obvious that the Commission will need adequate funds and human resources to enable it to be effective in the battle against discrimination.

The Federal Government has had ten years to listen to concerned groups and to study various provincial human rights branches in action. There was even a trial run in 1975 when Bill C-72 was introduced. The Justice Minister's Christmas gift for '76 was in a few instances a slight improvement to the previous bill, but not the far-reaching legislation we had hoped for. At best it is a cautious step to halt outrageously discriminating practices on the most narrow grounds. Every effort seems to have been made to protect the Crown and its agencies from having to scrutinize their own attitudes and practices of discrimination.

SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING BILL C-25

1. The preamble should include a positive affirmation of the rights of all individuals to be allowed to develop their personal abilities and to be judged by those abilities. Reference should be made to the Bill of Rights and the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights.

2. There must be a primacy clause to ensure that the Human Rights legislation has supremacy over other existing legislation.

3. There is no clause stating that discrimination can only occur because of reasonable cause. The categories listed in the Act (race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, age, sex or marital status, or conviction for an offence for which a pardon has been granted or by discriminatory employment practices based on physical handicap) is much too limited.

   In addition to a reasonable cause clause, political affiliation, life style, sexual orientation, economic or social standing, previous criminal conviction, mental or emotional handicap, should be included unless such characteristics are shown to be directly related to the capacity to perform the assigned work.

4. Denial of services, facility or accommodation should be based on reasonable cause.

5. Sections 11(3) (4) and 14(a) should be removed. 11 limit and /or restrict the present definitions and could be interpreted to ensure that women are contained in job ghettos.

6. The several sections excluding CPP, all pension, insurance and annuity plans could be adequately dealt with under sections 32(7), 64, and 65. Under section 32(7) no one may lose benefits already provided. The Commission can decide when to take action, thereby giving time to establish new regulations and legislation, which are in agreement with Human Rights legislation.

7. The Indian Act has been specifically exempted from this Act. VSW, while recognizing the need for this, believes that allowing the blatant sex discrimination found in this Act to remain, makes a mockery of the government's stated intention of curbing discrimination.

8. The Cabinet retains too much control (regulations regarding procedures for investigation, consent needed to prosecute under the Act, Treasury Board approval, no budget, can appoint Labour officers and assign to them Human Rights duties). Commission should be able to make regulations subject to approval of Parliament. There should be no statutory limit to the number of regional offices.

Two good things:

1. Section 11 makes it a discriminatory practice for an employer to establish and maintain differences in wages between male and female employees employed in the same establishment who are performing work of equal value.

2. Section 22 gives the federal Commission the power to review any regulations etc. of the federal government and to make recommendations regarding them, and to enter into agreements with the provincial human rights to perform each other's functions and duties and work together on projects, etc.

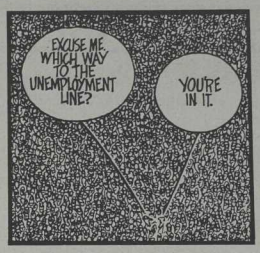
This critique was prepared at VSW by ombudsperson Carol Pfeiffer, in cooperation with Johanna den Hertog, Sheila Jones and Shelley Lea.

UIC HASSLES

SORWUC (Service, Office and Retail Workers of Canada) are currently fighting a UIC decision which has denied benefits to a woman on the basis that she was not employed during the requisite 10 week period around the date of conception. This is a discriminatory clause and should, therefore, be eradicated.

In addition, both AUCE and SORWUC have encountered problems with the existing UIC Act in trying to get union clauses that deal with maternity and pay leave implemented. At AUCE, they have a clause which provides that the employer will pay women the difference between her Maternity Pay on UIC and what she would normally have received in salary had she been working during her maternity leave period, if she afterwards returns to work for at least six months.

Find out more about this situation from SORWUC at 681-2811.



Last month, in reporting upon comments upon women's issues in the Federal House of Commons, Kinesis raised the issue of the eligibility of women for UIC benefits upon the premature birth of a baby. The Hon. Bud Cullen, Federal Minister of Manpower and Immigration, responds:

"On February 1, 1976, the legislation governing the payment structure of maternity benefits was changed. Under the changes, a woman may be entitled to receive the maximum of 15 consecutive weeks of maternity benefits beginning as early as 8 weeks before the expected week of birth and ending as late as 17 weeks after the week in which her baby was born.

Any woman who has a premature baby can apply for maternity benefits as soon as her baby is born and may be eligible to receive the maximum of 15 weeks of benefits. Of course, she must still meet the basic qualifying conditions. She must have at least 20 weeks of insurable employment in the 52 weeks before applying or since the start of her last claim, whichever is the shortest period. She must also have at least 10 weeks during which she worked in insurable employment or received benefits between the 30th and 50th week before the week in which her baby is born."

As the economy deteriorates, the government is moving to whittle down the UIC ACT so that fewer unemployed workers qualify for benefits. Last December 9, Bud Cullen tabled a motion to amend the Act. The eligibility for benefits was extended from a minimum of eight weeks to twelve weeks. 50,000 jobless were deprived of benefits.

This discrimination extends in a sexist manner to women. Whereas ordinary workers must now work 12 weeks for a minor claim, the pregnant woman must have worked for 20 weeks. And she must be working while she becomes pregnant!

The Vancouver Status of Women gives its fullest support to groups such as AUCE and SORWUC who are organising to challenge this Act, which oppresses women workers with elegant, bureaucratic sexism.

AN EXTRA MUSICAL REVIEW

sandra heindsmann

January 23rd, the Vancouver New Music Society presented a concert on the occasion of Barbara Pentland's sixty-fifth birthday. Extra-musically it was as interesting and rewarding an evening as it was for the ear. My particular pleasure was at the visible contribution local women had made to the evening. Firstly, Ms. Pentland is an inspiring Vancouver artist, whose work Disasters of the Sun was commissioned especially by the New Music Society. Much New Music is difficult to listen to, although usually intellectually interesting. Both Interplay, a chamber piece for accordian and strings, and Disasters were beautiful and pleasurable. I was impressed moreover at the, may I say dignity, maintained by the accordian despite my expectations. There are no gimmicks in Pentland's work, and the accordian was used in the best tradition of New Music, which approaches sound as if it were newly discovered, showing us what is possible to hear.

Disasters, the major piece of the evening was interesting too, in that Ms. Pentland had been inspired by her friend Dorothy Livesay's poem series of the same title. Both women have not only maintained their artistic vision as women into maturity, but show development which dignifies us all in its disavowal, by example, of our major obsolescence myths. When Livesay writes to the sun "I have lived sixty-five years/under your fiery blades" and "My hands that used to be leaves...have become roots gnarled in soil" in a sequence which includes "no more lovely man can be/than he with moon-wand/who witches water" our ideas on aging and the sexual lifetime are expanded. This necessity to re-evaluate in the midst of pleasure is a true gift of art.

Phyllis Mailing, soloist, has been commended many times as an exceptionally fine interpreter of New Music. I would like to thank her moreover for the clarity with which the poetry was expressed. Both Pentland as composer and Mailing as performer let music and word enhance each other, without the operatic distortion one too often encounters. Besides these three outstanding women artists, two other aspects of the evening added to my sense of sexual pride. In Tom Takemitsu's piece Bryce, flautist Kathy Cernauskas conducted while playing, in an unostentatious manner of competency which also says much for this consistently satisfying series of concerts by the Society. The sense of sharing this living music among creators, performers and appreciators is well housed by the Vancouver East Cultural Centre's intimate setting, visually and accoustically. The fourth piece, a fine quartet for strings, was by Ruth Seeger, yes, Pete and Mike's mother. The program notes that she "brought an adventurous mind to composition despite her rather small output". One can understand this, as she raised her talented family at the same time that she both "developed teaching methods for children utilizing folk music" and "transcribed, edited and arranged several thousand American folk songs" in collaboration with the Library of Congress. Some day we will not have to highlight the contribution of women artists, nor even to note their integration in the world of their fellow workers. Meantime, an evening of excellent music by two women composers, a poet and a performer-conductor does much to raise the spirits and contrast the old picture of men in tuxedos fiddling away to each other while we peak around our elaborate hair sculptures to watch.

The collaboration of these artists and the Society and the four men (in quiet grey suits) who played Pentland's and Seeger's pieces - the Purcell String Quartet - and the men and women (in black and white street clothes) who played with them in other pieces (one percussionist dipping bells and chimes into a dish of water) gave us a far different picture for eye and ear. I thank them.

women round the world

U.S.

HOUSEWORK STILL DOESN'T PAY

A nationwide drive opened in November to enforce the extension of federal minimum wage laws to 1.5 million maids, cooks and other domestic workers. The campaign is coordinated by the National Committee on Household Employment which won federal minimum wage coverage of $2.20 an hour for household workers in 1974, after a 10-year struggle. Since then, enforcement of that law has been almost non-existent.

Household workers have a median yearly income of only $2,700 per year. 97 percent of them are women, 54 percent are Black and the median age is 50.

Abortion in Europe

Italy's lower house of parliament has passed a new abortion law which replaces a Mussolini-era ban on abortions as a crime against the purity of the Italian race.

This measure, which was passed by a coalition ranging from C.P. to conservative Liberal, was opposed by the governing Christian Democrats and by the Roman Catholic Church. The new law would permit abortions to avoid "serious danger to the physical or mental health of the woman in relation to her state of health, to her economic, social or family conditions or to circumstances in which she conceived, or in anticipation of abnormalities or malformations in the baby to be born."

A woman wanting an abortion would have to consult a doctor, but could make her own decision after a week of reflection.

HOLLAND ABORTION CRACK-DOWN

For the second time in two years an attempt has been made to close down the Bloemebhove Abortion Clinic, the only one in the Nederlands which will terminate pregnancies over 12 weeks.

Over a thousand people, mostly women, protested at the closure, breaking into wards locked by bailiffs. At present, abortion clinics are technically illegal, though they are tolerated by authorities while abortion law reform is being debated.

ABORTION ILLEGAL IN PORTUGAL

Women lawyers working through the Democratic Women's Rights Movement in Portugal have completed their list of feminist demands. Although the new Portuguese constitution guarantees equal pay and insists that working women should be paid their full salary before and after childbirth, the guarantees have only recently gone into effect.

The constitution does not mention abortion, and therefore, under the law of the previous regime, abortion is still illegal. Hundreds of the more than 150,000 abortions performed in Portugal each year are fatal due to unsafe conditions.

SOUTH KOREA

The women's movement in Japan has begun to campaign against kisaeng tourism in South Korea. The kisaeng (Korean style geisha) is licensed by the South Korean government to 'entertain her guest in his bedroom' and 'kisaeng girls' are hired by the tourist hotels in Seoul to cater to their guests, predominantly male delegations of business people coming from Japan. As well, young South Korean women are exported to fill the same functions in the Japanese hotels, with the connivance of the South Korean government which stamps their passports "Artistic Delegation".

The industrial structure of South Korea has changed greatly within the last decade. Between 1962 and 1969, for example, there was a 10% shift from agriculture to manufacturing. As in many 'developing' countries, this neglect of agriculture has created rural poverty, mass migration to the cities and the growth of urban slums. Private investors put their money into textiles and clothing, electronics, cars and pharmaceuticals, banking, insurance and tourism in preference to education, health care or agriculture. Thus, the people fleeing from the poverty of the countryside provide cheap urban labour pools for the new industries. For the women, who are employed by the thousands of small and middle-sized factories, a working day is 10 - 12 hours with one short break, often extended to 18 hours. The pay for this is about $12 a month. Ten hours as a whore, however, brings the woman twice as much as she earns in her 10 - 18 hour factory day. Under this free enterprise system, she is free to choose between two modes of exploitation.

(Facts from SPARE RIB, 9 Newburgh St, London. Ask your local library to subscribe to it.)

CHILE

Each month, Kinesis takes part in a letter-writing campaign coordinated in Vancouver by the Committee for the Defense of Human Rights in Chile. None of the women from last month's campaign have been released, so our letters on their behalf must continue. However, Yvonne Sasz, Reina Jorquera nad Valeska Contreras, from last October's campaign have been released.

The women for this month's letter-writing campaign are:

MARIA CRISTINA LOPEZ STEWARD, a 23 year old history student. She was picked up on October 23, 1974 and has been subjected to savage torture. Her whereabouts today are unknown. She was seen at Tres Alamos in solitary confinement. DISAPPEARED.

CARMEN BUENO CIFUNETES, a 25 year old actress who was arrested in November of 1974 by DINA (Secret Police) agents. She has been seen at Villa Grimaldi, and at Tres Alamos and 4 Alamos. She, too, has been hideously tortured. DISAPPEARED.

Even inside prison, the Chilean people are fighting back. The local Committee has copies of CHILEAN POLITICAL PRISONERS DENOUNCE. The articles in this pamphlet were written by political prisoners who risk every kind of torture and brutality to tell the truth.

Write to several or all following addresses:

Maria Eugenia Oyarzun
Oficina de la Mujer
Edificio Diego Portales
Santiago Chile

As this is the official government women's office, it is a prime target for our part in the campaign. One can only wonder how the women on staff there rationalize their support for the junta.

