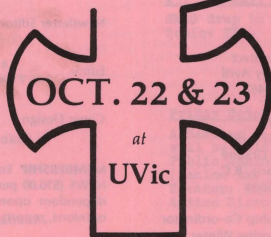
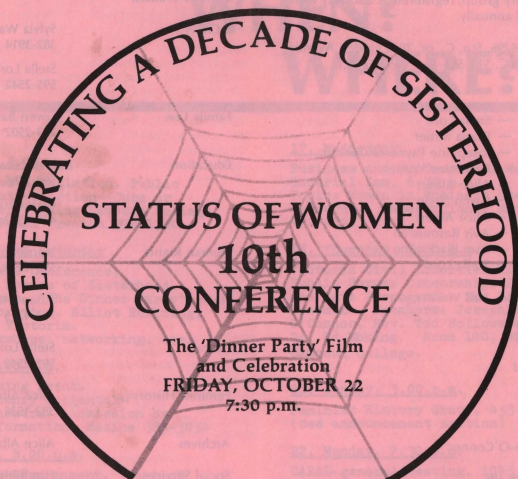


swag STATUS OF WOMEN NEWS



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 to and 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.

ADDRESS: P.O. Box 6296, Stn. C, or 1045 Linden Avenue
Victoria, B.C. V8P 5L5 Victoria, B.C.
381-1012

Co-ordinators

February	— Stella Lord
March	— Diana Butler
April	— Josephine Payne-O'Conner
May	— Catherine Winter
June	— Alice Albert
July	— Gwen Bavin
August	— Alice Albert
September	— Avis Rasmussen
October	— Pam Blackstone
November	— Stella Lord
December	
January	— Lois Vickery

Program Co-ordinator

Gwen Bavin
1160 Greenwood
Victoria, B.C.
383-2502

Media Co-ordinator

Josephine Payne-O'Conner
980 Wilmer St.,
Victoria, B.C. V8S 4B6
389-0754

Conference Co-ordinator

Alice Albert
453 Moss St.,
Victoria, B.C. V8V 4N5
382-1536

N.A.C. Contact
Shirley Avril
386-4467

Correspondent

Lois Vickery
#6-1010 Pembroke
Victoria, B.C.
384-9134

Treasurer

Diana Butler
2149 Granite
Victoria, B.C.
598-6964

Recorder

Ann Fraser
552 Cornwall St.,
Victoria, B.C. V8V 4L1
386-2191

Membership Co-ordinator

Catherine Winter
389-2959

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

B.C.F.W.	Sylvia Watson 382-3914
	Stella Lord 595-2542
Family Law	Gwen Bavin 383-2502
Education	Jan Newton 598-3786
	Marguerite Mousseau 479-1572
Human Rights	Norrie Preston 598-1390
Health	Susan Moger 592-4215
Labour	Stella Lord 595-2542
Feminist History	Alice Albert 382-1536
Archives	Alice Albert
Social Services	Elizabeth Hamlet 595-2569
Newsletter Editorial Board	Lois Vickery Stella Lord
Editor	Stella Lord 595-2542
Cover Design	Avis Rasmussen 598-3188

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 first & fourth Tuesday of each month (except when it falls on a holiday) at 1045 Linden Ave., 7:30 p.m.

WHO? WHAT? WHEN? WHERE?

October

21, Thursday, 8.00.p.m.

Civil Liberties Association, Public Forum: Affirmative Action--Cure or Disease? Fisher Building Camosun College
Information: Frank Preston. 598-1390

22,23, Friday and Saturday

10th Annual SWAG Conference, Celebrating a Decade of Sisterhood. Friday, 7.30.p.m. "The Dinner Party" Film and Celebration, Elliot Building, University of Victoria.
Saturday: workshops, networking, etc.

24, Sunday, 2.00.p.m.

CARAL Fundraising Event.
Speaker: Dr. Henry Morgentaler
U. Vic. Sub Theatre. Admission by donation. Information: Maxine 385-5054

27, Wednesday, 8.00.p.m.

Survival-Women-Disarmament. Part of Disarmament Week. Fernwood Coffee House 1923 Fernwood (at Gladstone).
Information: Lauri 598-5068

28, Thursday

Public reading by May Sarton at University of Victoria. Contact Everywoman's Books for venue.

30, Saturday, 11.00.a.m.

May Sarton at Everywoman's Books, 641 Johnson Street.

November

2, Tuesday, 7.30p.m.

SWAG business meeting, 1045 Linden.

16, Tuesday,

Women's Network. Imperial Inn.
Speaker: Isabel Kelly, Deputy Minister of Women's Programs.
Information: Lynn Gough 384-7825

17, Wednesday

Business and Professional Women Imperial Inn, 6.30.p.m.
Topic: Women in Business (selected club members). Reservations: Marjorie Blair 477-2691

18, Thursday, 8.00.p.m.

Victoria Civil Liberties Association Public Forum: Censorship, Pornography and Hate Propoganda: The Limits of Freedom. Speakers: Josephine Payne-O'Connor, Rev. Ted Follows and Dr. Ed Working. Room 100, Fisher Bldg, Camosun College.

21, Sunday, 3.00.p.m.

Feminist History Group, 453 Moss St., (see announcement section)

22, Monday, 7.30.p.m.

CARAL: general meeting, 1045 Linden.

23, Tuesday, 7.30.p.m.

SWAG drop in and discussion group.
Topic: TBA.

