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swag

status of women action group
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Victoria Status of Women News
September, 1976
Volume III, number 5

'pot pourri'



YOU ALWAYS ASK WHAT I DO ALL DAY... WELL TODAY I DIDN'T DO IT!

SOME BASICS

COMMITTEES

Members are encouraged to focus their energies on one or more committees. Those committees now active are listed below.

Victoria Status of Women Action Group (SWAG) was founded 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 volunteer group, registered as a society, with an executive elected yearly.

FAMILY LAW Linda Sproule-Jones
477-3324

EDUCATION Christina Johnson
595-4791

PUBLIC LIFE Dorothy Maxwell
384-0083

HERSTORY Linda Gilligan
384-6229

NEWSLETTER Marilyn Gore
384-7220

HUMAN RIGHTS Norrie Preston
598-1390

CONSCIOUSNESS RAISING GROUPS
Lyn Carter
595--6378

PRESIDENT Mimi Robertson
1149 Wychbury Ave.,
385-8680

V PRESIDENT (programmes) Lorraine Ayers
3940 Smugglers Cove
477-6014

V PRESIDENT (projects) Marilyn Gore
3-1150 Pandora Ave.,
384-7220

CORRESPONDING SECRETARY Marilyn Wharf
2444 Sutton Rd.,
477-8453

RECORDING SECRETARY Mary Dick
2194 Central Ave.,
598-1722

TREASURER Ann McMurdo
4101 Cedar Hill Rd.
477-7358

MEMBERSHIP Maxine Cowley
164 Beachwood
598-8167

PAST PRESIDENT Norrie Preston
766 Monterey Ave.,
598-1390

MEMBERSHIP

Your membership is important. There is strength in numbers... the more we have, the more likely the government and the community is to listen. Your support, your volunteer time and your financial contributions, no matter how small, add to the movement of women and men working to attain equal rights for women in our society.

MEETINGS

SWAG meets the fourth Monday of the month (except when it falls on a holiday) at the Cedar Hill Community Centre, 3220 Cedar Hill Rd., at 8:00 P.M.

THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE HELD ON SEPT. 27

Agenda items will include:
Recommendation to raise membership fee.
The conference.
Funding & fund-raising

Guest speakers will be Lorraine Toleikis and Theresa Kerin who worked on a summer project on immigrant and ethnic women.

SPECIAL NOTE:

VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED to staff the SWAG office. Can you spare one morning or afternoon a week? Call Maxine Cowley.

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SWAG NEWS

It has been an exciting and productive summer for SWAG. The project on immigrant and ethnic women was a tremendous success, many government and community agencies have become aware of our office and have sent women to us, we have had a high level of success with ombuds cases, membership has grown, and things are shaping up for a busy fall.

The Office

Over the months of July and August the following volunteers staffed the office:

Cayle Chapman,
Nancy Randall
Gail Cox
Pat Cromie
Muriel Azmiet
Avis Rasmussen
Ann Howie
Brenda Laurie
Susan Gage

Mary Clark
Eve Bill
Zoylā McNulty
Rosemary Gray
Lillian Nestling
Pat Van't Haaff
Doris Jacques
Josie Scholfield
Judy Boyd

Now that holidays are over, we hope to do up a new roster for September & October. If you can help, phone Maxine Cowley.

We have decided to let one room of the office go and keep #7 open at least until the end of October. Thanks to donations from "Strings" and other groups and individuals, we can hold out till then. With a conference in October, we feel it is essential to keep the office, gestetner, resources etc. at a central location.

The Newsletter

We have found a new source of paper. This will significantly reduce the cost. Several members have told us this is one of the most important things SWAG does, so it WILL continue, no matter what the funding situation. But membership dues and or subscription rates will have to be increased if we are to continue to send newsletters like the one on LAW and EDUCATION. Please attend the meeting on the 27th when this will be discussed.

The Project

The summer project on immigrant and ethnic women was carried out from June 1st to Sept 7th, under a Secretary of State grant.

Lorraine Toleikis and Theres Kerin worked full time on the project and Louise Robbins and Leona Dornan worked 9 weeks and three weeks respectively. They have put together a resource guide for immigrant women, a full report of their activities, successes, failures, frustrations and joys.

Their greatest achievement was the formation of the Intercultural Women's Association. This group will work with women in all ethnic groups, carrying on the work started this summer.

It was SWAG's hope that we could achieve an on-going programme of some sort, but the enthusiasm and dedication of these women went beyond our wildest expectations.

Lorraine and Theresa will be the speakers at our next meeting. You will find their experiences MOST interesting.

