



WOMEN'S EDUCATION DES FEMMES

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For this general issue perusal of the barriers that girls and women still experience in accessing education in this country (and why are articles on this topic still so easy to collect?), we are grateful for the informative and insightful contributions of Marie Barton, Stephanie Garrow, Janice Gingell, Monique Hebert, June Larkin, Dorothy MacKeracher, Nilima Mandal Girl, Sandra Monteath, Margot Schenk, Nathalie Stephens, and Lynda Stokes. Poetry is by Helene Blais, Catherine Lake, and Annette LeBox; original illustrations were contributed by Fran Thoburn.

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SUBMISSIONS

All women readers are invited to submit articles, ideas, poetry, humor, commentary, reviews, resources, photographs, illustrations or graphics. Send submissions to the Editor, WEdf, 47 Main Street, Toronto, Ontario, M4E 2V6, or fax them to 416/699-2145. Material that is sexist, racist, classiest, homophobic, able-ist, age-ist or which is oppressive in any other way will not be accepted for publication. Submitters who wish their material returned should include a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Writer's guidelines are available.

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The cover design is a result of the new-found illustrating talents of Fran Thoburn.



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

FEATURES

I had a little trouble on the way to a Ph.D.

(sommaire en français)
by Sandra Monteath

South Asian women academics in Montreal

(sommaire en français)
by Nilima Mandal Giri



Learning in a toxic environment

(sommaire en français)
by June Larkin

Educating the professionals

(sommaire en français)
by Janice Gingell

Du côté des francophones

(summary in English)
by Monique Hébert

McGill Students for Literacy: A feminist assessment

(sommaire en français)
by Stephanie Garrow & Lynda Stokes



Get Real! Developing curricula that respond to women's lives

(sommaire en français)
by Marie Barton

The role of librarians in the inclusive university

(sommaire en français)
by Margot Schenk

CASP! Do YOU really want one in your neighbourhood?

(sommaire en français)
by Dorothy MacKeracher

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par Hélène Blais

the passenger door

by catherine lake

a kiss on the nose

by catherine lake

Rummage Sale

by Annette LeBox

DEPARTMENTS

Editorial

Éditorial

Letters

Reviews

Consider the Hollyhocks by Marg Wilson

Review by Nathalie Stephens

Resources/Ressources

Agenda

Index to *Women's Education des femmes*, volume

10

(TPS inclus)

Les opinions exprimées dans *Women's Education des femmes* sont celles des auteurs; elles ne reflètent pas obligatoirement celles du Secrétariat d'État, du CCPEF, ou d'autres organismes de financement.

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Juggling lives

by Christina Starr

Our society is governed by an ideology of individualism which allows for the denial of oppressions and the neglect of structures of support.

It seems to be no secret to women that education in Canada is still unfairly dispensed. The environment is toxic, the curricula do not respond to women's realities, the professionals need enlightening, foreign degrees are not accepted, the library is exclusive, and working conditions for women teachers are appalling.

One of the central channels through which education is dispersed unevenly is the assumption that life should not interfere with thought, to paraphrase Sandra Monteath. Illness, finances, children, dependents, housework, racism, sexism, homophobia, laundry, culture, recreation... are not assumed to be part of any student's life. Work, thought, education are organized as if they happen in a vacuum. Not all workplaces, and less and less in this economy, make allowances for things like sick days, let alone sick-child days; not many educational institutions have a course schedule that accounts for those whose lives are organized around the needs of others, let alone their own needs.

Our society is governed by an ideology of individualism, which, through a pretence of every one for themselves & each with the same opportunity, allows the denial of oppressions and the neglect of structures of support. We are each assumed to exist, to organize our lives and needs individually, and to take advantage of such work or education as we can make convenient for ourselves. Of course, the more privilege one has, the easier it is to take advantage. There is no assumption, for those without privilege, that work or educational life be made convenient for the individual. And, since men have been the measure of those who participate in work or education, it is the lives, needs of, and demands on women which are left out. Women have for so long functioned as the part of society which makes everything convenient for men that we find ourselves stuck in structures that don't allow for the unpredictions of life, juggling demands like a street artist trying to toss balls in a phone booth.

You can read in this issue, for example, why it took Sandra Monteath seventeen years to complete her Ph.D. You will find out from Nilima Mandal Giri how South Asian women academics have organized their lives in order to study in Canada, and from June Larkin how some teenaged girls negotiate the daily waves of sexual harassment on their journey to a high school diploma. Other writers tell us about ways to effectively raise awareness and eliminate the barriers that girls and women face. The Provincial Association of

Transition Houses of Saskatchewan, Janice Gingell reports, has initiated a program to educate professionals who work with women so that their interaction can be more constructive, and Monique Hebert celebrates the organization of a national education week for francophone women.

We have come a long way to exposing the inequities in our social systems but we have a long way to go to see those inequities eradicated, to encounter no boundaries in our learning, to be free to toss and rearrange our commitments as unrestricted as a juggler in the open air. We have some way to go toward dismantling the systems that don't account for life, some way to go toward insisting that we function in a context without seams.

Christina Starr is the Editor of Women's Education des femmes and lives a very seamed life of motherhood, work, writing, more work, learning, and political activism.

ÉDITORIAL

L'art de la jonglerie

par **Christina Starr**

Le travail, les pensées, l'éducation sont organisés comme s'ils se produisaient dans le vide.

Au Canada, l'éducation n'est pas équitablement dispensée. Ce constat n'étonnera pas les femmes. Le milieu est empoisonné, les programmes d'études ne répondent pas aux besoins réels des femmes, les professionnels ont besoin d'être éclairés, les diplômés étrangers ne sont pas reconnus, les bibliothèques sont exclusives et les conditions de travail des enseignantes sont épouvantables.

Si l'éducation n'est pas dispensée uniformément c'est parce qu'on part du principe que la vie ne devrait pas intercéder avec la réflexion, comme le dit Sandra Monteath. Les maladies, les soucis d'argent, les personnes à charge, les tâches ménagères, le racisme, le sexisme, l'homophobie, la lessive, la culture, les loisirs... ne sont pas censés faire partie de l'existence d'une étudiante. Le travail, les pensées, l'éducation sont organisés comme s'ils se produisaient dans le vide. Compte tenu de la conjoncture économique, tous les milieux de travail ne prévoient pas de journées de congé de maladie, sans parler de journées de congé si un enfant est malade; très peu d'établissements d'enseignement préparent des horaires de cours qui tiennent compte du fait que certaines personnes doivent organiser leur vie en fonction des besoins d'autrui, voire des leurs.

Notre société est régie par l'individualisme, idéologie qui sous prétexte de prôner le précepte de "chacun pour soi et les mêmes chances pour tout le monde" permet de nier

que le système est oppressif et de faire fi des structures d'appui. On attend de nous toutes que nous existions, organisons nos vies et nos besoins seules et que nous tirions parti du travail et de l'éducation à notre convenance. Bien entendu, plus une personne est privilégiée, plus facile il lui est de tirer parti du système. On ne pense absolument pas à rendre plus aisée la vie professionnelle ou l'éducation de celles qui ne jouissent pas de privilèges.

De plus, comme c'est par rapport aux hommes qu'on décide qui travaille et qui reçoit une éducation, ce sont les vies, les besoins et les demandes des femmes qu'on laisse de côté. Les femmes ont pendant si longtemps fonctionné dans une société qui rend les choses pratiques pour les hommes qu'elles se retrouvent aujourd'hui prisonnières de structures qui ne prévoient pas les imprévisibilités de la vie et doivent jongler comme un artiste des rues qui essaie de lancer ses balles dans une cabine téléphonique.

Vous découvrirez dans ce numéro pourquoi il a fallu à Sandra Monteath dix-sept ans pour terminer son doctorat. Nilima MandaI Giri explique la façon dont les femmes d'Asie du Sud doivent organiser leur existence pour pouvoir étudier au Canada. Et June Larkin montre comment certaines adolescentes doivent négocier quotidiennement des vagues de harcèlement sexuel, en route pour décrocher leur diplôme de fins d'études secondaires. D'autres femmes expliquent les façons dont on peut sensibiliser les gens et éliminer les obstacles auxquels les femmes et les filles se heurtent. Janice Gingell rapporte que l'Association provinciale des maisons de transition de la Saskatchewan a lancé un programme de formation pour les professionnels qui s'occupent de femmes, de façon que leurs interactions soient davantage constructives. Quant à Monique Hébert, elle célèbre l'organisation de la semaine nationale de l'éducation pour les femmes francophones.

Nous avons couvert beaucoup de terrain pour mettre au jour les inégalités de notre système social, mais nous avons encore beaucoup à faire pour les éliminer complètement si nous ne voulons plus être entravées dans notre apprentissage, être libres de modifier et de réorganiser nos engagements sans contraintes, un peu comme un jongleur exerçant son art à l'air libre. Nous avons encore du chemin à faire pour démanteler des systèmes qui font fi de la vie; il faut que nous insistions pour que nos vies ne soient pas constituées de fragments décousus.

Christina Starr est rédactrice de Women's Education des femmes. Elle jongle sans cesse entre ses responsabilités de mère, sa profession, ses activités d'écriture, sa profession encore, sa formation et son militantisme politique.

LETTERS

Dear WEdf:



Pamela Harris

Overall, the winter training issue is very informative and the broad-based scope a pleasure to read. I did have great difficulty when I read my own piece and the words "non-traditional occupations" popped out at me. As the eradication of that term from current usage has been one of my goals as National Coordinator for the WITT National Network, to see it ascribed to me as I come up to the end of my second term was, to say the least, disconcerting.

WITT feels very strongly that these jobs are not non-traditional, men have been doing them for many years. When they are referred to as such only when women do them, the men believe that the women do not belong. They are even more isolated. Many young women do not want to be non-traditional, they want to be just like everyone else and they also want to make a good living doing satisfying work. In a way, the term has become a stigma, a judgment against those training and working in areas where they are under-represented. It doesn't really describe the work being done. Trades, technology, operations, blue collar work, and management are the terms we use to describe those jobs, and we delight in women doing them!

While the term had currency in the early 1980s to describe occupations to which women were not gaining access, it is now being recognized that the term may be somewhat self-defeating. Course names have changed to Women in Trades and Technology (WITT). Groups such as the Ontario Committee (now renamed "on trades, technology and operations occupations for women," OCTTOOW) a long-standing group of advocates for these issues, have recognized the need to update their usage. The City of Toronto, at the very last minute before publication in 1990, changed the name of their Retention Strategies booklet to "Retention: Support Strategies for Women in Trades, Technology and Operations Work." We applaud those developments, and hope to soon see a day when women are always welcomed into these jobs areas for the skills, abilities and atmosphere they bring to this most satisfying work.

Sincerely,

Marcia Braundy

National Coordinator

WITT National Network

Dear WEdf:

Thanks for including our article in the latest edition of *Women's Education des femmes*. It is an excellent issue--congratulations!

Sincerely

Dorothy MacKeracher

Director of Graduate Studies

Adult & Vocational Education

University of New Brunswick

I Had a Little Trouble on the Way to a Ph.D.

by **Sandra Monteath**



With my forehead resting on my hands and my elbows resting on my knees, I contemplate the abyss. I am using as my seat of contemplation a toilet in the women's room outside the third-floor examining room of the School of Graduate Studies at the University of Toronto. I have just defended my doctoral thesis on women's experience, knowledge and education. Inside the examining room, the examining committee is voting whether to accept my thesis as it stands, with minor changes, or to send me away to make major revisions before giving me a second and final chance to defend it.

I swear to myself, choosing a word particularly suited to my location. Through the lens of fatigue and anxiety, I see myself as having given a very bad defence for what I know is a very good thesis. Before my eyes, like scenes at the end of a life, flash recollections from my long struggle to complete my doctorate. On the road to this Ph.D. I have had to deal with despair, financial difficulties, psychic dislocation from unsuitable employment, problems with my thesis topic and thesis supervisor, disease, and, just when I thought I was home free, the adolescent distress of my daughter. Was it all to come to this?

I began my doctoral studies in the Sociology of Education in the autumn of 1975. At the same time, I got married for the second time to a man who professed to adore me. Because I was doing well in both my life of thought and the life about which I thought, I felt more than happy. In my second year of doctoral studies, when I was three months pregnant, my husband assaulted me. I immediately abandoned my idea of doing a thesis on the hidden injuries of sex, as the topic was a little too close to home. But caught up as I was in what I have come to call cultural stories about love and marriage, I remained in the relationship.

Le chemin menant à un doctorat a été parsemé de quelques difficultés

par Sandra Monteath

Au cours de ma deuxième année d'études de doctorat, enceinte de trois mois, mon mari m'a agressée. Tout en continuant cette relation difficile pendant quelques années, j'ai réussi à terminer mes études de doctorat, mais ma soutenance de thèse a été repoussée car je n'ai pas fini cette dernière à temps.

En 1990, des difficultés financières m'ont assaillie alors que je me préparais à essayer à nouveau. J'ai été obligée d'accepter un emploi très insatisfaisant pour suffire à mes besoins et à ceux de ma fille. Je menais une double vie: employée modèle dans la journée; étudiante studieuse la nuit pour préparer une thèse sur le vécu des femmes en matière d'éducation. Comme j'ai remis en question publiquement mon directeur de thèse, je me suis retrouvée sans directeur et ai dû continuer avec un nouveau directeur et un nouveau comité. Au trois-quarts de la rédaction de la thèse, les médecins ont diagnostiqué un cancer au sein. J'ai été opérée, mais comme je craignais que la chimiothérapie entravent mes travaux universitaires, j'ai décidé de repousser le traitement jusqu'à ce que j'aie soumis ma thèse. Je me suis préparée aussi bien que j'ai pu à l'examen oral, passant la nuit le précédant à consoler ma fille qui s'était disputée avec son ami. J'étais épuisée et je savais que je n'avais pas très bien fait à l'examen; toutefois, après ce qui me parut un siècle, les membres du comité sont sortis de la salle d'examen pour m'annoncer, dix-sept ans après que je l'eus commencé, qu'ils me décernaient à l'unanimité un doctorat.

I made the mistake of publicly challenging the authority of the professor who was acting as my informal supervisor.

I spent the next eleven years struggling with an enveloping despair that ultimately incapacitated me not just for a life of thought but for life itself. For me, there was no life without thought. I managed to complete successfully the fourteen half-courses that I had to take towards my degree, but I never completed a thesis. My candidacy lapsed in 1983 when I was half way through writing a thesis on the language of instruction in practical skills.

By the time I left the marriage in 1988, I had given up any thought of completing my degree. My pursuit of higher education seemed to have taken place in another lifetime. However, in the autumn of 1989, I changed my mind. Maybe, I thought, this life of mine can still encompass some serious scholarship. Because I had also begun to write a book, I delayed for over a year doing much about my decision to complete my thesis (1). Writing the book consumed me and transformed me. But by late 1990, I was ready to think thesis.

By late 1990, though, I was also having severe financial difficulties. In the summer of 1989, my ex-husband began defaulting on his support payments. I was determined not to lose the house that I had bought with my share of the assets from the marriage, and I hung

on by borrowing and begging. A Canada Council grant that I received to aid in the writing of the book gave me a stay of execution ... for a while. At the very moment that I realized I had to cut my losses and sell the house, the housing market collapsed. My house was on the market for nine months. In December 1990, I sold it at a price that, when I had paid back all the money that I had borrowed and begged, left me with less than nothing.

On New Year's Eve 1990, my thirteen-year-old daughter and I moved to a rented apartment. In January 1991, I began to contemplate the topic of my new thesis. I also began worrying how I was going to pay the rent. Then in March, when a bed under a bridge seemed imminent, I got a contract position working for an engineering consulting company. Everything about that company--the projects they undertook and the way they undertook them--was antithetical to everything I believed in. As a way of dealing with my sense of dislocation, I cultivated a split self. By day I appeared to care about engineering projects and their socio-economic impacts. By night I studied hard to write a proposal for a thesis on women's experience and education.

Yet even in the preparation of my thesis there were problems. All studies that have human participants are subject to an ethical review. All participants in a study must give their consent before it may proceed, and may withdraw their consent at any time. I did not have the consent of someone whose participation was essential to my study. I therefore had to jettison several months' work and go back to the initial planning stages. I did so in the short evenings after a long day's work.

Just as I was putting the finishing touches on a proposal for a new topic, I made the mistake of publicly challenging the authority of the professor who was acting as my informal supervisor. I had been participating in a seminar series this professor was leading. He had told the students who were taking the seminars for credit that they could not say anything that was critical of a presentation. During my own presentation, I described this injunction as a kind of silencing, and asked my listeners to speak honestly about the flaws in my work. I said, playfully I thought, that I would not run to "Big Daddy" to complain. The professor was not amused. He removed himself as my supervisor on the morning of the very day on which I was to present and defend my thesis proposal to my committee.

Unlike the hiatus that had occurred during my marriage, this disruption of my academic career was only momentary. I got a new thesis supervisor in short order. She and the rest of my new thesis committee were pleased to accept my proposal, which they did in April 1992, a month to the day when the professor had rebuffed me for speaking my mind. Because I proposed to do a study that relied on bibliographic sources instead of a study that relied on empirical data from participants, an ethical review was not necessary.



Two weeks after my committee accepted my thesis proposal, my fourteen months of living a split life came to an end. I got laid off. Because of a recession, there was a dearth of jobs available, particularly for a middle-aged woman with a scholarly turn of mind. Thinking my best hope was for an academic position, I decided to write my thesis. I wrote as if possessed. By late Autumn 1992, I was two-thirds done. At last I could see the finish line.

Suddenly, another obstacle appeared. For months, I had been concerned about a localized soreness in my left breast. For months my doctors assured me that the soreness was nothing serious. Then they realized that it was very serious. On November 18, when I had but two and a half short chapters of my thesis yet to complete, I had surgery for breast cancer. I was so determined to get my thesis finished that, after I had been admitted to hospital and while I was awaiting surgery, I revised one of the chapters. After the surgery, I declined to have chemotherapy in part because I was afraid that six months' worth of nausea and vomiting would entail a yet another delay in the completion of my thesis, a delay from which it and I might never recover.

I finished writing my thesis in February of 1993, just before I began five weeks of radiation therapy. I submitted the final draft to my thesis committee on February 26. My supervisor and I established May 7 as the day on which I would have my final oral examination. For at least a month before the exam, I wrote and rewrote the twenty-minute presentation that I was required to give; I rehearsed my presentation in front of my computer and in front of friends. My computer hummed at me; my friends asked questions. I canvassed my thesis committee members to get ideas of other questions that might be asked. I was well prepared for almost anything.

But I was not prepared for the vagaries of a teenaged girl's life. On the evening before my exam, I picked up my daughter from her gym. We arrived home a little after nine. I prepared a quick supper, and walked the dog. I sipped a glass of wine while I read a novel on women's splitting selves. Given the impending examination, I was as relaxed as it was possible to be.

Until late in the evening, my daughter remained in her bedroom, on the phone with her boyfriend. What I did not know was that they were fighting. When she emerged at eleven o'clock she was feeling truculent, and threw a comment at me that I felt questioned my ability both to defend my thesis and to get an academic position thereafter. When I reprimanded her she began to cry. Not because of our exchange, but because of what she and her boyfriend had been saying to each other. She wept inconsolably for two hours. Finally, at one o'clock, I announced that I had to go to bed. I had a Ph.D. oral examination on the morrow, awakened in the grayness of early morning, feeling foggy-headed with fatigue. At seven o'clock, as I was just dropping back to sleep, my still teary, very weary daughter dropped a plastic sewing basket and all its contents onto the wooden floor in the room across from mine. I awoke with a start. I'd had as much rest as I was going to get.

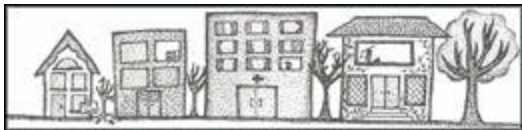
Unless we conduct our studies with determined detachment, isolating ourselves from everydayness, life will interfere.

With only four hours' uneasy sleep, I did not perform as brilliantly as I had hoped. My exhaustion, as much physical as it was psychological, made of each question an unfathomable enigma. My mind reached out for, but could not grasp, the meaning of the words being spoken to me. Perhaps, I thought to myself, this is how my mother feels (she has Alzheimer's Disease).

And now, sitting on the toilet in contemplation of the seventeen years of struggle I'd had to get to complete my doctoral thesis, I am in despair. Should my tired defence of a highly original thesis result in its not being accepted, I think I can come to terms with the committee's decision. I am not so sure how I will handle the anger I shall indubitably feel towards my daughter. I consider flight. But I have left both my briefcase and my copy of the thesis in the examining room. I can hardly ask the secretary to fetch them for me. I must learn to face my failure and then I must learn to forgive my daughter.

As I exit from the women's room, the door to the examining room opens. The chairman comes out. Despair transmutes to hope. There is protocol determining who of the examining committee informs the candidate of the committee's decision. If the thesis is accepted with no more than one abstention or negative vote, the chairman does the honours. If the examination is adjourned, then both the chairman and the thesis supervisor inform the candidate. I look beside and behind the chairman for my supervisor. She is not there. "Congratulations, Doctor Monteath," says the chairman.

And now hope transmutes into disbelieving joy. As I enter the room, the committee stands and applauds. I have dreamed of this moment for years and years. One by one, my committee members and the other examiners, with the exception of the chairman, come to hug me. "It was unanimous," whispers my thesis supervisor. "It was hell," I think to myself.



It took me all the rest of that day and evening to realize that at last my dream of a Ph.D. had really, really, come true. When I did, I said to myself "Yes! Yes! Yes!" And I am still saying it.

We like to think that the life of thought can and should be a thing apart from our everyday experiences. It's not always possible. Unless we conduct our studies with determined detachment, isolating and insulating ourselves from everydayness, life will interfere, even in the third-floor examining room in the School of Graduate Studies. That's what I found, anyway.

Sandra Monteath has a Master's degree in Environment Studies from York University and a Ph.D. in Education from the University of Toronto. The title of her Ph.D. thesis is "Splits, Silences, and Stories: An Inquiry into Women's Experience, Knowledge and

Education."

1. The book I wrote is called *Marriage and Metamorphosis: Telling Tales of a Woman's Life*. A feminist press is currently considering the manuscript for publication.

POETRY

thin milk

i feel the weight
of unbaked
chocolate chip cookies
herb gardens gone wild and
mindless
pots of chicken soup. i lack
the apron
the crock pot
and the stew

i never knew
the smell
of fresh baked bread or
fish on Friday
aproned embraces
or homemade butter tarts.

lunches of anything
other than
Sandwich Spread
spelled love
to me
yet i mothered.

i learned from Spock and Piaget
not from you, Mother,
you, my undernourished child
who supped from empty hands
ate your own mother's bitterness
learned to ration
love
for there was
never enough.

i gnawed and tasted loss.
do i pass this
to my children:
thin milk
a thinning bone?

the house on Keefer Street still
stands its cupboards bare
and i am hungry.

Annette LeBox
Maple Ridge, B.C.

South Asian Women Academics in Montreal

by **Nilima Mandal Giri**

The existing research considers women faculty members as one group, hiding the situation of ethnic minority women.

