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VICTORIA STATUS OF WOMEN ACTION GROUP

NEWS

Office: 320-620 View St., Victoria, V8W 1J6, (604) 381-1012 OCT. 1988 Vol. 15, No. 3

Editorial

The Federal Election has finally been called. Let's take advantage of this opportunity to focus attention on women and women's issues. SWAG has organized a series of educational forums to help educate the public on federal issues and how they affect women. These forums will be followed by an All-Candidates meeting. See datelines for more info.

The election offers the opportunity to discuss and debate important issues such as: Free Trade, Day Care, Abortion, etc. Our hope is that women will take the time to learn about the issues (by attending the educational workshops, discussing with other women, following the media) and make their concerns and opinions heard. The All-Candidates meeting will give women a chance to find out where their candidates stand on certain issues and an opportunity to raise pertinent questions. Get involved, ask questions and be sure to vote!

Coffee House

On October 18 SWAG held a fundraising women's coffee house. It was a great success bringing in \$250.00 profit. Volunteers did the baking and set up. Many thanks to all especially to Eloise who coordinated the event.

Entertainment was provided by the Raging Grannies, Louise Escalier, and Monica Shraefel. Jane Stark was ill and had to cancel, fortunately Monica was able to fill in. All entertainment was volunteered and was excellent.

Maybe this could become a regular event? Any input on this?

Learning about Racism

Recently I attended the Unlearning Racism workshop facilitated by Ricky Sherover-Marcuse from California; an exceptional, forceful, uncompromising, sensitive, loving woman. All these qualifications! But probably needed in a person who has made it her life commitment to help erase racism.

Half of the participants were women of colour and of Jewish heritage. The rest of us were "white". I would like to describe in detail what went on, it was all so important, but I can only give some idea of what it was like for me.

I came to the workshop with the idea that I was not a racist but ready to explore the possibility, which proved to be the case.

I learned that it wasn't my fault but due to conditioning we've all had since we were very young.

Ricky helped us confront our own oppression and conditioning, which helped me to understand how racism affects women who have been oppressed because of their colour.

First we worked in groups while the women of colour worked with Ricky; then they divided into groups while we worked with her. In the evening each group, Native Indian, Asian, East Indian, African, Latin American, and Jewish women stood up, incredible, brave and beautiful, and each woman said a) what she wanted us to know about her and her group, b) what she expected from us, her allies. When a group had finished we took turns paraphrasing, "What I hear you say is that..." There was both sadness and celebration; some danced until early in the morning.

I learned that whites need to remember that none of us is an exception, and that a woman of colour knows this so we shouldn't ask for a "certificate of innocence". We have all been conditioned, no one is to be blamed, and we can all learn to be good allies. Being an ally doesn't mean being "nice", nor showing pity or expecting gratitude. It's ok for an ally to make mistakes, and rejection by a woman of colour may be only a reflection of the ally's own earlier rejection.

And, finally, I would like to go to another workshop about racism.

Inger Kronseth



Unlearning Racism Workshops

Purpose

Racism hurts all of us, but its effects are experienced very differently by people of colour and by white people. These workshops provide a positive, non-threatening environment where participants from all backgrounds can explore and begin to work through a variety of issues related to race.

Unlearning Racism Workshops

- provide a new, hopeful perspective on the issue of racism
- assist people from all ethnic and cultural groups to build good relationships with each other
- expand cultural awareness by providing an environment in which everyone can reclaim pride in their heritage
- empower people to be more effective in taking action against racism on both an individual and an institutional level

Assumptions

These workshops are one step in a process; they are based on the premise that effective strategies against racism must transform both attitudes and behaviour. The undoing of institutionalized racism requires the unlearning of ingrained attitudes and habits; the unlearning of racist patterns of thought and behaviour must be accompanied by political and social change.

Unlearning Racism workshops operate from the perspective that:

- no one is born with racist attitudes or beliefs
- we can unlearn ingrained attitudes and undo old habits
- institutional change begins with individual change
- we can act with renewed conviction to rebuild our human connections and change our world

Focus

Participants in an Unlearning Racism Workshop focus on:

- reclaiming pride in one's own ethnic heritage
- exploring the impact of early messages about race on our lives
- understanding how racism is a 'no-win' situation for everyone
- changing habitual behaviour patterns which cause unintended hurts to others
- learning new ways to respond when ethnic slurs and stereotypes are used

40th anniversary of the universal declaration of human rights

HUMAN RIGHTS

THE RIGHT TO WORK

- Panel: the right to work as a human right.
- Panel: do we have the right to work?
- Employment Equity/Affirmative Action: What is it? Does it Work?
- The union and its right to promote its members' interest.

