

STATUS of WOMEN NEWS

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Sharing Power

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by Jerri Lee

A true spirit of sharing knowledge, experience and power prevailed as the Victoria Status of Women celebrated the publication of **Sharing Power** by Dr. Josephine Payne-O'Connor at a party in the Crystal Gardens Oct. 3.

One hundred people including many of the political activist women featured in **Sharing Power** were on hand to applaud the launching of this **Political Skills Handbook**.

Rusty Underwood, co-founder of the East Saanich Native Women's Association said that it was the title that most impressed her, that she liked the idea of "sharing knowledge and strength".

Pam Blackstone, a founder of **Women Against Pornography** said **Sharing Power** should be "an inspiration for women across Canada. We need women's concerns to be addressed." **Milnor Alexander**, New Democrat candidate in Oak Bay-Gordon Head said that being interviewed for the book was influential in her decision to run for office.

Sharing Power is a how-to-do-it book. Outlining the personal experiences of 40 women who have become politically active in one way or another, this handbook describes how to organize a pressure group, how to build public support, how to lobby and how to raise money.

Women in Politics, Vancouver Island Profiles is the subtitle of **Sharing Power**. It presents a microcosm of women's political reality in 1986 and its lessons can be shared by women across Canada.

"It is a book of personal testimony and encouragement," says its author.

Copies of **Sharing Power** may be purchased from the Victoria Status of Women Action Group located at 620 View Street, Second Floor. Price is \$8.95. Mail orders should be sent to the Victoria Status of Women Action Group, P.O. Box 6296, Stn. C, Victoria, B.C. V8P 5L5. Add \$1 postage for one to three copies and 50 cents per book thereafter. Trade discounts are available.

Enquire about the **Vancouver Island Women in Politics** video featuring 30 minutes of interviews with the women who participated in **Sharing Power**. Phone 381-1012.

A Great Christmas Gift - **Sharing Power** is a practical handbook for women's groups but it is also interesting reading for women with a taste for biography. Just sharing the stories of the women in the book is an inspiration!

Letters

Women Against Pornography

An Open Letter to the Women's Community:

This letter is to inform you that Women Against Pornography has evolved to the end of its natural lifespan. Early this summer, we reached the decision to formally disband as a group. The decision was made after much thought, because we did not wish to pass our name and reputation on to a new group of women who might not share our position on censorship. This position took years of hard work to establish, and was very important to us. We, of course, welcome new women to get involved in this struggle, and would provide whatever support or information we can.

We extend our appreciation to the many women who have given us their support and encouragement over the last four years. The fight against porn has been at many times a difficult and painful one, and without each other we would not have lasted as long as we have.

We feel that much has been accomplished, not just in our fight against violent pornography, but through our work around other related issues as well. Our work around the issue of prostitution-- and the opportunity to meet and work with local prostitute women-- has been a learning experience; and our work on the Erotica project has been fun, inspiring, and growthful (at a time when something uplifting was desperately needed). We have each learned much, particularly from the debates around sexuality and censorship. We have done a great deal of work having produced two panel displays, many written materials, two briefs, two videos and a slide/tape show.

Perhaps our most important accomplishment has been a contribution toward a greater understanding of pornography and broadening its definition to include other forms of sexist media, as well as calling for caution about the censoring of sexual images.

Our involvement in this issue has given us many opportunities for struggle, for personal growth, for acquiring new skills, for challenging ourselves and each other. We all feel greatly enriched by the experience of having been part of a broad-based grass-roots movement for social change. Our decision to move on to other issues, other commitments, is not an admission of defeat but an acknowledgment that we have accomplished what we can and it's time to move on to other areas of our lives.

We are donating our Erotica! slide show, our two videos, Rock Videos: Much More Than Music and She Works Hard for the Money: Women in the Sex Trade and all our other resource materials to the Victoria Status of Women, P.O. Box 6296, Station C, Victoria, B.C. V8P 5L5. The SWAG office is located at 620 View Street, phone 381-1012. The Rock Videos video is distributed in Vancouver by Media Watch, Box 46699, Station G, Vancouver, B.C. V6R 4K8.

Pam Blackstone

Editor's Note: On behalf of the women of Victoria, we extend our sincere appreciation to the women in the Women Against Pornography collective who have contributed significantly to the improvement of the status of women. The endorsement they have made to SWAG will continue to work for social

Letters to the Editor are welcome but should be kept short and may be edited in the interests of space.