During the second half of the twentieth century, women academics in Canadian post-secondary institutions have increased in number and also become more ethnically diverse. The existing research, however, considers women faculty members as one group, thus hiding the situation of ethnic minority women. By contrast, research on minority academics is limited and reflects the picture of the male academics.⁽¹⁾

This paper attempts to remedy this situation by reporting on a study of South Asian women academics in Montreal. South Asian women academics are disadvantaged in several ways: they are compelled to earn graduate degrees from Canadian universities in order to enter the academic profession here regardless of their previous educational and professional experiences and they face a number of obstacles during their education. As women, immigrants and non-whites, they have a triple disadvantage.

Immigration and Educational History

The South Asian women occupying academic positions in Montreal have entered Canada since the early 1950s. They were able to come here as a result of the liberalization of Canada's immigration policy with regard to entry qualifications. In the 1960s Canada needed more professionals.

These South Asian women wanted to study abroad because of the inherent prestige and better career opportunities resulting from a foreign degree. The majority of them arrived with their graduate student or professional husbands because conventional South Asian parents prefer that their daughters be married before leaving for another country. A few women entered Canada as unmarried students directly from India. Even fewer women entered as professionals, their husbands joining them later. Four women in my study were sponsored by a relative.

At the time of their arrival in Canada, the majority of these women were highly educated, e.g. they already had Doctoral, Masters, or Honors Bachelor degrees. Two had only high school education. Most of them also had teaching or other professional experience. Some had acquired Western educational degrees and experiences before coming to Canada. For example, two women had research experience at the University of Copenhagen, two had received Masters degrees from the University of Chicago and Harvard University, two had attended Masters programs at the University of Maryland and Washington, one received a degree from the London School of Economics and one a diploma from the University of London.

Les femmes universitaires d'Asie du Sud à Montréal

par Nilima Mandal Giri

Les recherches actuelles sur les femmes universitaires étudient le corps professoral féminin comme un seul groupe et cachent la situation des femmes appartenant à une minorité ethnique. Les recherches sur les universitaires appartenant à une minorité sont limitées et ne témoignent que de la situation des hommes. Pour remédier quelque peu à cet état de fait, j'ai entrepris une étude des femmes universitaires d'Asie du Sud à Montréal.

D'après mes recherches, ces femmes parviennent facilement à se faire accepter dans des universités canadiennes, car leur dossier scolaire et leurs connaissances en anglais sont bons. Leurs conditions de travail sont satisfaisantes et leurs rapports avec conseillers et professeurs amicaux. Toutefois, les diplômes que ces femmes avaient obtenus dans des universités d'Asie du Sud ne sont pas considérés comme étant équivalents à des diplômes nord-américains et elles doivent entreprendre des études doctorales à un niveau plus bas. Certaines ont vécu des situations déplaisantes car elles étaient immigrantes, mais selon elles il ne s'agissait ni de racisme, ni de sexisme. D'après mon étude, la situation financière des femmes mariées était sûre, mais elles mettaient plus de temps à terminer leurs études en raison de leurs responsabilités familiales. Il faut effectuer davantage de recherches sur les femmes universitaires appartenant à une minorité pour que leurs contributions et les obstacles auxquels elles se heurtent soient mieux connus.

Experiences as graduate student in Canada

I will discuss the experiences of South Asian women academics as graduate students from the perspectives of admission, finances, course work, finding a mentor, interaction and relationship with the mentor and other professors, interaction and relationship with peer groups, and the effect of family life on student life. These women studied at the universities of McGill, Concordia, Montreal, Toronto, Waterloo, Ottawa, British Columbia, and York.



Admission

From my study it is clear that many South Asian women had no difficulty entering Canadian universities. Six of them applied directly from South Asia and were admitted before their arrival. Another thirteen were admitted after their arrival in Canada. One, who had only high school education, obtained admission to an undergraduate program as a mature student, and another, with junior school education, completed high school before entering university.

As women, immigrants and non-whites, South Asian women academics face a triple disadvantage.

The women's attempts to gain admission to a particular degree program were less successful because, with the exception of the Ph.D., most South Asian degrees are not considered equivalent to Canadian degrees. Thus, the women who arrived with Masters degrees from South Asia were, with one exception, not directly admitted to a Ph.D. program but had to either complete another Masters program or finish a qualifying year before starting a Ph.D.

The one woman accepted directly into a Ph.D. program assumed that the "university was opening a new department and wanted students" and therefore allowed her admission as a doctoral student, though she was asked to take a qualifying examination during her first year.

The women with North American (United States and Canada) and Western European degrees and working experiences were in the most favorable positions to enter the Ph.D. programs. For example, women with Masters degrees and one year experience as graduate students in the United States, or women with nine or eleven years teaching experience in Montreal's school system, were directly admitted into the Ph.D program. Two women who had one year's research experience at a European university and who had been encouraged by professors to study in Canada, were also admitted into the Ph.D. programs in one of the French universities. One was able to complete her Ph.D., but the other had to switch to a Master's program after working for a year and a half.

Bachelor degrees with honors were judged differently. The women who studied in the 1950s were able to enter a Masters program, but those who studied in the 1960s and 70s had to complete one semester in an undergraduate program before being admitted into a Masters program. The women who were admitted to Masters programs already holding Masters degrees or those admitted to undergraduate programs already holding Bachelor degrees showed no discontent; rather they felt this was necessary. Only the woman who,

for reasons that are unclear, had to change from a Ph.D. to a Masters program in her second year was dissatisfied.

The flexibility of schedules and requirements has a significant impact on the educational plans of women in general, and immigrant women in particular, because these latter often have less of a immediate support network and greater financial need. The lack of a part-time Ph.D. program at one university compelled one woman to change from a Ph.D. to a Masters program after her children were born. On the other hand, the existence of a part-time Ph.D. program in another university enabled one woman to earn her degree while teaching full-time.

Some women had difficulty following lectures because of the different accent and rapid delivery of professors.

Finance

As students, the South Asian women academics faced a variety of situations with regard to financial need. The majority had professional husbands and did not require money for survival. Their husbands paid their tuition fees and other educational expenses and after a short time most of them received assistantships or graduate scholarships.⁽²⁾

Women whose husbands were students at the same time supported themselves with teaching assistantships. The joint income from teaching assistantships was sufficient for living and educational expenses. A few women received graduate scholarships. Those who came as students with government scholarships from their home country faced financial difficulties; such scholarships were not sufficient for living and studying in Canada. Some of the part-time students worked as teachers or secretaries to support themselves.

Women who came with a small amount of personal money and had teaching assistantships or scholarships from the university were able to support themselves before 1980. They had lower expectations and were not materialistic (3). One woman told me that she wanted books rather than consumer goods. Another admitted that she was happy with a radio and never thought of buying a television or a car. However, a woman who came as a student in the 1980s faced financial hardship because of the substantial increase in tuition fees for foreign students. She had to work every day as a lab demonstrator for evening classes to supplement her income.

The women who were sponsored by their relatives faced financial difficulties and financed all their expenses by working and by student loans. As undergraduate students they were not eligible for financial assistance other than student loans. One respondent mentioned that she was still paying back her loan, despite the fact that she finished her degree twelve years ago and has been working since then. The situation improved during doctoral studies because many of the women received assistantships, scholarships, and graduate fellowships.

Course Work

Good grades are a requirement for graduate studies, but success is related to many factors

such as language comprehension and understanding the educational system. South Asian women coming from different educational systems often felt uncomfortable with the course work in the early stages of their Canadian studies.

Although they had all studied English in their home countries, some had difficulty following lectures because of the different accent and rapid delivery of professors. One used a tape recorder in class and then re-played the lectures at home to overcome the problem, thus investing much more time than the other students. Others faced problems in adjusting to the unfamiliar Canadian educational system. Interestingly, students who studied at the French university had no problems in understanding the subject matter, as most books were written in English and they were permitted to write papers and examinations in English.

The South Asian women in my sample were hard working, good students who after overcoming their initial difficulties did well in their course work. Several of them did extremely well. Those who studied in Canada as undergraduates or taught for several years in this country before going to graduate school had no problems with different accents or educational systems.

One professor, originally friendly and helpful, reduced a graduate student's stipend when he learned that she was pregnant.

Relationships and interactions with mentors and other professors

Finding the right mentor and developing a "patron/client" relationship with professors are important factors in obtaining graduate degrees and employment. In general, South Asian women were very successful in developing a good patron/client relationship with their male and female professors throughout their student life. They handled the few unfavourable situations intelligently and courageously. Those aware of the importance of a good relationship with their principal advisor adopted strategies which enabled them to choose their advisor and committee very carefully. For example, one respondent decided to take as many courses as possible to get to know her professors before choosing her thesis supervisor and committee members. She had very

amicable relationships during and after her Ph.D.

Evidently, many professors were encouraging, supportive and helpful. For instance, one advisor encouraged and helped a student obtain admission to both the Masters and Ph.D. programs; two other students had supportive women as advisors. One of these women recalled that her advisor in the Masters program made her work hard and strengthened her confidence in her own writing. Her Ph.D. supervisor was also helpful and promptly corrected her thesis which enabled her to complete the degree rapidly. Both advisors wrote good letters of recommendation and have maintained contact with this student.

Four other respondents praised their advisors and other professors because they were always accessible and gave feedback. A few advisors provided financial help for their students. For example, after the first semester one student was offered a fellowship by her

advisor while another was offered a job.

The relationship between professors and some South Asian women students went beyond patron/client relationship. For example, one woman stayed at her advisor's house for approximately two weeks when she arrived as an unmarried young woman student. His family helped her to find an apartment and get adjusted to life in Canada. Another professor functioned as a father figure and was present in that role at his student's wedding. Others invited students to their homes at Christmas; many became family friends. Some friendships that developed between advisors and graduate students have persisted. One respondent reported that after twenty-five years she still corresponds with some of her professors.

However, some women reported unpleasant confrontations with professors. One respondent recounted that, unfamiliar with the Canadian writing conventions, she submitted a paper without putting the references according to the accepted format. The professor accused her of plagiarism and although she tried to explain her inexperience, he was not satisfied. The department's chair was more sympathetic; he advised her to drop the course and replace it with another. When another woman, after her Masters, wanted to move to a Ph.D. program, her professors asked her to give a public lecture on her completed graduate work and her Ph.D. thesis proposal. Feeling she was experiencing discrimination, she fought against it and won. She said, "I do not mind doing that, I have no problem giving a public lecture, I am a good public speaker. But there was a [white male] student of the last chairman who moved from the Masters program to the Ph.D. program without giving a public seminar. He gave a private seminar to the committee members. I would like to do the same thing. It is on principle. That student had 'B' and you gave him permission to do the private seminar. I have 'A+', I should be allowed to do the private seminar too." The professors were convinced by her argument and agreed. She went on to complete her Ph.D. successfully.

Like many others, South Asian women experienced gender inequality. For example, one professor, originally friendly and helpful, reduced a graduate student's stipend when he learned that she was pregnant. According to her, he thought that as a mother she would be a "totally useless person and would not be able to do the work she was doing." Many years later she still recalled her hurt and disappointment.

Relationship and interaction with peer groups

Good relationships and interactions among graduate students are important. They provide mutual help while studying, lessen the feeling of isolation and loneliness, and lead to the development of professional networks. The majority of South Asian women in the sample, because of their specialization in male dominated subjects such as physics, mathematics, architecture etc., were either the only woman or the only South Asian among a very limited number of women students in their program. Their peer groups consisted mostly of white men. Although they had good working relationships with everyone, the extent of friendships varied. The women who were single had more opportunity to develop friendships with peer groups than the married women. A few had

better friendships with the students from similar cultural backgrounds and socialized more with them.

South Asian women were either the only woman or the only South Asian among a very limited number of women in their programs.



While married women without children maintained some relationship with their peer groups and occasionally socialized with them, those with young children had no time to develop real friendships with their peer groups. They attended classes and immediately returned home. As one mother mentioned, "there was no time to think about isolation." The situation was different for another student who was married and the mother of a teenage girl. When, after a decade in Canada, she became a doctoral student, she enjoyed meeting younger students. According to her, they accepted her with friendliness and openness and she remained friends with many of them.

The women in the sample stressed that they never felt any discrimination from their peer groups because of their gender and race. However, one woman compared her friendships with Canadians not all that favourably to her friendships with other immigrants. As a single woman she often entertained in her apartment. She felt, however, that her immigrant peers were more sincere and helpful. Her Canadian friends never invited her to their homes, perhaps because of her different culture or because they were uncomfortable introducing her to their parents.

Affect of family life on student life

Married women students, especially those with children, often face hardships in finishing their graduate programs because of household, relationship and family responsibilities. South Asian women are no exception. They studied mostly at home and were kept extremely busy with their studies, childcare and housework. Fortunately, many of them had helpful families; their husbands were supportive of their higher education and shared the housework and childcare. The mothers of two women one who lived in Canada and one who came from South Asia tried to ease the burden as much as possible. But these women took longer to earn their degrees.

While doing her doctoral studies, one woman often went to the university at 4 a.m. to work in the laboratory. Two or three times a week she took her two children to the university daycare centre and met them at lunch, concerned that they not feel she was away from them. Another woman, who was a doctoral student when her first son was born, arranged to have her father baby-sit. When her second child was born, she left the baby with her parents and traveled by subway back and forth to attend classes and to breast-feed. Both of these women admitted that without their parents' support they could not have completed their Ph.D.

Not all the women were as fortunate. One respondent wanted to continue her Ph.D. program as a part-time student after her second child was born, but the university's rigid

regulation regarding full-time Ph.D. study combined with the lack of help at home hampered her ambition. She quit the Ph.D. program and finished a Masters degree. Another woman hired a babysitter when her first child was born. But after the birth of her second child she gave up the idea of doing a Ph.D. although she had completed most of the required courses. She said her heart was no longer in her studies.

Further study is needed on women academics of minority ethnic groups.

Conclusion

South Asian women academics in Montreal are highly qualified. They benefited from Canada's immigration policy, the need for professionals after 1950, and the universities' foreign students admission policies.

These women were easily admitted to Canadian universities because of their good academic records and knowledge of English.

They had no problems in finding advisors; they experienced good working conditions; they had supportive and friendly relationships with their advisors and most of their professors, and good working relationships with peer groups. The majority of these women did not face financial difficulties, as they received graduate scholarships and teaching assistantships, and they never mentioned that they received less money than their colleagues. One woman even admitted she was earning more.

However, there were disadvantages. Some students discovered that degrees from South Asian universities were not considered the equivalent of North American degrees, except for the Ph.D., and had to start at a lower level in spite of their good academic records. The majority of them accepted this as a means of gaining new knowledge, though it meant they took longer to finish their studies. Although they all asserted that they were equally treated by their professors and were never discriminated against, a few had confrontations and faced unpleasant situations as immigrant women. They were "unaware" of racism.

The married women students experienced both advantages and disadvantages. Financially, they were more secure but family responsibility reduced their time for study and freedom to develop friendships and network with others in the academic milieu. Although those who were students and mothers in the same period experienced more barriers, none of them regret having children. These self-confident, intelligent and hard working women were able to overcome the difficulties they faced and earn their degrees.

Based on the experience of these women, I would like to recommend that 1) all the universities have a policy to provide part-time Ph.D. programs, particularly to women with young children; 2) universities need to re-think the admission criteria for foreign students to reduce the period of study; 3) university faculties need to be more understanding and helpful to immigrant women students who come from different educational systems and have family responsibilities; and 4) students with children should be given a supportive environment in which to carry out their studies. The implementation of these suggestions will enhance the advancement of women as well as Canadian society.

Further study is needed on women academics of minority ethnic groups to make them

visible, to evaluate their contributions, and to assess whether or not they have faced similar advantages and disadvantages as graduate students and professionals.

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1. Chamberlain, M.K. (1988), "Minority Women," in M. K. Chamberlain (ed.), *Women in Academe: Progress and Prospects*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.
2. South Asian women received assistantships or scholarships from their departments or universities, or Doctoral Fellowship from granting agencies, such as NRC or SSHRC.
3. South Asian women used the term "materialistic" to refer to their lack of expectation for luxury and consumer goods.

Learning in a Toxic Environment

by June Larkin

"In English class we were talking about women's equality; 50-50 in politics. The guys said that the "chicks" would talk too much. We don't shut up. "

For many female students, harassing incidents are part of the sad reality of their everyday school life. And yet, despite all the talk about equal opportunity in education, there has been little discussion of the ways this behaviour interferes with young women's ability to get an education.

In the name of equal education, girls have been urged into math and science, plugged into leadership courses, and remediated for their alleged deficiencies while, at the same time, incidents of sexual harassment remind them that they are not considered equal at all. More and more, female students are finding themselves in a confusing situation as they grapple with the feelings of frustration, fear, rage, and humiliation that arise from the demeaning behaviour they so often experience in their passage through the "gateway to opportunity": school.

Over the past three years I have spoken to young women from various cultural and economic backgrounds about the sexual harassment they experience in their high schools.

I realize, of course, that young women's experiences of sexual harassment are not limited to schools; they are also harassed on the street, in public places and in their part-time jobs. But I chose to focus on schools because they are heralded as places where students come to increase their life opportunities. However, considering that the self-esteem and career aspirations of young women actually decrease throughout their high school years it seems that, for many female students, education is hardly a key to success (1). In fact, the testimonies of these young women suggest that life is often a grim battle against a hostile and threatening school environment. Their words are bleak reminders of the work we have yet to do if equal opportunity is to become more than a rhetorical term.

Le harcèlement sexuel dans le monde de l'éducation

par June Larkin

En dépit de tout ce qui est dit à propos des chances égales, on parle très peu de la façon dont le harcèlement sexuel gêne l'éducation des jeunes femmes. Ce que les hommes considèrent comme un comportement "normal" est toujours teinté par quelque chose d'avilissant pour les femmes. Découvrir que les taquineries, le flirt ou certaines plaisanteries constituent un harcèlement sexuel a ouvert les yeux de certaines jeunes femmes avec lesquelles j'ai fait une étude sur le harcèlement sexuel dans les écoles.

Le genre de harcèlement le plus souvent cité a été le harcèlement verbal, bien que des récits d'attouchements non désirés, d'empoignades, voire de viol, aient aussi été entendus. D'après les participantes, la plupart des propos se limitent à des sous-entendus, mais certains sonnent comme des menaces. Ce genre de conduite, de la part de leurs camarades de classe ou de leurs enseignants, empoisonne le milieu d'étude des jeunes femmes. Pour échapper à ce genre de situation, certaines mettent au point des stratégies compliquées, comme ne jamais emprunter certains couloirs, essayer de se trouver constamment en compagnie d'une amie, évaluer l'attitude des garçons avant d'entamer une discussion en classe. Beaucoup estiment que prendre des recours officiels, dont se plaindre à un enseignant ou au directeur, donne en général des résultats insatisfaisants, voire négatifs.

Si l'on veut que les filles et les garçons jouissent des mêmes chances en matière d'éducation, il est essentiel de résoudre le problème du harcèlement sexuel dans les écoles. Les éducateurs et éducatrices ont un rôle clé à jouer pour que cet obstacle à l'éducation des jeunes femmes soit éliminé.

Recognizing the Problem

Because sexual harassment is so commonplace most students initially claimed they had never been sexually harassed. Familiar with the term, they were nonetheless unaware of the range of sexually harassing behaviour. Like many adult women, these students had difficulty identifying the ordinary, everyday incidents of sexual harassment because so much of this behaviour is accepted as a natural expression of masculinity (2). The boundaries of normal behaviour for men have always included that which women

experience as degrading, humiliating and threatening, and this explains why so many women don't name sexual harassment if it isn't an extreme form of abuse. Despite all the recent media hype about sexual harassment, these young women still felt they had to put up with the sexual bantering and pestering that went on at school, even when it made being there an unpleasant experience. As one student explained, "It always bugged me, but I didn't know about sexual harassment."



Fran Thoburn

I wanted the students to interpret sexual harassment in the context of their own experiences so I encouraged them to keep journals and to participate in group discussions before they were interviewed. For most students, it was the testimonies of other young women in the group that prompted them to re-interpret behaviour they had not considered to be sexual harassment. These testimonies, however, did not come easily. When I asked the students to talk about harassing incidents they were, initially, silent. But, gradually and cautiously, one young woman would relay an incident that she thought might be sexual harassment. Such a story was often followed by the comment, "that happened to me too" and then the stories flowed.

Tanya told me, "This has just totally opened my eyes. I feel like I have been walking around blind while all this stuff was happening around me and I was just looking the other way." Clearly, for Tanya, "all this stuff" is not a new phenomenon. It is only recently, however, that she has been able to label it, which may mean that she and many other students tend to notice it more. These young women did not have their eyes closed but did not have the power of a name. When I asked them how they would have previously labelled what they experienced they used terms like "bugging," "teasing," "flirting," and "annoyances." One student poignantly stated that she had considered this behaviour to be "just a fact of life."

And yet, despite the ubiquity of sexual harassment at school and the anxiety the students experienced as they attempted to weave their way around it, our group meetings were the first place they had openly discussed, and then labeled, the behaviour that so severely limited their education. What follows is a snapshot' of their sexual harassing experiences at school.

"A lot of girls won't walk down the [school] hallways 'cause they know guys will be there grabbing their arms or saying, "Oh, come here baby." Most girls won't walk through a particular hallway because of the gestures."

The Experiences

Verbal harassment was the most common way the young women were diminished at school. Typically, comments leveled against them included name-calling ("bitch," "fucking broad," "douche," "dog," "bimbo," "baby," and "chick"); verbal put-downs ("women belong barefoot and pregnant in the kitchen"); objectifying remarks ("nice ass," "nice tits," "sexy legs"); and sexual propositions ("I know you want it bad so why don't you come to my house?").

Rating young women as they passed by male students in the hallways was described as a routine practice. Typical comments included, "I like the way she walks, I give her 10 out of 10." "That one's a dog, I give her a 2." Black girls were generally given lower ratings than white girls, and young minority women had also to contend with racism: "I hear Black girls are good in bed." "I never had a Chinese girl before; I wonder how it feels."

For most students, grabbing, touching, and rubbing were everyday rituals. "I will be standing at my locker," one student explained, "and someone will come up and start rubbing against me." Or, "the guys will walk out and try to touch your chest."

In at least two cases, physical harassment escalated to sexual assault: one incident was perpetrated by a male teacher, the other by a group of male students. In fact, it was incidents such as these that made the students realize that sexual harassment could lead to extreme abuse. And this helped them to understand why their most common reaction to sexual harassment was fear. For example, the young women commented on the apprehension they felt when male students leered at them. As one student put it, "It worries me ... what they might be thinking."

A few young women had been verbally threatened by male students. The following incident occurred in class: "I was talking to a guy who sits behind me. He said a sentence and ended calling me 'a bonehead.' I then said, 'You're the one who's a boner.' He said, 'You better shut-up before I stick my dick up your ass so hard you won't be able to breathe.'" Another incident involved a phone-call made to the vice-principal by a young man who expressed his intent to rape and kill a female student in her school.

Ranging from their routine experiences of insults and objectifying comments to periodic threats of rape and murder, these young women endured at school a persistent stream of harassing behaviour. Unfortunately, their stories are not unique and the prevalence and severity have been corroborated elsewhere. In a study recently conducted in the United States, 89 percent of the girls reported having experienced appropriate sexual comments, gestures and looks; 83 percent had been touched, pinched or grabbed; and 40 percent said these incidents occurred daily at school (3). Since the completion of my own research I have conducted workshops with hundreds of teachers and students who relate experiences

that resonate with those of the girls I interviewed.

