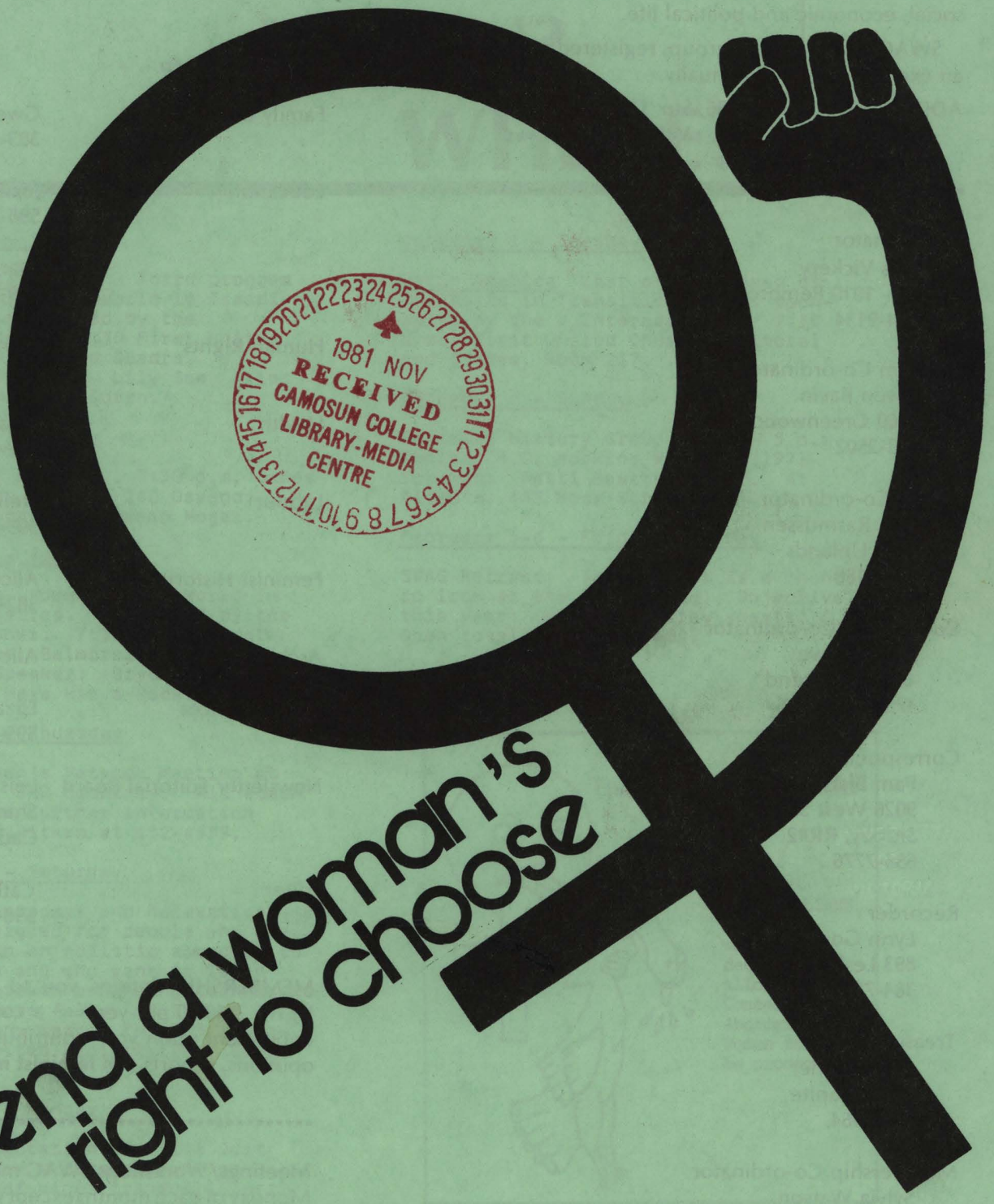


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swag STATUS OF WOMEN NEWS



Defend a woman's
right to choose

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 annually.

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Contact Women

Each of the Contact Persons has a particular area of interest in women's issues. Members who share that interest or, have a concern or problem in that area are encouraged to make contact.

Contact Women

Family Law

Gwen Bavin
383-2502

Education

Jean Newton
598-3786

Marguerite Mousseau
479-1572

Human Rights

Norrie Preston
598-1390

Health

Susan Moger
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Stella Lord
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Archives

Alice Albert

Social Services

Elizabeth Hamlet
595-2569

Newsletter Editorial Board

Lois Vickery,
Shirley Avril,
Catherine Winter

Editor

Catherine Winter
598-3620

MEMBERSHIP Entitles you to a subscription to SWAG NEWS (\$10.00 per year) — a completely volunteer effort dependent upon your contributions . . . poems, articles, opinions, reports. **All feminist material welcome.**

Meetings/Workshops SWAG meetings are held the fourth Monday of each month (except when it falls on a holiday) at the James Bay Community Centre, 140 Oswego St. Meeting Room. 2, 7:30 p.m.

WHO? WHAT? WHEN? WHERE?

November 17 - Tuesday

Canada: Native Women Third program in the Women of the World in Transition series sponsored by the Y International. 7:30 First United Church, Balmoral and Quadra, Room 217. Speaker: Lily Sam Film: "Mother of Many Children."

November 23 - Monday

SWAG General Meeting. 7:30 p.m. James Bay Community Centre, 140 Oswego. Topic: Menopause by Susan Moger.

November 24 - Tuesday

South Africa Women of the World in Transition series. Sponsored by the Y International. 7:30 p.m. First United Church, Balmoral and Quadra, Room 217. Speaker: Brycena Mvubu Film: "You Have Hit a Rock."

November 26 - Thursday

Victoria Women's Network meeting at the YM-YWCA, 880 Courtney. All women welcome. For further information phone Sandra Aitken at 652-4359.

