



# WOMEN'S EDUCATION DES FEMMES

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## WOMEN'S EDUCATION DES FEMMES

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### Submissions

WEdf invites all readers to submit articles, ideas, poetry, humour in all forms, commentary, reviews and resources. Please send submissions care of the Editor, WEdf, 47 Main Street, Toronto, Ontario, M4E 2V6. Material should be non-sexist, non-racist and about women with a feminist perspective. Submitters who wish their material returned should include a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Writer's Guidelines are available on request.

### Letters

We'd love to hear from you - about anything. Write to the Editor, WEdf, 47 Main Street, Toronto, Ontario, M4E 2V6. Letters may be edited for length.

### Article Copies

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### Cover

The cover this issue is a 1948 photograph of Madeleine Parent speaking to a Labour Day demonstration in Valleyfield, Quebec.



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#### **WOMEN'S**

#### **EDUCATION DES**

**FEMMES** est une revue publiée tous les trimestres par le Congrès canadien pour la promotion des études chez la femme. Le **CCPEF** est un organisme national bénévole chargé de promouvoir l'éducation féministe et le développement du plein potentiel des femmes.

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**CCPEF**  
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pour la  
promotion des études -  
chez la femme

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## EDITORIAL

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### CLOW: Pro-choice BY CATHY BRAY

At a recent meeting, the CLOW board of directors passed a policy supporting re-productive choice, including the right to choose abortion, for Canadian women. There are good reasons for taking this honourable step.

First, with the advent of safe, reliable birth control, heterosexually active women have become able to control their own reproductive destiny, and therefore their lives. The gradual recognition of these rights, across class and racial boundaries and in many parts of the world, is historic. But this recognition is not yet deeply embedded in the policies or consciousness of mainstream leadership in Canada. It is important, therefore, for all women's groups and all people who believe in the rights of women to continuously advocate for these rights until they become inviolate.



Second, the Canadian state is at a crucial stage in the development of policies related to women and families in general, and to a woman's right to abortion in particular. It is CLOW's democratic responsibility to speak to our elected representatives about abortion, so that the humanity and good judgment of heterosexually active women is recognized.

Third, reproductive choice is fundamental to women's learning. If heterosexually active women cannot plan pregnancies, they cannot determine a course of study in their adulthood and be certain that their plan will not be aborted by the necessity to carry a pregnancy to term. And a life-threatening illegal abortion is no way to broaden the scope of opportunities for learning.

There may be members of CLOW who do not believe that women have the right to control their own reproductive destinies through abortion, freely chosen. In considering CLOW's newly stated position on abortion, such women might consider the relationship between their personal position on abortion and the public issue of reproductive rights. Just as the recognition of the right of education does not compel adults to educate themselves, abortion rights do not compel women to have abortions.

CLOW members might also consider the meaning of membership in a pluralist organization such as we are. Our pluralism means that we support each other's different socio-political (including religious) analyses, as long as they fall within the boundaries of organizational principles. The CLOW board has agreed that reproductive choice is a principle that, as an organization, we uphold.

Finally, many women's groups, in debating the issue of abortion, have learned the importance of maintaining dialogue in the development of all policies and positions. As the CLOW board debated the abortion issue, we realized that no matter how emotionally tough the issue, reasoning and talking about our reasons was imperative. CLOW may again I debate reproductive rights and abortion in the future, and, if this occurs, it will be wise to perpetuate the process of a reasoned dialogue.

*Cathy Bray is director of the Women's Program and Resource Centre, Faculty of Extension, University of Alberta, Edmonton. She completed her doctorate in sociology of sport at the U of A and has been the Alberta director of CLOW since May, 1987.*

## ÉDITORIAL

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### CCPEF : Pro-Choix PAR CATHY BRAY

Il y a quelque temps le Conseil d'administration du CCPEF a adopté, au cours d'une réunion, une politique qui reconnaît aux Canadiennes le droit de choisir le moment opportun pour avoir des enfants, y compris celui de se faire avorter si elles le désirent. Les raisons ne manquaient pas pour franchir ce pas marqué d'honorabilité.

Tout d'abord, chez les hétérosexuels, les femmes ayant une vie sexuelle active peuvent à l'heure actuelle exercer un contrôle sur leur vie reproductive, et sur leur existence en général, grâce aux moyens de contraception qui sont devenus sûrs et fiables. Le fait que ces droits aient été petit à petit reconnus dans toutes les classes sociales et chez toutes les races dans de nombreux pays marque une étape dans l'histoire de l'humanité. Pourtant, au Canada, la reconnaissance de ces droits n'est pas encore profondément ancrée dans la politique ou dans l'esprit des chefs de notre pays.

Il faut donc que tous les groupes féministes et tous ceux qui croient que les femmes ont des droits défendent ces derniers jusqu'à ce qu'ils ne soient plus jamais remis en question. Ensuite, la nation canadienne se trouve aujourd'hui à une étape cruciale du point de vue des politiques élaborées pour les femmes et la famille en général, le droit des femmes à l'avortement occupant une place particulièrement importante dans ce domaine. Il incombe au CCPEF, en tant qu'organisme démocratique, de parler ouvertement à ses représentantes élues de l'avortement de façon que soient reconnus le caractère humain et le bon sens des

femmes.

De plus, en matière d'apprentissage, il est essentiel que les femmes puissent choisir le moment opportun d'avoir un enfant. Si des femmes hétérosexuelles ayant une vie sexuelle active ne peuvent prévoir leur grossesse, il leur est impossible de mettre sur pied une marche à suivre pour leurs études à l'âge adulte et d'être sûres par conséquent que leur projet ne sera pas à un moment ou à un autre remis en question par une grossesse. De plus, un avortement illégal mettant la vie d'une femme en danger n'est certes pas le moyen pour élargir les occasions d'apprentissage.

Il y a peut-être des membres du CCPEF qui ne croient pas que les femmes ont le droit d'exercer un contrôle sur leur propre vie reproductive en choisissant de se faire avorter, ceci en toute liberté. Lorsque ces femmes réfléchiront à la nouvelle ligne de conduite que le CCPEF a adoptée par rapport à l'avortement, elles devraient peut-être penser à la relation qui existe entre leurs idées sur le sujet et la question d'intérêt public sur les droits de la femme en matière de reproduction. Faisons un parallèle: les droits à l'éducation sont reconnus, mais ceci n'oblige personne à s'instruire. De la même façon, les droits que la femme doit avoir sur le plan de la reproduction ne l'obligent pas à se faire avorter.

Les membres du CCPEF pourraient aussi analyser le sens que prend leur adhésion dans un organisme pluraliste comme le nôtre. Notre pluralisme se manifeste par le fait que nous acceptons l'analyse politico sociale (y compris religieuse) de tous nos membres, dans la mesure où celle-ci ne s'écarte pas des principes de notre organisme. Les membres du Conseil administratif du CCPEF sont tombés d'accord pour dire que le droit des femmes en matière de reproduction est un principe qu'en tant qu'organisme nous nous devons de défendre.

Enfin, de nombreux groupes féministes se sont rendu compte au cours de leurs discussions sur l'avortement qu'il était important de maintenir le dialogue pendant l'élaboration de toutes les politiques. Pendant que le Conseil d'administration se penchait sur la question de l'avortement, nous avons pris conscience, qu'en dépit du côté profondément émotionnel de ce sujet, il était impératif que nous exposions nos raisons. Il est possible qu'à l'avenir le CCPEF aborde à nouveau la question du droit des femmes en matière de reproduction et, dans ce cas, il serait sage de continuer à dialoguer selon un mode raisonné.

*Cathy Bray est directrice du Programme pour les femmes et du centre de ressources à l'université de l'Alberta d'Edmonton. Elle a fini son doctorat en sociologie des sports à la même université et occupe le poste de directrice du CCPEF depuis le mois de mai 1987.*

## LETTERS

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**Dear Women's Education:**

I'm writing in regards to your spring 1988, Vol 16, No.2 issue, "Prison, Art and Some Myths". I don't understand why the article, "Prison, Art and Some Myths" was credited SOLELY to Persimmon Black bridge in the Table of Contents, and to Persimmon Black bridge WITH Lyn MacDonald and Michelle Christianson in the article.

The article was written by all three of us independently. My words are my own, I am entirely capable of writing about my own experience without anyone's help. You seem to imply that Michelle and/or myself are side-kicks in the stories of our own lives. I know this wasn't simply oversight, as Persimmon had not put WITH when she mailed the article. So, it was added for a reason. If you don't mean to imply that I am somewhat incompetent, I'd like to hear why my name and Michelle's don't appear side by side with Persimmon's. I also think it's a shame that you cut some of Michelle's strongest words regarding relative lack of racism in Canadian prisons, and particularly in the last paragraph, which you simplified incredibly, instead of allowing Michelle to tell your readers what she really wants them to know about women who've been in prison.

Sincerely, Lyn MacDonald

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**Dear Women's Education:**

Thank you for asking me for comments about the editing of our article, Prison, Art and Some Myths, in your spring 1988 issue. I'm pleased that you realized I might have some comments and that you wanted to have them and would be willing to share them with your readers. It shows an integrity and sensitivity that I appreciate. Articles have to be edited for length and clarity sometimes. It must be a hard process, with writers mourning every fallen word. I'll try to spare you that. But I want you to think about 2 ways in which you changed the content of our article. The most outrageous change was at the very beginning. Why did you credit the article to "Persimmon Blackbridge WITH Lyn MacDonald and Michelle Christiansen" instead of just using our three names together as it was in the copy I sent you? Adding "with" neither shortens nor clarifies anything. Adding "with" subordinates Lyn and Michelle to me, makes their participation of lesser importance. But in fact we all three wrote the article, there was no "with" about it. I was surprised and angry. I had talked to your editor exhaustively about how I didn't want to be given more status or credibility than Lyn and Michelle. She suggested several changes to the article which separated me from Lyn and Michelle and I explained again and again how that fed into classism, racism, and the marginalization of prisoners. Is it still unclear? Do you see how you have given a white middle class woman more credit for something that she did equally with a working class white woman and a working class woman of colour? I feel like I'm repeating myself, but I don't know how many times I have to say it to make you understand.

The second change that bothered me was at the end of the article. In the version we sent you, the last section is as follows:

**Michelle:** There are women in this world who due to various circumstances are put into jail and upon their release have little or no support from the women's community. I would like to know why. I know women in the feminist community who, when they saw me working the street, didn't even acknowledge my existence. I wasn't ashamed.

[continued on page 31](#)

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*We apologize for the error in not fully crediting the article in the Editorial, the Table of Contents and the by-line; no implications of incompetence were intended. The correction has been made, along with others from the Spring issue, on page 34. As regards editorial procedure, CCLOW policy has always been to retain final discretion in editing for style and length. However, the policy is continually evolving and, in the difficult work of providing for women an uncensored voice while at the same time maintaining editorial direction, your comments are appreciated. We have in fact recently made some refinements which take into account concerns such as you raise in your letters.*

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## Interview: Madeleine Parent

INTERVIEWED BY CHRISTINA STARR

**CHRISTINA:** You have been union organizer since 1942, involved in organizing the cotton and woolen mill workers in Quebec, cofounder of the Canadian Textile and Chemical Union and Confederation of Canadian Unions, and arrested several times for these activities. How did it all begin?

**MADELEINE:** I became concerned with economic matters as a student - an activist student - and was determined before I finished college to work as a union organizer. Immediately after graduating I gave classes sponsored by the Workers' Educational Association amongst union women in garment shops in Montreal. In 1942, during wartime, I became involved in organizing workers in munitions factories. Large numbers of these workers were women occupied for the first time in non- traditional jobs.