"A guy held a girl up to her locker and made her stay there while he kicked her."

For many female students, then, stories like these are depressingly routine. The consequences can be devastating as young women struggle to survive in a toxic learning environment. When so much of a young woman's day is spent fending off diminishing comments, sexual innuendos, and physical pestering, how can she be expected to focus on her education? Is it any wonder so many are apprehensive about their ability to succeed at school?

"I know this one teacher and he's very sexist. He makes comments about girls all the time, about the way they shouldn't do, what they should do. Women should be barefoot, pregnant and everything."

The Effects

The overall effect of sexual harassment is to create a threatening environment for female students. One student confessed, "A lot of girls don't feel very secure at school." For some, the anxiety that resulted from sexual harassment manifested itself in physical ways. One student was so nervous about a group of male students who constantly demeaned young women that her "stomach would turn" when she entered the school or traveled through hallways. Another claimed that the crude comments made by male students in class made her feel "sick to her stomach."

Many had developed strategies to avoid harassing behaviour. Hallways were identified as harassment zones, to be bypassed if at all possible. When the students were unable to avoid a sexual harassment area, some would travel in pairs "for protection": "I won't walk down the hall by myself. Not if there's a bunch of guys there. I have to have at least one person with me or else I will take a longer route." Other avoidance strategies included associating only with female students and restricting their participation in school activities, "like sports for instance."



Fran Thoburn

To elude harassing behaviour in the classroom, some students limited their participation in class discussions and their enrolment or attendance in various courses. One young woman monitored the behaviour of male students in her classes for the first month of a term to see how they responded to female students. During this time she didn't speak up in class. "If they don't do anything," she told me, "then, after, I can talk."

The harassment experienced by young women in non-traditional courses was a reminder of their infringement on male terrain and seemed to have a significant impact on their academic and career plans. In one school, some students had given up the idea of a career in science because they worried that the anti-female comments made by their grade 10 teacher would only get worse as they went further in their education: "If this is what I'm meeting in high

school, what kind of opposition am I going to meet when I get to university or college?"

One student had dropped a course because she couldn't tolerate the demeaning comments the teacher continually made about women. And, unfortunately, a few students felt they had no option but to leave the school. This strategy was used by one student who followed up her account of a particularly disturbing incident of sexual harassment with the comment: "I hate school... maybe an all girls' school would be better for me." I heard later that she had transferred schools.

Although many students had made these countering strategies part of their everyday routine, this should not be interpreted as tacit acceptance of harassing behaviour. On the contrary, these self-protective maneuvers are positive expressions of young women's strength and resistance. In most cases, the students had no alternatives. They were struggling to deal with a problem that had yet to be recognized by those entrusted with their education.

Educating for Change

Even when the young women were able to identify incidents of sexual harassment, they often did not report it because they felt that school officials were unlikely to respond. For example, a student who complained about male students continually lifting up her skirt in class was told to return to her seat and stop interrupting the lesson. She stopped wearing skirts to school: "I only wear pants, I tell you!" Another young woman had to endure a male student putting her book down his pants and making sexual propositions while the teacher looked on. In her words, "What can you do when the person in authority doesn't do a shit about it?"

"[The guys] would play this game ... whoever passed by between them would be the one that they'd have sex with. If it was a pretty girl they'd say, "Right on, you've got her!" If a Black girl walks by they'd go, "Oh my God, this and that. She's got such a big ass. ..." They'd put her down majorly. "

It is not my intention to blame teachers for the level of harassment that goes on in their schools (unless, of course, they participate) but to stress that such harassment needs to be acknowledged and confronted. This is no easy task. Like students, many teachers are not informed about sexual harassment; some experience it. But when sexually harassing behaviour goes unchecked in schools, a crucial barrier to young women's equality remains firmly intact. Certainly, educators cannot be charged with the sole responsibility for eliminating sexual harassment, but they can challenge the attitudes that promote it. Developing policies and educational programs on sexual harassment, providing safe and supportive spaces for female students, and challenging harassing behaviour at all times are positive steps.

But in general, educators need to re-examine the focus of equal opportunity initiatives that are geared primarily to "fixing" female students. As the stories of these young women so clearly point out, the most significant barrier to equal education lies not in the girls, but in those who do not wish to accept them as equals (5).

Conclusion

The perilous situation of female students is shocking when one considers that the commitment to gender equitable education is lauded as a primary objective of most school boards. The accounts of these young women are clear warnings that something is wrong. It seems that the road to equality we've carved is so fraught with cracks and barriers that young women move with trepidation, if they move at all. At the same time as they are inundated with messages about their unlimited opportunities, many are feeling increasingly confined as they restrict their behaviour to avoid sexual harassment. Equal opportunity has increased young women's access to education but sexual harassment is keeping them unequal.

Tackling the problem of sexual harassment in schools may be the crucial key to providing equal education for girls. As one student so clearly articulated, when we start dealing with sexual harassment "that's when equality will begin. That's when we will really start being equal."

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Passé inaperçu

Mon histoire plein la bouche
mes angoisses ces rides de vie dans ma main
ne me cachent plus ce que je suis

quand mon corps d'enfant cassée se met à parler
il me guide tout intérieur
il me libère du bâillon de ma prison privée

j'étais jadis ma meilleure ennemie la plus intime

quand mon histoire me remonte dans la bouche
mes peines mes colères
mes déceptions se démasquent
mes parcelles de conscience
mes fragments de mémoire
fracassent à tout jamais
les mensonges renversés sur moi

j'écris pour me dépouiller
de mes armures profondes
de mes vieilles cuirasses
de ces rages muettes de mon enfance

je partage mes années perdues oubliées
retrouvées
mon intégrité volée violée

j'écris pour ne plus me cacher ce que je suis
pour mettre les secrets à nu
pour que la vérité triomphe de la trahison
pour que meurent les règles de jeux faussées
les terreurs nocturnes
les confiances spoliées trompées souillées
les horreurs climatisées
les passés inaperçus
les démons incrédules

mon histoire insiste pour survivre
à l'immobilité dans laquelle j'étais couchée
mon histoire insiste pour vivre pour revivre
au coeur de toutes ces petites filles innocentes

que pleurent silencieusement leurs douleurs de
jouets vivants

je tournais dans le carrousel furieux de mon
père son manège de fausse affection
imprimait sur ma peau d'enfant
des nuages contaminés de honte
ma blessure invisible me disait
l'épreuve de la vie bien pire que la mort

je n'y suis pour rien
je ne peux plus ignorer
la réalité cruelle
des cadeaux affreux de la servitude imposée

dans la souffrante lenteur d'une guérison
mon harmonie de fond
sort de son hibernation

mes mues me demandent de nouveaux vêtements
une âme neuve
une nouvelle peau
la patience nécessaire pour renaître
à tout ce que l'existence rend possible
au mûrissement d'un amour véritable
peut-être enfin

Hélène Blais
LaSalle, Québec

Educating the Professionals

by Janice Gingell

We provide workshops to professionals who are likely to see, but not recognize, a significant number of abused women.

Violence against women has recently received increased public attention. For people working to educate professionals about the realities of women who live with violent male partners, this attention has increased the challenge. Every participant at a workshop comes with beliefs about the causes and incidence of male violence. Everyone has an opinion about what should be done and who should do it.

The Provincial Association of Transition Houses of Saskatchewan (PATHS) is a network of sheltering and counselling services for abused women. It is staffed by a job shared position of coordinator. One of the coordinators' duties is to augment the public education which is provided to the community by individual PATHS members. In doing so, we have recently begun providing educational workshops to professionals who are likely to see, but possibly not recognize, significant numbers of abused women. These workshops have been presented to nursing and legal professionals, social workers, mediators and to students in professional colleges.

As educators, we must be careful to impart information which will assist these professionals to effectively meet the needs of the women they see, while, at the same time, overcome any disbelief and bias about women who have experienced violence. Participants at workshops vary significantly in their knowledge about male violence and often there is a split along gender lines. Perhaps not surprisingly, women appear more open to receiving this information.

The Workshops

To determine the knowledge level and mindset of those in attendance, we begin sessions by describing a series of scenarios which we then ask people to address in small groups. The scenarios involve abused women in factual situations where members of the particular profession are likely see them. Social workers may be given questions which relate to a woman's application for financial assistance. Nurses might be presented with a number of incidents in which a woman comes to an emergency room or clinic for medical assistance. Mediators are asked to consider dealing with a woman in an initial interview, proceeding through a series of questions to determine if there has been abuse in her relationship.

Éduquer les professionnels

par Janice Gingell

L'Association provinciale des maisons de transition de la Saskatchewan offre des ateliers éducatifs à des groupes professionnels sur la violence dont sont victimes les femmes dans des relations intimes. Les ateliers visent les avocats, les médiateurs, le corps médical, les travailleurs sociaux et la police.

Le matériel de base des ateliers vise à éduquer les participants à déceler des signes d'abus et leur incidence, à comprendre pourquoi les femmes éprouvent des difficultés à quitter un conjoint abusif et à leur apprendre à aider les femmes maltraitées. Les ateliers se concentrent sur des situations auxquelles les professionnels peuvent avoir affaire tous les jours lorsqu'ils traitent avec des femmes maltraitées. Les services que ces professionnels fournissent en général sont ensuite analysés pour déterminer si leur réaction devrait changer une fois qu'ils savent que la femme est maltraitée. Il s'est avéré quelquefois plus difficile d'entrer en contact avec des professionnels pour leur présenter le matériel que d'élaborer le matériel lui-même.

We ask a woman to speak about her experience and what assisted her to end the violence in her life.

The group discussion which these questions foster usually relaxes participants and makes it possible to shift from a lecture presentation to one where people feel free to ask questions and make comments.

Basing the questions on experiences that participants have likely had with women helps them to realize that the information they gain will be of use to them in their daily work. We also try, through the dialogue and discussion, to help them formulate ways of talking to women about experiences of violence in a non-judgmental manner.



The sessions we conduct are half-day or full-day workshops, using two or more facilitators. We also rely on speakers or videos, produced by the National Film Board or emergency shelters, to help us explain what it is like for women to be involved in abusive relationships. Core materials covered in each workshop are: indicators of abuse; descriptions of abusive behaviours; statistics of incidence; information on the cycle of violence which some women report; how to appropriately interview and make referrals; a discussion about why it is difficult for women to leave their partners; the effects of experiencing or witnessing violence on children; and referral sources of help in the community.

Whenever possible we ask a woman who has survived violence to speak about her experience and what assisted her to end the violence in her life. It is important to note that women who are participants often recall their own experiences when they hear or see other women speaking about abuse. It is necessary to address this possibility at the outset of each session and to be available for discussion or consultation afterwards.

Being able to question someone who has faced violence helps people immensely in understanding why leaving is so difficult. Several years ago we spent considerable time presenting information about how the cycle of violence keeps women trapped in abusive relationships. In recent years we have become aware that the most common reason women stay is the very real danger that leaving presents to them, to their children and perhaps even to their partners. Recognition of this danger helps professionals to fashion better responses to the abused women who approach them.

After covering the above material we spend time relating what we have discussed to the actual work of the people in attendance. Mediators are helped with such things as devising safe methods of ending mediation sessions where abuse has been recognized. Nursing professionals look at ways to provide interim safety in a crisis situation. Financial workers in social service agencies are encouraged to review policies to determine if women who are fleeing abuse are getting the financial support they need to set up a separate residence. Lawyers go through the separation process and examine how the experience of abuse will alter the process in making decisions about custody, access, and division of property.

Organizing workshops around such discussions is time-consuming but we have been assisted by course planners to understand the duties of those in attendance. As well, by having the participants listen to the stories of women and the counsellors that work with them, stumbling blocks to appropriate responses are easy to identify. We then take these problem areas and try to devise ways of turning situations around for the benefit of women.

Making Contacts

Gaining support for the need to do these educational and making the appropriate contacts has been more problematic than the presentations themselves. We started with the legal profession because our personal educational backgrounds included degrees in law, and our experience included criminal work as well as family law.

We made our first contacts with the local Provincial Court Judges. We knew well the frustration experienced by women appearing as witnesses in criminal courts. We also knew some members of the Provincial Court personally. The Judges we contacted accepted our invitation for an informal coffee session. We attended this session with supportive facilitators from the local program for abusive men, and this exchange of ideas and problems provided us with the structure for a workshop.

We then approached Prosecutors and offered to do a workshop at their annual conference. By this point we had developed written material for use in the workshops, which provided a way to "market" our work. Legal practitioners who had attended our workshops indicated that the material presented would be important for lawyers to have at the outset of their careers. As in other provinces, each graduate must pass a provincial bar exam and most people wishing to practice in the province attend an annual bar admission course prior to writing the examinations. Our association was interested in reaching this group because many will practice family and criminal law and because, if we could get material included in the bar course, it would be published in binders which are available to and

widely purchased by all members of the legal profession.

The written bar course materials are important also because they are often used as precedents by lawyers when drafting documents or researching practical ways of proceeding on individual cases, and they are updated annually. We developed a bar course session which differed markedly from traditional legal presentations, and it received high evaluations from the group which first attended.

Setting a framework to reach most of the legal profession in Saskatchewan was not difficult because we were familiar with what opportunities for education existed. We were also fortunate that participants at our original workshops came from several different types of legal practice. After our initial sessions in the legal community, we simply had to respond to requests for more of this work.

POETRY

the passenger door (for Monique)

we counted on me to steal lunchmeat from safe way it was always cheaper in your little car: no insurance, the passenger door sealed/broken shut and ten dollar gas for the week snatching milk crates from stores not yet open i was just less of a risk and naive enough not to fear the absolute consequences the bottom line on the bills never spelt out to me while you were already constructing means of avoidance long before the mail came but you said that this you could intuit by the way i drank milk straight from the carton at my place where you came to pick me up for our first intimate meeting that evening later confirmed my tarot's fool when i offered a sip of my beer to you at the pin-ball machine which, out of age and abuse, gave us free games you would say, months later, that you could always tell by the way the white ones either kept to their own glass or, in the case of me, drank heartily from yours my original attempts were to decipher this meaning but there remained a loss in translation so then i tried to surround and inhale and grope it out in my mind i have since reconsidered now i witness the navigations of our defiant caress even still, it is always your eyes i see first and now when we sleep and your brown arm curves down against mine, it is only in the golden deepness of summer that i feel nearer to your equal in the beauty that the skin becomes upon waking

catherine lake
Toronto, Ontario

Why our approach to doctors and police officers has been ineffective is not clear to us.

Once the material was available to the entire legal community, we were invited by the Continuing Legal Education Association to conduct workshops for lawyers who were currently practicing. The focus of our sessions was how decisions made in connection with family law areas such as custody, access, and the use of mediation should be altered if the abuse has been part of the intimate relationship. These sessions were, again, well received, and lawyers also trained as mediators requested sessions which dealt specifically with mediation.

Our work with mediators has been preliminary in nature because we do not yet understand all the implications that mediation has for abused women. A general presumption of mediation is that the parties involved are equally able to put their viewpoints forward in a safe manner. This is clearly not the case where a woman has been controlled by her partner.

After participating in some work to help mediators recognize and understand the effects of abuse in relationships, we have started a process to examine effective interviewing and screening techniques. These are designed for mediators to determine if abuse has been present and if so, whether and under what conditions mediation might be possible.

Saskatchewan has just introduced legislation which requires that everyone requesting an order from a Judge in family matters attend sessions where mediation is explained. As this will likely increase the demand for mediation, it is doubly important that mediators are able to recognize all types of abuse. They will also need to understand how abusive behaviour may be carried over into mediation itself and thus taint the process.

Like the legal profession, nurses were also quick to incorporate our educational into their regular teaching program, and we began by developing material specific to this profession. In addition to our core material, we included information aimed at helping to identify women in a health care setting who were being abused or at risk. We attempted to build on the already good knowledge base nurses generally have about ways to intervene appropriately and effectively to assist such women.

Letters were sent to professional colleges introducing the workshop, and we also lobbied to have information about violence in intimate relationships incorporated into the core curriculum. Our initial workshop was piloted with professors from the Saskatchewan College of Nursing. After some revision, we have continued to offer it to this college, to the diploma nursing program, to post R.N.s and public health nurses. The material continues to be revised as health care becomes more of a community responsibility and the focus shifts from acute care to that of prevention.

Police forces and physicians were originally targeted by our membership as in need of a broader understanding of the situation of abused women. We have not made significant inroads in either area. Individual shelters have fared better in initiating contact with police forces. It's true that the link between direct service providers and police must be strong,

and perhaps police education is best done at the local level.

We are currently re-examining our process for reaching these two groups as it may be more appropriate for our provincial association to act simply as resource people to complement the groundwork done by shelters and counselling groups. Why our approach of offering written material and ourselves as speakers to groups of doctors and police officers has been ineffective is not clear to us. We may have been less skilled in making the initial approaches because we had less information about how their continuing education is conducted and who the appropriate contact people are. We also lacked the personal connections that we relied on with the nursing and legal professions. It appears to be crucial to have those in the targeted profession who will assist in developing the material and who will provide information about the mechanism through which the sessions can best be offered.

A third reason for the differing response may be the existing gender composition of the two professions. Although the number of female physicians has increased markedly in recent years, the contacts that we had in the profession were men. We have noted that, although many men showed a genuine desire to improve the quality of their intervention with abused women, we were more likely to receive a positive response from women perhaps because they already have a basic understanding of the importance of the issue.

The government of Saskatchewan is currently introducing new legislation aimed at improving non-criminal legal protection for women who have been physically abused. This legislation will require sympathetic enforcement from well-trained police officers if it is to be effective, and so timing is appropriate to renew our efforts at education. Similarly, the change in the delivery of the health care from an acute care approach to a "wellness model" will emphasize the need for physicians to have information about identifying and assisting women who experience abuse.

We have noted that we are more likely to receive a positive response from women in the profession.

Raising our Profile

Working with professional groups has raised the profile of our Association within those groups. It follows naturally that the Association is now consulted regularly about policy, legislative, and curriculum changes that would have an impact on abused women and their children. It has been, for example, almost a year since we delivered a session to a group of lawyers but we continue to receive phone calls requesting information relevant to current situations. This is, at the very least, a positive effect of our attempts at education.

1994 marks the fifth year that we have worked with professional groups to provide information about violence against women. In the course of this time we have changed our own thinking significantly. At the outset we approached things in a somewhat clinical way, thinking that abuse of women in intimate relationships as something that happens to other people. The personal anecdotes related to us after each session have made it clear that when we talk about abuse we are talking about something that affects all of us, including ourselves.

Our workshops now try to incorporate participants' individual experiences and views about violence with information about how to provide a helpful professional response to women. This work is always interesting, often frustrating, and sometimes exceptionally moving. Every time we think we have a good package to offer a particular group we learn something new, and the revisions begin.

Janice Gingell is currently a co-coordinator of PATHS. PATHS has one staff position which is currently job-shared by three women: Colleen Croft, Faye Davis, and Janice Gingell. Since 1989 they have produced a total of six children, which means that two of them generally work half-time. For more information about the workshops, contact any of the coordinators at #307, 135 - 21st Street E., Saskatoon, Sask., S7K 0B4, phone: (306)652-6175.

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Du Côté des Francophones

par Monique Hébert

Le Réseau privilégie l'éducation en français comme moyen de modifier les conditions de vie des femmes.

L'idée de créer le Réseau national d'action éducation femmes (RNAEF) est née en 1980 lors d'un colloque national qu'organisait le Conseil canadien pour l'éducation des femmes. À l'issue de l'atelier sur l'éducation en français, les participantes chargent un comité de découvrir s'il existe un besoin de regroupement. Le comité effectue alors un sondage auprès des femmes oeuvrant dans le secteur de l'éducation des femmes francophones. Les résultats sont frappants: près des deux tiers des répondantes (64 %) souhaitent devenir membres d'un organisme qui s'occuperait de la promotion de services éducatifs accessibles aux femmes francophones (1). Par la suite, une poignée de femmes

francophones, qui n'ont pas peur de voir grand, mettront sur pied le Réseau.

Nous vous ferons grâce des péripéties qui ont marqué les dix ans d'existence du Réseau. Le fait qu'il compte aujourd'hui quelque 300 membres, quatre groupes AÉF provinciaux et 23 groupes affiliés parle éloquemment des progrès réalisés. De plus, le Réseau a su créer un forum exceptionnel où une quinzaine de femmes de tous les coins du pays peuvent parler d'éducation. Elles se rencontrent trois fois par an, sans oublier l'Assemblée générale annuelle.

Depuis sa fondation, le Réseau cherche par divers moyens à faire prendre conscience aux femmes francophones du Canada de leurs conditions de vie. Il les y encourage par l'éducation sous toutes ses formes. La mission qu'il s'est donnée prend encore plus d'importance à l'aube du XXI^e siècle où l'éducation devient indispensable pour relever les défis politiques, sociaux et économiques mondiaux.

Comme la plupart des groupes de femmes, le Réseau préconise des changements sociaux et économiques qui mèneront à une société égalitaire et équitable. Il se distingue cependant des autres en ce qu'il privilégie l'éducation en français comme moyen de modifier les conditions de vie des femmes.

Le Réseau veut accroître les possibilités de formation des femmes francophones et en améliorer la qualité. Pour ce faire, il cherche à créer des liens avec divers groupes nationaux et organismes de femmes partageant les mêmes objectifs. Il tente aussi de faire officiellement reconnaître les apprentissages expérientiels des femmes francophones auprès des établissements d'enseignement et du monde du travail. Enfin, le Réseau effectue des recherches sur des questions relatives à l'évolution des femmes et en diffuse les résultats.

From the Francophone Point of View
by **Monique Hébert**

RNAÉF (National network for action on women's education) was formed in 1980 after an informal survey of participants at a workshop on education for francophone women revealed that 64% would like to be members of an organization that promoted access to educational services for francophone women. The primary mandate for RNAÉF is the promotion of access to education in French as a means to improve the quality of women's lives.

Since 1991, the RNAÉF has organized annually a National Week on Education for Francophone Women. Everywhere where francophone women exist in a minority, they are disadvantaged in terms of education and training. Twenty-four percent of francophone women have less than a grade nine education compared to 14% of non francophone women and they choose education for non-traditional careers much less frequently. Less than 1 % of francophone women earn more than \$30,000 annually, compared to 13% of francophone men. And since women are still most occupied with the education of children, their low educational levels have an impact on the whole community. It is within this context that the National Week has such an important role to play. It serves not only to heighten the need for more accessible education in French, but also to raise the awareness of francophone women themselves as to the difference that education can make in their lives, and their right to demand education in their own language.

Les femmes francophones sont nettement défavorisées sur le plan de l'éducation et de la formation.

Un événement marquant: La Semaine nationale de l'éducation des femmes francophones

Depuis 1991, le Réseau organise une *Semaine nationale de l'éducation des femmes francophones* qui rallie les femmes d'un océan à l'autre. Il s'agit d'un événement au cours duquel chaque région peut, selon ses intérêts et ses ressources, promouvoir l'éducation en français des femmes. Pendant une semaine, les représentantes du Réseau organisent dans chaque province diverses activités avec les membres, d'autres associations et des institutions scolaires et universitaires. Ces activités publiques concernent

l'éducation dans un sens large; il peut s'agir entre autres de conférences, d'expositions et de tables rondes. Le Réseau cherche ainsi à valoriser les femmes francophones et l'éducation en français dans les milieux minoritaires (2).



