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ACROSS B.C.

Joni Miller

Supporters of Vancouver Rape Relief at the 1981 Walkathon, which raised another $17,000 towards the rape relief shelter. Rape Relief reports that they are currently in negotiations for the house and expect to have it within the next few months.

Provincial judge hands down anti-poster decision

By Joni Miller

In early July provincial court Judge Randall Wong made an historic decision on the poster controversy in Vancouver, finding Don Stewart guilty of affixing a poster to a pole and handed down a one year suspension of sentence.

Stewart was also issued a $200 peace bond on the condition that he "keep the peace and be of good behaviour" or find himself back in court.

This marked almost a year since the controversy began. Groups who depend on postering as their main form of advertising and expression of opinion protested the city bylaw passed by Vancouver last September declaring that anyone found postering would be subject to a maximum penalty of $2,000 or two months in jail.

Women's groups, theatre groups, political organizations and others fought back with posters declaring, "this is a poster, it has a right to be here." There was a large demonstration at city hall where Bob Mutant and friends stormed city council chambers and stuck a poster up behind then mayor Jack Volrich's head.

The local press and public have also been behind the "poster people" evidenced by a favourable editorial in The Vancouver Sun and a pamphlet endorsed by more than 60 local groups circulating at the same time.

Before his sentence was handed down, Stewart said he would continue to poster. He said the anti-poster law is comparable to attempts to stifle dissidents in China, the Soviet Union and fascist Argentina and added that making postering illegal distorts the way events or views are advertised, and people may not attend.

Stewart said after his sentencing, "I have postered before the trial, during the trial, and I will continue to poster..."

He added that Judge Wong's ruling means that he and other poster people have a long struggle ahead of them. City officials insist that the anti-poster by-law is merely an attempt to save the city the $14,000 it annually spends to remove the posters form poles.

Harry Nicholson, assistant city engineer in charge of the by-law's enforcement said, "My whole purpose in life is to get rid of nuisances." According to Derek Creighton, city prosecutor, "A ban on postering may amount to a loss of freedom of speech but there are other things to consider - like littering."

Now that the test case is over, the courts have the go ahead to start processing the 20 people who have subsequently been arrested for postering. ♀

On strike all these years

It was a dubious victory but striking Service, Office and Retail Workers Union of Canada members wanted to get a contract at the Muckamuck restaurant or shut owners Doug Chrismas and Jane Erickson down.

"We wanted to get a contract or shut him down. We shut him down and that's a victory," SORWUC vice-president Jen Moses said of the strike, which began in the spring of 1978.

Moses said 40 or 50 people met June 2 at English Bay for a rally and celebration to mark the third anniversary of the Muckamuck strike. The restaurant has been closed since November 1980.

After the employees of the restaurant had come to SORWUC to organize, the owners refused to negotiate with their employees or recognize the union. The union went on strike.

"I don't think they (the owners) ever gave reasons for not negotiating, they always stormed out of the negotiations," said Moses, who added the owners claimed the employees had presented non-negotiable items. "I think it was stubborness and pride. They never did negotiate."

She added that the Muckamuck victory has had some effect on other unionization attempts in B.C. "I think it always has effects. This was brought up directly in our negotiations with Maz Tudor (restaurant) in Kitimat. We are presently certified there." ♀

Nanaimo Haven House finally opens

Nanaimo Haven House, a refuge for battered women, officially opened July 1st. The house, run by three paid staff members and Board of the Vancouver Island Haven Society operates through funding from the city of Nanaimo and the provincial Ministry of Human Resources (MHR).

The opening went smoothly but the struggle for funding has been a long one. Application for funding started as long ago as 1979 and only in January of this year did the city of Nanaimo come forth with a grant enabling the Society to rent a house. Clearly, a house without the means to equip and staff it is insufficient but the additional funding came only recently from MHR. This turn of events happened after a 2500 name petition was taken to Victoria; a funding contract with MHR was signed two weeks later.

Local community support has been excellent and has not ended with signatures. The Carpenters and Electricians Unions donated time and labour and local merchants helped out with lumber and bedding. The house still needs furniture, clothing, food, donations and...volunteers to handle the on-call shifts.

There are concerns for the future. The house has a limited capacity and is not expected to be able to meet the needs for this city in six months time.

If you live in the Nanaimo area and need help for yourself or a friend, or, if you can donate time or other needed articles, please call 754-7123. ♀

Port Alberni Shelter for women opens

Port Alberni has also recently opened a House for Battered Women. However, even as it opens, the house is struggling to survive on practically nonexistent funding.

It's hard to find a house where the neighbours don't object and when you do -- the zoning isn't right. This in turn means no grant from the city to pay for rent. The provincial government has also refused funding, although although a funding contract is being discussed for next year.

The Ministry of Human Resources (MHR) is presently paying room and board allotments for women who stay at the house. This money is paid only after the women stay there and, as it stands, if the house is empty on a given day there is no money paid at all. The money is not enough to maintain the house or pay staff members.

The house's survival at present depends on individual and group donations and is now staffed by volunteers. Many of the latter are paying out of their own already thinly-lined pockets in order to help keep the house afloat.

Talks are underway with MHR, community support via petitions and media contact is being sought, and volunteers are organizing.

Numbers to call are: Emergencies: 724-2223 and Women's Resource Centre: 724-0313 ♀

Watch for another Kinesis September 15

Although printing Kinesis became impractical during the recent strike by the Canadian Union of Postal Workers, work on the paper went on nonetheless. We'll be coming out again in mid-September. Look for:

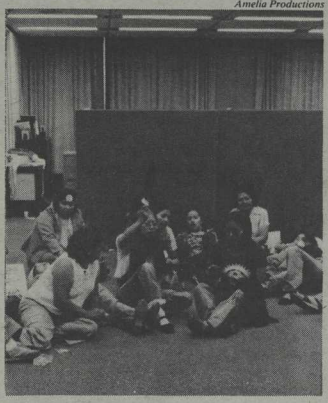
* an account of the strike by a CUPW activist
* interviews with Native women at the occupation of the DIA offices
* features on co-ops; on alcholism and women
* interviews with women performers from the Vancouver Folk Music Festival
* resolutions from the Lesbian Conference.

By the end of the next issue, we will have cleared out our accumulated news. In October we will revert to our old habits of mid-month deadline, month-end publication.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Support the concerned aboriginal women

Amelia Productions



Native women gathered at Britannia High school on August 9th to exchange support. The concerned aboriginal women spoke about the problems that they faced and issued the following statement along with their three demands that the regional department of Indian Affairs director Fred Walchli resign, there be a full-scale inquiry into the department, and a meeting with Indian affairs minister John Munro.

Aboriginal women sit in at the DIA office

Amelia Productions

STATEMENT OF THE CONCERNED ABORIGINAL WOMEN

For many years, we the aboriginal people of this land have taken physical and mental abuse from the Department of Indian Affairs through their paternalistic policies and restrictive regulations. We have experienced countless frustrations in dealing with this bureaucracy and as a result we live in houses that are poorly constructed and overcrowded; our people are unemployed; our young women are being sterilized unnecessarily; our babies are dying in high numbers; many suicides occur; frequent incarcerations; our young people are dropping out of school; increased alcoholism; the loss of our traditional hunting, fishing, trapping and gathering rights; sicknesses resulting from poor water and sewage facilities; interferences in our Indian Governments decision making authority; child apprehensions and adoptions; and the list goes on endlessly.

One example of our endless frustrations comes to us from our concerned sisters from the Blueberry and Cowichan Bands. These people have had hydro installed and a water system connected to their homes, but for many years they have had to live with no electricity and no water.

We can no longer stand for this oppression and for this reason we, the aboriginal women, occupied the Department of Indian Affairs offices here in Vancouver. For eight days we attempted to negotiate and lobby to have our three demands met; 1) a meeting with John Munro in Vancouver, 2) the immediate dismissal of Fred Walchli as Director General of DIA in B.C., 3) and a full and independent public inquiry into the activities of the DIA. As of today, Honourable John Munro has not yet responded to our demands.

Many aboriginal women and non-Indian supporters became aware of our stand through the media, support then began to pour in. On the first day of the occupation there were 50 women, two days later there were 120 women. We were and still are a solidified group physically, mentally, spiritually and emotionally because our concerns hav affected every part of our lives. Strength to carry out the position of our aboriginal women stemmed from our traditional decision making body which was our older women. Their advice, direction and renewed strength bonded the aboriginal people together. The struggle for our demands will be our responsibility to pursue because we organized and made the decision to expose the problems, hurts and sufferings caused by the Department of Indian Affairs. It is a grave insult to our aboriginal women's integrity to say the Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs subverted the occupation, as Fred Walchli has insinuated to the press. The UBCIC has given their full support to our stand and has provided many of their facilities for our aboriginal women's use. We are proud to say we initiated this movement for our people, and we give the utmost respect to our leaders and men who stood by us with courage to show their support and receive our direction.

On the eighth day of our occupation, the Vancouver City Police forcefully removed the aboriginal women and men. 53 of our people were charged with public mischief and were dragged off to jail where we were held overnight and subjected to verbal harrassment by the city police. We were treated as hardened criminals in court the following day, all handcuffed two by two. For your informatio we have become aware that the federal government spent $60,000 removing our bodies from the DIA offices.

In court the judge demanded that we stay away from the Department of Indian Affairs and certain conditions were given to everyone. He also made a statement in court that clearly indicates a very paternalistic attitude. He stated, "Strength in numbers is frankly something I don't want you to have again." It became apparent that the judge and the system were working against us to break down our strength as the DIA had shown by the arrest and by the many attempts over the last 114 years.

Our action is not a criminal one, it is political. Our concerns are legitimate, our demands are justified and no authority can deny us these demands. We are a people who have existed on this land since time immemorial and derive our authority to govern from that premise. We will only begin to be peoples unto ourselves when our governing bodies are instituted by and for our own people on our own land.

We want the real truth told to the general public in Canada, because we feel that you deserve to hear the real trut of the Department of Indian Affairs mismanagement and corruption. Our people have neither protection nor security at the community level, the occupation of the DIA offices was necessary because we have no recourse within the system, the simple fact is we cannot strike for better living conditions. In recognition of this, we the aboriginal women, are demanding that all 53 charges be dropped, we do not want the courts to make political decision on our behalf.

We are also demanding a full and independent public inquiry be held into the Department of Indian Affairs in B.C. now. We are fully prepared to undertake the responsibility of conducting our own public inquiry into the adminsitration of DIA in B.C. because we do not want our concerns to be swept aside by the insensitivity and self-interest of one man, namely Fred Walchli. We feel that DIA must become accountable to our people and our communities and with your support we can begin the inquiry now!

We held our first session of our own inquiry with Senator Ray Perrault, Sgt. Campbell of the Vancouver City Police and various press peoples on the seventh day of our occupation. For seven hours our aboriginal women and men provided evidence of the deplorable living conditions of our communities. We were fed up before we sat with Perrault, but after listening to him give his support for an inquiry, we became even more fed up. As a Senator, Mr. Perrault has no real power on authority to push for our demands, in fact he was there on a voluntary basis.

We, as aboriginal people, have so much to offer society, but with the despair our people are in, it is no wonder we are looked down upon. We are fighting for our very survival and the DIA is not assuming any responsibility for its negligence, but is making the situation much worse. The occupation would not have taken place if the Department of Indian Affairs had assumed its responsibilities and been sensitive to our issues at the Band level, for their job is to have a good sense of all the issues and must therefore make recommendations to the Minister for parliament to consider.

The truth must come out into the open for our people want to again grab hold of their dignity, honour, respect and honesty by bringing truth and justice out which our people so well deserve.

Once again our position as concerned aboriginal women has been voiced and unchanged. The stand we take must be heard by all if our demands are going to be activated. Again we demand that we have a meeting with Honourable John Munro in Vancouver, we demand the dismissal of Fred Walchli, we demand a full and independent public inquiry into the DIA in B.C. and we demand the 53 criminal charges against our aboriginal people be dropped.

We will not be ignored because we will not quit until our demands are fully met. We will keep pressing, because we have seen our people suffer in pain for too long.

We hope all aboriginal women here today can see and understand precisely what we are talking about in our stand because I am sure that we have gone through many of the same frustrations.

LABOUR

Coquitlam School Board denies woman janitor's job

By Ursula Kernig

"A Port Coquitlam woman has tattled to the B.C. Human Rights Branch because School District 43 won't let her clean their floors." (*The Columbian*, June 3, 1981)

Early in 1980 I attended the five week Building Service Worker's (B.S.W.) course, taught by two male instructors at the Pacific Vocational Institute. The objective of the course is to teach the basic skills required for the cleaning of hospitals, schools, stores, offices, warehouses, workshops, etc. Of the 14 students attending with me, five were women.

In the mornings we usually studied theory -- becoming familiar with the "duties, obligations and responsibilities of the B.S.W."; learning the routines of general, daily cleaning; treatment of different kinds of floors and carpets; about germs, dust, stains, the chemicals used for cleaning and their dangers, how to clean light fixtures, blinds, windows, walls; about safety and security procedures; and much more.

The texts for the course refer to the B.S.W. in a number of instances as "he", though an effort to substitute them with the pronouns we, you, one, seems evident.

One of the "tidbits" of information I gained was that in a large department store in Vancouver, usually the women clean under the counters and display tables and the men clean the aisles. I can imagine which chore is physically more demanding. But I forgot to ask if their rate of pay is the same, or if the women get paid more, commensurate with the difficulty of the task.

Looking for employment

Most afternoons we stuffed ourselves into green coveralls (smocks were offered to the women, but were declined) and headed in groups of three "man" crews, armed with assorted cleaning paraphernalia out onto the campus, applying in practice what we had learned in theory.

The instructors were helpful with referring students to potential employers, and vice versa, though most of the men did not need that help, as they had jobs already lined up.

A few days after the end of the course I received a call from the Surrey School Board, asking if I would like to come for an interview.

The next day I left my application with them and talked to the head of the janitorial department. In early March 1980, I started work.

As I found out later, three other women who had attended the B.S.W. course with me had been hired also. Two quit after the first day because of commuting difficulties. The other woman I sometimes see at union meetings. The last time I talked to her, she was working the graveyard shift.

As it simply seemed more sensible to work closer to home, I decided to apply for janitor work with the Coquitlam school board. On June 5, 1980 I went to their offices.

"Because it's dangerous in the dark."

I told the receptionist there that I wanted to inquire about job opportunities and fill in an application form. She asked me what kind of job I was looking for.

When I told her that it was janitorial work, she responded by saying that the Coquitlam School Board does not hire female janitors.

When I asked her why, she replied: "Because it is dangerous in the dark and because women have children." I felt like I had received a slap in the face -- stunned, and anger welling up. I asked her to give me an application form anyway, and told her that I'd see what I could do with it.

After thinking it over for a few days and reading the B.C. Human Rights Act, I decided to file a complaint with the B.C. Human Rights Branch under the following section:

> 7. No person shall use or circulate any form of application for employment, publish or cause to be published any

> advertisement in connection with employment or prospective employment, or make any written or oral inquiry of an applicant that
>
> (a) expresses either directly or indirectly any limitation, specification, or preference as to race, religion, colour, sex, marital status age, ancestry, or place of origin of any person.

Rights investigation is under way

Since I wanted to take the summer off and the Surrey School Board had promised to hire me again, I delayed filing the complaint until September 15, 1980, when I had my job back. Sometime in November 1980 I spoke for the first time to the Human Rights officer assigned to my case.

The investigation is currently underway with the result so far that indeed no woman janitors had been hired in the Coquitlam School District during the last eight years, despite the fact that women had applied for the positions.

During the recent CUPE strike in the Vancouver area (I was on strike myself, since non-teaching school board employees are CUPE members) I went to the press with the intention of having my case publicized, but had no success.

My purpose at that point was to shed light on the fact that firstly, the categories of inside and outside workers, on which many of the arguments against "equal pay for work of equal value" hinged, were inappropriate.

Janitors, for example, are inside workers in most cases, and most of them are men, and they are better paid than most office workers.

Secondly, since overt and covert discrimination are a reality, women can't just exchange a lower paid job for a higher paid job, as was suggested during the strike on several occasions.

A third point is that many women know from experience the numerous stress factors of office work. For example: endless repetition of tasks, or frequent interruptions when concentration is necessary; no control over the pace of work; confinement under close, constant and surreptitious supervision,; incessant noise from office machines; fumes from chemicals and paper dust; bad lighting; ill-designed furniture; confinement to one position (either sitting or standing) for long periods of time; restrictions against social interaction, etc.

Having worked for many years as office maid for everything, file clerk, in duplication, and as a key punch operator, and now as a janitor, I certainly don't need an expert to tell me which line of work is more stressful.

It's precisely the reason why I don't do office work anymore, aside from the lousy pay in most instances. I can change my routine now to some extent, adjust my pace more to how I feel physically; I can move around; my digestion works well, and I don't smoke, drink coffee, or eat out of boredom any more. I don't have a boss constantly breathing down my neck.

Though it's still work, and my feet are tired sometimes from all that walking, and I wonder what the dust and some of the cleaning chemicals will do to me in the long run, I feel much better physically and mentally.

As more and more women become employed in "non-traditional" jobs, we can expose the myth about there being generally more stress, etc. in "men's" work, and put it in its proper perspective.

It's ironic too because at one point in history cleaning generally was women's work, as it still is in the home. One of my great-grandmothers was a cleaning woman. She spent most of her working time on her knees though, scrubbing and waxing floors with simple utensils and compounds, which was hard work. In the meantime, new and easier to maintain building materials have come into use, along with simpler and more efficient cleaning methods. During this time the cleaning business has become largely dominated by men.

A century after my great-grandmother's time I am being put into the position of, in effect, not being allowed, despite my skill, to clean the schools my two daughters are attending.

Employers *not* liable?

On March 25, 1981 the B.C. Court of Appeal decided that under the B.C. Human Rights Act employers cannot be held liable for acts of discrimination by their employees. This decision affects many human rights cases.

Since very rarely you and I are in a position to deal with the employers, owners directly -- who are they anyways? -- this decision leaves us pitted against members of our own class, in my case even against a sister union member. It's clearly justice determined by class, which is not justice at all.

It lets the big ones get away and the little ones end up holding the bag and fighting each other, which happens so often in this society. Therefore, I ask you to petition MLA's and Labour Minister Jack Heinrich who has jurisdiction over the B.C. Human Rights Branch, to pressure him to bring an amendment before the B.C. Legislature as swiftly as possible to close this loophole in the B.C. Human Rights Act. ♀

HUMAN RIGHTS

Landucci's gone, but human rights concerns continue

By Mary Sims

June's issue of Kinesis carried an article "Is there reasonable cause for asking B.C. Human Rights Director Landucci to get packing?" (An Inside Look at the HRB) It seems that I was not the only one to question the effectiveness of the Director in dealing with human rights issues in B.C.