Workshop

Report

HOW TO LOBBY FOR CHANGE

One of the most important aspects of SWAG's mandate is an obligation to lobby for improvements to the Status of Women. The following report is from the workshop held in conjunction with the publication of Sharing Power.

by Helen Martin

The lobbying workshop focused on the experience and expertise of Vancouver Island women active in municipal, provincial and Native Indian politics. It was one of the most empowering workshop that I have attended and was presented in a direct yet sensitive manner.

Dorothy Mandy of the Nanaimo Haven House refuge for battered women provided a list of the most important aspects of lobbying.

1. Be clear on your purpose and identify specific areas of concern.
2. Establish network and write to all levels of government to request support.
3. Submit solid proposal to the body being lobbied in writing--be brief.
4. Go to the press and release your proposal expressing confidence that a fair hearing and positive action will follow.
5. If your proposal is denied or you receive no reply--request a hearing or meeting. Prepare a lobbying team to hit those being approached with full force, using someone personally affected as an example. **YOU MUST ACT NOT REACT.**

6. Press release - Give information on progress you are, or are not making, what steps you are now taking and approach network of support to prepare press release. Most important info first, then who, what, when where and least important info last. Include name and phone number of contact person. Make it short, use quotes and type double space.

7. After lobbying process is complete, evaluate your effectiveness and document for future reference and networking with other lobby groups.

Nicaraguan Women in Need

The continuation of U.S.-backed contra aggression in Nicaragua combined with the American economic blockade, has meant that many of the basic necessities are scarce or unavailable. That is why Tools for Peace, in conjunction with AMNLAE (the Nicaraguan Women's Association) has targeted sanitary supplies as a priority for the 1986 campaign.

Please donate napkins or money. Required are standard, adhesive-backed napkins in boxes of 10 or 12 (no tampons). Please bring your donation to the SWAG office at 620 View, Second Floor or to the Coalition for Aid to Nicaragua at 937 Balmoral (basement) or call Nadia at 385-1324. **Before Nov. 15.**

Health

Women And Health Conference

Osteoporosis And Menopause Workshop

A workshop on osteoporosis and menopause will be conducted by the Women's Health Consumer Action Group Dec. 9 from 7 to 9 p.m. in the multi purpose room of the downtown Public Library.

Women during the menopause are at risk of developing osteoporosis (loss of bone density). This is due to the cessation of the menses resulting in a reduction of estrogen produced by the ovaries. Insufficient intake of calcium and Vitamin D and lack of sufficient exercise are also factors. Younger women may also be at risk due to the surgical removal of both ovaries.

These and other concerns will be addressed by a speaker to be announced. Members of the Registered Nurses Assoc., Victoria Chapter will act as facilitators. Watch newspapers and posters for further info or call SWAG at 381-1012. No admission charge.

Port Alberni Women's Resources Society is sponsoring a Women and Health Conference on Nov. 1 at 8:15 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. at North Island College, 4006 - 8th Ave. Port Alberni.

A variety of workshops are planned including: Reproductive Control, Leith Leslie; Menopause, Sue Moger; PMS, Dr. Heather Marinaccio; Redefining Our Mental Health, Dr. Frances Forrest Richards; Cervical & Breast Cancer, May Sauder; Patient's Rights, Marilyn Taillefer; Birthing Options, Luba Lyons Richardson; Can I Like My Body Without Changing It?, Susan Slatkoff; Health Hazards in the

Workplace, Susan Sanderson; Pharmaceuticals/Pitch to Women, Vancouver Women's Health Collective who are also doing Gynecological Issues and Drug & Alcohol Abuse, Identification and Information.

Registration fee is \$15. For further information call 724-7111 in Port Alberni.

NAC has produced a 60-page brief on Unemployment Insurance which includes graphs and Statistics. Copies are available through the NAC office at \$4 each. Write to the National Action Committee on the Status of Women, 344 Bloor St. West, Suite 505, Toronto, Ont. M5S 1W9.

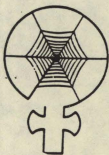
The Victoria Business and Professional Women's Club is holding a seminar on how to plan for your death. Topics to be discussed include: estate planning, a new concept of care, wills & estate settlement and the value of funeral services. This on Nov. 1, 9:30 p.m. - 3 p.m. at the Imperial Inn. Fee \$20 includes lunch. For tickets call Mary Eckersley, 479-6261; Inez Cole, 389-1799 or Mickie Janisse, Sands Funeral Home, 388-5155.



Who Offered to give lectures and conduct workshops by filling out the SWAG questionnaire? Someone very kindly did but they forgot to give us a name or number. If you are still interested please call.

A public forum sponsored by the Committee on Alternatives for British Columbia will be held Nov. 22 at the University of Victoria, Begbie Room 159. Contact Ruth at 721-7493 or Warren at 721-7494 or 595-8735.