During the same time, workers in consumer industries also started to organize successfully. In the Dominion Textile company cotton mills of Valley field and Montreal, over 6,000 workers, large number of whom were highly-exploited women and children, began to organize in 1942. Kent Rowley [*her working companion and, later, spouse*] and I were part of that campaign from the beginning. The first successful collective agreements that came out of the Valleyfield and Montreal strikes in 1946 crowned some 65 years of repeated efforts, often punctuated by strikes, on the part of the Quebec cotton mill workers to obtain more humane conditions of work.

**CHRISTINA:** What gains were made in those first cotton mill contracts?

**MADELEINE:** Well, uniform wage schedules were part of the new gains.

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*"It was something  
then for a woman to  
set foot in a union hall."*

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Prior to that there was one wage for men and a lower one for women and children, but we essentially won equal pay for equal work. The establishment of seniority rights was also an important gain because otherwise the foreman could layoff those who wouldn't play his game, usually women, and favour his friends with the better jobs. Seniority rights also allowed the workers to argue that a woman on maternity leave should be entitled to return to her job. A party would be arranged at lunchtime for a woman who was leaving to have a baby and when everyone had gathered, the foreman would be called in and reminded that the mother-to-be was entitled to have her job back. Often he was asked to pledge then and there that her job would be waiting for her.

Women also stuck together from the first to try to deal with sexual harassment. It was a question of being together and taking a stand wherever sexual harassment occurred.

**CHRISTINA:** So the women were always prepared to work together to protect rights of theirs which hadn't yet been officially recognized?

**MADELEINE:** I remember the first textile workers' meeting I attended in Valley field in '42. There were about 60 to 80 people. Men came into the union hall individually, but the women came in groups. It was something then for a woman to set foot in a union hall, so they came together and sat together, not only for company but because they wanted to consult each other during the meeting.

When a man raised a question he raised it as an individual; but when a woman raised a question you realized that it came from the group of women. After the meeting they

consulted together and agreed that they would sign their card and pay their dollar. The first significant remark I remember was, "Well now, this is the beginning of the end of the reign of the favorites."

It was difficult for those women too because they went to church on Sundays where the vicar would preach that a woman's place was in the home, even when he knew very well that they were working in the cotton mills. It made them feel guilty and shy about asking for rights and for wanting to go back to work after childbirth, but the union gave them the strength and support they needed to question the double wage scale and other inequities.



Between the jail cell and the court room;  
La Chute woollenworks strike, Québec, 1948

**CHRISTINA:** Would you say that today things like day care, maternity/paternity leave, and protection from sexual harassment are becoming part of standard contract negotiations?

**MADELEINE:** Oh, yes, except for day care demands which are more a community issue. Even during and after the intense strikes of '46 and '47, where women played a militant role, we talked more about the issues that were of particular concern to women, cutting in on the traditional male union ideology. For example, asking for maternity leave was not a concern only of married women, but also of the women who left work to have a baby out of wedlock. You hadn't won anything until you'd won recognition for all those women to have their jobs back, and you had to protest

openly against the bosses giving speeches on morality. Many a company manager was embarrassed by the women's response.

**CHRISTINA:** It seems that many women in the work force are moving toward work that is not traditionally organized. What are the possibilities of unionizing in banks or in what we might call "white collar" jobs?

**MADELEINE:** It has to be done. There have been heroic efforts over decades and very modest results. In the factories, there was a more direct and more obvious movement for women to organize because they had a strong sense of being working people, of being low in the hierarchy, of being obliged to punch a clock and follow certain disciplinary rules. Those conditions made their own position clear and the need to organize more obvious. But many unorganized white collar employees are reluctant to define themselves as workers and the policy of the banks is to take advantage of that ambiguity.

For example, the manager and chief accountant of a local bank branch often try to give employees the impression that they are all one big happy family. Of course that prevents the development of a sense of solidarity among the women employees. I've noticed that one of the first steps women attempting to organize in a bank may take is to tell the male accountant that they want to have lunch by themselves.

**CHRISTINA:** What do you think about the proposed free trade deal between the United States and Canada? Will it make organizing in those service sectors more difficult?

**MADELEINE:** The US-Canada free trade accord will definitely be a threat to our working conditions. While in Canada 38% of the work force is in unions, in the US the figure is only 17% and as one Canadian union leader has said, employers will fight to "level the playing field" in order to compete with American business.

It will also facilitate the take-over of service companies. With current technology, we can bet on it that data banks will be moved in large numbers from Canada to the United States. Information will then be stored and processed there, and we will lose many, many jobs. As an example, a friend of mine was in Quebec City and wanted to make a hotel reservation in Montreal. She phoned the usual 1-800 number and confirmed her reservation, then out of curiosity she asked where she was calling. The answer was "Dallas Texas, Madam." So it's already starting.

**CHRISTINA:** Do you see any job creation coming out of the free trade deal?

**MADELEINE:** Very, very little. They tell us we will have a chance to "make it" in the American market. But all of that is part of the race and tough competitive struggle of corporations. Large US corporation want our natural resources: oil and gas, hydro, forestry, minerals. There are comparatively few jobs for us in those areas. The US doesn't need our manufacturing plants, except to buy those they don't own already in order to shut them down later, knocking out a competitor.

The need for Canadian companies to compete with US companies in costs of production will put great pressure on Canada's social programs. There is no national, free medicare program in the USA. There is no universal old-age pension plan and there is no national unemployment insurance program. How will we be able to support the costs of better quality social programs in bare-knuckled competitive struggle with US corporations?

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*"Many a company  
manager was  
embarrassed by the  
women's response"*

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**CHRISTINA:** To return to the subject of unions, do you have a vision of unionism that is not hierarchical or bureaucratic? In other words, are unions where a majority of women are involved run differently?

**MADELEINE:** Many unions today have women's committees. Some are very active, some face obstacles from a union bureaucracy. The most successful carry out educational

functions for the women, explaining the complaints procedure, the issues for grievances, the way in which the grievances of women, such as sexual harassment or job equity problems, are handled. Where you have an active women's committee, women's power within the union improves and that always helps to democratize the organization, provided male leaders are not the main influence in the choice of women spokespersons. A good number of women elected remain responsible to their base of support, that is, to women in the union. An example of that is Monique Simard who is vice-president of the Confederation of National Trade Unions and who has made enforcement of equal pay for work of equal value a main demand in contract negotiations in the Quebec public sector. Through an active women's committee, union women are informed and become educated. They are able to give voice to their concerns and to take part in union debates on issues for contract negotiations, thereby influencing the outcome.

**CHRISTINA:** What about the new nurses union in Quebec, which is now autonomous and comprised almost 100% of women?

**MADELEINE:** As a result of a recent merger convention, there is now in Quebec a block of 40,000 nurses who have an independent union. Women are the dominant force in the union, though male nurses have minority representation on the board. As a new organization they are trying to develop policies of consultation with the membership much information as possible. They also have a women's committee working on feminist issues, both at work and in the community. I have great faith in what they are going to be able to do.

**CHRISTINA:** What role can unions, or as you've already mentioned, the women's committees within the unions, play in educating not just the women workers but the rest of the union and perhaps society at large about women's issues?

**MADELEINE:** The women's committees make it possible for rank-and-file women to give voice to inequities and injustices in the workplace and to work out a more equal relationship with their brothers in the union.



With Azelus Beaucage (to her right) after their conviction for seditious conspiracy in 1948. They were acquitted in 1955.

be trained for a non-traditional job, the right to be paid equally for work that is of equal value - is in an early stage, the tendency in union meetings once women have voiced their concern is for the men to say, "Okay, now we've talked about that let's get down to serious matters." A strong women's committee will eventually win recognition of their concerns as serious matters. A women's committee can call meetings where women can first discuss their concerns among themselves. Women then come to the main union meetings better informed, more confident and able to speak up and have their demands heard.

But those women's committees must have support of the top leadership of the unions as well as obtain a degree of autonomy. Such is not always the case.

**CHRISTINA:** Should the concerns of women remain unified with the demands of the rest of the union or is there any benefit in presenting a separate front?

**MADELEINE:** Oh, it's always got to remain unified. You want one bargaining unit with the employer and that unit has to present to the employer a united front.

If you had a separate bargaining unit for women and a separate bargaining unit for men, it would destroy the purpose of collective bargaining and the employer would be tempted to play one group against the other. The men in the unions have to be won over by your possession of information, your consciousness of your rights and your unity in taking a stand for them. Women also have to fight for the right to leadership within the bargaining unit. If the bargaining committee is only made up of men, you can be sure that what will be dropped first in the course of bargaining will be the paid maternity leave. If women are on the bargaining committee, supported by a base of women in the union, they can hold out for those demands as the Quebec public sector workers did in 1980. They won virtually full pay - really about 94% - for 20 weeks maternity leave and the right to add their four weeks paid vacation to that leave, if they wanted. They also won two years unpaid parental leave. But it was done because women were active and in certain positions of power.

**CHRISTINA:** What role can unions play in educating women about non-traditional occupations or even teaching them the necessary skills for work that is traditionally better paid?

**MADELEINE:** By demanding and negotiating for equal pay for equal value in their own bargaining unit, union women decrease the gap in pay and make the bridging into better paid jobs easier. With those efforts should go demands for job equity in collective agreements and active encouragement and assistance to women who bid for better paid, traditionally male jobs. I think that union women's committees must, and do in a large part in Quebec, relate to other women's organizations in the community that advocate access for women to non-traditional jobs. They must work together. For example, in Quebec, Le conseil d'information pour l'accès des femmes au travail demands better job-training for women and Action travail des femmes has fought for women to get into jobs in the railway shop crafts and in public transportation, jobs overwhelmingly performed by men. It's very difficult for women in unions, say the bus drivers', where they're nearly all men

in the first place. It's difficult to convince them that women have a right to the jobs. The position of the women's groups in the community who are involved in action to get women in non-traditional jobs is important in at least raising public awareness and supporting feminist demands. That is when union women's committees come in and support the specialized women's groups.

Where you have sexism you also have racism, and vice versa. I think it's important for the women's movement and for unions trying to get women into non-traditional jobs, to stand up for the visible minorities' right to those jobs also. That will combine the strength of those who are the least favourite.

**CHRISTINA:** You yourself seem a representative of what you advise: active still in the Canadian Textile and Chemical Union, a vibrant member of the board of The National Action Committee on the Status of Women, and of other community organizations including la Ligue des droits et libertés.

**MADELEINE:** Well, I believe that political action of union people can only be effective if it is joined with the action of progressive, democratic organizations within the community. There's a need for unions, women's organizations, community organizations, and church groups to work together for a better society; to bring about necessary changes or to stop retrogressive ones. There is a certain healthy balance in a coalition between community groups and unions pressuring government for our common interest.



Addressing the workers at a Labour Day demonstration in Valleyfield, Quebec, 1948.