On Friday, July 3, Landucci was shuffled out and Hanne Jensen was shuffled in as the acting director. As of this article's writing, no official word as to why Landucci was asked to leave has been given. I can only guess. There had been increasing criticisms of Landucci's leadership in the Branch by staff and ex-staff members. NDP MLA Emerey Barnes had also said Landucci should go.

I bid a bon voyage to Nola and wish her luck in whatever she chooses to do. As for the acting director, Hanne Jensen, her experience in human rights in B.C. (a senior human rights officer at the Burnaby office for the past six years, and recently, acting director of compliance); her reputation among the minority and women's community can only serve to set the Branch back on the right track. I can only hope that whoever the government chooses to replace Landucci will be as well respected as Hanne Jensen.

Her removal is just the tip of the iceberg

However, Landucci's removal as director is only the tip of the iceberg. There still exists some uncertainty about whether the government is sincere in its approach to human rights. The labour minister Jack Heinrich, who is responsible for the Branch, has appointed a disproportionate amount of Inquiry Boards in relation to the number of unsettled cases. Will this change in the future? Will Heinrich offer support to the Branch and its work? The community should adopt a wait and see attitude and gauge the future actions of the government, rather than reacting just to Landucci's dismissal.

The release of the McAlpine report on the Ku Klux Klan and the introduction and passage of the Civil Rights Protection Act all indicate a change in the government's attitude towards human rights. The real test of the government's sincerity will be when the Human Rights Commission's recommendations for changes in the Human Rights Code is brought up before the legislature.

The commission's recommendations include explicit language on forms of discrimination currently dealt with under some sections of the Code based on the "without reasonable cause" clause. The Commission recognized that certain forms of discrimination needed to be spelled out (sexual orientation, physical and/or mental disability and sexual harassment).

Contrary to what the former branch director was striving for, the commission also recommended expansion of "without reasonable cause" to other Code sections to offer further protection to minority groups. Other recommendations deal with tenancy, employment inquiries, family status (nepotism and anti-nepotism policies), mandatory retirement and equal pay.

Additional recommendations that deal with the Code's administration are also important. An addition to section 19 of the Code to deal with "the Employer's liability for discriminatory actions contrary to the Code perpetrated by his employee or agent..." means that an employer can be held responsible for the discriminatory conduct by their employees while on the job.

The primacy of human rights legislation over other legislation is also recommended. "In some cases, careful consideration must be given to the relationship bewteen the principles of human rights and the principles of confliction legislation." (for example, insurance legislation).

The most exciting and interesting recommendation deals with the Code's enforcement. The commission recommends that:

> "A single, integrated Human Rights Commission be established with authority and responsibility to inquire into and investigate complaints under the Code, and to make reviewable decisions, giving reasons, on their appropriate disposition. These powers would include power to dismiss a complaint if it is unfounded, power to approve a settlement if an appropriate remedy has been made, and power to refer an unsettled complaint to a Board of Inquiry for a public hearing."

The only problem with this recommendation is where we have, instead of the labour minister deciding whether an unsettled case should go to a Board of Inquiry, we have a Commission making that decision.

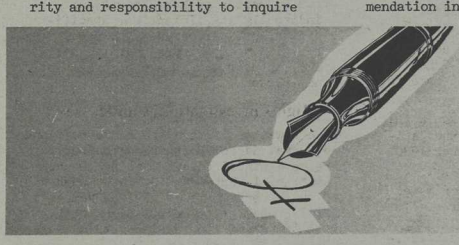
Board needed for substantiated, unsettled cases

An unsettled case that is *substantiated* through the investigative procedure *should* be referred to an inquiry board. Further, clarification of that recommendation and/or why the Commission doesn't feel that a substantiated unsettled case should go to a Board of Inquiry for a public hearing is needed. I would also like to know if there is criteria for referring a case to an inquiry board.

It will be interesting to see how the government deals with the commission's recommendations and how strenuously Heinrich will argue for those amendments to the Code. It is important to remember that Heinrich is not bound to introduce all the Commission's recommendations to the legislature. Even if he does, not all of the amendments will be easily approved by the necessary majority.

We must keep up the heat

I urge all women and minority groups to keep up the heat. Although we may have won a battle, we have not won the war. It is essential that the government realize that our voices will not be silenced until positive action is taken and the government's current attitude towards human rights is changed. Please continue to write to your MLA and Heinrich to urge them to support the Commission's recommendation in its entirety. ♀



Equal Opportunities restored at city hall

A recent decision by Vancouver's city council has reinstated the ill-fated equal opportunities program which was chopped by the NPA dominated council in 1979 after its two year existence.

Equal opportunities program officer Shelagh Day was accused by council members of aiming for a quota system and advocating reverse discrimination.

Day's job description included boosting job opportunities for women and minority groups at city hall. She and the councillors who supported her, worked under the premise that the city should guarantee people should not be discriminated against on the basis of sex, race or handicap.

One of Day's toughest fights was with Vancouver fire chief Armand Konig who maintained that women, because they are shorter than men, would be unable to reach the rungs of a city fire department ladder. Konig said he also feared that women firefighters would drive his men into fits of desire, they would monopolize the bathrooms putting on makeup and plugging up their sinks with their hair.

Konig eventually threatened to resign unless Day was removed from office. Council complied.

The recent council decision of July 21, passed with a 6-5 vote along party lines, overturned the 1979 decision to close the post. The new $35,000 a year job will involve overseeing hiring practices in city departments and acting as an ombudsperson for applicant's charges of discrimination.

The post is expected to be filled this fall or winter.

For VSW, which had worked on the setting up of the program since day one, this reinstatement has the sweet smell of success.

Feminist Studies Association launches fall programming

Feminist women are invited to participate in a unique course, *Feminist Theories in Canadian Contexts*, being offered this fall by the Feminist Studies Association.

This course will provide a forum for women from varying political and educational backgrounds to meet with each other and discuss issues such as: the intersection of theoretical and practical feminism; the development of a Canadian Feminist theory; the application of international feminist theory to the Canadian context, and the value of being "politically correct."

Dialogue between the academic women's community and local feminist groups is essential, says the Feminist Studies Association, to the creation of a synthesis between theory and action.

Share your political experience and intellectual skills with other feminist women. Academic background is irrelevant.

Course Times: Wednesdays, 7 - 9 p.m. from September 23 to December 2, 1981. And from January 13 to March 31, 1982.

Register at the Women's Bookstore, at Octopus East or at the UBC Women's Centre, SUB Rm 130 from September 8 - 11, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. For details call 874-2564 or 734-7756 evenings.

INDIAN WOMEN

Family Unit Concept was Indian Homemakers dominant theme

By Kathleen Jamieson

At an International Women's Day gathering last March a fieldworker for the B.C. Indian Homemakers' Association was asked a rather interesting question:

"What *is* the Indian Homemakers' Association and what does it do...perhaps you help out in Indian homes where the mother is ill?"

The short answer to this question is, "No."

But a lot of people are understandably misled by that term, 'homemakers'. The name goes back to 1937 when the Department of Indian Affairs set up the first Indian Homemakers' Association in depression Saskatchewan with the stated objective "to assist Indian women to acquire approved practices for greater home efficiency."

For the B.C. Indian Homemakers there is no contradiction in their title since they see no division between the domestic and public domain: these are interrelated in their lives and work and always have been.

Donna Doss, editor of Homemakers' excellent newspaper, The Indian Voice, recently wrote that the Homemakers are being accused of being 'too political'. Both the government and male-dominated Indian groups object to their independent views.

Indeed, the male groups have attempted to divert Secretary of State funding from The Indian Voice, endangering its continued existence.

Government officials have demanded that the Homemakers restructure their organization and that they develop new aims and objectives, ostensibly to conform with funding criteria.

Addressing 55 delegates and friends at the 17th annual Homemakers' of B.C. conference, held from April 27 to May 1 in Vancouver, Rose Charlie, Homemakers' president, noted that "after 27 years of struggle, our aims and objectives have not changed. We still try to encourage, support and assist our women and, of course, our men, to build a better future for the generations to follow."

She went on to examine in some detail and very frankly both the Indian leadership in B.C. and the role of the federal government in manipulating funding to Native groups.

"B.C.'s political atmosphere is turbulent" she commented, "and we, as Indian women, are especially in danger. There seems to be a scheme underfoot to annihilate the Indian Homemakers' Association.

"In the past, we have not allowed external forces to disrupt our work or our future plans, and we will continue to operate in this manner.

"For many years, the Native women of this province have struggled, while working on a shoe-string budget, to better the living conditions of our people. The male-dominated Indian organizations have ignored our women's achievements and it is only recently that the provincial and federal governments have begun to recognize the work we are doing.

Indian Voice gives fine coverage

"Our paper, The Indian Voice, is the only consistent, non-political newspaper in B.C. We believe we have given the widest possible coverage of news events relating to our people with the small amount of monies to use each year by the Secretary of State's Communications Program.

"Because the Indian Homemakers' Association and The Indian Voice have received funding only up to the 1980-81 fiscal year, I want to mention to you that a telex has gone to the Hon. Francis Fox, Minister of the Secretary of State. This telex indicated our concern over the actions taken by his regional staff who delivered the ultimatum: to let them reorganize our association, change our constitution and to decided our future planning, or our applications would not be considered...

"Are the Native women's groups here in B.C. getting caught in the cross-fire from the struggle which is ensuing between the male-dominated organizations and the federal government?", Rose Charlie asked.

Indian Voice

At the Indian Homemakers Conference

It became evident during the conference that Rose's forthright, gloves-off assessment of the situation was not unique.

The delegates themselves spoke up frequently, grilling the bureaucrats without mercy.

They also spoke of the many projects they are involved in -- crisis intervention, alcohol and drug abuse programs, legal aid and advocacy, housing programs, fishing and business ventures.

One woman described in detail an imaginative attempt to set up a factory for processing rabbit meat and furs, which would have given several people employment. But start-up funds have repeatedly been refused.

Indian women protest apprehension of their children

There was, however, a single concern which dominated the entire conference: the Family Unit Concept.

This was the title of a study released at the conference. The dominant theme of the study, and focus for the women's concern, is the apprehension of Indian children and their removal from their families and communities by provincial child welfare authorities, who place the children in white foster homes.

Many non-Indians are convinced that such procedures are in the child's best interests.

On the first morning of the conference, for example, in a workshop on the "Legal Rights of the Native Child," a family court judge saw no problem in defending the present system: many Indian children live in dreadful conditions, proof of which is that they get lice and scabies. Clearly, the judge said, they are better off in white foster homes.

At this point an Indian, John Sparrow, jumped up and tried to use his own experiences to point out the flaws in the judge's assumptions and conclusions.

The answer from the elegant young judge was patronizing, devastating in its ignorance, "You are a very anxious person," he observed.

In most of the panels, however, such blatant ethnocentrism was unusual.

On the second day, Lou Gerwitz, a US lawyer and advocate for Indians was invited to speak to the delegates. He said that he found the inattention of Canadian government officials at the conference so disturbing that he felt "like slapping their faces." Almost everyone who had been flagging a little woke up after that!

The Family Unit Concept, a proposal for a unified family treatment centre, is modeled on a concept developed in the US by the Native American Rehabilitation Association (NARA). The idea is not one suddenly appropriated by Homemakers, but is "reflective of Indian Homemakers' Association resolutions" going back to 1969.

The proposal is, in fact, a detailed follow-up of their first presentation of the concept at their 1980 conference.

The paper is in two parts. It begins by stressing the crucial importance of the extended family to Indians, and then discusses the destruction of Native families by "institutional abuse" perpetrated by "bureauracies, churches, schools (that) have set out deliberately to alter or destroy major institutions in Indian society."

What is going on, the paper stresses, isn't a case of abuse against any one individual. Rather, it is a case of social institutions in one culture "abusing whole segments or classes of persons in another."

The paper deplores the vast amount of money expended by a proliferation of government agencies making "sporadic and isolated attempts" to deal with a crisis situation.

The most serious problem is seen as alcohol addiction, which is directly related to the extremely high rates of native people in prisons. Various estimates are cited of 50% to 60% of prison populations in Canada being composed of Native people.

Alcohol addiction is also related to deaths from violence, especially among young people (at least four times that of non-natives).

And it is directly related to the large number of Indian children taken "into care" -- 20% of all children in care are Native.

Alcoholism is one symptom of "institutional abuse" which has also left many Indians in poverty, stripped of their self-esteem, unemployed and discriminated against in the job market.

Family Unit Concept based on successes

The solution offered in the model -- the family treatment centre, based on the NARA model -- would entail pooling the monies from all the government bodies presently involved in the various Indian welfare ▷

INDIAN WOMEN

and crisis intervention programs.

A unified, "holistic" program would be set up, combining family, alcohol, vocational and spiritual rehabilitation centres.

Similar centres have been operating successfully in Portland, Oregon, for the past nine years, the paper states.

Sites and buildings throughout B.C. which could be adapted and used for such centres are also described in the study.

The philosophy underlying the concept is based on the principle of self-actualization. It is designed to be flexible enough to accommodate all native individuals whatever the degree of assimilation to non-Indian culture.

There is an emphasis on integrating traditional Indian practices such as the symbolic burning of sweet-grass at meetings.

The program would also include day care centres, schools, child development workers, programs for parenting skills and cultural activities.

Promises were made at the conference by several senior bureaucrats. They said they would immediately look into the feasibility of initating such a program in Canada.

Indian Homemakers delegates sounded optimistic and spoke strongly in support of the family unit concept.

They have proposed a solution already proven effective. It will be interesting to see whether the Canadian politicians and bureaucrats have any real intention of putting the proposal into effect.

White Canadians like to congratulate themselves that they have treated their Native people more kindly than the U.S.

Historically, this is debatable. Today, looking at the desperate situation of most Native people in Canada, and at the feeble efforts being made to rectify it, that myth is quite clearly exposed.

Promises are not enough.

"We must insist. . . that *Indian* includes our children"

By Kathleen Jamieson

The deep, sweet and extraordinarily powerful voice of Doreen Pelke swelled through the conference hall. She sang an Indian song of grievance for the tragic death, the previous weekend, of John, teenage son of another member of the B.C. Indian Homemakers' Association, Barbara Kobierski.

It was the opening morning of their annual conference. It was also the morning of the funeral. The song was a forceful reminder of how much tragedy and sudden death is an unconsionable part of the daily lives of B.C. Indians.

Doreen Pelke is a leader of her long-house, a spiritual leader, and one of the many strong articulate women who challenged the government bureaucrats during the Homemakers' conference.

Strong as she is, however, Doreen's voice trembles when she talks about her children and her grandchildren. She and her husband of 32 years have brought up 10 children of their own, and 20 others.

Yet both still fear that those children may be taken away and put into foster care because their present Indian home is, by white Canadian standards, overcrowded.

Indeed, the impression I carried away from those who spoke at the conference and from the material presented there is that Indians in B.C. almost have to prove that they are fit parents before they are allowed to keep their children, so assiduous are welfare workers in removing Indian children from their homes and communities.

The data available on children taken into care in B.C. supports this impression.

Philip Hepworth, writing in 'Foster Care and Adoption in Canada' noted that about 20% of all children in Care were Native, and goes on to say that this is a conservative figure. Compare this with the fact that Native people make up about four per cent of the Canadian population.

In their 'Constitutional Proposal on Native Children - 1981' (which supported the position taken in the Family Unit Concept), the Indian Homemakers argued that the welfare of Indian children should not be a provincial matter.

"We must insist," they say, "that 'Indians' as defined in the BNA Act include our children, who are the most defenceless of our

Indian Voice

Rose Charlie

people. We therefore call for a federal inquiry into the state and welfare of Indian children in care of the provinces and those who have been adopted out to non-Indian families."

For the first time ever, this year an Indian Affairs Minister put in an appearance at the Homemakers' conference. John Munro showed up, ostensibly to respond to the Family Unit Concept proposals.

Interestingly enough, his speech suggested that he had written most of it himself. "I don't manage to get home nearly as much as I would like to these days...no matter how we may succeed in business, in education, in sports or politics or whatever, none of it means too much if we don't have a decent home to return to at the end of the day." He goes on to praise the skills of the homemaker.

He did hold out a faint hope of a special federal measure to protect Indian children, "One alternative is a special Indian Child Welfare Act, and parliament could certainly enact such legislation."

Later in the day Munro was asked about the Indian Act legislation. Under section 12 (1) (b) of that act, Indian women who marry non-Indians lose their status. Parliament has called for a 'moratorium' on that discriminatory section, and Munro himself called it 'indefensible', promising that the new Charter of Rights and Freedoms would render 12 (1) (b) inoperative.

But what about reinstatement of those Indian women who have lost their status because of that discriminatory clause in the Indian Act? Was the minister contemplating the restoration of full Indian rights to them?

"It doesn't obliterate every act of discrimination."

"No," he said, very carefully. "The legal opinion is that the new constitution would obliterate 12 (1) (b) but it doesn't obliterate every act of discrimination that has taken place back to the genesis of man."

Warning bells. The minister is saying something new and alarming here. What appears to be implied by these remarks is that once the new constitution, with its Charter of Rights and Freedoms, comes into effect, there will be no question of retroactivity.

Legislation that has retroactive application, you see, must state so specifically (the War Measures act, for example, did so). If it does not, and the new Charter of Rights and Freedoms does not, then it is held to be 'prospective', and does not have any effect on any previous events.

Indian women who have lost their status under 12 (1) (b) and who seek redress under the new legislation will be whistling in the wind.

The message is clear for Indian women contemplating marriage to a non-Indian. For the next three years at least: don't do it.

VSW

Vancouver Status of Women's AGM focuses on feminist response to wife battering

By Gayla Reid

It was the first annual general meeting of VSW's second decade. It felt good to be there, part of a seasoned, tenacious and effective feminist organization whose work becomes more and more important was we enter the 80s.

Highlight of the evening was a presentation by feminist lawyer Ruth Busch. She examined the legal response to the crime of wife battering, outlining the research-in-progress currently being undertaken by the Women's Research Centre.

That research questions the current practice of removing the woman, not the batterer, from the family home. It also challenges the deeply embedded prejudice that domestic violence is somehow different from, and lesser than, all other violent acts.

Election of a new executive was a major task of the evening. VSW is proud to welcome new women to executive: Marg Verrall, Roseanne Moran, Andree Buchanan, Joanne Ranson, Barb Bell and Barb Findlay. And to welcome back again Debra Lewis, Cole Dudley, Jan Lancaster and Pat Piller.

The AGM provided an opportunity to introduce new staffers: Jeannie Grapebatch, who replaces Debra Lewis as legal researcher, and Paddy Moore, who takes over from Gillian Marie as coordinator of VSW's programming. Susan Hoeppner, a former staff and executive member, returns after two years at South Vancouver Family Place to become the legal advocate, a position triumphantly reinstated due to our winning funding from City Hall.

A review of the past year's activities formed part of the AGM's proceedings, and a report was presented which interested members may obtain by contacting our office. The report enumerates our extensive public education and outreach work, at conferences, meetings and speaking engagements, as well as outlining our information and referral services.

