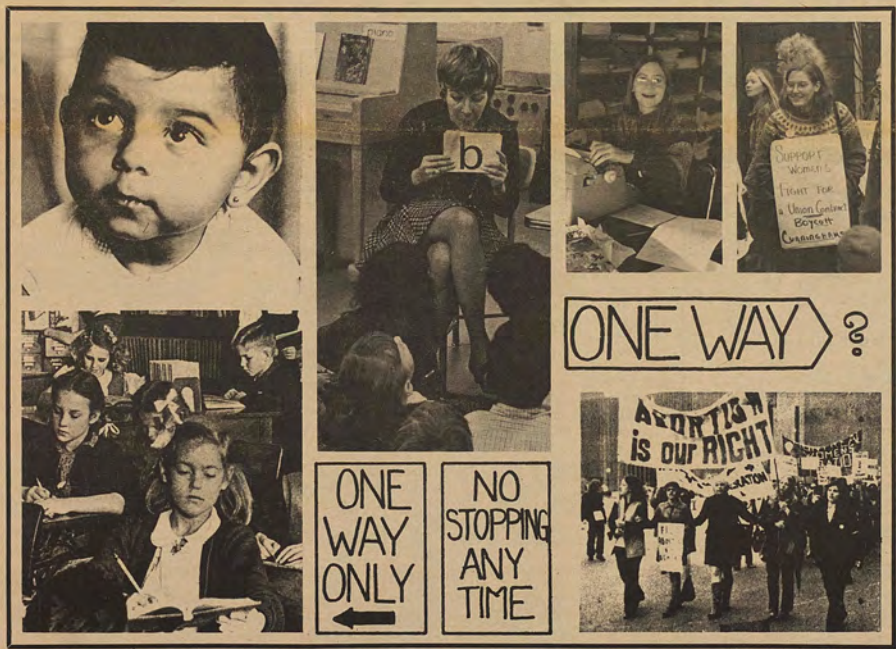


a Women's
Liberation
newspaper
25¢

PEDESTAL

Vancouver B.C. Volume III No. 8 Aug./Sep. 1971

where are we going?



where have we been?

Letters

FROM KAMLOOPS

Dear sisters,

Enclosed you will find a donation from myself and my mother. We hope that we will be in a position to repeat the donation in the future.

I would be very sorry if you people couldn't manage to produce your paper any longer. Living a liberated life and living in Kamloops seem to be polarized conditions and when you must do both at the same time, a newspaper like the Pedestal lends tremendous moral and intellectual support.

Both my mother and I feel that the subscription fee should be more than it is considering what one gets out of it. In view of some of the salaries some women must live on, though, \$2.00 is sometimes a very large amount. I was very glad to read of women taking action against their exploitation, that is, the article in your July issue on page 3. In hopes that you will be able to continue your excellent newspaper,

Sincerely,
Jean Ratcliff
Kamloops, B.C.



LOOKING FOR WORK

Dear sisters,

I'm enclosing a small donation for the Pedestal. I do believe that \$2.00 per sub is too low, and that the price should be raised to three dollars, two fifty at the very least. Any one interested isn't going to object I'm sure, and it would be a little more in line with other papers' prices.

A subject that often seems to be overlooked is the problem women have in knowing where to look for work. One can't tell from the telephone directory that places like Scott Paper, Cascade Electric, Blue Ribbon and Nabob Coffee etc. hire women. Also there's the matter of job classification on the application that leaves one stumped. I think it would be a great help to women if each issue carried the low down on one or two places. Which are unionized, wage rates, education requirements, age limits, where the hiring is done, pitfalls, etc. I have no idea how difficult a job it would be but maybe someone else will know more about the subject.

Sincerely,
Hazel Mortenson
Quesnel, B.C.



"I'm sorry madame, but your qualifications are irrelevant."

Dear sisters,

You may like to know and publish in the Pedestal my latest experience which tends to prove, if we did not know it already, that the situation of women is hopeless within the framework of our present economic system.

1. I applied for a job as a French teacher with the Delta School Div. in April. I filled in an application form on the spot and handed in a very praising recommendation from one of my former school inspectors.

2. The interviewer, a principal and himself a former French teacher, did not seem particularly impressed by my qualifications which happen to be the highest in the province (B. Ed., M.A., Licence-en-lettres, doctorate from the Sorbonne, special diploma from the Sorbonne to teach French abroad, fifteen years teaching experience - 3 in B.C., and native French fluency. All these assets meant nothing to the interviewer who stated he was mostly concerned with 'balancing' the sexes inside the French Department, and that the position which was vacant was for a male only because it involved headship of the department, and "men have more leadership". He would not even consider my application.

I reported this matter to the B.C. Teachers' Federation who said they had gone on record as having advised prospective employers they wanted their female members to have the same opportunities for jobs as men but that they had no actual control over hiring, short of expressing their desiderata in official policy, and that my case should be dealt with by the Department of Labor.

I wrote the Department of Labor explaining the position, in particular the fact that I had left an application form containing all my qualifications which include three years' teaching in B.C. schools, with the Delta School District, but that, to my regret, I could not give the name of my interviewer as I did not focus on his name when it was given to

me, partly because I did not suspect he would turn out to be such an interesting type, partly because my quarrel is with the Delta S.D., not with my interviewer, whoever he may be.

The Dept. of Labor replied a particular gentleman had been assigned to study my complaint. I contacted the investigator. Here is what he had to say:

1. He felt employers were free to employ whomever they like. (In which case, it is not clear to me what the investigator's functions are.)

2. He did not see there was discrimination against women, since the B.C. teaching force is made up of 75% women. He seemed particularly impressed by this argument and kept presenting it to me. (I feel there is discrimination because 75% of school administrators are not women and higher paying jobs are given to men, on their alleged superior leadership.

3. He did not see my qualifications, even a doctorate from the Sorbonne, were "relevant". (Very arrogant tone) (I stated it was far more relevant to teaching French than testicles were.)

4. He argued my case should be the concern of the BCTF, even though I had told him repeatedly our association had no authority to enforce hiring practices.

5. He felt the Delta School Board was right in trying to "balance" the sexes, even though this took the form of placing one male head, and a new comer, over four on the job female teachers. (I asked him why they don't invoke the balance of the sexes in the maths and science department which are almost exclusively staffed by men.)

6. He said he could not help me as long as I did not give him the name of my interviewer. I admitted some laxity on my part there but pointed out I was not invested with the authority to question the Delta S.D., but that he, on the other hand, could press them for the name of the interviewer, if this was of any particular significance. I repeated my objection was not to my interviewer but to the School Board itself.

7. He expressed great surprise at being told I had taught in B.C. for three years, and had left an application form with the interviewer, even though both facts were stated in my letter of complaint, which clearly means the investigator had not even read my letter.

8. He asked me if I would be satisfied if he would ask the Delta School Board to state in writing that they had always given, still do give and always will give women the same opportunities as men. I explained I was seeking redress for a past injustice not merely vague reassurance for the future.

9. He said that I had a job anyway and he did not see why I was so concerned with the Delta School Board's policy. (I feel that whether or not I have a job is none of the investigator's business and that if I were not concerned over the School Board's policy, his intervention would be useless and he would be drawing his salary for nothing - which seemed to me to be his aim anyway.)

10. He kept saying I should present my case to the BCTF. I wrote down his very words, read them back to him and said I would quote him to the BCTF. He then denied having said the words I had jotted down without his being aware of it.

I then contacted the BCTF to let them know of the hopeless vicious circle I was in. I even suggested I might sue the board as an individual, without official support, so as to put them into the awkward position while they are placed under oath of having either to perjure themselves, or admit prejudice, or try to prove they had a better applicant. The Association agreed this would be effective but I feel this is the most difficult and expensive way for most women to expose their prejudiced employers and place them under the law.

