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swag

victoria status of women news
april - 1977

1149 Wychbury
Victoria B.C.
388-6332

'THE HOMEMAKER'



THE TOTATED WOMAN

WE NOW HAVE OUR
 HER - LISTED IN THE PHONE BOOK NUM-
 "SOCIAL SERVICE ORGANIZATION"
 388-6332

SOME BASICS

The Victoria Status of Women Action group was formed in 1971 in order to work for the implementation of the Report of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women; to foster public knowledge of the rights and status of women; and to promote full participation of women in social, economic and political life.

SWAG is a voluntary group, registered as a society, with an executive elected yearly.

EXECUTIVE: 1977

PRESIDENT: Mimi Robertson
1149 Wychbury Ave.,
388-6332

VICE - PRESIDENT (programmes) Gwen Stokes
1160 Greenwood Ave.,
383-2502

VICE PRESIDENT (projects) Shirley Nordstrom
1429 Monterey Ave.,
598-6485

CORRESPONDING SECRETARY Vaughn McMorland
3930 Telegraph Bay Rd.
477-2486

RECORDING SECRETARY Lorea Tubb
4468 Majestic
477-6617

TREASURER Ann Howie
6833 Wallace Dr.
652-3658

MEMBERSHIP CHAIR Maxine Cowley
164 Beechwood
598-8167

PAST PRESIDENT Norrie Preston
766 Monterey Ave.,
598-1390

COMMITTEES

Members are encouraged to focus their energies on one or more committees. This is where the real work of SWAG goes on. You need not be an expert. Most committees require one or two evenings a month of your time - or daytime hours, if members prefer.

CHAIRPEOPLE

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| Law Ctte. | Avis Rasmussen 3050 Uplands Rd., 598-3188 |
| Education Ctte. | Linda Picciotto 1863 Feltham Rd., 477-3576 |
| Human Rights | Norrie Preston 766 Monterey Ave., 598-1390 |
| Newsletter | Mimi Robertson |
| Herstory | Linda Gilligan 601 Moss St., 384-6629 |
| Health & Labour | No Chair |

MEMBERSHIP

Your membership of \$3.00 entitles you to a subscription to "SWAG News" - eight issues per year. We welcome contributions from members - letters, poems, opinions & reports. All materials should be sent to SWAG, 1149 Wychbury before the 10th of each month. Send membership fee to Maxine Cowley.

MEETINGS/ workshops

SWAG meets the fourth Monday of each month (except when it falls on a holiday) at the Cedar Hill Community Centre, 3220 Cedar Hill Rd., at 8:00 PM. After a brief business meeting, a workshop follows .. Guest speakers - coffee etc.

CONSCIOUSNESS RAISING

SWAG will help you to start your own CR group. CR offers an opportunity to meet other women; to develop trust; to examine your position in society; to develop skills for coping with your problems; communication/support.

CALL Lynn Carter - 595-0582

NOTE!

WE NOW HAVE OUR OLD OFFICE PHONE NUMBER - LISTED IN THE PHONE BOOK UNDER "SOCIAL SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS"

388-6332

SWAG WORKSHOP

AND MEETING

APRIL 25 - 8:00 PM

CEDAR HILL COMMUNITY CENTRE

GUEST

JESSE DILLARD

VICTORIA REPRESENTATIVE

Secretary of State Dep't.

("the hand that feeds us")

BRING A FRIEND!

THE COVER: "The Total Woman" is a best seller, a new movement complete with courses. The theme -

'Wives! Submit yourselves to your husbands!'

NOTES & NEWS

PRESIDENT'S REPORT



It is time to admit that SWAG has bitten off more than we can chew. We have neither the resources or energy to cope with the NEEDS of this city's women.

The SWAG phone, after less than two months' operation, and very little advertising, brings about 35 to 40 calls per week - the majority from women in misery - some hysterical... some fighting tears. We can handle the referrals, requests for information, SOME ombuds etc. (often we can do nothing, because no law has been broken) - but the NEED in this area is becoming clear.

A WOMAN'S PLACE

We need a woman's place in the city - preferably a comfy old home - where women and their children are welcome.... a place to meet, talk, sort themselves out... a place to breathe. Loneliness is driving women to madness. These are not necessarily women alone - some have husbands and children. They are frightened of anything that sounds like the media image of "women's lib" - so, although it MUST be staffed by feminists to be any help, it must not have that label - or they won't use it, no matter how desperate. It will require a live-in staff, because women need a place to go at all hours, and they need personal counselling - not a faceless voice on the phone. They need a haven, different from a Transition House - a women's hostel, perhaps. EMI is their only alternative now.

IMPOTENCE

My feeling at the moment is one of frustration and impotence. Is there anyone out there who is willing to take on committee work, briefs, lobbying - whatever - to get such an operation in Victoria? How about some of the women from the now-dormant Women's Centre?? Let's get together on this! Call me.

Mimi

CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

Tentative date: October 28-29
UVic Action Group is looking into availability of facilities.

MEETING: Wed. April 27, 8:00 PM
1429 Monterey Ave.

If you can spare some time/energy on a SHORT TERM basis, please call Shirley - 598-6485

ABORTION IN VICTORIA - 1976

Jubilee Hospital - 401
Victoria General - 631... 2 refused
Breakdown by age - VGH:

| Age: | Number |
|--------------|--------|
| 13- 15 | 31 |
| 16-18 | 151 |
| 19-21 | 162 |
| 22-24 | 115 |
| 25-27 | 71 |
| 28-30 | 41 |
| 31-33 | 23 |
| 34-36 | 12 |
| 37-39 | 12 |
| 40-42 | 14 |
| 45 | 1 |

This shows the desperate need for family planning information for young women in high school. It is illegal for the birth control clinic to give information or devices to women under 16, yet there are a significant number of abortions at that age level. IF YOU HAVE NOT PROVIDED YOUR DAUGHTER WITH BIRTH CONTROL INFORMATION SHE COULD BECOME ONE OF THE STATISTICS..... and let's face it.. abortion is no fun! Run - don't walk - to the Birth Control Clinic, 1947 Cook, and pick up pamphlets on family planning NOW.

THEN - WRITE TO THE GREATER VICTORIA SCHOOL BOARD, MAKE THEM AWARE OF THE FIGURES AND DEMAND A MORE INFORMATIVE FAMILY LIFE PROGRAMME IN THE SCHOOLS.

It is our experience that those parents who oppose this information being provided in schools are the same ones who fail to provide it at home.

LETTERS

3



Dear Sisters,

I would like to thank those women and their husbands who took the time to fill out my sociology questionnaire. Through C.R. groups and SWAG I have a large enough sample to complete my mini-study. I'll be tabulating and summarizing the findings this month.

Sincere thanks,
Lynn Carter

Dear SWAG,

Thanks for the SWAG Newsletter, and congratulations on it.

It's an excellent work, and deserves a good response.

It's earned mine, and I wish you the best with it.

Yours,
Charles Barber, MLA

Dear Ms. Robertson,

I would like to take this time to thank you for the information that you lent to me as well as the leads you gave me. They really helped my essay substantially - as well as opened my eyes to a whole multitude of inequities in the law today. NOT that I can personally do anything to alleviate these traps, but I shall certainly speak up now. I have a new awareness.

Thanks,
Elizabeth Postle
(student, UVic)

Dear Vaughn,

I just wanted to put in writing my appreciation for the valuable and articulate criticisms that you've made regarding the proposed Greater Victoria

Economic Development Council to the economic and employment problems of women in Greater Victoria.

I can hardly disagree. The points you have made are entirely accurate, and the conclusions you've drawn are entirely supported by myself, and indeed by the NDP as a whole.

If you attended a meeting of the interim Greater Victoria Economic Development Council, you'd probably be as disappointed as I to see how many men there are in attendance, and how few women.

If anyone from SWAG would like to attend these meetings (and they're not private), please let me know. I'd be happy to arrange an invitation. It's important to put forward these points of view at the earliest opportunity, and that opportunity is available now.

My thanks for writing, and thanks for your continued excellent work in Greater Victoria.

Best regards,
Charles Barber, MLA

CAMOSUN COLLEGE DAY CARE

Memo: Thought you might be excited about this news, Mimi. Thank you for all your hard work and support and friendship. We're off the ground!!