Monsenor Enrique Alvear
Arzobispado de Santiago
Casilla 30-D
Santiago de Chile

General Augusto Pinochet
Edificio Diego Portales
Santiago de Chile

Ministerio del Interio
General Benavides
Edificio Diego Portales
Santiago de Chile

Servicio Nacional de Salud
Enrique Mac-Iver 541
Santiago de Chile

Sr.M.Eyzaguirre
Presidente de la Corte Suprema
Plaza Montt
Santiago de Chile

IN CANADA:
Horacio Arce
56 Sparkes St. Ste 816
Ottawa, Ontario
Canada.

UN:
Kurt Waldheim
General Secretary
O.N.U.
New York, NY

(Contact: COMMITTEE FOR THE DEFENSE OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN CHILE, 906 - 207 West Hastings St, Vancouver; ph: 669 5545)

Sisterhood makes the news

women lowest paid

WOMEN CIVIL SERVANTS LOWEST PAID IN 1975

OTTAWA (CP) - The majority of women public servants remained in the lowest-paid jobs with the least status in 1975 despite government promises to reverse that trend because it was International Women's Year, said an employment report released today.

The detailed report was prepared by the Advisory Council on the Status of Women for discussion by its 30 members from across the country at their first quarterly meeting of the year today and Wednesday.

The wage gap between men and women public servants widened, the concentration of women in administrative support jobs increased and only three more women were promoted to executive positions, the report said.

"It is evident that government policy directives made at that time have not been effective," the council concluded in the report.

"It is apparent that the government will have to be even more aggressive if it is really serious about improving the status and opportunities of its women employees.

Although the number of women in the public service increased to 89,129 or 32.6 per cent of the total employees in 1975, from 81,911 or 31.7 per cent in 1974, their employment in top jobs barely changed, the report said.

few illusions

On January 18th, the quarterly membership meeting of VSW was held at the YWCA. The meeting began with a discussion of the current status of women i.e. poverty. Afterwards, the discussion moved into a workshop with members exchanging their ideas and feelings about the state of the movement at the moment. It was a very fruitful evening, and the discussion was open and honest.

Joyce Legaux and Sandra Currie, both of the VRB, introduced an excellent discussion of the deteriorating state of the Canadian economy. As both pointed out, women today have fewer illusions about what we have achieved with the maginal reforms of the last decade. Legaux summarised statistics indicating that women are losing ground steadily. Single female heads of families are increasingly to be found within low income groups. Sandra Currie pointed to the fact that as soon as low income women do manage to make a small amount of money, it's all taken away in childcare. It was the feeling of the membership that heavy-duty economic battles are on the agenda for women in the lean years ahead.

detroit could care less

MOM'S REPAIRS IS NO MORE. However, the WOMEN'S AUTOMOTIVE RESOURCE CENTRE, a LIP project which provides make-work employment for two of the collective's members will continue until the end of May.

Mom's Repairs is NOT closing down because they're broke. "We have a terrible attraction for government money", explains a collective member, "and probably we could go on receiving it for years, slaving away for poverty-line wages if we wanted to". The notion of 'women mechanics' has become acceptable to funding agencies and even has a somewhat trendy image with the media. The women at Mom's provided an example of this: a local t.v. station phoned up and wanted somebody to come down and repair a pink Fiat. They stipulated that the woman must be wearing overalls.

The women spoke about what they had gained from the collective. "To learn how to repair cars was to take power back for ourselves in an area where it has been kept from us. This power is real; it breaks the mold, and small changes are accomplished in our cognitive system. It's a learning process about how changes happen. It's a poltical process. When I go down to the lumber yard and I know exactly what I want, the man I'm dealing with stares at me like he's just met a talking dog. Something is happening in his head. It's change.

"When we started our work repairing cars, that was how it felt. But our work turned into providing a service, and it was no longer a sharing of political change with other women. It's simply impossible to share this taking back of power with other women when you have learned all you have to learn. You find yourself playing the role of woman mechanic.

"Then there is the question of what is really changed in the system when the oil is changed. What if every single woman in B.C. knew how to do her own tune-ups? This process does not necessarily challenge the system. Detroit could care less. You can compare our work with that of food-coops. It's beneficial for the people who are connected with it, but the corporations like Safeway and Ford can carry on regardless. In a way, it's a con job, offering women power over something (their old Volvo, e.g.) that Detroit will have made obsolete within five years."

Mom's Repairs Collective has been an extremely positive experience for all of the women involved. They will now continue in the movement working for political change in other areas. The WORKSHOPS organized by the WOMEN'S AUTOMOTIVE RESOURCE CENTRE WILL CONTINUE. For info phone Ina, 874-2564.

provincial victories

CHANGE OF NAME

B.C. Health Minister Bob McLelland announced recently that legislation allowing married women to keep their maiden names will soon be introduced into the provincial legislature.

The law if passed would also allow divorced women to revert to their maiden names without going through the complicated legal procedures now required.

In addition, the bill, entitled Change of Name Amendment Act 1977, would allow a husband or wife to take each other's last name after marriage. Both spouses would have to consent to name changes.

There is no statutory requirement today for married women to take their husband's surnames. It is only a matter of custom.

However, many financial institutions like banks won't recognize a woman who doesn't use her husband's family name.

Finally, the proposal would protect children's rights as they may be affected by name changes.

Feminists in B.C. have been pushing for such legislation for many years since B.C. is one of the few Canadian provinces without it. Rosemary Brown, NDP MLA introduced a private members bill on the subject last session.

56 bills were passed in the B.C. legislature last session. Although some benefited women, none were specifically aimed at women's rights. This will be the first piece of legislation the new Social Credit government has introduced for women.

It's ironic that we had to wait for this reform to be enacted by a Party which does not even profess to have policy on women's issues.

RUMORS AND MORE RUMORS

A little victory in the human rights field provincially.

VSW has learned, from usually reliable sources, that three Boards of Inquiry have been approved since the small flurry of letters and complaints landed on the Hon. Minister Alan Williams' desk. Some people actually got replies from the Minister himself but the Minister directed Ms. Ruff to reply to our request for action. More on the provincial scene in the next issue.

Watch for amendments and new legislation on Matrimonial Property in this session. Our understanding is that the government is not prepared to implement the Berger recommendations so we may have to start fighting that one all over again. (Copies of the Berger material are on file at VSW.)

Speaking the oppressors' language

janet summerton

This is the oppressor's language,
But I need it to talk to you.

- Adrienne Rich

It is with considerable trepidation that I attempt to discuss sex differences in language from my position as a woman, when my vehicle of communication is a language created by men. The language, because it reflects the male world view, is far from adequate to express the vision of awareness and consciousness many of us are experiencing. Indeed this new perception is constantly slipping away from us because this straightjacket of language does not allow us to verbalize and thus objectify and share it.

Few serious attempts have yet been made to deal with the issue of sex and language. Scholars in linguistics and anthropology have observed and written of sex differences in exotic languages since the beginning of the century. The differences in English have been alluded to by scholars and writers throughout this century but have only recently been studied seriously. Surprisingly, myths regarding our version of language have crept into the literature and have been transformed into facts supported with negligible amounts of concrete evidence. As a result of a handful of research reports, a few articles and three books published in 1975, the lines are being drawn, the areas of concern mapped out. I am concerned with how the language treats us, how we use English and our styles of verbal and non-verbal interaction. Mary Ritchie Key points out the importance of considering Malinowski's concept of context of situation. "Every human being participates in many varieties of behavior, depending upon the relationships of the participants, the situation where interaction takes place, and the whole range of conditions involved...many of the differences which are attributed to male and female behavior are mixed in complex ways with other dimensions of behavior." My comments refer to general tendencies rather than hard and fast, exclusive rules of communicative behavior.

HOW LANGUAGE TREATS US

Let's first consider the use of male terms as generic, rather than gender specific - that is using man, or mankind to mean all human beings. This usage has been challenged for long enough that some headway is being made towards the use of terms which include women. But consider the widespread common use of manpower, one man show, manmade, brotherhood and forefathers. The masculine pronoun used for the hypothetical person or unknown person is fading out and being replaced with the pronoun they. Increasingly, the forms he/she or s/he are being used in written language. However, we are still confronted with modifiers such as lady doctor or woman pilot and feminine endings such as heroine or poetess, and attempts to change the order of male referents as first are often met with derision. So we still have man and woman, his and hers, male and female, brother and sister. These habitual language patterns help to reinforce the concept of us as invisible, as outsiders. So deep in the psyche are these traditions, that as I write I am tempted to speak of woman as the other. We are conditioned to the masculine use of we and us - we have been trained to interpret the world through their eyes.

Pairs of words which originally were symmetrical now have widely divergent meanings. Consider for yourself if the contemporary meanings show equality or degradation. Think of mistress and master, matron and patron, spinster and bachelor, governess and governor.

When will we be able to eliminate the use of girls for females of any age? Why do we still accept the expression 'his bride', or the gross inequity of 'man and wife'? How can we discourage the use of animal terms to describe us? Why do only women fret, scream, shriek, become hysterical, be vivacious or pushy? If we use or listen to phrases like 'old wives tales', 'venus fly trap', 'black Maria', 'weak sister' and 'seminal thinkers', or men's disparaging comments of other men such as 'he's effeminate' or 'he's an old woman', what must be the extent of our psychic damage? If we also consider the barrage of sexual terms it is easy to conclude we women are objects, spoken of in terms of our relation to men, not as equal members of the human race. We should react strongly to charges of being manly or unfeminine now we are beginning to articulate our genuine experiences.

Some researchers have investigated dictionaries for evidence of male domination. Varda One found that more space is given to male items, sex role stereotypes are reinforced, drawings are mostly of men and male animals and more insulting terms for women are included.

Although some writers question the importance of this information it seems imperative to me to correct this sexism in language wherever possible. Jespersen says "If we turn to the actuating principles that determine the general changeability of human speech habits, we shall find that the moving power everywhere is an impetus starting from the individual and that there is a curbing power in the mere fact that language exists, not for the individual alone but for the whole community." As members of fifty one per cent of the population we could initiate and sustain change in these habits.

OUR USE OF LANGUAGE

There has been a trend, especially with early researchers, to consider our language as peculiar, deviant - an aberration. This I hope to avoid and to show instead that the language we are taught is a way of keeping us apart, out of the mainstream of social affairs. Snide remarks about the triviality of our talk abound in male literature. I would suggest our talk is rendered such to help keep us in our place. Consider most of these issues as generalizations in regard to our interactions with men, for our communication patterns in that sphere are vitally important to our position.

We women tend to substitute requests for commands or assertive statements:

Would you please?
Do you mind?

We also avoid being assertive by inserting hedges:

perhaps, I guess, sort of
kind of, maybe

And tag questions:

isn't it? do you think so?

Lakoff and Key claim we tend to use intensifiers (so, such, quite, very) which end up distracting, thereby weakening, plain forceful speech. Jespersen claimed women are fond of hyperbole and use more adverbs such as awfully, terribly, absolutely and frightfully. Really?

SPEECH & STATUS

These patterns of speech are part of the fabric of our social beings and indicate hesitancy and submission. To drop these patterns leaves us open to charges of behaving like a man, of being unfeminine. Yet with these patterns certain spheres of activity are closed to us. It is, indeed, a double bind.

We also tend to use more correct speech. This has been researched in the United States and in England by Trudgill, Wolfram, Shuy and Labov. Various reasons are put forward for this - the most prevalent refers to the relation between speech and status. Because we are

plainly aware of our second class status we use correct English in a vain attempt to maintain, if not elevate, our position.

Our Style Of Interacting

Contrary to popular belief women talk less than men in mixed interactions. This has been researched by Argyle et al., Strotbeck, Hilpert et al., Kramer, Soskin and Swaker. Also, researchers have found we interrupt less and do not actively respond to male interruptions. We have difficulty getting and maintaining the attention of a group, especially in a task-oriented situation.

Various researchers have found that our utterances and writings are considered to lack authority by both sexes. In other words, our talk is considered trivial, and men often respond in a patronizing way.

Jessie Bernard differentiates between instrumental and expressive talk - "the first having to do with orientation, facts and information, and the second with feelings, positive or negative." Cultural expectations are that we will be mainly concerned with the latter. Researchers have found this is the case. We work hard to maintain the conversation, often falling into a pattern of asking questions, or apologizing for our behavior. We learn to control our speech, thus supporting the impression we are living in the background, on the fringe. This is certainly not the dialogue of equals.

SMILE! SMILE!

Non-Verbal Communication

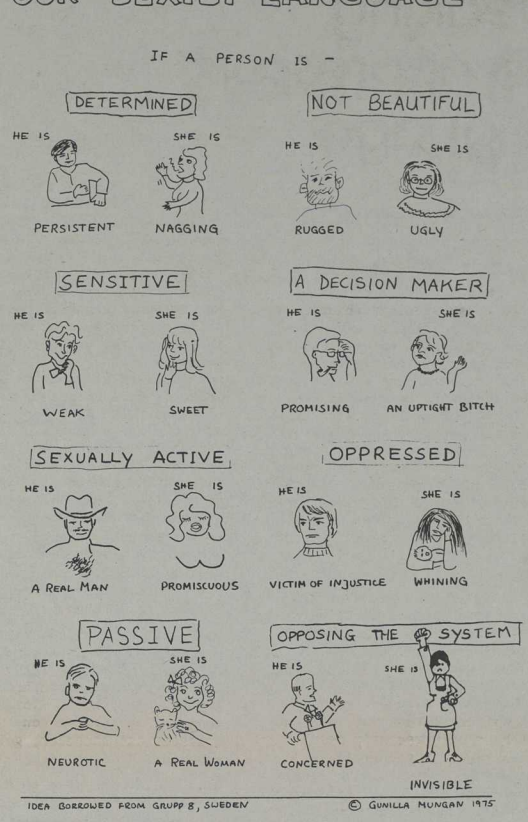
"Social interaction is the arena where women are continually being chewed up...Women are constantly being put down when they act uppity, or reminded to stay down even when they don't, by many little reminders of their inferior status...examples are environmental clues, non-content aspects of language and movement & gesture in interaction." (Henley)

We respond to these reminders with gestures of submission and appeasement such as lowering our eyes, and smiling. In fact our behaviors indicate our attempts to seek approval from the dominant males. That we smile more than men has been noted by Chessler, Firestone and Key. As Key says, "In fact they smile more than males throughout their lifetime, if they learned their lesson well - that females are supposed to be pleasant."