How do you feel about that?

Yours,
Arlette Johnstone



Thanks

The response to our appeal for help last issue has been wonderful. Many people responded with long helpful letters, which we liked so well that we are using a large part of this issue to share them with you. Even more people sent donations and subscription requests. We haven't been able to acknowledge them all individually, but we would like to thank you all collectively now. Our debt is now paid.

We hope that all of you who answered the appeal and many, many more of you who didn't, will continue to send us your ideas and articles. If you think there is something that should be in the Pedestal, please feel free to write it and send it in - it's your paper. For women in the Vancouver area, if you have an idea or experience you would like to share, but haven't the time or confidence to write it out, we'd be glad to help you in any way we can. We again invite you all to join us in putting out the paper and distributing it - details on how to get in touch are elsewhere in the paper.

Thanks again. It's great to be back.

THE HELPFUL NEIGHBOR

Dear friends,

I am sorry to read that the Pedestal and the office is at a financial crisis. As the editor of a little paper myself, maybe I could give you a few suggestions. Enclosed you'll find an 8-page newsletter, which costs us 50¢ per thousand plus stamps. It only has the one illustration now, but a photocopy sheet could be done at 2 cents per copy.

Your office could move to a rumpus room of one of our members centrally located. All this saves money. The expenses of Helpful Neighbor are not expected to rise more than the cost of paper and ink as we grow. A housewife has the phone line. Several people let us use their gestetner free. We are a registered society and we get the lower rate taxfree on paper, stencils and ink. The girl that types, lay-out and staples and another functioning as secretary are both on the welfare's opportunities program. Volunteers are distributing the paper to information centres, rec-centres, all over Greater Vancouver.

We would love to have a beautiful tabloid too but we just can't afford it. The people who need the information we give, however, would look for Helpful Neighbor even if it was printed on toilet paper. So much about budgeting.

I would like to express my personal experiences with other women, and in my SHARE group (formerly the Mothers' Club) as well as through our paper I am meeting several dozen new people every month. Being a supporter of the Women's Liberation Movement, I

often speak about this subject and take note of the opinion of others: I find, moderately and timidly every woman is for women's liberation, while many sort of whisper it, as not to let their husband know (he might get hurt). Others say: "Yes, up to a point." They are for equal wages, equal education and job training, abortion laws modified. They are against: women demonstrating, aggressiveness in women, women when married wanting to work and be independent. In the meantime they completely lean on their husbands, remain ignorant and so dependent that (if he mistreats her) she has no alternative but welfare and poverty. He knows that and he's got all the cards in his hand. Somehow this doesn't seem right, but it explains why we have so many mothers in and out of mental hospitals!

I wish you people weren't leftist though. I feel that within the free enterprise system, ways can - and are gradually being found - to care social problems. Only one who has lived in the communist countries can tell you the difference from experience. Ask immigrants from there! This is one thing about women's caucus and your paper that may just scare people or turn 'em off. Stick to facts and practical suggestions. We can do a lot on our own by helping each other out. I hope I haven't hurt your feelings but I had to say what's in my heart.

All the best to all of you,

Yours,
Ingrid Szabo

hi!

we're the tribal sisters collective of kalamazoo, michigan and we'd like to help you in any way that we can do you have any back issues that we could use for our library? we are forty women that got together a couple of months ago to form a seven woman collective with a skillskool, library, counselling, paper, and work on daycare and prison reform we love you



tribal sister collective
p.s. i'm danielle robert - a french canadian from montreal - hi!

more letters on p. 11 & 12



Dear Pedestal,

I am sending you \$10 to help with your financial crisis, but I must remark that even if every one of your subscribers sent the same amount, the financial relief would only be temporary. It would be a shame if the Pedestal went under. How about some long range - or substantial short range - remedies?

Since the publication of the Royal Commission Report, I am quite convinced that there are an awful lot of reasonably wealthy women around who believe, if not in Women's Liberation, at least in a certain measure of liberation for women. Unless these women are politically (existing parties) active, they must feel frustration in their personal attempts to bring about a better situation for women. Why not seek pledges from these women? Or ask them to be patrons of the Pedestal? You are not compromising yourselves, for if you and they indeed believe that "sisterhood is powerful", then they will not impose any restrictions upon you. I do not

know Vancouver, but I know that if the newspaper were being published in London, there would be a good chance of substantial support in this way.

Another idea. Last April the Cancer Society sponsored the Great Bike Ride for Women - and thousands of women rented and borrowed bikes to complete the 14 miles, each having pledges of one to fifty or more dollars. I rode in that ride (the first time on a bike in 16 years) and I was deeply impressed by the sheer womanpower around me. The ride was a lot of fun and wonderful exercise. A lot of women took up biking as a result, but that was only one of the benefits. Why couldn't the Pedestal sponsor a similar ride? Women themselves would be earning the money - men can do the pledging. There's nothing wrong with so-called middle-class fundraising, as long as it works. You might be surprised.

Anyway, I hope you can find some way to keep publishing. Best of luck!

Pat Dewdney
London, Ontario



This article is from the news sheet put out by Sandringham Hospital nurses' aides, who have been on strike for almost a year.

I, Mrs. D. M. Abolit, registered nurse, of the City of Victoria in the Province of British Columbia do solemnly declare:

I was employed at the Sandringham Private Hospital in the City of Victoria for the period September, 1968, to January, 1970, in the position as superintendent, more commonly called matron. My salary during this entire period was \$500 a month, that is \$9 a month below the basic rate for this position.

My sole reason for volunteering this statement is my belief that I have a duty to the public, the patients, the employees, and my profession to tell the story as I experienced it, and thus help to bring to an end what I know to be a disgraceful mess.

The Sandringham Hospital was built about eight years ago. It is a well laid out modern building. From a physical standpoint there is no reason for it to be inefficient. But there is more to running a geriatric hospital than facilities. There is the question of policy and relationships. And there is the question of supplies. While I was at Sandringham relationships were unbelievably bad and the supply situation scandalous. I believe that this is still the situation. Certainly it was the real reason for the strike by the nurses aides. Here are the details, on the basis of my personal knowledge.

THE ADMINISTRATOR DOMINATES EVERYTHING

The system in effect at Sandringham was as follows. The B. C. Pharmacy, a provincial government agency in Vancouver, dispenses FREE to the hospital all supplies for patients who are on welfare. Sandringham was originally licensed for 75 but this was later extended on a temporary basis to 84. Subsequently it was increased to 91 at the time of the closing of the Oak Lodge, presumably to allow for some additional welfare patients. When I was at Sandringham the number of welfare patients was 14 out of 84.

The Pharmacy was always generous with our welfare requisitions for supplies. They never unduly questioned us about anything or held anything up. We always received back rubs, green soap, lysol, every type of laxative, baby powder, suppositories and incontinent pads (for "bed wetters") whenever we put in for the fourteen welfare patients.

BUT THIS WAS ALL THE SUPPLIES WE HAD TO RUN THE ENTIRE HOSPITAL, save for the very rare cases when incontinent pads etc. were purchased and charged to individual private patients or when I was occasionally allowed to purchase a few supplies charged to the hospital.

What I am saying is this — the administration attempted to run the hospital for the 70 private patients who paid fees with the free supplies it received from the government for the 14 welfare patients. This is a serious charge, but it is the truth as I experienced it.

THE SUPPLIES SCANDAL

I know for a fact that the shortages were so serious that nurses aides were forced to "hide" what supplies they could get their hands on, so that they would be able to get through their particular shift — to protect them from the other shift so to speak.

From personal experience I know of many nurses aides who even went to the extent of buying such things as baby powder and back rubs out of their own meagre earnings, just so the patients would not go without.

Lysol and green soap were watered down to the point where they were useless.