Friday October 22, 1.30.p.m.

A Seminar on Affirmative Action will be held in Room 268 of the Public Administration Building (behind the Library) at U.Vic.
Speaker: Rhys Phillips, Affirmative Action Directorate, C.E.I.C., Ottawa

SWAG

NEWS

First the good news...

After several months of hard work by the board of the Sexual Assault Centre, the Centre has now officially opened its doors and welcomes your participation and support (see letter from the Centre, this issue)

Now the bad news...

The pro-choice slate was defeated at the Royal Jubilee Board elections. The anti-choice forces again stacked the meeting to elect their own anti-abortion candidates. There are now three on the board. Maxine Boag of CARAL deserves to be congratulated for standing for election. If only more of us had been there to support her.... Time will tell whether the new board will be willing to fight for the retention of the right to perform abortions when Obstetrics moves the the new Victoria General next year.

The SWAG conference is celebrating sisterhood on the 22nd and 23rd October at the University of Victoria. It will be great to see old friends again and to make some new ones. If you have not registered in advance you can register at the door on Friday evening between 6.00.p.m. and 8.00.p.m. at the Elliot Building, University of Victoria. (It will be signposted).

Several items in this month's newsletter draw our attention to the dent the recession is making in any progress towards the economic independence of women. The push for equal pay at both the legislative (human rights) level and the union bargaining level is coming up against some serious obstacles and stiff opposition. The National Council on Welfare Report on the Working Poor reviewed in this issue shows that whether women are working or on welfare, they have been faring worse in recent years than in the past. While it was good to see that the proposed BCGEU settlement made some provision for closing the gap between the lower paid and the higher paid, it has really only maintained the level of inflation for those at the lower levels. The question is whether the push to narrow the differentials in pay can be sustained in the next contract when presumably those who effectively took a pay cut this time around will be looking for some catch-up next time.

An excerpt from a recent AUCE Newsletter looks at the effect of wage controls on equal pay.

Many women, however, are receiving no wage-either because they are officially unemployed, discouraged by the job market or have family commitments. In the next issue we shall explore the system of unemployment benefits and the effects of unemployment on women and in the December Newsletter we hope to run a special issue on women and the welfare system.

DROP IN THE OFFICE. We need volunteers for filing, letter writing, telephoning or just to pass the time of day. Telephone Pam Blackstone our office coordinator at 381-1012 for information on office hours.

SWAG'S membership in BCFW is up for renewal. Some members of SWAG had questions about the benefits we receive from our membership in this organization. This will be discussed at the next business meeting of SWAG on November 2. If you have views either way please come and share them.

Wanted: An Accountant. SWAG needs a volunteer to do the audit for this year. Please contact Diana Butler at 598-6964

Letters



Sept. 17, 1982

Ms. Pam Blackstone

Dear Ms. Blackstone:
Thank you for your letter of June 24, expressing your Group's support for an increase in funding for this department's Women's Program.

I can assure you that I, too, am concerned that the various programs in my department receive adequate funding but I am sure you will agree that, given the current economic climate, it is simply not possible for us to meet the demands of all the various groups who look to us for support. The Women's Program received a significant increase in its grants budget in the 1981-82 fiscal year and I can only encourage you to continue to make every effort to carry out your projects within the limits of the available funds.

Yours Sincerely,
Gerald A. Regan
The Secretary of State of
Canada

Sept. 18, 1982

Dear Editor:

It is my belief that all victims of incest and rape be materially recompensed by the perpetrator. If that is possible only to a degree, society should pay to that limit.

Often, especially in the case of incest, the crime is not discovered until much later. If the perpetrator is either dead or physically/mentally unable to make restitution, all his moneys should be "changed" for (to?) the benefit of the victim, even to estate; that if alive, he be required to live with the money a welfare recipient receives, or to whatever amount is not designated as cost to the victim in all ways.

I see this as belated education, not punishment, at least in the case of living perpetrators. If not learned early, here is not only the opportunity but the necessity. I believe solidly in the law of cause and effect.

Constituency Office
101-1020 McKenzie Ave
Victoria, B.C. V8X 3Y1
Tel. 479-3200
August 23, 1982

L. Vickery, R.N.

Dear Ms. Vickery:

Thank you for sending me a copy of your recent letter to the Minister of Justice concerning the effect of Section 251 of the Criminal Code of Canada on the availability of abortions in the Victoria area and urging that Section 251 be repealed.

I cannot agree with you that this is an unjust and inadequate law which poses a threat to Canadian women and limits their freedom of choice. I am on the Pro-Life side of this issue, and while I do support therapeutic abortions when the mother's life is endangered as a result of her pregnancy, I am appalled at the ongoing efforts to liberalize our laws regarding abortion so that abortion would become an available method of contraception. Such would be the case if we were to legalize community abortion clinics at which a woman, no matter what her reasons for seeking an abortion, could have her pregnancy terminated.

Part of our freedom as responsible adults is being able to choose more humane means of preventing unwanted pregnancy than to resort to the destruction of unborn children. An unborn child has the right to life; it is too valuable a gift to cast carelessly aside.

I am certain that the Victoria General and Royal Jubilee Hospitals will resolve the problem of where therapeutic abortions can be performed so that any woman whose life is threatened by her pregnancy will receive the proper medical care, including if necessary, a therapeutic abortion.