Henley's research indicates women are touched more than men. She suggests touching has a dual nature of either indicating intimacy or status (the toucher being of higher status). Thus, touching, unfortunately, is another important reminder of our role as object and subservient.

Conclusion

The purpose of these comments is not to suggest that men are the enemy and the cause of our condition. Cynthia Ozick wrote "Society, remember, is above men and women; it acts in men and women. So you must not make the mistake of thinking that the culture of women is the conspiracy of men.



Not in the least...The culture of women is believed in by both men and women, and is the conspiracy of neither, because it is the creature neither of men alone, nor of women alone, but of society itself - that autonomous, cunning, insensitive sibling of history."

If language does influence thought it is important for us to continually assess our use of the language so the words we use no longer block our expressions of our authenticity. The power of language is so pervasive and subtle, even for the most aware of us; the process is difficult and fraught with many lapses into traditional behavior.

Language can be considered an expression of shared assumptions. But as we become more aware of our authenticity we question these assumptions and the concomitant implicit values and behavioral models. As a result communication with men may become more difficult. Conscious action to eliminate the sexism in language and our modes of communication which perpetuate the myth of us as outsiders could lead to a more androgynous society. The change will not come easily because of our conditioning, the necessity of functioning in the day-to-day world and because men may not easily accept the change in our status. But as Judy Chicago says, "As long as we go to men, move into their sphere without demanding that they move simultaneously into ours we will always be the other in their world."

At the end of January, Janet Summerton begins a six-week course on the sex-differences in language. This course is being organized by UBC's Women's Resources Centre, which is part of the Continuing Education Department. It is being held at the Resource Centre's location on the third floor of the Vancouver Public Library.

NO COMMENT

On January 4, The Vancouver Sun carried a front page interview with Janet Summerton. It was a classic example of the need for Summerton's work.

On the fact that we talk more quickly to men than we do to each other (an attempt to get it all said before we are interrupted, dismissed and trivialized):

"The little woman at home - heh heh - isn't going to like this but I sometimes hear her going a mile a minute whether I'm in the room or not."

On the way in which words such as 'cute', 'lovely' and 'adorable' are restricted for use by women: "Not quite. Though you should have seen the way everyone looked at the guy who sits behind me at work when he started talking like that."

When Summerton pointed out to him that men occupy more personal space, and that consequently a man feels more at ease touching a woman than vice versa: "True, but only in a pinch."

SPECIAL SIX PAGE SECTION

affirmative action

what does it mean?

where is it going?

Affirmative Action has been heralded as a major breakthrough for women. "Equal pay for equal work" has been a catch-phrase of the women's movement since its inception. Affirmative Action laws were enacted in the U.S. in 1965. The Canadian government has instituted an equal opportunities program for its public servants. In the B.C. legislature, Rosemary Brown has called for adoption of a far-reaching Affirmative Action program. Both the Vancouver Resources Board and City Hall have undertaken studies dealing with affirmative action. Corporations, in some cases, have "seen the writing on the wall" and have instituted their own equal opportunity programs.

What does all this mean and where is it leading us?

Let's look in more detail at some of these actions and at conditions in the work force to see if we can answer those questions.

The ghettoization of the Canadian working woman has increased, not decreased, over the past decade. Sylvia Gelber, director of the Women's Bureau in the Department of Labour, describes "the ever-increasing occupational segregation of the female labour force into low-paying occupations." Seventy-two percent of all women workers are in the service, retail and clerical areas, and the percentage of women employed in those areas is going up. In 1963, 30 in every 100 women workers were clerical; in 1974, 36 in every 100 were clerical workers.

Every year, women make less in every job category. Every year, the wage gap widens. Men make more even in those jobs which are so called "women's jobs." In 1973, the male clerical worker earned 34.2% more than the average female clerical worker. The average woman earns about 45% less than the average man.

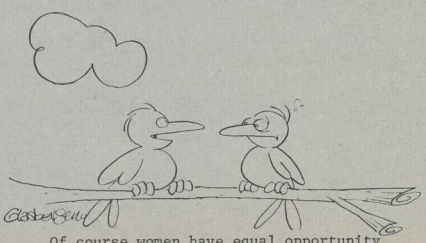
A QUICK FEMINIST QUIZ. PICK TWO OUT OF THREE.

"I'd like to invest my money in those corporations wise enough to have women in high executive positions."

YES ☐

NO ☐

IS THIS AFFIRMATIVE ACTION?



Of course women have equal opportunity in our flight and ground maintenance crews!

YES ☐

NO ☐

IS THIS AFFIRMATIVE ACTION?

YES ☐

NO ☐

IS THIS AFFIRMATIVE ACTION?

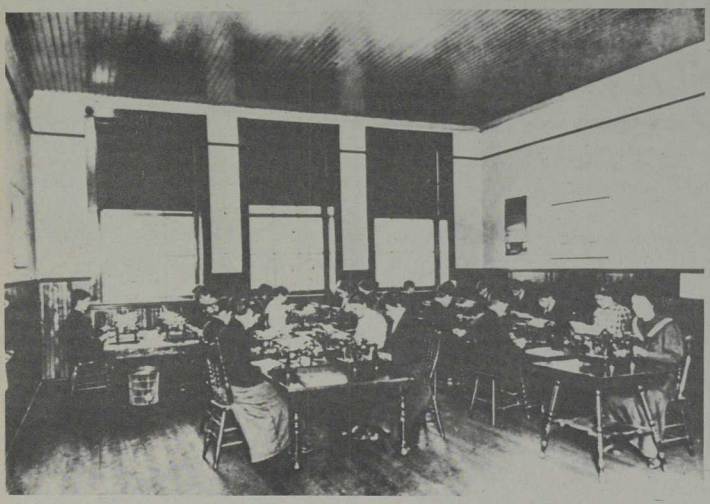
Canada does not have specific affirmative action legislation, nor do any of the provinces. Although there are "equal pay" laws in all provinces, they are sufficiently vague to render them largely ineffective.

Rosemary Brown, British Columbia NDP/MLA, last year introduced a private member's bill in the House dealing with an Affirmative Action Plan defined as:

"a plan, program, scheme or schedule setting out the proposal of an employer for promoting full equality between men and women in all aspects of employment and education, including hiring, promoting, superannuation, training and retraining, and access to jobs."

Acceptance by the government of the principle of an Affirmative Action Plan, the Act goes on:

ABOUT AFFIRMATIVE ACTION



IS THERE ANYTHING UNUSUAL ABOUT THIS PHOTOGRAPH?

"is a recognition by the recipient of provincial government monies that the onus of responsibility for ending sexual inequality in society rests fully upon these institutions...government departments, Crown Corporations, government commissions, boards and agencies ...not on the individual."

Any individual "aggrieved by the failure of such institutions... shall have access to the Courts. "Ninety days after the coming into force of this Act, any recipient of provincial government monies not having registered an Affirmative Action Plan will no longer receive provincial government monies."

v.r.b. program

The Vancouver Resources Board's Affirmative Action Committee, in February 1976, presented an overall plan to the Board which accepted it unanimously and assigned staff and program funds to the committee. Subsequently, the plan was incorporated into the Collective Agreement. This is the first time that a detailed Affirmative Action Plan has been written into a contract with a public service agency in Canada.

The fall 1976 interim report of the committee shows, in addition to other findings dealing with minorities and handicapped, that not only are men and women not represented evenly in most job classes, but that men get the highest salaries in every job class---even in those traditionally female bastions; clerical, housekeeping, social work. (Further confirming the 1973 Department of Labour statistics.)

Among the committee's recommendations are: 1) that the VRB adhere to the principle that qualifications and ability are the prime considerations in hiring and promotion decisions; 2) that the VRB adopt, as a long-term goal, a policy of 50:50 participation of men and women in all job categories in the VRB work force; 3) that sex-segregated job classes be examined in order to develop ways of assisting employees to move to other jobs, and to encourage the gradual desegregation of all such job classes.

city hall

Vancouver City Hall has a Special Committee re Equal Employment. It was struck during Philip's reign as Mayor. At the moment, studies have been commenced to gather data upon the employment patterns of people with disabilities, of visible minorities and of women. Shelagh Day, a Provincial Human Rights Officer,has coordinated the gathering of data upon the employment of women at City Hall. Her findings, and those of groups reponsible for reporting upon the employment of the handicapped, are well advanced. Within the next few weeks, Councillor Darlene Marzari, a Committee member, will be taking a proposal to Council which will provide funding for the collection of data upon the employment of minority groups. If Marzari's bid is successful (and VSW gives it full support) City Hall will have a completed study sometime later this year. BUT WHAT ARE THEY GOING TO DO THEN? So far, Volrich et. al have shown little commitment.

VSW MEMBERS ARE URGED TO LOBBY COUNCILLORS AND THE MAYOR IN ORDER TO RAISE THEIR CONSCIOUSNESS ABOUT THIS ISSUE.

bonnie webster

Bonnie Webster, of B.L. Webster & Associates, a local firm engaged in management consulting, feels that "affirmative action" evokes a negative response in the management people she has spoken with. Ms. Webster surmises it is because of affiliations with U.S. companies who were forced to adopt affirmative action policies by law and the subsequent court cases, etc., since 1965. The U.S. experience has made these management people wary --"equal opportunity" is fine; "affirmative action" is not.

Ms. Webster, who quit her job at B.C. Tel to start her company, was motivated by a desire to make a personal contribution to International Women's Year. She feels "it's necessary for women to organize---numbers talk." What is needed is for women, all women in a firm, to organize first, and then present a collective proposal of their demands to management. Otherwise, it is too easy for management to use the union and salaried women against one another.

Ms. Webster admits, however, that "cross-class" organizing is probably difficult. Salaried or management women are afraid, realistically, that their career chances will be hurt.

Much of Ms. Webster's work is with corporations wanting or needing to integrate more women into management. She doesn't feel that an emphasis on identifying and training women for management positions will take away from training or needs at the lower levels.

There seems to be an increase in "job enrichment" programs. Why? With increasing mechanization, workers become discontented, productivity falls, and---employers become concerned. Ms. Webster tells her corporate clients that it's to their benefit to adopt "equal opportunity" programs for women. The Financial Post (June 21, 1975) agrees:

"it may be important to determine the level of women's discontent. If the company is facing a near-revolution, getting on with an equal opportunity program may be a matter of some urgency, and a number of short-term actions may be required. Conversely, and more likely, if discontent is quietly simmering, an orderly, carefully phased program may be both sufficient and more constructive in the long term." (!)

When asked if she saw any "co-optation" problems (e.g. the drawing off of the young, upwardly mobile women to "ride herd" on the other women) Ms. Webster hesitated and said, "I tend to be idealistic; but I hope that doesn't happen."

U.S. AFFIRMATIVE ACTION UNDER ATTACK

PROPOSED AFFIRMATIVE ACTION RULES CHALLENGED BY WOMEN'S AND CIVIL RIGHTS GROUPS

NEW YORK (LNS) - Another hard-won gain of the 1960's, the Affirmative Action program, is in serious trouble, and scores of women's and civil rights organizations are fighting a proposed watering down of the program at government hearings in New York, Atlanta, Los Angeles, and Chicago in early December.

Affirmative action rules currently cover over one-third of the U.S. workforce by requiring companies with large government contracts to actively aid women and minorities with hiring, training and promotion. The new and highly controversial affirmative action regulations claim to streamline the program and make existing regulations easier to understand.

But civil rights and women's groups, after extensive review of the new regulations, have concluded that the proposed changes, to quote testimony by Gloria Parker of the National Urban League at New York hearings December 6-10, "are dangerously regressive and represent an overt move to sabotage more than a decade of progress."

Said the New York group Women Office Workers, "If these new regulations are implemented they won't cut out red tape, they'll cut out the guts of affirmative action."

The proposed regulations would require only companies with government contracts over $100,000 and with more than 100 employees to prepare written affirmative action plans. (The previous cut-off was $50,000 in contracts and 50 employees.) Complete figures on the number of companies affected by this one change are not available, but the number would drop dramatically - from over 100,000 to less than 100, according to one estimate.

The number of government contractors subject to review before the award of government contracts would be cut substantially too: only companies with $10 million in contracts will be subject to pre-award compliance review, as opposed to those with $1 million contracts before.

ABOUT 30 MILLION WORKERS, OR ONE THIRD OF THE NATION'S TOTAL WORKFORCE ARE AFFECTED BY THIS PROGRAM.

UNDER THE NEW REGULATIONS, INVESTIGATION OF AFFIRMATIVE ACTION COMPLAINTS WILL BECOME OPTIONAL.