The incontinent pads (for "bed wetters") were in hopelessly short supply. I know of instances where bedspreads, flannellette gowns and even old clothing were used as substitutes.

WHY THE AIDES ORGANIZED AND WERE FORCED TO STRIKE

The aides I had at Sandringham, many of whom are now on strike, were an excellent bunch. Many of them took home patients' personal clothing for laundering, sewed on buttons, shortened dresses when styles changed, washed and pin-curlled hair as extras for patients in order to improve the latter's morale, physical well-being and attractiveness.

I certainly had no complaints whatsoever about their work and dedication. In spite of this they were indiscriminately fired by the administrator. Moreover, the administrator was so spiteful that when she heard that the aides got jobs elsewhere she would phone up the new employers and let them know she had fired the aides from Sandringham.

THE INTOLERABLE WORK LOAD

At Sandringham there are no practical licensed nurses for each of the three wings. In my opinion these positions are necessary in order to insure proper care for the patients. Failure to provide this intermediate level of responsibility places a heavy burden on the aides. At Sandringham an aide has 8 to 10 patients on the average. A more normal load is four or five, the number handled by nurses in ordinary hospitals. Incontinent patients, who make up half those resident at Sandringham, have to be completely changed and dressed on the average 6 to 8 times in every 24 hours — some even as high as 14 times. Consequently each aide has to look after 4 incontinent patients about 3 times per shift. In order to do this they must know a good deal about body mechanics, how to lift and position people properly, since the patients simply cannot change themselves.

Despite the intolerable work load the aides were paid "miserably," and these are the words of the administrator herself, as quoted in the daily press. But worse, they were belittled, they were spied on, they were arbitrarily changed from one shift to another, given impossible tasks. If they took good care and paid careful attention to a patient, they were rebuked by the administrator.

Why do people continue to work under the conditions I have described? The answer is that we regard the job as a challenge and we really care for the plight of these infirm, elderly patients under our care. We have often been told by others we are crazy to remain. But we think it is better to stick it out as long as there is any possibility of change.

In my own case, I was told by the administrator that the management desired my resignation.

There is no question in my mind that the aides formed an organization out of a dire necessity to assert their rights as individuals, to try to establish an elementary level of human dignity, so that they would not be crushed psychologically. Organization into a trade union was primarily an act of self-defense. Once they made this stand, swift retaliation followed. It is on the public record that unlawful dismissals took place, and rehiring were ordered by the Labor Relations Board. But the administrator-management-owner trio refused to recognize the fact that their employees were entitled to any rights at all. The company and its various agents refused outright to negotiate a contract which would spell out wages and job conditions.


The aides went, through every section and sub-section of the B.C. Labor Relations Act to try to bring about discussions and an agreement. The company adamantly refused to communicate. Consequently the aides had no recourse but to strike.

Mrs. D. M. Abolit (RN)
former Sandringham Matron

You are invited to a
Quilting Bee
to make a quilt for
Bernadette Devlin's baby

We're getting together
Sunday, Sept. 5 at 2 p.m.
in the
Women's Centre
511 Carrall St.

Bring a 12x12 piece of *boil-proof cotton*
plus scraps for applique — and your ideas
See you then...



Abortion

ABORTION PROJECT LOCKED OUT

Women's Liberation Alliance was given \$4,000 by Opportunities for Youth with which to hire four students to carry out a research project on birth control and abortion. The project members have since been locked out of their office by the leadership of the Alliance because of a disagreement over the purpose of the project. The Alliance wanted the women to conduct a door to door survey asking residents 72 questions about birth control and abortion and to hold public meetings in Vancouver during which women would relate their abortion experiences. Instead the project has been working on a pamphlet to be distributed free throughout the province. Despite being locked out, the project is carrying on and the pamphlet will be published sometime in September as soon as we are able to raise the money.

WHAT WAS DONE

METHODS: Questionnaires were sent to all doctors, hospitals and public health units, project members visited some towns, information was obtained from various abortion counselling services.

BIRTH CONTROL: Birth control information throughout B.C. and the Yukon is inadequate. The Birth Control Handbook was rejected by school boards and public health units. The only source of information is the family doctor. In some cases, this is adequate but in small towns particularly, women simply won't go to the doctor and some doctors will lay their own morality/religious trip on their patients.

Proposed solution: Write a less detailed and easier to understand pamphlet than the Birth Control Handbook which appears designed primarily for college people. Try to get this pamphlet accepted by school boards and public health units. Other methods of distribution:

Women's liberation groups, community centres, youth groups, where these exist.

Much more propaganda about birth control is needed and more work particularly outside of Vancouver in making it acceptable.

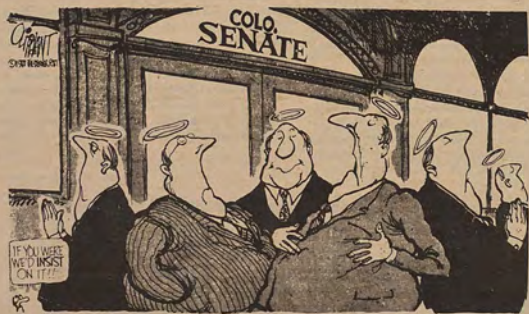
ABORTION: The situation regarding abortion is changing rapidly. Right now, there is no standard procedure and hospitals vary a great deal in the amount of liberalism and the procedure required.

All hospitals which are not Catholic and which have the required minimum of 4 doctors, now have Abortion committees. (A few small hospitals did therapeutic abortions before the new 'liberalized' law). Some of these are more strict than others and some will still do abortion for medical reasons only. All hospitals get uptight about getting known for liberalism and act paranoid about getting to be 'abortion mills', so there is some form of residency rules in all Vancouver and suburb hospitals. These are not so strict in out of town hospitals but would become so if they got a large influx of non-resident women seeking abortions.

The pamphlet referred to above will list the towns where abortions are available to residents and also suggest where women who live in towns with Catholic hospitals should try.

THE SITUATION IN VANCOUVER: Vancouver General Hospital, Royal Columbian, Lions Gate are easy to get through. Women need only convince one doctor they are certain they want an abortion. Referrals to specialists are rarely required. However, overcrowding of facilities and residency rules impose undue hardships on women from outside of Vancouver. VGH and Royal Columbian are teaching hospitals and out of town doctors can refer anyone to doctors who practice in these hospitals, with the exception of women seeking abortions.

Surrey Memorial Hospital also does its share of abortions but also restricts patients to those living in the immediate area. The situation in Richmond and Burnaby is somewhat more confused and seems to be in a state of flux.



'WELL, IF I WERE PREGNANT I CERTAINLY WOULDN'T HAVE AN ABORTION!'

COUNSELLING SERVICES:

- Women & Children First 872-0284, 874-8903
- Reach 254-1354
- Gordon House 683-2554
- Vancouver Free Clinic 731-6929
- VICTORIA—Mrs. Murrison 689-2122
- PRINCE GEORGE—Crisis Centre 563-1241

every
child



a
wanted
child





The Alaska Highway must be the longest and dustiest road in the whole world. The pavement ends about 30 miles before Whitehorse. In between there is about 850 miles of gravel, washboard and dust. Dust. They talk about pollution in the cities but everywhere there is no pavement, you eat dust, breathe dust, cough great black gobs of it out of your dust-lined lungs. The cars, the trailers, trucks, clothing, trees, people are all the same colour as the grey dust. But, unlike the city, most of the people are still human.

Mile 0. Dawson Creek.

My purpose in hitch-hiking some 2000 miles of dust and washboard and gravel and sun was to find out about abortion and birth control for the Women's Liberation Alliance. I intended to combine talking about abortion with a lot of beer-drinking and leave it at that, without any missionary work regarding women's liberation or racism or any other problems. I only had two weeks and very limited funds and I have no illusions about my ability to save the world. But I found that to people who are still human there is no way one can talk about abortion in isolation.