Yours sincerely,
Donald W. Munro, M.P.
Esquimalt-Saanich

Sept.17/82

Mr. Peter Menzies,
Editor
Peninsula Free Press

Dear Mr. Menzies:

Your recent editorial regarding maternity leave requires a response. It is most interesting to us to see the belief that women should be treated as equal to men described as 'bleeding-heart type stuff'. It should not even have to be stated that we haven't "come a long way" and we're not "babies". We find your use of this exploitive advertising slogan insulting. Women have made small gains, and we do not need to be reminded how easily they can be eliminated.

Furthermore, we suggest that for you to assume the collective guilt of all your (white male) brothers is just a little paranoid. But it is important for you to be aware that you -- like all white males -- enjoy power and privilege obtained and sustained at the expense of women and minorities. This is hardly a matter for levity, especially for someone who professes to "care".

Your editorial seriously misinforms the public, being based on several erroneous assumptions which we wish to correct. These are:

- 1) That the boss in the hypothetical situation you describe is a woman. In fact, only 5% of employed women are found in management or administrative positions.
- 2) That the employees in such a situation would be 50/50 male and female. You grossly exaggerate the gains made in the area of non-traditional work. The vast majority of women workers (62%) remain concentrated in the "pink-collar" job ghettos. Government, despite critical skill shortages in many traditionally-male occupations, has made only token efforts to encourage women into them. While women are entering the professions in larger numbers, we continue to represent well below 10% in jobs defined as non-traditional -- i.e. less than 1%, in for example, carpentry or plumbing.
- 3) That the male and female employees are paid the same salary. In fact, women receive only 63 cents for each \$1.00 a man earns, and this is consistently true at all ages and in all occupations. So, it is readily apparent, in fact, that the male workers cost the boss more. (Incidentally, a number of studies have indicated that men are less produc-

Therapy is fine, if the rapist does not agree to it as a faster exit from prison rather than a sincere desire to change. With a good actor, it can be even faster. You can also lead a horse to water but not to make it drink.

I believe that in our present society, if a young man does not stand out with the idea that money is 'where it's at', it most often becomes so. Since the victim's right to make a living and have the best possible relationships with others, are affected, this is also 'where it's at'.

Mina Corstorphine (Wilson)

Confession!?
Sisters,

I'm not quite sure how to put this. I often find myself dumping on many of my sisters. I don't know why I do it.

My analysis net me a zero or negative reasons. Am I jealous of my fellow sisters' prominence? I don't think so. Do I feel threatened because one or more of my sisters is further along - economically, philosophically?? I don't think so.

Perhaps it's to do with my interpretation of 'feminism'. I am more feminist than the next-- or am I? Can I not accept that we are all sisters, working towards similar goals and overcome my limited interpretation.

It is true - UNITED WE
STAND, DIVIDED WE FALL.

Anon.

Sept.28/82

Ms. Pamela Blackstone:

Congratulations on private showing of film "Snuff". I am sorry that I do not feel that I would be able to handle a film of this nature and so will not be attending - I hope that you will be successful in influencing the government to take steps to stop the release of such films in B.C. Be strong in your struggle against this degradation and oppression - you have my complete support.

Rosemary Brown, MLA
Burna y-Edmonds
Parliament Buildings

September 30/82

The Editor,
Peninsula Free Press *

tive than women, and actually take more sick leave, sexist myths notwithstanding.)

4) That all five female employees will get pregnant. Population statistics indicate that, in fact, we have a declining birth rate in this country. Many women are choosing to forego motherhood for a career.

5) That paid maternity leave is a widely-available employee benefit. Paid maternity leave is not mandatory, and very few employers offer this benefit to female employees. CUPW was the first union to make it a specific collective bargaining demand, and they successfully demonstrated to the employer that its cost is low. Paid maternity leave is far from common-place in the public sector, and virtually non-existent in the private sector.

6) That a sex discrimination complaint under the circumstances you describe would be successful. This is extremely unlikely in an economic restraint move, or the offices of the Human Rights Branch would be as crowded as those of UIC.

The vast majority of women who take maternity leave receive no compensation from the employer. Many find themselves ineligible for UIC maternity benefits. Periodic withdrawal from the labour force, for child-bearing has been identified as a key factor in the earnings differential between the sexes, the lack of advancement opportunities for women, and the "ghettoization" of women's jobs.

Paid maternity leave is a justifiable demand, as long as society expects women to sacrifice careers and opportunities to be the producers of Canada's future citizens. And particularly, if society persists in attempting to deny us reproductive autonomy. Child-bearing is, of course, an individual experience, but responsibility for this process rests collectively with all of society.

Yours Truly,
Stella Lord for the
Coordinating Committee

*The articles to which this letter refers is available at the SWAG office.

Dear Mr. Menzies:
Yet another editorial full of wit and innuendo! Perhaps the point that needs to be made here, in our dispute re maternity leave, is to clarify exactly what SWAG took exception to in your previous editorial. We objected to your presentation of the utopian work scenario (female boss, 50/50 male/female staff, same pay, universal maternity leave, etc.) as a factual representation of women's labour situation today. It wasn't. If you had identified it clearly as fantasy, or as an attempt to shatter stereotypes, we would not have objected. However, you portrayed this unrealistic scene as "the way things are", and used it to discredit the concept of maternity leave.

Your present editorial contains a number of cheap shots that are uncalled for. As SWAG's spokesperson (sorry, that's the house style) on labour issues, I am compelled to respond to some of the more salient points.