BE THERE Sept. 27th
CEDAR HILL COMMUNITY CENTRE

FUNDING

We appealed to the Provincial Secretary Grace McCarthy, asking for a meeting with her, but she said, "I regret that my schedule is very busy, and I will not be able to accept your invitation to meet with you at the present time. The matter of assistance to WOMEN ACTION GROUPS is still under study by the Department."

(We intend to keep pushing.)

Jesse Dillard, Secretary of State, was somewhat more understanding, and has forwarded our application for funds for the conference, office rental, part-time staff and newsletter assistance, to Ottawa.

(We are holding our collective breath.)

We have discussed fund-raising and have a few ideas. If you have any - let's hear them.

SUMMARY: S.N.A.F.U.

COMMITTEES

3.

EDUCATION

The education committee has worked all through the summer preparing for a programme to be used in the schools this fall. It seems that most educators are not convinced that sexism in schools is a problem, so we have prepared a pamphlet touching on a few areas of concern to us. This will be distributed to teachers, students and parents. It is our hope that it will raise the awareness of teachers sufficiently to allow us to "get a foot in the door" and effect some changes.

Family Law

The law committee took the summer off after a hectic spring. Our pamphlet, "For Better or Worse" is going into its second printing. It has been distributed to schools, community groups, libraries and individuals.

MLA Lyle Kahl, who is doing some work on the Berger Commission Recommendations for the Attorney General, has asked us to prepare a brief on these reports. If you are interested in working on this, call Linda Sproule-Jones. It looks like a busy year!

HUMAN RIGHTS

This committee hasn't really 'got off the ground' yet. We wrote a letter to the Minister of Labour condemning him for his lack of action in setting up Boards of Inquiry. Labour Minister Williams took exception to our letter, which was published in the Colonist and sent a letter too long to print here. Mr Williams appears to think that the success of the Human Rights Branch can be measured by the number of complaints that are resolved without having to go to a Board of Inquiry. We disagree with Mr. Williams. Complaints which are resolved by Human Rights Officers usually involve a great deal of compromise, which is just not satisfactory. A Board of Inquiry ruling is a statement that discrimination has taken place, and there is an order to rectify the situation. Furthermore, it receives publicity and makes the public aware of illegal discriminatory practices.

Human Rights (cont'd)

We need more interested people to work on this committee. We hope to set up regular meetings with the Human Rights Commission, to put out pamphlets etc., and for this, we need energy. Call Mimi

C. R. GROUPS

The consciousness raising group initiated at the April meeting is not only alive and well, but lively. We have eleven regular members, all the way from late twenties to early sixties. Our life styles, past and present, are just as varied; but we are a close group - revealing ourselves, listening empathetically, and offering each other support. With Lorea Tubb's pleasant organizing, we now meet every two weeks, taking turns hosting the group in our homes. Some of our topics have been mothers, the dating game, self-worth, life goals, and we keep coming up with more.

If you would like to be a part of another group, phone Lynn Carter (595-0582 evenings best). When we have enough names, we will help to get you organized. Then you will be off and C.R.-ing for yourselves.

HEALTH

This committee does not exist. Yet, we are aware of a need to collect and distribute information on breast and cervical cancer, birth control & abortion, pregnancy & breast-feeding. We have to compile a list of doctors who will EXPLAIN surgical and examination procedures, and who will discuss with us our personal hang-ups about our bodies without treating us like children who wouldn't really understand. We have to hammer away at Governments for mass screening mammography equipment, and for funding for research into mental health regarding women. This requires woman-hours. Would you like to be involved? Call Janet Poyen 477-5463

If you would like to start another committee to work on YOUR favourite feminist issue -- let us know about it. Write to the office and we'll print your ideas.

LETTERS

Dear Sisters,

In December, 1975, the Kingston Women's Centre sent about 250 letters to various women's groups and women's centres across Canada in order to assess International Women's Year at the "grass-root" level. We were hoping to publish a report on IWY, using the information given to us from various centres in Canada..

Unfortunately we only got 12 responses; this was not enough to publish our report. We would like to thank you for having answered our letter and we regret not being able to send you a report on it.

We are very distressed by the fragmentation within the women's movement in Canada and the lack of communication between various women's groups in Canada. We believe more than ever in the necessity of a strong mass movement to effect social change. Our own conclusions are that women will bring about social change for themselves through their own struggle and not through government hand-outs, be it grants or IWY. We believe that IWY only served the government too well; by legitimizing it according to its own rules, it tried to smother a radical active women's movement.

We mustn't be fooled by these tactics and we must keep up the struggle.

In sisterhood and liberation,

Sophie Bissonnette
Kingston Women's Centre,
Kingston, Ontario

Dear Swag,

Wrote a letter to Peter Kirkham before I left and found a reply waiting on my return.