November 28 - Saturday

Postures, Awareness and Relaxation - a workshop designed for people who are interested in an holistic approach to their health and who want to learn additional growth enhancing techniques for living more fully. 9:30 - 4 Reader: Sunny Leagh Fee \$35 (negotiable) Limited Registration Call 384-7346.

November 30 - Monday

A brief presentation of "It's Just Your Nerves" - a resource kit on women's use of minor tranquillizers and alcohol. 12:30 - 1:30 p.m. Women's Centre (Student Union Building) at UVic. Call Donna Bannister 386-7536 or Sunny Leagh 384-7346 for information.

December 1 - Tuesday

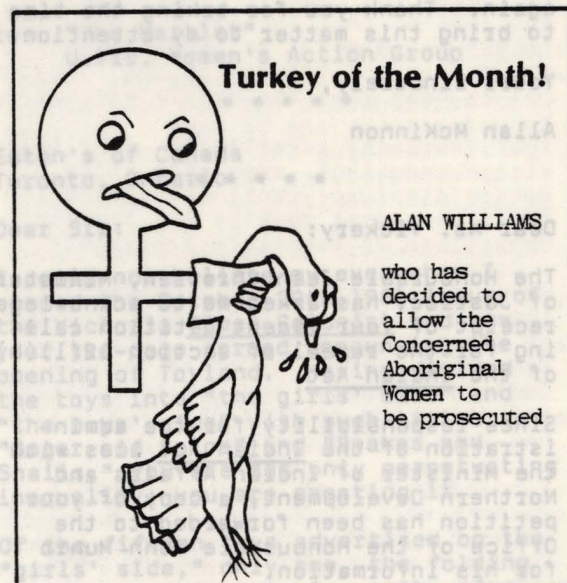
Latin America Last of the Women of the World in Transition series sponsored by the Y International. 7:30 p.m. First United Church, Balmoral and Quadra, Room 217.

December 6 - Sunday

Feminist History Group 3:30 - 5 p.m. Topic: B.C. Working Women at 1971 Speaker: Patti Beatty-Gunter. At Alice's, 453 Moss Street.

February 5-6 - Friday-Saturday

SWAG Retreat. The retreat is a chance to look at the year ahead. Objective this year: produce policy sheets. Open to all SWAG members.



Letters



Dear Ms. Blackstone:

This will acknowledge receipt of your recent letter in relation to the charges against the aboriginal women who recently occupied the Department of Indian Affairs offices.

I have considered the matter and have concluded that charges presently outstanding should be disposed of in the normal course of the administration of criminal justice.

Yours very truly,

Allan Williams
Attorney General

* * * * *

Dear Ms. Blackstone:

This will acknowledge your letter of September 11th and the attached copy of a letter you sent to the Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs concerning lack of government action in rectifying the problems of aboriginal people in B.C.

I have taken the liberty of writing to the Minister and requesting that he address this problem at his earliest convenience and advise me of the steps being taken by his Department in the matter.

When I have received some response from the Minister I will write to you again. Thank you for taking the time to bring this matter to my attention.

Yours sincerely,

Allan McKinnon

* * * * *

Dear Ms. Vickery:

The Honourable Jean Chretien, Minister of Justice, has asked me to acknowledge receipt of your recent petition calling for the repeal of section 12(1)(b) of the Indian Act.

Since responsibility for the administration of the Indian Act lies with the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, a copy of your petition has been forwarded to the Office of the Honourable John Munro for his information.

Yours sincerely, *

Jacques A. Demers
Special Adviser

Hello Everybody:

Thank you very, very much for your kind wishes on my appointment as a County Court Judge in Vancouver.

It has been a pleasure of course living in Victoria. I am certainly missing the individual contact with my clients; however, I feel that it is really very important that women who are given the opportunity to be of larger service to the community take that opportunity and do as much honour as possible to us all. How very different things are than they were when I entered the practice of law so very many years ago. Here I am joining Madam Justices Proudfoot and McLachlin who have set me a fine example and are of so much help to me. Thank you again for your heartfelt congratulations and for what I know will continue to be your support in the years to come. If any of you find yourselves in Vancouver please do not hesitate to let me know in advance that you are coming and perhaps I can arrange for you to see the Law Courts here from a slightly different perspective than that usually open to the public.

Yours sincerely,

Carol Huddart

* * * * *

Dear Sisters:

Bread and Roses is a socialist feminist group in the lower mainland. We have been meeting together since last fall and have begun to take on active political work since this past spring. One of the main tasks Bread and Roses has set for itself is to fight back against rising right wing forces, particularly as these forces are attacking the hard won rights of women as well as the ability of the women's movement to mobilize women. Bread and Roses is also involved in doing trade union work, drawing links between the women's movement and the trade union movement. We are taking up active work with the welfare coalition to fight against the welfare cuts.

In regard to our work against the right, Bread and Roses held a public meeting on September 18 at which representatives from the B. C. Organization to Fight Racism, Lesbian Resistance, and Concerned Citizens for Choice on Abortion spoke. Each group talked about their own particular struggle, explaining the kinds of

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attacks they are experiencing and how these attacks are being fought. Bread and Roses gave a speech which attempted to provide an overall anti-right perspective, linking the concerns of individual interest groups together. We feel that the meeting, attended by over 200 people, was a success and an important beginning for us in our work against the right.

Bread and Roses has been asked to present a strategy workshop at the coming BCFW conference. The workshop is to focus on the rise of the right and ways of fighting back. At this point, our knowledge is confined primarily to the Lower Mainland. We are writing to all BCFW groups to supply us with more information, but our particular concern is groups outside the lower mainland. We assume that you are very busy with your own work. We would, however, really appreciate it if you could respond to our questions. Write whatever you can. All information and opinions would be appreciated. Because of the proximity of the convention, we would appreciate as speedy a response as possible.