The excellent "Times-Colonist" interview with Josephine Payne-O'Connor was not a personal attack on you, Peter Menzies. In fact, it was not an attack on any person, but on societal attitudes and problems. Woman-hatred is a sad reality in our culture. We are beaten, raped, and brutalized daily by men with this attitude. I suggest that you have again personalized a statement made to address a general problem.

To your question, "have you no sense of humour?", I would reply it's hard to laugh with someone's fist in your mouth.

The "traditionally chauvinistic attitude toward women in the work force" remains fact for the vast majority of us. To pretend otherwise is myopic. There is a difference between acknowledging this and reinforcing it.

The information regarding the vast earnings differential between women and men came from, among other sources, Statistics Canada and the B.C. Ministry of Labour's "Labour Research Bulletin" (to which we subscribe). We suggest, if you believe it is "simply not true", you tell that to the government researchers who compile the statistics.

Another point: of course some women will become pregnant. But your scenario assumed that all 5 women workers were of child-bearing age. In fact, 42.6% of women working are past child-bearing age. Moreover, we suggest you consult the government's Labour Research Bulletin (V.7 N.8) to confirm that, indeed, women do sacrifice careers to produce Canada's future citizens.

Contrary to your casual assumption, UIC maternity benefits are not "widely available" to women. Because of cumbersome and restrictive regulations governing this benefit, many working women will have no access whatsoever. (Yes, society is responsible for the "Pill", but this dangerous form of contraception is far from an adequate solution. Its hazards are many and well-documented. Many women are physically incapable of taking it, and many more are unwilling to jeopardize their health with this method of contraception.)

We want to reiterate our final statement. While we in no way want to lower women's status to that of "baby machine", this is unfortunately how society continues to view us. Women undertake pregnancy and child-bearing at considerable risk to their health, and are economically penalized for doing so (loss of income, seniority, career, promotional opportunities, pension credits, etc.) We are simply saying that,

while child-bearing is an individual choice and experience, it is a collective societal responsibility because society as a whole benefits from women's reproductive labour. There is, of course, an important difference between accepting responsibility for this process and wishing to control it, enslaving women in this role. Women's life-creating function must be respected and supported, not enslaved and controlled.

In a society which values the ideal of equal opportunity, maternity leave does no more than ensure that a woman, by virtue of her natural ability to bear children, is not unduly disadvantaged in the work force for doing so. Like many other employee benefits, it accrues to a few at the expense of the many. There is no new principle involved here.

Since society must reproduce itself (or become extinct), we surely cannot expect those who do the reproducing to do so at significant disadvantage to themselves. Perhaps an analogy could be drawn to the tax-supported public school system, which is an unquestioned shared societal responsibility (whether individuals utilize the system or not) because all of society will benefit from the education of our young people.

Yours Truly,
Stella Lord, for
the Coordinating
Committee

*the article to which this letter refers is also available at the SWAG office

Court of Appeal,
c/o Registrar's Office
800 Smith Street
Vancouver, B.C.

Re: Stephen Hodgson

S.W.A.G. opposes release of this violent man on society. No more Barbara Costers. His freedom is Women's blood.

Telegram sent by S.W.A.G.



Women's Sexual Assault Centre
1045 Linden Ave.,
Victoria V8B 4H3

October 1, 1982

To: Friends and colleagues of Victoria's
New Sexual Assault Service for Women

Greetings:

We thought you might be interested to know that we're well on our way to ensuring that Victoria has a much-needed service for women who have been sexually assaulted.

During the summer we were successful in negotiating a contract with the Ministry of the Attorney-General for a grant to cover a "bare bones" service to start with.

We will offer:

- a) 24-hour crisis line providing support, information, and referrals where appropriate;
- b) follow-up counselling for survivors and significant others;
- c) accompaniment of survivors through medical, police, and court procedures
- d) third-party reporting of assaults (protecting the confidentiality of the survivor, while assisting police in related investigations);
- e) consultation and co-operation with others who work with survivors; and
- f) some public education, where resources permit.

The Board is already actively soliciting funds from a variety of other sources, which will allow us to be more aggressive in our educational programs, do research, and to more actively promote changes to laws, institutions, and behavior, with the overall goal of ending violence against women.

By the end of September, we had two staff members hired. They are: Dr. Sara David, Training Co-ordinator/Counsellor-whose background is clinical psychology, particularly feminist therapy, and who is known to many as an educator and advocate for women; and Carol Savage, Project Co-ordinator/Counsellor-a newcomer to B.C., who has many year's experience in development and administration of both community and government programs including a community information and referral service and a women's resource centre.

Detailed planning and preparation are now being handled by Sara and Carol and we hope to have volunteers recruited and trained and a sound, effective crisis service operating before the end of the year.

In the interim, we are holding weekly drop-in sessions for survivors of sexual assaults every Tuesday 7-9 p.m. at the Centre, providing emotional support and information exchange, and when appropriate referral to more intensive counselling resources. We are also now able to handle a limited number of preventive-educational programs on request, and are providing information and back-up consultation to agencies and individuals in the community. You are welcome to call us on our business line between 9.30 a.m. and 12.30 p.m. Monday-Friday regarding any of the above, or to volunteer your ideas/time/skills/material resources; (we particularly need clerical/administrative skills immediately).