SATURDAY OCTOBER 22, 1988 — 9:00 A.M. - 4:00 P.M.
Tally-Ho Travelodge, 3020 Douglas Street, Victoria

Everyone Welcome • Free • Coffee and Tea Provided. (Lunch is Not)

Organized by the VANCOUVER ISLAND HUMAN RIGHTS COALITION, in cooperation with the FEDERATED ANTI POVERTY GROUP, VICTORIA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, WOMEN FOR ECONOMIC SURVIVAL and VICTORIA LABOUR COUNCIL.

For further information please call VIHRC at 382-3012

Other Events:

THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION

Friday evening, November 18, Saturday, November 19

FESTIVAL OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Saturday, December 10

Workshop Leader

Ricky Sherover-Marcuse, Ph.D.

I have taught philosophy and social theory at various colleges and universities since 1970. I am a longtime social activist; my concern and involvement with the issue of racism dates back to my childhood.

Since 1973 I have worked as a counseling teacher, group leader and facilitator on a variety of cross cultural issues such as racism, sexism, anti-semitism, gay oppression, and the concerns of working people. In 1985 I became Co-Director of **NEW BRIDGES**, an intensive multicultural program for teenagers which I helped to create.

I believe that effective communication begins with an attitude of complete respect for an individual's integrity. I work with people on this basis.

SWAGgerins'

I'm writing this column the morning of the announcement of the federal government's formal redress of grievances to the Japanese Canadian community for the wrongs done them during the Second World War. Not only is this good news for everyone concerned about social justice, it carries an inspirational message for members of pressure groups such as ours. The lesson is to keep on lobbying, gathering support, applying pressure, building and publicizing your case; we have to shrug off temporary setbacks, and as workers in the Black civil rights movement used to sing, "Keep our eyes on the prize, hold on!"

We are feeling very inspired around the SWAG office these days. Our fundraising garage sale and coffee house were so successful they will become annual events. It was wonderful to see so many women turn out to support us. We have some physical additions to the office to buoy us up: a computer, courtesy of the Breaking the Barriers project we sponsored; a board room table courtesy of Oxfam; and two beautiful batik wall hangings courtesy of the multi-talented Shirley Avril.

More important than the new trappings is the new infusion of energy. We have an excellent Office Collective who take responsibility for answering the phone, greeting dropers-in, making referrals, and generally running the office. Veterans Doris Bergbusch and Eileen Henry have been joined by Shiela Ray, Sam Piety, Connie Patton, and Maureen Marriott. Other women are scheduled to begin, probably by the time you read this, and I welcome you all into the office to meet them.

Speaking of welcoming, it has been my pleasure to welcome many new members in the past little while. When I first started as SWAG staff person, I was often discouraged by the lack of active response on the part of the community. Now I find an enthusiastic response from many parts of the community to SWAG programmed, and a desire to take part in the activities we initiate.

It is also true that "When the people lead, the leaders will follow." More and more, we are able to respond to the expressed needs of women in our community. Maybe it's just the lightness of spirit brought on by the onset of a glorious Autumn, but I'm feeling that SWAG and women in Victoria are creatively working together for our personal and political goals.

I hope the many notices of upcoming programmes contained in this issue of the Newsletter will inspire you to take an active part in SWAG this Autumn and in the coming year. **IF YOU HAVEN'T YET RENEWED YOUR MEMBERSHIP, PLEASE DO SO NOW.** We very much need the money, the political clout, and the moral support brought by renewed memberships. I hope to talk to you all soon, and wish you well for the coming season.

Debby Grayson



Child Care

Several provinces and many child care experts are supportive of the recent actions in Ottawa to delay Bill C-144, the new Child Care Act. This is curious behaviour from people who have been lobbying strenuously for a national child care programme for years. But for **Lynn Hunter**, New Democrat federal candidate for Saanich-Gulf Islands, this behaviour is not all curious or contradictory.

"We, who have been working for years for child care, see this legislation as so fundamentally flawed that we believe it should be withdrawn," Hunter said. "What the Mulroney government has done is give us a piece of legislation which will make the current crisis in child care far worse. It does not address the real needs of Canadian families. The much touted 200,000 additional spaces this bill creates is actually a mechanism to put a cap on funding of the current growth rate. This whole process is a massive deception. This is the reason that the actions to delay the bill are receiving such support."

