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Swag

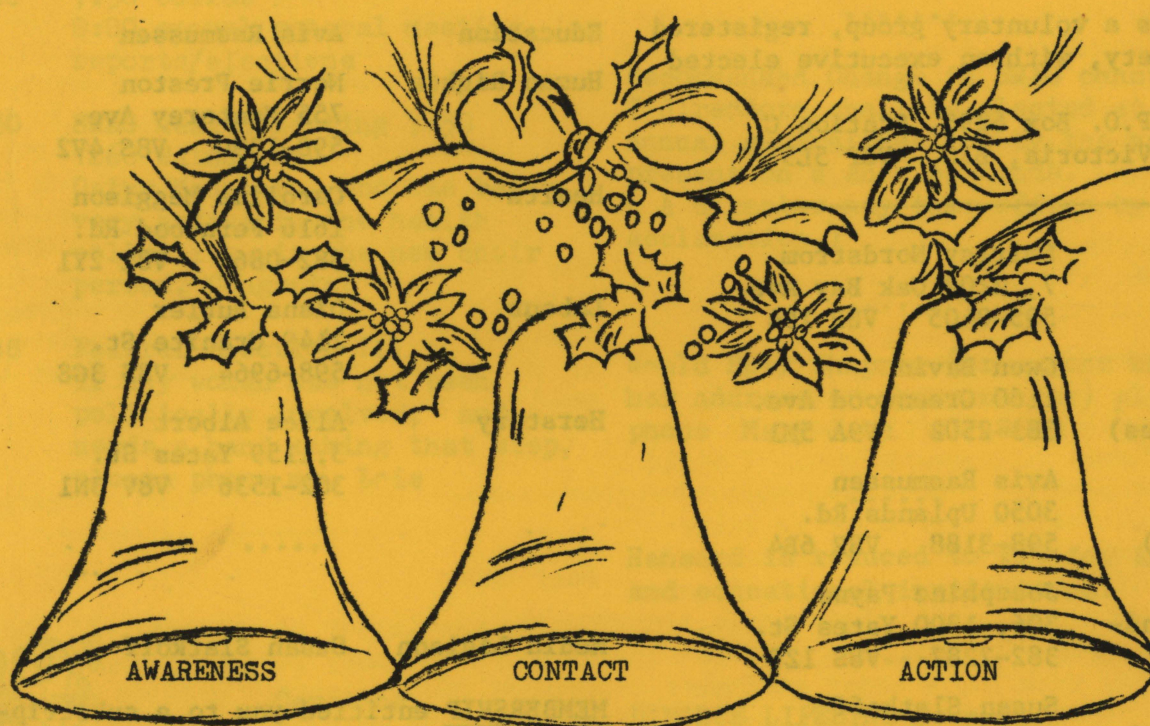
P.O. Box 6296, Station C

Victoria, B.C. V8P 5L5

VICTORIA STATUS OF WOMEN NEWS

Dec 1979

Back issue



LIBERATION: WOMEN HELPING WOMEN

Next Meeting:
Jan 28, 8:00 PM
Annual General Meeting
Reports/Elections

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

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

ADDRESS: P.O. Box 6296, Station C
Victoria, B.C. V8P 5L5

President	Shirley Nordstrom 7, 2209 Oak Bay Ave. 595-0405 V8R 1G4
Vice-President (Programmes)	Gwen Bavin 1160 Greenwood Ave. 383-2502 V9A 5M1
Vice-President (Projects)	Avis Rasmussen 3050 Uplands Rd. 598-3188 V8R 6B4
Secretary (Correspondence)	Josephine Payne 306, 1300 Yates St. 382-2287 V8S 1Z9
Secretary (Recording)	Susan Slatkoff 1422 Wende Rd. 477-8385 V8P 3T5
Treasurer	Elaine Forsey 207, 955 Dingley Dell 384-5019 V9A 5R6
Membership Chair	Mary Jane Lewis 1815 Seawood Place 477-8535 V8N 4N2
Past President	Mimi Robertson 1149 Wychbury Ave. 385-8680 V9A 5L1

MEETINGS/WORKSHOPS

SWAG meets the fourth Monday of each month (except when it falls on a holiday) at the James Bay Community Center, 140 Oswego St., Meeting Room 11 at 8:00p.m.

*WORKSHOPS*COFFEE*GUEST SPEAKERS*

COMMITTEES

Members are encouraged to focus their energies on one or more committees. This is where the real work of SWAG goes on. You need not be an expert. Call one of the chairpeople and offer your services.

CHAIRPEOPLE

Family Law	Gwen Bavin
Education	Avis Rasmussen
Human Rights	Norrie Preston 755 Monterey Ave. 598-1390 V8S 4V2
Health	Caroline Meggison 1616 Fernwood Rd. 382-0866 V8T 2Y1
Labour	Diana Butler 2149 Granite St. 598-6964 V8S 3G8
Herstory	Alice Albert 3,1159 Yates St. 382-1536 V8V 3N1

Media Liaison	Susan Slatkoff
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MEMBERSHIP entitled you to a subscription of SWAG NEWS -- a completely volunteer effort dependent upon your contributions ... poems, articles, opinions, reports. ALL FEMINIST material welcome.

Editorial Board: Alice Ages
Shirley Nordstrom
Lois Vickery

Editor: Lois Vickery
552 Victoria Ave.
598-1704 V8S 4M6

Typist: Joan Pearson

Collation: Pam Hogan
Jennifer Lowen



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

- Jan. 7 SWAG ex. meeting 7:30
at Alice Albert's
5 -1159 Yates St.
- Jan. 9 CARAL strategy meeting 6:30
Potluck supper
Cathy's 241 Howe St.
All welcome.
- Jan. 28 7:30 coffee
8:00 annual general meeting
reports/elections
- Jan. 30 SWAG health meeting 7:30
1260 Walnut St.
Cathy Mountain, who has been
very active in the health
collective, is the new chair
person. Congrats!
- Feb. 18 Federal Election !!!
If any woman has not been
politically involved, and
needs a hand taking that step,
please phone me. Lois



To

Caroline

For all your work
chairing the
health collective

ANNOUNCEMENTS

MLA's/MP's need letters to know that
you support Freedom of Choice on the
question of abortion. Anti-choice
people are in the minority, but they
are very vocal.
write: Rafe Mair, M.L.A.
Parliament Bldgs.
Victoria, B.C. V8V 1X4

Writing Grants:

Can. Human Rights Foundation
\$5000 to writers to assist in preparation
of books on Human Rights
Topics - Status of women, Mat. rights,
Rights of children, etc.
Prof. John P. Humphrey
Chair, Writing Grants Commission
Can. Human Rights Foundation
Ste 340, 1980 Sherbrooke St. West
Montreal, Que. H3H 1E8

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Recommended Change in SWAG constitution-
7 directors shall be elected at the
annual general meeting by the majority
present on a show of hands.
(A director may take office by
acclamation.)