In what ways are right wing political forces active in your area of the province?

How successful has the right been in gaining power and influence? Where? How?

What is the effect of these right wing forces on the lives of women and the women's movement?

What are the forces opposing the right, particularly women's movement forces? Are anti-right wing groups working together?

Other comments.

We thank you, in advance, for your cooperation and we hope that we will all be able to profit from the workshop in order to mount a more effective fight to maintain and strengthen our rights.

In the struggle,

Helen Mintz (for Bread and Roses)

* * * * *

Campus Shop,
University of Victoria.

Dear Mr. Shemdin:

It has been brought to our attention by a Ms. Valerie Collins that pornographic magazines, such as "Penthouse" and "Playboy", are prominently dis-

played and available for purchase in your shop. She advised us that she had spoken directly with you, to convey her concern and, while you were not unsympathetic, you indicated that you were stocking this literature to meet demand.

We support Ms. Collins' contention that magazines such as these insult and degrade us all as women. Pornography contributes directly to this culture's deeply held misogynist attitudes, encouraging the stereotyping of women as merely objects for male sexual gratification. It promotes shallow and superficial standards of female "attractiveness", and a "consumerist" attitude on the part of males toward women. Such material advocates the concept of one-half of the population as a commodity for the consumption of the other half; and - most disturbingly - it abounds in messages (both blatant and subtle) of violence against women.

I am offended by the presence of this garbage in your shop, and I speak as well for the entire membership of the Status of Women. It seems more appropriate to a sleazy "sex emporium" than a Campus Shop where, one might assume, more enlightened attitudes prevail. I, personally, avoid doing business with any store that stocks such material, and I would urge the U.Vic. female population to do the same.

Yours truly,

P.L. Blackstone

cc: "The Martlet"
U.Vic. Women's Action Group

* * * * *

Eaton's of Canada
Toronto, Ontario

Dear Sir:

I could not believe my eyes when I opened the October 20th 1981 issue of the Victoria Times-Colonist and saw your two-page spread announcing the opening of Toyland. Having divided the toys into "the girls' side" and "the boys' side" with such titles as "Sugar and Spice" and "Snakes and Snails," you are not only perpetuating inequality; you are creating it.

Of the fifteen toys advertised on the "girls' side," only one, the folding table and chair set, is worthy of a child's attention. Why should a building set or a horse farm set be designated a boy's toy?

But it gets worse! Your ad is

featuring a boy-child playing a computer game which is said to test "strategy, memory, logic and skill". Boys are asked to "get ready for the challenge" and "match wits" with the computer. And for the girl-child? It is "two shades of lipstick, nail-polish, eye shadow, lip-gloss and blush." All this is designed so that the girl-child can be "just like the big girls."

THIS "big girl" is offended! Have all these years of consciousness-raising been for naught?

I see no "Magic of Christmas" in your ad. It looks as if we're headed for another plastic Christmas in an unreal world.

Yours sincerely,

F. Forrest-Richards
M.D., F.R.C.P. (C)

cc: Eaton's, Victoria
Times-Colonist

* * * * *

Dear Sir/Madam:

I am writing on behalf of the Victoria Status of Women to express our shock and outrage at the recent two-page advertisement for children's toys, which played blatantly on sex-role stereotyping.

When is Eaton's going to learn?! Must we remind you, again, that this is the 1980's; that females are more than "sugar 'n spice"? We deeply resent the persistent refusal of the T. Eaton Co. to hear what the people are saying.

Your newspaper advertising, your television campaigns, even your store window displays, continue to promote sexist messages despite the frequent objections of feminists everywhere.

Eaton's has consistently demonstrated insensitivity to the changing values of the times. Women, for your information, have emerged as capable, competent beings, and are increasingly rejecting the constraints of arbitrary sex-role stereotyping.

I, personally, am going to boycott Eaton's until such time as the quality of your advertising improves. I will urge our membership to do the same.

Yours angrily,

P. L. Blackstone

Dear M. Ouellet:

I write on behalf of the Victoria Status of Women Action Group to express our concern at the proposed postal rate increases.

S.W.A.G. is an entirely volunteer organization. Our only source of funding is our memberships, so - needless to say - we operate on a shoe-string budget.

We rely heavily on the postal system to carry out our vital work, for both our heavy volume of correspondence and our monthly newsletter (to 250 members). The proposed postal rate increases will cause even greater financial hardship for us, as I am sure they will for most Canadians.

We find a 76% increase outrageous, particularly in view of the notoriously poor service provided, and hope that the amount proposed will be reconsidered.

Yours truly,

P. L. Blackstone

Alderman Gretchen Brewin



A concerned voice
for women
on City Council

If you would like to help re-elect Gretchen,
or for information,
phone 386-4523 or 383-7787.

vote

OVERGARD, M.



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ARTICLES

Women on Strike

Library assistants in CUPE Local 401 and Librarians in BCGEU Local 69, 90% of whom are women, have been on strike against their employer, the Vancouver Island Regional Library Board, since September 15. Because very little has been reported in the press on the issue surrounding the strike and because the Board has been stonewalling in the negotiations, it was felt the following information should be passed to SWAG members.

The Librarians in BCGEU are striking for a first contract. Money is not the major issue, but union recognition and security is. The local also wants proper dismissal procedures in the new contract and an acceptable grievance procedure.

The Library Assistants have been organized in CUPE for 20 years, and this is their first strike. There are several major issues seriously affecting the economic situations of these women which must also be shared by other part-time employees in B.C. (most of whom are women).