Since it was addressed to Mr. O.R. Barr, I somehow feel that we have not reached Dr. Kirkham:

I am enclosing a copy.

Olivia Barr

Dear Mr. Barr;

Thank you for your letter of July 21. I appreciate your concern about the term "head of household".

As you have been informed, the purpose of including the head of household data in the census is to identify a reference person for statistical purposes, such as the compilation of different types of family and household data. I also appreciate, however, that some Canadians object to the concept on the grounds that their marriage is a partnership, and does not include a head of household, or that the concept is discriminatory.

I wish to thank you for expressing your views on this matter. As a result of such reactions across Canada, the head of household concept will be re-assessed for the 1981 Census.

Yours sincerely,
Peter G. Kirkham,
Chief Statistician

(Editor's Note:) Kathleen Ruff wrote a superb letter to Dr. Kirkham regarding this issue stating that the Human Rights Branch had received complaints about it. The answer she received was almost a duplicate of the above.

Dear SWAG,

This letter is to inform you of the eviction of the U.B.C. Women's Office from Room 230, Student Union Building, U.B.C. as of July 16, 1976.

The reason given for the eviction by the Student Administration Committee was that space occupied by the women's office was "untenably excessive" for a non-subsidiary of the Alma Mater Society.

The Women in Focus Audio-Visual Library has relocated at 4-45 Kingsway, Vancouver, B. C. Telephone: 872-2250. Resources from the women's office such as the library of books, publications and Audio-tapes are available to interested women at this address.

Like many other women's groups we are in the position of trying to survive without furling. We are therefor attempting to make Women in Focus financially viable by means of the rental and resale of our video tapes.

Nicola Sumner

And More Letters

I SHOULD HAVE SAID...

A new feature

Dear Swag,

The Affirmative Action League seems to have gently faded away, its members all seem to have gone on to other commitments. Rosemary Taylor, the treasurer and I seem to be the last ones. We have closed out our bank account and are forwarding the \$ 32.17 to SWAG. I hope it will be helpful.

We originally all donated \$10.00 each and worked on a brief and a pamphlet for the B.C.F.W. conference that was never held in Victoria. So we still have a lot of Affirmative Action pamphlets if you could use them.

Hilary Stewardson did present our brief to the N.D.P. government. She is now back at University. I, too, am taking evening courses at UVic and have to curtail other activities. I hope to be more active again when I have more free time.

Nanw Roger

... ever get tongue-tied when someone makes a sexist remark? Send these remarks to SWAG and we'll try to get some good answers for you, so you won't be stuck next time. If you have a good answer for this one, send it in ... we'll publish as many as we can.

(a true story)

Voice on other end of phone: Carpenter's Union, Hello.

Me: Hello, can you tell me if you have any female journeymen or apprentice carpenters?

Voice: No we don't, but we'll take'em if they're qualified. The qualifications are 38-24-38.

Me: Splutter-choke rude word...

Suggestion: I should have said ...

"You mean ALL the men in your union are exactly the same size???"

NO COMMENT



"How about knocking off and making me a sandwich?"

NOTES & NEWS

SORMUC
Service, Office & Retail Workers Union

From Manpower

The Victoria Canada Manpower Centre, 810 Fort St., will be having an open house for Women on Wednesday, October 6th, from 4:00 P.M. to 9:00 P.M.

The purpose of this Open House is to provide women with information about interesting and rewarding careers in non-traditional as well as traditional occupations. Many women wonder how to attain their goals what barriersthey will face, indeed most are not even aware of the variety and scope of careers that exist.

We are planning to have displays, special films and slides, and presentations by invited guests representing all areas of the work force.

.....

On Tuesday, September 7, Steve Torrence and Diane Maisonneuve from Manpower visited the SWAG office. They asked for names of women in non-traditional occupations, hoping these women would take part in the above programme. We compiled a very small list. If you know of a woman who might be interested in sharing her experiences in a non-traditional occupation, call Diane at the Manpower Centre.

We discussed a few of the many shortcomings of the local Manpower operation in regard to women and they were given a list of grievances compiled for last spring's sit-in in Vancouver. They expressed a desire to communicate with local women's groups and to have a feminist on their Community Advisory Committee. They admitted that, at present, they have "almost nothing" to offer women in the way of training in non-traditional occupations.

Diane stated that as a counsellor, she found most women are already conditioned to seek work and training in traditional occupations. They have usually decided what they want to do when they come to her. She does not suggest alternatives to them. (Perhaps this would be a good place to start, Diane!)