Strengthened by the addition of an extra staff position, and rejuvenated by the presence of a new executive, plus new women on the VSW staff, we are now preparing our programming for the fall. Watch for the announcements in the mid-September Kinesis.

VSW tells Applebert: women artists are discriminated against

By Julie Wheelwright

When the Applebaum-Herbert federal cultural policy review committee came to town last month, Vancouver Status of Women brought the dismal position of Canadian women artists to their attention.

Jillian Ridington and Sylvia Spring, representing VSW on the problem of women's art in Canada, said, "it is essential, present but unseen."

They addressed the cultural heritage of women's art, the definition of this art and how the preservation of it has been neglected. "We decry the attitude of 'cultural institutions' who fail to see artistic merit in works that have function as well as beauty."

Carr forced to paint on cardboard

The brief also discusses many Canadian cultural institutions for failing to preserve the work of women artists such as Emily Carr. Because of her economic circumstances, Carr painted on cardboard rather than wood and thus her works have deteriorated more rapidly than many other works of the same period.

The Vancouver Art Gallery waited until Carr's paintings began to disintegrate before they started a campaign to preserve them. "Because women's art has not been highly valued, it has not been enshrined," Ridington and Spring stated.

They pointed to another example of women artists being neglected. The National Gallery in Ottawa's photo collection exhibits only one woman photographer, Margaret Bourke-White, an American. This happens despite the fact that one "Mrs. Fletcher" advertised her services as a daguerreotypist in Montreal's paper, two years after the process was invented.

Vast majority of administrators male

At the administrative level, women are vastly underrepresented, according to Spring and Ridington. They point out that women constitute only about 12 per cent of the judges who rule on Canada Council grants. "The vast majority of instructors in art schools and in university level art courses, are male. The faculty of Vancouver's Emily Carr College of Art is 87 per cent male."

This underrepresentation at the administrative and educational level means that women's art is under-rated. "Because the recognized artists, judges of art, and the controllers of capital in this society have been, and continue to be, predominantly male, work grounded in women's experience has been undervalued and underrepresented." Only when the work of women artists is equally distributed to the percentage of women artists in that field will "the principle of shared cultural experience be furthered."

Spring and Ridington also charge that much of our 'enshrined' art comes mainly from one class and one gender and is inaccessible literally and symbolically to most Canadians.

The authors speak of the experience that Canadian women artists face: "One of our members is a playwright of considerable public stature. Despite her credits, talent and perserverence, she finds herself continually having to fight for her right to speak from her experience as a female."

Her perspective is constantly misunderstood -- or worse, dismissed as irrelevant or 'strident'. Any attempts to speak, however symbolically or metaphorically, about the very real struggles of women is discouraged or labelled 'political rhetoric'. With one or two exceptions the power of artistic decisions in Canada is made by men, she observes. Male artistic directors continually choose plays and subjects which speak to them and their experience.

"The theatre is only one of the performing arts in which women are ghettoized." Radio and television scriptwriters and producers, filmmakers, composers and musicians all experience the same problems.

Real changes, not rhetoric, needed in CBC

The CBC also came under fire for its inaccurate portrayal of women. Although the corporation, under pressure from women's groups, set up an affirmative action program within their personnel department, they have assigned one woman to deal with the problem of sexism in broadcasting. "We hope that real changes, rather than rhetoric, will indeed take place within the CBC."

Another of Canada's cultural institutions, the National Film Board, also fails to deal with women's issues and women artists. "It is our observation ... that in dealing with the NFB, women are again in a Catch-22 position. Studio D was set up to deal with women's issues and participation but it was given a very small budget with which to do this." Again the result of this program has been to ghettoize women's contribution to the NFB.

"Female casualties from the local CBC and NFB are many and their stories are variations on a theme."

The CFDC has also traditionally been run my men and have given women film makers very little support, according to the report's authors. "Again, serious women film makers have had to limit their visions and impact by scaling down their ideas to the small Canadian Council film grants they sometimes get."

Another major problem that women artists must face is economic marginality. While all artists face this problem, it is even more critical for women for several reasons. "In times of slow economic growth and restrictions on government spending -- conditions which have existed in Canada for some years now -- artists suffer, and women artists suffer even more."

The authors cite an October 1978 national survey of visual artists which found that one out of every five Canadian artists earned a gross income of more than $5000 annually. Sixty per cent of those earning less than $5,000. were women. The $5,000 figure doesn't include the high costs of materials the artist must buy.

New policies should reflect perspective on past imbalances

Spring and Ridington conclude their report with a list of recommendations on what the government should and could do to help women artists. Any new policies should reflect a consciousness of the previous imbalance of male/female input and control of the Canadian culture, and a concerted effort should be made to correct that imbalance.

The recommendations also make it clear that artists should be recognized as "the valuable cultural resources they are, and that that value be rewarded monetarily." Child care, social benefits, allowances for work expenses would help Canadian women artists economically.

Governments should encourage women

Culturally, the government could encourage small scale exhibitions, performances, etc to make women's visual and performing arts available to women, living in isolated and remote areas. Demanding that CBC enforce its guidelines regarding sexism in programming and employment, would also be beneficial. Endorsing recommendations made by the CRTC Task Force on Sex-role Stereotyping would also ensure that broadcasters would not neglect or omit women. ♀

Emily Carr

Provincial Archives, Victoria

Manitoba women artists underrepresented, too

A recently released report from the Manitoba Provincial Council of Women charges that women artists in their province are under-represented and experience sexism in almost all areas of artistic endeavour.

"While most people recognize that women in the labour force do not have equal opportunities, few are aware that this applies to women in the arts as well," says council member Sharron Zenith Corne.

Women artists in Manitoba also suffer from under-representation in their provincial art galleries, such as the Winnipeg Art Gallery, the third largest in Canada.

"A survey of the gallery's permanent collection and group exhibits reveals that few works by women are included," the report points out. Only 10.5 per cent of the additions to the permanent collection in 1976-78 was work by women, although this increased to 24 per cent during 1979 and 1980.

Although the Canadian average for women artists represented in group exhibits from 1975-1977 was 29.8 per cent, the Manitoba 1978-80 average dipped to 15.4 per cent. A November 10 1980 count of art works displayed in the Winnipeg Art Gallery found a total of 273 signed works, with only eight of those pieces by women.

The report also includes recommendations suggesting how the provincial government could better the position of their own women artists. "Equal opportunity programs are a major means of integrated women into all areas of Canadian life."

Accordingly, fine arts departments of colleges and universities should establish a policy of hiring female faculty members, especially in full-time and higher ranking positions.

The authors also recommend that cultural institutions establish special historical, contemporary and one-person shows, highlighting women's arts, and that women be represented equally on committees and juries.

Government arts funding bodies should also appoint a central advisory committee of women to improve the status of women in the visual arts.

These are just some of the suggestions. But the message is clear: women are experiencing discrimination and there is something that governments *could* be doing to improve that situation.

ACROSS CANADA

Mary Two-Axe Early receives degrees, but no status

By Kathleen Jamieson

That indomitable Mohawk matriarch and fighter for Indian rights, Mary Two-Axe Early, received an honorary doctorate of laws from the University of York on June 11. The Quebec government held a reception afterwards in its offices in Commerce Court in the heart of Wasplan. Corinne Levesque herself had planned to attend; but cancelled.

The Quebec government has of late been taking an unusual amount of interest in Native women. Last November it announced it would no longer respect the federal government's divisions between Native peoples (into status, non-status and metis). The occasion of that announcement was the Quebec Native Women's Annual Conference.

The Quebec Native Women's Association was delighted with the news. But since then they have written to ask the government what concrete effect this promise will have on Indian women in Quebec who have been deprived of their status under 12 (1) (b) of the Indian Act.

They would, for example, be exempt from some provincial taxes if they were considered to come under the same provisions as status Indians.

So far, no response from the provincial government of Quebec.

Since Indian rights come under federal jurisdiction, it is unlikely that the provincial government has the power to make those substantial changes, anyway.

Meanwhile, what the government's promises presumably add up to is that a Native woman getting an honorary doctorate outside Quebec will be given a reception, which Corinne Levesque may or may not attend.

Perhaps the Quebec government is getting worried that its once pristine reputation -- outside Quebec, at least -- with regard to Native people is getting more than a little tarnished. In fact, the recent descent on the Restigouche reserve by 40 Quebec riot police, complete with helicopter backup and tear gas, is a culmination of a series of repressive incidents.

Mary Two-Axe Early won Persons Award

This honorary degree is not the first major recognition that Mary Two-Axe has received.

Two years ago she was one of the five women to be given the "Persons Award" by the governor general, the first year such awards were made in celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the decision by the British Privy Council that Canadian women were legal persons.

Mary is naturally very pleased with all this recognition of her commitment to the long and often bitter fight to achieve equal rights for Indian women. Unfortunately, it looks as if Mary, and indeed all these Indian women who have waged the battle for equal rights will not see their status restored.

Mary became "non-status" when she married a handsome young Irish New Yorker some 50 years ago. In the late 1960s, after her husband's death, she wanted to return to live on her natal reserve of Caughnawaga, in Quebec, where her mother had left her a house.

Mary soon discovered, however, that the band council would not allow Indian women who had married non-Indians to return to the reserve -- ever. Indeed, they had stepped up a campaign to evict non-status women who were still living on the reserve.

One of these women was Mary's best friend. Having received her eviction notice, she had a heart attack and died.

Mary has been able to remain on her reserve because she is living with her daughter, Rose, to whom she has given the house. Mary's daughter is married to a status Indian and although non-status herself, has the right through that marriage to live and own property on the reserve. Which is convoluted and crazy.

All the awards in the world cannot compensate for the misery that section 12 (1) (b) of the Indian Act has brought to Indian women.

The so-called 'moratorium' announced by the federal government last July, which ostensibly allowed Indian bands to suspend operation of 12 (1) (b) has been a farce.

Few bands have availed themselves of this option.

This inaction makes Indian band councils look very bad indeed. But the truth is that even by this spring the Department of Indian Affairs itself had not determined

Mary Two-Axe Early

exactly what the effect of the removal of 12 (1) (b) might have on other Indian Act legislation and were thus unable to give information to the bands.

Rumours abound that the effect would be retroactive, and some bands feared that with no explanation and no word of any increase of government funding for housing, etc, many Indian women and their families would return to their reserves, putting an additional burden on the already limited resources.

Many male-run band councils -- and the entirely male band councils were a tradition instituted and enforced by the Indian Act legislation up until 1952 -- are quite happy with the present bias in favour of men. It's a useful tool for keeping the women in line.

Indian women will have to wait for three years after the constitution is patriated before the proposed Charter of Rights and Freedoms comes into effect, wiping out 12 (1) (b). Even that might not be the end.

The whole matter may go through the Supreme Court. That would take another two or three years. Or even more, given the vastly larger role that the Supreme Court is expected to play under the new constitution.

Mary Two-Axe Early and many other non-status Indian women have been fighting for their reinstatement as status Indians. But Mary, and many of her friends, are now either approaching seventy or older. They cannot wait seven years, or more. Perhaps the federal government is counting on this. If it can procrastinate long enough, these women will all be dead. ♀

Rape is a joking matter for Manitoba judge

It is no wonder that women have no faith in the criminal justice system in Canada when provincial court judges such as Robert Trudel of Manitoba reveal their true colours.

A Globe and Mail story recently recounted how Trudel angered his audience by telling a joke about rape during a banquet speech at the 11th annual Canadian congress for the prevention of crime.

Trudel's tale was about a speaker who told an audience that statistics show a woman in New York can expect to be raped every four and a half years. To which an audience member remarks it's too bad she had to wait so long to enjoy it.

At least 30 of the 650 delegates left before the judge finished his speech, which was laced with sexist humour. Judge Trudel refused demands from several members of his audience for an apology.

"I said at the opening of my remarks it was an interlude" that was meant to be humorous, he told the outraged delegates.

Nona Munro, principal of a Vancouver school for juvenile delinquents, was cheered when she told the audience that she had worked with rape victims "and I want to tell you that if I were raped, I wouldn't enjoy it."

Several delegates, many of them rape victims, relatives of rape victims, or case workers who deal with rape victims, said they were shocked the judge would make such a joke.

Others said they were shocked by the audience reaction to it. ♀

Human rights tribunal awards geologist $9500 for dismissal on the basis of sex

A female geologist, dismissed in 1978 by Eldorado Nuclear from a summer geological survey camp in Northern Quebec, has been awarded $9,500.

The human rights tribunal found that Marthe Archambault's dismissal had been motivated partially or totally by her sex, and was therefore discriminatory according to Section 7 of the Canadian Human Rights Act.

Archambault and another student, Isabelle Cadieux, were the only two women in a party of fifteen based 180 miles northwest of Schefferville, Quebec. Both were dismissed ostensibly because their tent was used for informal parties which disturbed some employees. None of the male participants were cautioned or disciplined.

The tribunal observed that the real motive for Archamault's dismissal was that camp director Robert Tremblay felt the presence of only one woman could cause quarrels among the men.

Archambault's dismissal left her without funds for the year and postponed her graduation and entry into the job market. The tribunal awarded her $1,500 for lost salary from the summer job, $6,000 for loss of a professional year and $2,000 for personal damages. ♀

Gays in trouble "not their bag"

Telecare Ministries of North Bay, Ontario believes that offering gay counsellors for gay callers on their crisis lines reveals a lack of "personal and emotional maturity".

Cate Lazarov, a lesbian phone volunteer has been asked to leave as a result of her objection to a log entry in which a gay caller was told his problem "wasn't the counsellor's bag".

Another caller seeking a gay counselling service was refused the number of a local gay support group even though their number is on file as a legitimate reference. Beside the log note of this incident the director of "Telecare" commented: "If anyone ever asks again, tell them it's none of their business."

When Lazarov complained to the christian Board of Directors, they requested her resignation for disruption of the work atmosphere, and showing personal and emotional immaturity. Telecare director refused to comment but did say:"We treat everybody as equals. There is no prejudice." *Body Politic*

NEW RIGHT OFFENSIVE

Family Protection Act attacks women, children, promotes Right

By Helen Mintz

Although abortion is the most visible issue around which the right in the United States has consolidated its powers thus far, the Family Protection Act offers us a view of the overall objectives of the New Right.

According to the Centre for Constitutional Rights in the U.S., the Family Protection Act is based on the concept that the "rugged heterosexual, white Christian male will prosper if given free reign in a free enterprise society. The rest of us are merely here to make sure that he does."

The FPA's self-proclaimed goal is to "protect ... and strengthen the American Family and promote the virtues of family life ..." The bill envisions the family as a force for right wing social control.

Through some 35 measures, the bill seriously threatens many of the victories of the 1960s for women, for racial minorities for lesbians and gay men, for youth and the poor.

The Family Protection Act was written by Robert Billings, executive director of the Moral Majority. It was first introduced into the senate in 1979 by Senator Paul Lexalt who was chairman of the Reagan campaign and, we are told, a close friend of Ronnie's. American activists are expecting to see the bill reintroduced in this session.

The Family Protection Act is an all-out attach on the rights of women. The bill attempts to push American women and children into the home and keep them there defenceless and dependent on a man.

Under the FPA's tax scheme, women who do not work outside the home or who perform volunteer jobs would be eligible for tax breaks. In addition to the existing deductions for dependents, families would receive generous tax breaks for each child a woman bears.

The obvious programs to target in order to complete the subjugation of women and children to the male "head-of-the-household" are services for battered women and children.

Funding for shelters would be wiped out

And that's exactly what the FPA does. The bill would eliminate federal funding for programs or shelters for battered women as well as juveniles and, except in a limited number of cases, for abused children.

Programs that fail to notify parents before providing contraceptive, abortion or abortion counselling to unmarried minors would be denied federal funding.

Doctors or clinics that fail to notify parents within 24 hours of the commencement of treatment for venereal disease for an unmarried minor would be fined $5,000. The intent of these acts would be to place the morality of children under the thumbs of their parents.

Further, the ability of women and children to fight legally against exploitative situations would be severely limited. In cutting the heart out of federally funded legal services for the poor, the bill would prohibit federal aid for any litigation involving divorce as well as abortion, or gay or lesbian rights.

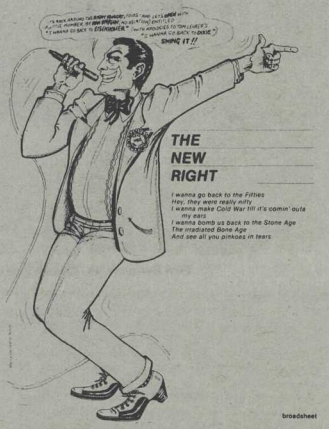
According to Andrea Eagan of the feminist journal, "HealthRight", "the bill would extend the financial, legal and ideological powers of the state to the male headed household. A man would be a king of his castle once more, free to treat his wife and children as his property and in any way he sees fit."

Because of the threat to the hegemoney of the heterosexual family represented by gay men and lesbians, the FPA vehemently attacks gay and lesbian rights. The bill prevents federal funding for any individual or group "which presents homosexuality, male or female, as an acceptable lifestyle."

The government's Congressional Research Service has commented that this clause would mean that "no person who was a homosexual or who even ... intimated that homosexuality might be an acceptable lifestyle could receive any federal funds under such programs as Social Security, welfare, veteran's programs or student assistance.

"Similarly, any organization that indicated that homosexuality might be an acceptable lifestyle would be ineligible for any government assistance."

The intent of this bill is to force liberal reformers to choose between support for gay and lesbian rights on the one hand and continued federal funding for essential social service on the other hand.



If successful, this bill would leave gays and lesbians isolated and without allies prepared to defend them. This would be the perfect set up for scapegoating -- for the victimization of gays and lesbians.

The Family Protection Act demonstrates the right's understanding of the importance of control over the education system and the content of curriculum materials.

The Act would offer considerable tax incentive to private schools as well as to parents sending their children to these schools. According to the New York Times, Protestant and fundamentalist schools are opening at the rate of three per day.

This year, the Association of Christian Schools International has a membership of almost 1500 schools, which enrol over 289,000 students. These figures represent an increase of almost 200 schools and 79,000 students compared to 1980. All teachers in association schools are required to be "believers" and many have gotten degrees from Christian colleges. Most of them do not have state certification as teachers.

The Accelerated Christian Education Inc. (ACEI) sells a curriculum package to over 4000 church-related schools. "We teach creationism without apology," said Roland Johnson, ACEI vice-president in charge of development. "We feel that sex education is best left up to the parents, but in the health classes we do teach Christian manhood to the boys and Christian womanhood to the girls ..."

With a view to the perpetuation of the ideas of male dominance, the FPA would deny federal funds for any educational materials in any schools which would "tend to denigrate, diminish, or deny the role differences between the sexes as it has been historically understood in the U.S." Federal funds would be withheld from states that do not have voluntary prayers as a part of every school day.

At the same time as the hand of independent and religious schools and the parents who send their children to these schools would be strengthened by this bill, there is provision to make sure that teachers do not become too powerful. Federal funds would be denied to any school district which requires a teacher to join a union.