Partout où les femmes francophones sont minoritaires, elles sont nettement défavorisées sur le plan de l'éducation et de la formation. Leur niveau de scolarité est inférieur à celui des femmes non francophones: 24% par rapport à 14% ont un niveau de scolarité inférieur à la 9^e année.

Elles choisissent des carrières non traditionnelles dans une plus faible proportion que leurs consoeurs non francophones: 10% par rapport à 14% au premier cycle universitaire.

Les conséquences financières de cette sous-scolarisation sont beaucoup plus graves chez les femmes francophones que chez les hommes francophones. En effet, plus de 83% des femmes francophones dont le niveau de scolarité est la 9^e année gagnent moins de 10000 \$ par an, par rapport à 42% des hommes francophones ayant le même niveau de scolarité. Moins de 1% des femmes francophones gagnent plus de 30 000\$, par rapport à 13% des hommes francophones (3).

Ces quelques chiffres le montrent clairement: la sous-scolarisation constitue un obstacle important à la qualité de la vie. Mais les effets néfastes ne s'arrêtent hélas pas là. Comme les femmes s'occupent encore de l'éducation des enfants, leur sous-scolarisation a un impact sur l'avenir de toute la communauté. Comment aider les enfants à faire leurs devoirs quand on sait à peine lire et écrire soi-même? Comment les encourager aux études quand l'école est souvent synonyme pour soi de frustration et d'échec? Ainsi se perpétue l'écart de sous-scolarisation entre femmes francophones et non francophones (24 % par rapport à 11 % ont une 8^e année) (4).

Les ressources éducatives limitées dont disposent les milieux minoritaires francophones expliquent aussi cette sous-scolarisation. Il suffit pour s'en convaincre d'étudier la situation au niveau postsecondaire: deux universités françaises (l'une à Sudbury et l'autre à Moncton), deux universités anglaises offrant des programmes en français (l'Université de l'Alberta et l'Université d'Ottawa), des collèges français rarissimes (par exemple, le Collège Universitaire de Saint-Boniface). C'est bien peu pour répondre aux besoins d'une population éparpillée sur un territoire plus vaste que toute l'Europe! Pour les

francophones, s'instruire dans leur langue maternelle reste difficile. Et faire des études supérieures en français quand on est une femme francophone, cela tient presque du miracle! À l'extérieur du Québec, une femme sur 19 de langue française détient un diplôme de premier cycle et moins d'une femme sur 50, un diplôme universitaire de deuxième ou troisième cycle (5).

Dans le contexte actuel de faible scolarité et de manque de ressources éducatives qui caractérise les milieux minoritaires, la Semaine nationale prend toute son importance. D'abord, elle donne l'occasion de sensibiliser les femmes francophones à l'importance que revêt pour elles le fait d'être éduquées en français. Ensuite, elle permet de valoriser les connaissances qu'elles ont acquises à l'extérieur des institutions formelles. Deux actions essentielles pour favoriser l'accès des femmes à la formation et leur participation à part entière au développement économique, social, éducatif et culturel. Enfin, comme les activités sont publiques, elles contribuent à sensibiliser la communauté à la question de l'éducation des femmes et des filles. Pour un grand nombre de femmes francophones, les activités de la Semaine nationale sont une des rares occasions de sortir de leur isolement. Un des effets tangibles, et non des moindres, est une fierté renouvelée d'appartenir à la communauté francophone.

L'alphabétisation: un outil essentiel

L'alphabétisation fait beaucoup couler d'encre, car ce n'est que depuis une décennie que l'on a pris conscience de la gravité de ce problème au Canada. Le Secrétariat national à l'alphabétisation a défini comme "analphabète fonctionnelle" toute personne qui a le niveau de 8e année ou moins. Selon cette définition, une proportion inquiétante de francophones est donc sous-scolarisée. Quelle que soit l'origine de leur situation, les femmes analphabètes n'ont-elles pas le droit de vivre en tant que citoyennes à part entière dans ce pays? Et comment le faire sans les outils fondamentaux de la lecture et de l'écriture? Une maîtrise insuffisante de la lecture et de l'écriture constitue un obstacle qui nuit grandement à la qualité de vie.

Il est primordial de revendiquer pour les femmes francophones le droit de s'éduquer.

Voilà pourquoi le Réseau national clame sur tous les toits depuis 1984 que l'alphabétisation est importante et que les femmes francophones ont des besoins particuliers. Besoins de transport: parce qu'elles vivent en milieu isolé. Besoins de garderies: au Canada français, il existe encore trop peu de garderies de langue française. Les femmes analphabètes ont aussi des problèmes d'estime de soi. En effet, comment ne pas se sentir profondément dévalorisées quand on ne parvient pas à comprendre un formulaire ou un mode d'emploi? (6).

Il est donc primordial de revendiquer pour les femmes francophones le droit de s'éduquer. Ainsi, le Réseau contribue directement au mieux-être de la collectivité puisque souvent ce sont encore les femmes qui doivent assurer l'éducation des enfants à la maison. L'alphabétisation des femmes a donc un impact sur toute la communauté francophone. Elle constitue un maillon essentiel pour mettre fin à l'analphabétisme en commençant par leur propre foyer. Mais, surtout, l'alphabétisation améliore leur propre qualité de vie en

leur donnant des outils concrets.

Reconnaissance des acquis?

La reconnaissance des acquis est le second dossier-clé du Réseau. Comme son nom l'indique, ce dossier a pour but de faire reconnaître non seulement les expériences que les femmes francophones ont acquises au cours d'emplois rémunérés dans des milieux officiels et traditionnels, mais aussi les connaissances pratiques dont elles se sont dotées en s'occupant de leur foyer ou en faisant du bénévolat et en militant.

Ainsi, un certain nombre de crédits en pédagogie pourraient être accordés à une mère de cinq enfants qui veut étudier pour devenir enseignante. En reconnaissant la valeur du travail traditionnel des femmes, on augmenterait leur valeur dans la société. Voici un autre exemple: une gérante de restaurant qui travaille chaque jour avec douze employées pourrait suivre un cheminement accéléré dans un programme d'administration à l'université ou au collège.

La reconnaissance des acquis permet non seulement aux femmes de faire valoir leur expérience, mais elle leur redonne aussi la possibilité de rebâtir leur estime personnelle en faisant le bilan des connaissances pratiques acquises au fil des ans.

Pour la deuxième année consécutive, le Réseau national a payé à certaines de ses membres les frais d'inscription au cours de reconnaissance des acquis qu'offre l'Université de Sudbury par correspondance. Les femmes qui le désiraient ont ainsi pu bâtir un portefeuille recensant tout le savoir qu'elles ont accumulé dans la vie. Par ce moyen, nous espérons établir un réseau d'accompagnatrices qui aideront d'autres femmes à faire le même cheminement.

Cet outil de promotion sociale qu'est l'éducation doit être accessible à toutes.

La création d'un milieu non sexiste pour les jeunes francophones

Le Réseau pilote depuis février 1993 un projet intitulé "Vers l'équité en éducation physique: partenariat et création d'un milieu non sexiste pour les jeunes francophones". Cette recherche-action d'envergure nationale a débuté en février dernier et devrait durer deux ans.

L'objectif principal est de développer, avec les gens du milieu, des outils et des stratégies pour assurer aux jeunes filles francophones vivant en milieu minoritaire les mêmes occasions de développement qu'aux garçons dans les cours d'éducation physique. Pour ce faire, nous devons d'abord connaître les besoins des jeunes pratiquant l'éducation physique.

Durant la première étape, les élèves des 9^e et 11^e année d'écoles sélectionnées ont répondu à un questionnaire; leurs enseignants et enseignantes d'éducation physique ont fait de même. Déjà, plus de 2 500 élèves, 50 enseignants et enseignantes, 20 directeurs et directrices de 20 écoles francophones du Canada ont pris part au projet.

Durant la deuxième étape, nous prioriserons les actions concrètes à entreprendre avec des partenaires communautaires. Nous espérons sensibiliser le plus de personnes, de groupes et d'institutions possibles aux résultats de la recherche pour que des mesures concrètes soient mises de l'avant.

L'éducation, l'avenir au coeur du présent

En milieu minoritaire, l'éducation a souvent été le cheval de bataille des Canadiennes-françaises. Pas pour elles, non, mais pour leurs enfants! Or, le Réseau national réclame ce droit pour les femmes. Selon nous, cet outil de promotion sociale qu'est l'éducation doit être accessible à toutes. Nous ne pouvons pas espérer l'égalité ou encore la parité salariale tant et aussi longtemps que les femmes n'auront pas accès à l'éducation et à la formation de façon équitable. Car le savoir, la connaissance, sont les clefs qui ouvrent les portes souvent trop bien scellées du pouvoir.

Monique Hébert est actuellement présidente du Réseau national d'action éducation femmes.

1. Lisette Donovan, "Historique du RNAÉF", dans *INFO*, décembre 1993, vol.5, no.3.
2. Ibid.
3. Linda Cardinal et Cécile Coderre, *Pour les femmes: éducation et autonomie*, Ottawa, RNAÉF, 1990-1992, vol. 1 à 5.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid., vol. 2, pp.2-3.
6. Voir à ce sujet Ginette Laganière, *Pour les femmes francophones, l'alphabétisation en milieu de travail?*, Ottawa, RNAÉF, 1991, vol. 1 et 2.

McGill Students for Literacy: A Feminist Assessment

by Stephanie Garrow and Lynda Stokes

McGill Students for Literacy (MSL) is an independent literacy organization founded and operated by McGill University students. Its mandate is to train McGill students to tutor adults and youth in basic literacy skills and to promote awareness of il/literacy issues. MSL's tutoring services are free and all of the students involved work as volunteers.

The issue should be the patriarchally induced disorganization of women's lives, not women's failure to become literate.

As a final research project for an interdisciplinary seminar on Women's Studies, we conducted a feminist evaluation of MSL. We wanted to know what were the barriers to learning that women faced and whether MSL was meeting the needs of both women students as well as the tutors and administrators. This article is a summary of that evaluation, and of the situations of women involved in the program.

Defining Il/literacy

Although there are many more non-literate women than men in the world, men and women in Canada have comparable levels of literacy, according to government statistics. Approximately 16% of Canadians have very limited literacy skills. A further 22% can read everyday materials only if they are written simply, are clearly laid out and if they involve tasks that are easy to perform (1). So why then is literacy a women's issue? How are women's experiences of il/literacy different from men's?

Understanding and assessing il/literacy in Canada has not been a simple matter of defining the skills needed to read and write; literacy has political implications beyond the mechanical skills of reading and writing. Defining il/literacy or identifying it as a problem is a central and difficult issue in literacy practice. According to Dana Beckelman, "Any act of defining what constitutes literacy is merely the definer's interpretation" (2). She argues that woman-positive literacy practice should strive for an understanding of literacy which is inclusive, not exclusive as any explicit definition suggests. As Jennifer Horsman, a feminist literacy worker, has also pointed out, the "stress on defining the population of 'illiterates' as if it were a clear-cut, either/or question, helps to strengthen the perception of non-readers as "other" (3).

Within the structure of McGill Students for Literacy, we have tried not to let our practice revolve around a specific definition. The onus is on the potential literacy student to determine whether s/he needs help with his/her reading and writing and to contact us. From a feminist perspective, this lack of an entrenched definition can be seen as an asset.

For example, when a Student-Tutor Coordinator meets with a potential literacy student for the first time, she asks, "Is there a specific reason that you are seeking help? How will your life be different if you improve your reading and/or writing? What do you find most difficult about reading? About writing? Is there anything else you would like to discuss?" By having the potential literacy student identify his/her needs s/he is the one who defines literacy. Women identify the areas they want to work on, such as reading comprehension, spelling, reading specific things and/or performing specific tasks.

Les élèves de McGill et l'alphabétisation: une évaluation féministe

par Stephanie Garrow et Linda Stokes

McGill Students for Literacy est un organisme d'alphabétisation indépendant qu'ont fondé et que gèrent les étudiants de McGill. Nous estimons que l'organisation et la structure de MSL tient compte des besoins et de la situation de toutes les femmes du programme, c'est-à-dire des étudiantes et des enseignantes.

On demande aux femmes qui s'adressent à l'organisme pour suivre des cours d'évaluer leurs besoins en matière d'alphabétisation, ce qui permet que leur apprentissage corresponde à leur existence et objectifs. Comme la vie des femmes s'organise souvent autour des besoins des autres, les cours sont souples, individuels, les apprenantes décidant elles-mêmes de leur horaire. MSL met aussi l'accent sur l'intégration des aspects sociaux et professionnels, car ce n'est que grâce à des contacts sociaux et à des interactions que l'isolement des femmes commencent à s'effacer et que ces dernières comprennent comment s'opposer aux forces sociales qui les désavantagent. Les apprenantes considèrent souvent que leur alphabétisation est habilitant une façon de trouver un emploi stimulant, d'avoir davantage d'estime en elles et plus confiance pour surmonter les soucis quotidiens toute seules. Dans son programme d'alphabétisation, MSL tient vraiment compte des réalités de la vie des femmes pour les habilitier.

Women and Literacy

Why is literacy a women's issue? Jennifer Horsman has written about the "social disorganization" of women's lives, a term she uses to deconstruct the concept of choice in the educational lives of many young women (4). For some, the social organization of the home and school lives involves violence, abuse, economic hardship, silencing, pregnancy and/or children, and the need to work to meet family demands. Accessing a desired level of education is often beyond their control.

We must consider that some women are simply too busy making ends meet to fit a literacy or upgrading program into their schedules.

Kathleen Rockhill makes the important observation that "literacy is women's work, but not women's right" (5). Ironically, it is the women of the household who are performing the majority of the literacy-related tasks, yet it is the social disorganization of their lives which restricts them from attending literacy programs. Women are also in need of a certain level of literacy skills in order to perform effectively in the areas of work available to them. In other words, in order to enter sales, clerical and secretarial service sectors of the economy, women must be confident with their reading and writing skills. However, the hope of gaining literacy skills in order to secure paid employment is often dashed by a male partner who does not want his wife to leave the domain of the home.

Violence is an issue for many women who decide to enter a literacy program. Reactions from husbands, boyfriends or other family members such as refusal to help with childcare, verbal, emotional and physical abuse, and simple lack of support can barr a woman from exercising her right to improve her education. Ethnicity, language, race, class, mobility, disabilities, age, responsibility for children, geographic location, etc., add to the difficulties faced by women seeking to improve their literacy skills. As conscientious feminist literacy workers, we must make it clear that the focus of the issue should be on the patriarchally induced disorganization of women's lives, and not on women's failure to become literate (6).

The links between literacy and poverty in particular are important in terms of women's lives. Statistics demonstrate that "only 25% of functionally illiterate women are in the paid labour force compared with 50% of women as a whole. Half of all female-headed families live below the poverty line. The rate of illiteracy in this group is much higher than the national average" (7). From these statistics we can conclude that the jobs available to women who have insufficient literacy skills are traditionally the lowest paid, such as domestic work and sewing machine operation. As feminist literacy workers we must consider that some women are simply too busy making ends meet to fit a literacy or upgrading program into their schedules. MSL has identified this concern and therefore offers very flexible, one-on-one tutoring which allows women to schedule their meetings with their tutors at their own convenience.

Women and MSL

As a result of the awareness of barriers faced by women who participate in literacy programs, we took the initiative to speak with some of the women students and tutors in our program in an effort to give voice to their learning experiences. The remainder of this article focuses on the conversations we had.

Social Disorganization

Many of the women in our program described themselves as feeling "shy" when they interacted with other people, both in the public and the private spheres. Horsman suggests that when women describe themselves as "shy" they are describing a kind of silence. These female literacy students have been silenced at school and at home through threats or violence. Such interactions with authority figures have defined and negated them: to describe women as "shy" focuses attention on women's lack of assertiveness rather than on the situations and authority structures which silence them (9).

When asked "Has the idea that you can't read affected the way you live?" Bonnie, a machine operator who completed grade four in Jamaica and who is the mother of four, spoke about being very quiet and removed from her children at times (10). She believes that this is because she is unhappy with herself due to the fact that she can't read and write. The social organization of her own home growing up has contributed to Bonnie's loneliness, "shyness" and distance from her own children. As the eldest of eleven children, Bonnie was kept at home to help with the work of the household. She mentioned at length the bitter feelings she had towards her mother who never provided her with the opportunity to go to school, unlike her younger brothers and sisters.

Sonia, a Greek woman who was orphaned as a young child and who is now the mother of three grown men, had a terrible first learning experience. Because she had no parents to enter her into a formal schooling program, she was tutored by a friend of the family. This man labeled her "retarded" and "stupid" and hit her when she failed to produce the correct answers to his questions.

Sonia expressed feelings of defeat and "shyness" in her everyday life. She explained that she feels timid because she is unable to comfortably express herself among family, friends and community members. She was extremely nervous about the idea of starting to learn again, as she had internalized the idea that she was unable to learn. The tutoring experience has served as an extremely empowering activity and Sonia is already, after five months, feeling better about her learning capabilities and her own self-image.

Sonia had a terrible first learning experience from a man who hit her when she failed to produce correct answers.

MSL executive members make the final preparations for their first annual Student Awards Banquet (February 1992).

Edna, a Jamaican woman who is a sample maker for a clothing designer, feels the strains of being a single mother of a rebellious seventeen-year-old son. The responsibilities and worries that flow from this relationship make it difficult for Edna to concentrate on her literacy lessons. She finds it hard to schedule regular meetings with her tutor and often becomes discouraged when she is unable to keep up consistently with her work.

Social Connections



There is a definite need for women to have social contact with other women in their literacy learning. Such contact allows women to engage in critical discussions which helps them challenge the social organization of their lives. Horsman advocates that "when literacy programs seek to enhance the social aspects of the program, and strengthen and expand the possibilities for meaningful interaction between students, they help to

create a space for discourse which include women's shared realities" (11). MSL makes a point of stressing the integration of "work" and "social" time in tutoring relationships. This approach draws the focus of learning away from an individual act and supports a philosophy of education which is more social in nature.

Women expressed an eager desire to organize their own lives and become independent from welfare, the medical system, husbands and families.

Pauline's relationship with her literacy student Simone, a thirty-year-old single mother on welfare, embodies the importance of building a supportive, social dimension to the learning experience. Pauline explains: "Although Simone and I have a hard time meeting on a regular basis and settling down into a regular pattern of work, I sometimes think that Simone needs me to be there more as a friend than as a tutor. It is because she is either busy looking after her ten year old son, or running out at the last minute for a job interview or to pick up a welfare cheque that she has been waiting for, that it is difficult to feel as though we are accomplishing anything concrete. Simone seems happy however, to have social contact with me on a personal level. Someone to share her frustrations with and to be supportive of what she is going through in society." This example demonstrates how these relationships have the potential to lead to social change, in that "if programs encourage sharing between

women, sharing that not only allows them to talk about their problems, but also to look critically at the location of these problems, they will create a space for discourses of resistance" (12).

A similar relationship was formed between Frances and her literacy student Bonnie, mentioned earlier. Frances commented: "I feel as though I have helped Bonnie through some of the hard times in her life by presenting myself as a positive role model for her to learn from. I'm not saying this in a patronizing way, but what I mean is that Bonnie has never had another women to act as her role model, or support system. Bonnie respects my

opinion and the advice that I give her. She ends up feeling empowered when she is able to take all these suggestions into consideration and act on them on her own."

Literacy as Empowerment

Most of the women that we spoke to expressed an eager desire to organize their own lives, to have their own source of income and to gain independence from welfare, the medical system, husbands and families. Several women mentioned getting a job or upgrading the one that they already had as a way to achieve independence. Doris sent us a letter last fall which read: "I definitely wish to begin my session. My English pronunciations and understanding text read needs immediate attention. I hope to qualify for your program to be able to gain some confidence to find my future employment."

Levana, an Israeli woman who is somewhat literate in Hebrew but wants to learn English, expressed her desire to provide her own children with a proper education. She spoke of how, as a young girl, due to the untimely death of her mother, she had to work hark to support her large family. Women like Levana focus their desires on their children, hoping that their participation in literacy and upgrading programs will give them access to greater opportunities.

Levana expressed how good it felt to be trying so hard to achieve her goals, and that it was this "trying" which make her feel capable of accepting new challenges in her life and of becoming more independent. Her most immediate goals included learning how to read her mail without seeking help from her children and becoming more comfortable with reading material at work and with filling out work-related forms. She also mentioned being embarrassed that everyone at work knew that she was unable to read and write.

Another common area in which women expressed their desire to rely on their own resources is the medical system. Bonnie was suffering from severe migraines and sought medical advice from a variety of sources. One doctor told her she was over-reacting and that her headaches could not possibly be as bad as she described. Another doctor whom she visited for a second opinion prescribed her with medication which was extraordinarily expensive and beyond her limited budget.

The challenge which lies ahead for literacy workers is to find meeting points between feminism and literacy.

This same doctor later prescribed her with sleeping pills, which proved to be the least suitable medication for her needs. Bonnie felt unable to challenge the medical authorities but was also dissatisfied with the lack of control over her own body and her own life.

However, it is a mistaken assumption that women like Bonnie are completely without resources. When she was first interviewed by MSL, Bonnie described an empowering exercise she had created for herself. Over the last few years she had been keeping a tape of all of her different experiences, both positive and negative. She explained how she found this a therapeutic way in which to work through her emotions and to evaluate the direction of her life. She expressed an eagerness to transcribe these tapes into a written journal so that she could refer to them

whenever she needed, and so that she could improve her skills of written expression.

MSL has also initiated an annual awards banquet to help build confidence in the students and their achievements. At this banquet, each student is presented with a certificate and their tutors are encouraged to describe how their learning has improved and in what capacity. The event also provides students with an opportunity to speak their minds and share their feelings about their tutoring experiences.

Challenges for the Future

As a result of our feminist assessment of MSL, we have concluded that the challenge which lies ahead for literacy workers is to find meeting points between feminism and literacy. This connection will be most satisfying if it is developed as a reciprocal relationship. Such a relationship will help us move our understanding of women and literacy full circle from that of the "us/ them" paradigm to the development of community and dialogue.

Similarly, as university students across Canada start to fuel an exciting and innovative campus-based literacy movement (13), it is important for all emerging groups to build woman-positive programming into their tutor training and program delivery. Through our experiences with MSL, we have discovered that students are politically and socially committed to making a difference to their society and to promoting literacy as a fundamental human right. Voicing the experiences of the women we have worked with at MSL is our contribution to both the literacy movement and the feminist process.

Lynda Stokes was actively involved with McGill Students for Literacy from 1990-93 as a tutor and as the Outreach Coordinator. She is currently studying law at the University of Alberta and has used her experience with MSL to help initiate a similar student-run program.

Stephanie Garrow was actively involved in the evolution of McGill Students for Literacy from 1990-93, as a tutor and as the Coordinator of the organization. She is currently the Canadian Program Officer at World Literacy of Canada, a non-profit voluntary organization that works to promote adult literacy, raise public awareness and fund programs in Canada and throughout the world.