In August, this union applied to the Canada Labour Relations Board for union certification for the Victory Square Branch of the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce in Vancouver. The application is the first in the history of the Bank of Commerce. The banks are well-known for discrimination against their female employees. In the last several years there has been some improvement in promotion opportunities for women, but the vast majority of women in the bank are concentrated in the lowest paid categories. 72% of all bank employees are women. Yet in 1975, of the 67,000 women who were working in the eight largest chartered banks, 48,600 made \$585 per month or less. SORMUC HOPES to apply for several more branches in the coming months. If you work in a bank or know of women who would be interested in joining the union, call 684-2834 for further information.

From Community Action

Since April 1976, The Greater Victoria Community Action Group has offered a free housing service to be used by tenants and landlords.

We know that our housing service has been useful for many people in helping them find suitable accommodation and also registering landlords who have accommodation to rent. This is a service offered to low income people. The only requirement is NEED.

Community Action Housing Service is at 551 1/2 Fisgard St., Telephone: 382-8331.

FROM THE NATIONAL ACTION COMMITTEE ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

Pensions for Women

On June 1 - 2, the Federal and Provincial Ministers of Welfare met in Ottawa to consider various issues arising from the Social Security Review and, in particular the question of pension plans.

(For proposals -- next page....)

RAPE RELIEF

Pensions for Women (cont'd)

Two proposals to amend the Canada and Quebec Pension Plans, originally tabled at the February 3 and 4 meeting of Welfare Ministers, were discussed. These proposals, intended to make special provision for spouses who work in the home were that;

(i) pension credits earned by spouses during marriage may be divided equally between spouses on marriage dissolution;

(ii) contributors who leave the labour force to raise children should be permitted to drop out those months of low or zero earnings from the calculation of their average life-time earnings for benefit purposes.

There was agreement to proceed with the first proposal and all provinces but one agreed with the second. Ontario expressed reservations about the latter, indicating it would give further study to the matter.

PLEASE NOTE: The refusal of Ontario to agree to the second proposal means that while Quebec can go ahead because it is not a member of the C.P.P. - and it WILL go ahead - no other province may. Action requires agreement of two-thirds of the provinces with two-thirds of the people. This is an Ontario veto.

Please write to the Honourable James Taylor, Minister of Community and Social Services, Queen's Park, Toronto, and point out to him that your province wanted to make this important change for the benefit of women and that he is delaying it for no clear reason. If possible, send a copy to us.

Goodness knows, the proposal itself is a very modest one and does not solve the question of whether a houseperson should get a pension for her/his contribution to the economy on its own merits. But it is a step in the right direction and will help all those women who find themselves, in middle or old age, without any pension credits and without the husband whose work was originally provided them.

PLEASE ACT. THIS IS URGENT.

NAC Office: 40 St. Clair Ave. E., Ste. 300
Toronto, Ontario. M4T 1M9

Rape Relief is now operating out of 1947 Cook St., with a staff of three. Aside from co-ordinating volunteers to be on call at night, they have finalized a training programme for the fall. Volunteers will learn such things as police procedures the role of prosecution, court procedures, medical procedures, physical examination, telephone policy, crisis intervention, listening skills and empathetic responding.

They are also working with local police and preparing an educational programme for students.

Rape relief needs your support, financial, physical and vocal. They act upon as many as 7 rapes in a two week period.

If you would like to be a volunteer and are willing to commit yourself to attend the training sessions, call 383-3232. Nancy, Rita or Tony will answer any questions you might have.

B.C. ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS

The B. C. Association of Social Workers has received funds from the Federal Department of Health to do a study on Middle Aged Women. An office has been provided for them at the YM-YWCA. The grape-vine tells us that some people in high places feel somewhat bitter about this grant, saying, "What about the MEN??" We have heard a lot about the problems men face upon retirement, yet we rarely hear about the problems women face when their last child has left home. The woman of forty who has rusty skills or no skills as far as the labour force is concerned finds little sympathy or help in our society. Has anyone ever really studied the vacuum left in a woman's life at this time from a WOMAN'S viewpoint? Psychiatrists have a lot to say on the subject - but that's another story!

Good luck to Marilyn Callahan on this most important project.

If your group or organization has any news of interest to women, send copy to the SWAG Office before the twelfth of each month. We reserve the right to edit materials... so keep it short.

More Notes & News

The Women's Centre

At a recent meeting at the women's centre, it was agreed that programmes and social events should be planned to bring more women into the centre.

The centre belongs to ALL women, and is not a private club. If you would like to teach a course of interest to women, or if you want to plan a "Women's Night" - or if your CR group wants a place to meet pop into the centre and put your name (and pertinent information) on the calendar.

Slide Show

Tues., Sept. 28th ... 552 Pandora
7:30 P.M.