Thanks very much to all of you who have already donated furniture, office supplies, resource information, time and energy; and to those who endorsed our funding proposal. We wouldn't be this far along without you.

You'll be hearing from us soon!

Alice Ages
(for Women's Sexual Assault Centre
Telephone 383-5545 (business))

Pam Blackstone's speech for:
"Take Back the Night" March,
Sept. 17, 1982

Hello:

I am speaking here tonight for the Women's Sexual Assault Centre, but really for myself, for my friends, for our sisters, mothers, grandmothers. For our children. I am speaking for every woman who has ever been assaulted, raped, beaten. For every woman who lives daily with the fear of being next.

I am speaking for us ALL, to say: we are not putting up with male violence any longer. We are fighting back. Speaking out. That is why we are here tonight.

We are here to end the myths about rape. We all know them. We live with them. They are the lies told daily everywhere.

I want to talk about just two of the many myths about rape.

Myth #1: THAT ALL WOMEN SECRETLY TO BE RAPED
That we like being slapped around. That we all secretly long to be "kicked by force". That we want to be kicked, beaten, violated, hurt. That it's OK for men to rape and beat us because that's what we really want. This is a LIE.

Myth #2 IF A WOMAN GETS RAPED, IT'S HER FAULT

If she was out alone at night, she asked for it.

If she forgot to lock her door, she asked for it.

If she knew him even slightly, she asked for it.

If she didn't resist, she asked for it.

If she was wearing jeans, she she provoked it.

If she was wearing a skirt, she provoked it.

If she was friendly, she got what she asked for.

If she was hostile, she got what she asked for.

T
This is a LIE!

Men, not women, are responsible for rape. We have a right to be on the street at night, to go where we please, to dress and act how we want. We have a right to be free of assault. We have a right to be free of the fear of assault.

But that is not our reality yet. But there is strength in numbers, and tonight we have reclaimed the streets, and we will again. And again. And to those who want us silenced, we are saying: we will NOT BE SILENT and we will NOT BE INVISIBLE.

Rape is NOT an act of passion. Rape is not an act of "uncontrollable lust." Rape is an act of violence. And we are fighting back.

SPECIAL REPORT

The Working Poor: People and Programs,
The National Council on Welfare, 1981

Fourteen percent of the families and thirteen percent of the children in Canada are poor. The 6% whose 'family head' obtain more than half of their income from employment are the focus of the National Council of Welfare Report, The Working Poor. The report compared 'the working poor' with both the non-poor and the 'other poor' (those who obtain less than 50% of their income from employment) on variables such as region, age, education, size of family and sex of family head. It also compared statistical data on the poor for the four years 1974 to 1977 and discusses changes in the profile of poverty over this four-year period.

Poverty is not confined to the so-called 'have not' provinces of Canada but is common to all regions. Place of residence makes a difference, though, to the type and depth of poverty experienced. Newfoundland and Nova Scotia have the highest overall rates of poverty while Alberta and Ontario have the lowest. But the poor in the prairies and B.C. are more likely to be 'working poor' than 'other poor'. In the East and central Canada this tendency is reversed. Most working poor families live in urban centres and contrary to some prevailing myths and stereotypes about poverty, the working poor are relatively well educated, do not have significantly larger than average families and are committed to the work ethic.

The risk of poverty is highest for young unattached individuals under 25 and within this age group there is much greater risk for women (31%) than for men (21%) of being poor. The report points out that poverty for the young may be temporary because it is partly attributable to the university and college student population most of whom work for some period of the year. Again, however, the picture is still more bleak for women than for men, especially in the older age brackets. 46% of single parent families, the vast majority of which are headed by women, are poor, but most fall into the 'other poor' category and subsist on welfare and social assistance. This is also true of the 'near aged' (55-64) where again, as we know from an earlier Report by the Council, Women and Poverty (1979), women face a much greater risk of poverty than men.

Charles Gordon
BARBER & HANSON
MLA VICTORIA MLA VICTORIA
COMMUNITY OFFICE

Information & Assistance

1020 Blanshard Street
382-9898
12-5 Monday to Friday

Examining the employment characteristics of the working poor, the Report finds that 86% of the average family income comes from salaries or wages and yet while the poverty line for a family of three in 1977 was \$7,473, the average income of the working poor was only \$4,000. This compares with an average income for all family units in Canada of \$16,764. The findings of the Report suggest that the reasons why some people must subsist on such low incomes relate, not only to low paying jobs, but to unstable employment opportunities compounded by high rates of unemployment. Working poor family heads face a much higher incidence of seasonal or chronic unemployment. Here again, women appear to fall predominantly in the latter category. Compared with non-poor families, 'wives' in working poor families are more likely not to work or only to work part time rather than full time. What the general picture presented by the statistics suggests, therefore, is that it is becoming more of an economic necessity for wives to work.

The working poor are predominantly in service and clerical occupations or in farming and fishing. These occupational categories also differentiate the main sources of poverty for men and women. Fully 60% of working poor women are concentrated in the former two occupations while working poor males are concentrated in the latter two. The Report did not extrapolate from the statistics at this point to suggest reasons why the sources of poverty may be different for men and women and why women are in a relatively worse economic situations than men. It does suggest, however, that lack of day-care facilities and employment opportunities for women may account for the higher number of one-earner families among the working poor than the non-poor (68% versus 31%). Working women are clearly keeping many families above the poverty line.

