



Victoria Status of Women Action Group

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NEWS

January 1990, Volume 16, Number 4

Victorians Support the Struggles in El Salvador

On Thursday, November 30, the newly formed Victoria Coalition for El Salvador held a vigil and candle-light march for peace in El Salvador. The candle-light procession left St. John's Anglican Church and proceeded to St. Andrew's Cathedral where an inter-church memorial service remembered the six Jesuit priests and their two assistants tortured and murdered by armed men linked to the Salvadoran Armed forces. Churchworkers, along with trade unionists, humanitarian aid workers and activists in the student and women's movements are the subject of increasing repression.

"The Salvadoran government is using the current civil crisis as an excuse to intimidate the popular organizations and arrest and detain their members" said Susan Albion, a Coalition spokesperson. "We are deeply concerned for the lives of the Salvadoran people, and profoundly shaken by reports of Army attacks on unarmed civilians" continued Albion.

These concerns and the critical need for emergency relief brought together 30 local groups representing the Salvadoran community and church, labour, student, peace, development and women's organization to form the Victoria Coalition for El Salvador. The Coalition has launched a campaign to raise funds for emergency food, shelter and medical relief through Oxfam-Canada.

The Coalition will also press the Canadian government for action on the crisis in El Salvador. "Canada is now a member of the United Nations Security Council and the Organization of American States," said David Szollosy of the Catholic Diocese of Victoria's Social Justice Commis-

sion and a Coalition spokesperson. "Our government must take a leadership role in those forms in pressing for a negotiated solution to the war in El Salvador," he added.

The Coalition is calling for the Canadian government to:

1. Act on its stated support for an immediate ceasefire and a negotiated settlement to the war. Pressure must be placed on the Salvadoran government to stop indiscriminate bombing of civilians and to conduct sincere negotiations with the FMLN (Farabundo Marti Front for National Liberation).

2. Actively back the OAS resolution urging "all parties which have links to or interests in the region, to abstain from any actions which interfere with the achievement of a real and lasting peace in Central America". The US government must stop shipping \$1.4 million in armaments every day to El Salvador.

3. Press the Salvadoran government to allow humanitarian organizations such as the International Red Cross and the Salvadoran churches to set up neutral hospitals and provide medical aid to civilian bombing victims.

4. Immediately suspend its bilateral (government to government) aid programme with El Salvador. Instead, Canada should support non-governmental organizations in relief efforts and long-term sustainable development.

For more information call:
Susan Albion 721-0832

Status of Women is one of the 23 local groups making up the Victoria Coalition for El Salvador.

December 6th Memorial Fund

In response to the massacre of 14 young women studying engineering at the University of Montreal, a group of concerned citizens in Victoria is establishing a fund to promote and support women in engineering studies.

Our goal is to raise \$50,000 by the summer of 1990 to endow an annual bursary for a deserving female student enrolled in the Faculty of Engineering at University of Victoria.

The fundraising committee will be approaching professional and women's organizations for their support. Individuals or firms wanting to make a tax-deductible donation can do so by making out a cheque payable to "December 6 Memorial Fund". Address:

Development Office
University of Victoria
P.O. Box 1700
Victoria V8W 2Y2

Volunteers willing to help with fundraising are invited to leave their names with the SWAG office at 381-1012.

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- Women in Trades & Technology
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Editor's Comment

Elise Wickson

As women we have all been aware from an early age that we are particularly vulnerable to violence from men. From the moment of our birth we are treated differently, and our behaviour is regulated by a code of conduct - a set of rules uniquely common to our gender. At each stage of life new rules are added so that by the time we are adults the list seems endless. "Don't hitchhike", "don't walk alone at night", "do lock your doors and windows", "do park only in well-lit areas" are but a few examples of the 'dos and don'ts' we must live by.

When we question why women, one-half of the population, must live in a state of siege we are told that this is the way our society is. It is only common sense for all women to follow the rules for safety, and women should be raised to expect violent behaviour by men as the norm in our society. Further, we are told, it is up to the individual woman to protect herself, and if she adheres to the rules, she will not become a victim of violence.

SWAG Goes Video!

In an effort to make some of our spring programs more accessible, SWAG is in the market for a TV and VCR. This issue launches our new Video/TV Fund!!! If you have a few extra dollars to spare, or have always wanted to make a donation to SWAG for a specific task, now's your chance! Having a TV and VCR in the office will allow us to show on a regular basis the dozen or more films we have in our resource library, or implement a bi-weekly Women in Film series, or enhance our presentations when members of our new Charter Speakers' Bureau reach out to the community. Help SWAG enter the technology!!! Donate to our special Video-TV Fund!!!

The insidious nature of this explanation is that it provides a false sense of security. Everyone then assumes that the rules will indeed protect women from violence, if like a prescription, they are followed exactly. This assumption leads to a dangerous corollary - the rules are infallible so the individual victim is to blame.

Blaming the female victim is reinforced in our society by the hidden and generally isolated nature of the violence against women. Whether the violent act occurs at home by a husband, or in a parking lot late at night by a stranger, it happens to one woman at a time and away from public scrutiny. As a consequence, women and men are able to distance themselves from the violence, it becomes personalized, and the ramifications mitigated by the society as a whole. It is then too easy to blame the woman victim, making it her fault, and not indicative of a deeper attitude towards women, and violence by men.

This blame is unique to victims of our gender. Rarely will you hear of a male victim having to prove that he is 'worthy' and in no way accountable for his victimization. Yet female victims must constantly prove their credibility, that is that they did follow the rules - they were not walking alone at night; or they were not wearing provocative clothing etc. etc, ad nauseam.

It does not appear to matter what type of violence is perpetrated because the first step for the woman victim is always the same. She must prove that she was blameless in the incident(s) before she is accorded the status of a victim worthy of society's resources. A battered wife must endure the dissection of her role in the marriage and defend her conduct as a 'wife', because as the stereotype goes "only bad wives are beaten, and deservedly so". An assaulted/murdered woman if she is a prostitute can expect very little sympathy and justice. She ignores the rules in her 'high risk profession', so according to many people, she only got what she deserved.

Over the years any attempts to question the appropriateness of blaming the victim, or suggestions that violence against women was the result of a deep-rooted tradition of women abuse generally, was more often than not dismissed as the strident accusations of paranoid, man-hating and overreacting feminists. That is until December 6, 1989.

Victoria Status Of Women Newsletter Committee

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Note: This Newsletter is put together entirely by volunteers. If you are interested in working with us, please contact the SWAG office.

On that day in Montreal, the blinders were torn away from society's collective eyes. For the first time in Canadian history there were female victims who could not in any way be blamed. These women were following the rules and yet they were killed for no other reason than their gender. The fourteen women were not beaten to death at home hidden from the public eye, nor were they murdered one by one in isolated incidents. There can be no distancing ourselves, or personalization of this violent act and this is what has shocked mainstream Canada.

My sincere wish is that the deaths of these women will end all violence against women, however, I know that this is not realistic. In the very least I hope that this horrific act will make the practice of blaming women victims much harder to defend. All of Canada witnessed the awful truth that day - for too long violence against women has been perpetuated, justified and maintained in our society, and as long as this is allowed to continue all the rules in the world are not going to protect us from violent men. ■

(This last summer, SWAG participated in the new UVic Arts Co-op Program. From May until August, we employed Susanne Klausen on a part-time basis. In addition to some office and organizational work, Susanne was asked to undertake a research project on the issues surrounding Take Back the Night. In Part One of this essay, published in the last newsletter, the issue of violence against women was introduced in the context of the author's personal experiences. An understanding of patriarchy is essential to an understanding of why violence against women continues to escalate in our society. Patriarchy was seen as a deeply rooted social structure developed to oppress women, and to prevent them from seeing their own enslavement (back issues of the newsletter are available from the SWAG office). The following is Part Two of the resultant essay, which will be serialized in upcoming Newsletters...)