### Entrevue: Madeleine Parent

Entrevue: Madeleine Parent Madeleine Parent est depuis 1940, année qui marque sa sortie du collège, une syndicaliste très active. Elle s'est occupée d'organiser les travailleurs des filatures de coton et de laine, elle est cofondatrice du Syndicat canadien des textiles et des produits chimiques ainsi que de la Confédération des syndicats canadiens. Elle a été arrêtée à plusieurs reprises en raison de ses activités. À l'heure actuelle, elle s'affaire au sein du Comité canadien d'action sur le statut de la femme, est encore membre de son

syndicat et d'autres organismes féministes québécois ainsi que de la Ligue des droits et des libertés. Nous rapportons ses propos:

«Pendant la Deuxième Guerre mondiale, j'ai organisé dans les usines d'armements les travailleurs, dont la plupart étaient des femmes. En 1946, j'ai participé à la mise sur pied de la grève de la filature de coton de Valleyfield qui a mené à la signature d'un contrat. Les femmes en ont retiré des avantages certains: à travail égal, salaire égal et reconnaissance des droits que donnent l'ancienneté.

Aujourd'hui, les congés de maternité, les mises en disponibilité pour les pères, la protection contre le harcèlement, et l'équité en matière d'emploi font partie intégrante de toute négociation de contrat normale, il faut encore toutefois que les femmes fassent attention que ces demandes ne soient pas ignorées pendant le processus de négociation.

«Je suis contre le libre-échange. Aux États-Unis, seuls 17% de la main-d'oeuvre est syndiquée, alors qu'au Canada 38% l'est. Si les entreprises veulent être concurrentielles, il faudra qu'elles se mettent au diapason des critères américains. Des emplois dans le secteur du traitement des données disparaîtront au fur et à mesure que les ressources informatiques passeront aux États-Unis. Les sociétés canadiennes vendues à des corporations américaines seront les premières à fermer leurs portes si la corporation a des difficultés.

«À l'heure actuelle, la majorité des syndicats ont des comités de femmes qui s'occupent des aspects éducatifs de la situation des femmes, leur expliquer la marche à suivre pour porter une plainte et les questions donnant lieu à des griefs, par exemple. Par la suite, lorsque les femmes assistent aux réunions du syndicat, elles sont bien informées, plus confiantes et prêtes à lutter pour ce qu'elles veulent.

Les comités de femmes peuvent aussi travailler de concert avec des organismes féministes pour faire prendre conscience à la population de certains problèmes et pour permettre aux femmes d'avoir accès à des emplois non traditionnels. Un bon équilibre se crée lorsqu'une coalition de groupes communautaires et de syndicats se liguent pour faire agir le gouvernement dans l'intérêt de tous.»

*Madeline Parent was born in Montreal in 1918 and received her B.A. from McGill University in 1942. She has been involved in union organizing since her graduation, mostly in the textile industry where large numbers of women work. She currently lives in Montreal where she is an active member of her union and various women's organizations.*

*Christina Starr is the Managing Editor of Women's Education des femmes.*

# Women: Know Your Rights!

Excerpts from a handbook by Edmonton Working Women

*Women: Know Your Rights* is the name of a manual for women in the Alberta workforce. It was produced by members of Edmonton Working Women out of a recognized need to supply working women with a straightforward, easy-to-use guide to their rights. Edmonton Working Women (EWW) is a working women's collective based on feminist principles. Members share a commitment to working towards the full equality of women, both in the work-force and society in general. This article is comprised of excerpts from the manual, which will be interesting to women concerned about their rights at work and to those interested in making working women's rights more accessible.

## Les femmes doivent connaître leurs droits Extrait d'un manuel par Edmonton Working Women

*Women: Know Your Rights* (Les femmes doivent connaître leurs droits) est un manuel destiné à la main-d'oeuvre féminine de l'Alberta que publient des membres d'un organisme de travailleuses à Edmonton (Edmonton Working Women) et qui applique les principes féministes. Cet article cite des extraits du manuel.

En Alberta, plus de 60% des femmes âgées de 15 ans et plus sont salariées. Plus de 61 % d'entre elles occupent des emplois sans débouchés: secteurs des services, de la vente et des travaux de secrétariat. Une minorité seulement de ces femmes sont syndiquées et, en général, celles travaillant dans ces secteurs, en particulier celles à mi-temps et les aides domestiques, sont mal payées et pâtissent de mauvaises conditions.

**Grossesse:** Un employeur qui apprend qu'une de ses employées est enceinte ne peut la renvoyer, diminuer ses heures de travail, la priver de certaines responsabilités ou lui barrer la route en cas de promotion. Bien qu'il existe des règlements qui protègent les femmes lorsqu'elles sont enceintes, le EWW estime que ceux-ci sont insuffisants, voire discriminatoires.

**Harcèlement sexuel:** Des sondages révèlent que 80-90% des femmes ont été à un moment ou à un autre victimes de harcèlement sexuel. Les femmes peuvent porter plainte à la Commission des droits humains, poursuivre en justice en passant par la cour des Petites Créances ou déposer une accusation criminelle.

**Syndicat:** Les femmes syndiquées peuvent tirer parti du processus de négociation collective pour exercer un certain contrôle sur leurs conditions de travail. La disparité de salaires entre les hommes et les femmes est moins importante chez les travailleurs syndiqués. De plus, les accords collectifs peuvent accorder aux femmes des congés de maternité plus longs ou des allocations de maternité plus importantes. Les syndicats,

d'autre part, disposent d'un système de réclamation qui est plus rapide, moins coûteux et souvent plus efficace que le système judiciaire.

Les recherches et la publication du manuel ont été en partie subventionnées par le Secrétariat d'État, Programme de la femme. Pour de plus amples renseignements, s'adresser à l'organisme Edmonton Working Women, Suite 30, 9930 -106 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T5K 1C7, 403-429-3370.

The experience and desire necessary to produce the manual were gained through contact with those working women in Edmonton who phoned the EWW Hotline. The Hotline offers free advice and support to women who are being treated unfairly at work. Women from many occupations - waitresses, secretaries, teachers, nurses, to name a few have called because their rights at work were abused and they decided to take a stand. The courage with which these women have struggled against injustice has been a constant source of inspiration. EWW acknowledges their individual strength and thanks them for their contribution to the collective struggle for women's equality.

Today over 60% of women in Alberta over age 15, or 525,000 women, are working for wages. We comprise over half of the Alberta labour force and our numbers are increasing every year.

---

***Today over 60% of  
women in Alberta over  
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We have become a permanent fixture of the economy and only the most backward-looking people would claim that our contribution is anything less than vital. Over 50% of families with two wage-earners would fall below the poverty line if one of the partners stopped working. In a time of high unemployment and economic restraint it is important that all recognize that women work because of economic necessity. It is crucial that we receive equal job opportunities devoid of discrimination based on our sex.

We must also facilitate women's equal participation in the labour force by developing better support services in this province. Of primary importance is the need for a high quality child care system accessible to all. In the past decade over 56% of women in Alberta with pre-school age children were in the paid labour force. Unless society accepts its share of responsibility for childrearing women will never achieve full and equal

participation in the work world.

Over 61 % of working women in Alberta are employed in the "job ghettos": service, retail and clerical jobs which have traditionally been seen as "women's work". In fact, 83.6% of all clerical workers are women. Because very few of these occupations are unionized (less than one third of working women in Alberta belong to unions), women working in these areas suffer some of the worst wages and working conditions in the province. Particularly hard-hit are part time and domestic workers. Neither group receives adequate protection under Alberta labour legislation.

While you're working, or while you're looking for work, it's a good practice to keep a small notebook for writing down all the significant things that happen to you. Good records can be very handy if you need to up-date your resume, apply for unemployment insurance or simply make sure you got paid for all the hours you worked. They can be invaluable if you run into serious problems and decide to seek legal aid.

### **Pregnancy Rights**

The individual Rights Protection Act (IRPA) protects a woman already employed for 12 continuous months from dismissal or discriminatory treatment on the grounds of pregnancy. Edmonton Working Women considers the 12 month stipulation to be discriminatory due to the fact that under any other conditions, an employee needs only three months of service to gain job security.

Upon learning that a woman is pregnant, an employer cannot fire her, reduce her hours or change the responsibilities of her job or her opportunity for promotion simply because she is pregnant. If a woman is capable of performing the duties of her job, she must be allowed to continue in the same capacity and with the same opportunities. However, if an employee is unable to fulfill her job responsibilities and reasonable accommodation is not possible, she should be treated in the same way as any other employee who is unable to carry out the responsibilities of the job.

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The problems with the regulations regarding pregnancy are obvious. Even though firing or layoff is prohibited, enforcement procedures do not require reinstatement. The woman has no right to her job and at best can expect six months wages and entitlements. Also, the woman must prove that she was dismissed solely because of pregnancy which often is very difficult to do. By contrast, BC legislation considers the dismissal of a pregnant employee to be the result of that pregnancy unless the employer can prove otherwise. Further, if a pregnant employee has no sick leave benefits and misses work because she is pregnant, she can be fired for failure to perform her duties.



## **Sexual Harassment**

The Alberta Human Rights Commission (AHRC) considers sexual harassment to be discrimination on the basis of sex and therefore sexual harassment contravenes the Individual Rights Protection Act. If you are being sexually harassed at work, you can either file a complaint with the AHRC, sue in small claims court, or lay criminal charges. Past surveys indicate that as much as 80 to 90 percent of women in the labour force have experienced sexual harassment at some time. In Alberta that would represent as many as 450,000 women.

Sexual harassment is an expression of power and violence. It is not to be confused with mutually acceptable bantering or flirtation. Sexual harassment is unwanted and aggressive and, as an expression of power, it is practiced with little regard for appearance or behavior. Any woman can be a victim of sexual harassment, regardless of age, race, marital status, social standing or sexual orientation.

## **Unionization**

Large numbers of working women in Alberta are employed in sectors which are still primarily non-unionized. There have been a few successes in recent years in organizing in the retail sector, but on the whole women in these jobs, as well as the service sector, remain outside the union movement.

Through unionization, women can use the collective bargaining process to gain some control over their wages, benefits, job security and other working conditions. Membership in a union can offer women some protection in the labour force. For example, the wage gap between men and women is narrower among unionized workers, and collective agreements may provide longer maternity leave or higher maternity benefits than those established by labour laws. As well, unions provide a grievance procedure, which is faster, cheaper and often more effective than remedies through the legal system. Together women can fight more effectively for their rights and important gains can be won to the benefit of all workers. It is the right of every worker to join a union and to participate in its lawful activities. Exceptions include those workers employed in a confidential or managerial capacity, or members of the medical, dental, architectural, engineering or legal professions who are qualified to practice under laws of the province and who are employed in their professional capacity. **If you discuss union business on your employer's time, you can be fired.**

Employer anti-union campaigns in sectors where women predominate, such as banking, have been powerful and effective. It is important to note that your employer is prevented by law from interfering with the formation...

[continued on page 21](#)

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## Humour!

In this issue we are introducing humour (not that we've never been funny before, just that we've never officially tried to). We welcome submissions of cartoons, jokes, poems, limericks, essays or humorous fiction. In keeping with WEDfs editorial policy, submissions should be non-sexist, non-racist and about women with a feminist perspective. We prefer previously unpublished material and submissions should include a self-addressed, stamped envelope if material is to be returned. Send us a laugh!