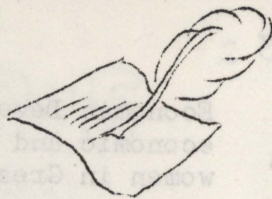
The Ministry of Human Resources has informed us of their wish to transfer the administration of the Centennial Day Care Centre to a non-profit society. Because of our society's interest in developing this kind of community service we have been negotiating with the Ministry to assume this responsibility. It is our intention to accept this opportunity and the transfer date will be on or about September 1st.

Jacquie Butters

Editor's Note:

Let's assure QUALITY daycare for the college! Join the Camosun College Day Care Society. Call Jacquie at 592-1281

LETTERS



Dear SWAG,

Receiving your newsletter has been a constant source of inspiration and support. In a community such as ours, it is very easy to lose contact with the 'real world'. The many items of interest have been made available to many women in the community - thanks to our friendly Xerox machine.

If it hadn't been for my mother, Betty Andrews and Norrie Preston with their 'care packages' of much needed information, I would never have been able to put together the programmes this community so desperately needed.

Thank you seems like such a small word. I have written an article on my work here and the developments that have resulted. I hope you will find it interesting. So many people in cities are unaware of the problems of small isolated communities such as ours. We form quite a large portion of this province's women.

Lorraine Messer
Granisle, B.C.

Dear Ms. Rasmussen,

I believe that I promised you I would inform you as soon as I had compiled the information concerning the questionnaire that I had put out where-in it made reference to abortion.

I expect you will be somewhat dismayed by the results of the recent questionnaire. The question read:

I believe abortion laws should be:

- a) More restrictive
- b) Less Restrictive
- c) Kept about the way they are at present

The results were:

| | a) | b) | c) |
|------|----|----|----|
| 1974 | 24 | 34 | 38 |
| 1976 | 29 | 36 | 35 |
| 1977 | 37 | 28 | 35 |

This shows that without much doubt, my constituents, who replied to the questionnaire, are in increasing numbers favouring stricter or more restrictive abortion laws.

Sorry to have to be the bearer of bad news as far as you are concerned.

Allan McKinnon, MP

Editor's Note:

A second letter arrived from McKinnon on April 5th:

exerpts:

"The results that I sent to you on March 29th were based on the first two-hundred questionnaires that were tabulated." (actually they added up to only ONE hundred)"This is usually accurate within one percentage point throughout the thousands of subsequent questionnaires that are returned; however this questionnaire is different and as tabulating has progressed there has been a variation away from the 'more restrictive' to 'remain as they are at present'".

The final results from the 1977 poll:

- A (more restrictive) 35.5%
- B (less restrictive) 28%
- C (kept about the way they are at present) 36.5%

"While this does not change the percentage of the people who wish as you do to have less restrictive abortion laws it does significantly change the results in A and C which I reported to you earlier. I felt you would want to know of this change of one and one-half percent.

Allan McKinnon, MP
for Victoria

Dear SWAG Sisters:

I forgot to mention in the Education centrefold that much of the material has been directly lifted from your excellent Education issue. My apologies!

Your newsletter is fantastic... and I fall upon it eagerly as soon as it reaches our office.

Gayla Reid
for KINESIS (VSW)

(Ed.)No apologies necessary!

UVIC/SWAG SURVEY

The SWAG Family Law Committee would like to thank Dr. Daniel Koenig for including a segment on property rights in the extensive Elector Concern and Satisfaction Survey carried out by his Department at UVic - and for preparing and making available the cross-tabulations of the results. As far as we are aware this is the first time in B.C. that viewpoints of British Columbians have been surveyed on this very important topic.

THE RESULTS SHOULD LEAVE NO DOUBT THAT THE EXISTING LAW DOES NOT COINCIDE WITH THE EXPECTATIONS OF THE POPULATION.

91% of those who support the Social Credit party agree or strongly agree that all assets acquired during a marriage should be divided equally if the marriage breaks down.

89% of the 700 respondents agreed or strongly agreed with this statement. The responses broken down by marital status sex, age, number of children, education, income, place of residence, etc. reveal only marginal differences in the strong support of this concept.

| <u>AGREE/ STRONGLY</u> <u>AGREE</u> | <u>CATEGORY</u> |
|--|--------------------------------|
| 86.8% | - males responding |
| 91.6% | - females responding |
| 90.4% | - income under \$10,000 |
| 88.1% | - income over \$25,000 |
| 88.6% | - support NDP provincially |
| 87.2% | - support Liberals " |
| 84.2% | - support Conservatives " |
| 83.1% | - belong to Business Assn. |
| 89.6% | - belong to Labour Union |
| 86.4% | - belong to Professional Assn. |
| 90.9% | - belong to Farm Organization |

Place of residence showed no appreciable difference in agreement.

| | |
|----------|---------------------------|
| 88.7% | - Victoria |
| 83.3% | - Capital Region District |
| 95.8% | - Vancouver Island |
| 88.4% | - Vancouver |
| 88.3% | - Vancouver area |
| 90.9% | - Lower mainland |
| 84.8% | - Southern interior |
| 94.2% | - Central interior |
| 84.6 | - Northern interior |
| 100 %(!) | - North/Northern Coast |

96% agreed or strongly agreed that husband and wife should have an equal voice in all major economic decisions within their marriage.

| <u>AGREE/STRONGLY</u> <u>AGREE</u> | <u>PARTY</u> |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------|
| 100% | - Conservative |
| 96.2% | - NDP |
| 96.2% | - Social Credit |
| 89.4% | - Liberal |

OTHER CATEGORIES

| | |
|-------|--|
| 94.1% | - males |
| 98.8% | - females |
| 98% | - income under \$10,000 |
| 94.6% | - income over \$25,000 |
| 98.2% | - grade 8 or less |
| 92.3% | - university degree |
| 97.8% | - Victoria residents |
| 100% | - outside Victoria but in Capital Region |

"Collection of Court ordered maintenance payments for child support should be enforced by the federal government."

| | |
|-------|---------------------------|
| 94.1% | - Liberal Party Federally |
| 88.0% | - NDP " |
| 94.8% | - Conservative " |
| 100% | - Social Credit " |
| 90.7% | - Victoria residents |
| 97.3% | - Vancouver residents |
| 93% | - married |
| 87.5% | - separated |
| 100% | - divorced |

"Alimony should only be paid for a specified duration until both parties can re-establish themselves."

| | |
|-------|-----------|
| 90.2% | - males |
| 86.2% | - females |

CONCLUSIONS DRAWN FROM SURVEY RESULTS

The opening paragraph of the Berger Commission Report on Matrimonial Property submitted in March, 1975 states:

"while... community of property may be seen as a fundamental departure from existing law of separate property, it is felt that the notion of community of property more adequately reflects the way both partners intend their married life to be ordered by allowing both of them to participate in the relationship as equals". This assumption appears to be confirmed by the results of this sample.

The Berger Report goes on to recommend and work out the system of "full and immediate community of property" which allows for equality of responsibility and independence during marriage and upon breakdown, and divides the community property equally.

In supporting these concepts we have often been told (mainly by lawyers and politicians) that "most people" don't want community property. Unfortunately, there was no specific category of "lawyer" or "politician" in this survey to check their responses; but noting the majorities in the high income, high education, professional association and political party preference categories - CATEGORICALLY, EMPHATICALLY, UNDENIABLY shows "most people" are in agreement with these principles of Community Property.

THANKS TO THE FAMILY LAW COMMITTEE MEMBERS WHO SPENT MANY HOURS IN HELPING TO ADDRESS, AFFIX POSTAL CODES, TYPE LABELS, ETC., AS A CONTRIBUTION TO THE PRODUCTION OF THIS SURVEY.

Grace McCarthy listed several women who had been appointed to public boards since the Socreds took over. Eileen Dailly challenged the list, saying most of the women had been electad - NOT apointed. McCarthy said she did not mean to infer the appointments had all been made by the government.

Chalk up another "gotcha" for Eileen!