How Did Patriarchy Evolve?

How did these images of woman and man come about? Why are women not allowed to form their own images? How did this system evolve? These and endless similar questions are growing in the minds of many women who have begun to see - or finally allow themselves to see what they have long suspected. Behind the so-called civilized face of culture lies a hatred and fear of women which strikes out in a myriad of ways. "The secondary status of women in society is one of the true universalities, a pan-cultural fact." (16)

We could stop our search here and listen to the voices of biological determinism and resign ourselves to the "scientifically proven" inferiority of women. We need not look back any further than the last century to find scientific studies galore which held that "woman's normal state was to be sick." (17) On the evolutionary ladder, women scored about as high as an adult black man, child and senile person, "proven" by inaccurate brain measurements, head sizes, and facial proportions. (18) To the woman who dared use her mind for pursuits other than male came this stern premonition from the

likes of R.R.Coleman, M.D.:

"Women beware. You are on the brink of destruction: You have hitherto been engaged in crushing your waists, now you are attempting to cultivate your mind: You have been merely dancing all night in the foul air of the ballroom; now you are beginning to spend your mornings in study.

"TAKE BACK THE NIGHT"

Violence Against Women: A Radical Feminist Perspective

You have been incessantly stimulating your emotions with concerts and operas, with French plays, and French novels; now you are exerting your understanding to learn Greek, and solve propositions in Euclid. Beware!! Science pronounces that the woman who studies is lost. (19)

Figes briefly touches on the heart of this matter by citing evidence that "nature outweighs nature" in forming the sex roles we unconsciously act out in our own lives. "Socially shared expectations" alone "exert a normative force upon the individual." (20) In other words woman is what she is because that is what society expects from her. To explore the roots of sexual stereotyping we turn to anthropologist Sherry B. Ortner and her work "Is Female to Male as Nature is to Culture?":

"How are we to explain the universal devaluation of women? We could of course rest the case on biological determinism. There is something genetically inherent in the male of the species, so the biological determinist would argue, that makes them the naturally dominant sex; that 'something' is lacking in females, and as a result women are not only naturally subordinate but in general quite satisfied with their position, since it affords them protection and the opportunity to maximize maternal pleasures, which to them are the most satisfying experiences of life. Without going into a detailed refutation of this position, I think it fair to say that it has failed to be established to the satisfac-

tion of almost anyone in academic anthropology. This is to say, not that biological facts are irrelevant, or that men and women are not different, but that these facts and differences only take on significance of superior/inferior within the framework of culturally defined value systems." (21)

Ortner goes on to ask what concept, held by every culture, could cause universal devaluation of women. The answer she provides is "nature", meaning women are more closely identified with the natural world than are men. Men, in contrast, are universally identified with "culture", which she defines as "the process of generating and sustaining systems of meaningful forms (symbols, artifacts, etc.)

by means of which humanity transcends the givens of natural existence, bends them to its purposes, controls them in its interest." (22) While Ortner realizes that the concepts of "nature and culture" are in reality inseparable, she asserts that the universality of ritual bespeaks the global truth that humans "act upon or regulate, rather than passively move with and be moved by, the givens of natural existence." (23)

How do women fit into this pan-cultural need to act upon nature? Ortner states the obvious: it is in their bodies, their (exclusively) female reproductive capabilities that culture finds the "flaw" of women. The aspects of female physiology which "lower" women in the eyes of men around the world are threefold:

1. Woman's body and its functions, more involved more of the time with "species life", seem to place her closer to nature, in contrast to man's physiology, which frees him more completely to take up the projects of culture. (24)

In other words, because men are less involved physiologically with reproducing and nurturing the human species, they have more opportunity to devote time and energy to act upon nature. A dubious advantage to the whole of the human species - to all species for that matter.

2. Woman's body and its functions place her in social roles that in turn are considered to be at a lower order of the cultural process than man's. (25)

Here Ortner contends that woman's ability to nurse infants places her in a domestic environment more than men. In turn, she becomes associated with nature through babies: "like animals (infants) are barely able to walk upright, they excrete without control, they do not speak. Even slightly older children are clearly not yet fully under the sway of culture. (26) Initiation rites bring children more directly into contact with culture and many societies do not have funeral rites for children who die at an early age (further testament to a lack of full regard to children as fully fledged members of society).

3. Woman's traditional social roles, imposed because of her body and its functions, in turn give her a different psychic structure, which, like her physiological nature and her social roles, is seen as being closer to nature. (27) Citing Chodorow to show that women do have a different psyche than men because of their universal female socialization, (28) Ortner links their psyche to "nature" through domestic relationships: "Woman's relationships tend to be, like nature, relatively unmediated, more direct, whereas man not only tends to relate in a more mediated way but in fact ultimately often relates more consistently and strongly to the mediating categories and forms than to the persons or objects themselves." (29) For example, mothers tend to be committed to their children no matter what their sex, age, looks, personality, or intelligence - and such personal loyalty can be seen as coming from "below", "insofar as it represents the fragmentary potential of individual loyalties vis-a-vis the solidarity of the group." (30)

Simone de Beauvoir continues to outline the "negative implications of women's enslavement of the species," (31) placing natural processes in relation to male-generating cultural pursuits:

"Here we have the key to the whole mystery. On the biological level a species is maintained only by creating itself anew; but this creation results only in repeating the same Life in more individuals. But man assures the repetition of Life while transcending Life through Existence (i.e. goal-oriented, meaningful action); by this transcendence he creates values that deprive pure repetition of all value. In the

animal, the freedom and variety of male activities are vain because no project is involved. Except for his service to the species, what he does is immaterial. Whereas in serving the species, the human male also remodels the face of the earth, he creates new instruments, he invents and he shapes the future." (32)

...rape became not only a male prerogative, but man's basic weapon of force against women, the principle agent of his will and her fear.

Looking at today's global environmental crises, it is impossible not to see the connection between man's disrespect for women and his disrespect for all life's natural processes. It would follow then that to discover solutions to environmental crises, and not simply band-aids, it is in humanity's interest to solve the mystery of misogyny. Although there is, at the present time, no "right" answer to the question "how did patriarchy evolve", I think it is clear that Ortner and de Beauvoir have shared with us ideas which are seminal to unlocking this mystery. They have suggested to us the relationship between woman's reproductive capacity and her universal devaluation. Is that the "key to the whole mystery?" Perhaps. But for the purposes of this paper, we must leave Ortner and de Beauvoir for the moment. For a deeper anthropological analysis of woman's relationship to "nature" within the cultural context, further reading of Ortner and Marilyn French, Beyond Power, are strongly suggested. Let us look now to another perspective on patriarchy - and its relationship to rape.

Why Do Men Rape and What Role Does Rape Have in the Evolution of Patriarchy?

In 1975, Susan Brownmiller broke new ground with her pivotal work Against Our Will. In it she bluntly discusses the central role rape has played in man's oppression of women: the conscious use

of his penis as a weapon with which to "claim" woman as property. Indeed, Brownmiller asserts that in fact, woman was the first "commodity" in history, predating the rise of agriculture and ownership of land or livestock.