1. CLOW pamphlet, "Let's Talk about Women and Literacy," 1989; and Statistics Canada, *Adult Literacy in Canada: Results of a National Study*.
2. Dana Beckelman, "Defining a Feminist Literacy," *Canadian Woman Studies*, 9 (3&4), p.132.
3. Jennifer Horsman, *Something in My Mind Besides the Everyday: Women and Literacy*. Toronto, 1990, p.124.
4. Horsman, p.86.
5. Kathleen Rockhill, "The Other City... Where No One Reads," *Canadian Woman Studies*, 9 (3&4), p.7.
6. Horsman, p.86.
7. CLOW pamphlet.

8. Horsman, p.86.
9. Horsman, p.79.
10. Please note that names of students have been changed to respect their right to privacy.
11. Jennifer Horsman, "The Social Dimensions of Literacy," *Canadian Woman Studies*, 9 (3&4), p.81.
12. *Ibid.*
13. Frontier College, a Canada-wide, volunteer based literacy organization, has developed in the last two years a program to bring Canadian university students to the forefront of the literacy movement. *Frontier College: Students for Literacy* aims to set up student-run literacy programs on university and college campuses across the country.

POETRY

a kiss on the nose

of a person you don't really know
is a difficult task.

as awkward as trying to strain self from home to work,
this idea being accomplished in small motions of palm to pocket.

who holds this pen, the ink issued out onto the files' flyleaf entries
the jarring unceasing ness of it broken only in the dialogue sketches shaped
by a man speaking quietly of old bills or a woman mourning missed opportunity.
where do faces rest once the office evening alarm is set
how does the reflection compare: the long bus ride home or opaque office
glass.

could i witness the presence of eyes and mouths and the clasping of hands
and for years not once glimpse the source?
never would i see you if not across filing cabinets
and only in the lunch hour could i ever have a chance to watch
the way sunlight strokes your cheekbones and chin.

our reciprocal anger has now been recorded.
should i speak of not knowing you in five years
should i speak of not really knowing you now?

who knows that what the bureaucracy calls "flyleaf" is really defined as:
a blank leaf at the beginning or end of a book
and which co-worker could say that one day they saw me
writing mine and my beloved's initials in the fresh cement
just steps away from my almost home streetcar stop.

walking on saturday, i glanced a tree shedding chestnuts
upon that same cement
but all weekend i recalled the hurtful words
then sunday night i dreamt that
i kissed you lightly on the nose
and smiled back at you.

catherine lake

Toronto, Ontario

Get Real! Developing Curricula that Respond to Women's Lives

by Marie Barton

To have a voice is to be human. To have something to say is to be a person.
(Carol Gilligan, 1993)

Education and educators have required women and children living with violence to deny their reality.

Three years ago, I was privileged to be a teacher of adults and the facilitator of a research project that changed my perception of education. Today, as vice-principal in an elementary school, I am in a position to share some of the insights I gained from my adult students. I can also implement recommendations formulated by these courageous women. Finding their voice empowered my students; listening to their message empowers all of us.

The story begins with a request from several of the women at our adult education centre that I organize a credit course on Personal Life Management that would acknowledge their experiences with violence. Only then, they insisted, would such a course be honest and meaningful for them. Only then would the skills taught by the standard course be "learnable" by women whose reality is defined by violence.

By reserving the centre for this class only, one night a week, I was able to create an environment that encouraged trust and sharing. I felt comfortable with the design we created for the program because my background includes social work training, work in crisis centers and personal counselling as well as teacher training. The students seemed to trust my ability to help them with their emotions. One woman said, "I know when I get unraveled, you're there to knit me back up before I go home." My professional caution, however, alerted me to the problems that might lie ahead for the group if I were not up to the task. I arranged for the support of a counsellor from the area's crisis centre. Initially this woman was a co-leader and gradually she withdrew to an on-call support role, available if needed.

The clear message my students gave me was that education and educators have required them as children growing up in violent homes, as teens involved in relationship abuse, as victims of incest, as child-viewers of pornography, as battered wives to deny their reality. For some participants, our course offered the first opportunity to make education truly meaningful. We began by addressing power imbalance and the vulnerability of children and women in our society; we moved through personal and political analyses and we grew into awareness, assertiveness and self-confidence.

Un peu de sérieux! Élaborons des programmes d'études qui tiennent compte de la violence

par Marie Barton

Il y a trois ans, à la demande de quelques femmes qui fréquentaient un centre d'éducation aux adultes, j'ai organisé un cours sur la dynamique de la vie, qui tenait compte de la violence. À partir de ce cours, nous avons élaboré à l'intention du personnel enseignant et du système d'éducation une liste de stratégies relative au problème de la violence faite aux enfants.

Nous traitons dans cet article trois des recommandations faites. La première: avoir des cours obligatoires dans le cadre de la formation des enseignants et enseignantes sur la façon de reconnaître la douleur des enfants qui viennent d'un milieu violent. L'éducation, si elle veut être éloquente et habilitant, doit admettre que tous les enfants souffrent quelquefois, mais beaucoup trop souffrent tout le temps. La deuxième: avoir des contacts réguliers avec le personnel pendant toute la scolarité. En vertu du système actuel, les enfants sont obligés de changer de salle ou d'enseignant, au moment même où ils commencent à se sentir peut-être un peu plus en confiance. La troisième: inclure des cours d'études féminines au cycle secondaire. Les femmes qui assistaient à mon cours n'avaient pas jusque-là eu l'occasion d'analyser ou de découvrir ce qui leur était arrivé, pas plus qu'elles n'avaient eu la chance de se sentir bien en tant que femmes ou jeunes filles. Les femmes et les enfants doivent suivre des programmes d'études qui correspondent à leur existence. En ma qualité d'éducatrice, j'estime que nous leur devons au moins ça.

The motivation and energy of the course gave birth to the idea of a research project. I asked the students to assist me in developing a framework, a list of strategies, anything that would be helpful to teachers who are aware of violence in the lives of children they teach, but unsure as to what, if anything, they could offer. Their overwhelmingly positive response challenged me to find ways the research project itself would continue to empower the women informing the work. I was only too aware of the vulnerability of any woman who chooses to re-open carefully closed wounds. We did not enter this work lightly or proceed without utmost care.

"I don't understand why nobody stopped a kid at twelve or thirteen and questioned why she stunk of booze in the morning at school. "

I chose to follow the feminist research process clearly outlined by such authors as Kirby and McKenna (1989) and Stanley and Wise (1983). This approach allows me to place myself firmly in the process and requires me to be totally accountable to the participants who inform the study. Several of the women had assisted me earlier in my M.Ed. research and they were familiar with the structure. Each also recalled the strength she found in using her voice to help others find theirs. The experienced students helped the new members to feel confident and together we designed a methodology that suited our needs.

We were twelve in total but we most frequently met in groups of five or six. We ranged in age from nineteen to fifty-five. We were all white women as is the majority of residents in our small town and surrounding rural area. We made no attempt to address minority issues because we did not feel it was our place to do so. However, we feel strongly that this is work that needs to be done. As women in small town Ontario we, too, feel isolated and marginalized. The bucolic myth of peaceful small towns and neighbourly love belies the reality of violence behind lace curtains.

One participant told of her troubled childhood and articulated frequently the protection she felt her abusing father was given because of his position in the community. When Jody became a "wild acting out teenager," the community sympathized with her parents. "I was dressing like I was eighteen (at twelve) and then I was into the smoking and the drinking and the drugging, very young, and I don't really understand why nobody stopped a kid at twelve or thirteen and questioned why they stunk like booze in the morning at school. ... Because of who my father was, everybody around me, everybody in authority, I think, because it was a small town, stuck their head in the sand."

Tammy was abused by her brother and assaulted by a school bus driver, both people respected in her community. When Tammy finally, after years of silence, shared her secret with her mother, she was told to continue the silence because the appearance of family unity was most important. Carrie, abandoned by her mother, was abused by an uncle. She struggles as an adult to fight demons of flashbacks and fears that her father too participated in her childhood terrors.

Date rape, alcoholism, neglect. These are common themes. So are concerns about the ability to be a good parent and deep worries about how the school system fails as a protector of children. Jenna was gang-raped at thirteen. Neither her parents nor her teachers were able to help her deal with the aftermath of the horror. Their silence taught her that her reality was invisible. At first, she rarely spoke. But though this young woman did find the strength to charge several of her assailants, she experienced another kind of silencing in court. Because she was unable to continue repeating her story over and over, separately for each perpetrator, the last two were released without penalty. Jenna fears her "weakness" has given these men the freedom to attack another child.

These are only a few stories, and their selection is not intended to deny the reality of anyone else's experience. The truth is that such stories are found all too readily in our communities and children such as Jody and Tammy sit in our classrooms every day. Indeed, these three stories are included here precisely to expose times in these women's lives when schools could have made a difference and didn't.

What do these women think we teachers could do? I will discuss here just three of their many suggestions: teacher training, continuing of contact with personnel, and women's studies courses in secondary school. As we talked and drew out common themes, we recognized easily a dozen other recommendations.

Teacher Training

The women who informed my study often asked, "Just what do they teach you in Teachers' College?" Their guesses, when I turned the question back to them, were not far from the truth. In the same way that we are horrified to learn how few lectures in nutrition students of medicine are required to take, my students reacted in shock when we talked about specific training given to teacher trainees in dealing with "real life ugliness." We are, as a profession, moving in this direction and my study group helped push us a bit farther. They prepared a tape for me to use at a professional development program which was well received by my peers. But we are a small group. Such training is not a pre-requisite of a diploma nor is it available to every practicing teacher. Not all are ready to hear the content; some are judgmental and only too happy to continue to blame the victim.

Clearly, the solution must begin with mandatory courses in teacher education.

Clearly, the solution must begin with mandatory courses in teacher education. As one student told me, "It's like everything else; if it isn't compulsory it doesn't seem . . . important." The speaker of these words chose to call herself "Invaded" for purposes of this work. She had felt unimportant at home and at school, and now feels strongly that often "the wrong people go into teaching."

Our discussion resulted in the recommendation that intense screening of applicants and frequent evaluation of graduates include a process for understanding the value teachers place on children's pain. While recognizing that academics are the primary focus of the teacher's job, Tammy insisted that she could not learn academics from any teacher who didn't first and foremost care about her as a person. The group agreed. All of them had been labelled drop-outs in the school system. None felt consistently valued by staff and all saw escaping from school as a way of escaping to a better world.



Fran Thoburn

Carrie over-achieved, feeling appreciated and safe only when she was perfect. Tammy under-achieved, so frightened was she of all the powerful people in her world. Jenna simply faded away--a bright but hurting child who could not find the crack in any teacher's door to welcome her back after tragedy struck. Jody and Invaded acted out their anger and felt a collective sigh of relief from their school's personnel when the door

closed behind them.

It is clear that hurt children behave in a variety of ways. My students also understand that teachers are overloaded with curriculum and duties required of their work. There was, in fact, little blaming of teachers who were "just doing their jobs." The overwhelming message is, however, that these women would have benefited as children if our jobs had been different. In the same way that the Personal Life Management course began with the acknowledgment of violence in the students' lives, we recommend that teacher training also begin with this recognition.

Each piece of a child's learning should be assessed from a hurting child's point of view; every opportunity should be given to students of any age to find a voice, to be a person. In order to enable a teacher to analyze material and lessons in this way, childcare counsellors and experienced social workers should be part of every staff. The reality is that every child hurts at some time; too many children hurt most of the time. The "hurting child" assumption helps us all.

Even I was reminded, during the research, of the importance of this work, and the lack of sensitivity most of us carry with us about the realities of others. In order to collect data, I suggested we each keep a journal. Each participant could personalize the night's discussion if she wished or she could add information and stories that she had not shared with the group. I am a compulsive journalized myself. I teach English and have often relied on journals to encourage comfortable, creative writing assignments for students. I heard no dissention as we agreed to this part of the methodology. I bought pretty books for each participant and I waited for entries to arrive.

Every child hurts at some time; too many children hurt most of the time.

Several women were ferocious in their work. Carrie wrote beautifully and poetically, using the exercise as a form of therapy. Cynthia used only writing, finding that talking in the group was too painful. Maggie made me laugh and Jody showed a wisdom far beyond her years; Cheryl wrote me letters.

But I failed to understand that a hurting child, although now a grown woman, might still be hurt. And I learned this from the women. Tammy: "I really don't like writing in the journal. It's hard but I'm doing it. I'm having a hard time doing it but I know why. ... It's because prior to the major event of abuse starting in my life, I used to write down anything and everything. I was always writing. When that happened, I threw away every notebook and every piece of paper I ever wrote on and said I'd never write anything again. ... I didn't have anything good to write so I wasn't going to write anything."

Invaded: "I once started a journal and I was told by my father that something like that was just ammunition for my mother to use against me--it's black and white--so I never got into writing anything down. Besides which, you start writing down things that are personal and you seem to bleed all over again. ... It's very painful." Beth: "I find writing it down is painful and it's not only painful but it's bringing me back to the events that happened."

Had I stopped to analyze this activity through the eyes of a hurting child, I might have seen what a painful process it could be. How easily we assume we can understand the feelings of our students, using our own feelings as a gauge.

Continuity of Contact with Personnel

Tammy sadly told us that it took her a long time to begin to trust a teacher. In fact, she often was just reaching that point when June came around and she was moved to another room; the work of learning to trust began all over again. "When I left the last teacher, I wasn't her problem any more," Tammy recounted. It seemed that all her previous teachers were no longer accessible to her.

We discussed this aspect of education at length. Together we devised a scenario of an in-school daycare centre staffed with childcare workers who have a role in the lives of the older children too. Each child in every grade would be required to spend time in the daycare, working with the childcare counsellor, witnessing problem-solving techniques and non-violent parenting. Teachers at the school would be encouraged to place their own pre-schoolers in this centre and to spend time with them throughout the day supplementing the staff at the centre and working with the older children present. The children would then see a more human and less formal side of the teachers and would also learn appropriate care of children and positive interaction with others. The early childhood educators in this scenario become key players in the school personnel, as they are constant figures in the life of the students as they pass from grade to grade. In addition, they serve as examples of adults in a teaching role whose primary goal is not academic but loving.

Women's Studies Courses in Secondary School

Those of us who have experienced a university course in Women's Studies are familiar with the incredible high that can follow from the shared experiences and opening of understanding. Some fortunate women always view the world from a clear women's point of reference, while the majority of us need a guide to understanding our reality or validating our perspectives. My students told me that our class gave them an opportunity to explore feminist thinking for the first time. They did not openly accept the philosophy as their own but several commented, "I never looked at it that way!"

Students are asking that such courses be available. As educators, we owe them nothing less.

The label is irrelevant; the viewpoint is critical. The privilege of middle-class, the arrogance of financial stability, the opportunity of higher education--each of these eludes my students. Most of them are single parents. All were struggling to attain a grade twelve diploma, hoping it would open entry level positions in the world of work for them. They were anxious to model for their children a way of life that did not limit itself to Mothers' Allowance cheques at the end of the month and was not defined by society's negative image of welfare recipients. University is not in their deck of cards.

Some secondary school teachers have attempted to include the women's perspectives in social science courses. English teachers have addressed gender bias in reading material. Guidance counsellors and co-op education have encouraged non-traditional careers. Yet,

at the same time women's studies courses are seen as the domain of post-secondary curriculum. My students feel this process keeps young women "in their place" and perpetuates the second-class citizen image they are struggling to leave behind.

Taking this course with me allowed my students to identify their experiences and find voices in which to articulate them. One of our activities as a group was to make presentations to the Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women. My students traveled over a hundred miles in a horrific winter storm to speak out against violence. They talked about raising awareness in the schools. They told their personal stories. Jenna's newly found voice was heard on national television. We also talked about perspective--women's perspective.

Until all students, the gifted and the learner with difficulties, the happy child and the hurting child, the male and the female, have the same opportunity that I have had to see a variety of perspectives as part of my compulsory learning, we will continue to view the world through patriarchal spectacles. My students are asking that such courses be available. As an educator, I believe we owe them nothing less.

Conclusion

The women who informed this study are experts in this field. They remember only too well what they needed as children and were denied. They spoke humbly (for their opinions are not often requested) and courageously as they realized they have an important message to tell. Their words travel with me as I walk the halls of the elementary school where I now work. I try every day to incorporate these stories into the way I think, act and teach. Hurting children cannot articulate their needs; my students have tried to do it for them. Are you listening?

Marie Barton is vice-principal in an elementary school, and has a special interest in women in adult education.

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The Role of Librarians in the Inclusive University

by Margot Schenk

At the first Status of Women workshop held by the Canadian Association of University Teachers on the topic of the inclusive university, I raised the question of library collections. My comment was received politely but participants hastened to move on to more "relevant" issues. Why is this the case? Do we all take for granted that university library collections are based on the principles of intellectual and academic freedom and that these principles will automatically lead to an inclusive academic library? Perhaps the library is simply forgotten. Perhaps the academy assumes that the library collection just happens, not recognizing that it is designed volume by volume as an ever-changing, growing entity.

Systemic barriers disallow full recognition and partnership to all those who would comprise an inclusive university.

Libraries are inclusive to the extent that their materials and access points represent the values and interests of both men and women, persons of diverse cultural and ethnic origins, differently abled persons, and persons of different sexual orientations. The principles of academic freedom, when applied to libraries, *should* lead to inclusive university libraries; however, I suspect that many of our university library collections are somewhat exclusive.

While preparing this paper, I sent out a message over the Internet to an electronic discussion list concerned with intellectual freedom. I asked list participants to comment on the possibility of systemic barriers in our purchasing and cataloguing practices. Only one respondent thought I might be a little cynical, while most eagerly described how systemic discrimination happens at their institutions.

A professor of collection development at a Canadian library school said that he was impressed with the degree to which selection of materials in libraries is a matter of submitting to a machine--one that is designed, maintained, and operated for the benefit of a few very large publishers. He planned to spend more time teaching the issues of finding and selecting alternative materials. An American librarian said that she guards against bias by ordering materials she "hates" for 10% of her budget. She felt that if we all did that cooperatively, balanced collections would result. Other Canadian respondents talked of the ease of buying mainstream materials and the difficulty of cataloguing non-mainstream materials, both of which mitigate against an inclusive diverse collection.

L'université et le rôle des bibliothécaires

par Margot Schenk

De nombreux obstacles se dressent pour créer des bibliothèques répondant aux besoins de tout le monde. Les politiques d'achat des bibliothèques universitaires reflètent les programmes d'études et les champs de recherches de l'institution, lesquels sont généralement déterminés par un corps professoral majoritairement blanc, masculin, physiquement robuste et hétérosexuel. De plus, beaucoup de bibliothèques dépendent aussi de plans d'achat et de commandes par machine qui sont conçus et prévus pour plaire à quelques grandes maisons d'édition. Lorsqu'on dispose d'un budget restreint, il est plus facile d'opter pour ce genre de solution, au lieu de chercher des publications représentant une gamme plus diversifiée d'opinions.

Cette méthode sélective peut mettre en péril des documents marginaux, qui sont souvent moins empruntés et s'abîment plus rapidement en raison de méthodes de production à bon marché. Les méthodes de catalogage constituent un autre obstacle; cataloguer des livres obscurs ou d'un intérêt précis prend beaucoup de temps, coûte cher et n'est souvent pas prioritaire. Les personnes se déplaçant en fauteuil roulant ou celles qui n'utilisent pas des ouvrages imprimés ont souvent du mal à avoir accès aux collections des bibliothèques. Heureusement, les techniques des bibliothèques, comme les livres-cassettes, les catalogues parlants informatisés et les services spéciaux d'aiguillage, commencent à répondre aux besoins de ces personnes. Enfin, en raison des coupures budgétaires draconiennes, de nombreuses collections diminuent sérieusement. Pour sauver quelques journaux prestigieux, faut-il risquer d'en perdre de moins réputés? Quand on décide de procéder à des coupures, il faut peser soigneusement le pour et le contre à ce propos.

Policies should reflect the need to incorporate, as widely as possible, all minority and marginal interests and points of view.

For most Canadian librarians, academic freedom is a right, as well as a responsibility, usually defined in their collective agreements, handbooks, or in their terms and conditions of employment.

Academic freedom allows librarians to practice their profession unhindered by those in the community who would restrict or deny free access to information. As academic librarians we also have long defended the right of other members of the academy to the protection guaranteed by these principles.

The Canadian Library Association statement of intellectual freedom says: "All persons in Canada have the fundamental right, as embodied in the nation's Bill of Rights and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, to have access to all expressions of knowledge, creativity and intellectual activity, and to express their thoughts publicly. This right to intellectual freedom, under the law, is essential to the health and development of Canadian society. Libraries have a basic responsibility for the development and maintenance of intellectual freedom.

"It is the responsibility of libraries to guarantee and facilitate access to all expressions of knowledge and intellectual activity, including those which some elements of society may consider to be unconventional, unpopular or unacceptable. To this end, libraries shall acquire and make available the widest variety of materials."



*Patrick Power Library
at Saint Mary's University*

Hate literature is, of course, an issue for librarians. Collections of extremist literature which can be characterized as hate literature cannot be justified on the basis of a balanced collection. "Balance" applies to competing theories which are subject to debate, discussion and consideration. When literature denies historical fact it is not redressing a balance in discussion, but promoting a historical fiction. Collections dealing with factual matter (historical or otherwise) need to stand the test of accuracy or authoritativeness, or be identified in some way as historical error or invention.

Most Canadian academic librarians are fully committed to these principles. What remains for us are the challenges, some of which can be discerned in existing systemic barriers. These barriers disallow full recognition and partnership to all those who would comprise an inclusive university.

Selection of Materials

Purchases usually reflect current curricula and research interests of the institution, and books and other materials are selected and purchased based on criteria stated in library collections policies. These policies should reflect the need to incorporate, as widely as possible, all minority and marginal interests and points of view, as well as those on the frontier of knowledge. While supporting the curriculum, librarians try to include materials that may not be currently taught but which, nevertheless, reflect the intellectual and socio-political developments of a broader society.

Unfortunately, the reality is that collections in many Canadian academic libraries today are diminishing--not developing, or even remaining static as a result of budget cuts, fund reallocation, the GST and other government initiatives. The GST does more than add to the cost of each purchase. Many small and alternative presses in other countries have refused to "collect Canadian taxes" and will not send materials to Canada, thus limiting the resources available to Canadian researchers.

The majority of faculty is still white, male, able-bodied, and heterosexual, and they recommend materials that support mainstream views and issues.

The financial situation at some libraries has reached desperate proportions. For example, the University of British Columbia announced last year that their library serials budget would be cut by one million dollars. The UBC library, once ranked twelfth in the annual American Research Libraries Survey, fell to twenty-seventh. Balancing library collections has taken on a new meaning and imperative: how can we achieve the goals of academic freedom and the inclusive academic library with the current funding crisis that exists in many institutions?

Given that the higher price increases typically occur among the costliest and most prestigious journals of a subject discipline, libraries may have to weigh the cancellation of several moderately-priced, but less critical journals against that of a few indispensable ones. Those that are dispensable may include publications of secondary importance within a given research field, journals that

are basic resources for a particular subject but are comparatively little-used, cross-disciplinary journals that may not be of intense interest to anyone academic department, and journals that cover subject disciplines that have a lower priority at a particular university.