Birth control information is adequate for white people, I was told by several people but Indians are "irresponsible" and wouldn't use it even if it was available. Although Indian women are more irresponsible than white women, the white women should not be allowed to decide when they should have a baby because this would be irresponsible also. "Responsibility" seems to consist of men screwing everything in sight and not even knowing, let alone caring, how many children they have.

Back at Prince George a man who took me some miles on my way and bought my breakfast told me I was wasting the taxpayers' money. His money. I asked him how many children he had and he said he supposed he might have fathered a few but he had never thought about it before. I asked him the name of his children's mothers and he asked me how a guy was supposed to remember the names of all the women, he'd laid. Later he considered the matter some more and thought perhaps my job was a good idea after all because it might make women less bitter. "Bitter," he said, "you have no idea how bitter they get after a visit to the abortionist. They're all sick and bleeding and bitter, and they act as if it was all my fault. Two of them kicked me out. Maybe if abortions were legal, they wouldn't be so bitter."

The next guy had some intentions of raping me and considered himself a very tolerant understanding sort of guy because he hadn't actually raped me.

Both these men were constructing an oil pipe line. Mackenzie has about 700 men working there and almost no women except for the professionals that come up occasionally from Vancouver. Human beings who do not live in a human society cannot, by definition, be human beings. Later, after meeting many more of these men from isolated segregated work camps, I tried to figure out the difference between one of these camps and a concentration camp.

The food is better in the work camps and there is some hope of eventually earning enough money to be able to leave it. Other than that there is no difference. My father says that North America has the only culture in the world which would set up labour camps for men only and not consider that punishment for some heinous crime. But we set up these camps and consider that men working there are privileged because they have a job at all. Men who have hardly any contact with women and children cannot be considered men. It does not seem improbable that the oilman, the one who hadn't any idea how many children he'd fathered, had never seen a small baby, let alone ever played with a child. If the oil companies had to provide facilities for families, they wouldn't make quite such big profits and so it's cheaper to encourage sexism and racism and promote "manliness" as that which does not need a human community.

But it's the Indians who are irresponsible. Indian and Metis families are too large, the public health man told me. They spent all their time drinking in the Chetwynd Hotel and what did I think of that. I thought it was a sad situation where people were given no choice as to what they did and he got irritated because I made the situation sound so hopeless. I asked why it was hopeless to say that people did pretty much what they had to do, and if he was inferring that human nature was all awful, but intrinsically awfuller in some races than others. "Do they have a human nature?" he asked. We started a petty argument that went on and on about whether or

not human nature was intrinsically selfish. He wanted me to tell him why the monks in Vietnam had burned themselves and I said it was because there were things more important than personal survival and the survival of one's group is one of them. We began arguing about whether or not most people would run in front of a car to rescue a child. I would but he wouldn't. Most people are contemptuously selfish, he insisted, and when I asked him why it was so important for him to think so, he said it was because he was and if everyone else wasn't, then he must be abnormal and he didn't want to think he was abnormal. I left without much optimism about what kind of health care the Dawson Creek public would get.

The Sisters

The hospital is run by the Sisters of Providence and does not do abortions although an awful number of sterilizations are done. I had been really upset by the large number and the large difference between the number of applications approved and the number actually done. Had women been forced into it and then run away? It turned out that they had just recently started doing vasectomies so many families had chosen to get the husband done rather than proceed with getting the wife operated on. It was very reassuring. The administrator assured me that the soul entered the body at conception and abortion was, therefore, murder, but that sterilization was okay in spite of what the Pope said.

Amazingly enough, she gave me a women's liberation speech. She hadn't wanted to be a housewife and the only other choice was to be a nun and she felt that nuns had greater freedom than wives. Nuns have a choice about vocation; wives do not. She wanted freedom and so joined a convent.

Horseshed Ritual

And then there was this amazing woman who was the neighbour of the woman I was staying with. She had loaned my friend her blender with which to grind up horseshed to be given to another neighbour. They explained that to this was a peculiar ritual of Dawson Creeksians, performed once a year in the presence of many children and teen-agers in order to institutionalize relationships. The children all got a taste of the horseshed and sat around moaning for water which was provided by mothers or surrogate mothers who also helped each other scrape horseshed off the ceiling. The ritual ended with a ceremonial dance through the neighbourhood during which the women and children chanted about the success of the horseshed ritual to the amazement of the watching men, who had not been allowed to participate in the secret ritual and seemed scarcely cognizant of its significance.

It turned out, alas, that the horseshed ceremony was only performed by a very restricted group of people. The majority of Dawson Creeksians are a lot like us. They despise children, for example, and think youth is a disease or a plague of locusts.

Like everywhere else in Canada, there is an economic slump in Dawson Creek. The main occupation is farming and farmers have had a difficult time of it these last years. In addition, the P.G.E. used to end in Dawson Creek which provided employment for railroaders as well as truckers who moved goods to wherever they were to go.

The youth

Now that unemployment is increasing, so is the violence of which decent citizens condemn those who are unable to find jobs. And in one sense, they are right to fear and despise their growing children because there isn't work for these children and so no room for them in this society. There couldn't be a youth centre in Dawson Creek because it would be a place for dope-crazed hippies to hang out and a 19 year old girl just died of a combination of adrenalin and mescaline. The biggest threats to business profits are hippies and Indians and both groups are spoken of with equal contempt with "dope-crazed" replacing "drunken" as the favourite adjective. There's no room for them and hopefully, if nothing is allowed to them, they'll soon destroy themselves with drugs and everyone can cluck their tongues in pity. One cannot mourn the dying; only the dead.

And then there was this 19 year old who used pinkie shears and aborted herself okay but also got 14 pints of blood and a hysterectomy. There's a night and moonlight and romance. I love you, baby, I love you and then terror and screaming and the blood pouring out in a constant stream. But the Georgia Straight advocates screwing girls from the time they're 8. Or earlier. Maybe babies. Why not babies? It's all the same and there is no longer any right or wrong only the momentary thrill. Repression is bad for you. A good piece of tail will get you to Dawson Creek, and afterwards the blood and the screaming. Stupid bitches, why don't they take the pill? Then there's only the risk of depression, strokes. Not many women die anyway. Most only suffer sore breasts, weight gain, some nausea. It's a small price to pay when repression is so bad for you.

Like Tom Campbell, many people feel no need to repress their hatred for youth. In Dawson Creek, an old woman got threatening phone calls until she got the paper to print them. I asked, "How many teen-agers have stayed here in the last year?" The two of them look at each other and try to count up the number but fail. "Well, about 50, does 50 sound right?" "Yeah, it would be about that." Nobody else cares. It's a good thing there's at least one person who cares. It doesn't take many more than that. The kid from Fort St. John knew her and said no one could do her any harm because the teen-agers would be there. All of them. He was talking about how they would protect her, when he hit the gravel out of Fort St. John and he rolled the car. I should have stayed with the truckers. But the truckers wouldn't look at me. There were three guys and me on the road; they stopped for me, and then

they didn't ask me where I was going even and wouldn't look at me. Nobody would hurt another human being, but there's this broad bouncing up and down on the rough road and if they don't look at it, it's only a body. I told them I was going to Fort St. John and got out there.

After the accident, two guys in a truck picked us out of the ditch and I went with them to Mile 422 from where I got another ride to Whitehorse. It must be the longest and dustiest road in the world and I was bruised with several sprains from the accident, but there was the bush and the rabbits and one bobcat and finally, Whitehorse. Those immense river valleys. Sick and dusty and aching, but I looked out at the valleys and nothing hurt.



Mile 300. Fort Nelson.