Because most of the Library Assistants are employed on permanent part-time status, working conditions have lagged far behind most other unionized full-time workers. The Board has been able to withhold medical, dental and other employee benefits. There are no shift premiums and holiday provisions are not in line with other CUPE locals. Wages have not compensated for poor working conditions. The base hourly rate is now only \$5.52 an hour which compares unfavourably with similar employees in other jurisdictions in B.C. Besides wanting to better their working conditions and up their salary by \$3.00 an hour, the Library Assistants also want job descriptions and a system of joint job evaluations. The latter, they argue, would avoid a repetition of the recent situation in which the employers initiated employee evaluations without having a system of job descriptions in place on which to base them.

Until last week, the Board had shown little interest in negotiating any of these issues. With public pressure on the Board, however, they may be persuaded to change their tactics and bargain in good faith. The Director of the Board is Fred White, 10 Strickland Street, Nanaimo, B.C. Local Board members are: Isabella Tipton, 777 Winfall, Metchosin (478-4157) and Earle Tabor, 6693 Tamany Road, Victoria (652-3417), Chairperson. If you feel that women, merely because they are working part-time, should not

be discriminated against in this way, write or phone one or all of the above to register your opinion.

Stella Lord

* * * * *

"It's Just our Nerves"

The following is a report on "It's Just Your Nerves" - a conference held at Naramata, B.C. on Oct. 14-16, sponsored by Health and Welfare Canada. Since Alice Albert was unable to attend, I had the adventure and pleasure instead - thank you.

I use the word Adventure - for all the information that had filtered down to Victoria was that this was a training of trainees, and the name as stated above. I was delighted that Donna Bannister (delegate from the Women's Centre at UVic) was also going - what better companion than another "Leo" to share the uncertainties - the fogged over Victoria airport - and the midnight romp in the Vancouver airport!

We discovered at Naramata that there were 15 women from various parts of B.C. attending. We were being trained to train others in the use of a resource kit on women's use of minor tranquillizers and alcohol. Also, B.C. was the pilot project (first of the four western provinces) for training in the use of this kit - so at times we felt somewhat like guinea pigs.

The kit includes a guidebook and flip-chart, and seems to be a very well designed tool for the presentation of material. Part of the description of this resource in the guidebook is - "this kit has been developed as an 'everywomen's' educational tool. The purpose being to look at the ways in which women use minor tranquillizers and alcohol to cope with the (often unrecognized) stresses of their lives, the social attitudes that underestimate women's problems and maintain the invisibility of alcohol problems and the lack of support of services and treatment centres designed to meet the needs of women."

In order for women to get a look at this resource, Donna and I are doing a short presentation of the kit at the Women's Centre (in the Student Union Building) at UVic on Mon. Nov. 30 from 12:30-1:30. Come and enjoy.

Since this resource kit now officially belongs to SWAG, there probably will be future presentations, and ongoing thoughts on how to best use this kit.

Sunny Leagh

ARTICLES

BOOK REVIEW: With Child, Phyllis Chesler. Harper & Row, New York, 1981. (Available in hard-cover and paperback)

Phyllis Chesler does it again! Unflinchingly open, uncompromisingly honest, the author of "Women and Madness" logs for us her personal journey into motherhood -- with all its conflicting feelings, its passion, its doubts and fears, and above all, its terrifying ambivalence. In journal form, the book is highly readable, but -- most importantly -- it abounds in insights which could forever shatter the patriarchal myth of motherhood. This book should be required reading for any feminist struggling with her role as a mother ... for any woman considering motherhood.

I will let the following letter speak for itself.

Dear Phyllis:

My sister, I salute you! I feel I can/should do away with the formality of "proper" salutations, for -- having just completed your wonderful, moving book "With Child" -- I feel I know you intimately.

I read your beautiful book cover to cover in almost one sitting, and wept openly many times, for nowhere have I seen my own feelings re motherhood -- the nagging doubts and fears, the transcendental joy, the terrifying ambivalence -- expressed so exactly. It is almost as if my phantom self had "ghosted" your book. You somehow found the very words I have searched awkwardly for. Your writing is poetry. Moving. Explicit. Flowing and spell-binding.

Our circumstances are remarkably similar. I, too, am over 30, a radical feminist; a would-be writer and artist; trying to juggle a baby, husband and career.

Even the circumstances of our birth experiences are alike, and I found myself reliving mine while reading about yours. I was in labour 26 hours. Prodromal. Posterior. Terrible, terrible back pain. Fetal heart monitors, pitocin, demerol, IV, episiotomy, the whole medical works. I, too, at one point, was informed I'd have to have a caesarian.

Thanks, however, to a wonderful doctor and the support of my husband and sister, I avoided a section, but did require an epidural and forceps to birth my daughter. I, too, was denied my babe, as she went into shock and

was rushed off to be resuscitated. I was numb. Didn't realize til later that we very nearly lost her.

She is 10-1/2 months old now. Looking back, it has been a difficult and painful 10-1/2 months. Her arrival turned my life upside-down, tore me inside-out. There is no going back. That is the hardest reality. Like you, I have had to (painfully) reassess my priorities. Some had to be sacrificed. I made the conscious decision to give her one full year of my life, total commitment. But even then, I could not sacrifice my work with the movement, my art. Thus, she has -- since the beginning -- been hauled along to meetings, rallies, groups; known a bevy of doting baby-sitters. She is an outgoing and happy baby. It has been right ... for both of us.

While there has been plenty of anger, frustration, resentment, anxiety, guilt, she has also given us indescribable joy and pleasure. I have learned so much from her.

But I also realize the years ahead will not be easy. I face so many of the same conflicts you do: between child and career; between husband and child. Her effect on our relationship has strongly paralleled your experience. You so eloquently convey the very thoughts and fears and doubts I have struggled with: Will she come between us? Will he come between us? I, too, felt I had "lost" her (to him?) the moment she physically left my body. A great sense of her separateness, her individuality.