ADDITIONAL CHANGES IN THE RULES ARE ALL DESIGNED TO PERMIT MORE BUREAUCRATIC MANOEUVERING BY COMPANIES TO AVOID COMPLYING WITH AFFIRMATIVE ACTION REQUIREMENTS.

THE NEW RULES GIVE UP ANY PRETENSE OF REAL ENFOCEMENT OF AFFIRMATIVE ACTION ON THE PART OF THOSE EMPLOYERS WHO HAVE PROFITED FROM DISCRIMINATORY LABOUR PRACTICES FOR YEARS.

This one change, Women Office Workers (WOW) estimates, will cut the number of colleges and universities required to undergo pre-award reviews from between 8 and 10,000 to only five institutions.

The Office of Federal Contract Compliance (OFCCP) also gains more power to exempt specific contracts and establishments from the affirmative action regulations if it is in the "national interest". Complaints about non-compliance can be referred to the Equal Employment Opportunities Commission (EEOC) which with a backlog of 120,000 cases, is essentially non-functional. Built-in time limitations for compliance are eliminated in the new ruling, encouraging delay and non-compliance.

"A cabinet-level department (OFCCP) has set out to rescind" the Executive Order establishing Affirmative Action and to "substitute an enfeebling directive", a National Organization for Women (NOW) representative testified in New York hearings December 6-10.

According to Oscar Garcia-Rivera, director of the Puerto Rican Legal Defense and Education Fund in New York, "It is at best graceless for this administration in its waning days to seek to change - by considerably weakening - regulations which at least are committed on paper to the goal of equal employment opportunity by employers being given directly billions of dollars in tax-payers money."

OFCCP's proposed new regulations were published September 17 in the Federal Register, which relatively few people see, with a standard 60-day comment period before they would go into effect. Working women's groups such as Women Employed in Chicago and WOW in New York had heard about the upcoming changes and had requested copies of the proposed regulations as early as June. But OFCCP director Lawrence Lorber never responded to their requests.

Meanwhile the "Equal Employment Advisory Council", which represents large corporations and the National Association of Manufacturers, were studying drafts of the proposed regulations and met with OFCCP to "refine" them.

Once women's and minority organizations read the new regulations, the reason for the OFCCP's reluctance to publicize the changes became clear. Lorber originally denied their requests for hearings, and it was only through a hard fight that the comment period was extended and the hearings granted. Written comment can now be submitted until December 27, with the new rules expected to appear in the Federal Register 30 days later.

The Affirmative Action program as it now operates is far from effective. But the proposed revisions, according to Women Office Workers, "merely codify and further institutionalize that failure."

"The solution ought to be to commit more resources, not to reduce the scope of the coverage."

affirmative action:

WHAT WE STAND TO LOSE

The following are excerpts from an article by Laurell Ritchie which appeared in This Magazine. Laurell Ritchie is an organizer with the Canadian Textile and Chemical Union, and a Board Member of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women.

Take a look folks. It's the Affirmative Action Programme. Good for all that ails working women! A powerful new tool! A modern miracle drug!

Or so we're being told.

Affirmative Action is the name given to programmes set up in various corporations and institutions, both public and private, to promote equal hiring and promotional opportunities for women. It's not exactly a household word yet, but give it time.

Based on the Affirmative Action programmes now in effect for federal and provincial crown employees, a model programme would initially involve securing top level corporate commitment and the establishment of a programme administrator and advisory council within the firm. The next step would be to collect data on the sex breakdown of the internal work force, job categories, salary levels, etc. and to identify women with potential for development and training. Based on this information, a file on "promotables" would be built up for reference when job vacanacies occur in areas of underrepresentation. The company would also develop an active non-discriminatory recruitment programme.

Other efforts would be made to set up job ladders and rearrange tasks to eliminate dead-end jobs.

While no quotas are involved, there would be target dates for improvement and a monitoring and evaluation system.

Universities, banks, unions, civic governments, the federal and provincial civil service, the CBC, Canadian University Students Overseas (CUSO), and a dozen other insitutions have recently tabled "Status of Women" reports, virtually all of which call for Affirmative Action programmes as "the" answer to the discrimination unearthed.

So what's the fuss? Why would anyone challenge Affirmative Action? Don't we support equal opportunity for women?

co-optation

Equal job opportunity and equal pay have long been priorities of the Canadian women's movement and so they should be, as fundamental economic issues. At a time when the gap between men and women's earnings is actually widening, when women are increasingly ghettoized into a limited spectrum of jobs, when they are wrapped in dead-end jobs and face discrimination in job benefits, we all feel the need for immediate action.

But we often become lazy. We lose grip of the tactics, the programmes, the strategies. We attach ourselves to the initiatives of Canadian governments or the American women's movement, and call them our own -- without much questioning. But we should question.

Affirmative Action, for example, would appear to be a very broad term that could cover many of the demands being put forth by working women. If we were sitting down for the first time to define an Affirmative Action programme, we might want to include everything from child care to skill training to equal pay for work of equal value.

But Affirmative Action was not defined by the women's movement. Its historical definition was molded by corporations and governments. And that definition is a dangerously narrow one.

In fact, Affirmative Action has become the brand name for employer programmes geared to co-opting upwardly-mobile, career-oriented women into corporate management. A carrot is being dangled to draw off the young, articulate, English-speaking, intelligent, energetic, self-confident women to positions of control where they will be required to ride shotgun on the rising demands of other women.

We are witnessing the emergence of the Corporate Woman.

From the point of view of government and industry, it would seem to be the cheapest and least disruptive method of accommodating an ever-growing and unpredictable women's movement.

Let's look for a moment at the origins of Affirmative Action.

american history

Affirmative Action was developed in the United States as a legislative response to the demands of Blacks and other minorities, such as Spanish-speaking Americans.

A law was introduced with complicated goals, quotas, and timetables requiring companies to employ the protected minorities in the same ratio as they were represented in the relevant labour market and to increase their numbers in the higher corporate echelons.

Then came a growing concern about demands being made by the American women's movement.

In 1972, the American government introduced a law requiring government contractors to initiate Affirmative Action programmes, with goals and timetables, to provide equal promotion and placement opportunities for women.

"As amended by the Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1972 (Public Law 92-261), Title VII covers employers with 25 or more employees, public and private employment agencies, labor unions with 25 or more members, labor-management apprenticeship programs, state and local government agencies, and public and private educational institutions. Effective March 24, 1973, employers with 15 or more employees and labor unions with 15 or more members will come under the provisions of the law. Title VII forbids an employer to discriminate between men and women with reference to hiring, discharge and compensation, and to terms, conditions or privileges of employment. Employees may not be segregated or classified in any way that would tend to deprive a woman or a man of employment opportunities because of sex.

"Conditions of employment in which it is unlawful to discriminate include (but are not limited to) job assignment, layoff and recall, promotions, training, sick leave time and pay (including maternity leave), medical and insurance coverage and overtime."

American business considered these programmes a bitter pill indeed but their own corporate journals were warning that survival from the "Women's Revolution" could depend on the implementation of Affirmative Action programmes and the integration of women into management. Corporations were told that such programmes would be the best defense against costly litigations in the courts and destructive wholesale investigations of other company practices by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

Barbara Boyle, an American expert on Affirmative Action (who is a partner in a New York City management consulting firm and has been retained by Canadian National and other corporations to develop Affirmative Action here in Canada) elaborated on the corporate point of view in an article entitled "Equal Opportunity for Women is Smart Business":

"...the fact is that women are working and must be considered as a resource that needs to be effectively managed, motivated and utilized...just like men.

"From a dollar standpoint, the female labour force constitutes an important reservoir of talent which is necessary to use to remain competitive in the business world.

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION: A CRITICAL APPRAISAL

"...corporate leaders can no longer ignore half the population when they are looking for creative and executive talent...Kept in 'women-type' jobs, they have not efficiently used their aptitudes, intelligence, education and skills.

"...many women decide that they are not interested or do not have the ability to move into management positions or new areas of responsibility. They are, however, more productive and happier employees after this decision is reached because they have had a choice."

Even job training is seen by the corporations as part of the upward mobility theme. Business magazines reason that "Women will have to be given additional exposure in new jobs and duties at the same level in order to provide the seasoning necessary for upward advancement."

As one reads the many, many articles on the American Affirmative Action programme, equal opportunity begins to sound like nothing more than a giant game of numbers. One starts to envisage each corporation operating its own abacus, manipulating the 'female employee' beads and the 'male employee' beads up and down the plus and minus columns - all in the name of complying with legislation. A few women go 'up', a few men go 'down'. But it's still the same old framework.

Canadian Experience

As early as 1973, articles on Affirmative Action started appearing in Canadian business magazines. The March, 1975 issue of Canadian Personnel and Industrial Relations Journal carried an article on "Positive Action for Integrating Women Into Management" which rationalized Affirmative Action as follows:

"Management talent will be the major shortage during the 1975-1985 period. In addition, we are facing a productivity crisis which can be met only by effective management and maximum utilization of human resources. A program directed at the inclusion of women in the term 'human resources' is not only socially responsible but makes economic sense. We need managers, and we need productivity. Why not use all our workerpower to meet these needs?"

The corporate agenda became that much clearer as business magazines continued to feature articles such as "The Executive Suite - Feminine Style". Upward mobility was always the theme.

Meanwhile, Canadian women read about the astronomical figures being awarded in U.S. courts under the Equal Employment Opportunity Act and the Civil Rights Act. Many of the settlements involved millions of dollars of back pay for past discrimination in hiring and promotions. The idea of Affirmative Action appealed to the upwardly-mobile, career-oriented women who stood to gain under such a programme.

In Canada, various governments started setting up Affirmative Action guidelines for their own employees. When Janet Smith spoke in Montreal in 1974 she was coordinator for the Office of Equal Opportunity for Women in the Federal Public Service. She explained how their Affirmative Action programme was operating - how job competitions were being opened up to both sexes, how the number of women in senior and middle management was increasing and how more women were to be put on management-trainee programmes.

But she also had the following to say:

"Women still get paid less on the average than men in the same category. This is to be expected in areas where women have less experience, such as management. But this is also true in the support category (including clerks, secretaries, and telephone operators). In 1973, men averaged $7,840, women $6,650. In 1969, the average man in the support category earned approximately $900 more than the average women. In 1973, the wage gap in favour of the men, widened to $1,190."

In any case, Affirmative Action was off to a quiet start in Canada.

Then, suddenly, it was International Women's Year.

The federal government, along with various provincial and civic governments, seized upon Affirmative Action as their pet project for 1975. Ontario Premier Bill Davis held a conference in February of 1975 calling for voluntary Affirmative Action efforts from the "Captains of Industry" assembled in a posh Toronto hotel.

Prime Minister Trudeau held a similar conference in Ottawa in November for chief executive officers of major Canadian employers, each delegate attending at the personal invitation of the Prime Minister. But the federal government's emphasis on Affirmative Action did not go unprotested. A group of Ottawa women picketing outside that conference called such programmes "window-dressing", "a superficial change" and "a minor issue".

A Critical View

The Canadian women's movement must take a more critical view of Affirmative Action:

- Women must examine the realities of the work force before putting an emphasis on the lack of women in corporate managements since managerial positions are necessarily fewer than jobs covering direct production, service or clerical work. Statistics Canada tables indicate that on average, only 1 worker in 10 is in a managerial position. The emphasis must be on issues and demands that touch the lives of the majority of women, not an elite.

The task facing the Canadian women's movement, now as always, is to maintain the priority and primacy of issues which speak to the mass of Canadian women, not the few who are used as role models for the corporate world. We cannot go about telling the women at their typewriters or sewing machines "Forget your lousy working conditions and pay. Someday you too may be a supervisor."

The women's movement must give guidance to the fight for real changes. Neither governments nor corporations are going to lead the way on issues that challenge one of the key ingredients of their profitable industries - the use of women as a reserve pool of cheap labour.

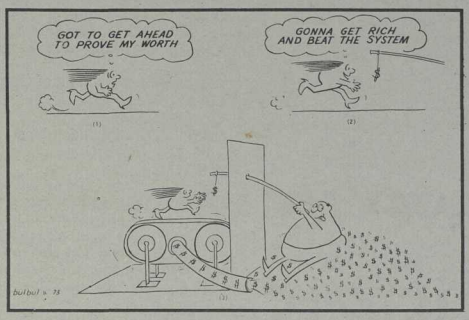
As Grace Hartman, now President of the Canadian Union of Public Employees has said:

"Hand in hand with the move to make women a part of the mainstream, there should be a parallel move to make life easier for the woman who will never be a senior executive in business or government...In the long run, what is more important to women: Making a symbolic infiltration of the fire department, or having enough money to put bread on the table? That is the fundamental question of liberation."

our economy literally depends on the use of women as a reserve pool of cheap labour

- The exploitation of women is deeply rooted in the structure of our economy. Our economy literally depends on the use of women (and immigrants) as a reserve pool of cheap labour. But there is nothing in Affirmative Action that challenges this fundamental economic problem. Affirmative Action in fact presents a non-antagonistic, attitudinal approach rather than a structural approach. It allows governments and corporations to sell the public on the idea that women's emancipation is only a "matter of attitude", while they reassure themselves that equality for women won't cost them much more than the cost of a consulting firm. Companies can rethink "attitudes", promote a few women and never really touch the corporate pocketbook. But women's equality will take more than a change in "attitude".

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION



Ritchie summarises her position on Affirmative Action with the following points...