Frightening implications for education

The Family Protection Act would have particular repercussions for the education of the poor and minorities. States would be given complete control over teacher qualifications, selection and promotion.

School districts would also be permitted to determine their own attendance regulations. This would allow racist school boards to determine their own criteria for who is eligible to attend school.

With many absentees and low achievers in the public school system coming from poor and non-white backgrounds, the implications of such a practice are frightening.

Further, the FPA anticipated the budget proposals that were put forward by Reagan himself when it proposed the replacement of categorical aid for education of the poor with block grants to be used at the discretion of each state.

The bill would also cut food stamps for college students thus making a university education even more the privilege of individuals with their own financial resources.

The potential of this bill is truly frightening. And, according to Sarah Schulman of the Committee for Abortion Rights and Against Sterilization Abuse, the right wing is not planning to go down easy on this one.

Their strategy is, rather than pushing the bill through in one lump, to propose many of the individual points separately, thereby enhancing their changes of passage and diffusing the energies of the opposition.

This is an American bill. However, it can stand as a harsh warning to us here. Right wing forces are growing in numbers and visibility in B.C. and when we examine their activities, we can see that they have moved in all the same areas as the Family Protection Act targets.

The Ku Klux Klan is growing in B.C. and the number of attacks against racial minorities, particularly East Indians is on the rise.

Fundamentalist church congregations are multiplying at an outstanding rate. For a number of years the fundamentalists were a militant force in some school districts, particularly Surrey and Langley, where they were pushing to alter the content of the school curriculum. We can probably credit their virtual disappearance from this area to the increase in provincial support for private schools.

The right has made alarming gains in their campaign to deny women choice on abortion. The battle over the funding of the Vancouver Status of Women in city counsel was largely waged over the question of VSW's support for lesbian rights.

We cannot afford to stand back now and watch the right organize against us. ♀

NEW RIGHT OFFENSIVE

The U.S. Right mounts assault on reproductive freedoms

By Julie Wheelwright

We've got to stop the million and one half murders a year: the holocaust.

- Ken Vanderhoff, president of Human Life, Seattle.

Holocaust. The word burns, conjuring up horrific images of innocent people being led to slaughter by some inhuman monsters; images of swastikas, jack-boots, bloody graves, a numbing reminder of our ability to kill. The word is emotionally charged.

It is a weapon currently being employed by anti-choice forces in the United States to take away a woman's right to safe, legal abortion, even in cases of pregnancy by rape, or incest. Even if the woman is a girl of 13, even if the baby will be born with severe deformities, it must be carried to term.

At the beginning of this year the anti-choice forces brought in their heaviest artillery yet. Senator Jesse Helms (R-NC) and Henry Hyde (D-IL) introduced bills to the senate and the house of representatives which would guarantee that human life "shall be deemed to exist from conception." The bills were worded exactly the same. The Human Life Statute and Human Life Amendments are clear in their intent and their impact will be mammoth.

"It's scary and it's not just this issue, this is just part of a whole movement," says Deejah Sherman-Peterson, a National Abortion Rights Action League organizer in Seattle, Washington.

"We got a nasty letter from a 'pro-lifer' today with gory pictures and covered with stickers like 'Planned Parenthood is anti-family. This came and it was sent to all the NARAL groups. I've been in this organization for seven years and my skin is thick, but that hurt ... me, a mother with two kids, a baby-killer?"

What makes the fight so bitter is that the stakes are so high. According to Sherman-Peterson, all contraceptives which act to prevent implantation of a fertilized egg would be made illegal by the statute. And that includes the IUD and 35 per cent of birth control pills. A badly deformed fetus, pregnancy by rape or incest, would no longer be considered grounds for abortion. 'Defect' is also disregarded as a basis for depriving an unborn child of life.

Back to the dirty little rooms

According to Marilyn Knight, a spokesperson for Seattle Planned Parenthood, the statute will affect the women that need abortions the most. Knight says that women who can afford to go somewhere else for abortions have always been able to, but women on low-incomes will be forced to either raise another child or seek illegal abortions.

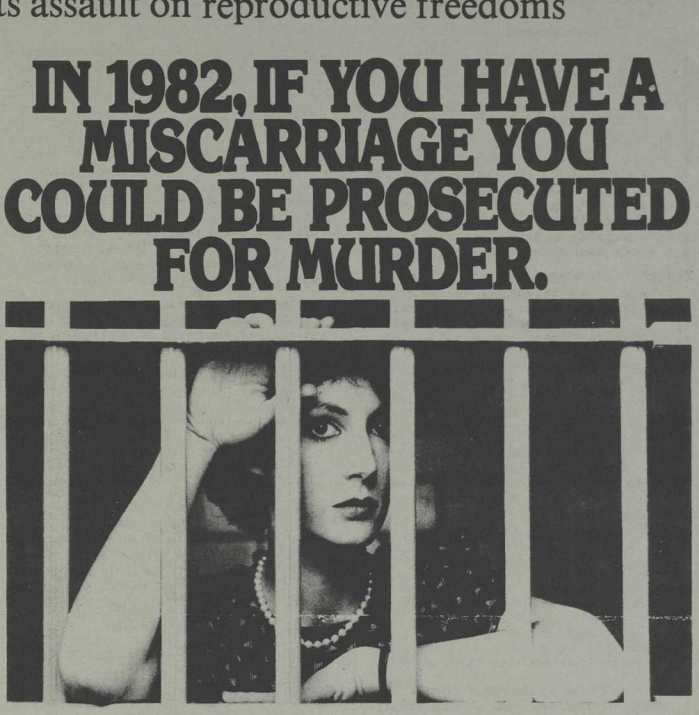
"It will outlaw abortion but it won't stop it. Women will have to go back to back-alleys and dirty little rooms."

But Knight adds that it won't be an easily won fight for the anti-choice groups. Annually more than 30,000 women have therapeutic abortions in Washington state where abortion has been legalized for ten years.

"If people are alarmed enough, and I think they are, they wouldn't be willing to give up that right over their reproduction without a fight."

She says that the consequences of the statute would be "very bad, just the social upheaval would be enormous."

Barbara Banfield, a lay health worker at Seattle's Aradia clinic, agrees. "This would have disastrous effects on us (the clinic) economically as well as taking away women's rights to reproduction," she says, adding that these are personal opinions.



First Defensive, Planned Parenthood Ad, New York Times, May 10 1981

"Right now we're feeling the crunch for money. If abortion is made illegal, that's another source of income that will dry up," Banfield adds. Aradia currently offers the lowest rate for abortions in Seattle: $110.

She adds that she doubts whether the statute will actually pass though the possibility that the right-wing forces will "steam-roll this thing through" exists.

"A lot of us are feeling paralyzed by what's happening in this country. But there's a lot of progressive groups getting organized in Seattle."

If the statute did pass, Banfield says that she would forsee a network of doctors going underground to provide women with services denied them by the state. Abortion has been legal in Seattle long enough for doctors to know how to perform safe operations and this may counteract fears of a return to the back alley butchers, she adds.

"Abortion in Seattle is extremely available. We do so many, there are so many places that do, I have a hard time believing that women will accept that."

She says that within the anti-choice movements there are many splits and some members even think outlawing the IUD and the morning-after pills is "going to far."

According to Sherman-Peterson, 35 per cent of birth control pills would fall under the definition of abortificants; contraceptive methods which work to prevent implantations rather than ovulation or conception.

Some direct results of the statute will be seen by a jump in mortality rates, more child abuse, increased numbers of women dying or contacting crippling infections from unclean, botched abortions and 300,000 more teenage pregnancies a year, she adds.

There is also the fear that doctors will have difficulty knowing whether a woman has had a spontaneous or induced abortion. Before abortion was legalized in Washington state, says Sherman-Peterson, women who went to hospitals with miscarriages were often harassed by doctors.

She tells of one woman who was five months pregnant when she miscarried. "The doctors didn't believe it wasn't an abortion. They surrounded her and kept saying, 'who did it?'"

"How far are they going to go to investigate a miscarriage which is a euphemism for a spontaneous abortion?"

According to Ken Vanderhoof, president of Human Life in Seattle, the leading anti-choice group, doctors can always tell whether a woman has had an abortion. "There's all kinds of positive tests to tell whether a woman has had a spontaneous or induced abortion," says Vanderhoff.

However Meg Hickling, education director of Vancouver's Planned Parenthood, says Vanderhoff's statements are "very hard to believe."

And Laura Lynn Brown, a counsellor at Vancouver General Hospital's surgical day-care unit says "for the most part that kind of evidence isn't apparent." She adds only in cases where the uterus has been punctured can doctors clearly distinguish between a miscarriage and a crude abortion attempt.

"We'll always have those who do wrong"

The statute will force many women back to the days of unsafe, often lethal abortions.

"I'm extremely concerned about that," Vanderhoff claims. "I'm going to try and make sure there aren't back street abortionists. They do two things: they destroy the baby and the mother."

He adds, ironically, "We'll always have those who will do wrong."

Since no birth control method is 100 per cent effective, many American women who otherwise could have chosen abortions, ▷

NEW RIGHT OFFENSIVE

would be forced to carry their pregnancies to term. The majority of those women in Seattle are either teenagers or women on low incomes, according to Marilyn Knight.

Last year more than 2,000 teenagers had babies in Washington state and only 3,000 gave their children up for adoption, says Knight. The consequence of the statute would be to force even more single mothers onto the welfare rolls, she says.

"The social costs would be enormous. Nobody likes abortion. No one does it happily. But there's always such things as contraceptive failure and ignorance."

She adds that most of the women who come to Planned Parenthood for abortion counselling are poor. Eliminating abortions "would be a very difficult thing to have to do."

But Vanderhoff says that he is not concerned about the added social costs. Nor is he concerned about the added number of unwanted children born to the 30,000 women who had abortions in Washington last year.

"Abortion is very dangerous to women. That doesn't mean that I have to say the baby has to die so the mother will feel good. I want to eliminate the holocaust for mother and baby."

He adds society must realize that even though it is much cheaper to have an abortion than raise a child, that sacrifice must be made.

"We have to address the fact that it is more expensive to raise a child. Economically it is cheaper to kill people. I can arrange an abortion for $125."

The readily available abortions in Seattle, he says, "encourage that." But now that congress has suspended medicaid funds for women wanting abortions, even in cases of rape or incest, that $125 is going to be an even greater sacrifice for those women.

The Human Life president also adds that women act with "less than reasoned thought" when they decide to have an abortion.

"Pregnancy is a very substantial impactor. Even when it's totally wanted and planned it's beautiful but traumatic. I think many women are put in the position where they can't tolerate that change in their lives."

Interestingly, Vanderhoff says he believes that women who become pregnant must either deliver their babies at full term or to the hands of "murderers."

"The reality is that it's not their choice to have that child. They have to deliver that child."

The Human Life Society is also unalterably opposed to NARAL and Vanderhoff charges them with having "not a shred of a value system."

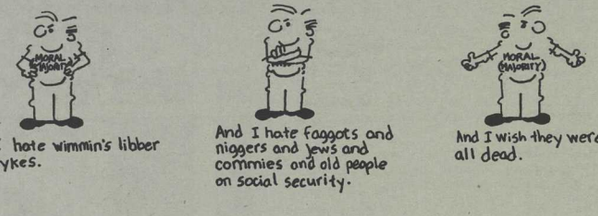
Anti-choicers into NARAL-bashing

It seems that NARAL-bashing is a nationwide occupation for the anti-choice groups. According to a recent edition of Time magazine, Paul Brown, head of the Life Amendment Political Action Committee made a vicious personal attack on NARAL's Karen Mulhauser:

Brown said, "I hear that Karen claims she was raped. Well, let me tell you, Karen is not the most beautiful creature in the world, so when I hear her say she was raped, my response is 'You wish'".

Mulhauser had been raped by two men, at gunpoint, and both attackers were caught and convicted. Brown's attack, as head of a group fighting for the 'morality' of anti-choice legislation was indicative of the hypocrisy of the fight.

One of the weapons the anti-choice groups are using along with exposing the 'immorality' of their opponents, is emotion. They used such heavily charged words as murder, holocaust, slaughter, and children instead of infants. Charges Moral Majority leader Reverend Jerry Falwell, who held an 'I Love America' Rally last May in Olympia, Wash., "Abortion stands as an indictment of murder against America for killing unwanted babies. America has the blood of all those babies on her hands." Says Vanderhoff sarcastically: "I'm sure that NARAL is deeply concerned with the fact that women have a right to kill their children."



The other weapon that the anti-choice movement has access to is the government's ear. When President Ronald Reagan came to power it was with the backing of the Moral Majority and other anti-choice groups. Vanderhoff is confident that their forces will be able to pass the statute through both House and Senate. "I have no question about winning. It's moving very rapidly."

One of the tactics the anti-choice groups use to convince the public to join their fight is to show them pictures of aborted fetuses. "The reality is when people see the results of the murder of the unborn child ... they're becoming horrified. Abortion has always been outlawed in history because it doesn't make sense," says Vanderhoff.

A recent federal court of appeal struck down a provision to the Massachusett legislature requiring a woman to read a detailed description of her unborn fetus before an abortion.

In Washington anti-choice groups are, according to Vanderhoff, "educating" their state senators through a letter-writing campaign, urging them to vote in favour of the statute. He adds that the bill will probably be considered before the fall.

Statute would allow states to rule on abortion

The statute will allow individual states to declare abortion illegal, overturning its 1973 Supreme Court decision, but specific court decisions will have to be worked out for charges, he says.

Human Life claims a subscription list to their state-wide newsletter of 40,000; has 28 affiliates in Washington state and drew more than 700 delegates to their last annual convention. Washington state residents have been the only Americans to vote on the issue of choice on abortion in 1970 at a state-wide referendum and passed a pro-choice ruling. But Vanderhoff claims the referendum passed with a small majority of 100,000 and says that majority has now changed its mind.

NARAL's campaign is similar. They also hope to put pressure on federal representatives through a letter-writing campaign based on community organization, says Sherman-Peterson.

She warns that, "unless people are ready to take action the situation is going to get worse and worse."

NARAL uses an organizing model where one woman will invite her friends to a meeting at her home to discuss the issue of choice on abortion and what can be done to defeat the HLS. Already 2,500 people in Oregon have become involved and Washington state has recently started its organizing.

"The politicians are going to go in the direction of the majority of the voters. Our viewpoint is that they have to hear from people on our side because we know we're the majority," she says.

The pro-choice groups work to ensure that pro-choice politicians remain in power and anti-choice candidates are defeated.

"We're trying to get the baddies out and the goodies in."

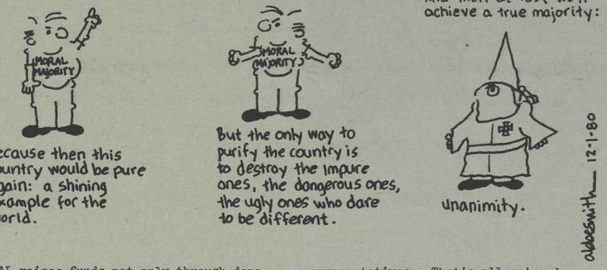
But the majority of politicians are reluctant to become involved with such a controversial issue, she says. "Most of them are men who don't give a damn. They just wish that we'd go away." The anti-choice groups are better organized, better funded and in a more powerful position at this point, although, says Sherman-Peterson, the majority of Americans are in favour of choice on abortion.

"It's like Reagan. He wasn't elected by a landslide: 50 per cent of the population didn't go to the polls. It's that type of thing."

She says the biggest problem is getting the women who have had abortions to come out and fight the statute. "If only those women who've had abortions would write to their congresspeople ... that would impress congress."

Support for groups like NARAL does appear to be growing. According to Sherman-Peterson, "we get people in their 80s who write in with donations and say, 'I wish I could give you more but I'm on social security.' The question is whether enough of those people are going to come out."

She adds that very few people are hostile when asked for support. "Very few people come up to us and say, 'go to hell.'"



NARAL raises funds not only through donations but by holding street fairs where volunteers sell T-shirts, buttons and bags with pro-choice slogans. Currently the Seattle NARAL annual budget stands at about $48,000 says Sherman-Peterson.

"The majority of people are on our side but they're still hiding in the closet. We're going to have a real split in this country."

The HLS may well pass because it only has to have a simply majority in the house and congress. Once that happens there will be increasing pressure placed on the state legislature to treat charges of abortion like homicide, she says.

"The more conservative states will be hit the hardest. There will be a lot of pressure on state legislators to severely punish women who have abortions."

Says Planned Parenthood's Marilyn Knight on the question of the HLS passage: "It depends on how much fear they (the anti-choice forces) can strike in the hearts of the congressmen. They have access to the White House and to social service departments. The tone of the administration lends itself to giving those people a hearing."

But there is little that Planned Parenthood can do to stop the passage of the HLS. "We can ask people to write to their representatives. That's all we've done. That's all we can do," says Knight.

Another threat is the change in federal funding to Planned Parenthood. Since specific monies are earmarked for such agencies in the Title 10 grants, and Reagan wants to replace them with lump sums, there is no guarantee that the state legislature will have to provide them with funds. Currently, 50 per cent of Planned Parenthood funds come from the federal government.

"It (the system of title 10 grants) has worked in the past but now Reagan wants to eliminate title 10 and give the states lump sums. A lot of the states would be in very bad shape if that happened."

However, there is still hope that even if title 10 grants were replaced by lump sums, Planned Parenthood would receive enough funding to continue operating. "If we get the monies in block grants it could be that later on in the year there'd be some adjustments in the figures."

But even if the statute passes, Sherman-Peterson says, NARAL and others will continue to push for choice on abortion. "Even if we lose, then we're going to keep on fighting. We're looking at the long haul.

"We've tried to point out to people that they're not going to get a chance to vote directly on this issue. The time for procrastination has passed."

There are reasons to be pessimistic that the pro-choice groups will win this fight. Recently the U.S. senate labour and human resources committee approved a bill designed to encourage teenagers to practice "self-discipline" in their sexuality.

According to Sherman-Peterson, this bill was proposed to divert funds from groups like Planned Parenthood. The measure, introduced by arch-conservative Senator Jeramiah Denton (R-Ala.), is intended also to promote giving children up for adoption as an alternative to adolescent parenthood.

Bill would "encourage self-discipline" among teenagers

Denton described it to the senate as a continuing adolescent pregnancy project which would provide services to other adolescents to encourage "self-discipline and responsibility in matters of human sexuality," encourage family participation in cases of teenage pregnancy, promote adoption as an alternative in such cases and provide research and data collection on family planning programs.

The bill authorizes $30 million for each fiscal year through 1984 and has the endorsement of liberals such as Senators Edward Kennedy (D-Mass), Thomas Eagleton (D-Mo.).

The issue of abortion as an alternative to teenage pregnancy is never mentioned although the bill states, "prevention of adolescent sexual activity and adolescent pregnancy depends primarily upon developing strong family values and close family ties."