I want to comment also on your profound choice of words. Several times, you use imagery which almost eerily captures fleeting thoughts or sensations I've had.

"Little ancestor": I, too, felt this. Strongly. When I saw my newborn daughter, I felt I was gazing into the eyes of a profoundly wise and ancient soul. It fascinated and frightened me. When I had the ultrasound, I shared your feeling of trespassing; of violating a sacred, timeless sanctuary.

Giving birth was, despite the pain, the most intensely spiritual experience of my life. Again, you validate me: "Palpable, luminous, the Mysteries unfold: arcs of paradox. I can touch them. I AM THEM." I strongly sensed the connection to all the mothers gone before, aware of the Goddess, the Creatrix, in me. Powerful, yet trapped and harnessed by science's machines and tubes.

Exhilarated yet terrified. I, too, was "born" that night. Initiated into a secret knowledge. A trial by fire. An endless roller-coaster ride.

Ah ... the overwhelming, paralyzing AMBIVALENCE ... which you chart and graph so eloquently. I have felt a tenderness, a touching, all-embracing love for Sammi that I've never known with anyone, beyond lovers' passion ... and bristled with rage, with frustration, resentment. One moment, I cringe, helpless, like a wounded animal. The next, I am soaring skyward, reveling in the scent, the touch, the pure sensuality, the sweet, tender trust of my daughter. She can break me. And make me. I am hers. I both hate her and love her for this willing captivity.

Indeed, motherhood is devalued and trivialized by patriarchy, as is every "role" they choose to assign us. I rage, helplessly, futilely, at this, at the injustice of it. What could be more important than raising the next generation of citizens?!? Yet there is joy, strength, in the coming together with other mothers, in re-discovering, reclaiming our power; sharing our pain. I turn again and again to women for strength, support for validation. Together, we will make change.

I also share your concerns about raising a child in this sick, death-obsessed world of patriarchy. When I was pregnant, I dreaded a boy, a male child; fearful of losing him to the patriarchy, of raising -- despite my best efforts -- yet another oppressor. Now, I am equally terrified for my daughter. How can I ever raise her, in a patriarchy, not to be a victim? What chance does she have for freedom, for dignity? How do I tell her about rape, about wife-battering, about all the evils lurking out there, without making her fearful, distrustful? Will they even live to adulthood? It sickens and enrages me that this most perfect creature I have created out of my sacred flesh will grow up to be considered only grist for the male lust/torture/death mill.

Even dressing her is a dilemma. An occasion of guilt. She can't crawl in dresses. She tugs impatiently at them, throws up on them. I don't use the closet-full of "pretty little things" I was given (many my mother carefully saved from my infancy). GUILT.

I am, with much ambivalence, having my tubes tied in a couple of weeks. Perhaps this is why I felt so moved by your book. The feelings are fresh,

still raw. You pulled them out of me again. Made me look at myself, my life. Do I want it all over again? No. Yes. To be a mother is to be pierced with excruciating ambivalence. The tender trap.

I thank you for your book, for sharing so openly and honestly your deeply personal feelings. For validating mine. Your book will have a place of honour on my bookshelf.

In sisterhood,

Pam Blackstone

* * * * *

FEDERAL/PROVINCIAL FISCAL ARRANGEMENTS

The topic and title of this column looks technical and abstract. What does this have to do with us? A great deal! Did you know that the federal government currently spends about 13.4 billion dollars on post-secondary education and health care and other shared cost programmes? It gives this money to the provinces, who are supposed to spend it providing these services to their residents. The current agreement between the federal government and the provinces runs out in March 1981. It is about to be renegotiated, and the renegotiation will have a crucial impact on post-secondary education, health care and social services delivery throughout the provinces. The Parliamentary Task Force on Federal-Provincial Fiscal Arrangements has released its report. The Task Force includes members of all parties. This is the first time that public consultation and active involvement of parliament (that is, all three parties) have been part of the process of negotiation on fiscal arrangements. The government of Canada is not required to do what the Task Force suggests.

Now the government (Prime Minister and the cabinet) will be deciding its position on the same issues. After it decides, it will negotiate the changes with the provinces. The services we need hang in the balance. What is at stake is the funding and control of: health, post-secondary education, childcare, rape crisis centres, transition houses, etc. Our concerns may well disappear during this process of consultation and negotiation. NAC is preparing strategies in response to this situation. We'll be putting them in MEMO, in stages, for you and your group to act on.

Action 1

We have prepared a position paper in response to the Report of the Task

Force which is available from the NAC Office. We suggest that you and your group express your concerns on both the provincial and the federal levels. In your province, write to your Premier. Send copies to the Ministers in charge of: Post-Secondary Education, Social Services, Health, Federal/Provincial Relations, Finance/Treasury. IF YOU WRITE THE LETTERS IN POINT FORM, THEY HAVE TO RESPOND TO EACH POINT. AND YOU CAN CALL THEM ON ANYTHING THEY DON'T RESPOND TO.

Here is a suggested format:

As a group concerned with women's issues, and particularly interested in _____ (whatever special focus your group has, e.g. battered women, rape crisis, childcare, counselling, etc.), you are watching the negotiations between your province and the federal government.

You support the Task Force Recommendations that:

1. the Post Secondary and Health portions of the Established Programs Financing arrangements be separated into individual programs;
2. that once allocated, federal EPF financing be earmarked for each program area and not for other purposes;
3. that the present provisions of the EPF Act, 1977, respecting the health system be renewed essentially in their present forms;
4. that the federal general support to Post-Secondary Education be continued;
5. that any statute establishing Parliament's role in provincial social assistance programs continue to use a cost-sharing approach;
6. that the Minister of National Health & Welfare have a Canada Assistance Plan manual compiled to include all guidelines, notes and administrative directives, and that the manual be made public with appropriate provision to respond to questions from the public on its application.