What's Happening For Women



Thursdays At Noon

Thursday noon programs are held in the SWAG office at 620 View in downtown Victoria. Come along and bring your lunch.

Nov. 6-Midwifery on Trial, Caroline Meggison, midwife.

Nov. 13-Women in the Armed Forces, Fran Dearman.

Nov. 20-Women in Development, Carol Sherwood, CUSO.

Nov. 27-Getthing Through the Holidays on a Low Income, Peggy Waterton & Debbie MacDonald.

Friends: Making Friends, Keeping Friends, Being Friends - A one-day workshop with Susan Slatkoff, MA, Counsellor, Nov. 22, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Queenswood Centre, Cost \$60, SWAG members \$55. Topics to be discussed include difference between family and friends, why we lose friends, what to do when things go wrong and building extended families of friends. Enrolment is limited and by pre-registration only. To register call the SWAG office at 381-1012.

The Literary Discussion Group will meet Nov. 26 at 7:30 at 1626 Rockland, Apt. 4 when *The Good Terrorist* by Doris Lessing will be discussed. You do not have to have read the book to attend. For more info call Freda Nobbs at 592-5950 or the SWAG office.

Women Supporting Women is a feminist discussion and exploration group to be held Nov. 12 at 7:30 p.m. in the SWAG office. Perfect for women unsure about feminist issues as well as those more experienced feminists.

Year-end Celebration on Dec. 5. Anyone interested in programming for this please call the office.

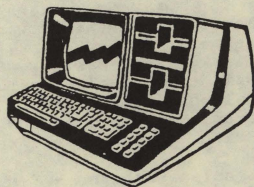
The Effects of Free Trade on Canadian Women will be discussed by Marjorie Cohen of Toronto, Oct. 30 at 7:30 p.m. in MacLaurin Bldg. A144. An economist, Cohen is vice-president of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women and on the staff of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education.

You can pre-register or pay at the door. Cost is \$6 or a donation for those who cannot afford to pay. For information call UVIC Extension at 721-8463 or 721-8827.

Human Rights & Education will be the topic of a seminar Nov. 5 at 7:30 p.m. at St. John's Anglican Church Hall, 925 Balmoral. Sponsored by the Vancouver Island Human Rights Coalition, admission free.

Shoreline/Spectrum Community Employment Project: Career Counseling and Job Search Skills Training and Job Placement for Women.

This is a free service. For more information or to arrange an appointment, phone Corinne Koehn at 386-8367. Leave your name and number for her to phone you back.



Women and Work Conference

Nov. 28-29 at Shoreline School. \$10 employed/\$5 unemployed and students, includes lunch. Daycare provided. To pre-register call 386-8367 for a brochure.

Our appreciation goes to **Liz Cullen** for all the graphics she has created for SWAG, for our window sign, membership brochures and logos for flyers and brochures.

From the SWAG Office - A Report

by Debby Gregory

The office continues to be an interesting place to work. We are hoping to be able to expand office hours to Saturday.

New members are always welcome to the office collective which meets the third Monday evening of the month. Currently helping to staff the office are: Liz Philipose, Anne Gale, Romola Wright, Janet Lundman and Gayle Nelson. Two Camosun College students will be starting temporary placements in the office. Elizabeth Easton is working to synthesize some information in the reference library into fact-sheets. Deirdre Barch will meet on Wednesday afternoons with women who need referrals to social service agencies. She can offer more information and informal counselling. Just call the office at 381-1012 for more info.

Welcome to the following new members: Cathy Barzo, Andrea Clark, Tracy Daniels, Lynette Halldorson, Helen Martin Gayle Nelson, Laura Porcher, Susan Ptak, Maria St. Armand, Barbara Smith and Darlene Walker.

Lesbian Concerns - I have noticed that although many SWAG members are lesbians and lesbian-

identified bisexuals, we don't have a very high profile. Our relative invisibility at a structural level indirectly contributes to our oppression.

Surely there are common areas of interest and concern to us as lesbians. In addition to our contributions to SWAG as individuals, it would be worthwhile for us to contribute something collectively.

Let's meet to discuss it. Bring your enthusiasms and bright ideas to the first meeting of the SWAG Committee on Lesbian Concerns, Nov. 19 at 7:30 p.m. in the SWAG office. If this is not a good date give us a call.

Wanted - donations of feminist books for the SWAG reference library.

The Status of Women News is published six times a year by the Victoria Status of Women Action Group, 620 View Street, Victoria, B.C. Phone 381-1012.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

Postal Code: _____

Telephone: _____

Send to:

Status of Women Action Group

P.O. Box 6296, Str. C

Victoria, B.C. V8P 5L5

(604) 381-1012

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