Recently anti-choice groups were also out in force to show their displeasure at Reagan's appointment of Sandra O'Connor to the Supreme Court in early July. The Moral Majority and the National Right-to-Life Committee members threatened that they would try and block O'Connor's appointment because of her stand on abortion.

"Sandra O'Connor has a consistent and strong pro-abortion voting record while a senator in Arizona," said Dr. J.C. Wilkie, the National Right-to-Life committee's president.

Cross at Reagan's failure to appoint judges who favour "Traditional values"

Cal Thomas, Moral Majority vice-president, joined Wilkie in his condemnation of O'Connor. Richard Viguerie, Conservative Digest publisher, charged that Reagan's choice for the Supreme Court violated his election promise to appoint judges who "respect traditional family values and the sanctity of innocent human life."

While the anti-choice groups may be unhappy with Reagan's appointment of O'Connor, they have won a small victory in the senate. A U.S. senate sub-committee has been holding hearings on the HLS since May and in early June they voted 3 to 2 to approve it. This is the first step towards validation of the bill.

Critics charge that they hearings were one-sided. Knight says the sub-committee's chair, John East (R-North Carolina) refused to let anyone who was not 'invited' to speak at the meeting testify.

"They really stacked that committee. They also said it had nothing to do with the issue of abortion."

She cites the example of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists president who was not allowed to testify in his official capacity but only as an individual.

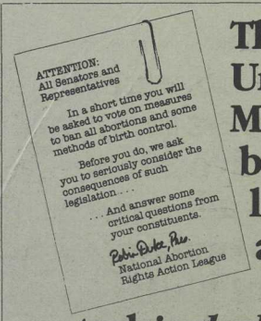
Fifty national organizations charged that the hearings were biased and deliberately limited in scope. Six women who protested at the hearings were arrested. Finally the hearings were extended to let all interested parties voice their opinions on the issue.

But even if the bill does pass through both houses of congress (it only needs a simple majority) groups such as NARAL say it will be challenged at the Supreme Court level. The statute would overturn the 1973 Supreme Court decision in the Roe vs. Wade case which ruled that women have a constitutional right to an abortion for at least the first six months of pregnancy. According to Knight, 95 per cent of abortions done in Washington are done in the first trimester.

The statute would allow states to pass laws making abortion illegal once again. Congress would no longer stand in the way of such legislation and the punishment for the 'crime' would vary from state to state.

Once one state makes abortion illegal again and a woman is prosecuted she could fight that decision on the grounds that the law is unconstitutional because it does not provide all women equal protection under the law. Why should women in Nevada be denied abortions when they are legal in Washington state?

Ultimately the decision will return to the Supreme Court. That Sandra O'Connor▷


ATTENTION:
All Senators and Representatives

In a short time you will be asked to vote on measures to ban all abortions and some methods of birth control.

Before you do, we ask you to seriously consider the consequences of such legislation . . .

. . . And answer some critical questions from your constituents.

Robie Kuhn, Pres.
National Abortion Rights Action League

The President of the United States and influential Members of Congress in both parties are advocating legislation to ban all abortions and to outlaw some methods of birth control *including the IUD and the Pill.*

Before Congress acts some critical questions must be answered.

The anti-abortion, anti-birth control Amendment is now before Congress. There is a very real chance it will be enacted.

Most Members of Congress acknowledge that the majority of Americans oppose such measures. And most Members are, privately, fearful of such legislation.

You can help call your Representative's and Senators' urgent attention to these questions by using the attached coupon. And you can do even more!

The National Abortion Rights Action League (NARAL) actively opposes passage of any anti-abortion, anti-birth control legislation. We, the 100,000 members of NARAL, dedicate ourselves to freedom to make the most

A message from NARAL which also appeared in the New York Times, May 10, 1981

NEW RIGHT OFFENSIVE

has been appointed is perhaps a good sign for the pro-choice groups.

According to right-wing representatives such as Senator East, the statute has nothing to do with the issue of abortion but it is an administrative matter which should be left up to the individual states, although he has publicly stated his opposition to choice on the matter.

East said recently on a television report on the HLS, "in the past we've stuck to a Jeffersonian principle, leaving it to the state level."

East also stated that the issue is merely one of definition: "Many reputable, highly qualified scientists" agreed that life began from the point of conception, he said, but failed to mention the 50 outraged national groups who demanded the hearings be opened and the six jailed protestors freed.

"I'm troubled with abortion as a form of birth control. I suppose ideally one would want to have a healthy sexuality where abortion wouldn't be a problem," he continued.

His opponents on the program included Dr. Halett, the white-haired head of the 800-member California Obstetricians Association who recently endorsed a letter sent to Reagan expressing their opposition to the HLS.

"We're concerned with the quality of life," said Halett. "That prospect (of the HLS) is very frightening to me." He added that he too had been through the days where his patients would die from septic abortions.

NARAL's Robin Chandler Duke also charged that making abortions illegal will not end them. "Making abortion illegal won't make it go away. It will only increase misery. It seems to me a crime to make a baby have a baby."

Real majority favours right to choose

(Since abortion became legal in 1973, more than one million teenagers became pregnant and 38 per cent had abortions).

Chandler Duke also raised the issue of public opinion. Knight charges that it is really only a 'small core of people' who really oppose the right to abortion for women.

"All the polls in this country show that most people in this country are pro-choice." She adds that a recent survey by her Republican congress representative found that out of 17,000 people polled, 82 per cent opposed banning abortion.

Opponents to the HLS say it is a case of the will of the minority attempting to impose its morality on the majority. Sherman-Peterson charges that because almost half the nation refused to vote in the last election, many politicians are governing without a clear mandate on this issue.

How will it affect Canadian women?

What effect will the statute have on Canadian women if it passes? Will American women travel north for safe abortions?

According to most health-care representatives in Vancouver, the effects will be minimal.

Meg Hickling, a Planned Parenthood education spokesperson says that American women could not come to Canada to have abortions done here because most hospitals have residency requirements.

She adds however that women who have money will always be able to have abortions even if it means travelling hundreds of miles. Many Canadian women currently travel to Washington state for abortions because it is difficult to have one in the north and interior of B.C.

"Many middle and upper class parents whip their children across the border for an abortion. What might happen (if the HLS passes) is that local pro-life groups might feel happier."

"DADDY?"

She adds that the statute seems "mind-boggling, insane to me."

Faye Cooper, a member of the North Shore Women's Centre, agrees. "I think psychologically it would give them (anti-choice groups) a hell of a big stick. But I think it would have virtually no impact on Canada."

One reason why Cooper says she doubts that it would be important to Canadians is that our abortion laws are by no means liberal. There is no easy access to abortions in Canada, she adds.

"It depends on the hospital, it depends on the doctor, and it depends on the circumstances. No hospital is obligated to have an abortion committee. There are anti-choice boards in places in Victoria, Powell River and Prince George and many other places in the province."

She adds that the hospital in Powell River performed only three abortions last year.

But according to Cooper it would be possible for a Seattle woman to have an abortion in Canada, although it would be expensive and difficult. "It's not going to be a snap for her." According to Laura Lynn Brown of the VGH surgical day care unit, it would cost an American woman between $250 and $400 for an abortion.

Says Cooper: "What the U.S. is proposing is just a stricter form of Canadian law."

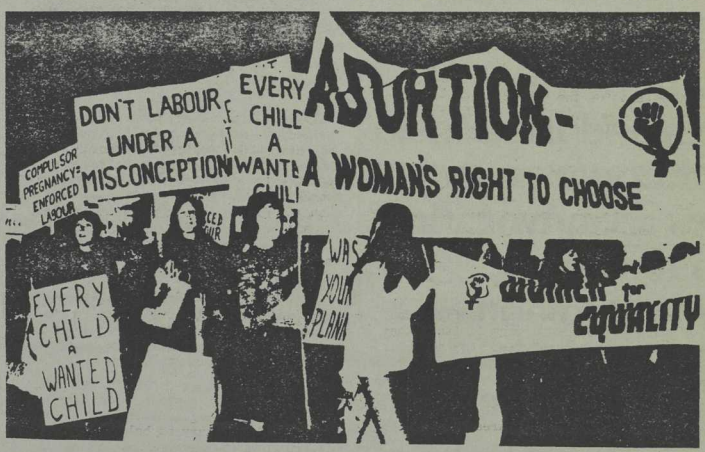
According to Statistics Canada, there were 12,483 therapeutic abortions performed in B.C. in 1978 and 62,290 nationally that year. And although there were only figures available for the three states, 1,372 abortions of Canadian women were performed in the United States in 1978. So that door, open to women who cannot get abortions in their own town or city or why are trying to avoid scandal, will once again be closed.

But the fear that Canadian politicians would jump on the bandwagon seems remote. At the moment Canada does not have the Moral Majority's equal who have access to wealth and the government's ear. Much of the work being done on the HLS is being carried out by lobbyists for both sides and the fight in Canada is fought at the level of hospital boards rather than in Parliament.

The abortion issue is just part of a right-wing campaign to 'put women back in their place', raging in America. Moral Majority members not only oppose choice on abortion but the Equal Rights Amendment and gay rights.

Rights that women's groups and others have fought so hard for are in danger of disappearing. The unthinkable is being contemplated and Canadians can do little but sit back and watch. ♀

RALLY SEPTEMBER 12



CONCERNED CITIZENS FOR CHOICE ON ABORTION

Come and show your support for a woman's right to choose

Rally to Repeal the Anti-abortion laws

Queen Elizabeth Plaza

Noon, September 12

BOOKS

In Her Own Right does not shy away from class issues in our foremothers' lives

By Laura Cardriver

IN HER OWN RIGHT: Selected Essays on Women's History in B.C. Edited by Barbara Latham and Cathy Kess. Published by Camosun College, Victoria, B.C.

Most British Columbians know little about their own history, and even less about the contributions that women have made to this province. In Her Own Right, a collection of selected essays, edited by Barbara Latham and Cathy Kess breaks new ground in this long neglected area.

The essays address a variety of subjects ranging from the arrival of B.C.'s first immigrant women on the ship, the Tynemouth, in 1862, to feminist reformers at the turn of the century, to those women who became absorbed in the relief effort of the 1930s.

A picture gradually emerges of prominent, very active middle-class women from Vancouver and Victoria and the organizations they were involved in. The same names appear over and over again; names of women who could be active in the reform movements because they enjoyed the privileges and freedoms of the leisured class.

While women like Maria Grant, Helen Gregory MacGill and Evlyn Farris made genuine strikes for the advancement of women and pushed for much-needed reforms, they were able to do so because of their social status acquired through fathers and husbands.

Early women's groups were the preserve of privileged women

The essays do not shy away from problems which can be traced to the middle-class backgrounds of reformers and women's groups.

Tami Adilman, in her essay on Evlyn Farris and the University Women's Club, points out that "it is obvious that the Women's Liberal Association did not want their membership to include working women." In other parts of the book reference is made to women's organizations which preferred to remain middle and upper-class in character.

Nora Lupton, in her essay, says that participation in the B.C. Protestant Orphans' Home Ladies' Committee was an indication of status though she adds that the home provided excellent care for children for a century.

Given society's stratified character, it was hardly surprising that the reform movements tended to be the preserve of privileged women. Opportunities for women of other classes were very limited; they concentrated on surviving. For example, Deborah Nilson's essay exposes the fact that the prevalence of prostitution particularly during times of economic depression, was related to the scarcity of employment for women in other areas.

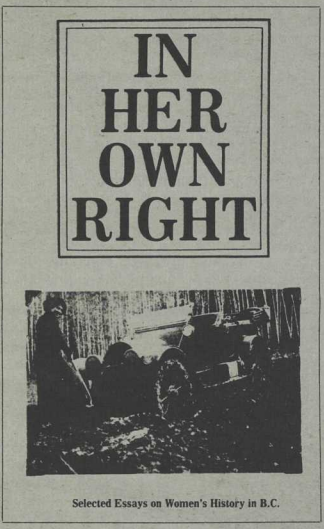
It is unfortunate that the women who would benefit most from social reforms were not those with the power to address their problems. Conversely, those women who were respected in the community didn't have the working women's perspective.

In her essay on sexism in B.C.'s trade unions, Marie Campbell examines how men involved in unions turned to middle-class rather than working women for advice on women's wages. What resulted was that women were forced to accept wages that even trade union leader James Wilton condemned as less than one-third of a reasonable wage for working women.

Briefs from middle-class women expressed a desire to "be fair to employers as well as the employee," which was natural enough since their husbands were more likely to be employers than employees. Even Helen Gregory MacGill, a prominent reformer, refused to support women's need for decent wages.

Reformers were not immune to racism

Mention is made throughout the book of these women's racist bias, or at least the tendency of important B.C. women's groups to use the general anti-Oriental bias of the time in their rhetoric to further their own political ends.



Selected Essays on Women's History in B.C.

Only two of the women portrayed in the collection of essays, Agnes Deans Cameron and Helena Gutterdige, are shown to have had a lifelong commitment to genuine egalitarian principles of equal rights for women and men. Both seem to have been unusual women in other ways as well; less committed than the others to maintaining the middle-class lifestyle with traditional marriage roles, and more interested in their own personal fulfillment.

For many of the others, as Gillian Weiss concludes, "the suffrage campaign was a minor battle in the war to retain and extend middle-class values throughout society."

All of this becomes more understandable when we view the prominent women and provincial women's organizations in the early part of the century as belonging to the large North American reform movement.

The fears of social degeneration held by white Anglo Saxon Protestants, and the belief in the superiority of their own social mores were the driving forces behind the reform movements.

Suffrage not a goal, but a tool

Women were welcome in reform groups for their nurturing abilities. The idea was that women's special role as mother gives them the right and duty to participate in the public sphere. In B.C., as elsewhere, most early feminists were 'maternal feminists' of this kind.

Families tended to be involved in reform causes together, and we can see many wife-husband teams who were very active in B.C. And as Linda Hale points out in her profiles of prominent B.C. suffragists, many of the women were active in a number of groups.

Suffrage was not a primary goal for these women. Their feminism had little to do with a belief in natural equal rights. Suffrage was a tool which they hoped would give them the power to make reforms in legislation which affected women and children, particularly in laws relating to family, property and labour areas.

Viewed from the larger historical perspective, the middle and upper-class elitist, religious and sometimes racist nature of many of the prominent B.C. women and women's groups becomes not only understandable but predictable.

As Gillian Marie points out in her opening essay, "Historians have written about the suffrage movement, but in isolation and not within the context of a wider social reform movement. This narrow focus gives the reader the false impression that suffrage is the sole story of women in the late nineteenth and early twenthieth centuries, that their only goal was the franchise and that feminism died with the granting of the suffrage."

Many different B.C. women's organizations were interested in suffrage, and for many different reasons.

But common to most of them was the fact that the franchise was considered a necessary tool rather than a major goal. In her essay Diane Crossley examines how many of these women continued to press for reform and were subsequently involved in the Liberal government's new social policies after B.C. women finally won the vote in 1917.

They used the vote to accomplish reform goals they had set for themselves decades earlier. Whatever their motives and class interests, the B.C. women whose lives are illuminated in In Her Own Right carried out many necessary reforms and helped get us all our primary political tool: the vote. They may not have been truly interested in equal rights for women, but their efforts have made it possible for us to work today to influence government policy toward that end. ♀

Stepping out of line is coming

Stepping Out of Line: A Workshop Manual and Resource Guide on Lesbianism/Feminism is almost out. Contact the workshop collective c/o Press Gang Publishers, 603 Powell, Vancouver.

Lesbian Conference outfoxed?

The 1981 Lesbian Conference applied for funding from the secretary of state women's program last February. Although the grant application met all the relevant criteria, so far Secretary of State Francis Fox, has refused final approval.

The conference of 500 women, held in May, still needs money to reimburse travel expenses.

Write to Francis Fox, House of Commons, Ottawa. Ask him when he is going to approve the funding for the conference.

For more information write to the Lesbian Conference Organizing Committee, Box 65663, Station F, Vancouver B.C.

Looking at *Radical Reviewer's* herstory: the first issues

THE RADICAL REVIEWER was invited to write a narrative of its birth for the literary journal 13th Moon, *which is producing a special issue on the history of women's literary magazines, as a celebration of women's cultural renaissance. We thought that KINESIS readers might like to read our story as well.*

Cy-thea Sand

The RADICAL REVIEWER was born one 1980 January evening in a Vancouver Lesbian Literary Collective (LLC) meeting. When the rest of the group had dispersed, three of us stayed to talk about our love of writing.

Between us we had written songs, poems and feminist literary critiques. We moved from one idea to another, warmed by each other's enthusiasm, until one woman said that she'd like to start a literary journal. Our minds spun with the possibilities. Of course no one had any extra finances for the endeavour, but we were undaunted. And very excited.

We decided to approach the editor of KINESIS, Vancouver's feminist newspaper, with the idea of producing literary supplements to KINESIS. Kinesis agreed to help us produce two issues under their auspices -- then we were on our own.

So, with the guidance, supplies and financial support of KINESIS, we produced issue number one in June 1980 and issue number two in December 1980. Our twelve-page supplements featured book reviews, poetry, interviews, critical analyses and photography from a lesbian/feminist perspective. They were received with eagerness and encouragement by KINESIS readers and subscribers.

Barbara and I *were* the Radical Reviewer

The three of us wrote all the reviews, articles and poetry for our first issue, but then one woman had to withdraw due to the increasing demands of her full-time job. Barbara and I *were* the RADICAL REVIEWER. (The LLC still exists, meeting regularly to discuss women's literature and feminist theory.)

After our second and last issue with KINESIS, we scrambled around creating an office and lay-out room in my basement, collecting supplies, mailing out sample copies and distributing in local bookstores.

We managed to attract fifty-odd subscriptions and a few submissions for our third issue published in May 1981.

Most of the copy was penned by myself and Barbara. We are presently researching, writing and soliciting for our fourth issue, set for September 1981.

We plan to publish three times a year -- Spring, Fall and Winter. We are applying for Secretary of State funding which will be used for advertising and promotion. We need to do outreach work in order to create a substantial subscription list and to increase bookstore sales.

We have mailed out 300 sample copies of the RADICAL REVIEWER number three to libraries, women's centres and feminist bookstores throughout British Columbia, the rest of Canada and the United States. We have also mailed approximately 100 sample copies to other literary publications in hopes of being accepted for their exchange list.

We now have a distribution manager, Sarah Shamai and a typist, Darlene Trewern. Barbara has divised a production schedule for our next issue, including deadline dates and typing times, in order to ease the confusion and anxiety associated with layout week. We are on the move.

Since Barbara and I have done most of the writing for the first three issues, we are just beginning to develop a formal editorial policy. As we attract more writers from our community, and realize our own time limitations, the need for an editorial policy becomes clearer.

Cy-thea Sand (L) and Barbara Herringer (R), the prime movers of the *Radical Reviewer*

We know that we want well-written book reviews and articles which are inspired by a love of, and concern with, women's literary culture and heritage. We also want the RADICAL REVIEWER to be accessible to as many women as possible. Therefore we encourage and practice non-academic language and styles.