Muriel Gough Azmier will present slides showing the positive and negative image of older women.

1. The image of older women as seen through the media.
2. Age - The Coming of a Different Beauty.

Discussion will follow the showing.

Everywoman's Books

Everywoman's Books is operated by a collective of volunteers. There are now twelve women in the collective. Six of these women have been involved in the store since its birth in February, 1975. We all have full time jobs apart from the store, so at times our individual and collective energy is very low. At times we each have other commitments and we really have to scramble to find someone to work in the store for a few hours. So far, we have always managed to keep the store open (11:00 AM till 6:00) (Tuesday to Saturday) - but it hasn't been easy.

So.... we need more help to keep the store open and running smoothly. If you are interested in becoming involved in the store - in any capacity - please call:

Lynne Shields - 598-2391

Everywoman's Books
2033 Oak Bay Ave.,
Victoria, B. C. V8R 1E5

NEW .. AT EVERYWOMAN'S BOOKS

Woman in a Man Made World: A socioeconomic handbook. Edited by Nona Glazier - Malbin & Helen Waebrer \$6,95

The Captive Wife; by Hannah Green \$2.25

Liberating Women's History: Theoretical and Critical Essays. Edited by Bernice A. Carroll \$5.95

Love, Therapy & Politics: Issues in Radical Therapy. Edited by Hogie Wyckoff \$5.75

The Law is Not For Women: A Legal Handbook for Women. by Marvin A. Zuker and June Callwood \$5.95

We also have in a good supply of:

The Assertive Woman by Phelps & Austin and the REVISED edition of Our Bodies Ourselves.

Did you know that we now carry PRIORITIES the NDP Women's Committee Publication???

DID YOU KNOW???

1. The "ghettoization" of women into low-skill, low-paying jobs has INCREASED in the last ten years?
2. The average woman earns 45% less than the average man in Canada, and the gap worsened between 1972 and 1973.
3. Secretaries in virtually every large Canadian organization are "rug ranked" - that is, salary is determined by the boss's organizational level, rather than on an evaluation of the specific job.
4. Child care centres meet only one per cent of the need in Canada.
5. The federal coal mines safety regulations prohibit the employment of women in most underground positions.
6. Quebec & New Brunswick restrict night and overtime work for women.
7. The Canada Labour Code does not include sex (as it does race & national origin) as an area of non-discrimination.
8. Under the Unemployment Insurance Act, unemployment benefits are payable in the event of maternity for a period of 15 weeks, subject to a waiting period of two weeks.

...And even MORE NOTES AND NEWS
(it piles up after two months..)

Vancouver Status of Women

On August 5, 1976 the Vancouver Status of Women sent a strongly worded letter to Grace McCarthy, Provincial Secretary, re: funding.

SWAG appreciates this move particularly because we were told by Laurie Wallace, Deputy, that the Vancouver Status of Women had told them they represent the Women's Movement in B.C., and he could not see why WE should require funds. Our arguments apparently were not accepted.

Dear Ms. McCarthy,

We understand that Vancouver Status of Women received funding from Provincial Secretary because we qualify as a provincial body according to your funding criteria. However we hope that those numerous women's groups who have been denied funding through your department have not been left with the impression that VSW was funded by you as a provincial representative of the entire B.C. women's movement.

We are a provincial body in that we provide legal services, skill sharing, information and resources to women and women's groups all over the province, as evidenced by our reports to you. But we wish to make it very clear that we are not a provincial umbrella group for all feminist organizations. That is the function of the B.C. Federation of women.

While we speak to issues of common concern to women throughout the province, we speak on behalf of VSW only, and not for other women's groups or centres as we have no mandate to do so. In the women's movement, we work towards common goals while remaining independent of one another, as sister groups. VSW does not tell other groups what to do or think. We act only in an advisory capacity when requested.

Moreover, we wish to emphasize that we support the concept of core funding for women's centres throughout the province because they provide vital services to women in local communities which are not available elsewhere. Therefore, we are deeply distressed that a number of important women's centres are closing for lack of funding. We want to make sure that the government does not believe that by funding VSW it is meeting the needs of B.C. women adequately.

Lorri Rudland,
Karen Richardson.

9.

KINESIS

This is a publication of the VSW, full of information about women provincially and federally. We can't possibly reprint all of the excellent articles in this news paper. A subscription costs \$5.00 a year and its worth ten times that in educational and emotional value. (It's good for the soul - or so someone said.) To subscribe, send cheque to: Kinesis, Vancouver Status of Women, 2029 West 4th Ave., Vancouver.

FREE PAMPHLETS

Send a long, stamped, self-addressed envelope for any of the following to:
SWAG, #7 - 671 Fort St.