WRITE A THANK YOU LETTER TO:

OUR FRIENDS

WHETHER OR NOT YOU AGREE WITH THE REST OF THEIR POLITICS

SCOTT WALLACE: who said in the Legislature there is a "tremendous scope" of work needed to improve the status of women - and that government has a responsibility to act as catalyst by providing funding to people who want to help themselves./- who told the House that VSW and SWAG handle a case load of women's rights regarding marital property, divorce, maintenance, employment, etc. which would otherwise be demanded of government departments which would need to be enlarged./- who asked Grace McCarthy if she had approached the federal government to have women's work in the home recognized through CPP./- who asked McCarthy to comment on the AIB guidelines and their effect on women in employment./- who asked McCarthy about Affirmative Action in the B.C. Civil Service. THANKS SCOTT

GORDON GIBSON: who said "tribute ought to be paid" to numerous status of women groups in B.C./- who called for a "women's ministry" under the premier's office./- who said "women's issues" should be represented in every provincial department. THANKS GORDON

BARBARA WALLACE: who criticized McCarthy for delaying the decision on VSW funding and read aloud several letters of support for the application.

EILEEN DAILLY: who said it is very sad that funding for women's centres has practically come to a halt under the Socreds.

DENNIS COCKE: who described McCarthy as "this very successful businesswoman who feels that all women have equal opportunities.".. and invited her to meet the women in his constituency who are not treated equally./- who argued in favour of women's centre funding for at least a small paid staff.

KAREN SANFORD: who spoke of the sad situation of many women in her riding, saying they had "lost hope".

HERSTORY

Dr. Barry, small, slim, aquiline-featured and hot-tempered, graduated in medicine from Edinburgh University in 1812. He entered the British Army, advanced rapidly in rank and served in far-flung parts of the Empire. Called by colleagues an unsociable little beast, he fought several duels and flirted outrageously with fellow officers' wives. He was detested, personally, as much as he was admired professionally. Finally, he came to Canada as inspector-general of military hospitals, later was made inspector-general of British military hospitals throughout the world.

In 1865 Dr. James Barry died. As his body was being prepared for burial, the undertaker was shocked. "My God!" he exclaimed in disbelief, "he's a woman!" Not only that, but an autopsy revealed that Dr. Barry had borne a child. There were rumours of a royal romance.

The Women's Kit

MANIPULATION

"In a free enterprise economy," he went on, "we have to develop the need for new products. And to do that we have to liberate women to desire these new products. We help them re-discover that homemaking is more creative than to compete with men. This can be manipulated. We sell them what they ought to want, speed up the unconscious, move it along. The big problem is to liberate the woman not to be afraid of what is going to happen to her, if she doesn't have to spend so much time cooking and cleaning."

"The woman has to want to stay in the kitchen. The manufacturer wants to intrigue her back into the kitchen - and we show him how to do it the right way. If he tells her all she can be is a wife and mother, she will spit in his face. But we show him how to tell her it's creative to be in the kitchen."

The Feminine Mystique

SOME FIGURES

Percentage distribution of persons 14 years and over who are not in the labour force. Canada 1964 and 1974

| | Women | | Men | |
|---------------------------|-------|------|------|------|
| | 1964 | 1974 | 1964 | 1974 |
| disability/ or too old | 1.1 | 1.3 | 8.3 | 10.8 |
| keeping house | 81.9 | 78.4 | - | .06 |
| going to school | 11.9 | 14.7 | 43.6 | 42.6 |
| retired | 5.0 | 5.5 | 47.1 | 45.6 |
| other | | | | 0.5 |

WHAT DOES THIS SAY?

1. Although disabilities should be equally divided among sexes - more men are not in the labour force because of disability. Do disabled women keep house? There are more aged women than men - but still, there are more men who report they are too old for the labour force.
2. Keeping house doesn't seem to have caught on with men!
3. Education and training is still thought to be more important for men - or - women are dropping out much sooner. Could be a reflection of the fear of being 'left on the shelf'!
4. Apparently, housewives never retire! How neat to be able to look forward to never having to do housework after age 65!



MEMO
DARLING! - TODAY I'M
RETIRING. MAKE YOUR
OWN BREAKFAST, EH?
- JANE
P.S. DON'T BUY ME A
GOLD WATCH. THE
MONEY WILL DO FINE!

FEMINISM and POLITICS

Within the Women's Movement there are three kinds of feminist. SWAG, in an effort to keep a unified group in this area, belongs to the first -

REFORM FEMINISM

The objective of the group is full equality within existing democratic society. SWAG, as a group, works for equality through existing political, social and economic institutions such as schools, courts and parliament. SWAG seeks legislation for law reform in all areas where discrimination against women exists.

A large number of SWAG members belong to one or both of the other two feminist philosophies while working within the present structure.

CULTURAL FEMINISM

Cultural feminists accept the common idea that men and women are essentially different. (But they do not say that therefore women are happy at home serving their husbands and children and are not interested in or capable of doing anything else.) They argue that women would make a much better job of running things than men have. They see their task to re-create society in the image of women's values and to go beyond capitalism which is the concrete manifestation of male nature. An example of this approach is this quotation from "The Manifesto of the Society for Cutting Up Men (SCUM)":

"The male, because of his obsession to compensate for not being female combined with his inability to relate and to feel compassion, has made of the world a shit pile."

To Cultural Feminists, the struggle for liberation is not seen as a part of a wider struggle for human liberation

from an economic system which is exploiting, stunting and oppressing us all. Men in an absolute sense are on the other side. The fact that women are subordinate to men, means, for some Cultural Feminists, that men in general are the enemy.

SOCIALIST FEMINISTS

For Socialist Feminists the primary causes of divisions are economic and not instinctual. Men and women are socialized to perform different roles, and men ARE often domineering and aggressive. But our society's values are capitalist values and wars and poverty are the result of a system run for the benefit of a few. They are not a mere reflection of male nature.

In the feudal village economy, the situation of women was circumscribed by the form of production: peasant families had to give a set percentage of their produce to the lord or work his land. The family itself was a directly productive unit; and the woman, while subordinated, participated directly in productive and social life.

With the advent of the capitalist mode of production, however, women were pushed more to the periphery of social life.

Two For the Price of One

For the single wage paid to the worker the capitalist also gets the labour necessary for the family's subsistence, which is done by the worker's wife -- cooking, cleaning, sewing and child-raising in the home. While the woman is still central as ever to social production, and perhaps more overworked, the wage form and the development of the nuclear family disguised this centrality by isolating individual women from the mainstream of social life.

Reserve Labour Force

This organization of things also ensures that women provide a vast reserve of labour. When they are not needed to work directly for the capitalists they stay at home as housewives with no wages for their work and no unemployment insurance.

9
Feminism & Politics (cont'd)

But they are always there if they are ever needed to do other jobs as well, (generally the most menial and worst paid jobs in the work force). So women's presence in industry has fluctuated with capital's demand for her labour.

Labour Laws a Hoax

Child-labour laws and protective laws for women passed early in this century were not primarily designed to help women. Their purpose was to prevent massive unemployment (and unrest) by keeping women in the home and kids in school.

Socializing the People

The Capitalist system conditions us to accept existing sex, racial, class, age and authority norms. It is these stereotypes that underpin capitalist political dominance. At the core of these institutions of capitalist socialization and legitimation is the family, the basic unit for the whole system.

System Demands Women Stay at Home

1. The labour force cannot absorb a vast influx of women.
2. Her isolated situation in the home ensures that a housewife is a champion consumer.
3. Now that consumption is so important to the system, women's role as sex object has become crucial. We learn we should be beautiful and we buy things to try to be so. We are used in advertising to stimulate men's consumption, too.

The family is, then, a key institution to modern capitalism. Increased independence of women would threaten this organization of things which is so profitable to the ruling class. If they began to move beyond the home or to demand pay for housework, collective ways of doing their tasks would be necessary - day-care centres, communal eating arrangements etc. It would mean women would no longer work FREE for the capitalist.

Women see themselves as serving their family and not the capitalist, and do not demand to be paid for their contribution to production. They are content to share their husband's wages and to accept the subordinate position in the home that this dependence on hand-outs entails. Women's labour does not produce commodities which can be sold. In our society value is defined according to what is bought and sold, so women's work is undervalued and treated as marginal. Her social worth is under-rated.

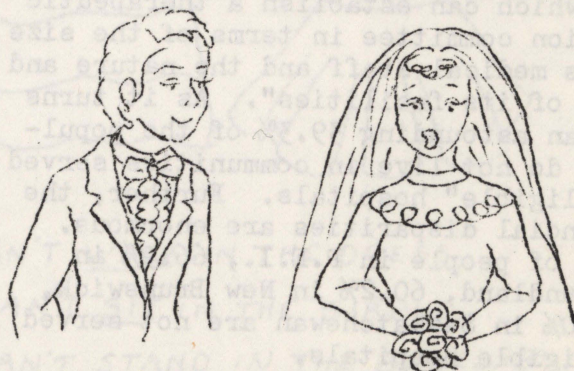
Socialist Feminists believe that the particular form of our oppression as women reflects the needs of our specific economic system. This must be understood before we can challenge it and work for change.