*Noreen Stevens is a Winnipeg-based illustrator and graphic designer. As the owner of Halle-Stevens Design Illustration, she enjoys a variety of work from architectural rendering to logo design and cartooning.*

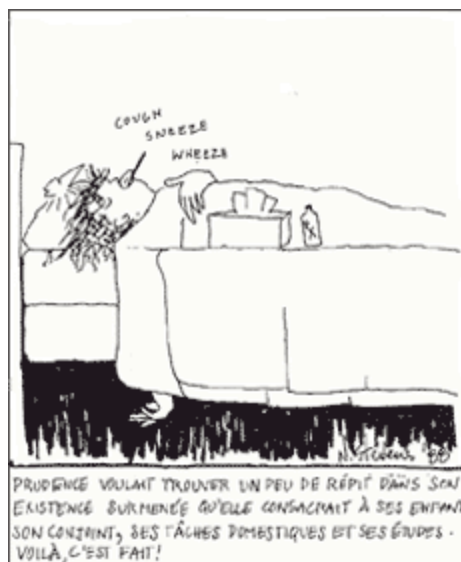
*Assisting organizations in the women's, lesbian and gay communities to present a graphically strong voice is a rewarding aspect of her work.*

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## Humour!

Dans ce numéro, nous présentons pour la première fois une rubrique humoristique (cela ne veut pas dire que nous n'ayons jamais été drôles auparavant, mais plutôt que nous ne l'avons jamais été de façon aussi officielle). Nous serions ravies de recevoir des bandes dessinées, des blagues, des poèmes, des rimes, des essais et des histoires.

Pour respecter la politique qu'applique le service de rédaction du magazine WEdf, les textes soumis se doivent de ne refléter aucun sexisme, aucun racisme et de porter sur des femmes ayant une optique féministe. Nous préférons autant que possible que vous nous envoyiez des textes inédits. N'oubliez pas d'y joindre une enveloppe affranchie à votre adresse si vous voulez qu'on vous renvoie vos textes. Faites-nous rire!



*Noreen Stevens est illustrateur et graphiste à Winnipeg. Comme elle est propriétaire de Halle-Stevens Design Illustration, son travail comprend maintes facettes, de l'architecture à la conception de logos en passant par les bandes dessinées. Un autre aspect de son travail qui lui apporte de grandes satisfactions est de soutenir les femmes, les lesbiennes et les gays en se faisant entendre grâce à des dessins forts et explicites.*

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*L'action communautaire et  
les femmes:*  
quelques pistes de réflexion  
PAR DENYSE CÔTÉ

Une forte proportion des femmes qui font du bénévolat se concentre dans les domaines social et éducatif. Les femmes sont plus nombreuses que les hommes à participer à des activités bénévoles, axées sur le service à autrui: popotes roulantes, services aux malades par exemple. Le bénévolat, tel que saisi par les études faites à ce sujet, est une activité non rémunérée, qui peut cependant être quantifiée. On comptabilise alors le nombre d'heures de bénévolat accomplie par semaine, par mois, par année, ainsi que le type d'activité (loisirs, activité sociale, éducative, professionnelle...)



Cependant, la notion de bénévolat ne fait pas la lumière sur une large portion de l'activité communautaire non rémunérée des femmes: de nombreuses activités ne peuvent en effet être quantifiées. Sont oubliées les actions que les femmes entreprennent en vue d'un changement des pratiques ou des institutions à un niveau local, les actions visant la solution de problèmes communautaires qui ne sont pas reconnus officiellement, ou encore les actions collectives visant l'éducation populaire et le mieux-être d'une communauté. Tout le travail communautaire effectué à l'intérieur de groupes communautaires (groupes populaires et autres) et à l'extérieur de ceux-ci, est ainsi passé sous silence.

**Some reflections on community work by Women**  
by Denyse Côté

It is a well known fact that women are and have been very active in their communities. This article criticizes mainstream understandings of women's community work. Although women's presence is now generally acknowledged as consumers, participants and leaders, important misconceptions and methodological limitations still remain. Statistics Canada accounts for voluntary work, but cannot include a good share of the invisible work always at hand in voluntary and community associations, and clearly excludes community work done outside such associations.

Community organizing has generally referred to community work as neutral and public, and little has been done to acknowledge or analyze the creation of community ties (neighborhood or/and kinship). But this is as basic to a community or an organization

as are leadership and finances. It is therefore of the utmost importance to reconsider our understanding of community work, and develop new frameworks of analysis. Is it not time to understand community work in reference to the private realm? Would "mother work" not be a useful concept (as useful as that of politics, many times referred to)? Would mother work not help us understand women's "invisible" work in our communities?

**Denyse Côté**, community organizer and participant in a variety of community activities, is a professor of social work at the University of Quebec at Hull. She welcomes with enthusiasm any commentary on this article.

Mais pourquoi parler spécifiquement des femmes alors qu'il s'agit de groupes mixtes, où hommes et femmes sont présents et actifs? Les hommes et les femmes ne partagent-ils pas la même réalité? Au contraire, nous savons pertinemment que les femmes sont majoritaires dans les groupes communautaires, mais que leur contribution spécifique est difficile à saisir. En dehors des groupes constitués de façon formelle, cette contribution s'évapore.

L'action communautaire mérite qu'on la définisse. Méthodologie et philosophie d'intervention, elle prend appui sur les personnes qui sont l'objet du changement. Elle a été définie comme "a people-based method" (1). C'est le "community organization" américain. Elle s'exerce dans le cadre de groupes mixtes et de groupes de femmes. Les groupes de femmes (2) interviennent sur des problèmes causés directement par des rapports de domination sexuelle; leur analyse et leur action mettent ces rapports en lumière: les hommes comme groupe social et le patriarcat comme système sont vus comme des obstacles pour les femmes. Dans les groupes communautaires mixtes au contraire, une telle optique n'existe pas. L'optique la plus répandue fait ressortir prioritairement la présence de rapports de domination ne tenant pas compte de la variable sexuelle. Les rapports entre les sexes sont ainsi relégués au rang de problème de second ordre. Une vision universelle de l'homme [sic] et des rapports sociaux au sein de l'action communautaire s'en dégage (3), vision qui se conjugue à la restriction des rapports entre les sexes au champ d'intervention occupé par les groupes de femmes. L'invisibilité et la neutralité sexuelles infiltrent alors les projets, ceux ayant pour objectif le changement de structures et des rapports de domination, la satisfaction des besoins des plus démunis, de même que les projets orientés vers le mieux-être communautaire.

En 1988, les têtes d'affiche au niveau de l'action communautaire mixte sont encore plus souvent qu'à leur tour des hommes. On reconnaît généralement la présence (majoritaire) des femmes, mais toujours plus facilement comme participantes, consommatrices et dispensatrices de services. Reconnaît-on cependant la place des femmes comme instigatrices, pionnières, premières responsables, militantes, intervenantes dans des projets autres que ceux destinés spécifiquement aux femmes? (4) Reconnaît-on l'apport et les problèmes spécifiques des femmes au niveau des thèmes d'action? (5) Reconnaît-on les énergies qu'elles y canalisent, la façon dont elles interviennent, la marge de manoeuvre

particulière dont elles disposent?

Les femmes ont été assignées à des places et à des fonctions déterminées variant selon les époques et selon les sociétés. Qu'elles se soient ou non conformées à ces rôles et à ces places, qu'elles les aient acceptés ou contestés, le fait demeure qu'elles ont à faire face à des interdits propres à leur sexe et qu'elles ont à agir en prenant ces interdits en ligne de compte. Et si l'on admet facilement que les structures et la dynamique d'une société influencent l'action communautaire, pourquoi alors mettre l'influence des rapports entre les sexes sur celle-ci?



En d'autres termes, si l'on admet que les femmes, sujettes à une socialisation particulière, situées de façon particulière dans la dynamique sociale et sujettes à des responsabilités et des interdits particuliers, si l'on admet que..

...gender ascriptive relations are clearly the fundamental sites of the subordination of women as gender (6)

comment présumer alors que les champs d'intérêt, les stratégies, les modes d'insertion communautaires des femmes aient été les mêmes que ceux des hommes? Comment supposer que les valeurs véhiculées par les femmes aient été identiques, explicitement ou implicitement, à celles des hommes, quand on impute par exemple à ces derniers l'agressivité et la prestance, et aux femmes l'abnégation et le service à autrui? (7)

Comment supposer que l'action des femmes au niveau communautaire soit identique à celle des hommes?

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Nous retrouvons un exemple de cette vision asexuée (donc masculine) de l'action communautaire dans la notion même de communauté. Les définitions, quoique très variées, associent sans exception la communauté à la sphère publique; c'est le domaine du "local politics" (les institutions et leurs représentants locaux, les groupes constitués oeuvrant dans le quartier, les problèmes relevant du domaine public). Tout ce qui serait associé à la sphère privée (et par le fait même à une aire d'activité et de responsabilité féminine) est éliminé: rapports de voisinage, rapports de parenté, rapports communautaires informels ou non formalisés. Il s'agit pourtant d'un domaine et de rapports essentiels à la survie de toute communauté (privée et publique), essentiels pour les femmes en particulier, qui sont en général responsables du privé. Les rapports communauté famille et le travail pourtant



nécessaire de production- reproduction d'une communauté sont rendus invisibles.

Qui se charge du travail de mise en place et de régénérescence des réseaux, des associations, tant au sein de la famille que de la parenté, du quartier, de lieu de travail? Ne s'agit-il pas là d'un travail communautaire, qui nécessite un investissement d'énergies, et dont l'importance (et non la reconnaissance sociale) équivaut largement à celle des autres activités ou transaction formelles qu'il rend possibles? Les femmes font fonctionner des réseaux informels au travers desquels s'effectue un partage des ressources (soin des enfants, survie d'une famille, organisation d'une communauté pour faire face à une pénurie, etc). Ces processus constituent une activité de travail, de gestion, de mise en place, de changement d'une communauté, et constituent à ce titre une action communautaire.

Les réflexions qui précèdent soulèvent certaines questions. Peut-on supposer que les femmes qui assument ce travail communautaire considèrent cette activité comme un travail? Comment inclure dans l'analyse ces activités, que la division privé public a rendues invisibles, sans tomber dans le piège de la quantification?

Il s'avère nécessaire de changer nos termes de référence et de baser les nouveaux termes choisis sur l'expérience collective des femmes. Je suggérerais à ce titre l'utilisation de la notion de travail maternel. Par travail maternel, j'entends l'ensemble des travaux d'entretien matériel, psychique et affectif, des interventions éducatives, des considérations organisationnelles et économiques qu'une mère effectue régulièrement pour les enfants dont elle a la charge et par extension, *pour sa famille et son entourage* (8).

Ne s'agit-il pas là justement de ce que font, bénévolement, des milliers de femmes, au sein de groupes constitués, ou en dehors de ceux-ci? Bien sûr, l'activité maternelle étant dévalorisée dans notre société, son utilisation comme concept peut poser un problème. Elle a le mérite cependant de mettre en lumière un pan de l'activité communautaire des femmes resté dans l'ombre.

*Denyse Côté, organisatrice communautaire et participante à diverses activités communautaires, est actuellement professeure en Travail social à l'Université de Québec à Hull. Elle accueillerait avec enthousiasme tout commentaire sur cet article.*

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1. Stephen M. Rose "Reflections on Community Organization Theory", dans Armand Lauffer et Edward Newman eds. "Community Organization for the 1980s" *Social Development Issues*, Vol.5 nos 2-3, p.152.
  2. Il s'agit d'organisations non-mixtes offrant des services ou regroupant exclusivement des femmes: les maisons d'hébergement pour les femmes victimes de violence familiale, les cliniques de santé des femmes, les associations féministes et féminines en sont des exemples.
  3. "Until recently, mankind's understandings have been the only understanding generally available to us. As other perceptions arise - precisely those perceptions

that men, because of their dominant position, could NOT perceive - the total vision of human possibilities enlarges and is transformed. The old is severely challenged." Jean Bakes Miller, *Toward a New Psychology of Women*, 1977, Boston, Beacon Press, p.1.