- Affirmative Action promotes the ultra-feminist position that woman's emancipation is complete when she achieves equality with men. Not only that, but she must be capable of going "where the men are" to find that equality. But women need men as allies on many fronts. Affirmative Action could well be used to drive a wedge in the common cause of men and women fighting other forms of injustice in the workplace. In talking of Affirmative Action, one hopeful Canadian business journal suggested that this could all be leading to "an international Union of Women of America (sic) with members in several industries". Nothing could be more destructive to the union movement in this country.

- Affirmative Action will divide women into the 'promotables', the less than enthusiastic promotables', and the 'unpromotables'. A women's movement embracing programmes that create such divisions chances losing allies and credibility among lower-income women, native women, and immigrant women (who together probably form the majority of working women in this country). The women who don't 'make it' will have good cause to see articulate, able women as enemies and competition rather than an leaders who will assist them in fighting for justice for all.

- The huge cash settlements made in the U.S. courts for suits under the Affirmative Action programme are not going to necessarily follow for Canadian women. First of all, there is not the same division of powers in the Canadian legislative and judicial systems, and secondly, the American multinationals that predominate in Canada will be better prepared the second time around. Business journals already offer advice under such titles as "Make Your Equal Opportunity Program Court-Proof".

- Recognition must be given to the role of the American multi-nationals in the exportation and promotion of Affirmative Action for Canadian women. Our governments have had in mind a pale carbon copy of the American original, one that would be acceptable to those corporations. Of course, IBM will consider moving some women up in the ranks. After all, they've already made the initial investments with some American consulting firm to set up an appropriate programme for their homebase operations.

But were we to move in the direction of paying women better wages for the work they are doing now, thereby cutting off one of the chief sources of cheap labour in this country, the threats of shutdown would fly fast and furious.

We would be told that we had just priced ourselves out of the international market.

Which raises a very serious question for the women's movement in Canada. How can the fight for women's equality in this country ever be won if it is not clearly connected with the fight for an independent economy, an economy which could incorporate such social goals as the economic equality of women?

- Affirmative Action is easily promoted as a panacea for the problems of working women. But sexism in employment goes well beyond discrimination in hiring and promotions.

Sexism is used as a tool to exploit women, en masse, in the service, clerical and sales jobs where they predominate:

"Affirmative Action might be acceptable if it was clearly indicated as only one ingredient in an overall government programme to establish:

-equal pay for work of equal value
-adequate child care facilities
-improved pregnancy leave
-improved labour laws that would make union organization less formidable
-strengthened laws on equal pensions and benefits."

As mentioned in the introduction, this article appeared in full in This Magazine. They are located at 3 Church Street, Toronto and this article appeared in their March-April '76 issue.

The purpose of this presentation upon Affirmative Action is to introduce readers to the nature of the issue and to several of the debates surrounding it. We look forward to some response from readers in the hope that informed debate might ensue in these pages which would serve to educate us all. (eds.)

At the Vancouver Status of Women, we recognise that Affirmative Action programs are only one step towards the liberation of women. While working for the implementation of Affirmative Action schemes, we also demand quality childcare, equal pay for work of equal value, just maternity benefits and more equitable pensions and benefits.

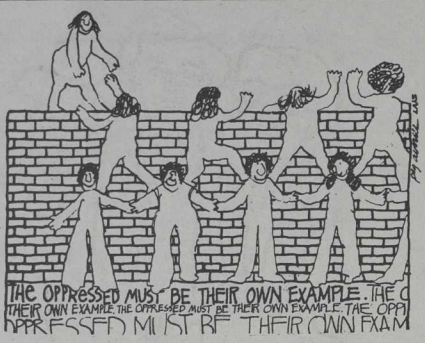
We also recognise that the wage gap is widening in every job category and that unemployment among women has increased greatly over the last decade. We see women working as bank tellers for years without chances of promotion. We see them training men at their work, and we know that these men aren't tellers; they're management trainees. Anything that can be done to break down the female job ghettoes, and to breach the wage gap, must be done. VSW is in full support of the Labour policy developed by BCFW (the British Columbia Federation of Women) which calls for the implementation of affirmative action schemes by government and by unions in cooperation with the women's movement. This final stipulation is vital. We must raise our demands so that we are working for what we want, not for what they tell us we want.

VSW has several immediate goals for the implementation of Affirmative Action schemes in B.C.

Firstly, we give our full support to the moves to implement Affirmative Action Schemes within the Provincial Government. There are 37,701 persons in the B.C. Public Service. Although 55% of these public servants are women, they are not represented at significant levels in the power structure. Organizations which purport to represent the composition of Canadian society must take sex as well as age, education etc into account to ensure that they truly represent the views of all citizens.

Secondly, we support Affirmative Action programs at the level of city government. We demand that the Mayor and Council commit themselves to the full implementation of the Affirmative Action Scheme at City Hall. In particular, we advocate the appointment of a liaison person directly reponsible to the Mayor or to the city manager, who can direct department heads to take affirmative action.

We cannot allow City Hall simply to accumulate a bunch of data. They must begin now upon designing a program for implementing affirmative action.



we're sisters

NORTHERN NOTES

Dear Sisters,

Things have begun to move up here again after the long December Christmas break. Winter has set in but with no vengeance as yet. The first "staying" snow fell on Christmas Eve, which is very late, and the temp. hasn't dropped below minus 20 yet.

I'm trying to remember when I last sat down to collect my thoughts - I think it was in mid-November. I have not done a lot of travelling since then just a trip to Fort Nelson, Dawson Creek and then down to Vancouver.

Fort Nelson was fascinating - located 300 miles north of Fort St.John on the Alaska highway, it is an ancient village and trading post now rejuvenated by the logging and natural gas industries. I was reminded of how far north it was when the sun set (at the end of November) at about 3.00 each day. I stayed with Audrey Greer (one of the few women Canada Personpower managers in BC) in her beautiful log house and I met some really energetic women. The Fort Nelson Daycare Society has just received LIP monies to conduct a survery of the interests and needs of the Fort Nelson women, with long term plans to develop a rec centre, a community service directory, drop-in and information centre. February is known as the suicide month in Fort Nelson - for women, that is. The long winter nights and short days in an isolated, male-oriented community take an annual toll. So we are left grasping for minimal LIP monies to patch up an inadequate social service system in the north.

Some of our contracts are now underway. Marie Mitchell has put together an intensive two-day skill development workshop that she will be taking to about eight or nine northern communities over the next two-and-a-half months. Topics include: "Structures and levels of governments and institutions"; "Methods of dealing with those Structures"; "Publicity"; "Developing local women's issues"; and "Political Skill Development". Many of the women here know the problems in their communities, but the system is so mind-boggling that it keeps them in a passive, powerless position. These workshops will look at that position, question it and start to change it.

And this weekend we have the first formal meeting of the Northern B.C. Women's Task Force on Single Industry Towns! Ellie Burton and Chris Wozney fly in from Kitimat tonight; Emily Pacholuk and Gina Baker drive down from Fraser Lake tomorrow, as do Joan Kotarski and Karen Klassen from Mackenzie. Three members of the Women's Research Centre (Gene Errington, Helga Jacobson and Linda Yancy) are flying up tomorrow to teach research skills and to coordinate work plans.

That's all for now,
Diana Bissell
Prince George
January 14, 1977.

fraser valley

ISHTAR WOMEN'S COLLECTIVE has produced a half-hour T.V. program for Western Cable 10 in Surrey. The whole production is handled by women: camera work, directing, interviewing, program planning, etc. This year Ishtar women have been joined in the production work by other women from the Fraser Valley Women's Coalition. Even with this infusion of new woman power, the work load is heavy. The 'work' is fun and challenging and the Ishtar women would like more women, particularly from New West, Surrey and Langley and environs to share the experience with them. If you are mildly curious or mad keen, please call Kathy Kerr at 530 9442. So little media time is available to women on these terms; uncensored and wholly our own. It would be a mistake to allow this opportunity to vanish. Contact FRONYA, (the Mission Women's Centre) at Box 3143, Mission, B.C.

Starting this February, the FRASER VALLEY WOMEN'S COALITION will be publishing one newsletter for all the women's centres in the valley (except for Port Coquitlam, which will continue putting out its own). Hitherto, each Centre has been producing its own newsletter.

NORTHERN WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS

TAMITIK STATUS OF WOMEN ASSOCIATION
Setting up a centre to include a childminding centre, information and homemakers service, etc. Write Box 18, Kitimat, or contact 632-7990.

THE FRASER LAKE WOMEN'S CENTRE
119 Endako Avenue, 699-6315.

PRINCE GEORGE WOMEN'S COLLECTIVE
1306 7th Avenue, Prince George, 562-1762.

PRINCE RUPERT OPTIONS FOR WOMEN
Meetings 1st and 3rd week of every month, 7:30 p.m. Upstairs at Amante Building, 824-3rd Avenue W.

QCI SOCIETY FOR CONTINUING SELF DEVELOPMENT
Thrift Shop, Queen Charlotte City, open Monday 2-4 p.m., Wednesday 7-8 p.m., Saturday 2-4 p.m. For more information, call 559-4640 or 559-4584. Box 387, Q C City.

QUESNEL WOMEN'S GROUP
308 Front Street, Quesnel, 992-8391.

MACKENZIE WOMEN'S CENTRE
c/o Joan Kotarski, Box 1551, Mackenzie.

TERRACE WOMEN'S ORGANIZATION
The Child Minding Centre is open Monday-Friday from 9:30 am. to 4:00 p.m. 3308 Kalum Street, 638-8211.

VICTORIA FAULKNER WOMEN'S CENTRE
302 Steele Street, Whitehorse, Yukon. Open Monday-Friday 9-12 noon, 1-4:30 p.m. 667-2693.

powell river

Thirty women gathered on November 4th at the Powell River Women's Centre to organize and discuss the activities and program for the coming year. A major need of women today is access to support and information regarding the changing image of women. The Women's Centre is trying to foster a positive feeling for women in this respect. For this reason and in response to repeated demands from the women of the community, they have started discussion groups about the following:

- Feminist Study Group
- Young Mothers Group
- Mid-Life Group
- Self-Image Group
- Young Women's Group

Among future plans the centre will be sponsoring week-end workshops such as Assertiveness Training, Sexuality, Verbal and Physical Self-Defense, etc.

The LIP grant received for the work at the centre covers a statistical survey on Women and Work in Powell River. This survey will interview women in an effort to identify, evaluate and document the particular difficulties women may have in their integration or re-integration into the labour market, and to identify areas where job training is necessary.

Any woman interested in further information about the above programs may call the centre at 483-3781 or drop in for a cup of tea and a chat during the following hours: Monday and Tuesday 11 - 3, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday 11 - 5, Saturday 1 - 4, and Sunday 7 - 9 p.m.

BCFW

BRITISH COLUMBIA FEDERATION OF WOMEN has a position open for an INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS ORGANIZER.

This is a volunteer position which involves:

- being a member of the 1976-77 Standing Committee;

- being responsible for putting out a mimeo newsletter after each Standing Committee meeting - which occurs bi-monthly.

The Standing Committee travels to communities throughout B.C. for several of its meetings. For further information contact Susan Sanderson, 734-2827 or 876-2865.

The second Standing Committee Meeting of the 1976-77 year is happening in Vancouver, on February 5 and 6. The meeting is taking place at the B.C. Federation of Labour office, 517 E. Broadway. Interested observers are welcome to attend, but are advised to contact the Co-ordinator regarding available space and times. Phone Susan Sanderson, 734-2827 or 876-2865 for further information.

RIGHTS OF LESBIANS SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE B.C.FEDERATION OF WOMEN held their first subcommittee meeting of the year in Vancouver on January 15, '77. 30 women attended this meeting, and there was representation from Vancouver Island, the Fraser Valley and the Lower Mainland.

The role of the Subcommittee was discussed, along with the recommendations passed at the BCFW convention in Vernon. As an action area of BCFW, it is one of our responsibilities to implement all of BCFW policy. Although some legal changes are necessary, the major changes necessary to eliminate lesbian oppression are those of attitude. This is where every woman involved in BCFW and in the women's movement can begin to assume responsibilty for the fight against the oppression of lesbians.

In order for both lesbians and feminists to work towards a clear political analysis of lesbianism/feminism, the Rights of Lesbians Subcommitee will continue to offer a workshop on lesbianism/feminism. This workshop is designed for every BCFW member and includes:

- a presentation and discussion of lesbian feminist theory

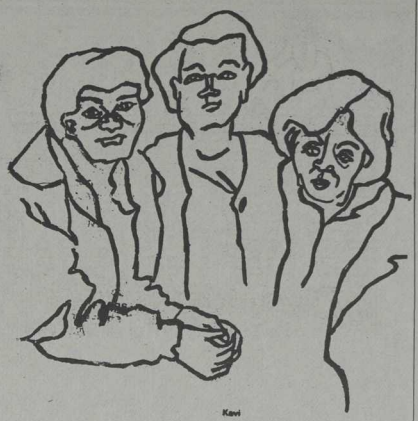
- an explanation and discussion of the myths and fears surrounding lesbiansim

- a sharing of strategies for dealing with the topic of lesbianism in groups, families, etc.

We have been invited to do two workshops in Campbell River for their conference in February.

Again this year the Subcommittee has formed several small groups in areas of particular concerns, such as:

we're sisters



- Lesbian/feminist workshops (this group does the workshops)

- Lesbian mothers

- Lesbians and Education

- Lesbians and Employment

- Lesbians and the Media

- Lesbians and Therapy

These groups meet regularly, then bring their findings and action proposals back to the General Meetings.