The Child Care Act was to be passed by the House of Commons on Monday, September 26 at which time it was sent to the Senate. Its treatment in the Senate may very well determine the timing of the expected election call.

We Can Do It!



BOONE CALLS FOR FULL ACCESS TO MAMMOGRAM SERVICES

New Democrat health critic Lois Boone is calling on the Social Credit government to provide full funding for breast screening tests for women throughout the province.

Boone (Prince George North) made the call after the Medical Services Plan recently advised doctors that mammography services are not covered under the plan except when there is a family history of breast cancer or medical evidence that symptoms exist. That means women who have doctor referrals based on age or other factors will be faced to pay between \$65 to \$81, depending on the technique used.

"The government's refusal to pay for this important preventive service is both unfair and a major health hazard," said Boone. "It's a deterrent to those women unable to afford the cost of a mammogram, and could result in late detection of breast cancer."

Boone, who has written a letter to Health Minister Peter Dueck urging him to reconsider the policy, says the screening restrictions are a direct contradiction of the government's philosophy of preventive health.

"There is ample medical evidence to show that standard mammograms for women over 40 are the first step in detecting breast cancer. By denying full access to this service, the government is severely risking the health of women and putting even more pressure on costly after-the-fact surgery and treatment."

"This, clearly, is just another Socred move towards undermining our medical system by ensuring high-quality health care is only available to the wealthy," said Boone.

Boone said while the government has made progress in recently initiating a mammogram pilot project in Vancouver

that provides screening services, it has failed to address the needs of women in the rest of the province.

"Women in the Prince George area obviously don't have access to a Vancouver facility. The government must either provide full coverage for women referred by their doctors, or work immediately toward extending free screening facilities throughout the province," she said

THE WAXING MOON HEALING VILLAGE

by Gitta Felina

The WAXING MOON symbolizes growth, on the way to completion, wholeness, HEALING symbolizes transforming yesterday's wounds and disappointments into strength, trust and better health today. VILLAGE meaning a woman's village, a neighborhood of women of all ages, backgrounds, and colors, on a spiritual path with a similar focus in life.

We would like to see an economically self sufficient community, where we combine our skills to provide products as well as providing training programs. This environment will encourage and promote the physical well being of woman. The Village will provide a space for us to learn life skills such as group dynamics, rural and healing skills, ecological awareness and energy conserving lifestyles. Our common goal in this village is harmonious co-operation for our self healing process and a peaceful atmosphere that results when we learn to trust to be who we are and accept each other's uniqueness.



The Village will also be a place for women to visit, to take a break from the city to regenerate.

There are women who are committed to making this Village a reality, however we require more help. We are a non-profit society and have developed an interesting land trust system. If YOU would like the Waxing Moon Healing Village to become a reality, you can help in many ways.

We produce a newsletter, and have an information packet available. This packet explains our different memberships, the land trust concept, our constitution and our decision making body up to this point. We also welcome you to our monthly get-togethers. A benefit dance and a Waxing Moon Healing Fair are in planning for this winter, where your involvement would be greatly appreciated. It is also possible for one of us to come and speak to you circle of womyn friends. For more information contact:

WAXING MOON HEALING VILLAGE SOCIETY

3541 W 14th Ave.
Vancouver, BC
V6R 2W3
Tel. (604)732-8927

FAITH NOLAN

Faith Nolan is a blues singer, guitarist, harmonica player, lyricist and composer in the blues tradition. Spiritual, folk, cottonpicking, slide, Chicago blues and jazz. Not to mention a little reggae fusion and funk. A down east (Nova Scotia) blues singing, strong guitar playing woman who sings about women struggling to live and people fighting for freedom in the world. Her blues are what the blues have always been about: Black people struggling for justice, equality and love. Her extempore singing style and her songs which ring for social justice places her deep in the true beginnings of Black music. Faith's blues, lifted in her clear, melodic and powerful voice, are blues against injustice, poverty, sexism, homophobia and racism. They are sometimes biting satiric, sometimes deeply moving and at times down-right raunchy. Audiences are always engaged by her directness, personality and insightful chatter.

