

# Lysistrata

a monthly  
newsletter

May 1975

LYSISTRATA is a female personna from an ancient Greek play by Aristophanes. She is a woman who lives in a city state that happens to be at war with another city state. Lysistrata thinks the whole idea of war is absurd, and decides to organize all the other women who agree with her in a non violent revolutionary action to stop the war. Their solution is simple: they refuse to make love with their men until the men stop fighting and settle their dispute in a humane and sensible way.

The idea of woman using the old standby strategy of pussy power to affect change is somewhat less than admirable. But the significance of Lysistrata is more rooted in sisterhood, in the idea of solidarity as a means to ultimate triumph. Lysistrata embraces the word sister in her very name. She is ludicrous, improbable, comical, ingenious and powerful. We acknowledge Lysistrata in all her ambivalent glory as one of our mythic mothers, and as the banner bearer of the Women's Centre Newsletter.

If we receive no feedback or good feedback about the name, we will keep it. The only criticism we have had so far is: well, who ever heard of it? But it really is time we find and recognize our myths and celebrate them. If you have a more appropriate name, send it in.

Thanks to all of you who sent in ideas for our new title. We look forward to new growth and new input from you out there. Please feel free to send in your comments, suggestions, reviews, graphics stories, reports of meetings and events, etc. We want to know how best to be relevant to you, our readers.

LOVE,  
THE NEWSLETTER COLLECTIVE



Sunday : Monday		Tuesday : Wednesday		Thursday : Friday		Saturday	
4		5		6		7	
11		12		13		14	
18		19		20		21	
25		26		27		28	
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# MORGANTALER

Honorable Member John Diefenbaker plans to introduce a private member's bill to this session of Commons which would make it illegal for the crown to pursue an appeal beyond a jury court verdict of NOT GUILTY. The rationale behind this proposed legislation is that a person should not be put in double jeopardy.

The appeal procedure was originally designed to be the right of an individual. In the Supreme Court decision against Henry Morgantaler, a dangerous precedent was set. Now the government can use the appeal process as a club to clobber individuals who dare to differ with current government policy.

Diefenbaker's bill would insure against the misuse of due process to usurp individual freedom. However, private member's bills have poor chances of getting even first readings, because they do not originate in any party's caucus, and are therefore not supported by a power block. Private member's bills need extra support from the electorate in order to even be noticed by the legislative committees.

If you agree that Dr. Morgantaler's conviction was a bad precedent and that Canadian justice is threatened by this decision, write the M.P. in your area, and write Diefenbaker in support of this proposed bill.

Allan McKinnon, and Donald Munro are the members of parliament representing Victoria and Saanich respectively. They can be reached c/o the Parliament Buildings, Ottawa.

**PUB NIGHT**  
at the women's  
centre



PUB night has been  
changed to every  
2nd thursday to  
coincide with films.

Boogie on down!



## beware of legal aid

Divorce is no fun for any woman, but for those relying on the assistance of Legal AID, it can be a nightmare.

Jean Aasson of Victoria, whose own divorce proceedings lasted over two years, was one of the unfortunates who got stuck with the wrong lawyer. In her own words, "I got nailed."

After considerable trouble she decided to divorce her husband on several grounds, and Legal Aid assigned John Myers to be her lawyer. When the proceedings started she noticed in him a bad lack of interest. She got the impression that Myers just didn't care about the case.

When her husband's lawyer bullied her in court and used examples completely unrelated to the case to make her look like a liar, Myers just sat there.

She had names, dates, times and witnesses to her husband's wrongdoings, including adultery, sexual perversion, assault and mental and physical cruelty. He openly admitted to some, but when she submitted the material to her lawyer, he just said, "We don't need that."

Strange, since it was the lawyer who had asked her to get the information in the first place.

He steered her in the wrong direction, not giving good legal counsel. She got no satisfaction, but she did get her 'head screwed up', she said.

Jean wrote a letter telling Myers that she no longer wanted him to represent her. He replied that he wouldn't let her off unless she paid him— something that Legal Aid was supposed to do.

Legal Aid wouldn't give her a new lawyer, so after a lot of hassle, she decided to give her husband grounds for divorce just to get it over with. Myers never let her know when to appear in court, and she never received a summons.