4. À ce sujet, l'Institut canadien d'éducation des adultes a mené une recherche-action sur la place des femmes dans les groupes populaires, à laquelle a participé activement l'auteure de cet article.
5. Les problèmes spécifiques des femmes comme locataires ou comme assistées sociales en sont un exemple.
6. Diane Elson et Ruth Pearson, "The Subordination of Women and the Internationalization of Factory Production" dans Young, Wolkowitz et McCullagh, *Of Marriage and the Market*, 1984 London, CSE Books, p.152.
7. Il n'existe pas de modèle unique d'action et d'intervention pour les femmes. Notre propos ne vise pas à créer ou à défendre l'existence d'un tel modèle. Au contraire, nous croyons que les actions et les insertions des femmes dans le secteur de l'action communautaire sont multiples et variées, mais influencées et produites par les rapports entre les sexes.
8. La définition que je propose se rapproche sensiblement de celle proposée dans l'editorial de *Women: A Journal of Liberation*, vol. 7, no.2, p.68. On y parle de mother work: "the labour of birthing, raising, tending, guiding, and caring for children within the home and the extension of this work into the community and labor market... Motherwork is one of the most intense and sophisticated forms of choreography in which one must plan and co-ordinate a series of often simultaneous or disparate movements in both a daily and lifelong pattern."

### ***Rights!*** continued from page 15

of a trade union. If an employer does interfere, such action may constitute "unfair labour practices" and a complaint can be made to the provincial Labour Relations Board.

There may be an established union which would be willing to organize in your workplace. The advantage of affiliating with an existing union is that they have expertise with organizational campaigns and collective bargaining. Unionization is a long and sometimes complicated process that usually requires expert help. You must realize that employers have vast resources at their disposal and that employees should be careful not to allow technicalities to scuttle their unionization.

If you wish to find out information about existing unions, phone the provincial Federation of Labour or the District Labour Council in your area. It might be helpful to talk to members of the women's committees of different unions, which may be located by looking in phone directory yellow pages under "labour organizations".

*Funding for the research and publication of the handbook was received from the Secretary of State, Women's Program. For copies, contact Edmonton Working Women at Suite 30, 9930 - 106 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T5K 1C7, 403-429-3370. EWW is asking for donations of at least \$1.00 per handbook, where possible, in order to recover their*

costs.



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## *Skills for stressful Lives:* Some Comments on How to Cope

BY BERTE RUBIN

Roles - learned, copied, enforced or acquired - pervade our lives and provide us with personal identity. The traditional roles of conforming daughter, dutiful wife, devoted mother and doting grandmother at one time comprised a woman's life. The emphasis was not so much on skill development but on being: being compliant, being compassionate, being caring, being nurturing.

Today, 64% of the female population 16 years and over with children work full time. As might have been expected, the appropriation of a career role over those of daughter, wife and mother has not much changed popular conceptions of the traditional roles but only created a new stereotype, the "superwoman". The work I did for my doctorate in Adult Education demonstrates conclusively that married, professional women with children are profoundly competent in managing their lives without undue amounts of stress nor recourse to supernatural powers. In other words, the "superwoman" myth is unfounded.



I studied stress reactions among married, middle-aged "superwomen" with children. Married professional women with children were the exception rather than the rule 25

years ago. I chose them for the study on the assumption that role conflict would be most pronounced in women who, in their formative years, were socialized to consider the roles of wife and mother paramount. Their experiences in coping with the role of professional along with the expectations of being a wife and mother afford valuable insights about the effectiveness of coping resources available, and provide guidance to the increasing number of women who are assuming these three roles.

Sixty urban, married, professional women between the ages of 40 and 60 with children were studied. These women work full time as doctors, lawyers, dentists, engineers, accountants, architects and business owners or executives. They were interviewed and were asked to complete an extensive questionnaire.

**Vie stressante ou les qualités à avoir:  
quelques commentaires sur les façons de bien réagir  
par Berte Rubin**

Au cours des travaux que j'ai été amenés à effectuer dans le cadre de mon doctorat en Éducation des adultes, j'ai étudié les façons dont les femmes mariées d'âge mûr (40-60 ans), ayant des enfants et menant une vie professionnelle réagissent au stress. On considère souvent ces femmes qui mènent de front leur vie professionnelle et familiale comme hors du commun. Pourtant, mes recherches montrent de façon concluante que ces femmes sont capables de mener une existence dans laquelle stress ne prend pas le dessus.

Les participantes ont dit disposer de neuf moyens pour réagir au stress. Ces moyens se classent en trois catégories: ceux qui servent à régler des problèmes (les détecter et en faire l'analyse dans des situations conflictuelles); ceux d'ordre social et interpersonnel (se sentir à l'aise dans la société et être ouvertes aux idées et aux sentiments des autres); ceux qui permettent de canaliser les émotions (ne pas prendre de décisions sous le coup d'émotions et poser le problème de manière objective).

Les programmes destinés aux femmes devront comprendre à l'avenir des cours de formation se fondant sur ces façons de réagir au stress. Il faudrait que les parents, les enseignants, les conseillers et les directeurs prennent conscience qu'il est de la plus grande importance que les femmes voulant jouer avec efficacité plusieurs rôles soient munies de ces moyens de réagir. Ce n'est que le jour où les femmes seront considérées comme des êtres capables (ce qu'elles sont), que nous pourrons espérer voir s'opérer un changement en profondeur dans la façon dont le développement humain est compris.

*Berte Rubin a passé son doctorat en Éducation aux adultes à l'université de Toronto en 1987. Depuis 15 ans, elle exerce en tant que conseillère libérale. Elle donne aussi des conférences et des ateliers sur la gestion du stress et l'efficacité de chacun. Elle aime s'adresser à des groupes féministes et serait contente de connaître votre opinion sur cet article.*

My primary aim was to investigate the relationship between each of five coping resources - support systems, group affiliations, self-esteem, behaviors and coping skills - and the level of stress experienced by the women in the study.

**Support systems** are networks of family (nuclear or extended), friends, colleagues, neighbors, mentors and other professional individuals., **Group affiliations** I defined woman as memberships in clubs and organizations for the purpose to (of personal and/or professional growth, developing friendships or exchanging resources. These groups could be social, professional, recreational, political, religious, interest, or consciousness-raising. **Self-esteem** is a personal resource related to self-worth that resides within the self. It is simply how a woman personally feels about herself and her actions. **Behaviors** are various personal qualities that can be modified by a woman to affect her roles of professional, wife and mother. For example, adjectives like determined, opinionated, reflective, emotional, self-

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and use of these  
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**skills** are a more complicated resource but proved to be the most effective in the lives of study participants. It was upon the knowledge and use of these coping skills that a woman's ability to handle stress seemed to centre. Women were asked to choose descriptive such as “very”, “somewhat” or “never” in responding to questions about their use of these skills. I defined nine distinct coping skills which I divided into three categories. The first, **Problem-Solving Skills**, are things like identifying and analyzing problems in situations of conflict, setting priorities in order to organize duties, making major decisions and following through with them, and negotiating in situations of conflict. These skills focus on coping with a problem, which really means the ability to contend or deal successfully with a situation or role. This can mean managing by redefining, tolerating, enduring or ultimately accepting. Women in the study used a high degree of problem-solving skills on the job, fairly high with children, and slightly lower with their husbands.

**Social and Interpersonal Skills** are the second group and involve talents like being at ease in social situations, being able to rationally express oneself in situations of conflict, and responding positively to others when they express their feelings and ideas. A major component of social and interpersonal skills is an ability to communicate and deal effectively with others with a minimum level of stress; social competence is viewed as a high level of coping competence. The women in the study used a high degree of social and interpersonal skills on the job, fairly high with children and slightly lower with husbands.

Many women indicated in the interviews that in their earlier years as professionals they were not as much at ease with their male colleagues as they would have liked to be. They recommended that women aspiring to multiple roles learn to use social and interpersonal skills in order to manage their social and professional lives, especially with male colleagues, more easily.

The third category, **Regulation of Emotion Skills**, sounds repressive and stoical but involves such common sense actions as not allowing emotions to overly influence one's decisions, and being able to distract oneself from problems to come back to them objectively. It means controlling emotions such as fear, guilt, jealousy, anxiety, self-doubt and depression. Many women in the study emphasized that controlling these emotions is fundamental to coping with role stress and conflict. The ability to do so results in emotional stamina, a resource essential to finding innovative solutions to role problems.

Though all five coping resources can be useful tools for dealing with stress, the results from my study indicated that the nine coping skills were the most valuable in lowering stress levels in the lives of participants. Future programs for women must include skill development based on the findings of this study. Parents, teachers, counselors (and others in the helping professions) and managers must be made aware of the importance of coping skills to women who wish to function effectively in multiple roles.

Since the study also indicated a majority of respondents with low stress scores, the

prevailing assumption that the roles of wife, mother and professional combined necessarily produce high stress is brought into question. Findings from the interviews indicate that managing the three roles of professional, wife and mother is possible, without undue amounts of stress, through organization of time, space and activities.

The stress of role conflict can be reduced another way, by reducing the underlying role conflict expected of women in society. This ultimately implies, as do most re-evaluations of the world by women, an ambitious long-term re-orientation of society itself. Perhaps when household duties really are the joint responsibility of husband and wife, the concern over role conflict and stress will have disappeared along with superwoman's red cape and big letter "S".

My study concludes that, on the whole, married professional women with children are better able to cope with stress than popular images of them portray. They can learn to juggle the roles of wife, mother, and professional or career person, even if it means demanding changes in the family, work environment and society in general. Perhaps when women are accepted for the strong and capable people they are - and when girls grow up with such women as role models - we can begin to envision a changed and deeper understanding of human development and a more generative view of human life.

*Dr .Berte Rubin received her doctorate in Adult Education from the University of Toronto in 1987. She has been in private practice as a counselor and group therapist for the past 15 years and has given numerous workshops and lectures on stress management and personal effectiveness. She welcomes opportunities to speak to women's organizations or groups, and would appreciate any comments on this article.*

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*Revolution in the Mountains:  
Feminism, at the Banff School  
of Fine Arts*

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BY PAM PATTERSON

Immediately following the departure of several hundred male RCMP officers sent from across Canada to provide security for the '88 Olympics, the Banff Centre hosted its first ever Festival of Women in the Arts. As Banff is not known for its bias towards women and their concerns, we of the Banff Centre Women's Group who organized the festival were not greeted with the same enthusiasm as the Mounties. The festival proved to be more than an everyday arts celebration. It was more like a revolution.

Set in the Alberta side of the striking Canadian Rockies, the Banff Centre is both a

conference centre and fine arts school of international repute. Though beautiful and inspiring, the mountains cannot help but dominate. A certain conservatism is fostered. Cautious of appearing overzealous, the permanent resident staff seem defensive about their ways. It is not overt. In fact, I have spoken to many who have difficulty isolating the problem but who all agree that an atmosphere, a feeling of rigidity, exists that is not experienced in other institutions.

The School of Fine Arts' mandate is to offer a hassle-free environment to the artist with technical, artistic and personal support. So far so good. To a large extent the mandate is fulfilled. Artists have living space, cafeteria service, studio or rehearsal space, access to some technical facilities, and a visiting faculty program with opportunities for performance and/or exhibition.

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## Une révolution dans les montagnes: féminisme à l'École des Beaux-Arts de Banff

par Pam Patterson

En mars dernier, le Centre de Banff, institut artistique connu dans le monde entier, organisait son premier festival sur Les femmes artistes.

