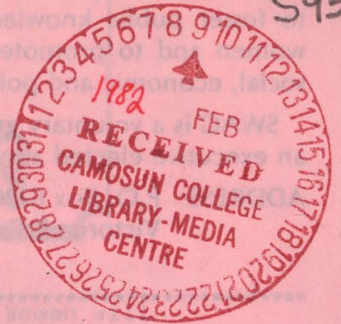


CAREY ROAD

swag STATUS OF WOMEN NEWS

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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 592-4215
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Feminist History	Alice Albert 382-1536
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Newsletter Editorial Board	Lois Vickery, Shirley Avril, Catherine Winter
Editor	Catherine Winter 592-1281 Ext. 378

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?

January 26 to March 16, Tuesdays

Harnessing Dreams: Creative Job Search for Women. A course conducted by Rowena Hunnisett and Susan Moger. Register with Rowena, 384-2833 or Susan 592-4215. Cost \$40. Location: Women's Building Office. Time: 7-9 p.m. Bursaries available for women on G.A.I.N. and low-income women.

January 27, Wednesday

Women and Pensions 12:10 - 1:00 p.m. at Robson Square Media Theatre, Vancouver. Speaker: Freda Paltiel of National Health and Welfare Canada.

January 29, Friday

Victoria Women's Network will meet at the Imperial Inn at 7:30 p.m. There will be a speaker and a bar. There is a small admission charge. For information contact: Sandra Aitken 652-4359.

January 30, Saturday

Pension Reform Conference sponsored by the British Columbia Women's Liberal Commission. Speaker: Judy Erola. Time 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Place: Denman Inn, Vancouver. Fee, including lunch, \$20. Contact: Pension Conference, 201 - 1894 West Broadway, Vancouver, BC V6J 1Y9.

January 31, Sunday

Feminist History Group Meeting at 3:15 at Alice Albert's, 453 Moss Street. Speaker: Stella Lord. Topic: The Struggle for Equal Pay.

February 1, 2, Monday and Tuesday

Marylee Stephenson, author of Women in Canada will be in town. She will be talking about the journal, Resources for Feminist Research. If anyone is interested in meeting and speaking with her, contact either Marjorie Mitchell or Catherine Winter at 592-1281.

February 17, Wednesday

Business and Professional Women will meet at the Imperial Inn, Discovery and Douglas. Social hour is 6 p.m., dinner at 6:30. Program at 7:45 is a Salute to the International Federation.

February 24-26, Wednesday-Friday

Women in the Justice System Conference. Island Hall, Parksville. Registration: \$90.00. Contact: Women in the Justice System, P.O. Box 69579, Station "K", Vancouver, BC V5K 4W7 or Malene Coffin 873-5501; Terry Leary 669-2880.

March 6, Saturday

Pensions - Focus on Women. A conference sponsored by a coalition of Vancouver Women's Groups. Registration deadline February 15. Fee \$15. Contact: Pensions - Focus on Women, c/o Hycroft, University Women's Club, 1489 McRae Ave., Vancouver, BC V6H 1V1.

March 7, Sunday

Women's Building Society Fund Raising Dinner. For more information call the office at 381-4133.

March 12-15, Friday-Monday

National Action Committee Annual Convention in Ottawa. For information contact: Shirley Avril, 386-4467.

July 5-11, 15-17

Festival '82: A Celebration of the Arts By, For and About Women. To be held in Vancouver. If you are interested in participating, contact: Carol Street, P.O. Box 1032, Stn. A, Vancouver V6C 2P1. Phone 681-8557. Brochure available from Catherine Winter, 592-1281 ext. 378.

Letters



Dear Ms. Lord:

Thank you for your letter of November 14, 1981.

The issue of training programmes to facilitate the entry of women into non-traditional jobs is an important one and one for which I have great sympathy. Personally, I believe that we could do more than we have done.

I am placing your letter on the agenda of our Board meeting of December 14, 1981. At that time, the Board will decide what constitutes an appropriate response. Board meetings are open and the public is welcome, if you or the members of SWAG wish to hear the Board discussion at that time.

Martin Levin, Chairman
Greater Victoria School Board

* * * * *

Dear Ms. Winter:

Your letter to Earle Tabor, Chairman of the Board of the Vancouver Island Regional Library has been given to me to acknowledge after being read by members of the Executive.

Your last paragraph has been followed by the Board acting through its bargaining committee since July 1981, when the job action began. It was noted that there had been no attempt on your part to verify any of the charges which you level at the Board throughout the letter. It is also a doubtful premise that you see the issues as women's issues only.

Thank you however, for taking the time to do your part in trying to restore library service to the people in the Regional Library area. It is greatly missed and we can only hope that when service is restored that people will get back the habit of visiting their public library for information and recreation.

Fred T. White
Secretary/Treasurer

* * * * *

The Sylph Salons
Victoria, BC

Our organization has received a complaint from one of your members regarding your newspaper advertising.

The advertisement in question, which has appeared repeatedly in the

Times-Colonist, portrays a slim female stepping out of an obese torso, with the caption, "wonders still happen ...".

We, of course, do not debate the importance of physical fitness, nor the harmful relationship of excess weight to health. We take exception, however, to the attitude so prevalent today (and apparent in your ad) that excess fat is "ugly"; that women must be slim to conform to arbitrary (male) standards of female attractiveness and beauty.

This only serves to perpetuate harmful and restrictive stereotypes, and fosters in women feelings of inadequacy, self-loathing, and guilt. (Taken to extremes, such attitudes result in mental disorders such as Anorexia Nervosa.)