'Stagflation' of the economy has obviously taken its toll and the comparison of the 1973 data with that collected in 1977 confirms this. There were significant changes in the shape of poverty which the Report attributes to rising unemployment, the increase in single parent families, an increase in two-earner families and the growing importance of government transfer. The working poor declined by 3% during the period but the other poor category increased. The absolute number of poor in Canada rose between 1973 and 1977. There was an astonishing 70% increase of those who had completed high school amongst the working poor and while some of this reflects increased educational standards generally, it must also reflect the much higher rate of unemployment among young high school and college graduates. Education is no longer the buttress it once was against poverty.

The outlook for women is not bright. The risk of poverty among single women did not decline during the four year period. Single women still face 50% higher risk of poverty than single men. Although the risk for female single parents declined slightly, the poverty gap between male and female single parents widened. Most alarming, is the fact that the gap between the poor and the non-poor also increased. The average income of the working poor decreased in value by 12% during the period while average real wages of the non-poor rose by 9%. As well as the relative increase in 'other poor', unemployment amongst the working poor also went up by 11%.

The final section of the Report examines the impact of government transfer payments and other programs on the working poor. It suggests that while the minimum wage is important for maintaining a bottom line, it is not an adequate tool to combat poverty since only about 10% of the working poor are on the minimum wage. Federal child tax credits and family allowances do not help to close the income gap between poor and non-poor. More beneficial are the provincial income supplements for the working poor now instituted in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Quebec. Although there has been a tendency for inflation to reduce the value of the subsidies, the Report argues for more provincial involvement in this type of program with the aim of bringing the working poor up to the poverty line.

The profile of poverty and the changes which have occurred in recent years were all well-documented in the Report. But given the depth of the problem, the recommendations are generally weak. Job creation programs may help the young temporarily and income supplements and tax credits may serve to bring some families up to the poverty line, but these are not permanent solutions to a problem which has deeper political, social and economic roots. While they would be beneficial, it is questionable whether any of them or even all of them together could come close to eradicating poverty.

On the other hand, more permanent, stable employment and higher rates of pay for low paying jobs would allow real advances to be made. But perhaps the National Council on Welfare is merely being 'realistic' in its recommendations. The rate of unemployment will only fall if Canada is also able to develop a more stable, healthy and full employment economy. The question of poverty and inequities in pay probably requires major restructuring of our political and economic institutions. Neither of these appear likely to occur in the short term. In the meantime, some of the immediate needs of the poor, especially women, could be met with better and cheaper day-care and child care facilities, job training and re-training programs and flexible working hours with full benefits

But even these, in the era of cutbacks and restraint on public and private sector workers, are not likely to head the list of priorities set by our governments. Clearly, unless the poor, and women in particular, can make their demands heard, there is unlikely to be much progress towards eradicating poverty. In fact, the situation is probably going to get worse.

Stella Lord.

Equal pay

FAIR PAY - THE ISSUE OF THE 80's

The Equal Pay Information Committee (EPIC) is an informal grouping of women and men trade unionists interested in fair pay for all workers. The following article is based on a brief entitled 'Will Wage Controls Bury Equal Pay?' presented by EPIC to the B.C. Federation of Labour in Vancouver on May 20, 1982 and is abbreviated from AUCE 7 Newsletter (University of Victoria).

Unravelling the equal pay for work of equal value mystery is becoming a major issue for B.C. workers and trade unions.

Since 1951 British Columbia has had legislation calling for equal pay for equal work, but this has proved largely ineffective as women and men usually perform different jobs requiring skills which are not readily comparable. The challenge for unions is to work toward wage structures which reflect the skills members need to perform their jobs without reference to the worker's sex.

The principal outcry is that women's wages are low because the jobs are performed by women, not because the skills required for their performance are minimal.

Female participation in B.C.'s labour force is 51.9%. At least 40% of working women are single, divorced, widowed, or the sole supporter of their families. Many of these female-led families live below the poverty line because women's wages are substantially lower than men's. In 1981, full-time female workers in Canada on the average earned 60% of what their male counterparts earned.

Equalization of base wage rates as a first step toward equal pay for work of equal value represents a new approach by trade unions in B.C. to the fair pay issue.

During 1981 'equal base rates' was a successful strike issue for CUPE & VMREU members in the Lower Mainland, Fraser Valley, and on Vancouver Island. Major breakthroughs on equal base rates were achieved by Steel-workers at Cominco in Trail, and OTEU members at B.C. Hydro during the same year.

With these successes already achieved, trade unionists are planning further ways to implement a fair wage system. The Equal Pay Information Committee (EPIC) is an informal forum in which member unions can exchange information and ideas about this complex issue.

EPIC's immediate challenge is to respond to recent Provincial and Federal Government restraint programs which not only eliminate the possibility of a union winning equal base rates for its members, but also will affect women directly by causing their wages to fall even further behind.

These anticipated effects of wage restraints are, for example, of considerable concern to AUCE Local 1, whose members include library and clerical workers at the University of British Columbia. At UBC, the average entry-level jobs customarily performed by men-light labourers, kiosk attendants, mail clerks - pay \$1652.00/month. Entry-level jobs for trained clerical and library workers pay \$1130.00 per month. Equalization of base rates requires a 46% increase for Clerk I's. Both the Compensation Stabilization Program (CSP) and the Federal 'World of 6 & 5' Program are major blocks to winning equal base rates as the percentages required to achieve them will not be tolerated.