Brownmiller's research lead her to the conclusion that the human physiology is unique in the animal world. Unlike all other species, humans are not limited to "mating season" within which to copulate; we can "mate" any day of the year (33):

"Our call to sex occurs in the head, and the act is not necessarily linked, as it is with animals, to Mother Nature's pattern of procreation. Without a biologically determined mating season, a human male can evince sexual interest in a human female at any time he pleases, and his psychological urge is not dependent in the slightest on her biological readiness or receptivity. What it all boils down to is that the human male can rape." (34)

The human "call to sex" obviously works both ways: women can evince sexual interest in men independent of his biological readiness or receptivity. The difference is that by whatever fluke of nature, the human anatomy presents men with the possibility of forcing a woman to have intercourse. "This single factor may have been sufficient to have caused the creation of a male ideology of rape. When men discovered that they could rape, they proceeded to do it." (35)

Brownmiller tries to imagine how men came to realize that they could rape. In doing so she imagines a prehistoric landscape, and a man and a woman:

"...some woman somewhere had a pre-scient vision of her right to her own physical integrity...After a thunderbolt of recognition that this particular incarnation of hairy, two-legged hominid was not the Homo sapiens with whom she would like to fully join parts it must have been she, and not some man, who picked up the first stone and hurled it. How surprised he must have been, and what an unexpected battle must have taken place. Fleet of foot and spirited, she would have kicked, bitten, pushed and run, but she could not retaliate in kind." (36)

Brownmiller continues:

"...if the first rape was an unexpected

battle founded on the first woman's refusal, the second was indubitably planned. Indeed, one of the earliest forms of male bonding must have been the gang rape of one woman by a band of marauding men. This accomplished, rape became not only a male prerogative, but man's basic weapon of force against women, the principle agent of his will and her fear. His forcible entry into her body, despite her physical protestations and struggles, became the vehicle of his victorious conquest over her being, the ultimate test of his superior strength, the triumph of his manhood."(37)

Finally, Brownmiller concludes the search for the origin of rape with a chilling indictment of the male of the human species:

"Man's discovery that his genitalia could be used as a weapon to generate fear must rank as one of the most important discoveries of prehistoric times, along with use of fire and the first crude stone axe. From prehistoric times to the present, I believe, rape has played a critical function. It is nothing more or less than a conscious process of intimidation by which all men keep all women in a state of fear."(38)

Unbelievable. Yet entirely believable. Here we have Brownmiller's "key to the whole mystery," the basis upon which patriarchy exists. If we keep rape as the focal point of patriarchy, we can understand the original motivation to universal devaluation of women. Rape equals fear.

Using fear to control women, men have a power-over relationship. Power leads to wanting more power. And once they have power, the patriarchs do whatever it will take to feed the continuing cycle of misogyny.

Which came first? The discovery of rape, causing fear in women, causing them to give up power to men - and then a system of devaluation of women based on the continuation of rape? Or universal devaluation of women based on their connection to life-cycles, giving men a motive, justification, or incentive to rape? In one sense, it is fruitless to ask these questions: after all, it's a bit like the chicken and the egg. Yet overwhelming women at the present time is the fact that they are both devalued and raped every day of the year. Surely the solution lies in understanding the root of the problem.

The most convincing voice at present may be Starhawk, who makes a direct correlation between the culture/nature dichotomy and rape, claiming that men rape as a result of their alienation from nature and therefore from themselves. As quoted above, Starhawk explained man's need to impact, to cause a reaction, even if it hurts. When the object he tries to impact is not considered a person, then there can be no impact because an object has no feelings.(39) A woman suffers from rape, yet the rapist cannot see her suffering. "The real pain, the real death of his vic-

tims remains unknown to him, because they were never alive to him. And so culture strikes out against nature..."(40)

Endnotes

17. Barbara Ehrenreich and Dierdre English, For Her Own Good, 150 Years of the Experts' Advice to Women (New York: Anchor Books, 1979), p.110.
18. Ibid., p.117.
19. Ibid., p.128.
20. Eva Figes, Patriarchal Attitudes (London: Virago Limited, 1970), p.12.
21. Sherry B. Ortner, "Is Female to Male as Nature is to Culture?", in Women, Culture, and Society, Michelle Zimbalist Rosaldo and Louise Lamphere, eds. (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1972), p.71.
22. Ibid., p.72.
23. Ibid.
24. Ibid., p.74.
25. Ibid., p.76.
26. Ibid., p.78.
27. Ibid., p.81.
28. Ibid.
29. Ibid., p.82.
30. Ibid., p.83.
31. Ibid., p.75.
32. Ibid.
33. Susan Brownmiller, Against Our Will: Men, Women and Rape (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1975), p.3.
34. Ibid., p.4.
35. Ibid.
36. Ibid.
37. Ibid., p.5.
38. Ibid.
39. Starhawk, Dreaming the Dark: Magic, Sex, and Politics (Boston: Beacon Press Books, New Ed. 1988), p.139.
40. Ibid.

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E V E R Y W O M A N S B O O K S

STAFF NEWS

M. Alto

In this column I try to keep all of you informed about what's going on at the office level of SWAG, the things we do on a daily basis which keeps the office a warm, accessible space for women.

In the scheme of that space, the most vital component in our system is the office collective. These women offer their time, compassion, attention, wisdom, experience, patience and humour to every person who calls. Despite their diverse backgrounds, belief systems, personal opinions, life skills, or motivations, they are united in one common goal - to be

there, at the end of the line, in that chair behind the door, for the women of Victoria.

Just before our seasonal break, circumstances arose which made demands of these women which extended far beyond any volunteer coordinator's reasonable expectation. After 14 women were murdered because a man thought they might be feminists, every publicly identified feminist organization in the country became a focus of attention. SWAG was no exception.

From December 7 through December 15, our office received over 200 calls relating to the Montreal murders. The bulk of these were dealt with by our office collective members. These women listened to,

commiserated, cried, and discussed with, informed, supported, understood, empowered, and were exhausted by, callers who expressed quiet sadness, sympathy, confusion, horror, anger, fear, blame, disbelief, pain, satisfaction, misunderstanding, misogyny, and graphic, violent threats.

The women in the SWAG office collective gave something very special to each one of those callers - an opportunity to grieve, to reflect, to try to understand, and to know that someone cared about them. It was not a gift lightly given, nor exacted without toll.

It is a privilege to work with these women, to share their passion and commitment. Each one of them warrants our respect, and gratitude.

This Newsletter *Still* Needs A NAME

We have received very few suggestions and would like to hear from more of you before we pick a name.

Send in your suggestion with a brief explanation. If your suggestion is chosen you will receive a free two year membership to the Victoria Status of Women Action Group.

A Note from the Production Layout and Design Department:

I'd like to apologize for the lateness of this newsletter. As you know, we operate on a volunteer basis and with a limited number of people. We try and keep our approach to this work as pro-

fessional as possible but circumstances can occur which mess-up our deadlines.

In this instance myson had a ruptured appendix and we were both the guests of Victoria General Hospital for a number of days. Given they only had a Mac on the ward I decided to delay production!

Thanks for your patience and enjoy your issue. - P. Beltgens

Report on the Annual General Meeting

Hallie Walsh, Chair of the Coordinating Committee

On Tuesday, December 5, 1989, the SWAG general meeting was held. There was good attendance by members, wanting to meet the Coordinating Committee, hear reports and vote on the by-law amendment.