.....

Would Ruby Chapman (or anyone knowing
her address or phone number) please
phone Mary Jane 477-8680

.....

Hansard is reduced to \$25 for individuals
and educational institutions.

.....

DIVORCE LIFELINE is open
co-ordinator: Jocelyn Gifford
219 - 932 Balmoral
2:00 - 5:00 P.M. Mon.to Thurs (inclusive)
Tel: 386-4331

1 in 3 marriages end in divorce.
38% of school-age children in Victoria
live in single parent families resulting
from separation and divorce.

An office has been offered at token
rent and a half-time permanent co-ordinator
is available along with volunteer secret-
arial staff. We have assurance of addition-
al funding to match whatever sums are
donated in this appeal. Will you help?
If we can generate donations ranging from
\$5 to \$100 we will be successful.
Send tax deductible donations to:
Divorce Lifeline of Victoria
P.O. Box 6522, Station C,
Victoria, British Columbia V8P 5M4

LETTERS

Dear Counsellor/therapist:

At a recent provincial conference on Counselling Women for Change held in London, Ontario a need was expressed for a cross Canada network of feminist counsellor/therapists to be established. Such a network would enable feminist therapists to communicate with one another, exchange materials, collaborate on assessing and meeting training needs, plan regional and national conferences, and take stands upon and make recommendations re national mental health care delivery and issues affecting women's mental health.

I have agreed to be the British Columbia regional representative and to coordinate communication amongst the other regional representatives. I would appreciate your help in making this known to colleagues who might be interested in being included on a roster and informed of future developments. Please send, or have them send, their names, addresses, phone numbers, the type of setting they work in, a brief statement of their mode of working and/or therapeutic interests to:

Sara Joy David

R. R. #1

Galiano Island B.C. V0N 1P0

As yet many parts of the country have no regional representative and many provinces require more than one. If you know and can recommend people elsewhere who might be willing to serve in this capacity, I would especially appreciate receiving their names.

There is much yet to be done in extending feminist counselling services to larger number of women. I am sure the proposed network will be an important part of doing this in better and better ways while providing support to those engaged in that enterprise. I hope you will agree and help us in any ways you can think of. I look forward to hearing from you.

I urge you to respond promptly. With our busy schedules not responding immediately often leads to long delay or forgetting.

In Sisterhood,

Sara Joy David, Ph.D.
Clinical Psychologist

Dear Ms. Nordstrom:

Please find a \$5.00 cheque enclosed for my year's subscription. I am enjoying SWAG very much. It gives me information, support, and up-to-date news on the whole feminist movement that I need at times.

Yours truly
Ms. Lida Rees

Dear SWAG:

The newsletter gets better all the time. I was away last year and enjoyed regular SWAG reports. Hope to get back to attending meetings soon.

Ann M. Wilmut

Dear Diana Butler:

The Honourable David MacDonald, Minister Responsible for the Status of Women, has asked me to thank you for sending him a copy of your October 6, 1979 letter to Mr. Atkey, Minister of Employment and Immigration.

As you are aware, Mr. MacDonald has many times indicated his concern over the disadvantaged employment position faced by women, one which includes occupational segregation, low wages, insufficient arrangements regarding the discharge of family responsibilities and lack of sufficient jobs and promotion opportunities. In order to help women workers overcome these problems, Mr. MacDonald has directed his department,

Letters -- Cont'd

Status of Women Canada, to prepare an Employment Strategy for Women. Mr. Atkey, in a speech last month to the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women, announced that part of his department's commitments to the Employment Strategy for Women will include increasing the budget of the Outreach programme for 1980/81 and according women higher priority in this programme.

The Department of Employment and Immigration is undertaking a review of the Unemployment Insurance programme which will take in the recent changes to the U.I. Act that you mentioned in your letter. I understand that some documentation on the U.I. review has been sent by the Department of Employment and Immigration to National Women's organizations and you may want to contact the National Action Committee on the Status of Women for details.

Yours very truly,
Carol Collier
Special Assistant

Dear Sisters,

We, the Persons Project, would like to extend our sincerest appreciation of your sponsorship of the Project undertaken last summer under the auspices of Secretary of State. Your continuing support encouraged us tremendously.

The project appears to have been a great success and the resultant Exhibition, which was displayed in the MacPherson Library, University of Victoria, was warmly received. Indeed we received a number of enthusiastic comments on the content of the exhibition. It is hoped that after the New Year the exhibition will travel to Cranbrook and Vancouver!

Thank you for all your help, encouragement and resources. Next year THE FEMINIST HISTORY GROUP shall apply for a further grant to do yet another research project into women in British Columbia.

In Sisterhood, The Persons Project

Alice J. Albert

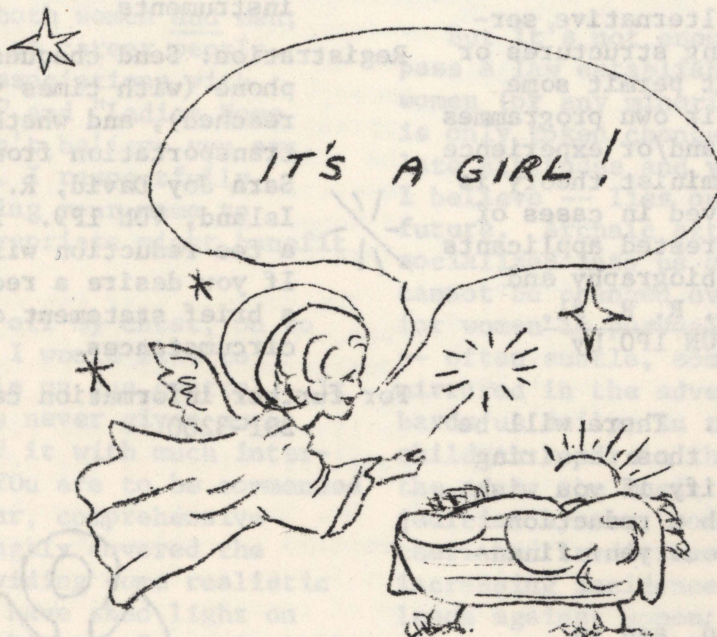
Judy Brunt

Dianne Crossley

Ros Gross

Rob Pazdro

Avis Rasmussen



FEMINIST THERAPY TRAINING PROGRAM

Recognizing the need for more therapists thoroughly grounded in feminist theory and counselling techniques, I am planning a nine month intensive training programme for women currently working or intending to work, clinically with women. We will meet at my home on Galiano Island from 11:00 a.m. to 8 p.m. every third Sunday beginning January 20. We will familiarize ourselves with the literature on feminist theory, feminist therapy and selected clinical techniques. The Sunday sessions will include discussion of readings, personal experiential work, supervised individual and group work, and consultation on clinical work outside the programme. Participants will be encouraged to arrange to do some ongoing individual work or a group during the programme. There will be exposure to a wide range of bodymind techniques, problem-solving skills and political analysis all from a feminist perspective. We will learn, as well, how to create an emotional healing circle, use and orchestrate group energy, and use ourselves optimally as channels for healing.