I didn't even notice Fort Nelson on my way up. Presumably I was nursing my bruises or had dozed off. On my way back I had a ride with a trucker who was among the world's most beautiful people. He was stopping for some sleep in Fort Nelson so I had three hours in Fort Nelson. I was some dizzy from the sun and sleeplessness and also covered with the dust of the Alaska Highway. I tried and failed to comb my hair. It had knotted into ropy strands of dust and nothing could be done about it. Oh well, if the trucker didn't mind, why should the doctors. I started walking over to the hospital. But it was too hot and I hadn't a hat. I started back to the hotel and drank great bunches of milk and water. There seemed to be only men in the hotel and they all leered at me. When I didn't respond, the looks turned to hate. It was all really strange. I was covered with sweat and dust and my hair was knotted into ropy strands of dust and they wouldn't have had me for two bits if I was available. But I wasn't, so they looked at me with contempt and came walking over to my table, stopped and stared and then turned away. I got really shook up. Later I was told that men who got caught on the Indian reserve at Fort Nelson got badly beaten up by the residents and that's why they were so horny. Most of the way, I'd been protected by the good girl/bad girl dichotomy. Good girls shouldn't be hitch-hiking alone but still and all, I was so obviously blonde and tried to be asexual as far as possible so that I could survive. Also I told people I was a student and I look a lot younger than I actually am. Good girls are blonde and have money and come from good homes. Bad girls are older women, Indians and women from low-income groups. Normally, you don't screw good girls until after you've married them, but in Fort Nelson, they're desperate enough to screw anyone.

"You get on out of town!"

Unnerved by the sun and the hatred, I couldn't walk over to the hospital, and decided to phone instead. They were polite about putting me in touch with the doctor who was there at the time. When I told the doctor who I was, he said he had already written to his M.P. about us and that it would be best if I left town immediately. I thanked him politely for his trouble and hung up.

A short time later another person, the newspaper editor, was saying more angrily: "You get out of town." This was after his receptionist had told me that only Indian women needed birth control and abortion anyway, because they were "irresponsible" and had babies all over the place.

Native people

I went back to my hotel to stick my head in some cold water and drink more milk. Came out just in time to see the truck I'd been meaning to get a ride with disappearing down the road. I was scared. I couldn't hitch-hike right in town and there wouldn't be a bus for two days. I got on out of town, walking down the road. The suitcase got lighter as I walked and seemed to provide balance. After about an hour of walking, a woman in a truck picked me up, but she was only going a few miles out of town. That was good enough; at least I wouldn't be in town. I told her my troubles, so pleased was I to see a friend. She wasn't however, sympathetic. Only the Indians, she said, needed birth control, etc..

Presumably it's true that the Native people have more children than the average white, but their life expectancy is lower so they ought to have more. I got the impression from all these people who talked against the Indians, however, that even one Indian baby was too many.

Watson Lake. Mile 600.

On the way to Whitehorse, I had slept through Watson Lake. On the way back, I drank milk and water in the hotel and then began walking down the dusty road and didn't get a ride for three hours. Well, actually I did. The kid was going down to the swimming hole only a few miles out of town so I talked to him for a while and then continued walking down the road.

There is no drugstore in Watson Lake so guys have to drive to Fort Nelson and just as often as not, when they get there, they lose their nerve about asking for safes. Nobody in Watson Lake got married any often than anyone else on the road, most often they lived common-law, shacked up, or just screwed around. High school girls commonly got pregnant (two this school term) and gave their babies up for adoption. They don't use birth control because it's too embarrassing and the kid only knew of one girl using it. Everybody knew who was screwing who, but it was embarrassing if they used birth control. I gave the kid some Birth Control Handbooks and he reacted with horror saying he would jeopardize his chances of setting up a business in the town if he was caught distributing the stuff. But then he changed his mind and took half a dozen.

He is the only person I remember on the road that didn't differentiate between Indians and whites. He said all the girls were promiscuous. He reckoned the guys weren't really, so I asked him did the girls screw each other and he said no, guys, then the guys were promiscuous too, but he wasn't, of course, oh no, they never are, who knows the fathers of those unwanted babies, who knows who cares, and how do you think they feel, that's how they when they find out nobody cares, well, that's baby it is.

Whitehorse. Mile 918.

"Wait right here," the mining men with whom I had fallen in love said. They came back a few minutes later and told me I could come in, the cook was in a good mood. It was a bunch of trailers just beside the highway about 10 miles this side of Whitehorse. The cook was pleased to see me and gave me bacon and eggs and toast and kept refilling my coffee cup. "There's more and more of 'em on the streets now, panhandling, since they laid off 140 a few weeks back and these kids keep hitching up here, thinking they

will find work, they call them lazybums in the south because there is no jobs so they come north like they're told and there's no jobs here either. You can't feed 'em all."

I felt guilty about the whole deal because I could afford to buy my own food, but due to circumstances beyond my control, my last meal had been 16 hrs. ago and Whitehorse was still 10 miles away. It wasn't like being hungry for weeks and months and years or even a lifetime. I ate anyway.

There were 28 men in the camp and they weren't much interested in me because I was there. I was also dusty and covered with sweat and bruises and I still had dust in my ears from the accident 800 miles of dust and gravel before. They wanted to talk about women and had no other topic of conversation besides a few sentences about the job, but they wanted to talk about women in the abstract, women's bodies without dust in their ears, not women wolfing down bacon and eggs. It appeared that most of them picked up Indian women but they all considered that a downer and were very ribald towards those who slept with 'squaws'. But they were nice men. They gave me food and they wouldn't hurt me because I was a good girl and also I was a human woman with dust in my ears, whereas they'd been trained to think differently about Indians. Men who do not live in a human community do not act like human beings.

I hitched into Whitehorse after walking a ways and then phoned the woman with whom I would be staying. She was really nice to me; in fact, everybody on this trip was nice to me.



"Squaws Along the Yukon..."

I slept, showered and then went out to look at the scenery. It was all very breathtaking. I was here. Green grass, trees, the hills leaning over the road. I went running down the road in a state of euphoria and immediately a car stopped. It was 7 or so miles into town so I got in. He was going to the Kopper King. The mining men had said they would be at the Kopper King so I looked in. They weren't there yet. The band was singing 'the squaws along the Yukon are good enough for me', so I kept on walking down the road.

It was another three miles into town and by the time I got there, the euphoria had worn off and I didn't know what I would do there. Fortunately, the same guy came along again. He was a trucker, he'd lived in Whitehorse for some years, he was lonely, he wouldn't get fresh being too old for that kind of stuff. We drove around looking at the riverboats and the river and then went to the only other pub open in town, it being Sunday. It was where the Indians went, the trucker told me, and it was a really tough pub, we might get into trouble, "I can look after myself.

friend," I said, "but don't expect me to protect you." We had a beer, looked at the Yukon River again and then went back to the Kopper King. They were singing 'the squaws along the Yukon are good enough for me'.

But it was great to hear Western music again. I was too self-conscious to dance but could listen to the groovy songs and watch the people. The trucker told me all he knew about Whitehorse.

After a few more hours when the mining men hadn't showed up, I went over to some of the other guys from the camp and asked where they were. They told me they'd gone to Carmacks, and did I want to dance? I went back to the trucker and asked why anyone would drive to Carmacks just after driving to and from Spy Hill, Saskatchewan in a week. He said to get a woman. I said they were nice guys, and the trucker said yeah, but there's a Native village in Carmacks and it's a good place to go. I'd probably have been persuaded to sleep with the one guy if he felt so inclined, but he'd have had to deal with me as

a human being and not only talk to me before, but even after. Much easier to go to the Native village. The band was playing 'the squaws along the Yukon', again and the trucker said he'd take me home. He seemed to be as disturbed as I was about the matter, but I was mad at him anyway for not having let me buy even one beer. I would have given him a long Women's Liberation speech if I could remember where I was staying. I'd gone running down the road without noticing what road, but fortunately, he remembered which road he'd picked me up at.