A feminist and Black activist, Faith also conducts workshops at schools, universities, conferences and festivals around such issues as political music, class and labour, Canadian Black history and heritage, feminism, blues, reggae, folk, jazz, children's music and collective song writing. Faith has played Covent Gardens, the Donmare Warehouse in England, Women's cafes and clubs in France, Holland, U.S.A. and Canada. She has played in major hotel chains over her decade in music and on the street busking. She has gigged many an International Women's Day; labour rallies and conferences; anti-racism and anti-apartheid rallies; and university campuses.

SWAG has sponsored Faith for a performance in Victoria on November 11 at the Newcombe Theatre. Details are in the newsletter.

QUOTES:

'I am convinced that until we have more women in politics -- openly, flagrantly and unashamedly committed to the struggle for the liberation of woman and determined to change traditional power politics to make it more responsive to the dispossessed of the earth -- we as women are doomed to many more years of oppression and exploitation'

Rosemary Brown

cited in Howe Sound Women's Center Newsletter
Vol VII Issue 10 Aug. 88



FAITH NOLAN

MWIC Multicultural
Womyn in Concert
Beth Taylor

D A T E L I N E S

Spectrum Community School

WOMEN'S FORUM

A weekly series devoted to discussion of important issues facing women in our community. Fees \$1 per session or \$5 for all 6 sessions.

September 28 - November 2nd Wed. 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.

Sept. 28 Contemporary Issues in Feminist Thought
Oct. 5 Young Women & Politics
Oct. 12 Feminist Sci-Fi
Oct. 19 Reproductive Technologies
Nov. 2 Older Women & Feminism
For more information contact SWAG.

G.A.L.S. NIGHT OUT

Gala Appreciation for Lesbians Supper

A Dinner-Dance Extravaganza

October 15, 1988
Crystal Garden Ballroom
713 Douglas Street

Doors Open 6pm. No Host Bar
Elegant Buffet Dinner 7pm
Entertainment 8pm.
Dance 9:30

Wheelchair Accessible
Display & Sale of Lesbian
Books by Everywomans Books

All Women welcome!

Advance Tickets only for
Dinner -Dance \$25
Dance only \$8 advance \$10 door

Tickets available:
SWAG - #320 - 620 View St.
Everywomans Books - 641 Johnson Street
Hot Flashes Coffee House -
106 Superior, Aug. 26, Sept. 30
Make cheques payable to SWAG
Co-sponsored by Victoria SWAG
and Hot Flashes Coffee House

Request for Donation

Needed one clock for the office.
(Time flies when we're having fun)

WOMEN'S DANCE COMMITTEE

A Women's Dance Committee is being formed - Anyone interested in joining please phone Jill at 383 - 8409.

SPECTRUM COMMUNITY CONFERENCE

November 5th
"Women in Politics"
Workshop 10 - 10:45 am.
Call SWAG for more information.

FAITH NOLAN CONCERT

November 11 8:30 pm. at the
Newcombe Theatre
Doors open 7:30 pm.

Tickets \$10.00/6.00
Opening act - Monica Schraefel
Fringe Folksinger-songwriter from
Winnipeg

GROW (Group for Rights of Older Women) Meeting

Panel and discussion: "Women and Retirement"
Saturday, October 15th, 2pm. at the SWAG office.
For more information contact Wanda at 477-1236 or SWAG

NEW GROW DROP-IN HOURS

Every Wednesday afternoon
1 - 3 pm. at the SWAG office
Bring your lunch if you wish;
coffee and tea served.

Use this time for conversation, support,
and writing those lobbying letters you
always mean to write but never get
around to.

Workshop for Women Mental Health Professionals

JoAnn Loulan (Psychotherapist)

Sunday, November 20, 1988
10 am to 5 pm
Robson Square Media Centre
\$100 before Nov. 1 \$125 after Nov. 1

WORKING WITH LESBIAN CLIENTS

JoAnn Loulan (Psychotherapist)

In this seminar, designed for womentherapists and mental healthprofessionals who work with lesbians, JoAnn covers not only the basics of Lesbian sexuality, but expands upon the techniques she used successfullyfor over a decade in her individual and group therapy work. She addressessissues with which clients struggles, such as homophobia, incest, the differentneeds of lesbians who are single andthose who are in couples, and maintainingsexual intimacy and excitement within a longterm relationship.

Tickets available at Ariel Books,
Vancouver, 733-3511.

WOMENS HEALTH WORKSHOPS

Campbell River

November 16th 7 pm.
MISCARRIAGE

November 17 & 18
9:00 am. to 5:00 pm.