We have also spun off from the traditional book review format into a subjective/emotive reading of given works. This has allowed us the liberty to transform the traditional book review into a catalyst for our own perceptions and ideas. We believe that this way of reading and writing is actively feminist and creative.

We want to encourage ourselves and other women to deeply explore a book, to integrate its sensibility into a new consciousness. So, I suppose part of our editorial policy could read as follows:

> Savour another woman's work; grace it with your mind and skin's intuitive/cerebral knowledge; create a review/critique which honestly reflects the work's value and significance ... for you.

We're dedicated to developing feminist criticism

In short, the RADICAL REVIEWER is dedicated to feminist criticism of literature and the arts which is fertile, inventive and rich.

We are also interested in poetry, photography, journal excerpts and short fiction pieces. We would like to feature interviews with artists, activists, and writers every third issue or so.

Moreover, we are keenly interested in submissions from young women. We have already published two reviews by the twelve-year-old daughter of an LLC member. We want voices from all generations -- as well as the 23 to 34 year old articulations of the lesbian feminist community.

The Women's Liberation Movement has made women aware of the deep need for our literary voice to be heard and appreciated. The feminist literary renaissance of the 1970s must not be allowed to fade into an anomaly.

For this reason, the RADICAL REVIEWER publishes original works by local women as well as giving critical attention to both established contemporary and traditional writers.

The RADICAL REVIEWER is not only interested in fostering feminist literary criticism, but also to making it accessible with a inexpensive newsprint format and non-academic approach.

We hope to attract more and more writers from both within and outside of the lesbian/feminist community in Vancouver.

An integral part of the women's movement

We understand our work to be an integral part of our feminist community in particular, and the women's movement in general. All revolutions are cultural. Reading, and writing are important cultural tools which, when sharpened by a feminist/lesbian wit and sensibility, enhance the voices of all women, of all classes, all races.

Our publication has been greeted with great interest. Many women have commented that the RADICAL REVIEWER has inspired them to read again. Some women have suggested that we have helped to alleviate the isolation of reading.

Moreover, Barbara and I are beginning to meet other writers interested in contributing to our tabloid. They have said that the RADICAL REVIEWER eases their sense of distance from the activist element of the women's community.

We plan to continue using a newspring format but we are investigating the cost for a glossy cover and back. This would enhance our attractiveness and allow us to use photographs and graphics to maximum benefit on the front and back covers.

We'll grow in size as submissions increase and our vision sharpens. Finances, of course, are always to be considered. We may eventually aspire to become a bound journal although we rather like the accessibility appeal of newspring.

Meanwhile, I research, write and solicit material, forever urged forward by Barbara and my strong working friendship, my love of reading, writing and women.

Our subscription rate is $5.00 per year for three issues; $10.00 for institutions. We will send bulk orders with an invoice for feminist bookstores interested in selling the RADICAL REVIEWER. Our address is:

P.O. Box 24953, Station C
Vancouver, B.C.

CULTURAL WORK

Original Sins is part feminism, and a great read

By Julie Wheelwright

It can be described as a cross between an important feminist work and a trashy novel, but Lisa Alther's new work, *Original Sins*, is entertaining, thoughtful and hard to put down.

Following her first novel, *Kinflicks*, her new book is more sophisticated, but the humour and warmth are still there. It is also a novel which focuses on truths about the 1960's and its various movements.

The novel traces the development and growth of The Five, a group of childhood friends living in Newland, Tennessee in the 1950's. The Prince sisters, Sally and Emily have plans to marry the Tatro brothers, Jed and Raymond to make their offspring double cousins. Donny, the only black member of the group is relegated to visiting cousin stature.

Things change for The Five. The first shock comes when they go to an afternoon movie and Donny is forced to sit in the balcony. When the others assure the teller that Donny is with them, she snarls, "Honey, I don't care if he was with Jesus Christ, he ain't setting downstairs."

In high school, Sally learns her pep squad smile, spends her time working on floats, going to Ingenue meetings and dreaming about Jed. Emily dates Raymond who sports Reindeer vests, rayon shirts and thick glasses. He is not the popular jock his brother is and Emily never learns the pep squad smile.

After a rape attempt by a white man, Donny's mother leaves PineWoods and heads for New York, fearing for her life. Donny goes to the black high school and no longer associates with the other four beyond his shuffling and grinning when asked to caddy or do yard work for Mr. Prince.

The first to leave town is Raymond, who heads to New York to work in a print shop and immerse himself in the civil rights movement. Here Alther uses first person narrative and allows us to see the contradictions in the movement.

Women are 'chicks' for male movement

One of the most striking is the role that women played. Raymond thinks of them as 'girls' and 'chicks' whose duties are limited to cooking, licking stamps and sleeping with the male leaders. The men in Raymond's group who venture South to register black voters view black women as status symbols and they realize it.

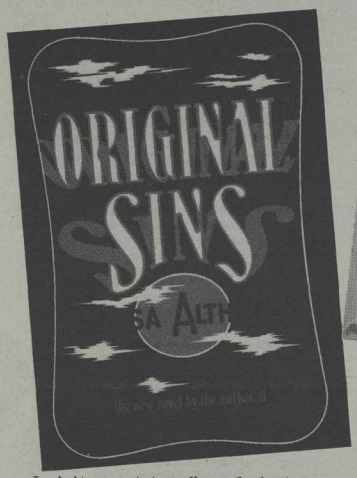
One woman confronts Justin, a wealthy white heir from New York and one of Raymond's idols, "Listen baby, white boys don't want nothing but two things from nigger women: housework and pussy. And Justin honey, I know you ain't got no house."

When Raymond's lover Maria leaves him because she can't have an orgasm with him, he rages, "orgasms for women! These aggressive demanding Yankee bitches. She should spread her legs and be grateful for what she got."

Emily is another recruit for the civil rights movement and she finds the same thing. But it is only after she marries Justin and is saddled with his child that she realizes the movement's hypocrisy.

Says Emily's lover, Maria, Raymond's former: "Well, during civil rights, women found themselves cleaning the Freedom House while the brothers were off being interviewed for the evening news. And then Stokley Carmichael came out with that bit about the only position for women in the struggle being prone. Then Cleaver described how he raped white women to get even with white men, practising up on black women. And then during Vietnam, the women were trying to find ways to pay the phone bills, while the men were out dumping blood on draft records."

There are other moments for Emily and her friends. At their weekly women's meeting when discussion begins to degenerate into chaos, Lou, a wealthy black college mate of Emily's who was once accused of being 'Oreo' in her attitudes towards other blacks, shouts, "You talk about being fucked over, you try being black and a woman and a dyke and Southern and a welfare mother all at once. I ain't got no sympathy for none of you. But what I think is this: You confront a carrot with a potato, and it'll probably insist, 'Hell



no, I ain't no potato. Honey look at me. Hell, I'm an orange, and long and thin. And lookee here, I got me this lacy green top.' Stops them seeing they're all in the garden together and all gonna get dug up come fall."

Lou urges the women that if they split up into factions they will no longer be a force to be reckoned with. It is a message well taken and described in a context that many women in the movement could identify with.

Emily also encounters white women who take black men as lovers even though they continually return home with bruises from their beatings. Her marriage with Justin fails as she begins to realize that she no longer wants to go through life as the Great Ear, although she fears what will happen once she is released from heterosexual monogamy.

"Monogamy: If her sex drive were released from it, what would happen? It was possible it would prove uncontainable. Maybe she'd lust after everything in sight. Broomsticks and doorknobs and gear shifts. No energy for her work or her child. No time to eat properly, or get enough sleep. Her health would begin to fail..."

But Emily survives. The woman who is the real victim is Sally, her pep-squad leader sister who becomes pregnant. Sally rapidly has two children and spends her days worrying about pleasing her husband.

The portraits of the characters are painted frankly and sympathetically. Even Raymond's vision which drives him to join his hillbilly relatives in Tatro Cove, is not without understanding. Jed, the reactionary mill foreman almost pathetically hangs onto traditions of the South that are dying as he clenches harder and harder to them for support.

Donny is another victim who in turn victimizes his wife and children when he comes to understand his position in the Southern way of life. He becomes involved in the civil rights movement without understanding his wife's oppression.

The Five are a microcosm of social changes

When The Five meet again in Newland, Tennessee, they are a microcosm of changes wrought on Americans in four decades. But there is a note of optimism in the picture and Alther has not lost her sense of humour.

It is a novel well worth reading if you're looking for a trashy book for a bedside table read or a look at changes in southern

United States. One criticism of the novel though is its failure to develop its characters equally. Emily is a much more powerful and real person whose transition from frustrated Home Coming queen to lesbian feminist is more understandable than Donny's transition from Mr. Junior Church Usher to Black Panther.

For Donny, reasons for the change are clear but Alther's handling of the transition is a little rough. Jed simply never changes and Sally comes into her own in a surprisingly powerful way.

One just hopes that the novel will soon appear in paperback. At $17.95, it is a difficult expense to justify. ♀

Sacrificial Burnings available

Sacrificial Burnings is a feminist videotape about love, power and illusion, now available from Women In Focus. Quotations from a medieval manual, Malleus Malificarum, referring to the evil of witches are interwoven with two recent witch-tales: Hollywood actress Frances Farmer, and a woman who 'escapes' an oppressive upbringing for an equally destructive marriage. For rental details, call Women In Focus at (604) 872-2250.

Women and Art in Quebec

Women in Montreal have put together a slide presentation on Women and Art in Quebec. A first, the presentation consists of some 200 slides covering a variety of media as well as styles.

The presentation, currently available in and around Montreal, is 40 minutes long and followed by a question period. Perhaps it will be available to those of us farther away? For info: 524-4036 Montreal.

MOVEMENT MATTERS

The question is not *should* men work against rape, but *how* they should

The Women's Almanac

By Dorrie Brannock

These comments were prompted by an article by Ruth Meechan in the June '81 Kinesis.

Dear Ruth:

The question was not *should* men work against rape, but *how* they should.

The disagreement as to how they should work to stop rape has lesbians on both side of the argument. It also has heterosexual and bisexual women on both sides.

The whole issue about policy change at Rape Relief was quite complex. For example, it has been and still is a policy at Rape Relief that one always believes the woman. That is a good policy when helping a woman through the male-dominated court system. It is also a good policy when counselling a woman.

It is not a good policy if the Rape Relief collective take the woman's word and then *act* on it *against* the *man* without having heard *his* side.

That is an injustice of a lesser but similar kind that women have been suffering from for centuries. I don't want that kind of injustice for anyone, man or woman.

In your article "Please Let us not resign from the human race." You seem to equate those who *disagree with Rape Relief policy with lesbians. And then you equate lesbianism with people who are dictating policy for 90% of the population. You also seem to equate lesbianism with man-hating.*

I am a lesbian and I want men to fight against rape. I want them to go out into the big wide world and educate each other about sexism. I don't want to eliminate men from the world, nor from my life.

Because I am a lesbian does not mean that I don't have men in my life. I have two children whom I love very much. One of them is a 6 foot 15 year old man. Any day of the week you will find him and his five male friends lounging around the house. There are moments when I wish that all six of them would disappear into thin air. But I don't want to eliminate them from my life.

There is a racist practice that goes like this: An Indian person does something that a white person does not like. The white person says, "Indians are like that" But if an Indian person does something that a white person likes, then the Indian is referred to as a person, no longer an Indian.

Something similar happens to women of colour. One woman does something that men consider foolish or she fails at something, She is then used as an example of how foolish and incompetent women are.

Minorities get held responsible for every member of their groups they are constantly being judged by what the status quo considers the failing, never by the achievement. If they succeed the fact that they are a minority is unimportant; if they fail it is all important.

The opposite is true for those who set the standards, i.e. if a white heterosexual make does something stupid it's because he's stupid. If he rapes it's because he's sick. If he does something brilliant it's because he's a white heterosexual male.

The way you talk about lesbian in your article is similar to the way minority groups get treated. You judge all lesbians for something that lesbians as a group did not do.

I understand from your letter that you don't agree with lesbian separatist politics. I don't agree with lesbian separatist politics either. However. I do agree with having women-only groups.

If an Indian or Black group did not allow whites into their movement in order that they may formulate their own thought and ideas, I as a white women would not feel discriminated against. Nor would I think that they wanted to eliminate me. I would not consider them separatist. I would only consider them separatist if they planned or wanted to build a culture that excluded others on the basis of nationality, race or sex.

Minority groups need time to figure out who they are and what they want because for too long they have been defined by the other.

The last point I want to address. You say that unless we co-operate with men we can expect lots of rapes. It seems to me we get lots of rapes no matter what we do. Cooperation means different things to different people; it does not mean we have to work in the same way or the same place.

I will not discount what you say because of who you choose to sleep with. It is true some lesbians will. It is also true that some heterosexual women will discount what I say because of my sexual choice. I hope you won't.●

The Women's Almanac

Where's our lesbian movement?

By Dorrie Brannock

For a long time we have had a women's movement and a gay movement in Vancouver but no lesbian movement.

Over the last 10 years we have seen lesbians emerging as political beings, organizing within the women's and gay movement around our own oppression. But we did not even utter the words "lesbian movement" until recently. Now that it is here I think it's real weird that nobody to my knowledge even noticed that it was missing.

We knew something was missing, at least I did, but I could not have said what it was. I remember when I was doing a paper on lesbians in the work force for my women's studies course. At that time I was a member of the Lesbian Information Line and like all lesbian groups in Vancouver, it was in a space that belonged to another women's group. So we had no place for posters, files, etc. I had to go to a gay men's organization to do the research for my paper.

I was embarassed that the Lesbian Information Line did not have the material on lesbians that a gay men's organization had. After that experience I tried to get support from my collective to get a space of our own. A space that would be ours alone where we could put up our posters, have a library, collect newspaper clippings and have a filing cabinet.

We were a small collective of ten women too busy providing counselling and paying our bills to raise enough money for the rent.

Later, when I was attending a Human Rights meeting, I thought the lack of feminist lesbians at those meetings was astonishing. You would have thought Vancouver lesbians did not exist.

The last Human Rights meeting had to do with (among other things) the inclusion of "sexual orientation" in the Human Rights Code. Who was there to speak for the feminist lesbians of Vancouver -- me. Now as much as I like to hear myself talk I really think we should have had some lesbians there who are better trained in middle or upper class mannerisms and speech.

Gay men from SEARCH and a mixed group from Victoria both submitted position papers but nothing from Vancouver lesbian feminists.

At that time there were at least six groups in Vancouver with lesbian in their name. None of those groups were primarily action groups. They were, and are, mostly service oriented.

Feminist lesbians when we went into action around political issues usually went under the banner of the women's movement.

The 1981 Lesbian Conference with its Lesbian Pride March was a turning point in our politics. Since the conference, the words I hear on most lesbian lips are "lesbian visibility" and for the first time the odd woman says "lesbian movement".

When you hear the phrase Lesbian Movement you will probably remember a time when you wondered, "What is wrong, where is everyone, what is missing"

Lesbians against sentimental slop

This year I think and hope will be a year when we will see emerging groups like: Voice of Lesbians, Lesbians Against Nukes, Lesbians for Peace, Lesbians Against Imperialism, Lesbians for a better Understanding of our Planet, Lesbians for Political Action, Lesbians Against Bigotry Lesbian Economic Systems and Theory, Lesbians Against Sentimental Slop.

Maybe we might even rent a space where we can put up our posters, hold meetings, gather material relevant to the work we will be doing. We could call our space the Lesbian Centre.

It should not be so hard. After all, we did it once before when we helped build the Women's Movement. ♀

MOVEMENT DEBATE

Autonomy = independence = separatism revisited

By Judith Quinlan

This is written in response to a letter that appeared in the June '81 issue of Kinesis, entitled "Please let us not resign from the human race".

I am aware that there has been a lot of heated debate in Vancouver about the question of men working closely with feminist groups. As an outsider to the heat, I hope I can inject a little light on this issue.

Over twelve years ago women in this country, along with our sisters around the world, stated the need for an independent women's movement. That meant independent from men.

Out of this first principle a very large body of feminist thought has grown, along with a distinct women's culture, women's services, a women's press, and a growing feminist consciousness among women.

As women, living in a world that practices systematic misogyny, our battle for freedom is far from over yet. And the basic principles of autonomy and sisterhood are still sound.

We built an autonomous women's movement for the following reasons:

· because experience had taught us that even within the most liberal of male-led freedom movements, the concerns of women were always ignored, sometimes even resisted;

· because we understood that the oppression of women was and is basic to the maintenance of all power hierarchies in the world, and that the best way to fight this was *as women*;

· because 'including' men always meant excluding some women (particularly lesbian women, but many others, too). And our first concern is always for our sisters;

· because we have seen that even allowing a single well-meaning man into our groups means that many others follow, and soon they assert their birthright of telling us what to do;

· because we understood that men had gone far riding on the apron strings of women but, like all good mothers we must push them out of the nest to fend for themselves. Men had to 'grow up' politically and the existence of an independent women's movement gives them the opportunity to do just that.

Much was written then, as now, about this question. Readers can look up such classics as *Sisterhood is Powerful* or *The Fourth World Manifesto*, to understand the principle of women's autonomy. For a much deeper analysis of the need for separatism and the myth of man-hating, I suggest the introduction to *Gyn/Ecology*, a more recent feminist classic.

Why is autonomy being challenged again?

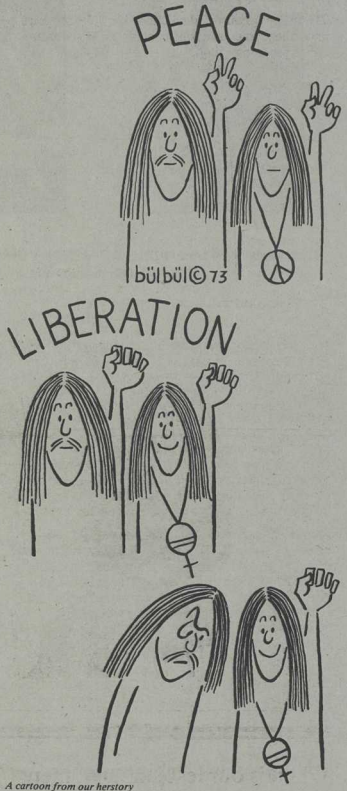
What I would like to discuss here is why the principle of feminist autonomy is being challenged again now. It seemed to many of us that the issue was settled long ago, which proves that we can't afford to become complacent about our victories.

The women's movement has been very powerful. We have challenged to the core all the assumptions of patriarchy. There is no woman in the world who has not been affected by the rising power of all women. A challenge to the basic principle of autonomy is a challenge to the core of our movement and cannot be ignored.

There has been a recent rise in anti-feminist literature emerging from such groups as the male left, the peace movement, the ecology movement. There has been strong anti-feminist organizing on the part of the church in all its brand names. There has been a world-wide rise in fascism, from Britain's National Front to our own Ku Klux Klan. This has been parallelled by a sharp 'swing' to the right in all First World state governments. These events are not isolated. Nor are they isolated from the women's movement.