We are, of course, a culture obsessed with physical "perfection," with superficial appearances. Countless products (such as yours) exploit and encourage this female preoccupation. Excess weight should be treated as a health hazard, not a possible impediment to the ability to attract men. The former will foster positive, healthy attitudes; the latter, ultimately, will only serve to increase feelings of insecurity, inadequacy, and self-hate.

This kind of advertising plays on women's insecurities, and we hope to see an immediate improvement.

Pamela L. Blackstone
Correspondence Co-ord.

* * * * *

Minister of Consumer and
Corporate Affairs

Dear Mr. Hyndman:

I am writing to advise that we have received a complaint about the cartoons in your booklet, "B.C. Trade Practice Act."

On viewing the cartoons in question, I must endorse the complainant's opinion that those portraying women (only two, in fact) are sexist.

The first (on page 4) portrays the woman's concern (and thus the woman herself) being flippantly and contemptuously dismissed. This is an insult to women, in the familiar guise of "humour."

The second, however, (page 8) exceeds any question of acceptability. It is offensive and sexist. It plays on stereotypical attitudes about the importance of women's appearance, and the need for women to conform to certain arbitrary "beauty" values. We find this highly offensive.

How can society's values change in a more positive, egalitarian direction, when even the government continues to subtly condone obnoxious sexist attitudes? Disguising sexism as "humour" does not make it any less offensive. I trust you will review the cartoons in question, and see that they are replaced with ones which do not treat women with contempt.

Pamela L. Blackstone
Correspondence Co-ord.

cc: Norm Levi, MLA
NDP Critic for Consumer & Corp.
Affairs

* * * * *

Dear Miss Lord:

Thank you for your letter of November 14, 1981 on behalf of the Status of Women Action Group.

I appreciate being advised of the resolution which was passed at your recent fall conference in Victoria and thank you for bringing it to my attention.

I have read your letter with interest and have noted the points you have raised. I must, however, clarify your concerns in this respect.

First of all, your group does not appear to be realizing the potential of our clients. Over 62% of single parent clients have high school graduation or other specialized training that fits them for the job market and many of the remainder have additional on the job training that enhances their job skills. Only 3.5% have no labour market experience before becoming dependent upon income assistance - 51.9% have worked in the six months prior to coming to us for help, 64% have worked in the previous year and 78.4% have worked in the previous two years.

This government believes strongly that employment offers greater opportunities than does dependency upon assistance and the figures I have quoted prove that our clients are able to be self-supporting, contributing members of the community if given the support and encouragement to re-enter the labour force.

I recognize that such support can be of vital importance to some. These are the clients who need help in upgrading or developing their particular skills or in simply enhancing their feelings of confidence and self-worth. Last year, my Ministry introduced the Individual Opportunity Plan for this purpose. I am enclosing a pamphlet on the program for your information but, in essence, members of my staff discuss the individual needs and requirements of each client and jointly they look into the various programs available to assist the client to reach the goals of independence. There is no waiting period to enter the program. Clients can be counselled whenever they apply to us for financial help.

The program has proved most effective and I was very pleased to be able to announce that it has been expanded through the employment of additional staff throughout the province to provide further services to our clients.

The policies are not new. At all times it has been understood that long term dependency upon income assistance was not in the best interests of the clients or of their children. Most single parents obviously believe this as well. The majority are working and if we take a group of single parents coming on income assistance in February 1980, 57.6% required help for only four months or less with 26.6% of these requiring assistance for one month only. It is apparent that long term dependency on government funds is not seen as desirable by the great majority of single parents.

I should also note that when a single parent re-enters the employment field, my Ministry, if necessary, may cover their medical benefits for up to one year. At the same time, day care can be subsidized either through group day care centres or through family and in-home day care and this subsidy which was increased in April has again been increased to further assist young mothers. Effective December 1, 1981, my Ministry made a 10% across-the-board increase in the day care subsidy rate. This increase, affecting all categories of day care subsidies, follows the average 16% increase implemented in April of this year. This is in addition to the three quarters of a million dollars allocated in August for start-up, expansion and relocation grants to day care societies and expansion of the in-home day care program. These increases in our subsidy rates will go a long way in attracting qualified new caregivers and will also increase the number of day care spaces.

Another provision to improve access to day care entails the addition of new staff positions within my Ministry to ensure the adequate assessment and monitoring of unlicensed day care services, and to speed up the processing of application from new day care homes. In addition, my Ministry will make lists of approved family homes available in all District Offices. The Health Ministry will also assist by posting up to date lists of licensed facilities in local Health Units. These lists will provide current information about day care facility vacancies to parents who are seeking care for their children. I know that these new initiatives will offer additional supports to our clients and particularly to single mothers in their efforts to become independent.

I have answered you at some length because I feel that full information can eliminate the confusion that appears to have arisen about our policies. I believe that our clients can be helped to become independent. We have the programs to assist them to reach their goals. They now need the support of the community. I trust that your group will recognize our clients' efforts and through your interest and good wishes, support our desire to help them to attain a successful and better life for themselves and their children.

I send my best wishes.

Grace M. McCarthy, Minister

* * * * *

Dear Ms. Blackstone:

Thank you for your letter of 1 November 1981, in which you request special consideration for your organization with regard to the proposed increase in postal rates.

I appreciate the substantial social contributions made by organizations such as yours. However, in its new role as a Crown Corporation, I do not feel it appropriate for Canada Post to be called upon to indirectly subsidize the many worthy organizations by way of postal rates.