SWAG - something to hand to friends who want to know more about the organization. Explains our policy on Education, Child Care, Equal Pay/ & Opportunity, Birth Control & Abortion, Political Activity, Family Law, Women in Poverty, as well as our objectives.

ONCE UPON A TIME - fairy tales about education. This is our newest pamphlet by the education committee. Full of facts & figures. Dispels myths.

FOR BETTER - FOR WORSE

Our very popular pamphlet by the family law committee. A test to see how much you know about present laws... changes required, and Berger Commission Recommendations.

MODERN METHODS OF BIRTH CONTROL by the Family Planning Assoc. of B.C. Highly recommended. Also covers sterilization, abortion, Genetic counselling, sterility/fertility.

STUCK IN A DEAD END JOB? - by the Affirmative Action League. What IS affirmative action, why we need it, what we can do to achieve it.

Send 40¢ to cover cost of mailing for:

"LIVING IN VICTORIA - A SURVIVAL GUIDE
FOR IMMIGRANT WOMEN"

Info on where to go, what to do, your rights re: employment, day care subsidies. Valuable to ALL women.

CONFERENCE

Oct. 22 + 23

The Conference Committee has been working over the summer developing plans for the biggest and best conference yet. Once again, it is jointly sponsored by SWAG and the UVic Women's Action Group.

The Elliot Building at UVic has been reserved for Friday evening (the 22nd) and all day Saturday. Speakers have been invited, and so far, Paulene Jewett, President, Simon Fraser University, has confirmed that she will be able to speak on the Friday night. We are still hoping to hear from June Menzies and Jean Errington. Rosemary Brown sent her regrets. She will be out of the Province at the time.

Workshops are going to be exciting if all of the women can do them. This year, only committed feminists will do workshops, and they will be on a variety of topics, such as:

Sexism in Schools	Women in Middle age
Women in Politics	Political Action
Work in the Home	Mature women returning to university
Immigrant & Ethnic Women	Family Law
Sex Role Stereotyping	Militant Feminism
Women in Business	Rape

and many more.

The Conference Committee meets every Wednesday night, 8:00 P.M. at the SWAG Office. The committee is made up of interested SWAG members and you do not need an invitation to come to the meetings. Marilyn Gore chairs this committee and is very good at spreading out duties so that no one person is overloaded. We would appreciate some help - particularly from those who would be interested in working on publicity, food, setting up and clean-up. If you have ideas about the programmes, other workshops, etc. - PLEASE attend the meetings (or forever hold your peace.)

oops! - Giant goof! - Can't find the darn correcting fluid - Forgive!

MAINTENANCE PAYMENTS

(Maintenance)

Jeannette Woodford, Community Action "Outreach" worker, has caught the ear of M.P. Donald Munro re: maintenance payments. It seems that some maintenance payments are awarded on the basis of welfare rates. However, these women must pay income tax on those payments, thus significantly reducing the family's income. If you know of a family in this situation, will you please contact Linda Sproule-Jones? If Mr. Munro is willing to listen, it would be wise to show him that these are not just isolated cases. We're not holding our breath - but miracles have been known to happen when an election is due. An opposition MP wields a certain amount of power these days.

Special thanks to Jeannette for setting it up.

BACK TO SCHOOL

Sexism and violence pervade school texts. Why isn't there a tremendous outcry from parents? Why is so little being done about it?

The Department of Education made it quite clear that parents were more concerned about books with sexual overtones than they were about sexism, racism or violence.

The problem is... most parents don't read the literature that their children are subjected to. They hear vague statements about sexism & violence, but rarely see specific examples of it.

For this reason, SWAG hopes to print one example of sexism from texts used in local schools.

Can you help us? Read some of the books of young acquaintances and family members. Send us a summary, the book title and the publisher's name.

The Lottery (A summary)
by Shirley Jackson
from a grade 11 English text
"Story Structure"

In the school yard, the boys gather stones while the girls stand aside, talking among themselves.

Mrs. Hutchinson replies to her husband's teasing about being late, "Wouldn't have me leave m'dishes in the sink, now, would you, Joe?"

Before the draw takes place, Mr. Summers asks who is drawing for Clyde Dunbar. "Me, I guess," a woman said. "Wife draws for husband," Mr. Summers asks, "Don't you have a grown boy to do it for you, Janey?" Although Mr. Summers and everyone else in the village knew the answer perfectly well, it was the business of the official of the lottery to ask such questions formally.

Then he asked "Watson boy drawing this year?"