It is my firm conviction that the move towards the worst extremes of patriarchal politics is precisely *in response* to the rising power of women. It is reaction to our own autonomous women's movement.

Every time women have risen in power there has always been a strong patriarchal reaction. From the Greek massacres of Amazon tribes, to the inquisition in



A cartoon from our herstory

Europe, which was directed specifically at women, solidifying the power of the christian church against the rising power of women in village economies. To the rise of fascism in the thirties which was a direct response to the post-suffrage freedom of women.

It isn't surprising that we are beginning to feel the wrath of patriarchal response to our present bid for freedom. The tactics within our movement are classic D & C (divide and conquer). In this case it takes the form of eroding our autonomy under the middle-class banner of 'humanism.' Let me answer Ms. Meechan specifically.

We are not doing any favours to men by 'rehabilitating' them. As long as we accept our role as taking care of men, then they will continue to insist on their right to be 'taken care of', including forcibly as in rape. We don't need the cooperation of men in our fight for freedom -- we are quite strong enough to manage it ourselves.

If men want to co-operate with us, they can figure out their own battles, and stop trying to join ours; they can refuse their complicity in our oppression and leave us to continue organizing ourselves as women, independently.

It isn't the 'mistakes' of individual men that are responsible for our oppression. When we talk about patriarchy we aren't discussing personal relationships between men and women only.

The patriarchy is a system of power. Power of some people over other people. Power, in the first case, of men over women. By fighting independently, we aren't 'resigning' from the human race. We've been excluded from the 'human' race for six thousand years -- our lives and struggles and contributions as women have been made invisible. Now we are fighting for inclusion in the human race, and when we win, and define 'human' the way we want, then men can choose for themselves whether *they* wish to join the human race.

I would like to add an important footnote. I have used the words independence, autonomy and separatism interchangeably in this article. This is because one of the problems in our movement is the increase in lesbian-baiting -- another D & C tactic.

Any woman who believes in and works towards an autonomous women's movement is a separatist. That doesn't preclude any woman also working with men elsewhere. It certainly doesn't preclude any woman sleeping with men. Our movement has always been pro-choice for women.

The label separatist is becoming increasingly associated with lesbian women, and disassociated from straight women. A lesbian is a woman who chooses to sleep with women, but that doesn't make her a feminist. A feminist is a woman who chooses to organize politically with women, but that doesn't make her a lesbian.

The women's movement is by definition separatist. So I would like to know what exactly a lesbian separatist is. I suspect it means a lesbian who works in the movement. So where's the threat?

The only other definition of a lesbian separatist I can think of is a lesbian who believes in separating from straight women as well as men. I have been involved in the women's movement for twelve years, and a lesbian for ten years, and I have yet to meet a lesbian who believes we should separate from straight women politically.

Of course there is a lesbian movement, and it is a very strong movement. But it isn't now and never was a movement in opposition to straight women. I am talking here about who we organize with, not who we sleep with.

Lesbian separatist: a lavender herring

So I am suggesting that the term lesbian separatist is another lavender herring, used to hide the real issue of women's autonomy. The question at stake, when women suggest accepting men into our feminist organizations, is the question of whether we want to continue organizing separately as a women's movement.

If we hadn't answered that question twelve years ago with a resounding yes, we wouldn't have any rape crisis centres to argue about, or women's newspapers to print our arguments in. And as long as women are still being beaten and raped, as long as women are still forced into marriages and veiled on the streets, as long as women are still losing our children because we are lesbians, or jailed for prostitution, or underpaid and overworked, or submitted to the horrors of modern gynaecology, or denied control over our lives and our bodies, then we must continue to have an independent women's movement. And that means, simply, no men. ○

Life is full of flux, and vice versa

By Victoria Freeman

Between thick slices of advertising, spread twelve minutes of dialogue, add predicament, villainy and female suffering in equal measure. Throw in a dash of nobility, sprinkle with tears, season with organ music, cover with a rich announcer sauce, and serve five times a week.

-- James Thurber's recipe for soap opera.

Ever since the days of radio serials, soap operas have been ridiculed and dismissed as "women's" entertainment. Intellectuals disdain it and feminists disown it -- along with Harlequin Romances and True Confessions. But, like country music, it won't go away. In fact, countless Canadians and 40 million Americans watch it daily.

There must be *something* in it.

A while ago, at the Women in Focus Art Gallery on Broadway, an unlikely event took place. More than 100 feminists and lesbians sat around listening to a new soap opera called Flux, a radio play.

The first episode dealt with a communal house of five women and two children. One woman tried to tell her mother that she was a lesbian. Her daughter complained that she didn't want to have a puberty party. Another woman accused her female lover of slam-bam-thank-you-ma'am sex. A male community organizer discovered that an informer was sabotaging the tenant meetings.

This was feminist soap opera. And the audience loved it.

"It's really important for me to make people laugh," said author Mary Schendlinger. "We need to see our lives that way, especially political people who work very hard."

But Schendlinger, whose stories have appeared in Press Gang's anthology, Common Ground, and in the newspaper, The Body Politic, is not just spoofing traditional soap operas. She is genuinely interested in the form and wants to explore her political ideas within in.

For soap, perhaps more than any other medium, is an examination of personal lives, feelings, characters, relationships and interrelationships within a community.

"Some of the issues in Flux are overtly political, like the tenant issue, for instance. But I believe the personal is the political; it's one of the reasons I like soap."

And because soap operas are serials which continue indefinitely (Search for Tomorrow, for example, is 30 years old), there are greater opportunities to look at issues and situations from all sides and in depth.

Everybody cries for weeks

"When someone's friend dies, everybody cries for weeks; that's what I've always liked about soaps. They're more like real life; everything doesn't get wrapped up in an hour."

What does it mean to live with children and share responsibility for them? What is it like to live in a communal house? What do you do in a collective where one person is more powerful? What happens when lesbian and straight women live together?

These are some questions Schendlinger hopes to explore in future episodes.

"It's a story about women-centered women for a change. The women on TV soaps are much more male-centered. Male-female relationships aren't going to play a major part, though they'll certainly be there -- they get all the attention everywhere else. It's a whole different set of problems and concerns."

At least for the moment, she expects her audience to be mainly female. "Women are interested in emotional process, much more so than men. I would like men to be interested, but I know I'm speaking mainly to women."

Schendlinger is a soap opera addict. "I started watching the soaps about 16 years ago when I was in high school and I used to stay home for the day. My mother watched General Hospital, and that was how I got into it.

We began to talk about it. We would wait for everybody else to get home for dinner and we would drive them crazy saying, 'I don't know about Jessie; she seems really worried about something. And Steve is in terrible shape and won't talk to her', and so on. We just had fun with that; gradually I started caring about the people.

"When my second kid came along, I was really under it. I was very isolated and barely keeping it together and the soaps were nice company. At my freaked-out worst, I could sit and be catatonic and watch all the ABC soap operas right through for a couple of weeks at a time.

"Now I really love checking in on them once in a while. I do care what happens to the people; after all, I've know them longer than either of my children and most of my friends."

According to Schendlinger, TV soaps aren't just an escape. They often explore sensitive or controversial topics, such as teenage drug use and artificial insemination, long before they are acceptable on prime-time.

And while homosexuality is still taboo, feminism has influenced the shows, at least to some degree. "The women are stronger. You see women doctors on General Hospital; they aren't all nurses any more. The woman who isn't married isn't always the bad woman; sometimes she's just made that choice."

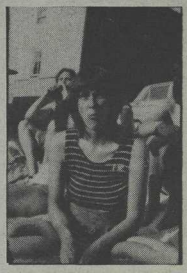
Schendlinger agrees that soap operas are too "grabby." Although the scenes in Flux leave the audience hanging in the traditional soap opera style, they are not as drenched in melodrama. "That kind of emotional stimulation can be a strong pull or draw for people who lead boring, repetitive lives. I don't want to suck people in."

Flux avoids soapy lies, secrets

Flux also dispenses with some other time-worn conventions of soap opera. Traditionally, secrets and lies provide the emotional suspense that keeps an audience interested.

"One of the things about soaps that always drove me crazy was how unwilling people were to be honest with each other. That's not how I live or how my friends live. Can you sustain drama and interest if people really talk to each other? Well sure, our lives are full of drama?"

Schendlinger produced the first episode with the help of other people. Further episodes will be produced this summer." ♀



Schendlinger (above) on the soaps of her youth: "I do care what happens to the people. After all, I've known them longer than either of my children and most of my friends."

The authors of COMMON GROUND read from other works

Octopus Books East welcomes

Helen Potrebenko
Mary Schendlinger
Anne Cameron
Cynthia Flood
Frances Duncan
LL Field

Kathryn Woodward

and all their friends and fans and other interested types
to a reading on
Thursday, September 17
7:30 p.m.
Octopus East—1146 Commercial Drive, Vancouver

MOVEMENT DEBATE

A diverse movement demands eclectic newspaper, open debate

By Gayla Reid

Kinesis is, and always has been, a project of Vancouver Status of Women. VSW publishes Kinesis; VSW edits it. In any discussion about what Kinesis is, this is the place to start from.

At VSW we understand that Kinesis is a feminist newspaper. The paper believes in certain things and promotes them with all the objectivity of a mother bear.

We believe in a woman's right to control her own body, to have access to quality childcare, to be paid equally with men, to enjoy complete freedom of sexual orientation, to live free from the fear of domestic violence. And so on.

Believing in these rights and existing to promote them, VSW would never, in Kinesis, publish articles which, for example, condemned reproductive freedom, or claimed that lesbians violated God's plans for the human race, or said that children are deranged by childcare. Or any comparable garbage.

Response to our support for fundamental feminist principles is not always warm. Last week we received a letter from a woman which began, "Please accept my resignation from the Status of Women as I cannot subscribe to its rejection of God, the Church, and the Family..."

We publish such comments, from time to time, on our letters page. When we do so, it should be clear that we are not promoting the beliefs expressed by the writer. We are letting our readers know that Kinesis meets with hostility as well as with affection. We see no necessity to keep such adverse criticism under wraps.

The two areas which meet with the most resistance are our advocacy of choice on abortion and freedom of sexual orientation. In 1980 Vancouver alderperson Bernice Gerard made repeated public attacks on VSW for these two stands. She accused us of always 'harping' on them in Kinesis, thus ruining 'what otherwise could be a very sweet tune'.

Just before our funding from city hall came up for council discussion this June, Rafe Mair was busy on his hot-line lambasting Kinesis for advocating 'self-induced abortions'.

And on one of our annual funding pilgrimages to Victoria, a civil servant told us his ministry had received complaints about VSW. One woman, he told us, had written to them because she had found a copy of Kinesis hidden beneath her daughter's mattress.

Kinesis *is* a controversial newspaper. No doubt about that.

How do we get there from here?

VSW shares with other feminist groups a commitment to ending sexism. Many feminists agree about goals. We can all agree, for example, that we want to see a world where misogynist violence does not exist.

But how do we get there from here?

That's where we can begin to disagree. That is what the debate is all about.

From coast to coast, the debate rages. In condos and co-ops, at benefits and barbeques, we are all putting in our two cents worth. And sometimes, just sometimes, when a feminist feels especially intense about a certain topic, the debate reaches the pages of the Kinesis.

When it does, we're glad to have it.

It takes courage to enter into controversy in a public way, in a newspaper. It takes far more courage to write an article than it does to publish it.

Vancouver Status of Women believes that by opening Kinesis up as much as possible to all our readers, we can work towards finding answers to that important question: *how do we get there from here?*

57 different varieties

Well, how *do* we get there from here? How, for example, do we combat misogynist violence? One woman believes that the most effective way to start is to eliminate men, as much as possible, from her life. She looks to her sisters for support, and finds it. Another woman staggers on home from a hard day at the transition house to snuggle in beside the man of her choice.

Both women are, equally, feminists.

One woman thinks that the principal contradiction is class; another says that it's sex. Yet another finds the phrase, *principal contradiction*, alienating lefty gabble. All these three are feminists.

One woman thinks that the best way to go is to have feminists sitting in the House of Commons. Another condemns working with institutions of the state as a co-opting waste of time. Both are women's movement activists.

And the list goes on.

Debates about strategies and tactics are by no means confined to the question of how best to combat violence against women.

Which is the best way to work for our reproductive freedom in 1981? For some, repeal of the abortion laws from Canada's criminal code is the *sine que non* of the pro-choice battle. For others, repeal at the federal level at this time would only give right-wing provincial governments a chance to get their grubby little paws on our abortion laws.

Precisely because there is no agreement within the women's movement about strategies and tactics, debate is essential. In this sense, our movement is light years away from even remotely resembling a political party; in this sense a feminist newspaper which plugs one line only is a bald contradiction in terms.

VSW could chose to take up the entire paper with stories about our organization's mighty leaps forward. We could spew out heroic press releases, page after page. We don't.

Instead, we pour our skills and labour into presenting, not only VSW's views, but the views of all the other feminist groups who wish to use our pages.

When VSW developed a critique of the proposed federal changes in legislation around rape, we ran it in Kinesis (February 81). When the North Shore Women's Centre organized a petition to protest Supreme Court comments in the Pappajohn decision, we ran it (December 80). When Rape Relief sends in articles we publish them too.

In past few months we have received two separate requests about how we treat movement debates.

First, Isobel Kiborn wrote us a letter. It appeared on the letters page of the February Kinesis. Said Isobel: when you print an article which is critical of a group doing anti-sexist work, please get a response from that group for publication *in the same issue.*

Requests seemed reasonable

Isobel's request looked perfectly reasonable. Here we are, publishing a paper which is intensely, almost extravagantly, interested in different points of view. What could possibly be wrong with printing a criticism, and alongside it, a response? Simultaneous debate. Sounds terrific.

Sylvie Beauregard

Okay, we said to Isobel. We'll go for it.

We had some lurking doubts, however. What if a group tried to hold up publication of a criticism by saying it couldn't *quite* pull its response together in time for the deadline? And, we wondered, would this act to undermine individual women who had criticisms of a group? Wouldn't it be a bit like a child complaining, having daddy respond, and saying that that closed the matter?

Ironically, we said *yes* to Isobel because we wanted a quick response in time for simultaneous publication.

A mistake. We dealt with Isobel's letter when it arrived, right on deadline. You may know about the late-night romance of deadlines. Sometimes decisions get made in haste. Upon publication, you get to repent at leisure. We did.

It was Dorrie Brannock who drew attention to the less-than-terrific implications of Isobel Kiborn's request. Isobel, note, did not asked for simultaneous-response protection for individuals. Only for groups.

Trouble is, Dorrie said, this will intimidate individual women just learning to speak out.

Looking at Dorrie's comments, we began to chew Isobel's requests over at length. We got out back issues of Kinesis and went through them, debating all the way.

In the February 1981 Kinesis, for example, Jen Moses and Esther Shannon have some remarks, headlined, "NDP accused of co-opting March 8." Following Isobel's proposals, we should have gone immediately to the NDP Women's Committee for a response, which we should have then printed alongside the criticism written by Esther and Jen. ▷

MOVEMENT DEBATE

Or should we? We tried this one out on some friends. "Women won't like you using the NDP Women's Committee as an example."

"Why not?", we asked. "Surely the NDP women have as much right to simultaneous-response protection as Men Against Rape?"

Isobel's letter was prompted by some remarks made by Margo Dunn about Men Against Rape, remarks that Isobel judged "mostly attack by innuendo."

In the month following Margo's criticism, Men Against Rape were given space to run their own statement in Kinesis.

But the time between publication, Isobel stressed, is vital. In those weeks the rhetoric festers, the opinions form and the positions harden, she maintained.

We wondered if Kinesis readers were as deeply vulnerable to that four-week gulf between criticism and response as Isobel suggested.

Questions arose of groups vs. individuals

Never an idle moment down at the VSW offices. Just after we've been chewing away on Isobel's proposals and our hasty agreement thereunto, in walks Cherbeau. Clutching an article.

Cherbeau had written an article in response to one by Rape Relief's Joni Miller in the February Kinesis. In that article, Joni had addressed three topics: the need for the Rape Relief House, Rape Relief's decision to work with men on their funding committee, and their opinion that separatism is not an option for most women.

Cherbeau wanted to point out to readers that there was considerable opposition to these three developments at Rape Relief from 'the wimmin's community'.

Here was an individual responding to a group. Should we now contact the group and get their response ready for simultaneous publication? But the group had already just had their page in Kinesis the month before.

What you'd end up with, we decided, was a power imbalance. First you have Rape Relief's article. Then a response to Rape Relief's article. But that response would not be allowed to stand by itself. It would be flanked by the group's response.

Time for a little lousy VSW house wine and on to the topic of the individual versus the group.

Groups have more power than individuals. This is, after all, the basic premise of collective action. Big groups have more power than little groups: Exxon vs. VSW; Regina vs. the Women's Movement.

Kinesis can do nothing to alter the greater power of the big groups, the lesser power of the little groups, the least power of individuals. Like the rain that falls upon our city, these facts prevail.

We want women to speak their minds

But Kinesis can permit, even encourage, individuals to speak out. The kind of women's movement we know we want to build is one in which dissenting voices can be heard, where individual women have access to the media, where each of us can speak her mind.

It didn't seem fair to have a group, any group, respond simultaneously to an individual's response to something that the group had just published.

As we said, never an idle moment down at Kinesis. No sooner had Cherbeau's article hit the streets, than in comes a letter.

Who is it from?

It's signed by Lee MacKay, "speaking for the women who attended the May 19, 1981 British Columbia Federation of Women Lower Mainland Region on Accountability."

Gulp.

Five women, the grapevine reveals, were at that meeting.

The letter, signed by Lee, is astutely and carefully written.

It makes several requests. First: please do what you'd said you'd do in response to Isobel Kiborn's letter: let the group criticised respond the same issue.

Okay. Point taken. We've changed our minds about Isobel's requests. We painted ourselves into a corner by hastening to make a simultaneous response to Isobel's request that groups be given a right to a simultaneous response.

Second, Lee wants Kinesis to make sure that "anyone who decides to use Kinesis to comment on the policies or actions of a feminist group or individual..."

Stop right there. Here's a significant difference from Isobel's requests. Lee, and the women who endorsed her letter, want to

widen to terms of reference. Isobel wanted protection only for groups; Lee wants it for individuals, too.

We were pleased to see that.

Then the letter from Lee and the four other women goes on like this: the group or individual who is criticising a group or individual should contact that group or individual 'well before the deadline' so that the group or individual has time to prepare 'an immediate response'.

To us, this showed an understanding of the deadlines we face. We appreciated that immensely.

But the writing and responding, mind you, must all be done in time for 'simultaneous publication'.

Again, as with Isobel's letter, the central request is for simultaneity of response.

And if, for whatever reason, the writer does not get around to doing this contacting for response, we, at Kinesis, must take responsibility for so doing.