The Canada Post Corporation has received on a number of occasions, representations from various groups and non-profit charitable organizations for special rates of postage. In recognition of these requests, postal officials have undertaken discussions with officials of the Department of Secretary of State concerned with

voluntary action groups. It is hoped that these discussions will lead to an assessment of the concept of other government branches funding concessionary postage rates for non-profit organizations.

In light of this, I could suggest that your Status of Women Action Group consider making representations to:

Mr. Arthur New, Director
Voluntary Action Program
Citizens Participation Directorate
Department of Secretary of State
15 Eddy Street
Hull, Quebec K1A 0M5

I hope that this information clarifies the situation for your organization, thank you for writing.

R. Michael Warren, President
Canada Post Corporation

* * * * *

Dear Ms. Lord:

Thank you for your letter of November 14, 1981. The Board of School Trustees of School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria) has asked me to reply and to advise you that we are forwarding a copy of your letter to the School Support Services Department, for their consideration.

The Board, however, wished me to point out that it does not believe that the present job being performed is inadequate.

Peter Yorke,
Chairman of the Board

cc: C.A. Warner

* * * * *

Mr. Jim de Domville
Commissioner
National Film Board

I am writing on behalf of the 250 members of our organization, with regard to the film "Not A Love Story" produced by the N.F.B.

I wish to commend you, and the N.F.B. (which has always been a fore-runner in daring the unorthodox, and certainly no stranger to controversy) for the courage required to produce this excellent film.

I have viewed "Not A Love Story" twice, with much pain and sadness and anger. I can confirm, for both myself and the many women in this community who have experienced the film that

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Bonnie Klein achieves her objective of reaching and arousing women's anger at what the pornographers are doing to our flesh. The film is enraging, profoundly moving, and technically superb.

It is not in the least surprising to me that this film has become embroiled in controversy and even banned in other provinces. Both its explicit sexual content and its strong feminist analysis doomed it to censure from those with thick skulls and narrow minds as well as the rigidly defensive "liberal" apologists for pornography. The fact that it is an uncompromising feminist statement guarantees it to alienate certain audiences. It is sadly amusing - but not unexpected - to me that it is being banned for the explicit content of the very thing it is attempting to fight: pornographic images. It is revealing, indeed, that this film is being requested for use at "stag" parties.

I write mainly to congratulate you on an excellent film, which took courage and integrity to produce. I can assure you that Ms. Klein has indeed achieved her goal with many of the female viewers. This film is provoking unprecedented dialogue - among feminists and non-feminists alike - around pornography. She has opened many eyes.

The narrow minded backlash presently being experienced is - sadly - inevitable. SWAG supports you wholeheartedly in the battle to ensure continuing public access to this important film. We hope you will appeal its banning in the three provinces which have seen fit to censure it. Above all, we don't wish to see the N.F.B. swayed by the negativity this film is certain to encounter! Don't lose your faith in it. It is, simply, far too important a film to be shelved in some N.F.B. back room.

Pamela L. Blackstone

cc: Wally Lee
Bonnie Klein

Dear Mrs. Blackstone:

Thank you for your letter congratulating us for NOT A LOVE STORY.

You will be interested to know that we have clearances from all provinces, except Ontario, to hold public screenings of the film, although in some cases some provinces have not granted commercial licences. We are trying to have the Ontario Censor Board judgment reversed. In any event, the population of Ontario does have access to the film through a variety of sources.

Your support for the NFB and the film are very much appreciated.

James de B. Domville

* * * * *

Enclosed is a copy of the report on the Public Hearings held by the Task Force on Older Women in the fall of 1980.

We wish to thank you for the information and assistance you gave to this project.

An on-going committee is developing policy and programmes, utilizing the knowledge gained during the research phase of the Task Force. We hope its proposals will be of interest to you.

Again, many thanks.

Mercia Stickney
(for) THE TASK FORCE ON OLDER WOMEN

NOTE: This report is available from the Archives.

* * * * *

Dr. Lloyd Morin
Principal
Camosun College

The Victoria Status of Women Action Group have been made aware of and firmly support the recommendations proposed by Eda Conner in regard to Women's Access Programming at Camosun College.

We urge you to make a priority funding need the hiring of a full time staff person for women's programming. To be effective the person needs to be in a position to program necessary courses for women. The percentage of women attending Camosun must surely justify at least one full time staff person for women's programming.

Camosun College is also in a position to put emphasis on women's programming for non-traditional jobs.

At our Women and Work Conference in October, 1981, we distributed the B.C. Ministry of Labour women's non-traditional employment program information sheet. Since the Ministry of Labour not only endorses but also is providing for the improvements and expansion of working opportunities for women it seems consistent to think that funding must be available for the education and training facilities and staff required to make such employment actually possible for women.

Avis Rasmussen
Status of Women Action Group

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Canada's Human Life Amendment: The Borowski Challenge to the Abortion Laws

The Canadian equivalent of the U.S. Human Life Amendment, which would outlaw all abortions and classify some forms of birth control as murder, has been launched. It is the Borowski challenge to the validity of the abortion laws.

On December 1, 1981, the Canadian Supreme Court agreed to hear a suit brought by Joseph Borowski of Manitoba against the 1969 amendments to the Criminal Code. Those amendments make it legal to perform abortions as long as they are done in "accredited" hospitals and follow very restrictive guidelines. Borowski wants the law declared invalid on the grounds that the Bill of Rights protects fetuses.