Preference will be given to women committed to providing alternative services outside the existing structures or who work in settings that permit some autonomy in creating their own programmes. Prior clinical training and/or experience and some knowledge of feminist theory is preferred but may be waived in cases of exceptional talent. Interested applicants should send a brief autobiography and resume to Sara Joy David, R. R. #1, Galiano Island, B. C. VON 1P0 by January 5, 1980.

The fee will be \$450. There will be a few fee reductions for those requiring assistance. Please specify if you wish to be considered for such a reduction providing information about your financial circumstances.

Enrolment will be limited, and in interview may be required.

Sara Joy David, Ph.D. is a clinical psychologist and training consultant who

trained at Berkeley, Duke and Cold Mountain Institute. She has been a feminist therapist active in the women's movement in B. C. since 1972. She helped plan and establish the women's studies programme at Simon Fraser University, has taught women's studies at Douglas College, has conducted emotional self-defense and women emerging workshops throughout the province, with Dorothy E. Smith coedited Women Look at Psychiatry and is currently part of a group seeking to bring Judy Chicago's Dinner Party Project to Vancouver in conjunction with exhibits of local women's art.

WOMEN EMERGING WORKSHOP

Transformation--Expansion--Creation--
Celebration

Time: 11 a.m. Jan. 12 to 8p.m. Jan. 13

Place: Galiano Island

Fee: \$40

Bring: sleeping gear, breakfast and lunch foods, journals, musical instruments

Registration: Send cheques, name, address, phone (with times you can be reached), and whether you require transportation from the ferry to Sara Joy David, R. R. #1, Galiano Island, VON 1P9. In a few instances a fee reduction will be possible. If you desire a reduction include a brief statement of financial circumstances.

For further information call Carol Bolog
291-3200.



LETTER TO THE EDITOR -- HOMEMAKERS MAGAZINE

Pam Hogan

As a concerned Canadian feminist, I am writing, a) to applaud your very fine publication; and b) to provide a rather lengthy (unfortunately, but unavoidably) response to the content of the October issue, particularly "50 Years as Persons"

I would like to say, firstly, that I find your publication thought-provoking, tasteful, and comprehensive in scope. One puzzling question, however, comes to mind: your publication -- whether "feminist" or not -- obviously has sympathies in that direction. Your recent editorial clearly shows that. You have been bold enough to raise issues of serious concern to women; and you have, for the most part, presented the facts in a clear, unbiased manner. You address subjects that are beyond the scope of most "women's magazines," which concern themselves with such vital issues as "The New Fall Colours" and "How to be Your Husband's Mistress." You raise controversial issues, and you treat them intelligently and thoroughly. So, why the name "Homemaker's"!?! You surely address a much broader audience of -- I assume -- both women and men; homemakers as well as career people. Your name raises associations with "Good Housekeeping" and "Ladies Home Journal," and I don't believe you are in the same league. I respectfully suggest that changing your name to something more appropriate might benefit your circulation.

Now that that's off my chest, on to specifics. First, I would like to applaud your article on gun control. It is a subject I have never given much thought, and I read it with much interest and concern. You are to be commended for not only a clear, comprehensive article which thoroughly covered the issue, but for providing some realistic alternatives. You have shed light on a very important subject. I particularly enjoyed the part on "gun psychology" (but you'd better watch whom you insult! They have guns, you know!)

I am writing mainly, though, to respond to your invitation for feed-back on your article "50 Years as Persons." Congratulations on a well-researched and informative piece of journalism -- but you only skimmed the surface. In answer to your question NO, I AM NOT SATISFIED WITH OUR PROGRESS. I believe fervently that much, much more remains to be accomplished before women achieve true equality and, as a feminist, I would like to offer my thoughts on the priorities and goals of the Movement for the future, as I see them.

Firstly, I do not mean to undermine the importance of the great "strides" that have been made toward our liberation; they are, however, only token gestures made by legislators (and a society) backed up against a wall. I strongly suspect it was a placating move, to "get the little ladies off our backs" (and back in the bedrooms), and to get on to "serious" business. They have, however, opened doors to women and, as you so adeptly pointed out, our situation has markedly improved.

But it's not enough! Legislators can pass a law establishing "equality" for women (or any minority), but what results is only token change. You cannot legislate attitudes and values, and there -- I believe -- lies our work for the future. Archaic attitudes and values, socialized into us over centuries, cannot be changed overnight. Contempt for women is pervasive in our society -- often subtle, sometimes not. It is mirrored in the advertising which bombards us daily; in the textbooks our children read; in the media; language; the arts; the music we listen to; our judicial system, social services, cherished traditions; in the ever-increasing incidence of rape and violence against women; but -- most of all -- in our fertile subconscious minds.

We are surrounded by degrading, sexist stereotypes of women, and the

timeless good/evil (read: man/woman, angel/whore, etc.) dichotomy still exists. It is the culmination of an attitude that has persisted toward women since the dawn of time. We all learn it subliminally. Some of us unlearn it; most don't. Most see the band-aid treatment as the cure, when in fact the disease is festering. Contempt for women is common and accepted. Our impoverished senior women can attest to it: rape victims, battered wives, and incestuously-abused girl children can attest to it; it is evident in the popularity of pornography; and in the verbal rape we endure daily, as women.

There are, of course, many institutional offenders, too numerous to mention here, but one clearly emerges ... sanctified, omnipotent, and inflexible .. the judeo-christian tradition. Charges of sexism (or any wrong-doing) levelled against the church are met with wide-eyed saintly innocence. But I challenge any "good" christian to really read his/her Bible, in particular the old Testament; it is riddled with blatant misogynist references. It is ludicrous, to me, that in the 20th century -- a so-called enlightened age -- we are adhering blindly to the moral code of an ancient Hebrew tribe. Of course, it is unspeakable -- and tantamount to sacrilege -- to malign the church. (Women have been burned at the stake for less!) But many feminists believe -- with good reason -- that this respected, powerful institution is the very foundation of the sexist attitudes that continue to oppress women today.

I do not intend to launch a tirade against the judeo-christian tradition here, but consider some of the issues concerning women the church stands firmly opposed to: equal participation in the church for women (including the right to ordination as priests); divorce, careers for women outside the home (we are told one cannot be an effective mother and working woman); and, of course, contraception and abortion. We are denied control over our own biological function, and the right to make such decisions for our selves. (The above refers specifically to the Catholic Church -- by far the worst offender. I realize there are many theologians more liberal in their views.)