Talk Show

The next morning I wandered around Whitehorse talking to anyone who would speak to me. At noon I did a tremendous talk show on the radio. Several People called to tell me abortion was murder, one stoned woman said she agreed with everything I said and probably even everything I didn't say and one young woman phoned to ask where she could get an abortion. "Are we to presume you are in favour of abortion?" John Dumas asked, but the young woman didn't have time to answer, rushing off presumably to arrange her abortion. I told the "abortion is murder" people that it didn't matter if all of Whitehorse answered negatively when polled about abortion; women called to get them and that was enough of a survey.

The hospital was hostile and all the doctors too busy to see me. However, much later in the afternoon I was granted an appointment with one of the doctors and allowed to speak to another by telephone.

"Medicine," one of them told me, "is anti-evolutionary. We save the weak people who ought to die." I asked him how one decided who was weaker and he said since money was the standard in this society that those without it could be presumed to be weak. They were non-productive and ought not to live. I said that was what the Nazis said about the Jews and he said it was not and I said it was so and he said it was not. "Socialists," he said, "are the scum of the earth." I stood up to leave and then he added "and it all started with that bastard, Jesus Christ." I sat down again. He worked 75 hours a week at his medical practice and another 30 at two small businesses he had begun himself. One was renting canoes and I don't remember the other. He made a lot of money and so could be considered productive. As soon as he became too ill or too tired to work like that, he would shoot himself.

The media people had been delighted with my radio show so Pam was sent to arrange a tv show. A taxi came to get me and Pam and I sat around rapping in front of a camera and became good friends but it was really a rotten interview. We just couldn't click the way we had on the radio. Afterwards Pam told me she would be fired anyway, probably, and something about the personal and political clashes going on in the station. The news director thought the news writer ought not to speak her opinion since she was to be objective about everything and they didn't like her anyway because she was a woman and

they didn't approve of the clothes I was wearing, so she'd dressed to match for the tv show. She had been there five days from Toronto.

The Road

I was delivered home in a taxi again and the next morning sat on the highway with my thumb stuck out hopefully. I sat there for a long time. The transition from being somebody to being nobody was somewhat traumatic.

Three hours and I was still 30 miles from Whitehorse. I decided I would do as well walking and walked a few miles down the road. It was hot and dusty and every car threw gravel at me as they drove by. I sang.

"Oh yeah, I'm gonna be a country girl again;
With a big brown dog and a big front porch
And rabbits in the pen..."

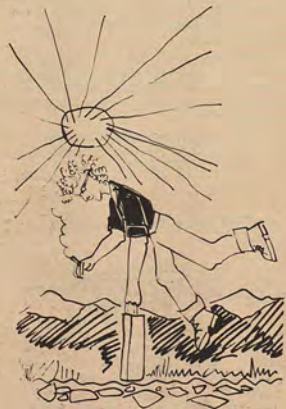


The Texan in the air-conditioned Cadillac asked the Lord if he ought to pick me up and the Lord reckoned he should, so he stopped and backed up for me. I assured him the Lord had been talking about some other hitch-hiker but the Texan had a soft spot in his heart for girls and so he reckoned it was me alright. The Lord didn't approve of anyone smoking or drinking, but presumably sex and certainly making money was alright. The Texan had five wives and a quarter of a million dollars [the Lord thought everyone ought to have their daily bread]. First he told me about how he'd been saved, then his entire life history and then how dumb us Canadians were.

I staggered off in Watson Lake dizzy and nauseated from too little nicotine and too much of the Lord. I got supper at the hotel but couldn't eat much of it as I was too busy puffing cigarettes to restore my metabolism to its natural imbalance. Then I started walking down the road again. It was still hot. I started getting dizzy from the sun. Got a ride with the kid as far as the swimming place and talked to him there for some time. Then down the road again...

The trucker was tall and sunburned and slow spoken with clear blue eyes and he was from Saskatchewan. When he smiled, his eyes crinkled up at the sides. I was still talking with a Texas drawl and quite embarrassed about it, so when we stopped for breakfast I told him about the Texan just to see him smile. By that time the sun was coming up and I got dizzy all over again so I couldn't think of anything else to say to make him smile. He never asked me what I was doing on the road and I was tired and dizzy most of the time and couldn't remember what I was doing there so it was just as well...

He was going to sleep in Fort Nelson for a few hours and said he'd pick me up at the hotel. But when I was desperate to leave town, I went back to the hotel to see the truck disappearing down the road. It turned out to be an entirely different truck and my trucker found other things to do and didn't leave until two hours later.



I was walking down the road. By the time the woman dropped me off at the trailer court about 5 miles out of town, I was suffering the nausea and dizziness of sunstroke. Oddly enough, it made walking easier. I couldn't have walked without the suitcase as I'd have floated away, but carrying the suitcase held me to the ground and provided balance. People from Fort Nelson in their cars would slow down to have a look at me and then speed up beside me showering me with gravel. I had ceased even trying to hitch-hike by that time, unmoved by the sun and hostility, and I wasn't getting in with someone I didn't know. But finally after walking several miles, I couldn't walk any farther. I sat down on my suitcase hanging my head down and watched the sweat dripping into the dust.

WOMEN'S JUG BAND

Friday, September 17, 8:00 PM
at the Women's Centre, 511 Carrall St.

Bring food to share

Bring your instruments - guitars, tambourines, combs, mouth organs, whistles, wasboards, violins, flutes, drums... Even jugs.

Come holler and stomp - we'll learn some songs, play some and have a bell of a time.

looking for work?

We have had a few letters from readers in the Vancouver area asking us if we had any information regarding jobs for women, particularly jobs in organised offices and stores. We decided the best way to get this information was to contact the unions directly. Most of the people we spoke to were extremely helpful and sympathetic but they all said the same thing; the job prospects in Vancouver are pretty bad at present. We did, however, get one very useful piece of information. For women interested in working in union organised offices, there is a referral service at the Office and Technical Employees Union, Local 15, No. 100-146 East Broadway. Women are advised that they can put their name on the list and jobs are sometimes available. This service is free.

According to the President of the O.T.E.U.'s

Sunstroke

"Oh yeah, I'm gonna be a country girl again,
With a switch-blade knife and a great big hat..."

A car stopped beside me. There were two guys in the front and one in the back and they were drinking cokes and I thought they might give me some but they didn't. They just sat staring at me. The one in the back was sitting by the door. "Did you stop to give me a ride?" I asked. They said yes. I asked then why didn't the guy move over? He moved over and allowed me about a foot of space for myself and the suitcase. I sat holding my head for a few miles and then it cleared some, and I asked the guys where they were going. They answered all questions reluctantly and never once looked at my face, just everything below the neck. They worked on an oil-rig about 20 miles out of town.

Now that I was no longer going to expire of sunstroke, I was stricken with the terror of men again. Why wouldn't they look at me? Then we passed my trucker on the road. He was checking his tires or something, walking around the truck. "There's my trucker," I said, "stop, he'll take me to Fort St. John." They drove on. "Oh well," I said, "he'll pick me up wherever it is you're turning off." There was some silence and then the driver said, "Goddamn, do you think he saw we had a passenger?" "Gouldn't help but," the other one said, "we drove right beside him." They continued talking in lower tones so I couldn't hear anything else. A bit later, the driver looking in the rearview mirror said, "shit, he's right behind us."

They turned left onto an access road in the middle of nowhere and I got out as fast as possible and ran across the road to wait for the truck. It was only a few minutes but it seemed much longer with the dizziness in my head from the sun and the hatred and the men pointing and laughing at me. I was covered with dust and sweat and if I had offered them my body for nothing they wouldn't have had it but a blonde friend in the middle of nowhere was some sort of transitory



excitement. Men who do not live in a human community cannot be considered human. I wondered if they'd ever seen or held a baby.