Presumably, he will bring in doctors and scientists to testify that human life begins at conception. Should his suit succeed, the door will be open to prosecuting women who have had abortions, and doctors who perform them, for murder. Use of birth control such as the IUD, which prevents implantation of the fertilized egg, might also violate the law. And of course, there would be no more abortions performed in hospitals. The clock would turn back to the days of the wire coat-hanger.

Borowski is well-known for his anti-woman actions. He was named Highways Minister in the Manitoba NDP government but resigned his position in 1971 to devote himself to an anti-abortion crusade. He went to jail for withholding taxes to protest against the abortion laws. In 1981 he went on a 40-day hunger fast. These flamboyant gestures now give way to a serious threat against Canadian women because of the Supreme Court's December ruling.

THE DECEMBER 1 RULING

There are several alarming features to the thinking of the justices who will hear and rule on Borowski's challenge. While the phrases quoted here follow the strictures of legal language and are used to convey precise legal meaning, their broader implications for women are evident.

The justices are emphatic in viewing abortion as principally illegal. As the majority opinion, written by Justice Martland, puts it: "The legislation under attack here...provides that in certain specified circumstances conduct which would otherwise be criminal is permissible." The justices speak as though some

Canadians are already getting away with "murder".

The crux of the December 1 decision is to confer legal "standing" on Borowski, thus entitling him to present his case in the Court. The rule of standing excludes a person from bringing an issue to court unless he has "the most direct interest" in it. Of course Borowski, who is male and is not a doctor, can neither get pregnant nor perform abortions.

Only twice before has a member of the public been allowed to challenge the validity of adopted legislation which did not directly affect them. Most of the 25-page text of the December 1 ruling is an examination of these precedents and of how various groups of Canadians "stand" in relation to the abortion law.

The groups given consideration are doctors who perform therapeutic abortions and doctors who do not. Similarly, hospitals that appoint therapeutic abortion committees, and those who do not are considered. Ignored in the ruling are women who may challenge the law because of the enormous obstacles in obtaining a legal abortion. "There is no reason", the justices say, "that a pregnant woman desirous of obtaining an abortion should challenge the legislation which is to her benefit."

With these words, they close their eyes to the fact that the majority of Canadian women do not live anywhere near a hospital that performs abortions, and that millions find legal abortion unobtainable.

Nowhere in the ruling are women spoken of as human beings with basic rights. Feminists have challenged the validity of the abortion laws since the 1969 amendments were adopted, but this challenge is not acknowledged.

The justices have this to say about fetuses:

The legislation proposed to be attacked has a direct impact upon the unborn human fetuses whose existence may be terminated by legalised abortions. They obviously cannot be parties to proceedings in court and yet the issue as to the scope of the Canadian Bill of Rights in the protection of the human right to life is a matter of considerable importance.

There is no reasonable way in which that issue can be brought into Court unless proceedings are launched by some interested citizen.

And thus the door was opened for Borowski and the anti-abortion movement to go to the Supreme Court.

WHAT MUST BE DONE

The strongest and best defence against the Borowski challenge is to mobilise all our supporters in a massive, continuing expression of support for a woman's right to choose.

We do not know when the case may come to court, but it is vital to use the time ahead to good advantage, to show that the majority of Canadians support a woman's right to choose and call for repeal of the anti-abortion laws.

National CARAL is investigating ways to make presentations to the Court. CARAL's Executive-Director, Kathleen Martindale, says: "If Borowski wins, we could lose everything. But now, we have to spend all our time, energies, and money just to keep the crummy law we have now. We can't choose not to fight this one."

Protests are being planned across the Province for the weekend of Mothers' Day, May 8 - 9, 1982, by the B.C. Federation of Women, the Concerned Citizens for Choice on Abortion, and locally by CARAL Victoria. We need your help to make these actions effective. Contact Maxine at 385-5054 or Jennifer 474-1482 for further information.

DEFEND A WOMEN'S RIGHT TO CHOOSE
REPEAL ALL ANTI-ABORTION LAWS!

Maxine Boag & Ann Thomson

SWAG Co-ordinator's Report for 1981

We had another busy year of meetings, conferences, correspondence, telephone consultations, crises calls, briefs, display tables, monitoring, petitions, monthly newsletters and annual conferences.

We introduced a couple of structural changes which proved beneficial. The changing of the executive titles to co-ordinators reflected a more co-operative, non-hierarchical structure we wished to achieve. The changing of committees to contact/resource persons eliminated some of the meetings.

Our conference theme this year was Women & Employment. This coming year we will celebrate our tenth annual conference. I would suggest it be multi-focused and one specific person co-ordinate the many tasks.

Over the last couple of years we have reached a turning point in our organization. It is unrealistic to expect that this work will continue without an office and at least a part-time co-ordinator/office manager. We have received a Secretary of State Grant to research solutions to these problems. Shirley Avril is checking local resources/spaces and Pam Blackstone is investigating methods of funding to ensure our financial independence. The voluntary positions will remain, but hopefully the work load will be lessened.

I want to thank the care of dedicated women, who for the past year, have carried on SWAG's work while juggling employment, studies, homes and families. While there is a growing awareness around the issues that concern women, most of the problems remain. If we are to make any changes, we must prepare for a long-term battle. Part of this preparation must be an office space to provide access to our growing resource material and a phone to relieve some of the calls to our co-ordinating committee. Part of this preparation must be a part-time/full-time paid co-ordinator/office manager.