Whatever proportion of funding comes from the federal or provincial levels, you expect your province to supply these services,

and you expect your province to negotiate with the federal government in good faith, knowing that you expect the integrity of these social services to be maintained and enhanced."

Action 2

Write a letter to the Prime Minister of Canada saying that:

-You have written to your provincial Premier and concerned Ministers and have said: (quote the letter)

-You expect the federal government to live up to its responsibility and national goal of helping provide comparable services across Canada, of making mobility a meaningful option for all Canadians across Canada

-You will be monitoring decisions of the cabinet with respect to Fiscal Re-arrangements with great interest

-Your concern is with the integrity of the services delivered, not with the mechanism and administrative means for doing so

-You expect a substantive response to the points raised in your letter.

Send copies to:

Hon. Monique Begin, Minister of Health & Welfare, Ottawa, K1A 0A6

Hon. Jean Chretien, Minister of Justice, Ottawa, K1A 0A6 **

Hon. Allan McEachen, Minister of Finance, Ottawa, K1A 0A6

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy, Minister of Employment & Immigration, Ottawa, K1A 0A6

Mr. Herb Breau, Chairman, Parliamentary Task Force on Federal-Provincial Fiscal Arrangements

** and Minister of State, Social Development

Action 3

CALL THE OFFICE OF THE PREMIER OF YOUR PROVINCE to say that you have written a letter and expect a response.

Action 4

If you are very rushed, send telegrams to:

1. Premier of your province
2. Prime Minister of Canada
3. Herb Breau, Chairman, Parliamentary Task Force on Fed-Prov Arrangements

* * * * *

"WE SUPPORT THE PARLIAMENTARY TASK FORCE ON FEDERAL-PROVINCIAL FISCAL ARRANGEMENTS IN ITS RECOMMENDATIONS THAT EPF FUNDING BE MAINTAINED, AT CURRENT LEVELS AND WITH AN ESCALATOR. WILL MONITOR NEGOTIATIONS CLOSELY"

Future Action

The Task Force makes recommendations on some specific forms of Federal-Provincial cooperation. NAC's position paper addresses those. Our next MEMO will give specific lobby strategy to follow up on these issues. We intend to keep you informed and make specific suggestions in orderly stages.

Women Work Twice as Hard by Peter Adamson Impact

A question for the men reading this page: does your wife work twice as many hours a day as you do?

You, of course, are the exception. But the average woman, it seems, does indeed work twice as hard as the average man. "Women and girls," says the International Labor Organization in Geneva, "are half the world's population but do two-thirds of the world's working hours." To arrive at this provocative conclusion, guaranteed to cause even more arguments than usual over the breakfast table, the ILO has taken into account work in the home as well as in the field and factory.

On the home front - cooking and washing, shopping and cleaning, sewing and mending, looking after the old and bringing up the young - a woman's work is probably as tiring as any man's. But on top of that, most of today's women also have a job outside their own four walls. In Europe and North America, for example, women are now 40% of the paid labor force - as well as contributing an estimated 40% of gross domestic product in unpaid labor in the house.

But it is on the shoulders of the 1,600 million women of Africa, Asia and Latin America that the burden of the "double job" falls most heavily. For them, the working day commonly begins at 4:30 or 5:00 a.m. and ends 16 hours later, as they struggle to meet the most basic needs of their families - for food, water, firewood, clothes, health care and a home.

In the popular imagination the women of the Third World look after the house and raise the children while the men look after the land and raise the crops. But recent research has blown this myth sky-high.

Information

Copies of the Report of the Task Force - "FISCAL FEDERALISM IN CANADA" - are available from: Ministry of Supply & Services, Place du Portage, Phase III, 11 Laurier Street, Hull, Quebec K1A 0S5.

The September issue of Perception, the magazine of the Canada Council on Social Development, deals with this issue and has interviewed people in every province on the topic of Fiscal Renegotiations. It is very useful and can be obtained from: CCSD, 55 Parkdale Avenue, Ottawa, Ontario K1Y 4G1.

NAC's position paper, in response to the Task Force Recommendations, is available from the NAC Office.

According to the UN Food and Agriculture Organization in Rome, women are responsible for "at least 50% of all food production." A study by the Economic Commission for Africa, for example, has shown that women do 60% to 80% of all the agricultural work on the continent plus 50% of all animal husbandry and 100% of the food processing.

In one region studied - Bukababa in Tanzania - the men work an average of 1800 hours a year in agriculture and then their work is largely done. The women, on the other hand, work an average of 2600 hours a year in the field and their work has only begun. In the local Haya language, the word "to marry" literally means "the man gets a hoe."

It's the same story in India where women also do more than half of the subcontinent's agricultural work. "It is usually thought that it is the man who is responsible for farm work, assisted by the women," writes Shanti Chakravorty in a study of India's wheat growing Haryana state, "but in most cases now, it is the woman who does the farm work, assisted by the man." Taking labor in both homes and fields into account, the Haryana study found the average working day for women was between 15½ and 16 hours long. In one particular family the work load of the three adult women and one 12-year-old girl totalled 58 hours a day: 12 hours doing household chores; 9 hours tending cattle and 37 hours in agriculture. In a second family, a woman of 75 was putting in a 10-hour day.

In the case of younger women such work loads are commonly combined with frequent pregnancy, childbirth and breast-feeding - exhausting processes for any woman's body but particularly debilitating when compounded by inadequate food and long hours of backbreaking work in the fields.

In the words of an official report to the International Labor Organization "this dual responsibility for home and job places an immense physical and emotional burden on women; more and more women are suffering from a malady commonly known as fatigue, the full effects of which on the economy and on the family have not yet been analysed."

What all this adds up to is that one of the most important and most ignored health problems in the world of the 1980's is that millions of women are suffering from chronic exhaustion.