Le centre n'est pas un des chefs de file de l'action affirmative. Les femmes ne représentent que 15% des cadres supérieurs. Les hommes occupent en général les postes-clés, prennent les décisions et défendent la politique de l'école.

Pour remédier aux problèmes que pose cette situation, artistes et personnel féminin du centre ont formé à l'automne dernier avec des femmes de Bow Valley le Groupe féministe du Centre de Banff. Selon ces femmes, il n'était nullement question de lancer des menaces ou de se sentir esclaves des doctrines féministes, mais bien de faire connaître leur véritable identité grâce à un festival. Elles voulaient que la population voie en elles des femmes tirant fierté de leur oeuvres et prêtes à dialoguer avec des hommes et d'autres femmes dans un esprit de gaieté.

Pour beaucoup de femmes, il s'agissait d'une nouvelle expérience: c'était en effet la première fois qu'elles travaillaient seulement avec des femmes dans un contexte de coopération collective. Malgré les remarques insidieuses, les désapprobations, les mouvements de résistance subtils et les silences lourds de sens, le festival a accueilli beaucoup de personnes, a été productif et amusant.

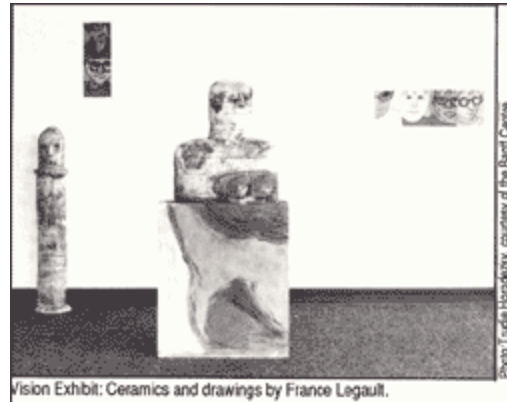
Il est possible que ce festival ne change pas le système patriarcal en place, mais peut-être qu'au fil des ans celui-ci va se lézarder et que ses fondations s'écrouleront. Espérons que le Centre de Banff apprendra ce que mûrir signifie.

*Pam Patterson est actrice, écrivaine et professeur/administratrice. Récemment, elle était assistante au directeur du studio des fibres et de la fabrication du papier au Centre*

*artistique de Banff.*

There are, however, limits. Participants are treated like children (mountain discovery trips and school auditorium chats), art is censored in public places in order to placate high-paying conference guests, and the organization is as rigid and difficult to change as any North American educational institution.

Need I say that there are noticeable inequities for women? In upper management, women are insignificant in number (about 15% of the total) and influence. Brenda Wallace, Head of Art Studio, and Isobel Ralston, Associate Director for the Music Program (winter), are two of the few fortunate. About five in twelve on the Board of Directors and a reasonable proportion of middle-management are women, but, on the whole, the structure is dominated by men who decide on and defend Banff Centre policies.



In response to these problems, a group of women visual artists, musicians, writers and staff members from the Banff Centre joined with women from the Bow Valley community last fall to form the Banff Centre Women's Group. The founding members included people like writers Gay Allison, Tillie Olsen and Myrna Kostash. We wanted to challenge the Center's mandate which we felt was not being upheld for women. The "artist" who is to be given freedom of artistic expression in a no-hassle environment with technical staff and faculty support must also include the "woman artist". Because of the inherent conservatism and sexism in the institution, women were not being given that chance. Still, we felt it important to keep ourselves open and approachable, but even such openness did not put the opposition at ease. At best we were considered unnecessary; at worst an insurrection.

Our process was specific. It had to be collective; we did not want to fragment or have to resort to a hierarchical structure. That would mean certain defeat. We had to be frank, but since some people were understandably nervous about their positions at the Centre, it was agreed that anything aired in meetings would not go beyond the group. Our initial get-togethers dealt with defining our group, sharing readings and having open discussion of personal concerns.

Reactions to the group were also discussed, the same comments emerging again and again. "The male artists are giving us a hard time about this women's group. They seem to feel threatened. They think we sit around and talk about how much we hate men. Don't they understand that we have more important things to do...?" A specific problem: "One male director of a program thinks we can't do this. He seems frustrated because we won't follow the accepted channels. But we can't. It would defeat our whole purpose." Again: "The younger women don't want to join. They think we are just going to make a situation worse and that we must all be rabid man-hating feminists."

We were a varied lot. Some had had experience with feminist organizations; others had never had the opportunity to work in a women-only, supportive, collective situation. We didn't want to threaten and we didn't see ourselves defined along feminist doctrinaire lines, so our statement of identity took shape as a festival. We saw ourselves as inclusive and empowering, as women proud of our work and our place in the community, open to dialogue with men and other women in the spirit of celebration.

To give it credit, the Centre tries to maintain an appearance of flexibility - especially when faced with a potentially good political move. Resistance to the women's initiative was passive rather than active. The festival was allowed but without much active support, except from Brenda Wallace, Art Studio. As Wallace's assistant, I was given permission to draw on other Visual Arts staff for assistance in technical, space and scheduling requirements. Informal support also came from isolated men and women in middle-management throughout the Centre, but the onus of organizing the mammoth project - without funding - was on the group.

We did it. It all took place around International Women's Day, at the Banff Centre and in the town of Banff. And when the festival was wonderfully underway, it was a treat to see Dr. Paul Fleck, the Center's president, crammed in with the full house for the panel discussion on Women in the Arts. Other events included readings, performance, slide shows, lectures, video and a campus-wide visual arts exhibit. The exhibit, called Vision, included everything from flying animal-like goddesses to a birth control quilt. We censored nothing and no one balked.

All events generated excitement, discussion, interaction. The bar was full and buzzing every night. We had shown that women, organized collectively, could implement solid, exciting programming and reach all kinds of people whose involvement had never been encouraged before. For those of us who had worked with feminist organizations in the past, the Banff process reminded us of the power and value of collective organization. For those who had never worked this way, it was a revelation.

What about the men? Some who came prepared to ridicule events such as the panel discussion left excited and willing to discuss issues into the morning. Others attending the festival were intrigued by the number of women who rushed around behind the scenes, producing food, fliers and information, running equipment for performances and having a good time. Where had all the rabidly angry feminists gone? Of course, there were other men who made snide comments during or after events or were simply absent and silent.

Even at this removed date, it is difficult to assess the festival's impact or future influence on the Banff Centre. It was the most successful event ever held there in terms of integrating activities and individuals from the town with those of the Centre. It gave women a voice and an opportunity to say in public forums what they had been denied the opportunity to express in the past. Some men entered into the spirit and took our concerns to heart.

But will it aid any future structural changes? Not likely. It is only through continued,

determined pressure that such institutions can change. The task cannot be taken on by one woman or by a few scattered, sympathetic men and women. Impetus must come from all levels. It must be clear, consolidated, positive, energetic, determined and consistent. More of an effort on the... center's part must be made to have women faculty members consistently represented in all programs, to have greater female representation in upper management positions and to have events and programs designed to support women's issues in the arts. Exciting possibilities are already there to be tapped and encouraged.

Perhaps the Banff Centre will embrace these changes. Maybe each year a chink in the old system will appear and eventually the barriers will crack. Women artists across Canada are prepared to provide names for faculty positions, to facilitate and teach programs. We want to help create an art institution that Banff and women can be proud of. Perhaps the enthusiasm of next year's group; can inspire Banff management to move towards the establishment of a Women's Art Resource Centre.

If a small group in one year can accomplish a festival of the arts, it's exciting to consider what a permanent facility could do. Women have the energy, commitment and capabilities to develop exciting programs and implement fresh ideas; the success of the Festival of Women in the Arts exemplifies this.

*Pam Patterson is a performance artist, writer and teacher / administrator. She was most recently employed as Assistant to the Head, Art Studio (Fibre and Papermaking), at the Banff Centre. At present she is living in Toronto, writing and making art, awaiting the arrival of her first child.*

## Poems

Early this year, **CLOW** received as a gift a poetry anthology entitled *Shop Talk*. The poems are about work and are written by the Vancouver Industrial Writers' Union. We are reprinting here two poems as a way to express our appreciation.

### **"Who Looks After Your Kids?"**

by Kirsten Emmott

"Who looks after your kids when you work?"  
"Who does the housework?"  
"How do you manage working those long hours  
with a family?"  
"How do you manage with the kids?"

Well, there's their father, and a nanny and a  
day care centre but they don't really hear, the  
people who ask.

### **Neighbours**

by Erin Mouré

They are in the street boiling the sweat out of  
their clothes  
In their houses scraping paint off the door to  
eat it as a meal  
They are in the basement sleeping at work-  
benches after the tools are sold  
They fidget  
Social workers come in & out of their doors  
Their drawings are suspect  
& their lists of groceries

They don't want to know about it.

What they want to hear is:

Who does the housework? My henpecked worm of a husband.

Me,

until four in the morning.

A Jamaican wetback whom we blackmail into slaving for peanuts. Nobody, we all live in a huge tattered ball of blankets like a squirrel's nest.

Who bakes the bread? Never touch it. Mac's Bakery. The pixies.

A little old Irish woman named Kirsten Emmott comes in every week.

How do you manage with the kids? I don't. I neglect them. I'm on the verge of a nervous breakdown, please help me. I'm drinking heavily. I don't give a damn about the kids, let them go to hell their own way.

Who looks after the kids? Nobody, I tie them to a tree in the back yard every day. My senile old grandmother. The Wicked Witch of the West.

"Who Looks After Your Kids?": Reprinted with permission from *Shop Talk*, Pulp Press, 1985

too much love & insufficient macaroni  
what is this

Do they think they can get away  
Do they think *steal*, do they know the sad  
night of hunger after the children are fed  
Do they dream of jobs

They are the neighbours  
Hello my neighbours  
In this age there are more of us than there are  
soldiers  
Still, if we cry out our sadness & break the  
government  
will it turn us into salt or food

*"Neighbours"; Reprinted with permission  
from Donestic Fuel, House of Anansi, 1985,  
and Shop Talk, Pulp Press, 1985*

## REVIEWS

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Amazing Space:  
Writing Canadian Women Writing  
Edited by Shirley Neuman and Smaro Kamboureli

Long spoon Press Newest Press Edmonton, 1986  
427pp., \$19.95,

Review by Ruth Bradley-St-Cyr

"A Amazing Space began modestly," say its editors, "as a collection of perhaps a dozen essays representative of feminist criticism and women's writing in Canada." (Preface, p.ix)



The surface of such a broad and diverse topic, however, is barely scratched by the thirty-eight essays that comprise the finished product. The initial impression is one of awe at the magnitude of materials covered: the book is over 400 pages and examines the female side of CanLit - including French and English, native and immigrant - over a period of a century and a half. But the lasting impression is that the collection provides a rich tapestry of literature and language, a valuable reference, and a potential text book. The broad scope is an indication that the areas discussed by the individual contributors have hardly yet been touched by Canadian literary criticism, much less collected together in one volume. As soon as it became available the book was placed on University reading lists, both in feminist and in critical studies. It has been a long time coming.

It should also be noted that the layout of the book is lovely; the type is relatively large and footnotes appear in a wide inside margin which is very handy for reference. There are also two indexes (subject and name/title) as well as biographical notes on the contributors, who are almost all women and include such well-known names as Constance Rooke, Aritha van Herk and Fred Wah.