Both programs will widen the wage gap further because of the small percentage ceiling they advocate. For example, 10% of a Labourer's rate, \$7.99, is \$.79. But 10% of a Clerk II's rate of \$7.00 is \$.70. Under a percentage ceiling formula the Labourer I rate would rise from \$7.99 to \$8.78; a Clerk II rate would rise from \$7.00 to \$7.70. The gap between the two wage rates has now risen from \$.99 (the initial difference between \$7.99 and \$7.00) to \$1.18 (the difference between \$8.78 and \$7.70); a wage gap increase of \$.17/hour.

EPIC also predicts that layoffs caused by the 10% budget ceiling imposed on hospitals, educational institutions and municipalities by the Bennett government will affect women disproportionately, as they are historically the workers who are 'last hired and first fired'. Across Canada in 1977, 53% of all employees laid off in the public sector were women, although women represented only 36.7% of public employees.

To combat government wage restraints, EPIC proposes a concerted fightback program led by public sector unions. "Each day without a fightback program" says an EPIC spokesperson, "is a day where both men and women see their gains eroded".

Globe & Mail
August 28, 1982

Equal pay could close firms,
Ontario official tells women

Ontario Labor Minister Russell Ramsay says he is afraid that a law requiring equal pay for work of equal value could close businesses and put some people out of work.

"I would think...when plants are on the verge, it could be another straw that could break the camel's back in some cases, certainly," he told reporters yesterday.

He spoke to the reporters after telling a group of women representing unions and women's rights groups that the costs of narrowing the gap between men's and women's wages through legislation are too high in a sluggish economy.

The women responded angrily. Spokesman (sic) Mary Cornish said, "Sure there is a cost; but right now it is women who are bearing the costs."

Miss Cornish said that when the minimum wage was first introduced the same argument was made, that it would put people out of work, but that didn't happen. "A time of poor economy is exactly the time women need equal-value legislation."

Although he said he accepts the principle and understands the statistics, Mr. Ramsay said there are no proposals before the Cabinet to introduce equal pay for work of equal value in the province. He said he has very serious reservations about the implementation of such a plan and its cost to the economy.

"I told them that I wear several hats and the most depressing one is I'm the person advised of plant closures. It leaves me like a wet rag at the end of the day," Mr. Ramsay said. He said he could cope with all other problems, including the gap between men's and woman's salaries, more easily.

The group also told Mr. Ramsay to resist wage controls because at best they would be a form of sexual discrimination that would keep women's salaries pegged at 60 per cent of men's. In 1979, the average full-time woman worker earned 63 per cent of the salary of a full-time male worker, \$11,952 compared with \$18, 813.

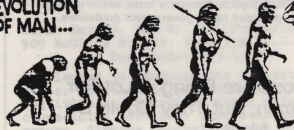
Mr. Ramsay told reporters that although the Cabinet has given its views on the controversial question of wage controls, it has not reached any decision or discussed any possibilities. Although the minister refused to say what he told the Cabinet about wage controls, he said he did not mention working women in his argument.

Miss Cornish said that her group will be looking at ways to "flex our muscles" to fight both against wage controls and for equal-value legislation this fall. She said that the meeting with Mr. Ramsay was "enough to make anybody go out and do something."

The group said in a brief to Mr. Ramsay that equal-value legislation is not a luxury to be considered only when the economy is flourishing, but a basic human right. "Why should women be singled out to wait on the sidelines for the time when achievement of their equality is convenient?"

by Sylvia Stead.

**EVOLUTION
OF MAN...**



File (Feters, JARON) DWY 1982, 1340, (USA)

and woman.



Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women

Working Together: Women and Unions

FACT SHEET #5



Women On The Job.

- 39% of the labour force are women; it is estimated that by the year 2000, 47% of the labour force will be women.
- A woman working full-time earns only 62% of what a man earns (1977).
- Two-thirds of all minimum-wage workers are women.

Unions Are One Way Women Can Improve Their Working Conditions.

- Among female office workers, the average salary of a unionized woman was \$104 per month higher than a non-unionized woman (1977).
- A unionized waitress makes 80 cents more per hour than a non-unionized waitress.
- 25 local unions of the CNTU (Confederation of National Trade Unions of Quebec) have won free space for child care at the work place.
- Studies of Canadian union contracts show that one-half provide maternity leave which is longer than provided for in government guidelines.

Unions Are Doing A Lot For Women, But They Could Do Much More.

- Nearly 50% of all adult women are in the labour force, but less than 20% of these women are in a union (1978).
- Only 3 out of every 10 union members are women (1978).
- Just 1 out of every 6 union executive members in Canada is a woman (1978).
- 76% of all union members belong to the Canadian Labour Congress yet only 2 of its 26 executive council members are women (1978).
- Among office workers, unionized women earn 9% less than unionized men (1977).

Women are Working Together To Organize.

- Since 1968 there has been a 91% increase in the number of female union members but only a 21% increase in male union membership (1978).
- 45% of all women unionists are in unions with over 50% female membership (1978).
- Scheduling flexibility is often all that's required to get women involved: a B.C. union, formed by women, changed meetings to lunch hour and got a 90% attendance rate at their meetings (1975).
- Unions are tackling the issues: women's committees have been set up in one-half of the provincial organizations affiliated with the Canadian Labour Congress (1978).