With the issue of abortion, of course, the damage is most obvious. Many of the above issues are of concern only to Catholic women. But the "pro-life" groups threaten the rights of all women with their narrow views and fanatical zeal. The church, of course -- especially the Catholic Church -- stands firm on their "moral" opposition to abortion, and women all over the world suffer because of it. These people are working hard to once again criminalize abortion, and I don't think many women realize how hard-won their right to obtain a safe, therapeutic abortion has been, or how easily it could be taken away from them again.

No one can deny them the right to make their own choices in the matter, but they have no right to force their religious beliefs on others (which is, of course, exactly what they are attempting to do). The suffering caused by the "compulsory motherhood" mentality is immense; thousands of unwanted infants, born into poverty and despair; the tragic deaths of women in illegal and self-induced abortions; even suicide.

A few years ago, when feminism was in its infancy, the inter-connection between all these issues was not clearly understood. Now, of course, the Movement has developed an overview; these are all aspects of a societal system which oppresses women -- and which is based on the principle of male supremacy and the assertion of male privilege. We are, as women in this society, still 2nd-class citizens.

The Persons Case was monumental in that, through it, we graduated from being considered sub-human to semi-human. Now, the time has come to assert our right to live as whole human beings, with equality, dignity, and self-respect.

So, in light of the above (rather lengthy) preamble, we have our work cut out for us as feminists. Sexism should be of concern to all women; we are all victims. I believe one important task facing feminists in the 80's is to combat the fear and suspicion many women feel toward us. It is regrettable, but true, that many women with "traditional" views

regard feminism suspiciously. Somewhere along the way, we acquired the reputation of being bra-burning, man-hating fanatics viewed with contempt and distrust by many. A fear of lesbianism (as with any foreign life-style) further alienated "straight" women. Lesbians do, indeed, rank among our numbers but "lesbian" does not equate with "feminist" any more than "fish" with "dog." We are evolving from being "anti-male" toward being "woman-identified." To love women does not necessarily mean to love them sexually, nor to hate men. Some of us are lesbians; some are radical; we differ in our views sometimes, but we share the dedication to fight patriarchy in all its applications.

Some of our most outspoken opponents have been women. But there is a large "silent majority" out there -- isolated in their homes and jobs -- sympathetic to our struggle, but immobilized by their own apathy. They lack the awareness, on a broader scale, of the countless ways they are oppressed, or they would be angry -- angry enough to fight back. I think it is essential that we reach more women; nurture that anger; encourage them to join the struggle.

This is happening now, on every level. Even our language is slowly changing, as people become more aware. Women are, for the first time in centuries, developing dignity and self-respect, a sense of our worth as individuals. It is not uncommon, on TV, to hear joking accusations of "male chauvinist;" the expression "Ms." is becoming commonplace. Even 15 years ago, this would have been unheard-of. The general consciousness of the public is slowly being raised, through the hard, ceaseless efforts of concerned women.

This gradual enlightenment of the public must be sustained. One of our most important jobs is to raise consciousness, and it is vital that we reach the vast mass of women out there, who have so much to gain. Magazines like yours can make a valuable contribution to this effort, by the continued publication of feminist material. You are in a position to reach many thousands of women that "feminist" publications cannot. You can play a vital role in the transformation of society into the kind of place we want our children to live.

To this end, it is also essential to establish and maintain strong bonds between the many women's groups and organizations, for in numbers we are strong. Groups may have differing objectives, but -- allied with others -- they are that much more effective. And this way, too, we can establish a vast network of women committed to change. Through this, also, comes the sharing of ideas, and the support and encouragement so vital. It can be a lonely, discouraging struggle sometimes, and can be difficult to reconcile an utopian feminist vision with the cold, ugly reality of the patriarchy.

Of course, change does not happen overnight. We may not see the reforms we dream of and work so hard for, in our lifetimes at all. (Sexism has resisted change for centuries!) But one final, lasting contribution we can make toward the realization of our dream is in the non-sexist up-bringing of our children. Those of us who choose to have them are entrusted with, perhaps, the most important (and challenging) task of all. As the older generations depart -- and with them, archaic sexist values -- our children will inherit the world. Let's make it worthy of them. And let's give them the tools to make it the kind of place we dreamed of!

\$364.87

is the monthly budget of three out of four women over 65 living on their own -- single, widowed or divorced.

The government's monthly pension package for a single person breaks down this way: \$179.02 federal old age security, which everybody gets; \$146.97 federal guaranteed income supplement, if a person can prove need; \$38.88 provincial guaranteed annual income system.

Total: \$364.87 per month with four annual cost-of-living adjustments.

THE NEW FACE OF THE FEMININE MYSTIQUE

Guerry Hoddersen

The word is out, ladies: feminism is passe and the hooker look is in.

According to Madison Avenue, feminism is only the shrill, strident echo of a distant past before women liberated themselves from the home and assumed glamorous careers in corporate suites and government bureaus. The "new woman" has no need of a movement to defend her rights -- she already has them!

Yes, today's woman should be a devoted mother, glamorous wife, highpowered careerist, charming hostess and expert homemaker, international gourmet, long-distance jogger, athlete and exerciser, seductress, community activist, cultural sophisticate, and purveyor of the "meaningful" relationship. That's all?

Never mind that we're still doing most of the household chores, that those challenging new careers look suspiciously like the same dead-end, under-paid jobs we've always had, that child care is a luxury item and that inflation is pricing working women out of house and home, health care, autos -- and those expensive new-look cosmetics.

All we have to do is learn to turn adversity to our own advantage, think positively, behave assertively (not aggressively!), and get out there and make it -- fashionably attired.

Retrograde culture

Retro (for retrogressive) is the key "in" word for women's apparel.

Commercial nostalgia for the fatal '50s has produced stiletto heels, super-tight peg-legged pants, and slick merchandising of come-hither dresses.

Women's magazines advise us on the finer points of hunting, titillating and capturing men.

And childless writers harange us on the jobs of motherhood and monogamous commitment.

Woman-as-victim is the latest in chic.

Dark, suave, compelling Draculas do a brisk business vampirizing and slaughter-

ing entrances women on the stage and silver screen.

Record jackets display semi-clad women in the delectable process of being raped, beaten, chained and stabbed.

And Vogue shows what fun it is to be slapped around while clad in haute couture costumes.

Schizophrenia time

What a split-level image! Females are to be self-confident, independent and sophisticated, AND dependent and submissive playthings. But there's a method to this madness.

Betty Friedan observed in The Feminine Mystique that the empty glorification of woman as a domestic sex symbol is in direct proportion to society's reluctance to treat her as a complete human being. And in a time of deepening recession and joblessness, the corporate powers are pushing women out of the job market and back into the home -- which requires the crushing or coopting of the women's movement and its gains.

This superwoman image is retained as a sop to middleclass feminism while it beats a hasty retreat from women's basic demands and concentrates on the needs of white professional women and relatively affluent housewives.