Since the beginning of the UN Decade for Women 1975-85, the United Nations itself has paid more heed to the problem. "It is not governments or organizations or UN agencies who are the heroes of the struggle for world development," wrote the executive director of UNICEF late last year. It is the millions of women who labor so hard and so long, under such difficult conditions and for so little reward, to meet the needs of their families and their communities. No praise can be too high for their courage and their effort, but it is not praise that they need. It is justice and help."

Unfortunately, numerous studies over the last five years indicate that the development effort itself, far from bringing justice and help to women, can actually make matters worse.

In the effort to improve nutrition, the prevalent myth that farmers are always men has meant that most of the agricultural training and technology has been geared to men's work. Tractors, for example, can shorten the work of the men who do the ploughing, and lengthen the hours of the women who do the weeding. In one African country's drive for modernization, reports the ECA, one hundred tractors were imported and only one mechanical weeder.

Similarly, the introduction of multiple cropping or high-yielding strains of wheat and rice can demand more hours spent sowing, transplanting and weeding - all women's jobs. In a now famous African study, Esther Boserup noted that, in villages where modern technology had been introduced, the women's share of the agricultural labor had risen from 55 percent to 68 percent. If the effort to improve food production illogically by-passes women, then so too does the effort to improve health. According to the World Health Organization, about three-quarters of all illness in the developing world could be prevented by better nutrition, water, sanitation, immunization and health education - all areas in which women take the major responsibility. But three-quarters of health budgets are being spent - by men on men - to provide expensive curative services to a small fraction of the population.

In one area where attention is focused on women is family planning. It is to women that IUD's are demonstrated, birth pills explained and the advantages of small families spelt out. But here too there is an element of illogical: for preaching family planning exclusively to women ignores the fact that most women live in societies where men make the decisions and women take the consequences.

Similarly, the drive for literacy and education, which has seen school enrolment rates more than double in the developing countries since 1960, has also seen women come off second best. Two out of three illiterate people in the world today are female. Yet as food producers and processors, as homemakers and health workers, and as the principal educators of the next generation, it is at least as important for women to be educated as men.

In the effort to improve nutrition, health and education, the rights, needs and contributions of women are being largely ignored. No sensibly managed enterprise - be it a company or a government or an international development effort - would channel so small a proportion of available resources to those who do so large a proportion of the work.

Recognizing the importance of women to the development effort is, therefore, not only a matter of principle to be enshrined in dusty declarations. It is an urgent practical issue. For nothing could do more to take the brakes off economic and social progress than the ending of discrimination against half the world's people.

Prairie Messenger, Feb. 1, 1981

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vote

ALTO, M.



WHITNEY, C.



sooke

What Can Be Done About Sexual Harassment?

Sexual harassment will only be reduced or eliminated when the conditions which ensure its perpetuation - namely, traditional sex roles and women's status in the labor force - are changed. Traditional sex roles must be expanded to allow women the option of full participation in all aspects of society. Women must be allowed to exchange their labor for compensation without bartering their sexuality. Women must achieve equal opportunities and participation in the labor force. These are important long-range goals. There are short-term solutions for the problem of sexual harassment:

1. Individuals

- Be aware of the problem and make others aware.
- If you are being harassed, check to see if there are other victims in your workplace. Harassers are often repeaters.
- If someone complains of harassment, be supportive. Don't fall into the trap of blaming the victim.
- If you are a union member, you can:
 - Alert your steward to the problem and encourage him/her to take action.
 - If you are harassed, lodge a grievance against the offender; often there will be more than one victim, in which case a group grievance would be more effective.
 - Make union officers aware of sexual harassment and press to have it made a union issue.
 - At negotiation time, introduce the idea of negotiating a clause on sexual harassment into the agreement.

2. Unions

- Discover the extent of the problem among the membership.
- Make the membership aware of the problem and possible solutions.
- In steward and officer training, include courses in how to handle sexual harassment cases.
- Conduct research and education programs on the topic of sexual harassment.
- Negotiate protection against sexual harassment in collective agreements. Clauses should stipulate that onus of proof is on the harasser not the victim.
- Once the contract covers sexual harassment, unions should initiate grievances and make them a priority. Arbitrators are usually male and may have a bias in a sexual harassment case. Where the union has the power to participate in the selection of an arbitrator, this should be con-

sidered.

- Lobby for legislative protection against sexual harassment of workers.

3. Legislation

Unions and individuals can lobby for effective legislation prohibiting sexual harassment. The Canadian and provincial Human Rights Acts contain clauses that prohibit employment policies and practices that discriminate on the basis of sex. However, they do not specifically address the issue of sexual harassment.

Individuals can bring cases of sexual harassment to the courts. The Ontario Human Rights Commission recently settled a claim by a woman worker who was sexually harassed at the workplace. The woman was compensated \$3,500 as part of a five-part settlement. However, a spokesman for the Commission cautioned that legally the decision was not necessarily binding.

To be effective, a legislative solution must include at least two provisions:

- More specific laws designed to address the issue.
- An effective enforcement agency with powers of jurisprudence.

In many cases, severe stress is experienced by the victims of sexual harassment. Lobbying can be done to have sexual harassment recognized as an occupational health hazard.

From: National Union of Provincial Government Employees Research Report #7.

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Announcements

Brief to the CRTC

An extensive brief was prepared on behalf of SWAG, CARAL and BCFW and sent to the CRTC to oppose the application of the Canadian evangelist and mainstream churches to operate their own TV and radio stations. This brief is available from SWAG if you wish to read it. Call Lois or Pam.

* * * * *

Therese Casgrain 1896-1981

Therese Casgrain was a leader in the fight for women's rights in Quebec. She was the first NDP member of the Senate.

* * * * *

Human Rights Code

In July 1981, the British Columbia legislature amended the Human Rights Code to make employers vicariously liable for discriminatory acts by their employees.