Cutting large numbers of less prominent journals to save a small number of prestigious titles can have serious implications for the inclusive university. Scholars in less mainstream disciplines or in academic fields with relatively lower profiles face a greater likelihood that their journals will be cut than do those in other disciplines. Creative and thorough research in the affected disciplines thus becomes more difficult, as researchers have to expend more time and effort to obtain the literature they require.

These implications can be of special importance to women, visible minorities, and others who represent non-mainstream interests. Given that scholarly journals also reflect particular theoretical, methodological or ideological approaches, there is the additional risk that journal cuts may not be ideologically neutral, that the diffusion of alternate or non-standard viewpoints might be restricted.

The process of selection at university libraries usually involves a partnership of faculty and librarians, and usually reflects the current curriculum. The majority of faculty in Canadian universities is still overwhelmingly white, male, able-bodied and heterosexual. These people usually recommend materials that support mainstream views and issues and do not reflect the widest possible range of social and political issues and philosophies.

There are other factors at play. Many university libraries rely on purchasing plans and machine ordering. With limited budgets, libraries can find enough materials to buy through the "easy" routes and may not search for elusive, ephemeral material representing more diverse viewpoints. It is, therefore, the responsibility of librarians to be aware of this systemic bias and avoid the easy route of restricted ordering that may be time-saving, but may not include material representative of divergent groups.

Along with selecting materials, most librarians also weed the collection regularly to make room for new acquisitions. The criteria used to weed unwanted materials may eliminate many of the ephemeral, alternative materials that support the inclusive university. The physical condition of these materials may be poor--many alternative presses cannot afford to bind their materials as well as the mainstream publishers. A book in poor physical condition is often discarded since it cannot be loaned. Frequency of use is another criterion for weeding. Small press books with a small readership may be weeded in favor of mainstream, widely cited material.

A note of hope is that with increasingly restricted purchasing power, many libraries are re-evaluating their weeding policies in favor of keeping more materials. The shelves are not filling up as quickly and it is still cheaper to rebind than replace.

Intellectual Access

Should we be fortunate enough to have purchased diverse, controversial, obscure or politically radical material, we need to make people aware that we have this material and where it is.

It has only been in the last few years that the Library of Congress has eliminated a whole range of discriminatory subject headings.

The standard cataloguing practices at university libraries are developed largely for mainstream materials. The vast majority of academic libraries have access through subject heading and classification based on the United States Library of Congress system. The vocabulary used for subject access to most university collections is controlled by a thesaurus compiled by the Library of Congress.

This institution has traditionally been monumentally slow in catching up to current trends, particularly with respect to subject analysis. It has only been in the last few years, for example, that the Congress has eliminated a whole range of discriminatory subject headings for women, such as the infamous "women as" headings.

Why can't enlightened cataloguers just use enlightened subject headings to describe books, you ask. Once again libraries are trapped by the easy and less expensive routes.

Most Canadian academic libraries find it much cheaper and more convenient to use large cataloguing utilities to derive cataloguing copy. Automated cataloguing methods work best for standard works from mainstream publishers where cataloguing records are created in machine-readable form, either pre-publication or shortly afterwards. These records, with their standard subject headings, are made available to libraries that subscribe to these cataloguing services. Most libraries rely heavily on copying the subject headings assigned to books by large central agencies.

Materials which are difficult to catalogue, which may include local, obscure, ephemeral, special interest materials--in short, some of the items one would expect in the inclusive academic library--may languish for a long time in the backlog area of cataloguing

departments. It is specialized, very time-consuming and therefore expensive work to start with the book in hand and assign subject categories and call numbers, with no guidance from the major cataloguing utilities. This means access to materials that fall outside the mainstream may be delayed even if they do reach the library.

Physical Access

There are the obvious physical barriers to any library collection. People in wheelchairs cannot reach the majority of the collection. People who have difficulty reading or using print materials have only limited number of materials available. While the demise of the card catalogue has made it easier for many to reach catalogue information, the difficulty of reading computer screens has created a different barrier for some. Very few library staff are trained in sign language to help hearing impaired users.

Most libraries do their best, with limited resources, to provide such things as doors that open automatically, recorded books, braille signs, "talking" computerized catalogues, machines that will read text aloud, large print terminals, and reference services to meet special needs. The use of cd-rom periodical indexes has enabled those who can't use conventional printed sources to do their own library research using specialized computer software. As well, the advent of the "virtual library ," where computer-literate users may access a wealth of information from all over the world, has reduced the need to be physically present in a library to use its resources. All of these services demonstrate where library technologies have been of enormous value in eliminating physical barriers.

Many libraries, including my own, have these services. However, this still does not mean equal physical access for all users. It usually takes much longer for students with "special needs" to get the information they require, especially if it must be recorded or is accessed through special equipment. In addition, to get the enhanced service, students must identify themselves as disabled to the staff. All library staff must be sensitive to the needs of all users, and libraries that strive to be inclusive must find solutions.

Governance

At many Canadian universities the chief librarian or another administrator represents the library on university committees. As a result, academic policies are developed which perpetuate the inherent biases and prejudices of established power structures. It is important to have input from rank and file librarians whose viewpoints may be more diverse than those of library administrators.

It is easy to say that an infusion of money would solve everything. It would certainly help.

If internal policies and procedures in libraries are determined by administrators, who may base their decisions solely on financial considerations and efficiency rather than on wider principles, we may not achieve the goals of the inclusive university library. As I have described, purchasing easily catalogued books from mainstream publishers can be very cost-effective, but at the expense of inclusivity. Declining budgets are a great excuse to limit the kind of purchases a university library may make. I have mentioned the importance of the library collections policy in

determining what will be bought; there must be wide representation on committees which determine library policy if we are to ensure that the collection will be as inclusive as possible.

Academic Inclusivity, Educational Equity

It is easy to say that an infusion of money would solve everything. It would certainly help. Without new money, however, careful choices must be made in allocating the resources available. The administrations of our universities and colleges must be committed to the principles of academic freedom and the inclusive university for much progress to be made.

Just as technology creates some of the barriers, so technology will open some of the doors. The recent National Summit on Information Policy recognized the role of technology in enabling access. Yes, we select and purchase materials through a system made easy because of automated procedures which may exclude materials not in the mainstream. However, the automation of library catalogues has created global libraries. Researchers can know about materials in libraries around the world from personal computers in their own homes, offices or libraries.

With machine readable cataloguing, researchers can find materials using specialized language that the author has used in the title or table of contents, and Boolean logic can link different concepts for more precision. Special personal computers can provide voice-read screens of library catalogues for those who require this assistance and library users in wheelchairs can access library catalogues independently, now that we have freed ourselves from card catalogues.

Systemic barriers to the creation of the inclusive university library do, indeed, exist but many Canadian librarians are aware of the issues and problems before them and are attempting, despite hard economic times and diminishing acquisitions budgets, to ameliorate them. Lobbying by groups such as the Canadian Association of University Teachers and the Canadian Association of Research Libraries can bring forward issues such as the restrictions imposed by the GST and the lack of funding for granting agencies. The shape of the library collection, access to the collection, and the place of the library in our institutions are important determining factors in weighing how far we have come toward the goals of academic freedom and the inclusive university. And if we are to achieve educational equity, all avenues of study must be supported; all members of the academic community must have access to information resources.

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CASP! Do You Really Want One in Your Neighbourhood?

by Dorothy MacKeracher

The Community Academic Services Program is very problematic.

The Community Academic Services Program (CASP) is a new, community-based literacy program in New Brunswick. There is a danger that the thinking which drives this program may be exported to other provinces, because it can be mounted with few government resources and appears to be very successful. Before you sign up for one in your community, however, perhaps you should hear about our experiences (1).

Adult illiteracy in New Brunswick, at 25 percent, is the second highest in Canada. The provincial government has declared that this situation must be remedied by the year 2000 and has initiated a number of programs designed to provide adults with opportunities to develop reading skills and upgrade their academic levels. While the programs are innovative and appear to be succeeding--well beyond the government's wildest expectations--each program has its own problems. From a feminist perspective, the Community Academic Services Program is very problematic.

CASP: A Partnership in Literacy Programming

In 1988, the newly-elected provincial government decided to take a more active role in literacy issues. A series of advisory committees at lower levels resulted in the formation, in 1990, of the Premier's Advisory Council on Literacy and, in 1992, the establishment of a provincial literacy office under the direction of the Minister of State for Literacy, who is also the Minister for Income Assistance.

Since 1988, the provincial government has established new literacy and basic education programs through creating networks within the provincial government and promoting the development of partnerships with private businesses and industries, federal and municipal agencies, and community groups. The partnerships which resulted in the development of the CASPs were first proposed in 1990. The partners include the provincial departments for Advanced Education and Labour (DAEL) and Income Assistance (DIA), the local Canada Employment Centers, the nine New Brunswick community colleges, members of community groups, and Literacy New Brunswick Inc. Each partner is responsible for a different aspect of the program.

Programme communautaire de services scolaires : une optique féministe

par Dorothy MacKeracher

Le Programme communautaire de services scolaires est une initiative du gouvernement du Nouveau Brunswick visant à éliminer l'analphabétisme d'ici à l'an 2000. D'après le gouvernement, les programmes remportent plus de succès qu'il ne l'espérait, mais d'après les femmes ces derniers comportent de nombreux problèmes.

Les programmes ont des points forts: ils remettent en contact des adultes sous-éduqués avec le système d'éducation, ces derniers peuvent suivre des cours à crédit pour obtenir un diplôme du cycle secondaire, le cadre communautaire crée un milieu favorable à l'apprentissage. Toutefois, le budget de la plupart des programmes est très limité et à moins que ces derniers ne soient affiliés à des organismes communautaires bien établis, ils ne disposent que de maigres ressources. Les responsables des programmes (surtout des femmes) sont beaucoup moins bien rémunérés que les éducateurs et éducatrices des collèges communautaires, bien que leur travail soit beaucoup plus exigeant. Il leur faut souvent mendier auprès d'entreprises ou d'autres organismes le matériel nécessaire, papier, crayons, livres, services de photocopie, etc. Une animatrice a même payé de sa poche ce genre de fournitures. Les animatrices ne sont pas soutenues et presque aucun cours de formation n'existe pour elles. Leur taux de roulement est par conséquent très élevé. Entre-temps, les responsables provinciaux prennent à leur compte les succès remportés, au dépend de travailleuses dévouées et d'élèves qui luttent.

On paper, the policies seem beneficial, flexible and realistic. In practice, the situation is less than perfect.

The community is responsible for forming a management committee which first raises a minimum of \$3,000 and then assumes responsibilities for locating a suitable classroom, hiring and supervising the program facilitator or instructor, recruiting students, and providing all supplies and equipment. A community group can be an incorporated village or town, not-for-profit organization, native band council, literacy council, group of interested citizens, and the like.

The DAEL, through the literacy coordinators attached to each community college, is responsible for providing information sessions to community groups interested in mounting a CASP, assisting in the hiring and training of facilitators, acquiring and distributing curriculum materials, and recruiting and testing students. The DIA is responsible for providing income support to students and the Canada Employment Centres are responsible for providing supplementary training allowances to eligible students.

Literacy NB is a group of distinguished citizens appointed by the provincial government who report to the Minister of State for Literacy and who are responsible for soliciting

corporate or individual donations to support the CASPs. Each CASP enters into a contract with Literacy NB for a grant which, in combination with the \$3,000 raised by the community, is expected to cover the basic costs of paying the facilitator and running a 1200-hour program.

The facilitator is hired from among those who are on, or who are eligible for, income assistance or unemployment benefits. Preference is given to those with teacher training and experience working with adult learners, but such training and experience are not essential. The only requirement for employment is that each facilitator must have completed grade 12. The facilitator is hired for the duration of the management committee's contract with Literacy NB.

No fees are charged to attend a CASP. Students are encouraged to attend part-time but may attend full-time. Both day and evening classes may be offered. Initially the program was only to cover literacy education, or basic upgrading (grades 1-6). However, the demand for academic upgrading at the intermediate (grades 7-9) and senior (grades 10-12) levels has become so great that many of those placed on waiting lists for other academic upgrading programs have invaded the CASPs. By force of numbers and need, they have succeeded in shifting the program's focus.

The Benefits

On paper, the policies which have guided the formation of some 300 CASPs since 1991 seem beneficial, flexible and realistic. In practice, the situation is less than perfect.

The programs do have many merits. They have brought many under-educated adults back into contact with the education system through informal, supportive programs available within local communities. The familiarity of the community settings in which classes meet (church basements, community halls, unused schools, etc.) is reassuring for the learners.

The facilitator is usually a resident of the local community, someone the learner is likely to meet in the shopping centre. The facilitators are dedicated to their work. Many are fully trained but unemployed teachers, although few have experience in teaching adults. Over 75 percent are women. While they are paid for 1200 hours of work, most cheerfully come in early and stay late to assist students in solving personal and academic problems.

If students wish to obtain academic credit for the work done in the CASPs, they are able to write standardized, provincial examinations and receive credit from the DAEL toward an Adult High School Diploma. These exams are written in the local community at the end of certain units of study: in language arts and mathematics at the basic and intermediate levels; in general science and second language studies at the intermediate level. Students who are ready to do academic work at the senior level are expected to attend to a community college program although many prefer to continue their studies within the CASP. Whether or not the student remains in the CASP for senior level studies is dependent more on the educational background of the facilitator than on policies.

The Problems

The problems are many and varied, to be discussed here under three headings: financial support; physical facilities and resources; and the background, training and role of facilitators. There are also major problems in the design of curriculum materials, the formal evaluation process, and dissimilarities between the anglophone and francophone programs.

In some programs, the facilitator is isolated, the resources and equipment are poor, and few funds are available to purchase essential services.

Problems are less acute in CASPs which are attached to well-established, not-for-profit community agencies already organized to provide educational programs. For example, a local John Howard Society is able to provide personal support to the facilitator and additional funds to purchase resources and photocopy essential materials. Problems are most acute in CASPs which are mounted by local literacy councils or management committees brought together for the sole purpose of operating a CASP. In these programs, the facilitator is isolated, the resources and equipment are poor, and few funds are available to purchase essential services. In addition, the committee members do not appear to have the same continuing commitment to the students and the program as can be found in other types of CASPs.

Financial Support

Literacy NB provides \$13,752 to each CASP. In combination with the \$3,000 raised locally, each managing committee has \$16,752 to cover the cost of the facilitator's salary (\$14,352) and benefits (\$900), leaving a paltry \$1,500 to spend recklessly on physical facilities, heat and light, equipment (tables, chairs, desks), supplies (paper, binders, pens, pencils, reference books, math sets, globes), and services (photocopying).

Even though facilitators are employed on a contract basis, they are paid an hourly wage \$11.50 per hour for the life of the contract. The management committee has the discretionary power to assign 20 percent of these hours to preparation time (reproducing learning materials, preparing lessons, marking assignments). Some, however, insist that preparations be done on the facilitator's (unpaid) time.

With 4 percent vacation pay, each facilitator is paid \$14,352 or \$359 per week for a 40-week contract (or about \$280 per week after deductions), with eligibility for unemployment insurance at the end of the contract. The facilitator cannot negotiate this rate of pay unless the management committee is willing to raise additional funds in the local community. One facilitator wrote to her management committee: "I have worked in the community college setting and know that a CASP facilitator's work is far more demanding, and yet the salary is one-third less. Is this because most of the facilitators are female? Or conversely, are most of the facilitators female because ... males would not accept not being paid what they are worth? To add insult to injury, the [facilitator is not paid] for traditional school holidays or sick days; there is not even a small pension plan. I suspect that the salary issue alone is likely to cause a high turnover of CASP facilitators; and [the resulting] instability in the classroom could raise the student rate of attrition

significantly."

When a group of facilitators wrote to the Minister of State for Literacy to inquire why she had authorized a cutback in the hourly wage paid to facilitators from \$16.50 to \$11.50, her reply was that the facilitators should be grateful that CASP provided them with an opportunity to work and to gain valuable experience, and that they were being paid a wage similar to that for others employed on a professional service contract (2).

The fact that educators hired to teach in a similar, albeit private and institutionally-based program, often operating next door to the CASP, were being paid \$16.00 for exactly the same work appears to be irrelevant. The fact that persons employed on a professional service contract usually negotiate their rate of pay is irrelevant. The fact that the government insists on using the term "facilitator" rather than "teacher" or "instructor" as is used in all other academic upgrading programs, means that CASP employees can be viewed, not as professional educators, but as employees in a "service" occupation. For service workers, an hourly wage of \$11.50 is above average. The fact that the facilitator's position has become a "traditional" woman's position means that the government can go on ignoring the problems it has created.

One document suggests that facilitators should "beg, borrow or steal" whatever resources they can.

The government's cavalier attitude toward facilitators does not stop there. At the end of the first year of the program, the government hosted a lavish dinner for benefactors who had made financial contributions to Literacy NB. When asked why the facilitators, whose contribution in the form of foregone income is proportionally at least as great as that of the benefactors, were not invited, the answer was that the facilitators are not the government's responsibility!

Physical Facilities and Resources

One policy document issued by the DAEL suggests that managing committees and facilitators should "beg, borrow or steal" whatever resources they can (3). In most CASPs, equipment is borrowed and of poor quality; chairs are uncomfortable, tables are unsteady. Some CASPs operate in community facilities which have other uses in the evenings and on weekends, so all equipment must be stored at the end of the day and brought out again each morning. In many CASPs, the heat is unreliable. One CASP ran out of funds to purchase wood for the stove and had to shut down until wood could be obtained. Students in another CASP had to work in winter jackets, boots and gloves to stay warm. Because the facilities are rarely designed for educational purposes, the lighting is inadequate. In many facilities, the noise level far exceeds levels appropriate for studying.

The DAEL provides each CASP with one copy of the curriculum materials it has developed for use in basic and intermediate academic upgrading. These materials are in the form of individual self-paced, self-directed learning modules, each designed to address one or two selected objectives in the overall program. CASPs are expected to follow these curriculum objectives.

At the basic level, the facilitator is free to use any material she considers appropriate. However, at the intermediate level, all examinations are geared to the curriculum materials so the facilitators and students feel obliged to follow these materials. The curriculum modules are provided as unbound pages of text and are considered complete in themselves. No additional, supportive resources such as textbooks are recommended, and therefore, none are provided by the local community college.

Each CASP facilitator must photocopy the curriculum materials for each student and provide pens, pencils, paper for assignments, and a loose leaf binder to store the materials. In the best situations, the literacy coordinator has been able to borrow resources from the community college's supplies or a college administrator has been able to purchase necessary resources by adding a few items to an order for regular academic upgrading programs. But in many CASPs, the facilitator is reduced to begging for materials or photocopying services from private businesses, government organizations or not-for-profit agencies. One facilitator told us: "I really have to believe in what I'm doing because there's not much to build up your confidence [when] you do so much scrounging and almost sort of apologizing, trying to convince people that it is worthwhile to help you." This woman had provided equipment and materials for her students by using her own financial resources.

What's Happening to Women's Training in Canada?

Volume 10, No. 3/4 of **Women's Education des femmes** critiques recent changes to training policy and unemployment insurance eligibility, proposes workable models (for language training, training in trades, technology and operations, training for women with disabilities and immigrant women, for private sector training), and defines in detail how training should be structured to provide access for all women.

\$4.50 ea. (+ 10% handling + 7% GST) or **\$18.19** for a subscription to **Women's Education des femmes** (with "What's Happening to

Women's Training in Canada" as your first issue).

Canadian Congress for Learning Opportunities for Women

Background, Training and Role of Facilitators

Well over three-quarters of the facilitators have been trained as elementary or secondary teachers; few have training as adult educators. The trained teachers are often mature graduates who cannot find work in the province's school system. There are many more applicants than positions, and over 80 percent of the facilitators are women. The turn-over rate is above 50 percent in one region.

The government's policy is succeeding by placing the burden on the shoulders of women.

The community colleges, through their literacy coordinators, are responsible for training facilitators. Since the number of untrained facilitators is so small, trained facilitators often are asked to train their co-workers in addition to their already heavy responsibilities. An in-service training program had been established by only one of the colleges included in the study. In this region, untrained facilitators receive two weeks of training prior to beginning work, to help them understand their instructional role and to become familiar with curriculum materials and teaching methods. Both trained and untrained facilitators in this region are encouraged to attend regular in-service training programs which provide professional development activities and an opportunity for isolated facilitators to share ideas and concerns.

All the facilitators work very hard and receive little encouragement or feedback on how they are progressing. They all know the work they are doing is important; their students tell them so. They are dedicated to improving the situation of under-educated adults in their communities. But they are expected by their employers (the provincial government and the community) to "prevent illiteracy from further manifesting itself in New Brunswick" (4), and to do so with little remuneration, no training, few resources, almost no funds, and poor equipment. That they are succeeding is remarkable. That more than half of them are becoming de-motivated, distressed and burnt out in the process is the logical outcome of a system which neither addresses nor meets nor appears concerned about the needs of these dedicated workers.

The government's policy is succeeding by placing the burden on the shoulders of women who are unwilling to demand more from their employers or the government. Perhaps these women represent the vanguard of a new breed of worker: someone who cycles between the workplace and unemployment on the basis of available contract work and who, therefore, has no assurance of future work, no long-term benefits such as a pension plan, sick leave or dental coverage, no opportunities for professional or remunerative advancement, and no opportunities for professional development.

Economic Solutions for Educational Problems

The CASP was originally conceptualized as a literacy program--a community-based response that would support the work of local literacy councils. Over time, they have become academic upgrading programs which often carry students through to grade 12. The untrained and elementary-trained facilitators are unqualified to teach in the senior grades; those who do have the appropriate training are too over-worked to do the task effectively.

Recently, the New Brunswick Commission on Excellence in Education published a report on post-secondary education which states: "Nothing matters so much to the success of an educational enterprise as well-selected, well-trained, well-motivated, well-respected, well-supported, well-rewarded and well-administered teachers" (5). Apparently the New Brunswick authorities have not taken this statement to heart. They do not appear to realize that an untrained, de-motivated, isolated, poorly paid teaching staff is unlikely to survive

long enough to accomplish the government's policy objective of eradicating illiteracy by the year 2000. Moreover, they are not likely to realize this for some time since the criteria used to hire staff and the continuing economic recession mean that there will always be dozens of unemployed teachers willing to take on the role of facilitator for at least one contract.

When government leaders talk about the CASPs, they speak in glowing terms about the number of programs which have been established and the number of students who attend-- never about the educational outcomes. The CASP partnerships were conceived as an economic solution to education and training problems. The partners are assigned economic responsibilities such as providing resources, raising funds, locating facilities, distributing curriculum materials, and providing income support to participants; but they do not appear to have much understanding of the funding level necessary to build a viable and effective education program. The funding is not only minimal, it falls below the educational poverty line. Responsibility for maintaining an educational perspective devolves to the facilitators, who are neither viewed as partners in the program nor consulted about educational decisions, which are made by bureaucrats working out of the central offices of the DAEL.

The funding for CASPs is not only minimal, it falls below the educational poverty line.