A tall boy in the crowd raised his hand, "Here," he said, "I'm drawing for my mother and me." He blinked his eyes nervously and ducked his head as several voices in the crowd said good things like, "Good fellow, Jack," and "Glad to see your mother's got a man to do it."

The objective of the lottery is finally revealed to be the selection of a victim for death by stoning; an annual village ritual.

Tessie Hutchinson, who left her kitchen spotless before going to the draw, watches as villagers arm themselves with stones; someone putting pebbles in her toddler's hand, before a stone hits her head.

"It isn't fair, it isn't right," she screamed, and then they were upon her..

.....

The author, a woman, either consciously or subconsciously attempted to bring out the paternalistic, condescending attitude towards women as well as to create a psychological study of human nature. The questions in the text, compiled (no doubt) by male educators ignore this aspect altogether. The result: Without a teacher who recognizes sexism, this story perpetuates chauvinistic attitudes.

For those who think children are not influenced by society's attitudes and school books, we offer excerpts from a taped interview. All grade threes.

Q. Who do you think would make a better principal - a man or a woman?

Helen: A man, because they're more rough and more active.

Tony: If someone gets in trouble a lot, the men would have better punishment than the ladies.

Linda: I think men would be more often principals because they are more stronger than women and could handle the bigger children more than the women.
(Interesting that children equate principals with punishment)

Q. Do you think a man or a woman would be a better pilot?

Teresa: I think men would be better because they've got to drive and ladies could fall asleep or something.

Helen: I think a man would be better because he could control the buttons better and a lady would forget where they are.

Tony: The ladies might get dizzy because they aren't used to being high in the air..

("Breaking the Mold"; Dept. of Education)

WOMEN & UNIONS

The Canadian Labour Congress, at its recent convention, issued a policy statement that opened the door for working women to begin the struggle for real equality.

The CLC in this statement declares that all workers, regardless of their sex must have equality of opportunity and treatment in all areas, and recognizes that discrimination against women workers is continuing today despite the heightened awareness of both men and women.

Women workers are not content with low pay and unfair treatment and are organizing to fight for their rights. The CLC's Conference of Women Trade Unionists and the Organized Working Women's Conference, both held in March of this year, marked a milestone in the fight.

Because of pressure from feminists within, the CLC has come to recognize the need for immediate action and states, "We believe that a long-term programme of practical international action will improve the situation of women and increase their effective participation in all sectors.

While recognizing the need for equal pay for work of equal value in all jobs, the Congress document states that special measures must be taken to raise the pay levels of women who work in women's "job ghettos" and for workers who are employed on a part-time basis.

To establish these rights the Congress declares that "all necessary measures should be taken to promote, in particular, through government action, equal opportunities for women, such action to include legislation relating to equality of opportunity for women workers, and effective machinery under public control, for its enforcement; and to insure strict application of the principle of non-discrimination in all sectors and especially those under public control.

Noting that women have from birth been socialized into accepting the traditional role of housewife, the Congress has declared that measures must be taken to ensure equality of opportunity in education and retraining programmes and to educate the public to women's changing role in contemporary family and social life.

(Reprinted from "Forward" - by Chris Judge)

ABORTION

in Victoria

In October new forms will come into use at the Victoria General and Royal Jubilee Hospitals, for women and doctors requesting abortions.

The new form was recommended by an ad hoc advisory committee on abortion and has been accepted by both hospital boards. SWAG believes that the forms are chauvinistic and paternalistic. It is hard to believe that women might have sat on that committee and that women voted for its acceptance on the Hospital Boards. We have approached Mary Ann Erikson of the Association for Repeal of Abortion Laws, and intend to make a joint statement to the Boards before these forms are printed.

(Swag does not 'recommend' abortion, but maintains that every woman has the right to control of her reproductive life. Until safe, effective birth control is available, the decision to abort an unwanted foetus is nobody's business but hers and her doctor.)

WOMEN in GOVERNMENT OFFICES

In November, 1975 a task force of seven female employees of the Department of the Attorney-General was established to investigate the status of female employment ~~within~~ the Department and to propose an Equal Opportunities (EEO) programme to help redress any imbalances between male and female staff.

Intuitive feelings about the grouping of women in low-paying, low-decision-making ability jobs, with minimal training opportunities or career ladders, were borne out by the study:

1. The average female wage is \$311 a month lower than that of the average male.
2. Females are 34% of the total staff, but only 17% of the non-clerical staff are female.
3. Only 2% of those earning over \$1,800 per month are female - 90% of those earning under \$800 per month are female.

Study of specific job situations within the Department showed that within a job description, female employees are grouped in the lower classifications. For example, more than 80% Clerk 1, 2 & 3 are female, but only 27% Clerk 6 positions are held by females.