Our SWAG retreat will be held at Pacific Centre on February 5th and 6th. This traditionally has been a very productive Friday evening and Saturday. It is also a relaxing time and gives us an opportunity to socialize. I would encourage members to join us for this session.

In Sisterhood,
Lois Vickery

Mental Health Act amended without Consultation by Nicole Laplante

The directors of mental institutions in B.C. now have the power to authorize treatment for new categories of involuntarily admitted patients. Like prisoners, for example.

The amendments to the Mental Health Act, which most citizens in B.C. have probably never heard about were voted on last June and came into force August 4.

What this means is that the law now authorizes the director of a provincial mental facility and a person in charge of a psychiatric unit to sign "consent to treatment" forms on behalf of a patient detained in such a facility. The treatment is then deemed to be given with the patient's consent.

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Even if the patient is, in law, capable of making his or her own decisions and of managing his or her own affairs, he/she can have his/her decision over-riden by the director.

Changes affect prisoners most.

To whom does this law apply?

*A person admitted involuntarily on one medical certificate under section 23 of the Act;

*A person admitted involuntarily after being apprehended by police and certified for an emergency admission or up to 72 hours by a doctor under section 24(1) of the Act;

*A person arrested under a Form A warrant and admitted to hospital for up to 72 hours under section 24(2) of the Act;

*A person transferred to a mental institution from a correctional centre or from a prison or lock-up operated by a police force under section 25 of the Act;

*A person detained in a provincial mental health facility after having been found not guilty of a criminal charge by reason of insanity, or unfit to stand trial by reason of insanity.

"Before the amendments to the Mental Health Act were adopted, these categories of patients may have been treated with or without their consent. The law, then, did not allow it. Now it does," explains Gerald Green, lawyer with the Vancouver Community Legal Assistance Society and Riverview patients' advocate.

"These amendments are very important changes in the law. They have been made without sufficient, if any, consultation with the public," Green says.

In the legislative process, there must be advance consultation with interested and affected people by those responsible for drafting changes in the law. For that reason, three readings have to be made.

The first reading is notification to the public and legislators. Media and official opposition are alerted, to ensure the bill's implications are understood. The second reading is so principles can be discussed, after which there is the committee stage for detailed examination and amendment. The third reading is for reconsideration.

Fight these amendments now

"The first and second readings were so close that there was no time for debate," complains Green. "These amendments were not even listed under the Mental Health Act. They were under the Miscellaneous Statute Amendments Act, with 26 other different acts."

The amendments to the Mental Health Act were made in such a way that interested people, concerned or affected by these changes, had no opportunity to express their opinions.

Did the government only consult people it thought would accept the amendments? It didn't consult the Canadian Mental Health Society, or many doctors and lawyers who could have opposed the changes.

What can the general public do?

Express your dissatisfaction. Make a lot of noise. Send delegations to the Ministry of Health and to the opposition. Write to the media. Meet with the directors of provincial mental institutions.

Let the government know you don't agree with the secrecy of its consultation system.

Kinesis, Dec/Jan, 1982, p.3.

Birth Control in the Third World by Cathy Ellis

When one thinks of Latin America in terms of a population explosion, many people are quick to say that if they would only limit their families to one or two children - like us - their problems would be over. Many people even blame the population of the Third World for creating worldwide poverty and hunger.

International family planning campaigns advertise prosperity and a better life for its participants, but in reality do nothing to improve the living conditions or health of the people. The aim of these population control campaigns is to limit the fertility of Third World people so there will be fewer of them to fight for a better standard of living.

Under the guise of helping Latin American countries out of under-development, U.S. population programs funded by government agencies are the main force in the population control drive. Certain segments of the population are singled out as targets of population control, according to the needs of transnational corporations. Target populations for birth control are also selected in areas with high

Announcements

unemployment and poverty as a solution to these social problems.

In 1975-76, over two-thirds of all U.S. assistance for health improvements in the Third World was allocated to family planning. Millions of dollars were given for research into more effective measures. Women, without having given their permission, are being experimented on like animals. Many times they are tricked into it. The World Health Organization, the International Planned Parenthood Federation and the Ford and Rockefeller Foundations have put millions of dollars into the investigation and testing of new contraceptives.

One drug called depo-provera has recently been in the news when it was found that it had been given to a number of American women in the Kansas City area. This drug has never been approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for contraceptive use, but only for the temporary treatment of uterine cancer. Despite this fact, women have been given this drug for birth control purposes both in the U.S.A. and abroad. The over-supply, which amounts to 500,000 doses per year, is being dumped on Third World countries, prescribed by doctors and sold over the counter in drug stores as a contraceptive.

The manufacturer of depo-provera, the Upjohn pharmaceutical company, continues to circulate the drug despite many reports of dangerous side effects, which include infertility, severe mental disorders, depression, cancer, lowered resistance to infections, loss of hair, marked weight loss or gain, inhibition of bone growth and possible interference with the normal development of reproductive organs in breast-fed children.

It is being widely used in Mexico, Columbia, Bolivia and Peru. Women in these countries often cannot afford to see a doctor if they suffer side effects from the drug.

In June, 1981, the United States Agency for International Development announced a reversal of their policy: they will distribute depo-provera abroad (legally), even though the FDA has rejected it for contraceptive use in the U.S.A. because of potential hazards.

Other items barred from the U.S. market but distributed in the Third World include: Syntex Corporation's 'mini-pill', dropped after tests revealed mammary tumors in experimental animals; and 'once a month' pills, which

have already made their way into Mexico. Birth control pills such as Norinyl 1 + 80 are used in the Third World, although their high level of estrogen may be dangerous to undernourished women.