(exerpts from "We Are Women"
by Angela Rose)

SWAG WELCOMES YOUR COMMENTS ON THE ABOVE ARTICLE.

"In order to build a great Socialist Society, it is of the utmost importance to arouse the broad masses of women to join in productive activity. Men and women must receive equal pay for equal work in production. Genuine equality between the sexes can only be realized in the process of the Socialist transformation of society as a whole."

Mao Tse-Tung, 1955



"I promise to love, honour, cook, sew, clean, wash your socks, iron, shop, garden, raise the kids, do the accounts for no remuneration... uh..... on second thought...."

ABORTION

A CRITIQUE OF THE BADGLEY REPORT

from NAC

Ignored the Results

Dr. Badgley and his committee have, for inexplicable reasons, refused to come to the kind of conclusions that their own evidence made painfully obvious. Instead, ignoring the results of its many costly studies, the committee stated that "it is not the law which has led to the inequities in its operation".

An amazing statement, a sociologically incorrect statement, a dishonest statement. It should be enough to give the committee members nightmares as they recall the following from their study:

"The only criterion for the assessment of a request for a therapeutic abortion given by the abortion law is that the continuation of the pregnancy would or would be likely to endanger her life or health." (p.251) The wording of the law, the committee admits, "allows for a great breadth of interpretation and considerable discretion in what is meant by these terms." In fact, the committee states, "what constitutes danger to a woman's health lies very much in the eyes of the beholder".

Having recognized so clearly the total ambiguity in the wording of the law, how can they conclude that "its not the law that has led to the inequities"?

Eligible Hospitals

An "eligible" hospital is defined as "one which can establish a therapeutic abortion committee in terms of the size of its medical staff and the nature and scope of its facilities". As it turns out, an astounding 39.3% of the population do not live in communities served by "eligible" hospitals. Further, the provincial disparities are enormous. 68.7% of people in P.E.I., 66.9% in Newfoundland, 60.2% in New Brunswick, and 50% in Saskatchewan are not served by eligible hospitals.

How can Dr. Badgley and his colleagues blame only "Canadian people, their

health institutions, and the medical profession" for the "widespread and entrenched social inequity for the women involved in the abortion procedure"? (p.17) If the law were working PERFECTLY, at least 40% of women wanting an abortion would have to travel out of their communities.

Consent

While the law on abortion does not require consent forms from anyone other than the woman herself, it also specifies that nothing in the law makes unnecessary a second-party consent. Two-thirds of the hospitals required the consent of the woman's spouse. These consent forms cannot be blamed on the hospitals alone when the federal law deliberately makes provision for them.

Profit Making Agencies

At least 6 of the 40 clinics visited by the committee in the U.S. had been established primarily to serve Canadian patients. One clinic owner who had invested \$200,000.00 in his facility, said it would be a disaster if the Canadian abortion law were to become more liberal for he would be out of business.(p.76) "At several commercial agencies, clients were routinely told that an abortion was illegal in Canada, and alleged counselors were paid on a commission basis." (p.383) Not nice places, but they are not accidents. There are no profit-making agencies selling gall bladder operations. These agencies are made possible and necessary by the abortion law itself, a law which leaves a decision to the good faith and discretion of too many people and too many circumstances.

The law cannot be let off the hook, nor can the government. The law is so unclear it invites interpretations based totally on beliefs of the medical profession. The Badgley Report has attempted to whitewash the federal abortion law. The control of hospital boards must end. The law must be repealed.

OPINION

FASHION

I would like to comment on Elizabeth Ruggier's remark on Margaret Trudeau's dress, last newsletter.

My opinions on fashion are unimportant. What IS important, in my opinion, is that we allow our fellow women the chance to 'do their own thing'.

Conventions of society are often a pain. Society wants Ms. Trudeau to accompany her husband to public functions. Do we also presume to insist she dress to certain standards? Must we continue to stereotype women and their roles? Where's the solidarity?

Susan Hillicke

Editor's Note: We printed Ruggier's remark under 'No Comment' because we believed her stupidity was not worthy of comment not in a feminist magazine. A mistake! Several women thought it WAS worthy of comment.

Perhaps we have to reiterate our views on the subject for new readers:

Fashion through the centuries has contributed to women's oppression.

- as a reflection of our status in relationship to the men upon whom we are dependent.
- as a means of creating jealousy among women, thus dividing us.
- causing us to compete with each other to be 'the fairest one of all' - again dividing us.
- as a crippling method of restricting our movements.
- as sex traps.

The fashion industry exists to make a profit for men.

The liberated woman, Margaret Trudeau, for instance, has broken free from the 'fashion trap', and wears clothing in which SHE is comfortable. The fashion industry will scream, will exert pressure to conform, and Ms. Ruggier, as director of Fashion Canada

who is trying to earn a buck by contributing to the oppression of women, will join in as loudly as the men.

Solidarity? The world is full of Queen Bees - women who have 'made it' in a man's world - who think as Barnum did - "There's a sucker born every minute!" We'll never change their minds - but we can reject what they stand for.

Mimi



"I CAN'T WALK IN THE DRESS,
I CAN'T SIT IN THE GIRDLE,
I CAN'T STAND IN THE SHOES, BUT
DID YOU NOTICE HOW JEALOUS GAYE
WAS WHEN HAL SAID I WAS GORGEOUS?"

REPORT ON N.A.C. LOBBY

This year, four women from B.C. attended the annual meeting and lobby of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women. Avis Rasmussen was SWAG's representative. Her report follows:

Two hundred delegates and observers attended workshops, made and discussed recommendations, took part in the annual meeting and lobbied members of parliament March 18 - 21, 1977.

I could attend two workshops only, so chose, Women and Family Law and Women and Employment. Mary Eberts, Lawyer, chaired the Family Law workshop. Resource people: Ed Ryan of the Law Reform Commission, Michele Rivet, Lawyer, and two law students.

I was able to outline what was happening in B.C. with regard to division of property upon divorce and how the Socred government was not interested in the economic value of the homemaker. Another delegate asked, "If everything has an economic value, why can't the value of housework be assessed within a partnership as well as at divorce?" It was pointed out that the homemaker is invisible and as long as there is no economic value put on this role there will be dependence by this person upon the wage earner.

Ed Ryan said girls should learn to use education, not marriage for their economic needs. Males use economic power to assure conduct by women to supply male needs. He said we must change the legal concept of what marriage is.

EMPLOYMENT

Lynne Gordon, Sociologist, chaired. Resource people: Grace Hartman, past president of NAC, Madame Parent, labour leader, and Bluma Appel.

Discussion: Women participating in bargaining and negotiating wages, human rights, women on Boards of Directors should investigate hiring practices. Madame Parent was interested in a booklet SWAG presented on Women in the

construction industry. It is American, but publications like this should be done in Canada.

SOCIAL

As well as representing regional differences, the delegates were all ages, life styles, economic levels, cultural backgrounds, and employment. There were many coffee, tea and lunch breaks where I could talk to resource people and I thought this most important.

FRIDAY MORNING

Status of Women Committees met with NAC executive. I stressed the importance of communication between women's groups through NAC. Funding was discussed, and most are funded by Secretary of State Grants.

LUNCH WITH LALONDE, BASFORD, ROBERTS JULIE LORANGER & LOUISE HOLMES (who are responsible to Lalonde on Women's Issues)

Again, I was able to speak directly to Marc Lalonde about the Division of Property upon divorce.

DISPLAYS

Display tables were set up outside the main meeting room. I put out displays of SWAG News and the FOR BETTER OR WORSE pamphlets. Some groups sold their newsletters.

LOBBY

Lee Grills, VSW, Joyce Krause, Terrace NAC reps and I met with Allan MacKinnon, MP for Victoria. He wished to discuss Women in the Armed Forces. We also discussed abortion, CPP, Human Rights, Family Planning and employment.

He was receptive and courteous and spent an hour with us. However, I attended the House of Commons question period and he brought up the submarine question only. Women's issues WERE brought up by Joe Clark and other members of the opposition. Basford answered questions on No Fault Divorce - an improvement over last year.