If you are interested in either being part of the general Rights of Lesbians Subcommittee or in working on any specific aspect of our "sub-sub-committees" (and there are certainly many fronts one could work on!), call this number for further information: 872 2156.

The next Subcommittee meeting is on Sunday, February 20th, at 1.00 in the afternoon at VSW - 2029 W. 4th Ave.

Canada has a new, bilingual newsletter, LESBIAN CANADA LESBIENNE. The energy for the newsletter grew out of the national lesbian conference held in Ottawa in October of last year.

At that conference, it was agreed to form local branches in five regions of Canada: the Atlantic provinces, Quebec, Ontario, the Prairies and British Columbia. Each region had its own meeting, and selected representatives who later met with the representatives of the other regions to set up networks of communication. At this meeting, the idea of the newsletter was conceived, as the editors explain, "to keep the hot feminist blood flowing, to keep the lesbian pride burning and to keep our political minds and our hearts in touch with our sisters across the country."

The women from the Atlantic provinces, APPLE (Atlantic Provinces Political Lesbians for Equality) have accepted the responsibility of publishing the newsletter.

Send contributions (and donations!) to the APPLE women c/o Anne Fulton, 44 Arlington Avenue, Halifax, Nova Scotia B3N 2A1.

The B.C. WOMEN'S STUDIES ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE will be held on Saturday, March 12, 1977 at Simon Fraser University in the South Court Lounge. The conference will begin at 9:00 a.m. and finish at 5:30 p.m. There will be a status report on the structure of women's studies in B.C., and papers are invited in the following areas: Women's Studies and Feminism; Student Projects; Research on Women and other Revelant Topics. Deadline for abstracts is February 12, 1977. Send all abstracts or requests for information to Meredith Kimball, Faculty of Interdisciplinary Studies, Simon Fraser University, Burnaby. Dinner and an evening of entertainment will follow the conference. Childcare is available, but pre-registration for care is essential. For billeting arrangements and for pre-registration, call Mercia Stickney, 943-5080

ACCESS

Starting this month, Kinesis will carry a regular feature entitled ACCESS, which will serve as a feminist resources exchange. Please send in your requests for information, and your offers to share skills to KINESIS, V.S.W., 2029 West 4th Avenue, Vancouver. Or you can phone VSW any weekday afternoon and ask for Gayla. The service is, of course, free.

* Do you know about cars? I'd love to have a woman help me to gain a little more control of my universe by teaching me to repair my own car. I'm interested in some repairs more complex than tune-ups and oil changes. I would be glad to pay $$$$s or give freely of some skill I have in return. Call SHARON at 253 4868 if you are interested.

* I have a plan to establish an Infant Day Care Centre for children from 5 months to 3 years, but before venturing into all the bureaucratic procedures of licensing such a facility, I would appreciate some feedback from readers regarding: fees, need, ideal location, etc. I can be contacted at 4480 Irwin Street, Burnaby, B.C. 438-3189. Brenda Cottle.

LETTER LOBBY

KAREN RICHARDSON

HELP! SAVE VSW

AN OPEN LETTER TO ALL OUR FRIENDS

RE: VSW FUNDING

DEAR FRIENDS,

As you may know, our core funding from the Provincial Secretary expires on March 31, 1977, and we are making another grant application in the near future. As you have been kind enough to send us a letter of support of VSW in the past, we are hoping that you will be able to do the same for us again this year.

Our basic services have not changed. The three general areas we are involved in are: para-legal women's rights counselling; public education on the status of women; advocacy for feminist legislation, programs and funding.

Overall, the demand for our services is increasing steadily beyond our ability to deal with it, due to our limited budget and staff. Our ombudservice handled 1,200 cases last year. We did about 90 speaking engagements during that period, and each month, about 50 requests are made for information and publications from our reference library.

You might be interested to know that of some 200 feminist groups in B.C., we were the only women's group that received funding in 76-77 from the Provincial Secretary. As a result, almost one third of these groups have now been forced to disband, due to lack of funding. This makes it all the more imperative that VSW continue its services.

With loss of additional grants and inflationary costs, our grant for 75-76 meant a reduction in staff, and we have not raised their salaries, which are quite modest, in two years. Therefore, this year we are applying for our original $75,000 plus an increase to hire more staff and to increase wages. This will bring us to $115,000.

This grant is by no means guaranteed to us from one year to the next. Therefore, a showing of COMMUNITY SUPPORT FOR VSW is vital. We would very much appreciate your support in the form of a letter. It will be sent along with our grant application to the Provincial Secretary. Thank you so much for your help.

Nancy Conrod
President
Vancouver Status of Women

CHILDCARE & SEXIST TAXES

It's tax time. If you are a single parent mother, you will already know that the Child Care expenses of the Income Tax Act is grossly sexist.

The Articling Student Caucus of the National Women and Law Association (85 Winchester Street, #4, Toronto, Ontario) is organizing a national protest against the sexist nature of the Income Tax Act policy on child care expenses. Their letter follows. VSW urges its members to send letters in support of this action by the Women and Law Assoc. to the appropriate Ministers who are addressed at the top of their letter. (All at the Parliament Buildings in Ottawa, no stamp is necessary). Send a cc to VSW and one to the Women and Law Assoc.

Ministers
Department of Finance
Department of Revenue
Department of Justice
Government of Canada

Dear People:

Re: Income Tax Act, s63, Child Care Expenses.

It has come to our attention that the reference income tax section is discriminatory in its application. A single parent father can deduct more for child care expenses than a single parent mother.

The Child care expenses section contains other discriminatory aspects which should be investigated and corrected.

1) The policy of this section is unacceptable since it assumed a woman must shoulder the child care responsibility. She must bear the expense of the babysitter when she goes out to work in the paid labour force. Women generally earn 60% of men's incomes. (Statistics Canada, Dept. of Labour, Women's Bureau). Thus either her husband pays for child care and she deducts it (which is unfair to the husband, who should be able to deduct his real expenses). Or, she pays the expenses (usually more than the permitted deduction) and her earning power and consequently, her financial independence is considerably reduced. This sex-stereotyped division of responsibilities is especially discriminatory. A clause should be developed which allows for maximum flexibility of responsibilty and/or joint responsibility.

2) An indirect discrimination results from the absence in the definition of child care expenses (s63(3)(a)(ii)) of persons studying in full-time institutions. Under "earned income", there should be added a provincial or Canada loan or grant. As well, to s63(3)(a)(ii) the phrase, "and to persons engaged in full time study at an accredited institution" should be added.

3) The $1000 per child is inadequate and unrealistic in terms of the present cost of living and cut-back wages. A person running a business is entitled to deduct the full amount of expenses. Yet a maximum is placed on child-care expenses. Caring for children is a worthy valuable activity and full recognition of its value should be reflected in tax policy.

4) The child care expense deduction should be from tax payable and not from taxable income as at present. Babysitting expenses are approximately the same whether the parent is at a $5000 a year annual taxable income level or a $50,000 a year taxable income level. The lower income person is therefore paying a higher proportion of income for child care and benefits least from a deduction from taxable income. This discriminatory discrepancy should be rectified.

In conclusion, since the described discrepancy in allowable deduction for child care expenses between a single parent man and a single parent woman is so clearly discriminatory, our Association would like a clear explanation from you as to why this section is drafted this way. We would like responses as well to the four other points raised.

Will you give your assurances that this section will be amended to eliminate discrimination and the blatantly unfair discrepancies before the budget changes are given final reading?

We are awaiting your response before proceeding with further analysis of the underlying policy of this section.

Thanking you in advance for your prompt attention to this matter, I am

Yours truly,

Kriss Boggild, Chairperson
Women and Law Association
Articling Student Caucus

cc: Conservative Party
New Democratic Party
Councils on the Status of Women
Other interested groups

SOME HON. MEMBERS

Following is a brief report on what the federal Cabinet Ministers and MPs said about women's issues during the month of December 1976. Once again, VSW urges all members and readers to write to them about the matters discussed. If you don't know who your MP is, just ask us. Cabinet Ministers are addressed as "The Honourable..., Minister of...". Members of Parliament are addressed as MP. While Parliament is in session, no postage is necessary. Just put "O.H.M.S." where the stamp normally goes.

ABORTION

On December 9, 1976, MP Whiteway of Manitoba asked the Minister of National Health and Welfare if the statement that "abortion is an acceptable form of birth control" in the booklet "Teacher's Guide for Sex Education" recently published by Lalonde's department is legal.

The Honourable Marc Lalonde said the booklet does not say that, and stressed that the government position has always been that abortion is not an acceptable means of birth control.

On December 22, 1976, MP Epp of Manitoba asked the Prime Minister if the federal government would introduce amendments to the Criminal Code in 1977, restricting abortion to cases in which the mother's life is seriously jeopardized in view of the fact that "50,000 Canadians lost their lives in 1976 by being aborted."

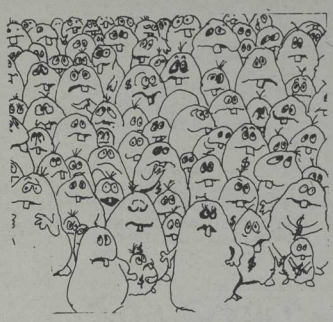
Trudeau replied that the Badgely committee had studied the operation of abortion laws across Canada and that its report will be tabled soon by the Minister of Justice.

Your views on abortion should be directed immediately and repeatedly to Basford. c.c. to Lalonde and your own MP.

EMPLOYMENT

On December 7, 1976 MP Broadbent of Ontario asked the new Minister of Manpower what he proposed to do about the underemployment of Canadian women. Broadbent said 23,000 women have dropped out of the labour force during November, a rate much higher than that of men. He also noted that the level of unemployment for heads of families is almost 50 per cent higher for women. The Honourable Jack Cullen argued statistics with him briefly and then said he is doing all he can within his limits to create and find jobs for the unemployed. He did not say what he is doing specifically for women.

Cullen should be notified that many Manpower programs are not equally available to women (remember the closure of Women's Independence Necessary and the Manpower Women's Advocate Sit-In, the fall of '75), and therefore he must institute special programs for unemployed women.



EQUAL WORK

On December 2, 1976 MP Aideen Nicholson of Ontario asked the Minister of Manpower if he would revise the Canadian Classification and Dictionary of Occupations used by the federal government for civil service jobs. She criticized the book for including foster mother and child care attendant in the same category as tattoo artist and cabana boy, rating foster parent skills lower than a dog trainer. The Honourable Jack Cullen replied that the book was published in 1971 and would indeed be updated.

On December 6, 1976 Ms. Nicholson charged that the book reflects male bias in underrating service jobs which are mainly staffed by women and immigrants. She stressed these jobs would have to be reevaluated if the intention of the equal pay for work of equal value clause in the newly proposed federal human rights law is to be met. Mr. Arthur Portelance, Parliamentary Secretary to Cullen, said the book would be revised by April 1, 1978 with consideration to foster parent and childcare jobs.

In the meantime, the Vancouver Sun reports that Manpower has renamed some 1,500 civil service jobs with non-sexist titles but has not changed its own sexist name. (New job titles do not mean reevaluation.)

Cullen should be pressed on the matter until it is concluded. Send carbons to Nicholson, Lalonde and your own MP.

ILLEGITMACY

On December 17, 1976 MP Lavoie of Quebec moved for leave to introduce Bill C-389 to amend the Interpretation Act to prevent discrimination between illegitimate and legitimate children. The motion was agreed to by the House of Commons, given first reading and ordered to be printed.

Write to your MP asking that he/she support the bill until it is passed and the reasons why you think illegitimacy should be abolished.

PENSIONS

On December 7, 1976 MP Knowles of Winnipeg asked the Prime Minister if the federal government would review all pension plans under their aegis, in particular the shortcomings of spouse's allowance, the non-inclusion of housewives in the CPP, pensions of only 50% to surviving widows of public servants, and the denial of pensions in many cases to veterans' widows.

The Honourable Marc Lalonde, Minister Responsible for the Status of Women, replied that a complete review is now being made of all pension plans private and public in Canada. However, he denied the allegation of discrimination in pension plans, saying that "It is merely a matter of dealing differently with people according to the conditions in which they find themselves, male or female. That has nothing to do with the status of women as such."

On December 13, 1976 Knowles raised the issue again. He said perhaps Lalonde meant women don't get pension equality because they are not in the labour market at all or as long as men and therefore do not qualify. Nevertheless Knowles argued this is discrimination.

Mr. Paul McRae, Parliamentary Secretary to Lalonde refuted Knowles' accusations and explained that the new human rights legislation if passed would prohibit discrimination in pensions and fringe benefits, and that an inter-departmental committee is reviewing the matter. Knowles charged McRae with missing the point.

Lalonde should be pressured on the issue. Send carbons to Knowles and your own MP.

SENATORS

On December 20, 1976 MP Fairweather of New Brunswick asked the Prime Minister if he would summon more women from the 11,413,700 women of Canada to the upper chamber (Senate). The Right Honourable Trudeau replied that the number of women in the last few years who have been appointed to very high offices in the courts, to lieutenant governorships and to the Senate is indicative of the federal government concern for women. (MP Hees of Ontario then said "Pierre is the Earle McLaughlin of Parliament.") Mr. Fairweather asked if six women out of 194 Senate places is a fair and adequate representation of the women in Canada. Trudeau said it is not sufficient and that "We know the historical reasons why women have not been as active in politics as men. Fortunately, we are beginning to correct that."