But this contradictory image of womanhood, virtually unattainable even for the privileged, puts a cruel and impossible burden upon working and poor women, women of color, and lesbians. It reduces women to self-hate, a sense of inadequacy and competitiveness -- the hallmarks of the feminine mystique.

Madison Avenue is huckstering an artificial, irrational, essentially Nazi programme for women -- Kinder, Kirche, Kuche. Capitalism tries to hype women by glorifying the traditional role of mother, wife and lover, but failing this, the violent woman-as-victim image is employed to convince us that female autonomy cannot prevail against the macho supermale.

For a new sexual politics

If the powers that be think they can bamboozle women once again with a shoddy, '50's style hype they have another thing coming. Women have nothing to gain by resurrecting all the badges of oppression. Instead, we must topple the system that thrives on turning us into corpses, dollies or property. And that means seizing the government and the corporate suites and creating some really avant-garde styles in human existence.

From: Radical Women, 3815 - 5th Avenue
N.E., Seattle, Washington 98105

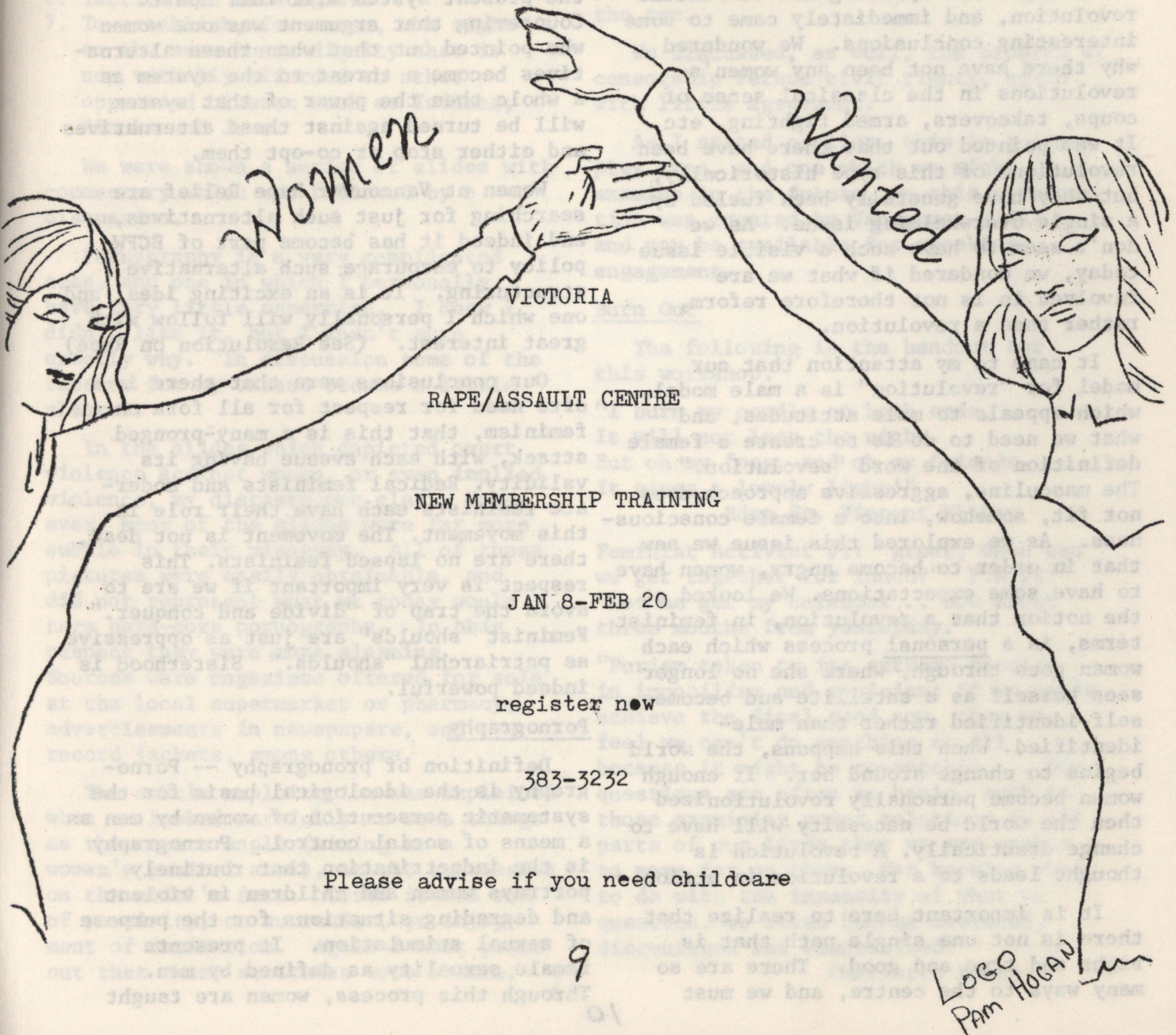
If you are a woman who is physically
or emotionally abused, you can call

VICTORIA TRANSITION HOUSE

for help.

The 24 hour number is

385-6611



DELEGATE REPORT -- B. C. FEDERATION OF WOMEN

Susan Slatkoff

From November 9 through 12, I was one of SWAG's delegates to the B. D. Federation of Women Conference, held in Victoria. I left the conference exhausted, excited, frustrated, and ultimately very satisfied that I had attended. I would like to share some of my experiences with the other members of SWAG who were unable to attend.

First I would like to report on the three workshops which I attended:

Feminism -- Reform or Revolution

We began by exploring how we define revolution, and immediately came to some interesting conclusions. We wondered why there have not been any women's revolutions in the classical sense of coups, takeovers, armed fighting, etc. It was pointed out that there have been revolutions of this type historically, but they have generally been fueled by a single overwhelming issue. As we don't seem to have such a visible issue today, we wondered if what we are involved in is not therefore reform, rather than a revolution.

It came to my attention that our model for "revolution" is a male model, which appeals to male attitudes, and what we need to do is to create a female definition of the word "revolution." The masculine, aggressive approach does not fit, somehow, into a female consciousness. As we explored this issue we saw that in order to become angry, women have to have some expectations. We looked at the notion that a revolution, in feminist terms, is a personal process which each woman goes through, where she no longer sees herself as a satellite and becomes, self-identified rather than male-identified. When this happens, the world begins to change around her. If enough women become personally revolutionized then the world by necessity will have to change drastically. A revolution is thought leads to a revolution in action.

It is important here to realize that there is not one single path that is right and true and good. There are so many ways to the centre, and we must

encourage all forms of feminist thought and action. In erecting a revolutionary model we must create one which is plastic enough to change with the needs of the movement, and does not remain static.