NAC Lobby Report (cont'd)

PARTY CAUCUS MEETINGS

Throughout the day, delegates met with Liberal, Conservative and NDP caucus groups. I was able to attend only the NDP Caucus meeting... Ed Broadbent and five other members listened to our concerns and answered thoughtfully.

STIMULATING

It was a most stimulating and educational weekend for me and left me with the impression that women are most capable and intelligent people coming to terms with the most difficult situations in life.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR 1978

I strongly recommend that SWAG send two delegates next year. B.C. needs to be well represented because we are so far away.

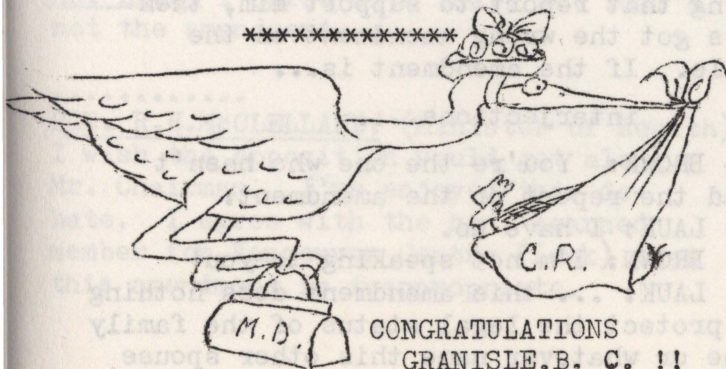
Delegates should lobby more B.C. MP's, and should take plenty of material for display.

A national organization is ESSENTIAL because the government is made up of a hefty majority of men who have great difficulty understanding our point of view. (For example - they could not understand why Mary Two-Axe Early, a Native Indian woman, was so concerned that Indian women who marry Whites should have the same rights as Indian men who marry white people. It took much explanation to the MP's to point out the discrimination.)

THANKS

I would like to thank the Victoria Status of Women for sending me as a delegate.

Avis Rasmussen



BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENT

Born to Granisle women - a bouncing baby consciousness raising group. After a long but exciting labour & delivery on March 24th, it emerged lustily screaming, ready to conquer the problems of community women. Many thanks to Godparents, Betty Andrews & Norrie Preston for their continued support in supplying stimulating resource materials.

To get some idea of why we are so excited, it is important to know something of our little community. Granisle is tucked away on the north-western shore of Babine Lake; about 60 miles north-west of Burn's Lake & 90 miles east of Smithers. This small mining village is characterized by a large number of transient and highly mobile families. Except for a small core, it is estimated that there is a complete turnover in population every two years. New families coming in have a great deal of difficulty sinking roots, creating meaningful relationships and developing creative ways of spending time. There are a number of consequences: a relatively high level of marital/family conflict & marriage breakdown; alcohol & drug abuse (especially overuse of tranquilizers). The severe weather & isolation, along with the above, creates a climate of depression often manifesting itself with "cabin fever".

Under Dep't. of Human Resources funding, a community programmes worker was hired and various activities were presented to the community. Films, prenatal classes and CR sessions for women were initiated. The latter proved to be the most valuable. A group of energetic & curious women will continue the bi-monthly sessions together. This core group should be able to stimulate other women in the community to examine their lives and emotions.

A remark by one woman summed up the feelings of many: "It's nice to have the chance to use your brain for a change!"

Lorraine Messer

WHAT HAPPENED IN THE HOUSE?

CHANGE OF NAME AMENDMENT ACT, 1977

BILL 3

MR. GIBSON: Mr. Chairman, I have a concern with section 2, in that I believe the restrictions that apply to the ability of a married woman to change her name remain too heavy..... to me, it removes, upon marriage, a freedom that that married woman had while she was single, namely the freedom to apply to change her surname to any name that the court would ordinarily allow under the authority of the Act.

In the case of a female partner, a change in surname need not be restricted in such a way and there need not be any requirement of agreement because a change in surname affects only the person making the application. The principle here, Mr. Chairman, to me is that the act of marriage ought not to remove rights that one had before marriage unnecessarily. It seems to me that the restrictions of this section do, and it further seems to me that a woman, after marriage, ought to have the same right to make application for a change in surname as she had before.

Accordingly, I would move the following amendment which would change section 2(3)(c) to read:

- "A married woman shall be able to change her surname to
- her husband's surname or,
 - her maiden surname, or
 - the surname she had immediately prior to her marriage, or
 - any other name which she may choose, subject to section 8(2) of this Act.

I so move.

MS. BROWN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to speak in support of the amendment. As the Act presently stands, any male person, married or single, really has the right to change his name under the three headings given here, So maybe the Minister would give us an explanation as to why he made a difference in this section as it applies to married women.

14

(EDITOR'S NOTE: SEAT YOURSELVES BEFORE YOU READ ON.)

MR. LAUK: I am opposing this, Mr. Chairman.

I think it 's appropriate to have the law remain as it is. This added amendment has been well sought and wisely given with respect to allowing a wife the same rights as respects the husband. I don't think it's necessary to have someone within the family unit unilaterally change their name. Particularly when there are children involved, it could cause some confusion.

I have no objection to a spouse having a different name from the other, but I think its inappropriate to allow a change of name without consent of the family, which is virtually the law.

MS. BROWN: I'm wondering if there is some reason why he (the Minister) left this section the way it is.... He must have a very good reason, and I'd like to hear it.

MR. GIBSON: Mr. Chairman, in the summary of recommendations of the Royal Commission on Family & Children's Law relating to change of name, recommendation one reads:

"A married woman should be entitled to apply for a change of name without the consent of her husband. This option should be available to spouses in all existing and future marriages through an application to the Director of Vital Statistics. If the change of name for one spouse affects the legal name of the other spouse, a joint application should be required."

MR. LAUK: Mr. Chairman, if the hon. member for north Vancouver-Capilano is using that report to support him, then he's got the wrong amendment on the table. If the amendment is...

interjections....

MS. BROWN: You're the one who hasn't read the report or the amendment.

MR. LAUK: I have so.

MS. BROWN: I'm not speaking to you!

MR. LAUK: ... this amendment does nothing to protect the legal status of the family name or whatever name this other spouse has.

WHAT HAPPENED IN THE HOUSE (cont'd)

MR GIBSON: It gives a woman the right to change her name.

MR. LAUK: No, you see, what you're doing is you're not protecting the woman against the possibility that the man may change his name, affecting the legal rights of the family somewhere down....

MR. GIBSON: Yes, you are.

MR. LAUK: No, you're not. This amendment does not do that.

MR. GIBSON: I would point out to the learned first member for Vancouver Centre that subsection 2 notes here that: "Application by either spouse may be made to change the husband's surname so long as the consent of the applicant's spouse is obtained". So the family name is protected in terms of both partners' consent. This amendment does not change that.

MR. LAUK: So you're allowing the wife to change her name without consent?

MS: BROWN: This is the problem that always occurs when you get lawyers involved in a very simple, straightforward matter. In fact... a single woman in this province can change her name to any name of her choice whatsoever. A single male in this province can do the same. A married male in this province can change his name.

MR. LAUK: With agreement.

MS. BROWN: With agreement. What the recommendations say in the 11th report is that a married woman with agreement should be able to change her name to any name of her choice.

MR. LAUK: I agree with that, but that's not the amendment.

.....
HON. R.H.McCLELLAND: (Minister of Health) I wish the opposition would get along, Mr. Chairman. I've enjoyed this debate. I agree with the hon. learned member for Vancouver Centre (Lauk) that this amendment is inappropriate.

But, seriously, Mr. Chairman, there is a freedom of some sort given up by each side in a marriage and there always will be, I expect. The husband loses the freedom to change his name unilaterally because its the family name. There must be consent. The concepts that either side could change a name unilaterally within a marriage - complete freedom of that kind for husband or wife to change surnames independently of the other spouse, as advocated - is not considered to be appropriate at this time. It was given consideration but the government can't accept this amendment, Mr. Chairman.