In the long run, the educational outcomes of the CASPs depend on the skill, knowledge, ability, wisdom and creative genius of the facilitators. They are the core of the CASPs. If they cannot be better paid, they should at least be respected for their contributions, supported and encouraged throughout the duration of their contract, and provided with appropriate training. And they should be recognized and valued as equal partners in the venture.

Dorothy MacKeracher is a professor of adult education at the University of New Brunswick, and is a feminist scholar, teacher, and researcher.

1. This paper draws on an inquiry conducted into the nature of the academic upgrading programs offered in New Brunswick with funding support from the Canada Employment and Immigration Commission. For further information, see MacKeracher, D. "Academic upgrading in New Brunswick," unpublished report available from the author, Faculty of Education, University of New Brunswick, Fredericton, NB, 1993.
2. The letter from the Minister of State for Literacy reads, in part, "La possibilité d'emploi offerte par le programme fournit une expérience de l'enseignement a beaucoup de personnes qui n'ont pas eu l'occasion d'utiliser leurs compétences. Cette expérience pourrait servir de tremplin pour obtenir un emploi de longue durée ou permanent en enseignement. On n'offre pas d'avantages sociaux complets aux employés du programme, car il s'agit de travail a contrat, non d'un emploi permanent. ... Il est intéressant de noter que, dans d'autres provinces, la formation en alphabétisation est fournie par des bénévoles. Toutefois, le Nouveau-Brunswick

a choisi une autre option afin d'assurer une formation de qualité uniforme à tous les apprenants."

3. DAEL (1991) "Academic upgrading services." Fredericton, NB: New Brunswick Department of Advanced Education and Labour, 1991, p.13.
4. Curtis, K. "Literacy initiatives in New Brunswick: 1975 to 1992." Unpublished paper available from the author, Woodstock Community College, Woodstock, NB, 1992.
5. Downey, J. & Landry, A. (chairs) *To live and learn: The challenges to education and training*. Second report of the New Brunswick Commission on Excellence in Education. Fredericton, NB: New Brunswick Policy Secretariat, 1993, p.9.

REVIEW

Consider the Hollyhocks by Marg Wilson

The Mercury Press, Stratford, 1992; paperback, \$11.95, 144 pages

review by Nathalie Stephens

Consider the Hollyhocks is a powerful collection of seven stories by Marg Wilson, thematically centered around dysfunctional families and the broken lives that are a reflection of the torn fabric of Canadian society. Most often, the victims are women and children.

In the title story, a young working-class girl is sent to stay with her middle-class aunt for a

Marg Wilson's eye for detail has resulted in an accurate reflection of white Canadian society as experienced by the young and by women.

week, during which time she discovers her hidden artistic talent, and learns how integral pain and feeling are to bringing the beauty of her art alive on the canvas. "Consider the Hollyhocks" is a sensitive story among many in which Marg Wilson pays close attention to young people and their very real emotions that adults often ignore.

In "Many Minor Moons," a woman looks to the waxing and waning moon for solace, as she awaits a meeting with a former lover. In this moving story, the author explores the cruelty of destiny. "Many Minor Moons" is full of the sadness and frustration of a woman unable to fulfill her dreams, subscribing, instead, to a "comfortable" life as wife, mother, nurturer, and the emptiness that such a life-style can carry.

"Nobody Wears Orange" is told from a child's point of view. It painfully exposes her vulnerability and her role as silent witness to her father's adultery, while in "A Blue Car," an overworked and exhausted mother sends her children out for a walk with their father, who leaves them waiting outside a bar while he goes in to get drunk.

"A Visitor's Guide" is the story of a textile designer who escapes from the stress of her job to a vacation in Cuba, where, instead of love, she finds loneliness. "The Singing Rocks" is the story of a young man's resentment of his mother's new boyfriend.

All of the stories in *Consider the Hollyhocks* are "incandescent moments of life inspired by blood-clotting scratches on the soul" (p. 9). What impressed me most was the simplicity with which Marg Wilson is able to take snatches of everyday life and transfer them onto the written page, weaving the small, but significant details that amount to experience into texts that bleed with the urgency of living.

Abandonment is a recurring theme in all of the stories contained in this collection; abandonment of children and young people by adults, of women by men. Abandonment of hope, dreams and life. Marg Wilson's eye for detail has resulted in a book full of life and an accurate reflection of white Canadian society as experienced by the young and by women in their struggle to create a safe space and then have it slip away from them. The author's sensitivity to children and young people and their often silenced needs allows readers to become further aware of the ways in which "grown-ups" ignore them. She is equally sensitive to women's needs and their difficulty in fulfilling them within patriarchal society. The women in *Consider the Hollyhocks* are very real, and find that there are no easy solutions to their struggles, which often involve broken marriages, unhappy children and unfulfilling jobs.

I hope that this book will find its way onto reading lists and into the school curriculum, for it shows a side of life that I certainly did not read of when I was in school. While it is not representative of all parts of Canadian society--no one work can be--it does approach certain issues and experiences with sensitivity; namely, the experiences of white women, children and working class people. Wilson's approach is not dogmatic. Her style is very gentle. She only paints the picture. It is up to the reader to look into it and see for herself the pain that writhes there.

I hope that in future works, Marg Wilson will use her insight and talent to make a more complete representation of this small corner of the world we live in. When re-reading *Consider the Hollyhocks*, I began to question our approach, as white women writers, to writing. We often consider as "given" that a character not physically described is a white character, while Black writers and writers of colour often describe at great length the colour and cultural specificity of their characters. While many may disagree with me, I think that as conscientious writers who happen to be white, living in a white-dominant society (dare I say world?), we should look at such details as equally important as the colour of hollyhocks on a canvas. Not to do so is to subscribe--if only subtly, and perhaps unknowingly--to the idea that white is "normal", therefore a "given" and need not be stated as such. This said, I am looking forward to reading more of Marg Wilson's work.

Nathalie Stephens is a writer, poet and translator living in Toronto.

Rummage Sale

You wrote your last
will and testament on
binder paper with a pen that leaked.
Frugal to the end,
you wouldn't hire a lawyer,
"Those bastards'll suck you dry."

Your final instructions,
in words that forbade
argument said: To my children,
divide, in three equal portions,
stocks, bonds, and monies-
Then have a rummage sale,
and split the take.

We wanted to cart away
the salt and pepper shakers
shaped like hawaiian dancers
the lamp with plastic dangles
that jangled, the tired brown couch
with lace runners, and the drawer
full of gizmos that were guaranteed
to perform as described or
double your money back.

We wanted to call the junk man
and sell everything for fifty bucks
and be done with it.

We wanted to say
just take it away
so we don't have to remember
how lonely you were.
But we couldn't argue
with final wishes.

We had the damn rummage sale
between bouts of weeping.
We sold the pieces
for fifty cents or a dollar
and traded your favourite chair
for the suddenly

precious
memory of you.

Annette LeBox
Maple Ridge, B. C.

RESOURCES/RESSOURCES

ORGANIZATIONS

The National Eating Disorder Information Centre

Toronto, Ontario

The centre was established in 1985 to provide information and resources on eating disorders and weight preoccupation. Services include: development of information materials; nation-wide listing of treatment services and resources available; lectures and workshops for schools, community groups, professionals; support group for those with eating disorders; Beyond Dieting Program for large women. For more information on these services, contact The National Eating Disorder Information Centre, at 200 Elizabeth Street, CW 1-304, Toronto, M5G 2C4, telephone (416) 340-4156.

YW-NOW (New Options for Women)

Nova Scotia

A program of the Halifax, Nova Scotia YWCA, provides consultation to employers and unions who wish to achieve gender-balanced employment. This program is publishing a manual which will provide information on defining the roles of the consultant, management, and union in effecting change, and implementing pre-trades bridging programs for women. It will address organizational barriers to women such as hiring procedures, sexual harassment policies, job titles, and other practices affecting the recruitment and retention of women in trades, technology and operations jobs. A supplementary resource reading list is included. For further information contact YW-NOW at 1217 Barrington Street, Halifax, Nova Scotia B3J 1Y2, telephone (902) 425-0731, fax (902) 423-7761.

Voice of Survivors (VOS)

Ottawa

A group of women incest and childhood abuse survivors working to promote public awareness of child sexual abuse and recognition of the denial in our society. This is achieved through public education, lobbying, special projects, and talks on personal healing. Contact VOS c/o Family Service Centre, 119 Ross Avenue, Ottawa, Ontario K1Y 0N6.

ORGANISMES

Orientation et Services en Emploi (OSE)

Montréal

OSE offre une gamme de services intégrés, poursuivant ainsi la mission du " Y " des femmes. Cette mission vise le développement personnel et le renforcement des rôles économique et social des femmes. C'est une équipe composée de conseillères spécialisées en orientation et en information scolaire et professionnelle qui, par l'entremise de counselling individuel, répondent efficacement aux besoins des femmes prestataires d'assurance-chômage. C'est aussi un service d'orientation complet qui s'adapte aux besoins des clientes, ainsi qu'un guichet unique qui offre un service à la carte aux clientes qui ont déjà amorcé une démarche de recherche d'emploi. Pour de plus amples renseignements, contactez OSE, au 1355, boulevard René-Lévesque Ouest, Montréal (Québec) H3G 1T3, téléphone, (514) 866-9941, télécopieur, (514) 866-4866.

CALLS FOR SUBMISSIONS

Divya: Quarterly Journal of South Asian Women

427 Bloor Street West

Toronto, Ontario

M5S 1X7 (416) 921-7004

Vol 4 # 4: Sex, Sexuality & Desire. A journey into our concepts and experiences. Erotica, sexual identities, poetry, profiles, fiction, reviews, art work. Dateline for contributions: June 30, 1994.

New Initiatives in Film (NIF) Professional Development Internship Program

Professional Development Internship NIF/Studio D

3155 Montréal, Québec H4N 2N4 (514) 283-9534

This program is designed to support and encourage Women of Colour and Aboriginal Women to become active participants in Canada's Film and Television Industry. Developed by Studio D of the National Film Board of Canada (NFB), the program addresses directly the under-representation and misrepresentation of Aboriginal Women and Women of Colour in Canadian Film.

Violence, Human Security, and International Development

EDPA

University of Calgary

2500 University Drive NW

Calgary, Alberta

T2N 1N4

The 1994 Canadian Association for the Study of International Development meetings will

be held in Calgary in conjunction with the Learned. The organizers are interested in addressing these issues from gendered perspectives, given the level of violence experienced by women around the world, and invite submissions for participation. Research related to First Nations or local development work in Canada is also welcome. Contact: Bev Suderman.

Isolating the Barriers

c/o 911-10th Street E.
Saskatoon, SK S7H 0H6
(306) 374-8583 or
(306) 652-6975

CLOW-Saskatchewan is looking for stories of approximately 250 words (one page double-spaced) from women whose education has been affected by violence. These stories will be included in a kit for adult educators and people who work with women who have experienced violence. An honorarium of \$35 will be paid for any story that is selected. Contributors will be identified by first name only, and are free to use a pseudonym if desired. Questions to consider are: How has violence affected your education? How can teachers or instructors recognize the effects of violence? What were you able to do about the effects of violence on your education? How do education systems and programs need to change to take into account the effects of violence? Due date for submissions is **July 12, 1994**.

SOUSSION DE TEXTES

Colloque national touchant le développement de carrière

Career Centre
Université de Toronto
214, rue College
Toronto (Ontario) M5T 2Z9
(416) 8089
(416) 978-8020 (téléc.)

Le colloque susmentionné aura lieu du 23 au 25 janvier 1995. Sont invités, les personnes et les organismes du monde de l'éducation et des secteurs privé, public et communautaire à faire parvenir leur projet de communication. L'exposé devra présenter un projet ou programme innovateur ou offrir un atelier expérientiel qui sera utile dans le domaine de l'emploi et du développement de carrière. Date limite: **8 août 1994**. S'adresser à Mme Lou Hawkes, coordinatrice du programme pour de plus amples renseignements.

AWARDS

A FRIEND INDEED AWARD

3375 boul, St, Laurent, Suite 402
Montréal (Québec) H2X 2T7

(514) 843-5681 (Fax)

\$5,000 will be awarded to the person(s) who demonstrate(s) innovation in studies about, or services to women in menopause, The criteria: Evident current or potential benefit to women in menopause as a result of programming, research, writing or other services. Nominations should be sent to Janine O'Leary Cobb (address above). Submission deadline: **July 31st, 1994.**

FILM / VIDEO

A New Life in Canada Starting Life Again

Joyce Scane and Joe Barr (prod)
Green Dragon press
135 George St., S., #902
Toronto, Ontario M5A 4E8

A New Life in Canada describes the history of non-English and French immigrant women in Canada: how they came, where they came from and what they accomplished in their new country. In *Starting Life Again*, the women use their own words to describe their problems and their successes. The videos are designed to bring into focus the story of an important, but much neglected, group of Canadian women. \$50.00 (set).

She's Making Choices

Attn: Susan Risk
Live Wire Productions
2050 Garnet Street
Regina, Saskatchewan S4T 2Z6
(306) 586-3492

This is the second video in a series of videos that help young adolescents to reassess the options that they think are possible in their lives. It invites girls to experiment with a variety of activities while they're young.

Them That's Not: Single Mothers and the Welfare System

National Film Board of Canada
Attn: NFB Zoom In, D-5
P.O. Box 6100
Station Centre-Ville
Montreal (Québec) H3C 3H5
(514) 496-2573 (Fax)

This video puts a human face on the statistics relating to women and poverty. \$26.95.

FILM / VIDÉO

Viol: interventions policière et judiciaire

Vidéo Femmes

700, rue du Roi
Québec (Québec)
G1K 2X7
(418) 529-9188
(418) 648-9201 (téléc.)

Quelles sont les démarches légales et judiciaires qui attendent les victimes de viol quand elles décident de porter plainte et d'intenter une poursuite? Trop souvent les femmes ignorent tout de leurs droits.

Viol: mythes et réalité

Vidéo Femmes

voir ci-dessus

Les vieux mythes et préjugés qui entourent la question du viol ne pèsent pas lourd contre la réalité. Le viol n'est que la pointe de l'iceberg d'une violence généralisée à l'ensemble des relations hommes-femmes.

Femmes indiennes

Vidéo Femmes

voir ci-dessus

Une Amérindienne retrace l'origine des lois des mariages amérindiens en faisant apparaître de flagrantes injustices pour les femmes et pour la survie de la culture autochtone.

Nouvelles initiatives cinématographiques

Programme de développement professionnel

Nouvelles initiatives cinématographiques

Studio D 3155

Côte de Liesse

Montréal (Québec) H4N 2N4

(514) 283-9534

Programme de développement professionnel. Ce programme a pour objet d'appuyer et d'encourager les femmes de couleur et les femmes autochtones à devenir des participantes actives de l'industrie du film et de la télévision au Canada. Élaboré par le Studio D de l'Office national du film (ONF), le programme porte sur la sous-représentation et la fausse représentation des femmes autochtones et des femmes de couleur dans les films canadiens.

BOOKS / PUBLICATIONS

Gender Violence in the Mass Media

Health Canada
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 1B5
1-800-267-1291
(613) 941-8930 Fax

This report was prepared for the Family Violence Prevention Division of Health Canada. Because the media speak to so many aspects of life regulation, the writing and research on media are both extensive and specialized. The purpose of this review is to bring together some disparate elements and encourage a more global view of gender and gendered violence in mass media.

Singing in the NIGHT: the complete poems of Beatrice Ferneyhough

The Estate of Bernice Ferneyhough c/o
Rankin Associates
195 Alexander Street
Vancouver, British Columbia V6A 1N8
(613) 232-1505
(613) 232-1886 Fax

The poems collected in this book are an expression of the life and thoughts of Beatrice Ferneyhough. Ferneyhough is well known in Canada as a militant fighter for justice and peace. Proceeds from the sales of *Singing in the Night* will go to the Voice of Women, one of Canada's oldest peace organizations, of which Beatrice Ferneyhough is a founding member.

Claiming Women's Lives: History and Contemporary Studies

Pat Staton with Paula Bourne
Green Dragon Press
135 George St. S., #902
Toronto, Ontario
M5A 4E8
(416) 360-6006

A comprehensive 388 page resource, designed to help teachers create gender equitable curriculum. \$75; schoolboards can inquire about discounts. Write to Green Dragon Press for their catalogue on educational and feminist resources.

Changing Women, Changing History: A Bibliography of the History of Women in Canada

compiled by Diana Pedersen
Green Dragon Press
see above

This new "user-friendly" resource has been designed with the needs of undergraduate students in mind but it should also be of interest to teachers, graduate students and researchers in the field. \$15.00

Working for Dignity: The Employment Standards Act

The Moment

947 Queen Street E.

Toronto, Ontario M4M 1J9

(416) 469-1123

(416) 469-3579 Fax

The November 1993 issue of *The Moment* looks at the Employment Standards Act to spell out the most basic rights of the majority of workers in Canada.

Women in Cross-Cultural Transitions

Phi Delta Kappa International

P.O. Box 789

Bloomington, IN

USA 47402-0789

(812) 339-1156

(812) 339-0018 (Fax)

This book offers readers perspectives on how women adjust to cultural change, the struggles they face in coming to a new culture, and how those challenges affect their lives and the lives of their families. \$24.00.

No Safe Bed: Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Youth in Residential Services

Carol-Anne O'Brien, Robb Travers, Laurie Bell

Central Toronto Youth Services Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Youth Program

65 Wellesley Street East, Suite 300

Toronto, Ontario M4Y 1G7

(416) 924-2100

This study of youth residential services in Toronto draws on the voices and experiences of lesbian, gay and bisexual youth, and provides the first detailed picture of the current situation for these young people in residential services for youth. It is based upon in-depth interviews with youth, frontline workers and managers from youth residential services. \$15.00

Women, Feminism and Development

Huguette Dagenais and Denise Piché (eds)

McGill-Queen's University Press

c/o University of Toronto Press

Order Department

5201 Dufferin Street

Downsview, Ontario M3H 5T8

This book illustrates the significance and relevance of the work carried on within a feminist perspective, with a particular focus on the contribution of Canadian researchers and activists. \$55.00 (cloth), \$24.95 (paper).

Towards Training Equity: Putting Training Policies to Work for Women

New Brunswick Advisory Council on the Status of Women

95 Foundry Street, Suite 207

Moncton, New Brunswick E1C 5H7

(516) 853-1088

1-800-332-3087

(516) 858-2990 (Fax)

This brief assesses how government policy addresses the training needs of women, identifies problems and needs of women in training in New Brunswick and recommends principles and measures for action to various New Brunswick departments as well as the former federal department of Employment and Immigration.

Sharing Our Experience

Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women

110 O'Connor Street, 9th Floor, Sta. "B"

Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5R5

(613) 992-4975

(613) 992-1715 (Fax)

This book is a collection of letters by racial minority and Aboriginal women about their lives in Canada.

Federal Steps: Toward An End to Violence Against Women

National Action Committee on the Status of Women
57 Mobile Drive
Toronto, Ontario M4A 1H5
(416) 759-5252
(416) 759-5370 (Fax)

There is a way to end violence against women. This discussion paper argues for the concrete changes in government policies that would make a difference. \$4.95.

Tilting the Tower

Linda Garber (ed)
Routledge New York

This book explores the status of lesbians and lesbian studies in the high-school and university classroom and in the academy. Bringing together high school teachers, community college and four-year university professors, graduate students and tenured program directors, the volume documents the voices, personal experiences, teaching strategies and activist efforts to diversify the curriculum, the classroom and the campus. \$49.95 (cloth), \$15.95 (paper).

Training Needs of Canadian Farm Women: Executive Summary & Recommendations

The Canadian Farm Women's Education Council
Attn: Dorothy Middleton
R.R.#2
Crysler, Ontario
K1A 1R0
(613) 987-5328 (Fax)

Full colour report - special order only.

Black & White Report - \$13.00.

Annotated Bibliography - \$13.00.

Executive Summary - \$6.00.

Status of Women: Journal

British Columbia Teachers' Federation
100-550 West Sixth Avenue Vancouver, BC V5Z 4P2
(604) 871-2283
1-800-663-9163
(604) 871-2291 (Fax)

Published on International Women's Day, this journal carries thoughts, reflections, summaries, and accounts of issues currently on the minds of women within education. It

is presented to the reader to stimulate thought and inspire people to act.

Like a Wingless Bird: A Tribute to the Survival and Courage of Women who are Abused and Who Speak Neither English or French

Secretary of State (Multiculturalism)

(Status of Women)

National Clearinghouse on Family Violence

Family Violence Prevention Division

Department of Health

Ottawa, Ontario K1A 1B5

1-800-561-5643

This report looks specifically at issues and information needs of abused immigrant women who are not able to speak one of the official languages.

Gender & Language: An Annotated Bibliography

Diane Goossens

RFR/DRF

Ontario Institute for Studies in Education

252 Bloor Street West

Toronto, Ontario M5S 1V6

(416) 923-6641 ext. 2277

Compiled by Diane Goossens with an introductory essay by Maryann Ayim. The authors explore issues of the exclusionary nature of sexist language, with particular reference to the so-called generic words "he" and "man". They question among other things, why "mankind" is still, after many years of feminist activism and research, widely accepted as a term connecting all human beings. Resources for Feminist Resource/ Documentation sur la recherche féministe (RFR/DRF), Spring/Summer 1993, Vol 22, No 1&2.

Including Women with Disabilities in Development Programs: A Resource Guide

DWD Project

c/o Mobility International USA

PO Box 10767

Eugene, Oregon

USA 97440

This booklet promotes integration of women with disabilities into international community development efforts. It offers resources and practical, low-cost strategies for making projects accessible, including non-English materials (Spanish, French), bibliographies, and names of individuals and organizations which can provide information and expertise.

Canadian University/College Lists

Canadian Book Marketing Centre

2 Gloucester Street Suite 301

Toronto, Ontario M4Y 1L5
(416) 413-4930
(416) 413-4920 Fax

A comprehensive and in-depth list of post-secondary courses and professors. Can be used to search professors for promotional mailings, to write texts or articles, as speakers, etc. Available now are lists on **Women's Studies**, and **Canadian Literature**; coming in the fall are **Native Studies** and **Canadian History**.

Employment Equity for Aboriginal Women: Putting Skills to Work

Ontario Women's Directorate
2 Carlton Street, 12th Floor
Toronto, Ontario M5B 2M9

This publication from the Change Agent Program was co-produced by the Ontario Métis and Aboriginal Association and the Ontario Women's Directorate. The book highlights and celebrates the skills, achievements, and potentials that Aboriginal women bring to the workforce and to society. The publication includes six profiles of inspirational and successful Aboriginal women, advice on career development, breaking down barriers, and a resources section for Aboriginal women. Free.

LIVRES / PUBLICATIONS

Femmes, Féminisme et Développement

Huguette Dagenais et Denise Piché (s. la dir. de)
Mc-Gill Queen's University Press
a/s University of Toronto Press
Order Department 5201 rue Dufferin
Downsview (Ontario) M3H 5T8

Cette collection vise à mettre en valeur la spécificité de l'apport féministe, notamment en regroupant les têtes de façon à établir un dialogue entre la théorie et la pratique, entre la recherche et l'action. Ce volume offre des articles en français et en anglais. 55,00 \$ (relié), 24,95 \$ (broché).

Assez!