(continued)

was going on. The divorce began in January 1973 and it was not until March 1975 that Jean received court transcripts and found out she was divorced.

In a letter to the Lawyer's Board she wrote, "I feel that I had a great injustice done to me by this lawyer. No woman should be sent to him. It is my opinion, and the opinion of other woman who have had to cope with him, that he should be dealt with strongly. I could not trust him, and finally had to call another lawyer to check my case."

The result of having a misleading and insulting lawyer was this: "My husband got off scot free at my expense and at the expense of my three children. I had to pay off my husband's debts amounting to \$1800; I lost my home, my pride, my respect and was very humiliated. I can't convey the mental anguish caused me by all this and by Myers' incompetence and indifference."

Bonnie Bedford

## EVERYWOMAN'S BOOKS

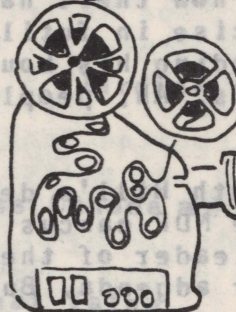
Victoria's Feminist Bookstore

2033, Oak Bay Ave.

Tues. to Sat. 11-6, Fri. 11-9 p.m.

592-7311

## WOMEN IN MEDIA



contact:

MARILYN GORE  
#3/1150  
PANDORA  
VICTORIA  
B.C.

A directory of women in film, video, radio is in the works. Send your particulars to Marilyn Gore.



# the south hill

## parliament disaster

A group of about 100 children, parents and staff from South Hill Daycare Centre in Vancouver, supported by local sympathizers converged upon the B.C. parliament buildings on Thursday, the 17th of April. They were protesting the government's discontinuation of the centre's hot lunch program due to lack of government funds.

The thrust of the demonstration was to point out that the MLA's have a subsidized lunch program, and they are all grown up people with five figure salaries. This ironic little item is something that the news media coverage of the demonstration failed to mention. It was mentioned that the South Hill group marched up to the member's dining room; but it was not mentioned that sergeants at arms forcibly pushed children back, and in one case, hurt a little boy enough to make him cry.

Human Resources Minister Norman Levi did finally agree to meet with the group- after lunch- in the Oak Room. He was decidedly hostile. And he defended the government's position (of cutting off the hot lunch program) by harkening back to the old days of Social Credit when there was not even daycare; so the people should bow down in thanks for this wonderful favour. Levi was not in the least bit ashamed when he announced that he makes \$48,000 a year, although that, like the doomed hot lunch program comes from the taxpayers' money. His attitude did not seem to acknowledge that the parents and staff of South Hill are taxpayers too, and that they might want some say as to how their hard earned bucks are to be used. It was an exercise in futility though. Norm Levi plumply sat there defending his bourgeois hide against the real socialist hoards. Ah, people's government, did we only dream you?

South Hill's delegation later invited themselves into the NDP caucus meeting, and were received very coldly by the leader of the meeting who was anxious to get on with her agenda. But the demonstrators stood firm and stated their grievances, reminding the members of old policy statements from election platforms two years back. They did this without gratitude for kept promises, because a promise is not a favour, but an obligation.



# Review

The first issue of a new feminist journal of literature and criticism has just hit the scene. It is called ROOM OF ONE'S OWN and it is done by a group called the Growing Room Collective. It costs \$1.50, but, at least this first number is worth every penny. There are several poems, all worthy of attention. But for me, the most striking one is by Cam Hubert entitled "Old Women". It is a kind of chanty evoking the ancient and powerful totem imagery, the raven, the eagle, the heron, the cormorant, the salmon and the everpresent ocean, and the hanging elusive fog: our coast. Hubert weaves these strands in and out of a young woman's view of an Old Woman. The Old Woman is at once, myth, mystery, and key to human wisdom. Hubert's conjuring of image calls to mind the totem goddess Emily Carr describes in D'Sonaqua, and makes that goddess flesh, gives her a biography and a philosophy of strength to match her already awesome dignity. The poem is very long and its words are crafted to be read or chanted out loud. It is impossible to describe its impact, but the term that comes closest is visceral.