Amazing Space reflects at least two important trends in current feminist literary studies. First, it embraces new critical theories such as deconstruction and those of the French feminist schools. Second, it attempts to place - or replace - female authors into the "canon" of literature. Important in both of these trends is the idea of feminist "re-reading" or "re-evaluating" of material which may have been overlooked or discarded by previous critics.

The first trend is evident in many of the essays as the sort of play with language and terminology which produces sentences such as this: "Viewed in the context of Jameson's oeuvre, moreover, the letter can be seen to recreate, in a *mise-en-abyme* fashion, a paradigmatic Jamesonian narrative pattern, a femino-centric discursive universe..." (Bina Friewald, "Femininely Speaking": Anna Jameson's Winter Studies and Summer Rambles in Canada", p.62) Although such language can be viewed as merely obscure and academic it should be seen, above all, as playful. It is a way for feminists to command the sort of power associated with naming things; the sort of power which God bestowed upon Adam (or "man") when he was charged with naming all the Earth's creatures.

The second trend, regarding the “canon”, is apparent in many of the articles and this is partly due to an editorial decision not to concentrate on those Canadian women authors - namely Margaret Laurence and Margaret Atwood - whose works are already accepted as important. As a result such authors as Laure Goodman Salverson, Laure Conan, Sharon Pollock, Louky Bersianik and Nicole Brossard, among others, are considered instead. This approach makes for a work which is both groundbreaking and fresh.

*Ruth Bradley-St-Cyr is a Master of Arts student in the Graduate English Program at York University. Her areas of concentration are Canadian Literature and Women in*

*Literature*

## May Works in Vancouver

Review by Faith Jones

*MayWorks is a festival of culture and working life, celebrating art inspired by the triumphs and tears of working people. It takes place annually in Paris, Berlin, Glasgow, Toronto, and now Vancouver.*

It was billed as a celebration of “the culture that has arisen from BC's colourful Labour history”, but Vancouver's first Mayworks festival, held May 1st to 8th, suffered from a lack of consistency. In what was supposed to be a grass-roots celebration of working people, big name performers were out of place and only served to diffuse the theme. Heather Bishop is all well and good, but what does she have to do with working life?

Perhaps the organizers hoped to appeal to as many people as possible instead of just reaching those already aware of union and work issues. In any case, this ambivalence of purpose left audiences confused and gave a certain inertia to the week of events. Mayworks seemed afraid of its own shadow.

Part of the problem of a broad appeal is that minority experiences can be isolated or overlooked. There was obvious difficulty in incorporating non-white experiences into the overall design of the week's events, for example. While there were several performances by non-white groups, events detailing the experiences of working people in general did not address race issues.

As well, women's working lives were, with one notable exception, dealt with separately from men's and were also devalued in a practical way in that no childcare was provided for any of the events.

But while the organizers may have diluted the political focus of May Works, many performers acknowledged the working roots of their art in productions that were not only political but also moving and empowering. Two examples of this were the plays of Vancouver Sath, a Punjabi theatre troupe, and an evening of songs and poetry called

## Working It Out.

*A Crop of Poison*, a play about pesticides, and Picket Line, about organizing, are usually performed in Punjabi for audiences of farmworkers. Their aim is to educate workers who have little access to the English-language media and whose interests are not adequately addressed by that media in any case (as the play points out). But they also address issues of cultural change that the East Indian community is facing in North America. *Picket Line* attempts to help the community by dealing with male and female roles in a way that empowers women to demand change and teaches men why they should accept it. In the play, a workplace is being organized by the Canadian Farm workers Union. The women workers, skeptical about their power to change working conditions and restricted by a culture that prohibits public action for women, are hesitant. Gradually they gain respect for their power as individuals and as organized workers, and they convince their husbands that by learning to speak out they have improved their collective lives. *Working It Out* was a collaboration between two singing groups - Fraser Union and the Euphoniously Feminist and Non-Performing Quintet - and poets Helen Potrebenko, Kate Braid, Glen Downie, Sandy Shreve and Calvin Wharton. Men's and women's work experiences were about equally represented and were well integrated. The flow of the songs and poems was remarkable. One sequence began with songs about food industries (such as fishing), moved to a song about baking, and finished with Braid's "Recipe for a Sidewalk" which explains how to pour concrete by comparing it to a cake recipe. All the women who performed in *Working It Out* touched on the theme that the world's attitudes toward women are a part of women's working conditions. Braid in particular addressed this, since she works in the construction trades. In her poem "These Hips" she says:

When the men carry sacks of concrete  
they hold them high, like boys.  
I bear mine low, like a girl  
on small, strong hips  
built for the birth of buildings.

Potrebenko and Shreve, who are clerical workers, read poems expressing outrage at the common assumption that their work is easy. But their poetic styles are very different. Potrebenko's poems are incredibly funny ("If someone tells you they are bored/you know right away they're not a typist") although they have a way of going from funny to stunningly serious in one line. Shreve, on the other hand, writes with a reverence for women's jobs. Her message is: typing well is as important as art, and as beautiful. To Shreve, the office is a stage where she executes bravura performances.

The best message May Works offered was that our work, no matter how devalued, is work; that it is important and that it is culture, or at least that it is a suitable topic for culture. That this message is embodied in performances of real strength and beauty is a gift to all workers.

*Faith Jones is a Vancouver-based writer and partner in a three-woman desktop publishing business called SuperScript.*

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**Letters** *continued from page 6* <<

I was only trying to survive - by selling the only marketable job skills I knew.

I want to tell you as women that I am a woman too, who wants to be accepted for me, not judged for what I have done or may do.

You cut all but the last paragraph. When your editor had suggested cutting that section to shorten the article, I found other places where cuts could be made. I explained to her that Michelle talking about lack of support from the feminist community was an important part of the article. That it was a challenge to your readers to examine their own relationships (or lack of relationships) with women who have been in prison.

Why did you go ahead and cut it, rather than cutting a less crucial section? Michelle's last paragraph is much weaker on its own, and is almost entirely a repetition of a point made in a previous section. Why would you cut the strong, challenging part and leave the repetitive part. Is it because you don't want to hear the challenge?



I have one more criticism - a self criticism. My last section in the article is naive and one sided, through no fault of the editors. I wrote it like that, and I'd like the chance to apologize. I made it sound as if a friend of mine had read some of the texts from *Doing Time* and miraculously stopped "distancing and dehumanizing" women in prison. If only it were that easy! What actually happened was that she realized that she was distancing and dehumanizing them, and that it was wrong. From her point of view it's a big step, but for women prisoners it's an incredibly obvious insight, leaving a lot to be accomplished in terms of other people actually changing their behavior. In my anxiety to show your readers that more privileged people can move away from the attitudes society has taught us, I overstated the case, in a way that was at best naive and perhaps insulting. Women prisoners can't afford such naiveté and deserve better from those who would be their allies.

Thank you for giving me the space to say these things. It's been a "learning opportunity" for me, and for others too, I hope.

Persimmon Blackbridge.

**RESOURCES/RESSOURCES**

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## **Organizations**

### **Women Learning to Cope**

66 Gerrard Street East  
Toronto, Ontario M5B 1G6  
416-925-2476

An educational support group that offers a program for women between 25 and 60 interested in self development and personal growth, focusing on assertiveness and stress management. Contact them for further information or educational materials.

## **Calls for Submissions**

### **Bulletin of the International Congress of University Adult Education**

Notice for activities, reportage on work and events, and exchange of information, opinion and contacts are welcome submissions to the Bulletin. Items must be in English and reach the editor one month prior to publication dates of March and September. For guidelines, information or submissions write to Editor W. John Morgan at Department of Adult Education, Cherry Tree Buildings, University Park, Nottingham, England, NG7 2RD.

### **Resources for Feminist Research "The Politics of Reproduction"**

This special issue celebrates the work of Mary O'Brien. Work exploring and debating O'Brien's philosophy of birth and critique of dominant Western intellectual traditions, or work that critiques ideologies of reproduction in non-Western philosophy and theory, is invited. Other topics might be: women and mothering in social and political thought; feminist epistemology and ethics; current or historical case studies on reproduction or ideologies of reproduction; and issues around the new reproductive technologies. Submissions should not exceed 3,000 words and must be received by February 1, 1989.

Contact:

Somer Brodribb,  
Guest Editor, RFR,  
Ontario Institute for  
Studies in Education, 252  
Bloor Street West, Toronto,  
Ontario, M5S 1 V6,  
416-923-6641, ex.2278.

## **Grants/Scholarships**

### **Mount Saint Vincent University Women in Science Scholarship**

In honour of Dr. Lillian Wainwright, the university has established a scholarship of \$15,000 to be awarded yearly to a woman entrance student with a serious interest in

science. Dr. Wainwright has served at Mount Saint Vincent for 31 years and was named professor emeritus of biology upon her retirement this summer. For more information write:

Development  
Office, Mount Saint Vincent  
University, Halifax, N.S., B3M  
2J6, 902-443-4450, ex.433.

## **Books & Publications**

### **Breaking the Silence**

P .O.Box 4857  
Station E  
Ottawa, Ontario K1S 5J1  
\$2.00 per issue

Breaking the Silence has released two special issues on The Changing Family, March and June, 1988. These theme issues explore the problems and limits of the traditional family structure and present re-examinations of the family in more positive forms.

### **Matrix, the story of Women in Dialogue**

The Spider Press Collective Women's Resource Society  
285 Prideaux Street  
Nanaimo, B.C. V9R 2N2  
\$5.00 + \$2.00 shipping

This is an account of how Nanaimo women developed a cooperative consensus model in response to the Forward Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women. It is a "how-to" book that includes research reports, photographs, news stories, and organizational models.

### **Nonsexist Research Methods**

by Margrit Eichler  
Allen & Unwin, Inc.  
Winchester Place  
Winchester, MA. 01890  
183 pages, \$10.60

Dr. Eichler, a professor of sociology at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, has written a practical approach to identifying, eliminating and preventing sexist bias in social science research. Three derivative sources of bias are discussed: sex appropriateness, feminism and sexual dichotomies. The book also provides a chapter on guidelines for non-sexist research.

### **Resources for Educational Equity**

Women's Educational Equity Act Publishing Center Education Development Center

55 Chapel Street  
Newton, MA.02160  
Free

This catalogue describes 300 print and audiovisual materials for post-secondary and women's studies classes, vocational-technical schools, staff development sessions and rural, minority, bilingual and gifted student programs.

### **Surviving Procedures After a Sexual Assault**

3rd Edition  
by Megan Ellis  
Press Gang Publishers  
603 Powell Street Vancouver,  
B.C. V6A 1H2  
144 pages, \$8.95.

This resource book for survivors and those working with survivors incorporates substantial changes to the Criminal Code, effective January 1, 1988. It is intended for anyone across Canada who wants to know more about the medical, police and court procedures after a sexual assault.

### **Job Sharing Brochure**

YWCA  
80 Burrard Street  
Vancouver, B.C.V6C 2K9  
Free

The Social Action Committee of the Vancouver YWCA has created a brochure to assist people looking for ways to combine their job with a variety of life-style situations. It includes suggestions and advice for both the employee and employer. Copies are available on request.

### **Danger, Keep Out Exclusionary Hiring Practices by Employers: Reproductive Hazards at Work**

by Lynn Kaye  
National Association of  
Women and the Law  
440-1 Nicholas Street, Ottawa  
KIN 7B7  
20 pages, \$4.50 NAWL Member,  
\$5.50 Non-member

The issue of hiring practices that exclude women due to workplace hazards to reproductive capacity is examined. Reported cases are reviewed, human rights policy is examined and the impact of the Charter is discussed.