Sterilization has been a popular method of birth control in countries such as Puerto Rico. Starting in the late 1930s, U.S. interests in the sugar industry demanded a control over population expansion. A bill was passed in the Puerto Rican legislature in 1937 allowing sterilization for "health reasons". The severe lack of health care in the island made diseases such as malnutrition, parasite and malaria rampant. Therefore, it became common to sterilize any person who was in poor health. Women were often sterilized post-partum (following birth). By 1968, about one-third of Puerto Rican women had been sterilized - all because their standard of living was so poor and there was no other method of birth control open to them.

U.S. investment expansion in Puerto Rico's heavy industries, such as mining and petro-chemicals, requires fewer labourers than before. The sterilization campaigns are geared to the low economic sectors and the unemployed. To solve Puerto Rico's economic problem, planners offer one solution - further population control, which could result in genocide within the next 20 years.

The myth that poverty is caused by a large population within a small area is destroyed by the examples of Paraguay, Bolivia, Nicaragua and Honduras. These countries are poor and yet their population is sparse. In Bolivia, population control is strongly encouraged. In the late 70s in a rural area of Bolivia, some members of the Peace Corps set up a rural clinic. As well as practising general medicine, they sterilized many women post-partum, without their consent. When the local people discovered that the women who had had their babies in that clinic could not get pregnant again and those who had their babies at home could, they realized what was being done. Some local men went to the clinic and castrated the Peace Corps workers.

Since the fall of Salvador Allende's government in Chile, the Augusto Pinochet government has severely cut back health services. Forty percent of the national health budget is allotted to the population planning program which is specifically aimed at reducing the numbers of the poor and unemployed.

In Guatemala, one percent of the population owns 80 percent of the land. Over the years, the people have made attempts at social reform and redistribution of land. There are 77 multinational corporations investing in Guatemala. The government, which supports these investments, is backed by an army heavily financed by U.S. funds. These corporations will do anything to prevent redistribution of land. What could be more effective than sterilizing people in areas of guerilla activity and social unrest?

A simple injection method of sterilization was tried out on women in San Juan de Dios, a hospital for poor and working class people. Transportation costs to and from the hospital were offered as an incentive for the women to participate in the experiment. The method consisted of an injection of 5 mm of paraformaldehyde through the vagina into the uterus. It was expected that paraformaldehyde would inflame and block the Fallopian tubes and therefore cause sterility.

The experiment called for 48 of these women to be given hysterectomies a few weeks after sterilizing to be sure that the tubes were indeed blocked. One woman suffered bronchial spasms, presumably because the doctor accidentally injected the solution into her veins. Since one-half of the funds for the experiment were allotted to the study of toxic effects, the researchers must have known how dangerous this chemical was when injected into the human body.

There are many examples of similar experimental cruelty. When the pill was first tested in Puerto Rico, three deaths occurred among women tested. The researchers claimed that the women were unhealthy anyway, and three deaths during the experimentation weren't unusual.

During my three years' work in a rural health clinic in southern Mexico, I saw how U.S. funds were used to change the direction of health care. Birth control pills and IUDs are free and consistently available in district health offices, while vitamins, iron and oral antibiotics are consistently unavailable. In areas where the birth control programs are strongly pushed, beautiful new four-wheel drive jeeps are supplied by the U.S. for the transportation of medical workers in the population control brigades. In areas where the people have not accepted birth control practices, or in towns which don't have roads and are therefore too difficult to reach to administer birth control, there is a low level of health care.

Occasionally, women from our area would go to the city to have their babies in the hospital, and come back with an IUD in place three days postpartum. This is a dangerous practice because of the possibility of infection and expulsion.

A woman who went to a government clinic for help because she was bleeding heavily from a miscarriage was told she needed to have her tubes tied. She and her husband agreed, but they didn't know this meant she couldn't have more babies. She only has three children and she needed more to help with the carrying of water and with the planting and harvest of the crops which is all done by hand. Without those extra helping hands, they will have to hire workers for the fields and suffer worse economic problems.

Birth control methods should be available to Third World women if they choose to use them. But they should be offered with educational material, not pushed on women with no regard for their social situation. Birth control programs should only be one part of a comprehensive health program using paramedical and medical workers involved in preventive medicine and tertiary care.

Cathy Ellis has several years' experience working in medical clinics in Central and South America. Sources of information for this article include Population Target, The Political Economy of Population Control in Latin America by Bonnie Mass, and National Women's Health Network News, November/December 1980 (Volume 5, Number 6)

Briarpatch, September 1981, p.18-9



Thank You

Jan Brown and Chris Oulton-Smith for the many hours spent putting recent issues of the Newsletter into the word processor. Appearance of the Newsletter is better and lay up time much shorter.

***** Announcements *****

Incest

The Dec./Jan. '82 issue of Kinesis has a number of articles and a bibliography on incest.

* * * * *

Lesbian Conference Report

The Final Report 1981 Lesbian Conference is now available. Write: The Lesbian Conference 1981, Box 65563, Station F, Vancouver, BC. The report contains workshop reports, press coverage and a networking list of organization.

* * * * *

Okanagan Women

We have received the Winter issue of Tapestry from the Okanagan Women's Coalition. Among other items of interest they have listed women's groups in the area with a short description of their work. Anyone interested in contacting other groups on issues would find it useful. Available from our Archives. A subscription is \$3/yr. Write: Okanagan Women's Coalition, Box 1242, Vernon, BC V1T 6N6.