Some women felt that reform was impossible, following the notion that "You can't fix fucked." They are looking for alternatives to the present systems, rather than reforming them. This search for alternatives is felt to be revolutionary. They believe that if enough feminist alternatives are created then the present system will fall apart. Countering that argument was one woman who pointed out that when these alternatives become a threat to the system as a whole then the power of that system will be turned against these alternatives and either stop or co-opt them.

Women at Vancouver Rape Relief are searching for just such alternatives, and indeed it has become part of BCFW policy to encourage such alternative structuring. It is an exciting idea, and one which I personally will follow with great interest. (See Resolution on Rape)

Our conclusions were that there is a dire need for respect for all for a on feminism, that this is a many-pronged attack, with each avenue having its validity. Radical feminists and moderate feminists each have their role in this movement. The movement is not dead, there are no lapsed feminists. This respect is very important if we are to avoid the trap of "divide and conquer." Feminist "shoulds" are just as oppressive as patriarchal "shoulds." Sisterhood is indeed powerful.

Pornography

Definition of pornography -- Pornography is the ideological basis for the systematic persecution of women by men as a means of social control. Pornography is the indoctrination that routinely portrays women and children in violent and degrading situations for the purpose of sexual stimulation. It presents female sexuality as defined by men. Through this process, women are taught

to objectify themselves for the sexual pleasure of men, as well as for their own fulfillment.

Purpose of the workshop --

1. to analyze pornography from a feminist perspective, i.e. the subject of pornography is male power and control over women, not sex.
2. To educate women about the hatred of women expressed in pornography.
3. To increase understanding of the destructive consequences of these images.
4. To put an end to all portrayals of women and children being bound, raped, tortured, killed or degraded for sexual stimulation or pleasure.
5. To reclaim-redefine women's sexuality.
6. Tactics and strategies.
7. To establish, for women, the right to the same human dignity that is now verbally afforded to other oppressed classes such as Indians, Blacks and Jews.

We were shown a series of slides with commentary which was followed by a discussion.

Pornography is a very complicated area, and one in which I personally have very little expertise. I knew I didn't like it, but I wasn't sure exactly why. In discussion some of the reasons for my unease became a little clearer.

In the slides which depicted overt violence against women, or even implied violence, my distaste was clear. However, many of the slides were far more subtle in their misogyny. All of these pictures were easily obtainable, and did not represent what we today would term hard-core pornography. In this respect they were more alarming. Sources were magazines offered for sale at the local supermarket or pharmacy, advertisements in newspapers, and record jackets, among others.

The subtle exploitation was explained when we looked carefully at such things as the camera angle (aiming at a woman's genital area), or the expression on the model's face. Often it was one of passivity, or surrender, or enjoyment of domination. Again I must point out that these attitudes were subtle,

the woman seems to have no personality at all, her sole purpose in doing what she is doing in the picture is to please, attract, tempt the observer. She has no will of her own. She has become an object, not an active subject. As well, the woman is often fragmented, being a breast, leg, mouth, vagina, etc. The woman as a whole is not evident. Often the woman's head is thrown back, exposing her throat, a submissive vulnerable position.

It is this attitude of only serving the observer which was found to be distasteful.

There was discussion concerning the whole problem of eroticism versus pornography, with no clear lines between the two.

We discussed, as well, the problem of censorship versus civil rights, again with little agreement.

As I stated earlier, this is a complex area, and one which we might examine in the future, as this presentation was created by Vancouver WAVAW and may be available for speaking engagement.

Burn Out

The following is the handout for this workshop.

"I burn my candle at both ends,
It will not last the night.
But oh my foes, and oh my friends,
It gives a lovely light!"

Edna St. Vincent Millay

Feminist Activist #1: "great, when can we get together for lunch?" F.A.#2: "Let me get my calendar .. How about three months from yesterday."

"Purism taken to its extreme results in immobilism and cynicism; if we can't achieve the final good now, then we feel we can't do anything at all because it might be co-optable ... Our questions are often so basic, such as those examining power relations in all parts of our lives that we are unable to move far on them. Not knowing what to do with the immensity of what we question, we often become isolated, discouraged and immobilized."

Charlotte Bunch

"I want to see an end to violence against women in my lifetime." Overheard

Symptoms of Burn-Out

Individual-- chronic low-grade infections, feeling of being trapped, poor work, feeling of isolation, drug dependencies (caffeine, nicotine, sugar, grass, valium, alcohol, etc.) cynicism, withdrawal, impatience, depression, tiredness, insomnia, lethargy, neck and shoulder pain, gastro-intestinal problems, self-doubt, poor impulse control (tears and angry outbursts), bitterness, loss of perspective.

Collective -- too many meetings where nothing seems to get done, people obviously sitting on their feelings during meetings, chronic lateness at work and to meetings, lots of no-shows at meetings, factionalism within a group and rivalry between groups.

We discussed the problem facing every activist in the women's movement, that of overextending. It was pointed out that the classical feminine model is one of total self-sacrifice, all giving, all nurturing. One of the dangers is that even within the women's movement, we are still following this model, and the result is that we expect total dedication from ourselves and each other, at great personal expense.

We talked about the importance of the feminist learning to say "no," not only to the patriarchy, but to her sisters, when it is necessary for her well-being. We must learn to mother ourselves, take care of ourselves, and value ourselves. We should learn to set reasonable personal limits, and to have short term goals. We are not able individually to do everything, and we must see that in order to save ourselves.

We were shown that there is no need to feel guilt about privilege, as long as we are using that privilege.

It is imperative that we learn to be self-protective.

Demonstration

On Sunday, the 11th, there was a demonstration at the Cenotaph. I would like to report on that action.

At the Sunday morning workshop, we were suddenly summoned back to the main meeting room for a matter of importance. When I arrived there it appeared that some sort of demonstration was to take place, and we had to leave immediately or it would be too late. There was a brief discussion of what was about to take place, but due to the time pressure we had to move before everyone could be heard, or the issue debated.

We left the James Bay Community Centre and walked in groups of five or more towards the Parliament Buildings, where a prepared speech was to be read. We were issued copies of the speech, and proceeded to the Legislature. The speech was printed in the last issue of the Newsletter.

There were manyhundreds of people there. I don't think we expected so many. Members of the armed forces were present as well, in formation.

We approached the crowd from many angles and waited at the edge while one woman went to confer with all the small groups of BCFW women. We then quietly made our way through the crowd towards the front. All the while the ceremonies were proceeding. When we had gone as far forward as possible, a man fainted right at the front. One of our women came forward and put her coat over him, then another of our women followed suit. A third member of BCFW identified herself as a nurse and proceeded to give first aid.

While this was happening the minister finished his address, and the woman who had agreed to read the speech stepped forward and began to speak. The whole undertaking had been done with quiet dignity. A flower was placed on the Cenotaph. She read the speech almost in its entirety, but when she got to the part about coat-hanger abortions, someone tried to take the microphone away from her. There were murmers from the women present who were participating in this action, and the microphone was returned to our speaker. She finished her speech, and we walked quietly out of the crowd.