Centre médico-social communautaire de Toronto
22, rue Collège
Toronto (Ontario) M5G 1K3
(416) 922-2672
(416) 922-6624 (téléc.)

Le photo-roman c'est un outil éducatif pour les francophones (jeunes, femmes, hommes et intervenant/es) : trois histoires en photos sur l'agression sexuelle et la violence conjugale. Le Guide d'animation c'est un outil pour les intervenant/es dans les domaines de l'éducation, des services sociaux, des hôpitaux, des groupes communautaires, des centres

de counselling... Il contient cinq fiches de travail ainsi que des suggestions pour l'organisation d'un atelier et un formulaire d'évaluation.

L'enfer du décor

Les éditions de la paix
125, Lussier
St-Alphonse-de-Granby
Québec J0E 2A0
(514) 375-4765

Ce guide, lancé par le mouvement contre le sexisme dans les médias a pour but d'accroître la sensibilité du public au sexisme. 9,95 \$.

Des expériences à partager

Conseil consultatif canadien sur la situation de la femme
110, rue O'Connor, 9^{ième} étage,
C.P. 1541, Succ. "B"
Ottawa (Ontario) K1P 5R5
(613) 922-4975
(613) 992-1715 (téléc.)

Cet ouvrage est un recueil de lettres écrites par des femmes membres de minorités raciales et de femmes autochtones qui parlent de leur vie au Canada.

Élargir nos horizons - Le travail du Conseil consultatif canadien sur la situation de la femme et son contexte

Conseil consultatif canadien sur la situation de la femme
voir ci-dessus

Ce livre donne un aperçu de bon nombre des grandes questions ayant touché la vie des femmes au cours des dix dernières années: la violence des hommes, la pauvreté, les garderies, le droit de la famille, la fiscalité, la réforme constitutionnelle, la *Charte canadienne des droits et libertés*.

Le Racisme et l'éducation: Perspectives et expériences diverses

Fédération canadienne des enseignantes et des enseignants
110, av. Argyle
Ottawa (Ontario) K2P 1B4
(613) 232-1505
(613) 232-1886 (téléc.)

Recueil de douze dissertations renfermant les observations des auteurs et auteures sur l'histoire et la présence du racisme dans l'éducation canadienne. 15,00 \$.

Pouce! La prévention en milieu scolaire de la violence faite aux femmes

Fédération canadienne des enseignantes et des enseignants

voir ci-dessus

Un recueil de plans de leçons, M-12e, montre comment aborder dans les salles de classe (ou les clubs communautaires), selon le groupe d'âge, la question de la violence faite aux femmes. 3,00 \$.

Vidéo femmes

700, rue du Roi

Québec (Québec) G1K 2X7

(418) 529-9188

(418) 648-9201 (téléc.)

Cette cinquième édition du répertoire dresse la liste des films et vidéos contenus dans la vidéothèque de *Vidéo femmes*: 140 productions indépendantes créées par des réalisatrices québécoises, canadiennes, françaises, hollandaises, belges, américaines et colombiennes.

Inclure les femmes handicapées dans les programmes de développement: un guide de ressources

DWD Project

a/s Mobility International USA CP 10767

Eugene, Oregon

USA 97440

Cette brochure préconise l'intégration des femmes handicapées aux efforts de développement de la communauté internationale. Elle énumère certaines ressources et stratégies pratiques et peu coûteuses qui rendent les projets accessibles, et certains documents en des langues autres que l'anglais (espagnol, français) et des bibliographies et nomment des personnes et des organisations en mesure de fournir des renseignements et des conseils d'experts.

WITT National Network

June 10 - 14, Halifax, Nova Scotia

AGENDA

The theme of this conference is Building Bridges-Building Partnerships and will focus on building partnerships with labour, education, business and government to reduce barriers for women in trades, technology, operations & blue collar work. Contact: Tricia Robertson, WITT Conference Coordinator, 6256 Lawrence Street, Halifax, NS, B3L 1J9, (902) 422-0750, fax (902) 422-0969.

Understanding Sexual Diversity

June 20-22, Guelph, Ontario

This 16th annual Guelph conference on sexuality will look at current issues in human sexuality, counselling strategies, and sexuality education. Contact: Office of Continuing Education, University of Guelph, Guelph, ON, N1G 2W1, (519) 767-5000, fax (519) 767-1114.

Community-Based Training: Meeting the Challenge

June 22-24, Toronto, Ontario

The Ontario Network of Employment Skills Training Projects' annual conference will include an opportunity to speak directly to directors of the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board and the Canadian Labour Force Development Board. Contact Suzanne Robinson, Conference Coordinator, ONESTeP, 517 Wellington Street W., #210, Toronto, Ontario, M5V 1G1, (416) 591-7151, Fax (416) 591-9126.

Social Change: Women's Studies, Feminist Research

August 13-17, Ottawa, Ontario

This international conference will focus on women's/feminist studies, its content, pedagogy and research, and the creation of an international women's studies organization. Contact: Joint Chair of Women's Studies, Carleton University, Ottawa, ON, K1N 6N5, (613) 788-6644, fax (613) 564-7461.

Women, Power & Politics

October 8-11, Adelaide, South Australia

Topics to be discussed at this international conference include: women and government, women and the economy, women and learning, women's rights are human rights. The conference will also celebrate the centenary of women's suffrage in South Australia. Contact: Conference Secretariat, Festival City Conventions Pty Ltd, P.O. Box 986, Kent Town SA 5071, Australia, 61 8 363 1307, fax 618363 1604.

It's Never Okay

October 13-15, Toronto, Ontario

This is the 3rd international conference on sexual exploitation by health professionals, psychotherapists and clergy. Contact: Temi Firsten, c/o CHASTEN, P.O. 73516, 509 St. Clair Avenue West, Toronto, ON, M6C 4A7, phone/fax (416) 656- 5650.

Sensibiliser, décider, agir

14-16 octobre, Ottawa, Ontario

Ce colloque pour femmes seulement fournira une occasion de se rallier et de se concerter pour agir contre le fléau des agressions à caractère sexuel en Ontario. Pour renseignements: écrire au C.P. 74 023 Ottawa (Ontario) K1M 2H9, ou composer le (613) 741-1334.

A Global Conservation about Learning

November 9-12, Washington, DC

Topics for this 4th international conference on experiential learning will include: self-directed learning, restructuring formal education, effective workplace learning, learning for social change, learning from diversity, etc. Contact: 1994 International Experiential Learning Conference, 223 West Jackson Boulevard, Suite 510, Chicago, ILL, 60606, fax (312) 922-1769.

INDEX

Women's EDUCATION des femmes

Subject Index / Index par sujet
volume 10

BATTERED WOMEN

Gogia, Nupur. Beyond the "culturally sensitive": violence orevention by education wife assault Fr abs. WEDF 10:19(Winter/hiver92-93)22-24.

Green, Lilian. Elliot, Lorelee rev. Ordinary wonders: living: a recovery from sexual abuse [Book review] WEDF 10: 1 (Winter/hiver92-93)53.

Krisch, Joan. Wells, Arlene. Bridges: an emuloyment program for abused women Fr abs photo refs. WEDF 10:1(Winter/hiver92-93)25-26.

Townsend, Maureen. My children's ancestor WEDF 10: 1(Winter/hiver92-93)9.

BOOK REVIEW

Backhouse, Constance. Flaherty, David H ed. Schmidt, Lisa, rev. Challenging times: the

women's movement in Canada and the United States [Book review] WEDF 10:3/4(Winter/hiver93-94)60-62.

Forman, F. O'Brien, M. Haddad, J. et al. Owens, Elizabeth J. rev. Feminism and education: a Canadian perspective [Book review] WEDF 10:2(Spring/printemps93)34.

Green, Lilian. Elliot, Lorelee rev. Ordinary wonders: living a recovery from sexual abuse [Book review] WEDF 10: 1 (Winter/hiver92-93)53.

Hanmer, Jalna. Stanko, Elizabeth. Fidkalo-Weight, Wendy rev. Women. policing and male violence [Book review] WEDF 10:1(Winter/hiver92-93)50-51.

Price, Lisa S. Russell, Leslie rev. Patterns of violence the lives of girls and women: a reading guide [Book review] WEDF 10:I(Winter/hiver92-93)51-52.

Walkerdine, Valerie. Hilyer, Gail M. rev. Schoolgirl fictions [Book review] WEDF 10:2(Spring/printemps93)33.

BRIDGING PROGRAMS

Hadikein, Hannah. Doing the work: a feminist perspective on training in the private sector Fr abs photos. WEDF 10:3/4(Winter/hiver93-94) 12-15.

Krisch, Joan. Wells, Arlene. Bridges: an employment program for abused women Fr abs photo refs. WEDF 10:1(Winter/hiver92-93)25-26.

Thomson, Aisla. Training for whom? [Editorial] WEDF 10:3/4(Winter/hiver93-94)2.

CANADIAN CONGRESS FOR LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN

Thomson, Aisla. Training for whom? [Editorial] WEDF 10:3/4(Winter/hiver93-94)2.

CONGRÈS CANADIEN POUR LA PROMOTION DES ÉTUDES CHEZ LA FEMME

Thomson, Aisla. Un programme de formation pour qui? [Éditorial] WEDF 10:3/4(Winter/hiver93-94)2.

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

Attenborough, Debra. Deans, Dorte. Images and education Fr abs ill refs WEDF 10:2(Spring/printemps93)35-36.

Hughes, Patricia. The feminist revolution in legal education Fr abs photo refs. WEDF 10:2(Spring/printemps93)5-9.

Mulligan, Suzanne. Mitchell, Donna Dr. Family violence prevention and curriculum development Fr abs ill ref. WEDF 10: 1 (Winter/hiver92-93)34-37 .

Yitsch, Barbara. Political correctness (or, how to fish and cut bait) Fr abs photo refs.

WEDF 10:2(Spring/printemps93)22-25.

DISABLED WOMEN

Wagle, Helen. Women with disabilities: the revolving door of training Fr abs ill stats chart refs. WEDF 10:3/4(Winter/hiver93-94)16-18.

Barile, Maria. Validation as prevention for women with disabilities Fr abs stats. WEDF 10: 1 (Winter/hiver92-93)40-41.

Doe, Tanis. Looking for solidarity in the margins Fr abs ill WEDF 10:3/4(Winter/hiver93-94)40-44.

DISCRIMINATION

Concordia University, Visual Media Resources. Bujara, Irene. rev. Inequity in the classroom/En tout égalité [Review] Fr abs. WEDF 10:3/4(Winter/hiver93-94)59-60.

Storey, Cheryl. From one who works with crones. Fr abs photos stats refs. WEDF 10:1(Winter/hiver92-93)16-20.

EDUCATION

Attenborough, Debra. Deans, Dorte. Images and education Fr abs ill refs WEDF 10:2(Spring/printemps93)35-36.

Burton, Nadya. Heillig, Leona. Education is prevention WEDF 10: 1 (Winter/hiver92-93)2-3.

Concordia University, Visual Media Resources. Bujara, Irene. rev. Inequity in the classroom/En tout égalité [Review] Fr abs. WEDF 10:3/4(Winter/hiver93-94)59-60.

Education Wife Assult. As an educator, what can I do? Fr abs. WEDF 10: 1 (Winter/hiver92-93)38-39.

Forman, F. O'Brien, M. Haddad, J. et al. Owens, Elizateh J. revs. Feminism and education: a canadian perspective [Book review] WEDF 10:2(Spring/printemps93)34.

Grant, Judith. Women's Studies: Women's Lives Fr abs. WEDF 10:2(Spring/printemps93)10-12.

Hughes, Patricia. The feminist revolution in legal education Fr abs photo refs. WEDF 10:2(Spring/printemps93)5-9.

Kutcher, Jan. Ross, Eleanor C. A Model for feminist workplace education Fr abs ill refs. WEDF 10:3/4(Winter/hiver93-94)32-34.

Staff, Christina. Vive le féminism! [Editorial] WEDF 10:2(Spring/printemps93)2.

Walkerdine, Valerie. Hilyer, Gail M. rev. Schoolgirl fictions [Book review] WEDF 10:2(Spring/printemps93)33.

Yitsch, Barbara. Political correctness (or, how to fish and cut bait) Fr abs photo refs. WEDF 10:2(Spring/printemps93)22-25.

ÉDUCATION

Gagné, Dolorès. Les carrières d'avenir: agir et aider les femmes à s'y lancer Eng abs photo refs. WEDF 10:2(Spring/printemps93)13-16.

Staff, Christina. Vive le féminisme! [Éditorial] WEDF 10:2(Spring/printemps93)3.

EMPLOI NON TRADITIONNEL

Gagné, Dolorès. Les carrières d'avenir: agir et aider les femmes à s'y lancer Eng abs photo refs. WEDF 10:2(Spring/printemps93) 13-16.

EMPLOYMENT

Butterwick, Shauna. The limits and possibilities of privatization Fr abs refs. WEDF 10:3/4(Winter/hiver93-94)8-11.

Chegwidden, Paula. Women and CJS programs in Nova Scotia Fr abs ill photo refs. WEDF 10:2(Spring/printemps93)26-30.

Doe, Tannis. Looking for solidarity in the margins Fr abs ill. WEDF 10:3/4(Winter/hiver93-94)40-44.

Hadikein, Hannah. Doing the work: a feminist perspective on training in the private sector Fr abs photos. WEDF 10:3/4(Winter/hiver93-94) 12-15.

Kutcher, Jan. Ross, Eleanor C. A Model for feminist workplace education Fr abs ill refs. WEDF 10:3/4(Winter/hiver93-94)32-34.

MacKeracher, Dorothy. McFarland, Joan. Learning working knowledge: implications for training Fr abs refs. WEDF 10:3/4(Winter/hiver93-94)54-58.

Tulloch, Elspeth. A case in point: the N.B. works program WEDF 10:3/4(Winter/hiver93-94)6.

Tulloch, Elspeth. Where are the women? Federal training policy and the gender factor Fr abs. WEDF 10:3/4(Winter/hiver93-94)4-7.

Wagle, Helen. Women with disabilities: the revolving door of training Fr abs ill stats chart refs. WEDF 10:3/4(Winter/hiver93-94)16-18.

FEMINIST MOVEMENT

Backhouse, Constance. Flaherty, David H.(eds.) Schmidt, Lisa rev. Challenging times: the

women's movement in Canada and the United States [Book review] WEDF 10:3/4(Winter/hiver93-94)60-62.

LES FEMMES ET LA LOI

Starr, Christina. Vive le féminisme! [Éditorial] WEDF 10:2(Spring/printemps93)3.

FEMMES IMMIGRANTES

Bassaletti, Teresa. Projet d'intégration professionnelle des femmes immigrantes Eng abs photo WEDF 10:3/4(Winter/hiver93-94)24-29.

FORMATION PROFESSIONNELLE

Bassaletti, Teresa. Projet d'intégration professionnelle des femmes immigrantes Eng abs photo WEDF 10:3/4(Winter/hiver93-94)24-29.

Thomson, Aisla. Un programme de formation pour qui? [Éditorial] WEDF 10:3/4(Winter/hiver93-94)3.

GUÉRISON DE LA VIOLENCE

Dumont, Monique. Un rêve pour notre temps Eng abs ill refs. WEDF 10:1(Winter/hiver92-93)42-46.

GUN CONTROL

Rathjen, Heidi. Gun control: an analysis of Bill C-17 Fr abs. WEDF 10:1(Winter/hiver92-93)47-48.

IMMIGRANT WOMEN

Gogia, Nupur. Beyond the "culturally sensitive": violence prevention by education wife assault Fr abs. WEDF 10: 19(Winter/hiver92-93)22-24.

LANGUAGE TRAINING

Lior, Karen Charnow. LINC to what? Fr abs photo refs. WEDF 10:3/4(Winter/hiver93-94) 20-21.

LaRosa, Leti. The needs of visible minorities in P.E.I. Fr abs phot fer. WEDF 10:3/4(Winter/hiver93-94)30-31.

LITERACY

Eastman, Diane. Woman-positive literacy: one example Fr abs. WEDF 10:2 (Spring/printemps93)31-32.

NATIVE WOMEN

Dumont-Smith, Claudette. What we want Fr abs stats. WEDF 10: 1 (Winter/hiver92-93) 8-9.

POETRY

Dow, Leslie Smith. Girl lost on the ice. 1214 [Poem] WEDF 10: 1 (Winter/hiver92-93)29.

Dow, Leslie Smith. The Marriage [Poem] WEDF 10:2(Spring/printemps93)9.

Driedger, Diane. Dark pit [Poem] WEDF 10:1(Winter/hiver92-93)24.

Fitzsimmons, Janet B. "it's all about commitment" [Poem] WEDF 10: 1 (Winter/hiver92:93)53.

Guillemot, Cécile. Untitled [Poem] WEDF 10:3/4(Winter/hiver93-94)23.

Hendricks, Ruth. Let' s dance [Poem] WEDF 10:2(Spring/printemps93)16.

Hendricks, Ruth. Other names [Poem] WEDF 10:2(Spring/printemps93)16.

Le Dressay, Anne. Afterwards [Poem] WEDF 10:2(Spring/printemps93)25.

MacDonald, Tanis. Three feet by six (for the names project) [Poem] WEDF 10:3/4(Winter/hiver93-94)15.

Margles, Miriam. self-defensive [Poem] WEDF 10:1(Winter/hiver92-93)4.

Tracy, Michelle. Femme- guessed [Poem] WEDF 10:3/4(Winter/hiver93-94)61.

Tracy, Michelle. Leaving for work. having met her only the night before [Poem] WEDF 10:3/4(Winter/hiver93-94)44.

POLITICAL CORRECTNESS

Yitsch, Barbara. Political correctness (or, how to fish and cut bait) Fr abs photo refs. WEDF 10:2(Spring/printemps93)22-25.

PRÉVENTION DE LA VIOLENCE

Burton, Nadya. Heillig, Leona. Éduquer, c'est prévenir [Éditorial] WEDF 10: 1 (Winter/hiver92-93)2-3.

TRAINING PROGRAMS

Braundy, Marcia. Building foundations for technical training: WITT standards and guidelines Fr abs refs. WEDF 10:3/4(Winter/hiver93-94)50-53.

Butterwick, Shauna. The limits and possibilites of privatization fr abs refs. WEDF 10:3/4(Winter/hiver93-94)8-11.

Chegwidden, Paula. Women and CJS program in Nova Scotia Fr abs ill photo refs. WEDF 10:2(Spring/printemps93)26-30.

Dehli, Kari. Apprenticeship training models for "women's work": the Norwegian experience Fr abs ill photo refs. WEDF 10:2(Spring/printemps93)17-21.

Doe, Tannis. Looking for solidarity in the margins Fr abs ill. WEDF 10:3/4(Winter/hiver93-94)40-44.

Eastman, Diane. Woman-positive literacy: one example Fr abs. WEDF 10:2(Spring/printemps93)31-32.

Hadikein, Hannah. Doing the work: a feminist perspective on training in the private sector Fr abs photos. WEDF 10:3/4(Winter/hiver93-94)12-15.

Krisch, Joan. Wells, Arlene. Bridges: an employment program for abused women Fr abs photo refs. WEDF 10:1(Winter/hiver92-93)25-26.

LaRosa, Leti. The needs of visible minorities in P.E.I. Fr abs phot ref. WEDF 10:3/4(Winter/hiver93-94)30-31.

Lior, Karen Charnow. LINC to what? Fr abs photo refs. WEDF 10:3/4(Winter/hiver93-94)20-21.

Thomson, Aisla. Training for whom? [Editorial] WEDF 10:3/4(Winter/hiver93-94)2.

Tulloch, Elspeth. A case in point: the N.B. works program WEDF 10:3/4(Winter/hiver93-94)6.

Tulloch, Elspeth. Where are the women? Federal training policy and the gender factor Fr abs. WEDF 10:3/4(Winter/hiver93-94)4- 7.

Wagle, Helen. Women with disabilities: the revolving door of training Fr abs ill stats chart refs. WEDF 10:3/4(Winter/hiver93-94) 16-18.

Wellmeier, Ingrid. Transitions research by the women's reference group Fr abs refs. WEDF 10:3/4(Winter/hiver93-94)36-39.

UNIVERSITIES

Concordia University, Visual Media Resources. Bujara, Irene. rev. Inequity in the classroom/En tout égalité [Review] Fr abs. WEDF 10:3/4(Winter/hiver93-94)59-60.

Grant, Judith. Women's Studies: Women's Lives Fr abs. WEDF 10:2(Spring/printemps93) 10-12.

Kutcher, Jan. Ross, Eleanor C. A Model for feminist workplace education Fr abs ill refs. WEDF 10:3/4(Winter/hiver93-94)32-34.

Lacroix, Margot. Concordia women's centre: a place of resistance Fr abs photo. WEDF

10: 1 (Winter/hiver92-93)5- 7.

VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN Green, Lilian. Elliot, Lorelee rev. Ordinary wonders: living a recovery from sexual abuse [Book review] WEDF 10: 1 (Winter/hiver92-93)53.

Mulligan, Suzanne. Mitchell, Donna Dr. Family violence prevention and curriculum development Fr abs ill ref. WEDF 10: 1 (Winter/hiver92-93)34-37 .

Price, Lisa S. Russell, Leslie rev. Patterns of violence the lives of girls and women: a reading guide [Book review] WEDF 10: 1 (Winter/hiver92-93)5 1-52.

Townsend, Maureen. My children's ancestor WEDF 10: 1(Winter/hiver92-93)9.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Barile, Maria. Validation as prevention for women with disabilities Fr abs stats. WEDF 10: 1(Winter/hiver92-93)40-41.

Burton, Nadya. Heillig, Leona. Education is prevention WEDF 10: 1 (Winter/hiver92-93)2.

Burton, Nadya. Tools not rules: challenging traditional power dynamics as assault prevention Fr abs photo. WEDF 10:1(Winter/hiver92-93)10-12.

Dumont-Smith, Claudette. What we want Fr abs stats. WEDF 10:1(Winter/hiver92-93)8-9.

Education Wife Assult. As an educator, what can I do? Fr abs. WEDF 10: 1 (Winter/hiver92-93)38-39.

Green, Lilian. Elliot, Lorelee rev. Ordinary wonders: living a recovery from sexual abuse [Book review] WEDF 10: 1 (Winter/hiver92-93)53.

Handler, Debra. Beach story Fr abs. WEDF 10:1(Winter/hiver92-93)21.

Hanmer, Jalna. Stanko, Elizabeth. Fidkalo-Weight, Wendy rev. Women policing and male violence [Book review] WEDF 10: 1 (Winter/hiver92-93)50-5 1.

Krisch, Joan. Wells, Arlene. Bridges: an employment program for abused women Fr abs photo refs. WEDF 10: 1 (Winter/hiver92-93)25-26.

Koczka, Wanita J. Presentation to the Canadian panel on power and control against women Fr abs. WEDF 10: 1 (Winter/hiver92-93)27-28.

Lacroix, Margot. Concordia women's centre: a place of resistance Fr abs photo. WEDF

10: 1 (Winter/hiver92-93)5-7.

Price, Lisa S. Russell, Leslie rev. Patterns of violence the lives of girl, and women: a reading guide [Book review] WEDF 10: 1 (Winter/hiver92-93)51-52.

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