Ask Trudeau for a list of the women appointed during his administration, their positions and their names. Press him to appoint more women. Send carbons to Fairweather, Lalonde and your own MP.

RESOURCES

The following materials are now, or soon will be housed in the VSW library where they are available for reference five days a week. Sorry, we do not have extra copies to sell, but you can order them as listed below. We also have paperback books which can be loaned out, and back issues of feminist periodicals on file for research. Drop in and see us soon.

- Karen Richardson

Socialism and the Fight for Women's Rights: 15-page booklet by Linda Jenness on the necessity for socialist feminism in a capitalist society. 25¢ from Pathfinder Press, 410 West St., New York, NY, USA 10014.

Support/Supplementation: Who Will Benefit: statistical profile, 33 pages, November 1976 by the National Council of Welfare at Brooke Claxton Building, Ottawa, Ontario. Free.

Status of Women: bulletin of the B.C. Teachers Federation Status of Women Program. Free from Pearl Roberts, BCTF, 2235 Burrard St., #105, Vancouver B.C.

Survival in the Seventies: 47-page booklet on organization skills and resource materials for incorporating as a society, budgeting for community services, bookkeeping, managing volunteers, working with bureaucracies, pressuring government. $1.00 from SPARC at 2210 West 12th Avenue, Vancouver, B.C.

Women's Studies: Annotated Bibliography for High School Students: 125-page booklet listing sources of audio-visual materials, and print resources on sex-roles, the family, economy, history of women in Canada, politics, the law, education, literature, arts and women in other cultures. $5.00 from Centre for Continuing Education, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, B.C.

Women's Liberation in Canada: 23-page pamphlet. 50¢ from Pathfinder Press, 25 Bulwer St., Toronto, Ontario.

Women: A Bibliography of Special Periodical Issues 1960-1975: book listing periodicals devoted to feminist issues from A to Z. Available from Canadian Newsletter of Research on Women, Dept. of Sociology in Education, OISE, 252 Bloor St. W., Toronto, Ontario.

Female Artists: Past and Present: 160-page annotated directory/bibliography on women art teachers, historians, gallery personnel, art critics, etc. $6.50 from Women's History Research Centre, 2325 Oak St., Berkeley, CA USA 94708.

Ms. Liberty Colouring Book: wide perspectives for children on careers open to women. $1.00 each from AMAZON, 2211 East Kenwood Blvd., Milwaukee, Wisconsin, USA 53211.

Posters: women are courageous, aggressive, strong, logical, constructive, creative and independent human beings. 18 x 22 inches, black on gold. $2.50 from N.O.W., P.O. Box 16132, St. Louis, Missouri, USA 63105.

FINE FEMINIST POSTERS are available from the Notables, 6019 Kenwood, Kansas City, MO 64110. USA

Resource Handbook For Policy Makers: 122-page overview on sexism in education, athletics, employment, counselling, curriculum, teachers, etc. $2.50 from Equal Rights for Women in Education, Ed. Comm. of States, 300 Lincoln Tower, 1860 Lincoln Street, Denver, Colorado, USA 80203.

Half the World is Woman: 45 rpm record bilingual written by Angele Arsenault, recorded by Jacqueline Lemay, commissioned by U.N. and funded by Quebec government. $1.50 from SPPS Disques, 2030 Crescent #6, Montreal, Quebec.

Planning, Women and Change: 78-page details of women as urban planners. Planning concepts which affect women and recommendations for change. $6.00 from ASPO Bookstore, 1313 East 60th Street, Chicago, Illinois, USA 60637.

Women in Planning: 28-page report on their status in public planning agencies. $5.00 from ASPO Bookstore, 1313 East 60th Street, Chicago, Illinois, USA 60637.

SISTERS HAVE ABUNDANT RESOURCES EVERYWHERE

Fact Sheets on Institutional Sexism: booklet of data on women's rate of enrolment and degree attainment in education, representation in government, sexism in sports, housing and media. $1.00 from Racism and Sexism Centre, 200-1841 Broadway, New York, NY, USA 10023. Ask for their free catalogue on women's studies.

Women And Fellowships: 35-page report on who, what, why, where, how, when women are discriminated against in grants and what to do about it. $4.00 from WEAL, Ed. and Defense Fund, 733-15 Street NW, #200, Washington, D.C., USA 20005.

Resource Guide for Women in Seminary: 36-page handbook on entry of women into theological education, list of feminist religious publications, etc. $1.50 from Commission on Women in Ministry, NCC, 475 Riverside Drive, Room 770, New York, NY, USA 10027.

Through the Looking Glass: monthly newsletter on women and children in prison in pacific northwest area. Free to inmates. $5.00 from TLG, Box 33702, Seattle, Washington, USA 98133.

Female Studies Series: Volume 8, a newssheet to promote women's studies. $2.25 from KNOW Inc., P.O. Box 86031, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, USA 15221.

Albatross: lesbian feminist satire magazine, news, views, reviews, interviews, poetry, fiction, humour, comix. $7.00/year. Sample copies $1.50. Albatross, Box 112, 111 S. Harrison St., E. Orange, New Jersey, USA 07017.

Politics of Sex: 26-article packet on woman-man relationships. $4.90 from KNOW Inc. at P.O. Box 86031, Dept. AD, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, USA 15221. Send 25¢ for full catalogue.

Woman's Body: 16-article packet on abortion, vaginal health, v.d., male motivations in obstetrics and gynecology, etc. $3.15 from KNOW Inc., P.O. Box 86031, Dept. AD, Pittsburgh, PA USA 15221.

The Monthly Extract: An Irregular Periodical: a communications network of global gynecological self-help clinics. Six issues for $5.50 from New Moon, Box 3488, Ridgeway Station, Stamford, Connecticut, USA 06905.

The Witch's Os: new revised edition of history of gynecology in relation to modern self help movement. $6.50 from New Moon, Box 3488, Ridgeway Stn., Stamford, Connecticut, USA 06905.

Fight Male Chauvinist Piglets: 20-article packet aimed at helping high school women deal with chauvinism. $1.25 from Youth Liberation, 2007 Washtenaw Avenue, Dept. W, Ann Arbor, Michigan, USA 48104.

Lesbianism and Feminism: 11 article packet on sexuality and the women's movement. $3.05 from KNOW Inc., P.O. Box 86031, Pittsburgh, PA, USA 15221.

Feminist Xmas Cards: The Notables, a set of women's movement seasons greetings like "merry xmas to all, and to all, equal rights". Send a postcard asking for Xmas catalogue. The Notables, 6019 Kenwood, Kansas City, Missouri, USA 64110.

Rape and Sexual Harrassment, free from Student Affairs Committee, University of Guelph, Ontario.

Media Sexploitation, The Hidden Implants in America's Mass Media and How They Program and Condition Your Subconscious Mind: by Wilson Bryan Key. $8.95 from Prentice-Hall Inc. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, USA 07632.

Samples of Sexist Ads: 20-page booklet prepared by IWY Secretariat for Action 75 conference in Ottawa by federal government. Free from YWCA, 572 Jarvis Street, Toronto, Ontario.

Martha Matters: feminist newsletter for homemakers. $3.00 from Martha Matters, 1022 Wilson Blvd, Room 2610, Arlington, Virginia USA 22209.

The Never Married Woman: about women who never wed. Academic, statistical, and personal material on social and economic position of single women. Marianne Bossen, 123 Home Street, Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Lesbian Herstory Archives: newsletter listing materials on lesbianism. P.O. Box 11258, New York, N.Y. 10001.

Lesbians and Kids: workshop kit. $3.00 quarterly from Janice Macomber, Piano Tuning Allied Arts and Services, P.O. Box 8292, Emeryville, CA, USA 94662.

BOOKS

Do we fully understand that we aim at nothing less than an entire subversion of the present order of society, a dissolution of the whole existing social compact?
Elizabeth Oakes Smith, 1852

If you would like to do a review of any of the following books, please contact me at 736-3746 weekdays at the office. Reviews are printed monthly in Kinesis and two are sent to the publishers in return for further review copies. In this way, reviewers are helping to stock our reference library for free. Thanks.

- Karen Richardson

Country Woman

The Female Eye

No-Fault Marriage

A Woman's Place

The Wheel of Things

Women and Success

A Woman's Book of Money

Women Loving

Woman's Evolution

Working Mothers

Women in Prison

Woman At Home

Women Look at Psychiatry

Cuban Women Now, Interviews with Cuban Women by Margaret Randall

Distributed by Canadian Women's Educational Press, 1974.

Reviewed by Norah Hartman

In Cuban Women Now, Margaret Randall illustrates through interviews with Cuban women their view that the roots of their liberation lay in the radical change at the base of their society which occurred with the victory of Fidel Castro in 1959.

This book is divided into three parts: the first is a brief description of the Cuban women's revolutionary history, the second and major section consists of interviews with Cuban women in all aspects of life and the third is a chronology and glossary which was of great assistance to this reader.

Women from areas of life are interviewed: agricultural workers, revolutionaries, ex-domestics, dancers, an actress now director, ex-prostitutes and foundry workers, and of all ages. Each person describes her life before the revolution and the changes which it has brought.

Many details of their lives are revealed such as the shopping bag plan for working mothers, the fact that some husbands will do laundry, others won't, how the Children's Circles became staffed by ex-domestic workers and the details of the extensive literacy program.

Some women described their experiences during the revolutionary war and how they achieved respect from men through their courage and resourcefulness in violent situations. This respect has aided women in their liberation from sexually determined roles in a "macho" society.

The description by an ex-prostitute of the efforts to wipe out prostitution were vividly portrayed. She tells how she was forced into degrading conditions through economic oppression, how this situation was recognized by the present government, and how women were removed from prostitution, educated and given a purpose in life through employment.

Everyone interviewed emanated great joy and pride in being able to work, particularly in the production of sugar. Moreover, one also learns through these interviews how the Central Committee has influenced every aspect of life. It has produced revolutionary art, theatre and music.

This was difficult reading for someone unfamiliar with life in Cuba, but it is valuable as a source of information from the women themselves who are enthusiastically carrying out the promises of the revolution.

RAPE by Carol V. Horos

Tobey Publishing Co. Inc.
Box 428, New Canaan, CT. 06840
(1974) $2.95.

Reviewed by Diana Smith

Rape, to this writer at least, is the ultimate expression of women's oppression, whether before, during or after the act itself.

Of the books currently on the market dealing with rape, this book I recommend. For starters. Horos gives a straight-forward approach to the crime, its consequences and its prevention.

Other recommended books on the subject give similar information but all tend to deal with some areas more extensively than others. For instance, Rape, The First Sourcebook for Women by the New York Radical Feminists covers better the political/feminist issues of rape. But for practical information in an easy-to-read form Horos' book is very useful.

She begins with a short historical overview, aptly sub-titled 'a painful perspective'. For example, biblical law forced an unmarried rape victim to marry her rapist with the added penalty that he could never divorce his victim. Who, after all, would want spoiled merchandise?

Following this Horos attempts to dispell several of the myths surrounding rape. Among these are the old favourites that rape is motivated by uncontrollable sexual urges and performed by a stranger who leaps out of the bushes. Studies in fact show that the major motive is aggression and often the victim and rapist are, at least casual acquaintances.

In studying the rapist, Horos finds him to appear to have no distinguishing characteristics. One study found "...their heterosexual adjustment is quantitatively well above average."

The particular value in this book is its heavy focus on the preventative aspects of rape; precautions to take whether at home or outside to avoid assault; and self defense techniques to use to resist an attack.

Horos then deals with the process involved if a woman is raped and decides to report to the police. This includes the detailed questioning and written statement; a medical examination, not only to treat the woman for injury but to collect evidence should the case go to court; and the legal procedure if a man is charged with the assault.

The final chapter gives information on how to start a rape crisis centre with a brief list of its functions. Typical of the whole book, this chapter is factual and with limited analysis, although any commentary is relevant and rarely rhetorical.

Like most other books on rape readily available, this one is written by an American about the situation in that country and so the statistics given do not necessarily reflect what is happening in British Columbia. Nor is the U.S. Directory of Rape Crisis Centres, given in the back of the book, too useful to Canadian readers. However, rape, like most other areas of women's oppression, cuts across national borders and makes most of the content relevant to us also.

This book is one of a series from the "Women's Library" compiled by The Centre for Women Policy Studies, a publishing program of literature useful to women. A notable feature of this program is a 70% discount to groups, organizations and services who intend to distribute the book free. For this, contact the publisher, Tobey Publishing, Box 428, New Canaan, Conn. 06840.

OLIVIA RECORDS (Box 70237 Los Angeles CA 90070) now in its fourth year as an American national women's recording company has produced two new albums. "Where Would I Be Without You" features the poetry of Pat Parker and Judy Grahn. Both celebrate lesbian struggles in white heterosexual U.S. The other new record is by BeBe K'Roche, a four woman band whose music combines Latin, rhythm and blues, and jazz elements.

calendar

Women's Week at UBC

February 9-16

February 9 at 12:30: Lecture on FAMILY VIOLENCE by Gillian Riddington of Transition House, in the Mildred Brock Lounge of Brock Hall.

February 9 at 7:30: GERMAINE GREER in the SUB Ballroom (Student Union Building). Tickets from the AMS (Alma Mater Society) Office. Students, $1.00; others $2.00.