Mid-year reports from the chairs included fundraising, lesbian issues, coordinating committee, office collective, staff and newsletter committee. The NAC representative also gave a report. SWAG sponsored many events over the past year, and developed its community outreach and public education. These mid-year reports showed the increased activities and visibility of SWAG.

The proposed constitutional change was passed unanimously. SWAG

members voted in favour of amending the by-law from "active membership shall be open to anyone who supports the object of the Society" to "active membership shall be open to any woman who supports the object of the Society." It is interesting to note that SWAG was the only women's group on the Island with such an open by-law. This change does not mean that we are excluding non-active members or men, rather a new non-voting membership category is now available for those wishing to become "Friends of SWAG". These "friends" will receive our bi-monthly newsletter and be able to contribute to work we do for women. They will not be able to vote or hold positions on the Coordinating Committee.

THE LAVENDER MUSE

Sonia Johnson: Out of the Closet and Into Women's Arms

an interview by Marianne Alto

(This is the first lesbian issues column, a feature which will appear regularly in the newsletter. The Lesbian Issues Committee hopes to gather articles, interviews and stories for printing in this column. If you have anything you would like to share with SWAG members about lesbians, our experiences and any issues surrounding our lives, please send it along to the Lesbian Issues Committee, care of SWAG. The following is an excerpt of an interview by Marianne Alto with Sonia Johnson during her stay here in Victoria in November.)

MA: Your background comes originally from a relatively traditional and conventional position, as you were, what we would call, a traditional housewife in the Mormon church. Yet you have managed to make a profound change over the years in who you are and where you are going to what really is one the most interesting radical feminist lesbians in North America today. Can you tell me a little bit about how you made that progression and what happened to you over the years to make you come to the point where really you have a completely different lifestyle?

SJ: ...You say relatively conventional I can't think of anything more conventional and more patriarchal than Mormons, but I actually wasn't typical. I didn't have a conventional Mormon life. I married a man who hadn't been a Mormon all his life, who just actually joined the church to marry me, I think. Then I lived all over the world. ... I often ask why me and not other Mormon women who supported the E.R.A. back there in the late 70's and early 80's. I think it's just because I'd lived in many

countries of the world and I also had been encouraged by this man that I had married to finish my education, to get a doctorate. So I was teaching at universities, but the conventional part of my life was that I saw that as just a hobby... Teaching English at university was just a hobby. My real work was to be a wife and mother. So in that sense I can be called a conventional Mormon housewife. What happened was that...you know, I'm actually not sure why it happened...

When the Mormons opposed the Equal Rights Amendment, and not just opposed it but fought it in the legislatures of all of the unratified states in the United States, and did it in such a slimy, sleazy and underhanded way, my sense of outrage was just enormous.

I began to talk to the press... I helped to organize something called Mormons for E.R.A., which is like a contradiction in terms... like military intelligence or something... I was terrified, but I called the Washington Post one day and I said in a little voice: "Would anyone be interested in knowing what the Mormons are doing in the legislatures against the E.R.A.?" Well, were they interested! Then began to appear these articles with my name in them and the church leaders and elders were beside themselves. You just didn't do this sort of thing. I don't know why I just kept on with this, why they couldn't stop me. They used all of the conventional reasons. Finally they excommunicated me, really for disloyalty, just for... not keeping the family secrets in the family. And at the time they did, my husband left me. He was a feminist from the neck up, like lots of them, but he wanted a more conventional woman than I was fast becoming. Because I was now centering my life on myself which was (what) really made him feel abandoned. We had both been living his life. All of a sudden, I was living mine and he was living his and he felt very lonely living in his life all alone. So he left me for another woman...

So I kind of had a double divorce and a double excommunication, you might say. I was cut off from the old life all at once, completely. It was just perfect. It was very painful, but I got through it all at once. And then I was looking about in my life thinking, "Well, I never wanted to be with another man." Being a radical feminist, it was clear to me that this was not possible for me.

MA:.. Why do you say that?

SJ: Well,... I understood that all men have privilege at women's expense. They may not do the raping, they may not do the actual brutalizing, but because their fellows are, other men are doing this, they have privilege. They all benefit from this... I just couldn't bear the thought of living with somebody who was profiting from the fact that women were being raped, and beaten, and killed, and demeaned, and debased... I couldn't bear it. So I just knew I couldn't do that, ..because I couldn't give any energy to that kind of sadomasochism or hierarchy. So I just knew that that was the end of that.

I thought that was the end of intimacy for me. But a marvellous thing happened when I became a feminist, when the Mormon church made me one, which was that I suddenly saw women... I had never in my life seen them really because they hadn't figured in the world as far as I was concerned, as far as the Mormon church was concerned... So I had been totally concentrated towards men. I had never had a crush on a gym teacher. I had never had a crush on another girlfriend. I never really had girlfriends... Women just were not important. I had been totally male-identified, totally male-focussed.

And then, all of a sudden, the whole other half of the human race began to appear. I was so delighted because we were so beautiful, so beautiful... I loved the way women moved. You know, I'd see a woman in the grocery store bending over to button her child's coat, and it was just like... poetry. Just the way women moved, just the way we did things... When we reached to do a tennis ball and just the arch of our bodies. I just thought "Oh my word... all of this has been out there, all this time?" ... I began to attend feminist meetings, mostly with the National Organization for Women, and women were hugging each other... the softness of women, and the affection that they showed each other so abundantly... Well I just felt like I'd died and gone to heaven! But I couldn't feel anything sexual about them... I thought "Well that's a great chain, but isn't it wonderful that I at least have them in my life?" It was such a warmth, such a richness, just to see women, and to love them and to be with them, and in their company, and to be a woman among women... it's like coming home: "I'm in the right place."

But I mourned that I didn't feel anything except just great affection and great respect...

MA: ...Do you think it's just a hold over from your traditional upbringing?

SJ: Oh sure! I just think that's just conditioning. My feeling about sexuality is that most of us...at birth, could be conditioned to do either one or the other or both. Maybe on the extremes, ...there's maybe 10% on each extreme, ...who couldn't be anything else but heterosexual or homosexual, but most of us in between...given the right circumstances, could love anybody of any sex that was just sweet and good and kind and loving and all that. But I had had really overwhelmingly heterosexual conditioning. I really thought that there was nothing I could do to break from it. I thought "They have really got me there, they have really put a barrier between me and that"...I just assumed that because I was 43 years old, and I had never felt any of that, that my conditioning would hold... You know, you can't try to be a lesbian.

I considered myself to be a lesbian. Those were the days, you know, in the middle 70's, you remember, we talked about things called political lesbians

MA: ...Do you think you can make an intellectual, political decision to become a lesbian?

SJ: Well, I did. But I didn't make a political decision to become sexual. You had to feel that...I couldn't just go out there and say "Hey, you know, let's have some sexual experience," because that's exploitive. I just knew that my allegiance was with women forever. Total allegiance to women... I just considered that lesbianism. We did in those days...If you were woman-identified, if that's where your energy was, if that's where your passion was, then you can call yourself one. I was really pleased to be able to do that. I just thought "Well that's certainly better than before." ...It wasn't satisfactory, totally, but it was certainly better than anything else I'd ever experienced, so I just thought, "well I can do with that for the rest of my life.