Jesus, Murphy. Gonna need the feminist equivalent of a fleet of fast pink ladies!

But there's more.

If the group or individual criticised can successfully 'convince' Kinesis that publication could be 'substantially damaging' to the group or individual targeted, Lee and the others want to see Kinesis delay publication by one month.

There was no mention made of any indefinite delays. One month was offered as the maximum hold-back period.

Okay.

Let's go back and see how that letter about "NDP co-opts March 8" would look according to Lee's procedures.

Following Lee's suggestions, Esther and Jen should have contacted the NDP Women's Committee 'well before deadline' and invited their 'immediate response'.

When Esther and Jen showed up at VSW with their letter, our first question to them should have been, "Have you contacted the NDP Women's Committee?"

If they hadn't (for whatever reason), then it would have been our responsibility at Kinesis to get on the phone to the NDP women, get the letter in the mail to them, discuss deadlines and so on.

They would have been offered two choices. First, write an immediate reply. Burn the midnight oil, sisters, and be quick about it. For at our backs we always hear that dreaded deadline scurrying near.

Second, they could have tried to 'convince' us at VSW that publication of Esther and Jen's letter could be 'substantially damagining' to the pro-choice cause. They could have sent in their most persuasive, experienced speakers to argue that such criticism, published in Kinesis just before the rally, would sabotage the entire pro-choice cause in town, setting it back ten months if not ten years.

Had they chosen the first route, and written an immediate response, would we then have checked with Esther and Jen before publication? No. Not according to Lee's propsals.

If the NDP Women's Committee had chosen to go the second route, and had tried to 'convince' Kinesis not to publish the criticism before the rally, they might have succeeded or they might not.

If they had been successful, the criticism from Jen and Esther would have been held until the April issue of Kinesis. By the time you read it, the March 8 rally would have been long gone.

Given that the March 8 pro-choice rally was cancelled in support of the civic workers' strike, this has been a hypothetical example.

But the procedures are exactly what Lee's letter proposes. Do not forget that this could apply not just to one article a month but to three or four.

Imagine the phone calls. The phone calls back. The delegations arriving at VSW 'to convince' us not to publish that article for a month. The time it takes to run accountability searches on every single controversial comment.

We're rejecting Lee's proposals because they demand super-human strength. Which we don't have.

Already, the charge towards deadline demands an almost demented burst of stamina.

What about those who aren't swift, skilled?

Dorrie Brannock's comments, in the June Kinesis, on Lee MacKay's proposals, were acute and clear-sighted. Dorrie herself is willing to burn to the midnight oil; so is Lee.

But, Dorrie askes, what about those of us who aren't skilled at churning the stuff out? We do not all command the journalistic breeze of a Joey Thompson or the political savvy of a Lee MacKay. What is to become of those feminists who aren't swift, insomniac writers? They would be effectively silenced.

We don't want to see that silencing happen. And we don't want to see over-hasty responses happening, either.

Policies, you know, are all very well and good, but the proof of the policy is in its practice. Having drafted these careful editorial requests, Lee found she had a practical decision to make. Dorrie Brannock is mentioned in her letter. Should Dorrie be placed in the category of those people who are to be contacted for a simultaneous response?

No, decides Lee.

Yes, decides Dorrie.

Two of the women who were party to Lee's letter came down to VSW during May to take a look at Miriam Azrael's article about women in prisons, scheduled for June publication. ▷▷

MOVEMENT DEBATE

Did it need a simultaneous response from the group, Women Against Prisons?

No, decide the two women.

Yes, decides a member of Women Against Prisons.

Opinions vary.

The point is this: when you embark on this path of hurry-scurry simultaneous-response editing, you tremendously accelerate the role of editor-as-god, deciding who shall qualify for notification for simultaneous reponses and who shall not.

In the June 81 Kinesis we ran an open letter to the Quadra management from three bookstores. Should we have asked the women from the Quadra for a simultaneous response? Why? Why not? Who decides?

The traditional practice at Kinesis, and one to which we intend to revert forthwith, is this: let the person or group involved decide if a response is needed. Let them respond without haste, in the following issue of Kinesis.

Never has any group or individual been denied that right. No one ever will be.

Does publication jeopardize funding?

The request from Lee MacKay and the four other women was quite specific. It dealt with Rape Relief. An article critical of Rape Relief was published in Kinesis in the very week that Rape Relief was negotiating its funding.

When we published an article by Ellen Baragon, back in October 1979, that was also critical of Rape Relief, we were told that the Baragon article could jeopardize funding.

Criticism in October can damage funding; criticism in May can damage funding.

Lee suggests that we might have possibly held off publication of that criticism until June. But June is Walkathon month. Would that have made June a bad month, too?

Actually, we think Rape Relief is right about the fact that governments which fund community groups keep an eye on what those groups are doing, all year round.

But we are confident that one, two or three criticisms in Kinesis about any organization, (*any* organization) would not constitute sufficient grounds for a government agency to suspend funding.

If government funders took every critical comment to heart, VSW would have been down at Georgia and Granville with our begging bowls by 1976 at the latest.

Civil servants, we believe from experience, look most carefully at what organizations such as VSW, Rape Relief and the Health Collective, consistently say about ourselves. They also look most carefully at what women who have used our services say about us. It is on these groups, we believe, that governments reach funding decision.

Your enemies are reading this

Finally, we want to address what we see as being the most important part of Lee Mac Kay's letter. It shows up in paragraph one:

We believe that debate on controversial issues within the movement is essential, but insofar as possible we need to find ways to enable this debate to take place in ways that do not give anti-feminists ammunition that they can use to damage the movement.

Your enemies may be reading this.

Yep, they sure are.

Against the need for protection against the enemy, as Lee points out, you need to balance the need for self-expression within the movement. And if you can't air controversial matters in the pages of Kinesis, where the hell can you air them?

We believe that feminists who read and support Kinesis know about life on the tightrope. It's a delicate balance.

So far, Kinesis hasn't done anything unconscionable. We don't intend to, either.

If the women's movement as a whole decided that Kinesis was 'too public' and therefore too risky, we believe that the movement would find some other way of airing debate.

We could, for example, turn to the BCFW newsletter. It exists; it doesn't cost too much to produce. We could drive around town and drop it off at women's centres. We could keep it under the counter at Ariel, at the Women's Bookstore, at Octopus...

But the local movement has not, in any significant numbers, yet expressed discomfort with VSW's receptivity to printing debates. We have not, as a movement, developed an alternative way of conducting print media debates. When and if the movement decides that's necessary, it will have all the support of VSW.

And when and if that heavy-duty day dawns when *all* feminist debate must go underground, we believe that women won't use Kinesis. You won't need a rejection slip from us to tell you which way the wind blows.

In any discussion of external vs. internal communications for the women's movement, VSW places Kinesis firmly and unequivocally in the area of external communications. Outreach has always been and always will be our number-one priority at VSW.

The vast majority of our readers are not involved within the inner circles of the Vancouver women's movement. They are not privvy to that grapevine which circulates local news with juicy gusto.

To sum up:

Kinesis is not prepared to agree to Lee's requests. We are, with the wisdom of hindsight, no longer prepared to agree to Isobel's requests.

What we intend to do is this:

Kinesis will send a copy of an article critical of any individual or group to that individual or group along with details of the deadline for the next issue of Kinesis.

That's all, folks. ♀

LETTERS

Send groups, individuals, a copy

We want to urge you to adhere to a policy of sending a group or an individual a copy of material that involves them prior to its being printed. This request comes with particular reference to the article in May '81 issue written by Cherbeau in criticism of Rape Relief.

We think that it is important that Kinesis continue to be a respected forum for criticism and information within the women's movement and that consistency in editorial policy will maintain this.

The Women's Caucus of the Learning Collective: Adonna Rudolph, Sharon Matsui, Dorrie Nagler, Trisha Joel, Sue Scott, Carol Evans and Eileen O'Brien.

and in addition: Henry Nagler, Rob Hornsey, Gwilgym Smith.

Print criticisms simultaneously

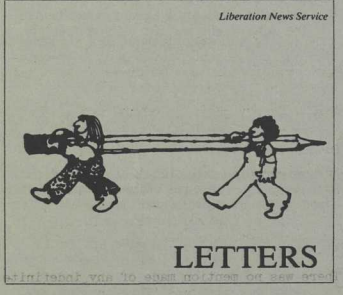
To Kinesis:

We are in full agreement with the proposals from the May 19 BCFW regional meeting to request that Kinesis print criticisms simultaneously with responses and hold back for one month criticism that would appear at a time that was critical to a group's well being.

The right-wing is becoming more powerful and better organized. We must deal with criticism of each other in a way that does not prove useful to their cause. When only one position of an issue is printed there is potential to cause bad feelings and unnecessary splits in the Vancouver Women's movement which demoralizes and cripples us in our fight against our oppressors. It can also provide them with ammunition to be used against us.

We need to learn new ways of dealing constructively with our differences, and we think the suggested changes are an essential step in that direction.

Sally Batt, Isobel Kiborn, Lorraine Krakow for the Radical Therapy Collective, Women's Caucus



Make debate easier, not more difficult

Dear Editors:

I would like to respond to the articles in the June Kinesis: "BCFW women request changes In Kinesis editorial policy," by Lee MacKay, and "Proposals are convoluted..." by Dorrie Brannock.

In my opinion Dorrie is correct in that we must facilitate open communication between various groups and various points of view.

We must make it *easier* for women to present their analysis of controversial issues, rather than building cumbersome obstacles to hind the effective exchange of ideas.

Remember that for non-Lower Mainland women, Kinesis is often the only source of information on current feminist issues.

I feel that the procedures suggested by the BCFW regional meeting reps would simply slow doen this debate and stall progress towards resolving controversy.

However, my main point in writing is a comment in the BCFW article, "We need a forum wider than BCFW in which to share our ideas..."

Sad to say, this appears to be true.

BCFW, the only provincially-organized, umbrella network of feminists, has become so narrow in perspective and analysis that it excludes many feminists and is no longer able to provide a forum for feminist debate.

I think it is time that those of us -- the temptation is to say 'those few of us' -- who still belong to BCFW to address ourselves to this issue.

The federation should be open to all feminist women's groups who wish to join. We must leave the ideology of the correct -- feminist or political -- 'line' to individual member groups as there is no place for partisan exclusion of groups in an umbrella organization.

If we succeed in broadening the base of BCFW, a wider range of viewpoints could more effectively be presented for debate at annual general meetings as well as in articles in Kinesis throughout the year.

In sisterhood,

Susan Tickson
Prince Rupert

BULLETIN BOARD

ON THE AIR

THE LESBIAN SHOW

August 20: No theme re-run show. A wide variety of pieces from past shows.

August 27: Music show: New Wave, A look at the women's music of the New Wave scene.

September 3: Back to school show

September 10: Lesbian mothers

September 17: Poetry

September 24: Music: Ferron

THE LESBIAN SHOW on Co-op Radio, 102.7 FM, 7:30 -- 8:30 p.m. each Thursday.

WOMANVISION SHOWS

August 24: Country and western music; women performers of the 1940s.

August 31: News show.

September topics TBA.

WOMANVISION on Co-op Radio, 102.7 FM, Monday, 7:00 -- 8:00 p.m.

GROUPS

PRESS GANG Printers and Publishers are now open on Saturdays 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at 603 Powell, 253-1224.

THE WOMEN'S SELF-HELP COUNSELLING collective can be contact at 872-3122, Vancouver Status of Women, Tuesday 7 to 9 p.m. and Saturday, 1 to 4 p.m. One-to-one counselling is now available. We plan to form several self-help groups in September.

AS ABORTIONS BECOME MORE DIFFICULT to obtain, especially in areas outside Vancouver, more women are forced to come to Vancouver for abortions. Many of these women have little money and no place to stay. Anyone who can provide comfortable accommodation, for anywhere from 1 night to 2 weeks, to women coming to town for this reason, please contact the Vancouver Women's Health Collective at 736-6696.

LESBIAN INFORMATION LINE is open for calls two nights a week, Thursday and Sunday from 7:00 to 10:00 p.m. at 734-1016. Drop-in every second Sunday.

VANCOUVER LESBIAN MOTHERS DEFENCE FUND has a potluck dinner the last Sunday of every month. For information call Mary at 251-5034.

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS meetings for lesbians Sunday at 8:00 p.m. Call Susan, 734-1776 or Mary, 874-5142 or Theresea at 986-9484.

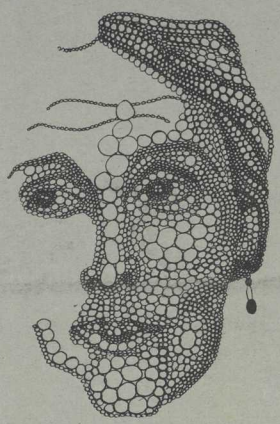
DROP-IN FOR LESBIANS OVER 40, Mondays at 8:00 p.m. at 322 West Hastings. Make friends and socialize in a non-threatening atmosphere.

SUPPORT GROUP FOR LESBIANS using a problem-solving format and self-help model is open to new members. Facilitator. Payment is on a sliding scale. We meet Mondays, 7:30 -- 10:00 at the CRS warehouse. If you're interested, call 251-2534.

GRANNY Y's, EMERGENCY CHILD CARE centre, operated by the YWCA opened July 6 at St Andrew's-Wesley United Church, 1012 Nelson at Burrard. Hours are 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. This centre offers childcare for children six months to six years in event of personal emergency.

MEDIA WATCH. Women interested in maintaining strong pressure against sexism in the media -- radio, tv and print -- please call Jillian or Sylvia at 738-0395 or 539-5473.

The Kinesis workers bid farewell to Gayla. Her dedication, hard work, and cheerful disposition will be missed. We wish her good luck in her future adventures.



VANCOUVER STATUS OF WOMEN offices are now located at 400A West 5th Ave., Vancouver V5Y 1J8. Office hours are Monday through Wednesday 9 to 5:30, Thursday 9 to 9.

Our new phone number is 873-1427

KINESIS

KINESIS is published ten times a year by Vancouver Status of Women. Its objectives are to enhance understanding about the changing position of women in society and work actively towards achieving social change.

VIEWS EXPRESSED IN KINESIS are those of the writer and do not necessarily reflect VSW policy. All unsigned material is the responsibility of the Kinesis editorial group.

CORRESPONDENCE: Kinesis, Vancouver Status of Women, 400A West 5th Avenue, Vancouver, B.C. V5Y 1J8.

MEMBERSHIP in Vancouver Status of Women is by donation. Kinesis is mailed monthly to all members. Individual subs to Kinesis are $10.00 per year. We ask members to base their donations on this, and their own financial situations.

SUBMISSIONS are welcome. We reserve the right to edit, and submission does not guarantee publication. Include a SASE if you want your work returned.

WORKERS ON THIS ISSUE: Ani Arnott, Janet Beebe, Mary Bell, Janet Berry, Sylvie Couture, Cole Dudley, Jan de Grass, Penny Goldsmith, Rosanne Moran, Gayla Reid, Julie Wheelwright and Cat Wickstrom.

DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE: August 31 for September 15 publication. Normal publication resumes thereafter, with deadline 15 of each month.

WOMEN, ART AND POLITICS. We are putting together a slide show of women artists in Vancouver who consider their artwork political. It will be shown at Women In Focus in October. We are asking for five slides per person and a statement about themselves, their art and politics. We need all of these slides by Thursday, September 10. To make arrangements or to get further information, call Claire at 253-0743 or Persimmon at 253-7809.

WOMEN TAKE BACK THE NIGHT events are being organized in Vancouver and Nanaimo for September 18. Childcare will be available. For details, call the Vancouver Rape Relief centre at 872-8212 or Nanaimo Rape Relief at 753-1021.

EVENTS

WOMENWORDS at Women in Focus, 456 Broadway, August 23 at 7:30 p.m. Readings of poetry by Ani Arnott, Cyndia Cole, Laura Foster, Angie Zenk and others. Admission is $2 at the door and $1.50 advance. Tickets are available from Ariel Bookstore, Octopus East and Octopus West, and the Women's Bookstore.

MARCH FOR CHOICE SEPTEMBER 12. Together we can defeat the anti-choicers and make abortion legal and accessible to all! Assemble 12 noon at Queen Elizabeth Plaza for a rally organized by the Concerned Citizens for Choice on Abortion. For details phone 73102974 or 684-7696.

A MULTI MEDIA SHOW by Sue Schnee and Sandra Preshara, Helen Pitt Gallery, 163 West Pender, August 17-29.

THE SECOND ANNUAL WEST COAST Women's Music and Cultural Festival at Camp Mather near Yosemtie, CA (three and a half hours from San Francisco), September 10 - 13, 1981, Thursday through Sunday. Music, politics, culture and spirituality, sports. $65 per person, camping. Advance tickets only from WCWMF, 1195 Valencia, San Francisco, CA 94110, 415 - 641 - 4892. Apparently 200 tickets are being held at the gate for Canadians. Phone ahead to check.

WINTER BREAK IN NICARAGUA is being planned for December 19 to January 3. We can learn a lot from Nicaraguan women, discuss their experience and compare it with ours and show them sisterly support. To join this group, phone Jeanne at 525-8136.

WOMEN'S CENTRE TRANSFORMATION meditation workshop. Learn to use psychic survival tools which transform negative energy into positive changes. Increase personal and collective womenpower. Sunday August 30 from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. at East Side Family Place. Fee is 4% of your net monthly income. Wheelchair accessible. Childcare needs 10 days advance notice. For registration and information call Cyndia at 251-2534.

WOMEN AGAINST NUCLEAR TECHNOLOGY benefit dance, Friday September 25, Legion Hall at 6th and Commerical. Women's Bands; women only. Childcare available. Call 734-0565.

THE GAY AND LESBIAN EXPERIENCE, Contemporary issues and options. This course will focus on social and legal issues and the particular way they affect lesbians and gay men.

This is an 8 week course running from 7:30 tp 10 p.m., starting Monday October 19 at the Carnegie Centre. It is offered through Continuing Education at Capilano College in conjunction with local lesbians and gay men. For details call Marc at 733-0616.

WOMEN'S HEALTH: a date of up-to-date information on women's health. Saturday, September 26. 9:00 a.m. to 3.30 p.m., Theatre Rooms A130 and A122 at VCC Langara Campus, 100 West 49th. Fee is $6:00. For details 324-5323 or 324-5324.

FEMINIST THEORIES IN CANADIAN CONTEXTS is the focus of a fall course offered by the Feminist Studies Association. Dialogue between the academic women's community and women's groups is the goal. Academic background not necessary. To register, call 874-2564 or 734-7756 for details. Or contact the Women's Bookstore, Octopus East or UBC Women's Centre, Room 130 in SUB.

VANCOUVER COMMUNITY COLLEGE WOMEN'S STUDIES offers transfer credit courses in the fall and spring. Theme of fall 1981 is Women and Work, focusing on anthropology, history and literature. Call 324-5221 or 461-1024 for details.