The amendment to section 19(2) of the Code is contained in section 123 of the Miscellaneous Amendments Act (No. 2) 1981. The amended section reads:

an act or thing done or omitted by an employee, officer, director, official or agent of any person within the scope of his authority shall be deemed to be an act or thing done or omitted by that person.

From: Human Rights Commission Newsletter Aug. 81, p 10.

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Theatre/Women

A National study is being undertaken under the auspices of the Status of Women Canada. This study is a modest but serious attempt to assess the current status of women in the Canadian theatre, with particular reference to women playwrights, directors and artistic directors.

Your views, experiences, and suggestions will help us to evaluate the opportunities now available to women, and to discover any obstacle to the full participation of women and to make recommendations towards enhancing the position of women in the Canadian theatre.

If you would like to meet to discuss this subject or suggest other individuals and groups for us to contact, please write:

Rina Fraticelli
96A Bellevue Avenue
Toronto, Ontario
M5T 3N9

Meetings will be arranged in several cities across Canada through the winter of 81-82. If you would like to attend one of these discussions, please indicate this in your letter and we will send you a schedule as soon as one is available.

* * * * *

Thank You to Claude Bernier

We would like to extend special thanks to Claude Bernier, Director of Complaints & Compliance, Canadian Human Rights Commission, Ottawa, for her lively and informative workshops on "Equal Pay for Work of Equal Value" at our fall Conference.

Claude experienced discrimination early in her career with the Personnel Department of CBC when she assumed a management position after a man left and the job was downgraded. This motivated Claude to learn all she could about job classification schemes. Within a short period of time she had the job restored to its original category.

This knowledge of job evaluation was to prove useful. Hired away from the CBC by the Canadian Human Rights Commission as an equal pay specialist, she had two years to develop the principles, strategy and methodology to implement section 11 of the Canadian Human Rights Act of 1977. She completed the task in one year and simultaneously taught herself English. When the Director's job became vacant, Claude applied. Resisting demands from pressure groups and politicians for immediate results, she placed a one year moratorium on all actions while she reorganized the Complaints & Compliance Department. Specialists in job evaluation, wage and pay structures, statistical analysis, and collective agreements were hired and trained. New strategies were plotted and the emphasis shifted from pursuing cases under sections 7 and 10 to sections 11 and 15. Investigations were and are thorough. By the time the Department is ready to meet with an employer it is armed with an ominous array of facts and figures. Each case lays the groundwork for the next in a planned attempt to broaden the Act. This strategy has paid off, culminating most recently in the \$2.8 million settlement of the dispute between the historians and librarians. Settlements are not without repercussions; sometimes they

trigger off a chain reaction and "blow-up" an employer's classification scheme since salary scales are inter-related; at least, they trigger off a flurry of new complaints.

An exuberant personality who sees possibilities rather than problems, Claude obviously enjoys the challenge of her job. Our only regret is that more people did not hear and meet this interesting woman.

Lyn Gough

* * * * *

Conference Comments

Thirty-eight people filled out the feedback form at the SWAG Conference. From these forms we discovered that the lunch was awful, the publicity not sufficient and the conference was wonderful. A few comments:

- It was great. Most interesting and diverse day I've had in years. Fun even. Won't miss them in the future.
- Thought the theme was very relevant and that you managed to include many relevant topics.
- Revitalizing, energizing, eye-opening, educational, disheartening (because of the fact we barely have our feet in the proverbial door). Made me so very proud and glad to be part of the women's movement, let alone just being a woman.
- I really like meeting the women who came - they were great. It has opened a lot of doors/ideas for me which I will pursue.
- The SWAG Conference is the highlight of my year.
- Workshops and leaders excellent but too brief.

Thank you all for bouquets and your many constructive criticisms. They are taken to heart.

RELAXATION

Sunny Leagh

CONSULTANT

B.Sc. (Phy. Med.), M.Ed. (Counselling) A.G.
Chartered Physiotherapist (B.C.)

Individual Sessions
Group Workshops

384-7346
By Appointment Only

Working Women's Organizations Across Canada - from Resources for Feminist Research, July 1981, pp 71-76

Women in Trades
c/o Times Change
932 Bathurst Street
Toronto, ON

Women into Rail
3 - 325 Sherbrooke Street
Winnipeg, Manitoba
R3B 2W7

Equal Rights and Opportunities
Committee
Manitoba Labour Federation

Organized Working Women
c/o Barbara Linds
Ontario Public Service Employees' Union

Saskatchewan Working Women
P.O. Box 7981
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

Working Women Unite
Box 65563, Station F
Vancouver, B.C.

Working Women's Educative
Collective
c/o Julie MacMahon
2708 Gottingen Street
Halifax, N.W.
B3K 3C7

For a short description of what each group does, see the issue of RFR from which this is taken. Available at UVic and Camosun Libraries.

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Women and Trade Unions. Resources for Feminist Research July 1981

This special issue gives up-to-date information on the Canadian scene about women and unions. There are articles on all aspects of unions and women's employment, strategies for equality (including non-traditional work); social unionism; micro-technology; sexual harassment; day care; sexual orientations; domestic workers; immigrant women; and part-time work. These articles give a good deal of information on the current status of these topics and some background on women's activities in these areas. Some are very personal, others are evaluative.

There is also a large section on resources including an annotated list of films on these topics.

CIVIC ELECTIONS

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Susan Moger : Speaker

Monday November 23

7:30 James Bay Community Center

Membership Form

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Postal Code: _____

Telephone: _____

Renewal: ☐ New: ☐ Gift: ☐

Membership is \$10⁰⁰ per year due March 8.
Pro-rated until March 1982
(Reduced rates available if needed).

Send to: SWAG
Post Office Box 62 , Stn. C,
Victoria, B.C. V8P 5L5

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