MA: ...Your talking about a transition before you first became aware of women and couldn't work that into your personality as a sexual thing, but obviously that did happen eventually. How did you make that second transition?

SJ: I don't even know. It just happened on some unconscious level, because I didn't even try to force it...Every once in a while, I would see a woman, and I would think, "Could I be attracted to her"... I would try to see, "Is anything happening?"...Nothing was happening. I thought, "Oh well, you know she's won-

derful and beautiful, and I love her and her and her..."...I just loved them all... Oh I just love all women...I thought, "I just can't live long enough to enjoy women." I just mourn those 43 years I hadn't seen any of them, you know.

Well then something was going on inside obviously. I ran for the presidency of the National Organization for Women, and some women came to work on my campaign. One of them I saw almost every day. She was doing a lot of press and stuff, and we worked at it together. One day, I was sitting at the table and we were working at something, and I looked over at her and the thought just came into my mind...Without my even having to day to myself, "Do L.?" I wasn't doing that anymore. I just assumed it was just fruitless. I looked at her and the thought just came into my mind...I'd like to kiss her. I was so excited, I was so excited. I thought, "I can't believe this!"

Later, I told her. I said, "You don't have to act on this, you don't have to feel like there's any reason why you have to do this, but I have just got tell you this wonderful thing has happened to me. I really felt like kissing you. I had a real impulse to do that, a natural one, not anything I was trying to make happen." So we did kiss. Oh such a kiss! and such an experience! From then on, it's just been one discovery after another. Beautiful! ■

County Court Judge Rules Child Sexual Abuse OK

On November 25th, a man who admitted to a sexual incident with a three-year old girl was given a suspended sentence. Judge Peter Van der Hoop found the child "sexually aggressive". Judge Van der Hoop excused the man's behaviour because he was "fatigued" and "under the influence of alcohol". This decision is UNJUST. This judge MUST be removed from the bench!! Your calls and letters are needed to convince the "authorities" to take action against this public servant.

When calling or writing, don't mention you are a member of a politically

oriented group. Be polite but firm!! Don't accept simple answers. You will be transferred to different people. Be patient, but adamant. Insist that you get an explanation.

Begin your call/letter by stating your outrage about this court decision and the behaviour of the judge. You might say:

- the sentence given is too LENIENT.
- in his stated reasons, this judge showed that he did not understand any of the issues around child sexual abuse.
- this judge gave the benefit of the doubt to a drunken adult at the expense of a silent, innocent three year old child.
- this judge believes three year old girls can be sexually aggressive enough to overcome the responsibility of an adult.
- this judge believes adult sexual conduct with children can be excused by drunkenness and fatigue.

INSIST: It is clear that County court Judge Van der Hoop is incapable of passing judgment on this, or other similar cases. Demand that this judge be dismissed from the bench. Decisions like this must stop! Use your voice to remove this judge from the bench! Use your words to put this sex offender in jail!

Call and write to the Provincial Government, the Federal Government and especially:

Canadian Judicial Council
#717-130 Alberta Street
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0W8

For more information and other addresses contact: SWAG at 381-1012.

Bill C-43

An Act respecting abortion

Her Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate and the House of Commons of Canada, enacts as follows:

1. Sections 287 and 288 of the *Criminal Code* are repealed and the following substituted therefore:

"287. (1) Every person who induces an abortion on a female person is guilty of an indictable offence and liable to imprisonment for a term not exceeding

two years, unless the abortion is induced by or under the direction of a medical practitioner who is of the opinion that, if the abortion were not induced, the health or life of the female person would likely be threatened.

(2) For the purposes of this section,

"health" includes, for greater certainty, physical, mental and psychological health; "medical practitioner", in respect of an abortion induced in a province, means a person who is entitled to practise medicine under the laws of that province;

"opinion", means an opinion formed using generally accepted standards of the medical profession.

(3) For the purposes of this section and section 288, inducing an abortion does not include using a drug, device or other means on a female person that is likely to prevent implantation of fertilized ovum.

288. Every one who unlawfully supplies or procures a drug or other noxious thing or an instrument or thing, knowing that it is intended to be used or employed to induce an abortion on a female person, is guilty of an indictable offence and liable to imprisonment for a term not exceeding two years.

2. This Act shall come into force on a day to be fixed by order of the Governor in Council.

Reaction to New Abortion Legislation

-this legislation is a significant step backward for women.

-it puts abortion back into the Criminal Code, after women spent 20 years getting abortion out of the Code. It will be used the same way as the old law was against women.

-it does nothing to address the inequities in access to abortion across the country which pose serious obstacles and delays to women and which threaten their health.

-it does nothing to decrease the need for abortion by improving family planning services for women.

-it is not in keeping with the spirit of the Supreme Court of Canada decision in Morgentaler, which recognized women's rights to physical autonomy and security of the person.

-Chief Justice Dickson in the Morgentaler decision said "Forcing a woman, by threat of criminal sanction, to carry a foetus to term unless she meet certain criteria unrelated to her own priorities and aspirations, is a profound interference with a woman's body and thus an infringement of security of the person."

-it does not recognize the social, eco-

nomical and other aspects of women's health.

-it gives a new lever to the anti-abortionists to use against women faced with an unwanted pregnancy.

-anti-choice activists have already promised to use the law to hunt down doctors and women in hopes of initiating lawsuits and criminal charges against them

-ex-boyfriends and anti-abortion activists could apply for injunctions on the basis that a woman is going to have an 'illegal' abortion.

-anti-abortion MPs can introduce amendments to such a law to try to further restrict abortion.

-it will have an intimidating effect on

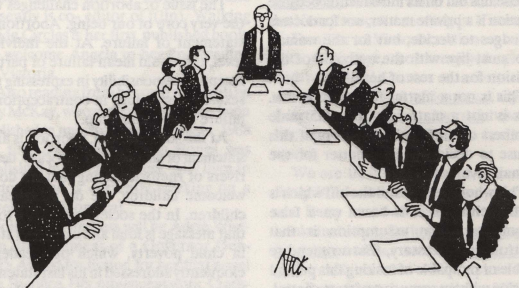
many doctors, who will apply the legislation very conservatively.

-it will have a chilling effect on the availability of abortion services. If one doctor is charged under this law doctors everywhere will stop performing them.

-this legislation acknowledges that abortion is essentially a health issue, while at the same time placing it in the Criminal Code.

-it is an interference with good medical practise and with the doctor/patient relationship.

-this legislation is a cynical, political attempt by the government to be perceived as dealing with the abortion question.



"This committee on women's rights will now come to order."

A Woman's Place is In the House (Of Commons!)

Commons Debates
November 27, 1989

Ms. Lynn Hunter (Saanich-Gulf Islands): Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak strongly against Bill C-43, an act to recriminalize abortion. I was reluctant to even participate in this debate because I am so angry that it is occurring at all. I, along with my New Democrat colleagues, oppose this bill on its introduction because abortion is a private matter, not for doctors or judges to decide, but for the woman who must live with the outcome of the decision for the rest of her life.

This is not a matter for criminal law. This is not a matter for the 255 male members or 40 female members of this House to decide. It is a matter for the woman involved.

This whole debate and the bill which is at the centre of it is based on a false assumption. That assumption is that controls are necessary, that women are unable or incapable of making this painful decision without some sort of state control. I utterly reject this assumption. Women have always, through time, and in different cultures, made these painful life and death decisions.