February 10, 11: WOMEN'S ART EXHIBITION in the lobby of the Lassere Building. 9am-10pm on Thursday; 9am-6pm on Friday.

February 10 at 12:30: Sara David will speak about EMOTIONAL SELF DEFENSE in the Mildred Brock Lounge of Brock Hall.

February 10 (evening time TBA): Address and discussion with RAPE RELIEF.

February 11 at 12:30: Avis Rosenberg speaks about WOMEN AND ART in the Mildred Brock Lounge.

February 11, 4-8pm: BEER GARDEN in Mildred Brock Lounge. FERRIN will sing.

February 12, 8pm-12am: COFFEEHOUSE in Mildred Brock Lounge. Entertainers from the Full Circle Coffeehouse Collective.

February 13 at 7:30pm: A workshop by the Health Collective, probably in Place Vanier. Details TBA.

February 14 at 7:00: Tentative arrangements for Ti-Grace Atkinson to speak in IRC (Instructional Resources Centre, Building #2).

February 15 at 7:00: Helga Jacobsen will speak on WOMEN IN CHINA, in the Art Gallery of SUB.

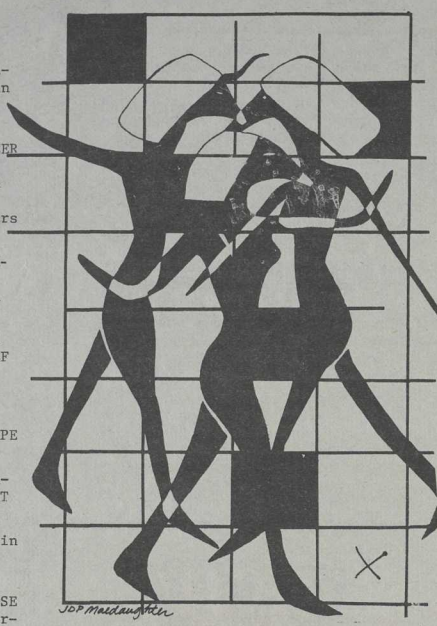
February 16 at 12:30: A seminar about WOMEN AND FINANCES, especially student fees, in SUB 207.

There is also possibility of a noon-hour workshop on Assertiveness Training, but details are not finalized.

February 16 at 7:00: Dorothy Smith will speak on FEMINISM AND SOCIAL ISM in the SUB Art Gallery.

February 16 at 7:00: C.R. (consciousness-raising) WORKSHOP led by Marnie Wildeman in the Mildred Brock Lounge.

In addition, there will be noon-hour films in the SUB Ballroom. For more details about these events, phone the now-reinstated WOMEN'S OFFICE at UBC: 228-2163.



Women's Lives

WOMEN'S LIVES - Free Noon Hour Talks, with Video and Film

In cooperation with Vancouver Public Library, 6 Thursdays, February 3 to March 10, 12:10 to 1:00 pm in the Women's Resources Centre, Vancouver Public Library, 750 Burrard Street.

February 3: SO WHERE'S MY PRINCE ALREADY? Nomi Promislow, Media Freelancer, Reel Feelings.

February 10: EQUAL TO THE MAN NEXT TO ME. Ann Bishop, Media Freelancer.

February 17: WOMEN IN THE FAMILY. Canadian Women's TV Series.

February 24: RAPE IS A SOCIAL DISEASE. Diane Russell, Rape Relief Collective.

March 3: KAREN: WOMEN IN SPORT. Marion Barling, Media Freelancer, Women in Focus.

March 10: SINGLE WOMEN. Kay Smith, CBC-TV Producer, Coordinator, CBC Network Series "Concerning Women".

Woman Alive

Wednesdays at 9:30 on Channel 10

February 2: MAGAZINE SHOW #1 - News items and upcoming events in journalistic format -- short film 'The Life of Nina Polanski' -- Pat Smith interviews Janis Acton of the Toronto Women's Press -- SORWUC case dealing with UIC hassles for the pregnant.

February 9: WOMEN IN THE CHILEAN RESISTANCE.

February 16: GERMAINE GREER speaks at UBC's Women's Week. 11pm.

February 23: WOMEN IN THE MEDIA.

March 2: MAGAZINE SHOW #2 - News items, features, upcoming events.

watch! woman alive

Wednesdays at 9.30 on Channel 10

February 3: CONTRACEPTION: The Pros and Cons of Different Methods of Contraception. Resource person: Dr. Vera M. Frinton, YWCA, 580 Burrard Street. Thursday at 8:00 p.m. Admission: $3.00. Phone 683-2531.

FEBRUARY 5 and 6 at the B.C.Fed offices, 517 E.Broadway: second Standing Committee meeting of BCFW. 734 2827 for info.

FEBRUARY 7 at VSW 7.30 pm. The Lower Mainland Regional Reps to BCFW meet at VSW. Val Embree for details: 228 8143.

FEBRUARY 10, VSW 7.30 pm. Education Action Group meets. Phone Nadine, 736 3746 for details.

FEBRUARY 12 and 13: NDP WOMEN'S CONFERENCE, at Douglas College, 8th and McBride in New Westminister. Child care provided. $2.00 registration fee. Contact Judy Paterson, 936 0904 for more details.

FEBRUARY 17, University Women's Club holds a panel discussion on A Cross Cultural Perspective on Day Care. Daycare in China, Russia, Eastern Europe and North America. Discussion starts at 8.00 pm, but get there at 7.30 for the sherry in the Oak Room.

FEBRUARY 20, VSW at 1pm. Rights of Lesbians Subcommittee of BCFW meets. 872 2156 for info.

EVERY WEDNESDAY NIGHT AT 8.00 at VSW: the Lesbian Drop-in takes place.

EVERY SECOND THURSDAY NIGHT AT VSW is Orientation Night. This month the dates are the 8th and the 22nd. Time is 7.30. If you are new in town and want to make some friends, or if you want to become involved in VSW activities and have never quite got round to it - COME TO AN ORIENTATION MEETING. Phone Susan at VSW - 736 3746 - for details.

SUNDAY AFTERNOONS AT 1pm, the WOMAN ALIVE production team meets at VSW. If you want to become involved with this show, call Nadine at 736 3746.

IF YOU HAVE ANY OF VSW'S AV TAPES AT HOME, NOW IS THE TIME TO RETURN THEM!

action

Ideas for Education Action

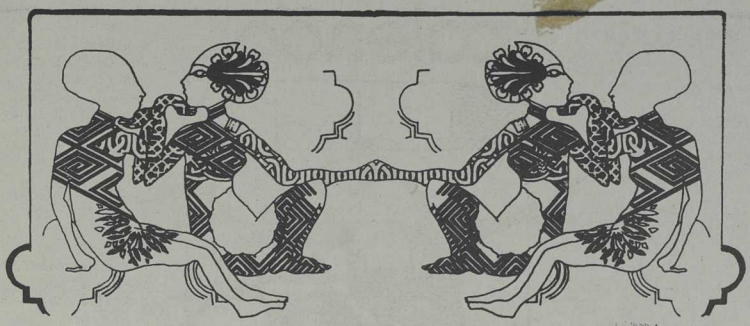
1. Call the principal of your local secondary school to find out if Women's Studies will be taught in your school next fall.

2. Order the Core Curriculum booklet from the Ministry of Education in Victoria.

3. Get the BCTF statement "Are Core & PLAP Bad for Children?" from 2235 Burrard Street, Vancouver.

4. Write to Dr. McGeer and let him know how you feel about Core Curriculum and the (PLAP) Provincial Learning Assessment Program.

5. Attend the Education Action Group Meeting here at VSW February 10 at 7:30 pm.



events

people's law

The VANCOUVER PEOPLE'S LAW SCHOOL is pleased to present a series of ten Sunday afternoon seminars on the law at Vancouver Public Library. This series is in addition to their regular spring course held during the week. All seminars and materials are FREE.

February 6...IMPAIRED DRIVING AND THE LAW; February 13...BUILDING BY-LAWS; February 20...HALF-WAY HOUSING LICENSING; February 27...CANADA PENSION PLAN. Time for all seminars is 1:30-4:30 p.m. at the Vancouver Public Library, 750 Burrard Street, Vancouver.

The spring courses from the Vancouver People's Law School which will take place during February are:

WORKER'S COMPENSATION...January 31, and February 1, 2 from 7:30-9:30 pm. at the King George Secondary School, 1755 Barclay; WOMEN AND THE LAW... February 7, 8 and 9 from 7:30-9:30 pm. at the Vancouver Public Library, 750 Burrard Street. (This course will cover the federal and provincial laws that give special status to women with an emphasis on Family Law and Labour Law.) INCOME TAX (two courses)...February 14, 15, 16, and repeated on February 21, 22 and 23. Time for both: 7:30-9:30 pm. Place for both: Kitsilano Secondary School, 2550 West 10th Avenue. INSURANCE CORPORATION OF BRITISH COLUMBIA... February 21, 22 and 23 from 7:30-9:30 pm. at John Oliver Secondary School, 530 East 41st. WELFARE RIGHTS...February 28, March 1, 2 from 7:30-9:30 at First United Church 320 East Hastings (at Gore). (This course will cover all aspects of Welfare Regulations, and will in addition examine the practice of the social service delivery system and include an analysis of the working poor and welfare rights. For more information about any of these courses, contact Vancouver People's Law School, #610-207 West Hastings Street, Vancouver. Phone 681-7532.

coffeehouse

The FULL CIRCLE WOMEN'S COFFEEHOUSE COLLECTIVE is looking for a larger space for their Friday night events. Watch this space in KINESIS next month for an update. To plug into the Collective, phone Penny at 669 3397

douglas

SPRING PROGRAMS AT DOUGLAS COLLEGE

WOMEN AT HOME: Starts March 9, and runs for five Wednesday mornings, until April 6th. Course will be held at the Centennial Pavilion, Maple Ridge. Free is $15. Child care is available for 2-5 year olds at 25 cents per morning. Contact: Centennial Arts Centre, 463-3113, or the Maple Ridge Status of Women, 467-1633.

JOB FINDING SKILLS FOR WOMEN: Two evening sessions from 7:30 to 10:00 on Tuesday and Wednesday, February 15 and 16, 1977. Place is the New Westminster Senior Secondary School, 835-Eight Street, New Westminster. Instructor: Beth Morris. For information, call 588-6404.

WOMEN IN THE WORLD: This is a series of six Wednesday sessions, February 23 to April 6, 1977. Time: 7:30 - 9:30. Fee is $12. The course, which is being co-sponsored by the White Rock Community School, takes place at that school, 1785 - 148th Street, Surrey, B.C. Information: 588-6404 or 536-2131.

ASSERTIVENESS TRAINING FOR WOMEN: Three one-day workshops. Surrey Campus, January 29; Coquitlam Campus, February 26; New Westminster Campus, March 12. Fee is $15 for a one-day session, which lasts from 9:30 - 4:30. For information, phone 588-6404.

STOP WAITING UNTIL: Two sessions at New Westminster Campus. Friday, March 4 from 7:00-10:00 p.m. Please register by February 25. This is a workshop which offers us insight into our power to make our own life choices.

valri bromfield

Cultural Funk presents VALRI BROMFIELD in YOU'RE EATING OUT OF THE DOG'S DISH! Valri Bromfield, that inimitable woman of imitation, impersonation and canine training, presents a very special Cultural Funk this month. YOU'RE EATING OUT OF THE DOG'S DISH is a one-woman show featuring the various, assorted and sundry women, men and dogs in Valri's life.

Sunday, February 20th at 7:00 & 9:15 p.m. Tickets are $3.50. Reservations Advised! Vancouver East Cultural Centre, 1895 Venables Street, Vancouver. 254-9578.

cold mountain

February 11-13: SEX THERAPY FOR PRE-ORGASMIC WOMEN: A Professional Training Workshop, organized by the Cold Mountain Institute. Fee is $150, and is being conducted by Barbara Biggs.

March 16-April 13: EMOTIONAL SELF-DEFENSE FOR WOMEN. Five Wednesday evenings, all day Sunday, March 20. Resource person: Sara David.

north shore

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IS WOMEN'S CENTRE CONCERN

The North Shore Women's Centre will welcome Gillian Riddington, of Transition House, Vancouver, to speak to their group at the Pub Night Tuesday, February 8, 1977 on Domestic Violence.

The Pub Night, for this month only, is occurring on the second Tuesday of the month instead of the first, at Neighbourhood House, 252 E. 2nd Street, North Vancouver.

Battered wives and children, the family interaction that leads to such behavior, and ways of dealing with it will form the substance of Ms. Riddington's talk, titled Domestic Violence.

The meeting will be open to the public, and refreshments will be available. All women are welcome.

North Shore Women's Centre, 3255 Edgemont Boulevard, North Vancouver, B.C. 987-4822. Contact Faye Cooper, 985-0067 (home), 876-3211, local 2457 (office).

family violence

SYMPOSIUM ON FAMILY VIOLENCE will be held at the Bayshore Inn on Wednesday, March 9 through Friday, March 11. Major presentations and workshops will include ones on Child Abuse and Wife Battering. This conference addresses itself mainly to social workers and other professionals, but you and I might be able to get in. The registration fee for students and other interested people is $15.00. Contact the United Way office at 1625 West 8th Avenue, Vancouver. Phone 731-7781 for more information.

vancouver status of women
2029 west 4th avenue
vancouver, b.c. V6J 1N3
736 3746

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