As we were walking away some people in the crowd made hostile comments such as "shame, shame," or "right sentiment,

wrong time." One woman in a wheelchair was given another flower, and she wept, and said that this was the first time that women had been remembered, and that she would never forget this remembrance day celebration.

One member of our group started to shout, "down with guns," but she quickly stopped, and we left the area, again in small groups.

The press coverage of this event was appalling. Having been present, I could hardly recognize the incident from the reports of it. This is a perfect example of media distortion of feminist events.

The crowd reaction was one of confusion rather than hostility, although there were those few vocal comments. I don't think many people there knew what had taken place.

I found the whole thing very exhilarating, especially when I discovered that there had been live coverage of the event, and we had received a lot of air time, both on radio and television. Even with the tapes which were obviously made there was great distortion in later reports.

Although this was termed a successful action, I would like to make some observations at this time.

I am, personally, in favour of such actions, but I felt that this one was successful more by accident than by planning, and that we can learn by its successes and failures.

The action was not well planned, being a last minute decision. I was encouraged to participate in a demonstration on faith, and I felt uncomfortable about it. I had little idea of what we were doing or why. I was reassured by a friend whom I trusted, so I went, otherwise I would have been reluctant to do so.

I feel that such actions must be planned, in advance, and that all participating know fully what is going to happen and why. There was never any clear discussion of the purpose of this action. Did we want women remembered for their part in wars? Did we wish to disrupt? Did we wish to be a part of

the ceremonies or outside of them? Who were we trying to reach and why? Was this for other women who might be watching, or was it for ourselves? All these questions arose, few were adequately answered.

Had we decided, in advance, on a clear purpose, some of our actions might have been different. If we wanted to bring attention to the fact that women are left out of these remembrances, would it not have been better to remain until the ceremonies were over, in respect for those women? or, did we want to get the point across that women are at war, and our fighting is still going on? Again, these issues were not clear. I feel we could have been even more effective if we had decided in advance what our aim was, and plan each step of the way in accordance with that purpose.

It was very effective, our arriving in small groups. Perhaps had we arrived en masse with signs and banners, we might not have been as well received.

I was personally concerned that I didn't know what to do. It robbed me of some of the pleasure such an action would have ordinarily given me.

I would like to state that I greatly admire the women who went that day, and was proud to have been a part of what did happen. However, I feel that we must learn from all that we do, and I mean in no way to demean their intention by my critique. I say bravo to all of us!

Business and Resolutions

The following officers were elected:

Coordinator - Miriam Azrael
Secretary/Treasurer - Stephan Crabbe
Fund Raiser - - Alice Ages
Internal Communications - Jess Lawson
External Communications - Nina Westaway
Action Facilitator - Prabha Kohslah
Members at Large - Joy Green
 Lisa Dell
 Theresa Conrow
Membership - Mary Boucher

Elaine Forsey, SWAG treasurer, will be our regional representative.

A new subcommittee was formed dealing with Women Against Prisons.

The following resolutions were passed. If anyone wants background information they can contact me and I will do my best to fill them in:

- This plenary appoint a committee to review the existing BCFW constitution and structure and bring recommendations for change in the form of resolutions to the 1980 convention, and further that this committee attempt to hold seminars in each region to get input from all member groups.
- That internal communications be a first priority next standing committee meeting for one year.
- That a day be set aside for a province-wide action on women against violence against women, around Mother's Day, and that this be facilitated by committees.
- That BCFW member groups actively support and encourage the creation of, and the use of, alternatives to the existing medical, legal, psychiatric, and social service institutions when these alternatives are based upon the concepts of: anti-professionalism, co-operation collectivism, shared decision-making, self-help, skill and information sharing, and the demystification of knowledge, professionalism and hierarchical structures.
- That BCFW actively support the eradication of violence against women.
- That BCFW actively support, through the use of such methods as letter writing, confrontation, leafletting, demonstrations actions to
 - a) protest any form of violence against women, and
 - b) publicly expose the opporessive behaviour and attitudes of individual men and institutions.
- Whereas Stelco, one of Canada's most powerful coroporations, has consistently refused to hire women at its 13,000 worker Hilton Works in Hamilton:
And whereas a campaign has been launched to change Stelco's discriminatory hiring practices by United Steelworkers of America Local 1005 at Hilton Works and by four women who have taken their complaint to the Ontario Human Rights Commission:
BE IT RESOLVED
That BCFW expresses its solidarity with USWA Local 1005 and the four Hamilton women:

And that BCFW publicize and build support for this campaign.

- Whereas the financial responsibility for management of grant money is presently the responsibility of the person signing the grant application form and that a woman is personally liable for mismanagement or loss of funds, and whereas this responsibility could be regionally dispersed, be it resolved that the future funding applications be signed by a number of women equal to the number needed for a quorum of the standing committee.

- Whereas government funding will be available only to those groups incorporated under the Societies Act, be it resolved that the standing committee research the financial and political pros and cons for the Federation of incorporation as a non-reporting society.

And be it resolved that a report, including a recommendation for or against incorporation be presented to the membership at Convention 1980.

- Be it resolved that the BCFW reiterate its position to the Attorney General of B.C. that all charges against the SFU 18 be dropped, by sending a delegation to his office on Tuesday, November 13, 1979.
- That the BCFW actively support the defense campaign of the SFU 18 by:

1. encouraging each member group in the Lower Mainland to send one representative to an organizational meeting to build a public meeting in support of the SFU 18 on the theme of Equal Pay for Work of Equal Value. This organizational meeting to take place on Sunday, November 18 at Britannia Community Centre .

2. distributing information on this campaign through the subcommittee to BCFW member groups and encouraging that these groups distribute this information to labour organizations and community groups in their area.

3. that BCFW member groups send telegrams to Garde Gardom demanding that these charges be dropped, and financially support the SFU 18 defense committee if possible.

- That the BCFW oppose sexual harassment
That the BCFW encourage its member groups to support women who are sexually harassed, and
That the BCFW encourage organizations

such as unions and community groups to develop and enforce strong policy opposing sexual harassment.

- That the BCFW demand that the Department of Labour, the Human Rights Branch and other governmental bodies develop and enforce strong policy against sexual harassment.
- That BCFW demand of the Unemployment Insurance Commission that they recognize sexual harassment as a valid reason for leaving employment and immediately entitle women for benefits.



N.D.P. M.P.'s

Margaret Mitchell

Svend Robinson

for blocking a private members' bill that would have strengthened the law against abortions

TURKEY OF THE MONTH -



Liberal M.P. Hal Herbert

for introducing a private member's bill that would have strengthened the Criminal Code provision that a hospital committee can approve an abortion if the health of the mother is endangered. The bill would have defined endangered to remove any question that the social and economic consequences of a pregnancy would be taken into consideration by the committees.