The trucker either thought I was awful dumb or he realized what the sun does to you. In any case, he still didn't ask me any questions but bought me coffee and told me he knew of a cheap motel in Fort St. John. I had, by this time, fallen madly in love with him. Men who live in human communities in the north are more human than urban men. For women, of course, there is not freedom anywhere, and in Fort Nelson even walking down the street would be an acute kind of punishment requiring more guts than I have to accomplish.

When he left me off by Fort St. John, the trucker repeated the name of the hotel he thought was the cheapest about 16 times and also instructions on how to get there. I promptly forgot the name but sang, as I walked down the road into town: "Two blocks down and one block left, two blocks down and one block left." But though it really was cheap [\$3] it was for men only and when they ascertained I was a girl, they sent me on my way.

The sidewalk kept moving from side to side which made the nausea worse, but hanging on tight to the suitcase prevented me from floating away. I was drenched with sweat and covered with grey dust and my hair, which I had tried and failed to comb, was ratty strands of grey dust. A bunch of teen-agers followed me the last block into town making kissing noises and asking each other if "she was a boy or a girl."

"Oh yeah, I'm gonna be a country girl again,
With a great big hat and a great big knife..."

B.C. Hydro is an excellent place for office workers to apply for work. The chances of employment are fairly good. Unfortunately, as with most types of employment, the bulk of the women are employed in the lower job groupings. The higher the job classification, the fewer the women.

However, here are some of the jobs which are available from time to time and the wages:

Job	Starting Pay	After 6 Mo.
Junior Clerk	373	385
Clerk Receptionist	387	400
Clerk Typist	436	447
Comptometer Op.	493	506
Senior Clerk Steno	558	576

The outlook for women who are looking for work as cashiers in supermarkets is decidedly grey. The Retail Clerks Union gets about 50 applications per day from women looking for jobs. The membership of Retail Clerks is approximately 6,000, half of whom are women. About 25% of these women are part time workers who would like to work more hours. This means that even for women who are already union members, the chances of employment are slim; for women who are not in the union there is very little chance of employment, if any.

We would be extremely grateful if any of our readers would write and let us know about their experiences in applying for jobs, union or non-union, good or bad. This information can be very helpful to other women who are looking for work in Vancouver at present.

more letters

FREE SCHOOLS?

To the Vancouver Women's Caucus

For the past couple of years I have been thinking a lot about free schools, especially for young kids; and this year, after finishing first year university in Montreal, I decided to take a year off from school and see if I could work either in a free school or in a daycare centre. Last year I spent time, on an irregular basis, in a "homework room" with kids from Montreal's inner city. We were planning to try and convert it into a free school, financed by the church where we were located, but we couldn't get the funds. So I decided to come out west and see if I could do similar work out here.

Specifically, I wonder if you run any daycare centres, and if so, whether you could use me in one of them. I don't have many credentials, but I really dig being with kids, speak French, have been trained as a classical musician (I play viola and recorders) and so far, I intend to return to school after next year. If you don't do that sort of thing,



perhaps you could tell me of some people who do, and who might need someone to help them out.

I will be coming to Vancouver sometime around the end of August — beginning of September and will look you people up. Thanks a lot for your time and trouble.

Sincerely,
Celia Brickman

Dear Pedestal,

Enclosed you will find a cheque for \$20 as a donation toward the debt. I wish I could send more. I am planning on returning to university for my fourth year, in geology, and I must save for the school year.

I enjoy receiving and reading the Pedestal. It is a newspaper put out by women, and it is worth reading.

As you say "the Pedestal is not

perfect" and as you suggest I will send you a letter to follow this one which will be critical of the paper. I also want to write to you about my experiences so far, as a female geologist, as I want to encourage others to enter a profession they like. Well, so much for now, as I say I will write again.

I hope you can keep the paper going.
Terra Larsen
Sudbury, Ontario

★ ★ ★

A FEW COMMENTS

Dear Pedestal,

You asked for some comments on the Pedestal and I have a few things on my mind, so here they are.

It's true — you aren't perfect, but... the fact remains that the Pedestal is the best established, most professional and to my mind the most popular (in the sense it has something for everyone) publication by any women's liberation group in Canada. It gives the impression, rightly or wrongly, that Vancouver women are really organized and something is really happening on the West Coast that's not happening elsewhere in Canada. Perhaps I'm too close to the factionalism in Toronto; it does seem however that Vancouver women are meeting their problems head on — and telling us all about it.

I was disappointed when you stopped the literature service — but that was a logical move for any growing newspaper (journal). What I'd like to see now is an anthology of writings from the Pedestal.

The articles on unions and working women have been consistently good. I'd like to see more exposes on charm schools and that sort of thing — how about one on the exploitation of stewardesses? I'd also like to know in advance when you're preparing a special issue, or when you are featuring certain subjects. For example I had very mixed feelings about the two "library" articles. Since I was attending the Canadian Library Ass'n Conference at the time of publication, I put these articles up on the main bulletin board — I hope you get a lot of replies. But if I'd known about these articles, I could have perhaps organized a discussion group at the conference. As it is, I'm going to write you an article on

women in libraries... I found both articles somewhat naive, though fairly perceptive.

And now down to hard core complaints. On the back page list telephone numbers and urge people to call. I was in Vancouver for a week — for the first and probably last time — and I called three of the numbers at various times, including right after the general meeting Thursday night. I also went to 511 Canal twice on different afternoons. Do you think I could rouse anyone? Not a soul. Completely by accident, I heard of a meeting of the Women's Alliance — was this conference advertised in the Pedestal? — and went to see what was what. It was pretty interesting — they seemed to have a lot of potential force — but again there seemed to be an undercurrent of factionalism, to the extent that I thought I'd better not ask about their relationship with the Pedestal staff. Where were you all, anyway? Another thing. Some time ago I expressed an interest in writing a monthly column of book reviews and sent you three months supply. You published the first one only. What happened? If I send one month at a time, are you interested?

Generally, however, the Pedestal is a very important piece of mail at our house, and I do show it to others. Since it's the best of its kind, I think all women — not just Vancouver women — should get behind it and make it really go.

Sincerely,
Pat Dewdney

PS: Why do you charge libraries \$10 for a subscription? Often they haven't got money either. I can't persuade my library to renew at this rate.

ENGLISH CONFERENCE

Dear sisters,

Please tell all there is a Women's Lib Conference in Skagness — 100 miles from Nottingham. Activities begin on the Friday and end on Sunday — weekend of Oct. 15.

A struggle is precipitated between sisters who want to link women's liberation to one political line and those who prefer a looser structure.

Men are allowed but Gay Lib has been asked to counteract male-chauvinist tendencies.

Roughly the weekend has been divided thus:

Saturday: analysis of WLM, role and function of WLM.

Sunday: future action on four campaigns — equal pay, equal education, 24-hour day care, birth control & abortion. And films, theatre, seminars, etc.

Please write this to other groups. We need your help. We are together in this struggle.

Roslyn Smythe
South End Green Workshop
57 Gandar Gds.
London NW 6, England



Sisters,

Please renew our subscription to Pedestal. Note new address.

Again our house functions as a women's centre, with library, rap time, open to all women all the time. Please put our name and street number in Pedestal list for women's liberation centres.

Thanks—

Power—
Jeanne Ferreault
for Sibylline House
11028-85 Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta



Greetings:

The purpose of this communication is to inform you about the Stadium Gallery. Basically we are an extension project of the Vancouver Art Gallery operating on funds provided by Canada Council, Vancouver Foundation, Opportunities for Youth, and City of Vancouver Operating Grant. Our location is 4601 Ontario Street in the old Capilano Baseball Stadium next to Queen Elizabeth Park.