It has been proposed that the Department of the Attorney-General institute an EEO Division to deal with these problems, with a mandate to investigate and monitor job descriptions, recruitment advertising, short-listing procedures, interviews, training opportunities, applications for reclassification and promotion. It is also proposed that the Division engage in management education in the concept of EEO, and be available to staff for career counselling, or as an advocate in potential discrimination situations.

CREDIT for WOMEN

SWAG member, Mary Webber passed on the following letter from Jack Lofquist, Vice-president, Bank of Commerce.

Dear Mrs. Webber:

Thank you for your letter of August 17 outlining your reasons for not using your Chargex card.

We are taking the liberty of enclosing a booklet entitled "Credit and You, Women's Access to Credit in Ontario". Although this is a Government of Ontario publication, our Bank participated in its development and fully endorses its content. The philosophy contained therein has been made known to all our branches across Canada, including our three Chargex centres. They have been supplied with copies and instructed to be governed by the principles described therein in handling all credit applications.

We can only assume that the refusal to grant you cards in your own name was the result of a misunderstanding or misinterpretation of procedures by a branch officer.

CREDIT FOR WOMEN (cont'd)

We are advising our Vancouver Centre of the incident concurrently, requesting that they contact you in order to explain our position more fully and provide you with cards embossed in a manner acceptable to you.

Yours very truly,
Jack C. Lofquist

(Editor's Note:) Mary Webber contacted Dortha Atwater, Director of Information Division, Consumer Services Department, Victoria to find out if B.C. has a booklet similar to the Ontario one. She learned there IS a pamphlet entitled "Credit for Women". Dorothy Atwater admits it is "not completely satisfactory, but is a start".

BOOK REVIEW

by Lynne Shields (Everywoman's Books)

For those women who peruse our fiction shelves but can't decide which author to try next - I highly recommend "WOMEN AND FICTION".

This is a great appetizer. It is an introduction to the fictional works of twenty-six women. There are stories by Willa Cather, Eudora Welty and Tillie Olsen; by Virginia Woolf, Gertrude Stein and Katherine Mansfield; by Doris Lessing, Joyce Carol Oates and Margaret Drabble.

Susan Cahill, the editor of "Women and Fiction" has written a short bibliography of each of the authors. She has also included a bibliography of all the published works of each woman.

This is available in paperback at \$2.25.

CONTINUING EDUCATION

by Lyn Carter

Highly Recommended....

U. Vic Continuing Education

Self-Exploration Seminar for Women - Could give that extra ego boost you need to get back to work or school.

Leaders: Mary Jane Murphy & Joel Newman

(great role models - liberated and self-actualizing.)

Women and the Law - Should be offered for Spring 1977.

Jean Watchuk, Victoria Legal Aid Lawyer, instructor.

Covers topics of special interest to women. Clear, concise explanations and lots of time for questions.

GO - and find out how badly we need to insist on law reform NOW.

Late Arrivals

Dear Mimi,

Just a note to say that after reading the two documents Living in Victoria: A survival Guide for Immigrant Women and The Situation of Immigrant Women in Victoria, I can only say that they are extremely well done and will be an asset to any person that has the chance to read them.

We are pleased that your organization took on the responsibility and I look forward to working with SWAG again in the not too distant future.

Good luck with your other projects.

Sincerely,

Jesse Dillard

P. S.

Theresa, Lorraine and Louise should be recognized for making a real contribution to the cause!?!?

Dear Ms. Robertson,

We thank you very much for the copy of your report of a summer project entitled "Reaching Out" and as conducted by Louise Robbins, Lorraine Toleikis and Theresa Kerin.

We should like to congratulate the three concerned for an excellent job of research and are also more than grateful to have so much information to be able to give to our clients and counsellors

The survival guide for immigrant women is a most vital compilation of helpful information and we have great hopes that this will help to lessen the plight of many women coming to live on the West Coast

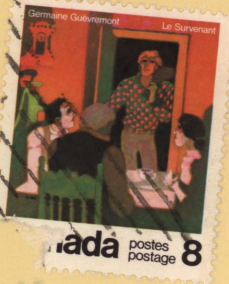
Yours sincerely,

Mona & Roy Hundleby, Co-ordinators

Greater Victoria Citizens'
Counselling Centre



8 - 671 fort street



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BOB REVIEW

Jesse Dillard

Joan Feyer
1219 Alderman St.
Victoria B.C.
V9A 4A8

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live on the West Coast.
Yours sincerely,
Joan Feyer

Max & Roy Hurdaby, Co-ordinators

1971 guide for Immigrant Women in Victoria
Government of British Columbia
Community Centre
1219 Alderman Street
Victoria B.C.
V9A 4A8