YEAS - 12

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|--------|-------------|-----------|
| Cocke | Lea | Nicolson |
| Gibson | Wallace, B. | Barber |
| Brown | Barnes | Lockstead |
| D'Arcy | Sanford | Levi |

NAYS - 32

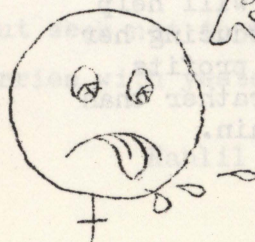
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| Phillips | Gardom | Bennet |
| Wolfe | Chabot | Curtis |
| Fraser | Calder | Shelford |
| Bawtree | Lloyd | Kempf |
| Kahl | Haddad | Davidson |
| Vander Zalm | Nielsen | Bawlf |
| Mair | Williams | McClelland |
| Davis | Waterland | Rogers |
| Mussallem | Loewen | Veitch |
| Strongman | Lauk | Stupich |
| King | | Macdonald |

amendment negatived.

MR. KING: Mr. Chairman, I just want to caution the Liberal leader that the support of members of my party only went as far as the amendment.

GAAWWD!

A ROYAL RASPBERRY



to
Gary Lauk, NDP
MLA for Vancouver Centre.

MENTAL HEALTH

from
"Our Psychic Spaces"
by
Maggie Fehlborg

Women in our society are, in effect raised in a double bind. From childhood onwards they begin to learn that it is often necessary to give up certain kinds of self-fulfillment in order to be a 'woman'.

As women grow older, form more complicated relationships, and perhaps have children, they are placed more and more often in the double bind situations from which there seems to be no exit. They are repeatedly caught between their own aspirations and the obligation they feel to behave like 'normal' women and fulfill their socially assigned and approved roles. A woman who rejects her role is more often than not regarded as 'sick' or, at least, odd. Yet, it is destructive to live a life in a net of frustration and anger with little understanding of the source and reasons for these feelings.

Given the overwhelming conflicts of so many women's lives, it is not surprising that they so often find themselves in therapy or in a mental hospital.

TRANQUILIZERS

An advertisement for a tranquilizer, Valium, pictures a woman in her thirties who has an M.A., is active in a local parent's organization, is in good physical health, but is badly depressed. She is clearly bored and depressed by the lack of stimulation and challenge in her life, but the drug company's solution to her problem is a pill that will help to reduce her anxiety by reducing her tension. The drug company profits from treating the symptom rather than the cause of the woman's pain.

Many mental hospitals tend to perpetuate a rigid system of roles. Women are assigned to typically housewifely chores and are expected to be compliant if they wish to be judged 'cured'. Women are often not encouraged to work out their problems or to seek a new and stronger identity. The hospitals are satisfied if they show a conventional and stereotyped sense of what a woman's role SHOULD be.

GUILT

It is common for a woman who seeks help to feel guilt because she cannot be happy with her role, cannot fit, cannot live with what is expected of her when others seemingly can. She tends to assume that there is something deficient in herself at the same time she is rebelling against her situation. The individual complex of suffering that drives a woman to seek help is often associated with problems that arise from her identity as a woman, from her inability to cope with the world as the world asks her to be.

THERAPY

Good therapy can make a woman strong enough to break out of the double bind that society has set up. It is only by understanding the reasons why women are more likely to seek help in our society that therapists can begin to give help that is constructive or counter-productive. By understanding some of the social causes that underlie her distress, a woman can also become more clear about the kind of help she wants.

A woman should not be willing to settle for just any therapy - she should be ready to leave a therapist and seek a new one if she feels she is not being helped.

" I am my conditioning.
I cannot tell where
my conditioning stops and
I start."

THE PROPHET

Then Almitra spoke again and said, And what of Marriage, master?

And he answered saying:

You were born together, and together you shall be forevermore.

You shall be together when the white wings of death scatter your days.

Ay, you shall be together even in the silent memory of God.

But let there be spaces in your togetherness,

And let the winds of the heavens dance between you.

Love one another, but make not a bond of love:

Let it rather be a moving sea between the shores of your souls.

Fill each other's cup but drink not from one cup.

Give one another of your bread but eat not from the same loaf.

Sing and dance together and be joyous, but let each one of you be alone,

Even as the strings of a lute are alone

Though they quiver with the same music.

Give your hearts, but not into each other's keeping.

For only the hand of Life can contain your hearts.

And stand together yet not too near together:

For the pillars of the temple stand apart.

And the oak tree and the cypress grow not in each other's shadow.

OF CHILDREN

Your children are not your children.

They are the sons and daughters of Life's longing for itself.

They come through you but not from you.

And though they are with you they belong not to you.

You may give them your love but not your thoughts.

You may house their bodies but not their souls,

For their souls dwell in the house of tomorrow, which you cannot

visit, not even in your dreams.

You may strive to be like them, but seek not to make them like you.

For life goes not backward nor tarries with yesterday.

Kahlil Gibran, 1923

The POLITICS of HOUSEWORK

by Pat Mainardi

"I don't mind sharing the housework, but I don't do it very well. We should each do the things we're best at."

Meaning: Unfortunately, I'm no good at things like washing dishes or cooking. What I do best is a little light carpentry, changing light bulbs etc.

or

I don't like the dull, stupid, boring jobs, so you should do them.

"I don't mind sharing the work, but you'll have to show me how to do it."

Meaning: I ask a lot of questions and you'll have to show me everything, everytime I do it, because I don't remember so good. And don't try to sit down and read while I'm doing my jobs because I'm going to annoy you until its easier to do them yourself.

"We have different standards and why should I have to work to your standards. That's unfair."

Meaning: If I begin to be bothered by the mess, I will say "This place is a sty" or, "How can anyone live like this?" and wait for your reaction. I know all women have a sore called "guilt" over a messy house or a feeling that housework is ultimately their responsibility. If I rub this sore long and hard enough it'll bleed and you'll do the work. I can outwait you.

or

I can provoke innumerable scenes over this housework issue, eventually, doing all the housework yourself will be less painful to you than trying to get me to do half.

"I've got nothing against sharing housework but you can't expect me to do it to your schedule."

Meaning: I'll do it when I darn well please, if at all. If my job is doing dishes, it's easier to do them once a week. If doing laundry, once a month. If washing floors, once a year. If you don't like it, do it yourself oftener and then I won't have to do it at all.

"I hate it more than you. You don't mind it so much."

Meaning: Housework is awful. It's the worst job I've ever done. It's degrading and humiliating to someone of my intelligence. But for someone of your intelligence.....

"Housework is too trivial to even talk about".

Meaning: It's even more trivial to do. Housework is beneath my status. My purpose in life is to deal with matters of significance. Yours is to deal with matters of insignificance. You should do the housework.



I SHOULD HAVE GOT THE
VASECTOMY 5 YEARS AGO!

WAGES for HOUSEWORK

by Marie Welton
from "The Women's Kit"

Everyone knows the proverb "Women's work is never done." What needs to be stressed now is that women's work is never recognized as work. Only work done outside the home for wages is considered real work. What is not paid is not noticed.

It is ironic that the roles of wife and mother, said to be so important in our society, seem to be important only if done by the loving mother in her home WITHOUT PAY. Yet our society says an important job should be well paid; for example, doctors, who are supposed to really care about their patients, are extremely well paid for their important jobs. But look at nursery-day-care workers and housekeepers. Graduates in early childhood education have received two years of training at a community college, yet receive among the lowest salaries paid to community college graduates.

Because housewives are not paid for this work, women accept the low pay given for these jobs.

After all, who would pay a high wage for services that are usually provided free? In our money-oriented society the value of a job is generally defined by how much one gets paid.

Unpaid Time Not Valued

Because a housewife's work is unpaid, her time isn't really valued. It does not matter to anyone, except women, how long it takes to cook, shop, or clean house. The time spent watching children in the yard, the playground, or at the beach isn't seen as work.

Women are on duty 24 hours a day. They must always be there. Yet many people are paid to be on duty. When the Maytag repairman waits for a call, he's paid; the night watchman is paid, as are lifeguards and firemen. (No one ever criticizes firemen for playing cards while awaiting an emergency.)

Jokes that poke fun at the easy life of the housewife always include a dig at the housewife's coffee break.

Many men do work that they don't particularly like in order to support the ones they love, but women are expected to listen to their gripes and encourage them. (We are the safety valves for their tension). But many women feel guilty if they complain about their work. How many husbands are capable of really understanding their wives' work?

Women have needs for companionship that most men know nothing about. And if there is not that understanding between women and men about their work and human needs, it is not surprising that many married couples cannot make a go of their marriages.

WHAT HAS TO BE DONE?

Every worker has the right to be paid. Since in our society the value of work is judged by the amount of money one gets for it, we should begin by demanding money - "wages for housework". If women refused to do this work, industry would collapse overnight. Women bear, raise, train, maintain, and service all the present and future workers. Our work is valuable and should be recognized as such and paid for.