But It Isn't Easy To Form A Union

- The federal government effectively opposed collective bargaining with its own employees until 1967.
- Since 1977, when unionizing attempts began within chartered banks where approximately 73% of employees are women, 67 complaints for unfair labour practices have been filed against the banks by different unions — more complaints than any other industry handled by the Canada Labour Relations Board.

All facts are based on 1979 statistics unless otherwise specified.

Sources available on request.

The Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women is a federal organization whose mandate is both to advise the government of the actions it deems necessary to improve the position of women and to inform the public about matters of interest and concern to women.

***** Announcements *****

The Humanist in Canada, Autumn 1982 carries SWAG's Brief on Televangelism which was submitted to the CRTC hearings on religious broadcasting last fall. The Brief and the article are in the office for reading.

The Dinner Party will be in Calgary, December 3 to February 27 at the Glenbow Institute. More information in the next issue.

The Law Centre is holding free public information classes in several locations on various aspects of consumer and family law. Details available in the office or phone The Law Centre 388-4516

Women and Words, a new Vancouver based organization is proposing a country wide conference of women from all fields of literature to be held in Vancouver in July 1983. They are soliciting memberships, ideas and papers for the conference. Information is available in the office or write "Women and Words", Box 65563, Stn F, Vancouver V5N 4B0

The Coalition for Nuclear Disarmament is organizing a referendum on nuclear disarmament for the Victoria municipal elections next month. The \$7,000 cost of this referendum must be paid by the coalition. Donations to help defray this expense can be sent to The Coalition for Nuclear Disarmament, 381 Irving Rd. V5S4A3

May Sarton will be signing her books at Everywoman's Books, 641 Johnson, on Saturday, October 30 at 11.00.a.m.

May Sarton is author of The House by the Sea, The Small Room, Crucial Conversations, Mrs. Stevens Hears the Mermaids Singing, Kinds of Love and many other books. Sarton will also be doing a reading at University of Victoria on October 28. Contact the bookstore or the University for time and place.

Eileen Hendry, Vice-President of the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women is pleased to announce the opening of the Western Regional Office at 1055 West Georgia Street, Suite 1800, Vancouver, B.C.

The Victoria Association for the Care of the Dying is sponsoring a series of lectures on Care for the Dying and the Bereaved (an introduction to understanding and caring for the emotional needs of the terminally ill and their family and friends) on Thursday evenings 7.30-9.30p.m., October 7 to December 2, Lansdowne Campus, 1950 Lansdowne Road, Victoria. Fee \$30.00.

The Greater Victoria Multicultural Women's Association have opened their own office and drop-in centre at #101, 1012 Douglas Street. The official opening took place on Thursday September 30 when Isabel Kelly, Deputy Minister of Women's Programs, Ministry of Labour officiated over the opening ceremony. Other dignitaries present included Gretchen Brewin, Robin Blencoe, Mel Couvelier as well as representatives from other local organizations and women's groups. It was a delightful celebration and I am pleased that I was able to attend as the representative of SWAG.

Alice J. Albert

The Greater Victoria Multicultural Women's Association, 1012 Douglas St., is sponsoring a series of lectures on Issues on Human Rights by Hanne Jensen, Director of the Human Rights Office. These will be held at noon on Fridays, October 29, November 5, November 19 and November 26. Topics include: Discrimination, affirmative action, sexual harassment and equal pay. Phone 384-4525 for further information.

The Feminist History Group will meet on Sunday 21st November at 3.00.p.m. at Alice's, 453 Moss Street. A new format--a study group to consider the various political philosophies evident among feminists and identify one's own position.

Reading: The Unhappy Marriage of Marxism and Feminism edited by Lydia Sargent. Introduction for Nov. 21.

Karen Davies, R.P.N., MA.(Psychology)
909 McClure Street, Victoria, B.C.
Telephone: 383-1347

is pleased to announce the relocation of her practice in psychotherapy from Coquitlam to Victoria. Karen offers counselling services: psychotherapy for groups, divorce counselling and mediation and body work.

See You At The

STATUS OF WOMEN CONFERENCE
"CELEBRATING A DECADE OF SISTERHOOD"

October 22 & 23

UNIVERSITY OF VICTORIA

7:30 PM Friday Night: Judy Chicago's Dinner Party Film & Celebration

WORKSHOPS:

9:00: to 4 All Day Saturday

CO-HOSTED BY: UVic Women's Centre Collective

Membership Form

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Postal Code: _____

Telephone: _____

Renewal: New: Gift:

Membership is \$10⁰⁰ per year due March 8.

Send to: SWAG

(Reduced rates available if needed).

Post Office Box 629¹/₂ Stn. C,
Victoria, B.C. V8P 5L5

Return to:
Status of Women Action Group,
P.O. Box 6296, Stn. C,
Victoria, B.C.
V8P 5L5



See You At The

CO-EDITED BY: W.A.C. Women's Centre Collective

MEMBERS:

1:30 PM Friday, 10/19/81: Judy Christie, & Diana Paula Ellis & co-operation

8:00 PM 1 01 1981, 10/19/81

UNIVERSITY OF VICTORIA

October 25 & 27

ALTERNATIVE A DECIDE ON STRATEGICAL

STATUS OF WOMEN CONFERENCE



Administrative form with fields for Name, Address, Telephone, and other contact information. Includes checkboxes for 'New' and 'Old' status.

Administrative form with fields for Name, Address, Telephone, and other contact information. Includes checkboxes for 'New' and 'Old' status.