There is another assumption implicit in this debate and it is that this debate will somehow bring some resolution to this dilemma which confronts us. This, too, is a false assumption. I doubt that there is a legislative resolution to this question. In a pluralistic society, how can we legislate the solution to abortion?

The question of abortion is a moral question. We all bring our own life's experience, differing religious beliefs and philosophies when considering such a question. We as legislators, acting in a pluralistic society, know there is no

legislative resolution to this issue. No law will end abortion. In this instance, I mean political in the crassest sense. It is, as my colleague for Victoria pointed out in last week's debate, a bill designed not to respect women or their decisions, nor in that false polarity, fuelled by this debate, is it a bill to protect life. It is, to be blunt, a bill to protect politicians.

Some speakers in this debate have characterized this bill as a compromise. At the beginning of this debate I rejected that idea. But now I have come to agree. It is a compromise. But once again I mean that in the crassest sense. It is meant for many in this House to compromise their principles. So in this bill we do have a political compromise flowing from political expediency.

For the record I should state that that last sentence was spoken with contempt. I will now turn from speaking about the debate to the broader discussion of the issue.

The issue of abortion challenges us at the very core of our being. Abortion is a statement of failure. At the individual level, this could mean failure of partners accepting responsibility in expressing their sexuality, or failure in contraception, or failure in a relationship.

At the societal level, abortion is also a statement of failure. It is our society, despite rivers of rhetoric, saying that we do not welcome children, we do not treasure children. In the society we live in today, that message is loud and clear. It is stated in child poverty, which our leader so eloquently addressed in his last statement before this House. It is stated in the lack of resources given to child care. It is stated in overcrowded classrooms and the lack of housing where children are welcomed. There are few enough housing units where children are accepted, even fewer where space for children and those who care for them are included in the planning. These are the reasons I say abortion is a statement of failure. As I said at the beginning of my remarks, women have always recognized this.

(1940)

For women, this issue is not abstract - it is very real. It is a women's issue. It is women's bodies and women's lives being controlled by this legislation, not men's. Women are the ones who ultimately decide this life and death issue. They have done

so since time began and in all cultures. They have done so alone, in fear and secretly, often protecting the men in their lives from the enormity of their decision because they were aware that men have little ability to handle life and death decisions unless these decisions are depersonalized such as during war. They will do so no matter what this House does., I suspect that much of the anger surrounding this issue us based in recognition of this fact because ultimately this issue is about power. Women exercising their power of choice challenges that unstated premise on which our society is based, that men know best, that they are morally superior. If you doubt that assertion, just consider the continuing debate surrounding the ordination of women. I can understand that this challenge is very threatening, especially to those who are reluctant to share power with women. If women cannot be controlled, what will become of us?

Women are not morally deficient. I respect women's rights to choose. As a woman I feel betrayed by this bill. I feel betrayed by some of the formerly pro-choice women of this House. This issue is too important to flip-flop on. I implore all of the formerly pro-choice members of this House to reject political expediency and instead stand in pro-choice solidarity against this bill. Canada has signed the United Nation's (sic) Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. Paragraph 4 of the Convention calls for signatories such as Canada to: "Repeal all national penal provisions which constitute discrimination against women."

This bill before us discriminates against women. It does not control men's sexuality and reproduction; it controls women's sexuality and reproduction. It does not limit men's right to choose whether or not to have children; it limits women's right to choose whether or not to bear a child.

As critic for the New Democratic Party on international development, I am appalled that Canada says one thing abroad and practises another at home. I have become very angry at the arguments used and abused in this House to justify this bill. Some members whom one once would have called pro-choice are saying now that they will support this bill because it proposes a national standard for abortion,

a national standard for access. This is utterly outrageous. This bill does not prevent the harassment of women outside clinics. It does not create community health centres where abortions can be performed. It does not prevent restrictive laws such as the one we are currently seeing in Nova Scotia, nor will it lead to abortion services being made available in Prince Edward Island. The only national standard it sets is one of fear of being charged under the Criminal Code. This bill does not meet international standards and it does not promote a national standard. All it does is hurt women. I would have hoped that some formerly pro-choice cabinet ministers would have at least had the integrity to admit that.

In conclusion, I want to say that this is the issue that made me a New Democrat. It is only my party which has had the courage to tackle this issue and determine a party policy. This policy was achieved not without pain. Only the New Democrats gave the issue the priority to work through that pain and come to a position on the issue. Our detractors use this as evidence that we do not individually struggle with this issue, that we blindly and unthinkingly follow party policy. Our party speakers during this debate have made it clear that this is patent nonsense. Each one of us have brought our own life's experience, our religious beliefs and philosophies and come to a common conclusion. We, as New Democrats, respect women. We believe that abortion is a private matter for a woman and her conscience. We are confident that each woman is capable of making the right choice. ■

HAPPY 15th BIRTHDAY EVERYWOMANS!!!

by L. Nerman & M. Alto

February 17 will see Victoria's only feminist bookstore celebrate its 15th birthday! In honour of our very success and longevity, we're having a huge birthday sale, complete with goodies to tantalize your taste buds, and 15% off everything in the store to tempt your mad book buying passions!

Later on that same evening, Everywomans presents a Gala reading by seven of Canada's most renowned writers. Among the authors will be Angela Hryniuk, currently a resident of Vancouver, who has worked as a street youth worker and as a suicide and crisis counselor with teenage prostitutes. Angela has edited various literary magazines, and presently is co-editor of f(lip). Walking Inside Circles is her first published book. We welcome Angela to her first reading in Victoria.

Also reading from her own work will be Ally McKay, whose short fiction has been published in numerous magazines. In 1988 her first collection Human Bones was published by Oberon Press. Ally lives in Victoria and is currently working on a novel set in Montreal.

Joining our readers will be Adele Wiseman, the recipient of a Governor General's Award for fiction for her first novel The Sacrifice. Her subsequent work, Crackpot is considered by critics to be a Cana-

dian classic, as is her moving work Old Woman at Play, a biographical testimony to her mother's art as a dollmaker. Currently she is writer-in-residence at the University of Windsor, and she is Coordinator of the writing program at the Banff Centre for the Fine Arts. Adele's most recent work is Kenjo and the Crickets, a book for children.

Our authors' night will also welcome newcomer Nancy Chater, a resident of Toronto, where she writes, engages in feminist activism, works as a waitress, studies at the University of Toronto in the women's studies program, and works with the Women's Press. Bodies of Knowledge: fear is Nancy's first book. This will be Nancy's second reading in Victoria.

Familiar to Victoria audiences will be author P.K. Page, who has enjoyed a prolific and remarkable career as a writer and visual artist. A Flask of Seawater, a lyrical fairytale, and Brazilian Journal, based on her experiences in Brazil, are her latest works.

We are thrilled to be able to include Betsy Warland in our company of readers. Betsy is a west coast writer whose books include A Gathering Instinct, open is broken, and her newest, Double Negative, a collaboration with Daphne Marlatt. Betsy is another co-editor of f(lip)³, a newsletter of feminist innovative writing.

Rounding out this outstanding evening of authors' readings will be Daphne Marlatt. Her works span more than two decades, including such titles as Frames: of a Story, Rings, Our Lives, and The Story She Said. Now living in Vancouver, Daphne Marlatt has garnered high praise for each of her diverse and spectacular works.