Wages for housework, paid by the government, would

- involve taking back some of the huge profits corporations have made because of our work.
- make women's social and economic contribution to society clear, giving financial recognition for her labours as mother, nurse, baby-sitter, teacher, laundress, cook, chauffeur, hostess, mistress, etc.
- make it possible for women to refuse the low-paying, degrading jobs that are forced on them now.
- make it financially possible for those men who wish to make their job raising children and servicing a family. When this happens it will not be "Women's Work" any longer.

Wages for Housework (cont'd)

Wages for housework, paid by the government would:

- give women real independence. Women are not really independent until they are financially independent. Marriage would no longer be based on economic need.
- put a price on a house worker's time, so that more efficient use would be made of it, without the waste, duplication and isolation presently involved in child care and home maintenance.
- give women more power to:
 - a) challenge the sexism and inequality of their lives.
 - b) make the struggle to change the general structures and values of a society which oppresses both men and women.

SWAG WELCOMES YOUR COMMENTS ON THE ABOVE ARTICLE.

HOMEMAKERS &
FEMINISM

Housekeeping and child care occupy the bulk of my day. The joys and tribulations of such a job are well known to the majority of women. There has been some question in the past as to whether the women's movement has acknowledged the contributions of those who were "just housewives".

The media image of "women's libbers" portrayed a militant, braless female who had abandoned hearth and family to "find herself". Perhaps there were some. Every revolution, it seems must have its initial shocking impetus. We owe them a vote of thanks. These women, unintentionally perhaps, set a spark to our society. But my experience has been with a quieter revolution. Not with "women's libbers" (if indeed there are any real people behind that derogatory label), but with feminists within an ever growing women's movement.

FAR-REACHING CHANGE

With thousands of women for whom the added perspective of feminism brought more subtle but nonetheless far-reaching change. The change meant women cared for their health and appearance as a statement of their self worth rather than to bolster a husband's ego or aid his promotion or keep him coming home from the office. A change that meant energy was given to children not because you didn't have the training for anything else but because conscientious child care is a demanding and creative pursuit worthy of considerable energy. A change that meant modern technology was a means not to have cleaner, brighter homes than ever before in history, but that our time and energy was freed to develop personal interests and to contribute to our collective society.

ECONOMIC FOUNDATION

The women's movement has taken us back to an earlier knowledge that women are essential to the functioning of our society. They're not the "icing on the cake". And their contribution is not only cultural - as they rock the cradles and thereby rule the world. Homeworkers are the economic foundation of society. As the majority of homeworkers are women, this role has been given little status. The women's movement is changing this. They are working towards political and economic recognition of the contributions made by women.

VARIETY OF ROLES

None the less important are the efforts of the women's movement to make available an infinite variety of acceptable roles for women. Aptitude and desire must become the criteria with which we choose our lifestyle, not stereotyped sex role typing. Responsibility and recognition must be shared by both sexes.

THANKS

So I say, thank you, "women's libbers" and "feminists". Because of your efforts and sacrifices I can be a housewife because I choose to be, not just because I'm female. And now I know it doesn't have to be my function forever.

Shirley Nordstrom

POET'S CORNER

WOMAN'S PLACE

i am in a lifeboat
floating along in space
i can stay aboard
if i know the woman's place

i can ride along
in suspended animation
if i know the woman's place
and like the destination

but

i do not like the woman's place
if its passive acquiescence
i must make the quantum leap
beyond late adolescence

now that i have spoken out
and reject passivity
we can make decisions
and make them mutually

so

i will no longer go along
with the destruction of the race
breeding atomic fodder
is not the woman's place

Vaughn McMorland

For my sisters - free
and
unfree.

BUTTERFLY WOMAN

She tends her husband and children
her stove and washing machine.
Watching T.V. in the early afternoon
when nobody else wants it.
Hers is a soft, grey cocoon
warm, protected, smothering.

Will she know the struggle?
Stretch out her wings?
Find her own strength?

Fly brilliant and multi-coloured
into the world?

Lynn Carter

TO EACH HER OWN

but i want HIS name
said she
good for you
but not for me
i want my own Identity

i'm proud to have HIS name
said she
i'm pleased you do
but let me be
i am a separate Entity

you want your FATHER'S name?
asked she
t'was mine since birth
so don't you see
i want a chance to be all me

i want to change my name
i plea
too bad for you
for we are we
so not until i die, said HE

i could have married
and stayed me
so VIVA
maureen's bravery

Vaughn McMorland

"Man is willing to accept
woman as an equal, as a man
in skirts, as an angel, a
devil, a baby-face, a mach-
ine, an instrument, a bosom,
a womb, a pair of legs, a
servant, an encyclopedia,
an ideal or an obscenity;
the one thing he won't accept
her as is a human being, a
real human being of the fe-
male sex."

D. H. Lawrence

THE POET'S CORNER

featuring W.L Baker

IMPASSE

All of a sudden-
I am sick of children,
I have had enough
Of diapers and bottles,
I am sick of cleaning up
Messes I never made-
Glop on floors,
Jam on door knobs,
Piss on the toilet,
I am sick of picture books,
Hotdogs and hamburgers,
Wash and wear clothes,
Simple sentences,
Endless explanations,
Most of all - my nagging voice.
Can't someone invent
A more compassionate trap?

NANAIMO WIFE

She longed to hear Shelley's skylark;
But she fed the ducks in Bowen Park.

POOR WIFE

I sit alone, secluded as a nun, except
That in another room my baby lies
Asleep, her fern-frond fingers curled
Against her rounded cheek.
Inside a skull a busy brain
Computes unhousewifey questions.

I never cared a damn which detergent
Gave the whitest wash
Whether weiners at two pounds for X
Or baloney was a better buy, never
Wanted to be a member of a Koffee-klatch.

I've burnt more cakes than Alfred
As I wondered -
If there ever was a "Jesus" figure,
What Shakespeare was really like -
What would have happened if
Napoleon had listened to Stevenson?
What causes violence?
And other foolishness.

W.L. Baker, Nanaimo, forgot to tell
us her first name. Whatever, we are
proud to present her poems in SWAG,
AND THANK HER FOR SUCH A TERRIFIC
CONTRIBUTION.

SUNDAY MORNING, THINKING OF JAMES CHAMBER S PAINTING 'SUNDAY MORNING'

It is pleasant to lie thus,
In the still sleep-drugged morn,
Listening to girl-child, boy-child
sounds,

Hearing the water run,
Knowing that the larders are full,
And that we are still at peace;
Seeing by the way light falls
It's going to be a lovely day,
Only one thing flaws the scene -
The worm that whispers,
"It won't last."

I W Y ?

The who person
Who could perhaps be me -
If no one minds
Would like to know why,
When they had it everywhere
What happened?

Would like to know,
When it came to pass....
And they spent....
How it didn't -
At least it
Doesn't seem to have.

Maybe it shouldn't have anyway -
Perhaps it never could -

Still I'm almost positive
That... well...
Well, maybe just forget it.

SEND YOUR POEMS TO:
SWAG, 1149 Wychbury Ave.,
Victoria, B. C., V9A 5L1

HOMEMAKER'S FUN QUIZ

OUR Definition of a Homemaker : a person who does volunteer work in and out of the home....without remuneration.

World Book Definition of a Homemaker: a woman who manages a home & its affairs.

DIRECTIONS

Choose one from each category:

- 1) I like my job as homemaker
 - a) all the time
 - b) most of the time
 - c) there are times
 - d) never
 - e) I'm too busy to answer questions
 - f) all of the above

- 2) Being a homemaker is not what I thought it would be - it's:
 - a) worse
 - b) better
 - c) couldn't have been imagined
 - d) I wouldn't have taken advice anyway

- 3) I chose to become a homemaker because:
 - a) I'm lazy
 - b) I like the fringe benefits
 - c) My partner would feel his ego threatened if I worked outside.
 - d) It gives me time to do volunteer work for women's rights
 - e) The world expected me to.