## **Music**

### **"We're Still Standing"**

Four the Moment

Verse to Vinyl Records

P.O. Box 311, Stn. E Toronto,

Ontario M6H 4E3

\$11.90 + \$2.50 for album or

\$1.50 for cassette

Four the Moment is an all woman a capella quartet from Halifax whose songs about Black history, women, and third world struggles are a unique fusion of blues, folk, gospel and soul rhythms. The group first came together in 1981 to perform for a benefit, "for the moment", and have just released their debut album, "We're Still Standing". Members Delvina Bernard, Kim Bernard-Morris, Debby Jones and Andrea Currie see music as an art, a statement, a commitment and sheer joy.

Their album is available in women's book and record stores, in some major record stores or from the address above. Four the Moment will be touring across Canada this summer.

## **Appels aux Contributions**

### **Documentation sur la recherche féministe, "Sur la politique de la reproduction humaine"**

Ce numéro s'inspire de l'oeuvre de Mary O'Brien. Nous aimerons des articles explorant la philosophie de la naissance et la critique des traditions intellectuelles occidentales de O'Brien, ou des contributions faisant la critique des idéologies de la reproduction dans les philosophies et théories non occidentales. Les articles ne devraient pas dépasser les 3 000 mots, et doivent nous parvenir le 1<sup>er</sup> février 1989. Veuillez les envoyer à Somer

Brodribb, Rédactrice invitée,

DRF, Institut d'études

pédagogiques de l'Ontario

252 Bloor Street West,

Toronto, Ontario M5S 1V6.

## **Livres et publications**

### **L'Avancement professionnel des femmes**

l'AFDU Québec

Pavillon Lacerte

Université Laval

Sainte-Foy, Québec G1K 7P4

65 pages, \$10.00 + \$1.70 frais de poste

Ce livre contient les actes du Colloque organisé par l'Association des Femmes diplômées des Universités du Québec tenu à l'Université Laval, le 28 mars 1987. La présentation allégée a été voulu afin de permettre l'annotation immédiate d'une piste de réflexion, d'une référence biographique, d'un contact, enfin, d'une réflexion personnelle facilitant ainsi une lecture active en continuité avec l'intention première ce colloque et cette publication, soit contribuer à l'avancement professionnel des femmes.

### **La protection des travailleuses et travailleurs contre les dangers pour leur fonction reproductrice**

par Marianne Langton  
Association nationale de la  
femme et le droit  
400, 1 rue Nicholas  
Ottawa, Ontario K1N 7B7  
10 pages, \$2.50 Membre,  
\$3.50 Non membre

Le document donne un aperçu de certaines grandes questions qu'il faut aborder au cours de l'élaboration de méthodes sûres et équitables contre les dangers que le milieu de travail peut représenter pour les fonctions reproductrices. Bien qu'il soit évident qu'il n'existe pas de réponse facile, l'étude offre un éventail d'orientations de changements qui pourraient alimenter de futurs débats sur la question.

### **Le retrait préventif de la travailleuse enceinte**

par Suzanne Bélanger  
Association nationale de la  
femmes et le droit  
(susmentionné) 12 pages, \$2.50 Membre,  
\$3.00 Non membre

Le document examine les ramifications compliquées des lois dans la mesure où elles s'appliquent à la réaffectation préventive des travailleuses enceintes. La Loi sur la santé et la sécurité au travail est examinée en détail tout comme le sont les statistiques d'application québécoise sur les demandes de réaffectation dans divers secteurs. L'auteur donne des suggestions utiles pour améliorer le milieu de travail et réduire par le fait même les risques pour la mère et le foetus.

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## Apologies.. .

In the spring issue, "Learning, Making, Teaching Art", the following mistakes were made:

In the **Table of Contents** under "Prison, Art and Some Myths", in the Editorial and on the first page of the article, credit should be given equally to Persimmon Blackbridge, Lyn

MacDonald and Michelle Christianson for their contribution.

**Page 4**, "Doing Time" should be "Still Sane". Doing Time is still in progress whereas Still Sane is a completed work. Copies of the book Still Sane, compiled from the work, are available from Press Gang Publishers, 603 Powell Street, Vancouver, B.C., V611H2 \$12.95 + \$2.00 postage



**Page 12**, "I was founding member" should be: "I was a founding member".

**Page 31** The correct title of this work is Breach of Reason, by Heather Scott.

**Page 19**, "Secretary of State Committee" should be "Secretary of State Standing Committee".

## COMMENTARY/COMMENTAIRE

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### *Returning to Learning* BY AUDREY WAYTIUK

Somebody with a keen sense of humour asked me, “What's funny about going back to school (when you're past thirty...)?” This was not a casual question. This person wanted me to actually document the experience; to capture the light side of returning to learning. I gave it some thought.

#### THERE IS NOTHING FUNNY ABOUT GOING BACK TO SCHOOL.

Perhaps it was the wrong time to think about it. I was in the midst of studying for the last of my third term examinations. Physical Chemistry. Now, I have a background which leans towards the arts subjects: literature, psychology and writing. I worked as a news reporter for a time as well. These areas demand opinions and interpretations of people's philosophies and ideas which leave one plenty of room to function; sometimes merely with one's adroitness in handling words, one can manage to give a favourable impression.

But I returned to school to study Biochemical Technology, a course in which all the subjects require exactitude. One must constantly quantify and account for things with logical proof. Even in areas of uncertainty, the degree to which one is uncertain must be calculated in cold hard numbers.

#### REPRENDRE SES ETUDES Par Audrey Waytiuk

Quelqu'un me demandait récemment «Qu'y a-t-il de drôle à reprendre ses études?» J'ai réfléchi à la question.

#### **IL N'Y A RIEN DE DRÔLE À REPRENDRE SES ÉTUDES!**

Ce n'était vraiment pas le moment de penser ça. J'étais en train de réviser mon cours de chimie pour l'examen du troisième trimestre. J'ai surtout étudié la littérature, la psychologie, la rédaction et le journalisme, sujets qui laissent le champ libre à l'interprétation. J'ai repris des études en technologie de la biochimie, ce qui exige une grande exactitude. Même ce qui y est incertain doit se calculer en chiffres. Voilà six jours que j'ai passé l'examen et je retrouve petit à petit l'apparence quasi humaine. On

oublie souvent lorsqu'on reprend ses études à un âge mûr qu'on ne peut étudier jusqu'à une heure avancée de la nuit et être fraîche comme une rose le lendemain matin. On n'a plus dix-huit ans.

Mais je garde de bons souvenirs, comme cette question que posa le professeur de calcul à la classe après une de mes interventions «Est-ce que l'un d'entre vous sait de quoi elle parle?»

J'ai retrouvé dans le journal que je tenais à treize ans cette phrase "Cher journal, j'ai appris aujourd'hui que je ne savais pas encore tout". Sans l'ombre d'une hésitation, j'affirme aujourd'hui que je ne sais pas encore tout. Un peu triste, mais forte de ma plus grande sagesse, je reconnais que cela ne changera jamais.

*Audrey Waytiuk a obtenu son diplôme en technologie de la biochimie au Red River community Collège de Winnipeg.*

When approaching Physical Chemistry from this point of view, one can sometimes be overwhelmed in detail.

One is not encouraged either by the remarks near the beginning of the Physical Chemistry text of a German Physicist, Arnold Summerfeld:

Thermodynamics is a funny subject. The first time you go through the subject, you don't understand it. The second time you go through it, you think you understand it except for one or two small points. The third time you go through it, you KNOW you don't understand it, but by that time you are so used to the subject that it doesn't bother you anymore.

It's been about six days since that exam and life is beginning to take on a fresh colour. I am regaining my human-like appearance. One rarely considers when returning to school in later years that one can no longer study the nights through during exam week (which is really two weeks) and rebound as one did at eighteen. The bag-like effect under my eyes and my relapse into a condition of adult acne is less pronounced today.

And fond memories are whelming up in my mind from last term...it is said one only remembers the happy things.

I remember, for instance, the relief in my lab instructor's eyes when I did not call the x-ray fluorescence instrument a "machine". And I must admit, it really was funny when the Calculus Instructor asked the class, "Does anyone know what she means?" when I asked a question.

One of the lab assistants in the department who is also "older" returned to university to pick up a course last fall. While comparing notes on how it is to study again, he said,

“Yeh, you look at a page for twenty minutes ... and then you might even be able to read it.” I was leafing through a diary I wrote in my thirteenth year (of life, not school) and I came across the words, “Dear Diary, Today I learned that I don't know everything yet” I guess I was anticipating that very, very soon, perhaps within the following two weeks, I would know everything.

Without hesitation, I will admit, that, dear me, I still don't know everything yet.

And sadder and wiser that I am, I know that I won't know everything, ever.

*Audrey Waytiuk is a graduate in Biochemical Technology from Red River Community College in Winnipeg. She has worked for three rural weekly newspapers in Manitoba.*



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promotion des études chez la femme, 47 Main Street, Toronto, Ontario M4E 2V6

## **Agenda**

### **Kootenay Women in Trades & Technology Association National Conference on Women in Trades & Technology**

October 1-4, 1988, Penticton, B.C.

The themes of the conference will be: recent history of women working in trades and technology, employment equity, and issues of women in technology. For registration information write WTT at RR1, Winlaw, British Columbia, VOG 2J0, 604-226-7624.

### **International Council for Educational Media "Interactivity '88"**

October 5-7, 1988, The Hague,  
The Netherlands

This is an international conference on human, cultural and technical interaction in education and training, sponsored by the Netherlands Institute for Audio-visual Media. For more information contact PLF Communication Ltd., Box 97734, 2509 GC The Hague, The Netherlands, 070-143559.

### **"Focusing on the Family: Influencing the Decision-Makers"**

October 26 - 29, 1988, Ottawa, Ontario

This is the sixth annual conference of Family Service Canada. Keynote speakers include Katie Denyer, Family Life Educator; and Justice Claire L'Heureux-Dubé of the Supreme Court of Canada. For more information contact Family Service Canada, 55 Parkdale Avenue, Ottawa, Ontario, K1Y 4G1.

### **"International Conference on the First Year Experience"**

November 6-9, 1988, Toronto, Ontario

This conference will focus on curricula and programs designed to address the unique challenges and opportunities facing first year students as they experience the transition to college. To learn more about this conference, contact:  
James Griffith, Director, Student Services, University of Prince Edward Island, 550 University Avenue, Charlottetown, PEI, CIA 4P3.

### **Canadian Institute for Research on Women "Women and Development Femmes et développement"**

November 11 -13,1988, Québec City, Québec

Organized by the Group de recherche multidisciplinaire féministe de l'Université Laval, the conference will involve women from Canada, the United states, South America, Europe, Asia and

Africa, discussing the different developmental opportunities available to them. French and English simultaneous translation provided. Contact:

Service des communications, Faculté des science sociales,  
bureau 3446, pavillion Charles-De Koninck,  
Université Laval, Québec, GIK 7P4, 418-656- 2832.

**“International Conference on Education  
and Development”**

November 16 -19, 1988, Manila, Philippines

Jointly sponsored by the South Asian Ministers of Education Organization Regional Centre for Educational Innovation and Technology, the Southern Illinois University and the University of South Carolina, this conference will draw leaders and practitioners in the fields of educational development, rural education, distance learning and low-cost instructional programming. For more information write to:

Dr. Delores Hernandez, Director,  
INNOTECH, Box 207, University of the  
Philippines, Diliman, Quezon City,  
Philippines.



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