Everywomans Books is proud and thrilled to be Victoria's home of books for, by, and about women. We are pleased to be able to offer to our community this night of inspired celebration. Please join us in this rare evening of Canadian literary excellence, at Camosun College's Young Auditorium, Saturday, February 17, at 7 pm. admission is free. ■



Women in Trades and Technology

by Jean Willow

For those of us who work in non-traditional areas, the horrendous massacre of 14 women in Montreal has left many of us in a state of anger, fear and grief for the senseless loss of these young women's lives. For us it is particularly frightening. Our conspicuousness on the job site and the derision we face daily in our work becomes even more threatening to our sense of personal safety.

And yet, I feel even more determined to make a difference in a society which speaks of equality, yet offers such a disparity between the sexes. For instance, did you know that most women work in 30 occupational categories while most men work in 480; that women earned sixty-six cents on every dollar men made in 1987; that more than 50% of working women are in either clerical or service occupations which are the lowest paying occupations; that although women's participation in the labour force has increased to 55.9% our representation in construction trades is less than 2% and that 42% of all female-headed families live below the poverty line compared to 7% for all male-headed families.

There are many obstacles for women who want to enter non-traditional occupations but Victoria Women in Trade Society (V.W.I.T.S.) and Camosun College are offering some programs and support which we hope will encourage more women to enter trades and technology areas.

The Women in Construction Program is a Canadian Jobs Strategy Program sponsored by V.W.I.T.S. which pays women to train and work in the construction field. The participants get 9 weeks of training in carpentry, math and life skills at Camosun College then they work for a variety of construction companies gaining training and experience in the field of carpentry. The Women in Construction Program was offered in January and September of 1989. We will apply for renewed funding for 1990.

The V.W.I.T.S. will also be applying for funding for a "Women in Electronics Program". This program will include training plus work experience similar to the Women in Construction program. We foresee this program as not only providing the training to become electronic assemblers, sales people, or purchasers, but also would bridge the gap for women who have wanted to enter electronic technology courses but did not have the math or physics background which is required for this field of work. This program will include training plus work experience similar to the Women in Construction program.

Camosun College is offering a Trades Immersion Program in 1990. This program used to be specifically for women, but is now open to anyone who is considering entering a trades field. The T.I.P. program is an orientation program providing classroom and hands-on training in the fields of electrical, carpentry, welding, auto mechanics, auto body repair, drafting, plumbing, and appliance repair. In addition the participant will receive first aid training and forklift operation training. The purpose of the program is to give people career exploration and introductory experience in a variety of trades. The last three weeks of the program is work experience in an industry that the participant has expressed interest in. This is an excellent program for women who are interested in a trade but have not had the background or experience to make an informed career choice.

The Women's Advisory Committee to the President of Camosun College supports establishing a Coordinator of Women in Trades and Technology. This position (if funded) would:

- A. Explore funding and program possibilities for Bridging programs.
- B. Support women who are in trades and technology programs or considering entering these programs.
- C. Provide public education for: counsellors, teachers and students in primary and secondary schools, Ministry of Social Services and Housing workers, Canada Employment Counselors, and most

of all, employers in the advantages of more women entering trades and technology fields.

Given all the obstacles that women must face in entering non-traditional occupations you may be asking why should I consider it. There are advantages in these occupations.

Job Satisfaction: If you're the type of person who likes to see concrete results with your work, a trade or technology may interest you. It is a tremendous feeling of satisfaction to be able to finish building or fixing something and say "I did that!"

Job Opportunities: There is an increasing shortage of skilled tradespeople in Canada. Given the construction boom in Victoria skilled tradespeople are increasingly hard to find. And if the Federal government ever puts some consequences in their Employment Equity Plan for those Contractors who do not hire women and minorities, we may see a dramatic increase of women being hired by federal agencies and contractors.

Work Variety: Most trades and technology work offers a variety of experiences, environment and types of work.

On the Job Training: Most trades work involves 6 months of training, then 4 years of apprenticeship where you can earn a living while learning your trade. Most technology programs are 2 - 4 years in length.

Money: Trades and technology work generally pays very well. Where else can you go to school for 6 months, make \$7-\$12/hr. while learning your trade culminating in \$18/hour as an average journey persons wage in construction.

One day, I hope to go to a construction site or a technology lab and see women, not as low paid secretaries or low paid lab assistants, but as skilled tradespeople, the supervisors, the directors, the employers and it won't be "non-traditional" any more.

For more information contact:

Jean Willow, c/o Camosun College
4461 Interurban Rd.
Victoria, B.C. V8X 3X1
or phone: 370-3759

"Our Children - Our Future" Victoria Child Poverty Forum

Saturday, October 14, 1989
Spectrum Community School

(The following are some of the recommendations which emanated from the child poverty forum.)

First Nations' Community Health Society

- more native participation in policy and decision-making with regards to service delivery and access to elected officials who are policy makers.
- cross-cultural educational programs to encourage attitude changes.

Children and Youth

- all schools implement programs for poverty children, design methods of anonymous access, and distribution of information to children.
- school fees should not deny a child or parent access to a school program.
- life skills programs be implemented at all levels of education, particularly at high school level (sex education, budgeting, family relationships etc.).

Housing Hassles

- social housing is a priority.
- among other recommendations: need for a rentalsman and personnel to uphold the law; need to use government land to provide for housing via leasing mechanisms to co-ops, non-profit organisations, public housing organisations, etc.

Nutrition and Health

- support concept of breakfast program
- increase nutrition and health education in schools: (a) public health nurse and nutritionists more time in school, (b) include parents in nutrition education.
- community and parent involvement essential: (a) prepare food (colleges, high school cooking programme), (b) parents to supervise and distribute meals.

Economic Survival

- housing: (a) change zoning to balance increased density allowed a developer with an increase in space for low cost housing, (b) stop division between shelter and support in welfare cheque, (c) have rent control.
- trading skills: at community centres etc., trading goods and services. ■



Opening Doors

A program for women
who are considering
re-entering the
workforce

- ✓ Build your self-confidence
- ✓ Get to know yourself better
- ✓ Identify goals for yourself
- ✓ Learn skills to help you get to where you want to be

Tuesdays 2:00 to 5:00 p.m.
Starting February 6, 1990 for 10 weeks
Fee: \$10
Limited to 10 women
Facilitated by Beth Trotter, M.A., R.C.C.

This is a group for women who are receiving Social Assistance and/or are 45 years or older and who have been out of the workforce for a minimum of two years.

To register for the group or for more information
call 381-1012

Registration Deadline January 26, 1990

Sponsored by the Victoria Status of Women Action Group

Bulliten Board

EVENTS

OPENING DOORS

Tuesdays, 2-5 pm, beginning February 6, for 10 weeks

Location: SWAG meeting room

* a program for women over 45 and/or women on social assistance thinking about re-entering the workforce. Emphasis on self esteem building, getting to know yourself better, identifying goals and learning new skills related to entering the workforce. Facilitated by Beth Trotter, M.A., Counsellor. Sponsored by SWAG and Women's Programs (B.C.).

ELLY DANICA, Sunday, February 11, 1990, 8 pm, in the Newcombe Auditorium. Author of "Don't: a woman's word", Elly, a survivor of childhood incest and violence, reads from her life affirming book and talks about finding her way out of the maze of childhood sexual assault. Tickets at SWAG, \$6, low income, \$9 waged. For more info call the office at 381-1012.