* * * * *

GOOD NEWS!!

All charges have been dropped against the Concerned Aboriginal Women who occupied the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs Office.

* * * * *

Everywoman's Books

Here is some info about new books, periodicals and forthcoming literature here at Everywoman's. Keep writing and putting out that newsletter - it is very much appreciated by all women in Victoria -

Books we carry on Pornography (for those of us who saw NOT A LOVE STORY)

Female Sexual Slavery by Kathleen Barry

Pornography: Men Possessing Women by Andrea Dworkin

Take Back the Night ed. by Laura Lederer

An excellent book on incest Frances Anne Speaks Out: My Father Raped Me \$2.95 - published by New Seed Press - a group from California dedicated to publishing children's books free from racial class or sex-role stereotyping.

For all of us fiction freaks:

Edith Wharton is being published now at a very affordable \$2.95. Summer and The House of Mirth.

May Sarton's House by the Sea and The Reckoning on the shelf in paperback.

Feminist humour is alive and thriving:

Women in the John

PORK ROASTS

Nicole Hollander's I'm Training to be Tall and Blonde and coming soon That Woman Must Be On Drugs.

Two periodicals that are terrific:

BROADSIDE - a feminist review (from Toronto) and The Lesbian Insider Insighter Inciter from Minneapolis.

Something for all of us to think about:

Feminism in the 80's ... facing down the right by Charlotte Bunch. This powerful speech was given at the 2nd Lesbian's Colorado Conference in 1980 - printed by Charlotte and selling at \$2.20.

* * * * *

The Hypocrisy of the Month Medal belongs to officials in the Ottawa office of the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women, who have thwarted an attempt by their own employees to unionize. The council has vigorously supported the right of women to join unions, but apparently that only applies to everybody else. (Funny how difficult the principle is to put into practice when the crunch comes.)

From "Briarpath" Dec.81, p. 29.

* * * * *

Conciliation Set as CHRC Finds Discrimination Against Inmates at Penitentiary for Women

OTTAWA, Dec. 14, 1981 - The federal penitentiary system discriminates against women inmates, members of the Canadian Human Rights Commission ruled today.

A conciliator is being appointed to see if the situation can be corrected by agreement.

Dealing with the issue at their regular monthly meeting here, the human rights commissioners were told that improvements are already being made -- for example, the addition of

training in data processing to programs at the Penitentiary for Women at Kingston, Ont.

This is the only federal penitentiary for women in the entire country, although some women serving penitentiary sentences are in provincial institutions elsewhere.

Today's decision follows a complaint by Brigid Hayes, representing an Ottawa-based reform group called Women for Justice.

The CHRC investigation found that prisoners in the network of penitentiaries for men have access to a wider range of work and training programs aimed at rehabilitation than do the women held at Kingston.

A key factor in the discrimination faced by women is the fact there is only one penitentiary for women while there are several, scattered widely across the country, for men.

For this reason, women are more likely to find themselves far from family and friends when they are imprisoned.

Women inmates have no possibility of being transferred to a better facility than the one in Kingston, and women of all security classifications (minimum, medium and maximum) are held together instead of being segregated among institutions of different ratings.

However, the human rights commissioners rejected Women for Justice's allegation that the senior administration at the penitentiary in Kingston is all male.

The three deputy wardens responsible for socialization (offender programs), security and health services are women, although the warden and four other deputy wardens responsible for education and training, finance, technical services and administration are men.

Under the Canadian Human Rights Act, discrimination is banned in federal jurisdiction on grounds of race, colour, national or ethnic origin, religion, age, sex, marital status, conviction of an offence for which a pardon has been granted and, in employment, physical handicap.

From Broadside Dec.81/Jan.82, p. 9

Resources for Feminist Research (RFR), a feminist quarterly, is soliciting material for a lesbian issue to be published in March 1983. The editors would be interested in receiving

articles on subjects ranging from politics to unions, culture, work, lesbian history, and health. The issue will contain research articles, discussion pieces, book reviews, bibliographies, and resources of all kinds. Completed articles, proposals, outlines, ideas, and contacts would be welcomed. Submissions must be in by July 1, 1982.

For further information, write to: Resources for Feminist Research, c/o Department of Sociology, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, 252 Bloor St. West, Toronto, Ontario M5S 1V6; or phone Kathy at (416) 533-3945.

* * * * *

DID YOU HEAR?????

About the "'People of Native Ancestry" curriculum guideline for the Senior Division put out by the Ministry of Education? This teaching guideline is to be used throughout Ontario schools, grades 11-13. Upon thumbing through it I can say with all honesty that I wish this guide was operational when I was going to high school. This is a very comprehensive document that more than adequately depicts the Aboriginal peoples of Canada in the light that:

"Canada's Native peoples have played a major role in this country's past and they remain an important part of its social and cultural fabric. Today Canadians in general are developing an interest in appreciating Native culture, contributions and heritage. This is reflected in the decision of the Ministry of Education, Ontario to incorporate the study of Canada's Native people into the curriculum."

If, as a parent, you are unaware of this document, ask about it. It should be being utilized throughout Ontario schools as I write this.

From "Women's Association Newsletter" Dec.81.

* * * * *

The Roll-Back Coalition

This coalition of groups is continuing to fight the welfare cutbacks. They have drawn up two fact-finding sheets - duplicated on the next page. If you are interested in working on this issue, they need your input by March 1st. Coalition address: 3660 Cameron Ave., Vancouver V6R 1A2.