WOMEN TALKING ABOUT HEALTH

Contact Vicki Simmons at
287 - 3044

Workshops and training sessions

with Sandra Butler

Healing the Healers

Oct. 20-21 9:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
Van Duesen Botanical Gardens
5251 Oak Street, Vancouver B.C.
\$200.00 / participant

Women, Sexual Terrorism And The State

October 22, 9:00a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
U.B.C. Grad student center
6372 Crescent Road U.B.C Campus
Vancouver, B.C.
\$65.00/participant

Women And Mid-life

October 23, 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
U.B.C. Grad Student Center
\$75.00/participant

Personal Disarmament

October 24-25, 9:00 to 4:30
U.B.C. Grad Center
\$130.00/participant

Training For Women Who Work With Family Violence

October 26, 9:00 to 4:30
U.B.C. Grad Student center
\$65.00/participant

For more information contact the SWAG office

BOOKS and FILMS

Taking Care

By Mary J. Breen
A handbook about women's health
Available in the SWAG library

Two New NFB Films

"A mother and Daughter on Abortion" 13 mins.

"The Legacy of Mary McKuen" 60 min.

MEMBERSHIP Including Newsletter Subscription:

- \$12.00 YEARLY; prorated at \$1.00 per month from September
- \$6.00 Low Income • \$25.00 Sustaining

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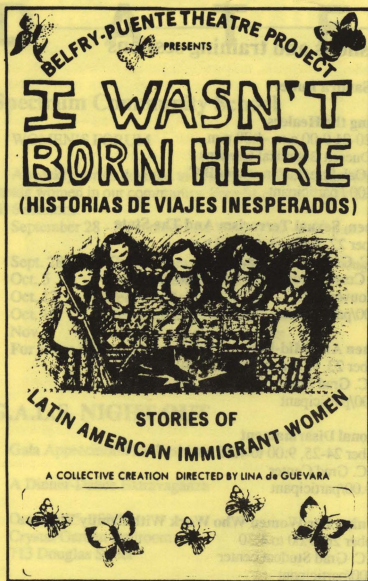
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NEW MEMBER RENEWAL FOR A FRIEND



The weekend of the fringe festival I was very fortunate to see one of the performances of "I Wasn't Born Here" put on by a Latin American womens theatre group. This exceptional performance portrayed the life of immigrant women starting at the time they left their country, the difficult and dangerous journey, their arrival in a foreign country and the difficult task of adapting to the new surroundings. The play moved through their various experiences using both humor and tragedy to tell their story.

Using only wooden chairs, masks, shawls and scarves of many colors these women were able to vividly get across a wide variety of emotions.

Their stories of leaving their homeland and coming to Canada were portrayed in such a manner that the audience could feel their pain as they had to leave everything they were familiar with, the confusion of arriving in Canada not knowing either the language or the customs, the fear of the unknown, the sadness at the loss of friends and family, and the strain on their family relationships.

The courage and determination shown by these women as they adapted to a new life in a new country can be used as inspiration for women from all walks of life.

More Quotes

'Since women are the pioneers of the new world, what is required of us is the most prodigious and difficult, the most enduring faith ever required of any people: faith not in god (or goddess) but in ourselves, in our own voices, in our own judgement, our own abilities, right now, this minute, and despite everything! Faith in our own world view, which is feminism. Faith in other women. Faith that we are here on this planet at just this time in history to midwife the human race through a rebirth of spirit and mind such as has never before been witnessed on earth. Faith in a miracle ... We are the ones we've been waiting for.'

Sonia Johnson, from 'Going Out of Our Minds: The Metaphysics of Liberation.' (The Crossing Press)

Announcements

Art Show
Images West '88
New Works on paper by
Shirley Avril
Studio show and sale
November 25,26,27

1139 Burdett Ave. Victoria
 Call 386-4467 for details
 or just drop in

Video Project

Have you faced an unplanned pregnancy? Eva Many, an Ottawa video artist is looking for women willing to share the stories of their experiences with an unplanned pregnancy. Group meeting probably in November. Absolutely confidential. Leave your name and number at the SWAG office if you can participate.

Next Newsletter

December Issue. Please take all articles and items for the newsletter to the SWAG office by Nov. 25. It would be really helpful if articles could be typed into the computer and saved to a disk. The newsletter is now being produced by computer and this would save much time in data entry. Comments and suggestions about the newsletter are welcome. Its been fun working on it.

Sandy Winfield

NEW MEMBER RENEWAL FOR A FRIEND