ANSWERS

- 1) If you answered a) or d) you are inclined to lie a lot!
 - b) or c) you are probably well-adjusted to the system
 - e) you have a tendency towards anti-social behavior
 - f) you are crazy

- 2) If you answered
 - a) you have a negative attitude towards your work
 - b) you have a positive attitude towards your work
 - c) your ability at fantacizing is not well developed
 - d) you have a very stubborn streak

- 3) If you answered
 - a) take iron
 - b) Gotcha! What about UIC, pension, statutory holidays, overtime, tenure????
 - c) how about YOUR ego?
 - d) you're in trouble.. consider deprogramming.
 - e) welcome to the club

MAINTENANCE

and Alimony

Given the existance of marriage and the fact that women work for no pay but with the expectation of security... divorce is against the interests of women... When a man 'takes a wife' he is obtaining her unpaid labour in return for providing her with basic maintenance. After twenty years of marriage in which she has provided him with domestic and sexual services, given birth to and raised their children, and perhaps even put him through medical school and helped him build a thriving practice, he is free to cast her aside in order to replace her with someone more exciting.

If there are minor children involved, he will probably be required to provide child support. If he is well-off financially and the judge is sympathetic to the woman, he may be required to pay HER maintenance. If this occurs you can be sure that he will complain bitterly and claim that it constitutes oppression for him. But what is alimony after all?

Isn't it ridiculous to require an employer to give his employee severance pay when he in fact owes him twenty years' back wages?

Sheila Cronan
from "Marriage"

NOT 'JUST' A HOUSEWIFE!

Whenever I feel myself inferior to everything about me, threatened by my own mediocrity, frightened by the discovery that a muscle is losing its strength, a desire its power, or a pain the keen edge of its bite, I can still hold my head up and say to myself,

"I am the daughter of... a woman who, in a mean, close-fisted, confined little place, opened her village home to stray cats, tramps, and pregnant girls."

"I am the daughter of a woman who many a time when she was in despair at not having enough money for others, ran through the wind-whipped snow to cry from door to door, at the houses of the rich, that a child had just been born in a poverty-stricken home to parents whose feeble, empty hands had no swaddling clothes for it."

"Let me not forget that I am the daughter of a woman who bent her head, trembling between the blades of a cactus, her wrinkled face full of ecstasy over the promise of a flower, a woman who herself never ceased to flower, untiringly, during three quarters of a century."

Colette, 1928
from "Break of Day"

A QUESTION

from "Time"

At best, the rearing of children is fascinating and rewarding. At worst, the duties are menial labour of the lowest sort, dirty, boring, endless. The housewife gets no salary, promotions, titles, no formal evidence that the maintenance of family life is "the basis of our society". The only thing that makes it bearable is constant reassurance that the best goes along with the worst, but the housewife has never had too much of that reassurance.

Equality in marriage is an ideal which sometimes does work, but is not easily achieved. It is true that a remarkable number of housewives either do not want outside work or cannot find anything preferable to housework. They want love & security from their husbands more than new challenges or an exactly equal division of labour. They feel puzzled and threatened by the persistent denigration of their role. And even women who have given up successful outside careers because they feel that caring for families is more rewarding, yearn for reassurance that the traditional lives they have chosen are worth living.

Has the Women's Movement made a mistake in lumping housework and childcare together and implying that women must escape in order to achieve selfhood?

A ROLE REVERSAL

FOR WIVES

1. Do you allow your husband an appropriate amount of the family income to spend as he chooses, without accounting?
2. Do you still "court" him with an occasional gift of flowers; by remembrance of birthdays and anniversaries; by unexpected attentions?
3. Are you cooperative in handling the children, taking your full share of responsibility and also backing him up?
4. Do you show interest in and encourage him to develop intellectually?
5. Do you enter sympathetically into his plans for social activities, trying to do your full share as hostess in your own home and, when you are a guest in the homes of others, trying to make him appear to the best possible advantage?
6. Do you make an effort to understand the peculiarities of masculine psychology and to help him through his varying moods?
7. Do you tell him at least once a day that you love him, and act as if you meant it?

FOR HUSBANDS

1. Do you try to make the home interesting, attractive, cheerful, a place of rest and relaxation - devoting as much thought and study to that as you would a job downtown?
2. Do you encourage your wife to spend some time with her women friends?
3. Do you serve meals that are enticing in variety and attractiveness?
4. Do you handle household finances in a business-like way?
5. Do you keep yourself attractive in appearance, in order that your wife may be proud to have everyone know you are her husband?
6. Are you a good sport; cheerful and uncomplaining, punctual, not nagging, not insisting on having your own way or the last word, not making a fuss over trifles or requiring your wife to solve minor problems that you should handle alone?
8. Do you prevent your father and other relatives from unduly intruding, and show courtesy and consideration to her relatives?

HOMEMAKERS ON WELFARE

"I never did finish high school; there was no encouragement from my parents, and when I quit it was because I was tired of it and they let me. I should have finished, I was bright enough, and I kick my ass for that now."

"When I got pregnant and had my first son I didn't know anything about mother's allowance. I was ready to go out and make the best of it. But these agency people came while I was in hospital and said to me, you can have it, and so I said, well, okay for now, and I took it."

"There was my baby and he was ill. Who's gonna look after a kid who when you're feeding him, he can't breathe out of his nose and he's throwing up all over you constantly. A lot of times I could have picked up my son and chucked him against the wall. And I love my kid! How could I have got a babysitter to take that responsibility?"

" But the pros and cons of it... They want to know everything you're doing; if you want to do anything a little bit personal you have to go behind their backs. So there's this constant nagging guilt. Pretty soon you have it, the guilt, even when you haven't done anything wrong."

Constant, nagging guilt is Valerie's part of a bargain with society that provides her with the \$370 a month in family benefits, plus \$47.78 in family allowance.

"At the end of the month, very often, there is just no food in our house, and I have to go bum food from my mum and dad because the kids are hungry."

"If there was a means to get off it - just to tell them to SHOVE their welfare - I would really do it, gladly." But she says it flatly, not with a lack of sincerity, but in the tone of someone longing for something she knows just does not exist.

The whole concept of family benefits, or mother's allowance, is allegedly designed to PERMIT the woman without a male breadwinner to stay at home to raise her children. In theory, mother's allowance etc. give women a CHOICE - she can stay home and collect it, or work to support her family, whichever she prefers.

However, although the level of welfare payments guarantees her a life of poverty - if she enters the work force, with its attendant expenses, child care, transportation, clothing etc., she has less than a 50-50 chance of ever breaking out of poverty. The lower educational levels decrease her chance even further.

The so-called CHOICE of the 63 per cent of single mothers who chose welfare, looked at in this light, seems less of a free choice based on devotion to the duty of child-rearing than many would believe.

Margaret Daly
from

"The Disadvantaged
Woman"

HOW THE
VANDER
GRINCH
STOLE
FROM
THE
HANDICAPPED



NEXT MONTH

"THE LABOUR FARCE"

SEND US YOUR OPINIONS,

POEMS, JINGLES, STORIES,

UNION NEWS

TO

SWAG, 1149 WYCHBURY AVE, VICTORIA
V9A 5L1

DEADLINE: May 10th

HOMEMAKERS ON WELFARE

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"When I got pregnant and had my first son I didn't know anything about allowances. I was ready to make the best of it. When people came while I was in hospital and said to me, you can have it, and so I said, well, okay for now, and took it."

"There was my baby and I... Who's gonna look after you when you're feeding him, he can't breathe out of his nose and he's throwing up all over you constantly. A lot of times I could have picked up my kid and chucked him against the wall. And I love my kid! How could I have got a baby to take that responsibility?"

"But the pros and cons of it... They want to know everything you're doing; if you want to do anything a little bit personal you have to go behind their backs. Victoria, B.C. I've started nagging guilt. I've got to have it, the guilt, even when you haven't done anything wrong."

Constant nagging... part of a bargain with society that provides her with the \$370 a month in family benefits, plus \$47.78 in family allowance.

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The whole concept of family benefits, or mother's allowance, is allegedly designed to PERMIT the male breadwinner to raise her children on allowance etc. she can stay home and work to support her family she prefers.



VICTORIA

*Joan Feyser,
1219 Alderman Place,
Victoria, B.C. V9A 4A8.*

However, although the level of welfare payments guarantees her a life of poverty... the work force, child care, the expense of... a free choice based on devotion to the duty of child-rearing than many would...

THE LABOUR FORCE... Margaret Daly from "The Disadvantaged"

SEND US YOUR OPINIONS, POEMS, JINGLES, STORIES

UNION NEWS... HOW THE... WANDER... GRINDING... DEADLINE... FROM... THE... HANDICAPPED