Memberships Due

FACT SHEET #1 COMMUNITY INFORMATION

To be stapled to FACT SHEET(S) #2 and returned before March 1st to:

ROLL-BACK COALITION
3660 Cameron Avenue
VANCOUVER V6R 1A2

Population of the community _____

Information from Ministry of Human Resources

How many on welfare?

How many affected by GAIN cut-back?

How many appeals?

Information from Women's Resource Centre or?

CHILD CARE

Age group	No. of spaces available	Monthly Cost above subsidy
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6 mos. - 3 yrs.

3 - 5 years

6 - 12 years
(after school)

What programs for teenagers after school?

Information from Canada Manpower

JOBS AVAILABLE

In town - long term	In town - short term	Out of Town
Men	Women	Men

In town - long term	In town - short term	Out of Town
Men	Women	Men

In town - long term	In town - short term	Out of Town
Men	Women	Men

Skilled

Semi- or
Unskilled

JOB TRAINING AVAILABLE

(Indicate number of places open)

For what occupation(s)?

Who is eligible?

When does it start?

How long a waiting list?

Under what program?

training in order to prepare for pro-grams at the Ministry for Women at Kingston, Ontario.

This is the only sentence for women in the province. Although some women are sentenced to terms of 18 months to 2 years, they are usually in the Women's Reformatory in Kingston.

Today's desegregation by Blacks may be resulting in Ottawa-based group called Women for Justice.

The CMAC investigation found that prisoners in the network of penitentiaries for men have access to a wider range of work and training programs aimed at rehabilitation than do the women held at Kingston.

articles on subjects ranging from politics to unions, culture, work, lesbian history, and health. The book is a collection of research articles, and it contains a lot of information on the lives of lesbians. It is a very good book and it is well worth the price.

For further information, contact the National Lesbian and Gay Archives, c/o Department of Social Services, 252 Bloor St. W., Toronto, Ontario M5S 1A6 or phone (416) 593-3945.

Thank you very much for your help.

DIO YOU HEART??

FACT SHEET #2

EFFECT OF G.A.I.N. CUTBACKS ON INDIVIDUAL FAMILIES

Composition of family (indicate age of children)	No. of months on Welfare	Monthly GAIN before cut-back	Allowance after cut-back	Monthly cost of shelter	Formal education	Job training	Job experience	Health	CHILD CARE Who would care for your children if you were employed?	What would enable you to take a job?
Under the Canada Pension Act, discrimination against women in general, colour, race, ethnic origin, religion, age, sex, marital status, conviction of an offence for which a pardon has been granted and, in employment, physical handicap.	From 8 to 12 months	Monthly GAIN before cut-back	Allowance after cut-back	Monthly cost of shelter	Formal education	Job training	Job experience	Health	CHILD CARE Who would care for your children if you were employed?	What would enable you to take a job?
Resources for Families Research (RFR), a feminist quarterly, is soliciting material for a book to be published in 1983. The editors would be interested in receiving	From 8 to 12 months	Monthly GAIN before cut-back	Allowance after cut-back	Monthly cost of shelter	Formal education	Job training	Job experience	Health	CHILD CARE Who would care for your children if you were employed?	What would enable you to take a job?

Memberships Due

November \$4.00 to March 1982 or \$14.00 to March 1983

June Andrews Irene Hill Elzby Jazinski Ann Wilmot Nina Westaway

December \$3.00 to March 1982 or \$13.00 to March 1983

Sheila Anderson	D. Balin	Florence Best	Gayle Chapman	Penelope Czwarno
Phyllis Carlyle	Barbara Darling	Sheila Drew	Carolyn Folse	Donyne Haggarty
Colleen Hicks	Ann Haggarty	Lou Holland	M.J. Johnson	Sandy Kennedy
Bev Kruithoff	Jerrine Lee	Maureen Lawson	Cheryl Leask	Alison McAdam
MacKintosh/Spiney..	Jan Meadows	Ruth Miller	Denise Nadeau	Mary Potrebenko
Irene Scott	Paddy Tsurumi	Ruth Taylor	Barb Walker	Nadya Ward

January \$2.00 to March 1982 or \$12.00 to March 1983

Joyce Bewley	Elma Cobb	Elizabeth Hamlet	Mary Caffka	Shirley Keller
Barbara Latham	Dorothy Livingston	Mary Martin	M. Nixon	Janet Patterson
Roberta Pazdro	Mimi Robertson	Susan Slatkoff		

February \$1.00 to March 1982 or \$11.00 to March 1983

Sandy Middlemiss Maxine Zurbrigg

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

From: Box 6296, Stn. C,
Victoria, B.C.
V8P 5L5

Gandy Macdonald

Maxine Anderson

Membership \$1.00 to March 1983 or \$11.00 to March 1983

Robert Macdonald

Helen Robertson

Susan Elstakoff

John Macdonald

Rita Cobb

Elizabeth Hamer

M. Nixon

Shirley Keller

Membership \$2.00 to March 1983 or \$13.00 to March 1983

John Macdonald

Frank Johnson

Rich Taylor

Barb Walker

Nancy Ward

John Macdonald

Jan Macdonald

Keith Miller

Denise Neill

Mary Robertson

John Macdonald

Ann Macdonald

Lois Holland

M. J. Johnson

Gandy Kennedy

John Macdonald

D. Balin

Florence Best

Gayle Campbell

Penelope Cameron

Membership \$2.00 to March 1983 or \$13.00 to March 1983

John Macdonald

James Hill

Ann Wilson

M. J. Johnson

Memberships Due