There are also short fictions by Nancy Thayer, Vera B. Williams, and Vibeke Ohm; and reviews by Dorothy Livesay, Joan Haggerty and Cynthia Flood. The poets represented are: Elespeth Strang, Gwen Hauser, Stephanie Judy, Wiesia Jujawa-Scott, Myra MacFarlane, Maureen McCarthy, Leslee Silverman and Cam Hubert.

ROOM OF ONE'S OWN is available for purchase at the Women's Centre and at EveryWomen's Bookstore. I recommend this issue without reservation. Do give it a read.

Jardine

## OUTRAGE DAY MAY 10TH

Groups in Major Cities across Canada are Marching to Protest on Six Issues.

1. Equal Pay for work of Equal Value
2. Universal Access to Quality Childcare
3. Equal Rights in Marriage and Property Laws.
4. Safe effective Birth Control for all.
5. Remove abortion from the Criminal Code.
6. Free Dr. Henry Morgentaler.

How about this Victoria can we support this and march. Call us and lets get it together!





# rape relief centre

Rape victims experience a terrifying, degrading, often traumatic situation. I am not talking about the act of rape; the words terrorizing, degrading, and traumatic almost go without saying when one is raped. But unfortunately, those words also apply to the scenario that the rape victim will face should she decide to press a charge or even to report the offense. A woman who is blithering in physical pain, humiliation and impotent rage after having been raped is not in a position to deal with what invariably comes afterward - a police investigation - in her best and most rational frame of mind.

Such a situation calls for sympathetic advocates who can accompany the victim through the questioning period, physical examination, and through her court proceedings.

A Rape Relief Centre would be able to provide this kind of service in a straight forward way. Its workers would be specialists in the problems resulting from rape. They would, unlike volunteers in Crisis Line or other similar services, be specially trained to aid rape victims. And during times when there is no crisis, they would work with the community in prevention workshops to teach women ways of self defense and avoidance psychological techniques.

Rape advocates would have training in legal, technical and judicial problems of rape. They would be able to provide advice, assistance, and reassurance at a time when the victim really needs to know someone cares.

A Rape Relief Centre is getting started right now. It takes research, money and a lot of women energy. A group of women in Victoria is now trying to get all these elements together. They have already broken into small task forces to find funding, resource materials, and make contacts with the police and social agencies in the city. If you are interested in helping with this important project, or would like more information, phone coordinators Nancy and Natalie at 3839100.

HELP IT HAPPEN.



## REALIZATION

A tear of ecstasy slowly slides  
along my cheek.

There's pain in my forehead,  
and tension in my body.

My mind is blown by the awareness  
of what you do to me -

and I shudder  
and fear, just a little,  
and I am grateful.

sharon anderson

SHARON

## Beginning

blank page

blank year

waiting to be written on,

skipped over, torn apart

ignored, dirtied

painted on, music notes ascribed,

or given bright felt pens

madly waving life and hope.

sharon anderson



# PARENTS' WORKSHOP

A parent's self-help workshop will be held in Room 9 of the YW-YMCA building on the four Wednesday mornings in May (7th, 14th, 21st, and 28th) from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m.

If you are a parent (mother or father) and feel that you lack skills, knowledge and understanding of "what to do when...", then you would surely be interested in knowing about and attending this workshop.

It was put together by representatives from: the Foster Parents Association, the Natural Parents Group, the Single Parent Encouragement Program, and "just parents." Foreen Kilpatrick, psychologist will be the resource person. She will give a thirty minute presentation at the beginning of each session which will be followed by an hour and a half of discussion. Babysitting will be available at the Y or funds are available for those who need to hire a sitter to care for their children at home.

Telephone Faith Magwood 598-5121 Monday - Friday.

## SPIRITUALLY: where are you?

This, a project being done by a woman, for women. It has no connection with any particular religious group; it is being done solely as an exploratory, discovery-oriented project, and is not intended to "prove" or "disprove" any theories. All I ask is that you complete a questionnaire, letting me know where you are at spiritually. You are free to omit any questions you wish, and responses may remain anonymous. Questionnaires are available at Everywoman's Bookstore, 2033 Oak Bay Avenue, and the Women's Centre, 552 Pandora Avenue. Responses should be returned to the Centre. The results of this project will be made available to you in mid-summer. Hoping to hear from you...

Sylvia Holland



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The Newsletter Collective

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WE WELCOME FEEDBACK AND CONTRIBUTIONS OF ARTICLES  
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