On Monday, February 12, at 8:15 pm, UVic Room TBA

- Heather Nelson, Co-Coordinator, Port Alberni Women's Centre
- Lorinda Allix, Past Coordinator, Campbell River Women's Centre
- Marianne Alto, Coordinator, Victoria Status of Women Action Group

- in a panel discussion on 'Practising Feminism in the Community' entitled "Feminist Activists: Paid to make changes", subtitled, "Ma, can I be a feminist and still make any money at all?". Free and open to the public. Info from the office, 381-1012.

Beginning March 4, watch for an entire week of spectacular International Women's Day events, including a FABULOUS women's dance featuring KEY-CHANGE!!! Details available from the office at 381-1012. Enclosed in this newsletter is our special Supplement Edition.

On Saturday, February 16, Everywomans Books is celebrating their 15th birthday!!! Throughout the day, everyone is welcome to enjoy cakes and goodies while browsing through 15% off every book in the store! At 7 that evening, join us at Camosun College's Young Building auditorium as we listen to readings by some of Canada's most renowned authors, including Adele Wiseman, Ally McKay, Angela Hryniuk, Betsy Warland, Daphne Marlatt, Nancy Chater, and P.K. Page. Admission is free!

Monthly meeting of letter writing on WOMEN'S ISSUES

We have addresses, information and ideas. Always telling yourself you should write that letter? Join us and we'll write them all in one fell swoop (each month). Our next meeting will be in the SWAG meeting room at 5:30 on Thursday, March 1.

CLASSIFIED ADS

Peaceful Retreat!

Bed and Breakfast Salt Spring Island. Cozy and self-contained rooms with private entrances. Comfortable setting for women in a feminist home. Call Maureen at 653-4345 for info. or reservations.

ODDS & ENDS

Could You Be A *Mentor*?

St. Margaret's is Victoria's only all-girls' school. They are international, non-denominational, and are looking for mentors for their senior students.

If you are interested in sharing information on your career and related life style with a secondary student please give them a call. Approximate time commitment is two hours per month.

Contact: Linda Siegel, Counsellor, St. Margaret's School, 479-7171.

Share Your Career

St. Margaret's School is also having a Career Afternoon in April 1990. If you are interested in participating and sharing information on your career please give them a call. People involved in traditional or non-traditional careers are welcome.

Contact: Linda Siegel, Counsellor, St. Margaret's School, 479-7171.

New Acquisitions

(October-December, 1989)

The following is just a sampling of the many new acquisitions to our resource centre...Come in and browse anytime during office hours...You'll be surprised at our great selection of titles and the wealth of information at your disposal!!

Women and the AIDS Crisis. Diane Richardson. London: Pandora Press, 1987.

Women in the B.C. Labour Market: A Statistical Sketch. Victoria: B.C. Women's Secretariat, 1989.

LEAF Litigation Year One. Mary Eberts, Gwen Brodsky. Toronto: Women's Legal Education and Action Fund, 1986.

The Supreme Court of Canada Decision on Abortion. Shelagh Day, Stan Persky, eds. Vancouver: New Star Books, 1988.

The Lesbian In Front of the Classroom: Writings By Lesbian Teachers. Sarah-Hope Parmeter, Irene Reti, eds. Santa Cruz: HerBooks, 1988.

One Teenager in Ten: Writings by Gay and Lesbian Youth. Ann Heron, ed. Boston: Alyson Publications, Inc., 1983.

A Full Circle: The Manitoba Committee on Wife Abuse. Karen Schmidt. Winnipeg: The Manitoba Committee on Wife Abuse, 1989.

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NAC Representative Report

Paula Beltgen

In November I attended the Regional NAC Meeting in Quesnel. This year the Southern B.C. and Northern B.C.-Yukon regions met together in order to pool funds and cut expenses. For the same reason the NAC regional meeting was piggy-backed with the BC and Yukon Women's Centres semi-annual meeting.

A reoccurring theme emerged over the weekend; the need for increased communication between our women's centres in our areas (ie/ Vancouver Island), our regions

(southern B.C.) and nationally. We need to keep stride in the age of electronic communications. The Fax, electronic mail and modems are all ways in which we hope to, in the near future, be able to relay information quickly and efficiently. This will enable us to gather facts, and respond almost immediately to issues. It is also critical that we keep up with the work of other women's organizations in order to avoid redundancy and isolation, and take advantage of new ideas. This is particularly true for the rural women's centres.

The Quesnel meeting was the official birth of a Rural Women's Committee. This committee will work at giving a strong

voice to the rural grassroots in NAC. Please phone the SWAG office if you would like to contact this committee.

A good part of the weekend was spent on combining 3 proposals for the reorganization of the NAC structure. As it stands now, the organization has conditional support from B.C. and the Yukon. There are some groups that will withdraw membership if changes are not forthcoming. Other groups are still optimistic that we will be able to solve the differences in time. It will be interesting to see how this region's proposal is taken by the Reorganization Committee and what sort of changes will be voted in at the AGM.

Membership Including Newsletter Subscription to Victoria Status of Women Action Group

\$15.00 annually, Oct. 1 - Sept. 30 prorated at \$1.50 per month from February

\$7.50 limited income

\$40.00 sustaining

Friend of SWAG (non-voting)

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

POSTAL CODE _____ PHONE: _____ (h) _____ (w)

please check beside the appropriate category.

New Member

Renewal

For a Friend

AREAS OF INTEREST:

Human Rights

Feminist Theory

Women & Work

Health

International Women

Women of Colour

Lesbian Rights

Other _____

Activities that need your
involvement include:

Staffing the office
 Clerical work

Lobbying
 Organizing workshops

Artwork
 Fundraising

Phone
 Newsletter

I would like to donate to the TV/VCR Fund

"I am a woman who supports the policies of SWAG" _____

signature

Enclosed please find: \$ _____ (membership) \$ _____ (donation)

I am enclosing \$15.00 a Victoria Status of Women T-shirt in:

Ecu

Lavender

Black

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Large

Extra Large

SEND TO: Victoria Status of Women Action Group P.O. Box 484, Station E, Victoria, B.C., V8W 2N

THANK YOU!

Victoria Status of Women
Action Group
P.O. Box 484
Station E
Victoria, B.C.
V8W 2N8



NAC Representative Report
In November I attended the Regional
NAC Meeting in Oshawa. The year the
status of women in Ontario is
and the importance of the status of women
NAC regional meeting was held in
with the BC and Yukon Women's Councils
and annual meeting.
A working team created over the
weekend through discussion and
initially focused on women's control in
our area (in Vancouver Island, Okanagan

Membership including Subscriptions to
Victoria Status of Women Action Group
Treasurer M.A. Council
TWAG and Women's Progress
CLASSIFIED ADS
KELLY DANCO, Sunday, February 11
Address 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100

The Everywoman's Health Centre Society Presents:

Pledge a Protester

to help support the

Everywoman's Health Centre

Here's how
to pledge: You pledge a nickel, dime, quarter, dollar - whatever you like - towards every anti-choicer who shows up at the clinic or one of our rallies. We'll keep count.

Then, at the end of the month, you'll receive an invoice showing the total number of anti-choicers times your pledge. If, for example, you pledge a nickel and we count 100 anti-choicers, you owe \$5.00.

If 200 of our supporters pledge a nickel, we collect \$1,000 towards the cost of quality reproductive health services provided by the clinic.

What's more, we'll be letting the anti-choicers know how they're helping the clinic every time they protest a woman's right to choose.

Support the clinic by pledging today.

*Yes! I want
to pledge!*

Put me down for: 5¢ 10¢ 25¢ \$1.00 other: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____ Postal Code _____

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