Conservative M.P.'s Doug Roche and John Reimer strongly supported the bill!

LABOUR

Jean Newton

On October 14 I attended the Conference of Working Women Unite in Vancouver. The conference was well attended by women employed in a wide variety of jobs and had an encouraging atmosphere of supportiveness. The number of interesting sounding workshops offered made the choosing in the time allotted difficult. I decided on the workshop on Women in Non-Traditional Jobs and the one on Immigrant and Third World Women.

The workshop on non-traditional jobs was conducted by a panel of women who work in jobs so categorized. Non-traditional jobs were defined as those not being an extension of the work women do in the home and also, being considered mainly "men's jobs," as paying well. Lack of confidence in learning a non-traditional skill was cited as a major barrier for women considering such occupations, but all the women present who worked in non-traditional jobs stressed that confidence does improve as the skill is learned. Difficulties encountered in non-traditional jobs were said to include the conspicuousness of being the only (or one of very few) women in a male crew; the pressure of feeling that a woman must prove herself on the job as a representative of other women; and the difficulty of being accepted by male co-workers who are unsure of "proper behaviour" around a woman. Pleasures in doing non-traditional work included a sense of physical well-being; improved self-esteem at being able to earn good wages; increasing confidence and self assurance; and a feeling of comradeship in working in a crew. Some of the women who attended the workshop plan to organize a Women in the Trades group to offer support, information, and encouragement to women working in non-traditional jobs or those interested in such careers. B.C. offers a women's exploratory apprenticeship training programme through Manpower. The programme allows women to gain some exposure to work in 12 trade areas with the aim of helping interested women gain confidence and do a self-assessment of their ability to pursue non-traditional training

programmes.

The second workshop I attended on the subject of immigrant women focused mainly on the problems faced by women who come to Canada to work as domestics or farm workers. The picture is grim and ought to be an embarrassment to anyone espousing Canada as a country of opportunity. Heading the many injustices to immigrants working as farm and domestic workers is their lack of inclusion under basic labour legislation. Workers are not paid even minimum wage, work long days with no overtime pay, and get no sick or holiday pay. Many immigrants do not speak English, are fearful of being deported, are obviously economically impoverished, and are unaware of any legal rights they might have to help improve their situation.

Domestic workers, if they are in a bargaining position, may draw up a legally acknowledge contract with an employer stating number of hours work required, days sick leave, pay, etc. Farm workers often work through contractors who serve as middle men between the workers and the farmer, and though workers are attempting to unionize and therefore be able to do their own contracting, they have had little help from either political party in B. C. and continue to live in deplorable conditions. Having boycotted California lettuce and grapes in support of American farm workers, I was naively surprised at the equally bad, underpublicized situation of B. C. farm workers. And the situation is worst for women who, in most families, share not only in earning wages but carry on with work at home and the burden of caring for children under conditions of extreme deprivation.

EVERYWOMANS BOOKS
641 Johnson St.

ABORTION: A WOMAN'S RIGHT TO CHOOSE

Maxine Boag

Our right to safe legal abortion in Canada is being seriously threatened by the recent efforts of the national anti-abortion groups to outlaw abortion. More than 300 Campaign Life delegates met in Ottawa in late November to lobby MPs to change the existing abortion legislation and cut payments to Planned Parenthood of Canada, because of their sex education and abortion counselling services. The resulting Bill was successfully blocked by two NDP members, but the struggle is far from over. The recent Stats Canada report stating that B.C. has the highest number of abortions in all provinces, prompted Rafe Mair, Minister of Health, to announce that he will launch an investigation into B.C.'s accredited hospitals to see if any are performing "illegal" abortions. And here in Victoria, there are 3 to 4 letters every week in local newspapers from anti-choice groups demanding that abortion be outlawed in Canada.

WHAT CAN WE DO?

Write letters expressing your views to newspapers, to your MP, and join

CARAL, the only national organization working full-time for abortion law repeal. For your \$10 membership, you can make your influence felt at this critical time, and show your support for freedom of choice in the matter of abortion. CARAL (the Canadian Association for the Repeal of the Abortion Laws) is a grass-roots organization, working without government grants or the support of wealthy religious organizations, and will keep you up-to-date about the national situation, and inform you on what is happening in other provinces.

We have only a small number of CARAL members in Victoria, and we need your support desperately. We will be meeting on Wednesday, January 9, at 6:30 p.m. at Cathy's place, 241 Howe Street, for a pot-luck supper, to discuss 1980 strategies and action. Join us; or send your \$10 membership fee to:

CARAL

Box 6282, Depot C.

Victoria, B. C.

V8P 5L5

CATHY



FROM MANITOBA SWAG.

THREE CHEERS FOR PRO-LIFE

Away in a manger,
No crib for a bed,
The cribs are all empty,
The mothers all dead.
They all died in childbirth,
Or 'neath the butcher's sharp knife,
They got illegal abortions,
To salvage their lives.

And some, they got pregnant,
Through incest or rape,
And how could they know that
The condom would break.
And some were just twelve,
Some were forty-three,
They got illegal abortions,
In fear of deformity.

Those nice folks, the Millers,
Barbara and Jack,
Already feedin' four mouths
On a welfare cheque.
And remember Susie Powell,
So young and so free,
She didn't know Tom was lyin'
'Bout his vasectomy.

An' then there's Gloria Baxter,
The Mayor's charming young wife,
She bled to death just last week,
'Neath the butcher's sharp knife.
And all this cause some people
Who call themselves "pro-live,"
Made abortion illegal, and
Brought back the knife.

Pam Hogan, for Mother's Day

-- Tune: Away in a Manger

-- The above names are fictitious.

"As common sense has long told us, and as experimental psychology has recently made overwhelmingly clear, nervous systems demand to be used. Deprived of exercise, they rot, produce pathological aberrations, or at best drive their owners into fixed patterns of sterile activity: The visual system of the chimpanzee reared in darkness deteriorates. The human subject in a sensory-deprivation experiment hallucinates. The captive squirrel runs monotonously in his circular treadmill. The laboratory rat rigidly alternates between left and right pathways, both leading to the same reward, in a too familiar maze. My neighbour imprisoned in underdemanding housewifery waxes and rewaxes her intrinsically shiny vinyl floor".

from

The Mermaid and The Minotaur

Dorothy Dinnerstein

.....

"From education we gain higher expectations, and from there we move through anger and into the will for self-determination, to seizing power over our own lives, to reclaiming the products of our labor (our own sexual definition, and our own children), and, ultimately, to transforming the quality of life itself in society, as a whole -into something new, compassionate, and truly sane!"

Going Too Far...Robin Morgan

I apologize for the "blat" of ink. The typewriter was fixed yesterday, and is still cutting through the stencils. I've had the biscuit with the thing!

HAPPY HOLIDAYS - Lois

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