We will be offering a year long program in the following areas: craft and industrial workshops, art instruction courses, school tours by secondary and elementary institutions, music and movement workshops, involvement with preschoolers, young adults, and senior citizens, special events (i.e. concerts, theatrical performances, film festivals). Present workshops already underway include candlemaking, tie-dye, batik, macramé, weaving, woodworking, guitar, harmonica, and folk dancing instruction, music appreciation, and dental health clinic, photography, life-drawing, mother's and pre-school program. Special events to date have included progressive rock concerts, solo folk guitar performances, and ethnic music bands.

Our facilities now include: gallery exhibition space, darkroom, wood shop, kitchen, theatre, drop-in centre, library, and a lot of open space. All events, workshops, instruction, materials, and use of facilities are free and open to the general public at large.

It is sincerely hoped that you will phone for information regarding school and other tours, times, etc. or visit the operation so you can view our efforts first hand. We are open from 10:00 am to 10:00 pm seven days a week.

The Stadium Gallery Staff
4601 Ontario Street
872-0208

Dear sisters,

Please enter my subscription for one year, for which I enclose a check for \$2.50.

I recently spent a few days in downtown Vancouver and was appalled by the signs over the entrances to hotel bars, "Men" and "Ladies with Escorts". Although I myself didn't even want to go in and drink, this seemed the same to me as signs "All dogs must be on leash", fully as insulting.

Oh well, I enjoyed the couple issues of your paper, especially a fantastic article on clothes and the fashion racket, that I'm looking forward to receiving it in the mail.

Sincerely,
Charlotte A. Schmidt
San Francisco, Calif.

from
FRANCE

Dear sisters,

I am from the very new French women's lib and I am interested by all the overseas newspapers and of course all the news from you—

Here is the first issue of our movement. I would like to have permanent contact with you. Can you send me a subscription blank.

Love from your french sisters—

Mijo Duval
5 rue Lobineau
Paris 6
FRANCE



UNE OUVRIÈRE GAUCHISTE:

From *Le Torchon Brûlé*, June 1971
a women's liberation newspaper from France

On Friday, May 7, the workers at the Renault plant at Billancourt in Bas-Meudon voted to strike in support of the Renault workers on strike at Le Mans. A meeting of 10,000 workers decided at the instigation of the C.F.D.T. to occupy the plant during the weekend. The C.G.T. was originally opposed to the occupation, but after 60% of 8,000 workers polled favored it, the C.G.T. leaders urged occupation too. The young C.F.D.T. activists are regarded as leftist by the C.G.T. old guard. At the Renault plant at Flins, a group of C.F.D.T. workers were attacked and stoned by an unidentified person. On May 24, the workers at Le Mans voted to accept the settlement, and the occupation at Renault-Billancourt was ended.

Seguy is Secretary-General of the C.G.T.

At Renault-Billancourt in Bas-Meudon the strike committee has occupied three workshops since Friday, May 7.

One the radio we heard Seguy declare that no women will occupy the factory at night, that women should stay at home.

A workingwoman at Bas-Meudon: "Last Friday I was in the office of an official of the CGT (General Confederation of Labor) and I heard him say on the telephone: 'No women in the factory after 8 p.m.' I replied to him: 'We're going to take over, and you'll have to kick us out.' He: 'Okay, try it, but if you're bothered, if anyone gets raped, you're responsible.'"

"When some of the officials meet me in the factory now, they say: 'Hey, there's the whore!'"

Saturday there were five women to take over. They made a formidable team. But you're always got to fight against prejudice against women who take their affairs into their own hands.

And Sunday the CGT dared to send girls into the workshops to make trouble, using them to try to create incidents and show that I was wrong. But we, the five "occupants" followed them to keep an eye on them. The CGT has used these women like whores. It's really reactionary.

The other day they bothered a sister. She was in the iron works. A deputy of the CGT asked for her card, because they give women permission to make the guard rounds, but not to wander freely in the factory. The sister has a provisional card, and this was a pretext to take her to the PC of the CGT where they wanted to hold her. When I got there with the sisters of the strike committee, they were putting her in front of what was almost a court. We said that she was from the factory, but they would not let her go until another sister arrived and threatened to put out a pamphlet on the attitude of the CGT. Then she was able to leave with us.

For the CGT, Bas-Meudon is "the bordello, because there are women," it is the "campus" because people inquire into things, because there are posters about "Flins" about racism, about anything other than the strike demands. When women are activists they are whores; when men are activists they are leftist students.

At Troyes women who occupied a workshop all alone have been supported by their husbands, but several were heard to say: "If there were men in the factory I would not allow you to spend the night." And why? So we should obey those who wish to keep us at home, to listen to them, when they treat us like whores if we fight along with men? We will fight against division, against discrimination.

As for the women who cook and serve at the canteen, they're worn out and all they receive as pay are "friendly" slaps on their rears. No deputy, no striker, thinks to help these women in serving and in the kitchen. Isn't it the same habit of exploiting women at home that one finds in the exploitation of women at the canteen during the strike?

We call attention to the kind of thing which we all, men and women, were involved in at the canteen during the strike.

A leftist workingwoman
of Bas-Meudon





The Old Crumbles...and so did the new.

WOMEN'S CAUCUS

Thursday July 22nd the Vancouver Women's Caucus held a general meeting at which it was decided to disband the organization and give up the office to be turned into a Women's Centre. Over the last year, the women who made up the Caucus membership had become involved in a number of projects autonomous from the Caucus (see below) and the Caucus itself had become little more than a mailing address and an expensive office used by few women's groups. Both the Pedestal and the Working Women's Workshop are continuing independently (see below).

THE WOMEN'S CENTRE

We tore down the office walls and painted the ceiling and the walls and the floor and Lynn spilled paint on the sidewalk but it's bright red which is rather neat. And we took 280 lbs. of garbage to the dump.

The front part is going to be a lounge/drop-in centre for women: women shopping and needing a place to sit down, drink tea or coffee, bring kids, read, talk, sit quiet.

And if things go well, a women's art and cultural centre for shows, poetry readings, things like that...

If you want to drop in or help clean, paint, renovate etc. or just find out what's goin' on, phone the Women's Centre at 684-0523 or Colette, Jane or Lynn at 261-1729.

Women's Union

The working women's workshop of the old Women's Caucus planned and held a series of six discussions at noon in the main branch of the public library this summer. We talked about the history of working women and of women's organizing, about the conditions for women on the job, the relationships between those conditions and women's roles in our society, and ways we could work together to change those conditions.

Coming out of those noon meetings, and out of a parallel series of evening meetings in different women's homes, is a new organization of working women in Vancouver.

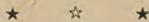
Over one hundred women attended one or more of the presentations. The sixth session was a discussion of a proposal to set up a working women's union for Vancouver. The union could deal with the many problems discussed during the series. The response was enthusiastic, and at a meeting on August 26th the women decided to plan a conference to be held in October. A meeting to plan for this conference, which is to launch the women's union, will take place on Tuesday, September 7. It will start at 7 PM in room 307 of the main library, and all interested women are welcome to attend.

Pedestal Collective

The Pedestal Collective will be meeting regularly again on Sundays at 8:00 P.M. in the new office at 137B Water Street (three flights up), beginning September 5th. We hope that many of you will join us in putting out the paper.

We will meet four times a month on a regular basis: the first Sunday to review the issue just published and to discuss weaknesses and strengths of particular articles, graphics and layouts. (Women who don't intend to work full-time on the Pedestal are especially invited to this meeting to give us the benefit of their opinions and ideas.) The second Sunday the collective will decide on the content of the next issue and divide the responsibilities for writing or getting others to write the articles planned. (But we're very open to suggestions and articles from sisters out of town, so don't hesitate to send something.) The third week the collective will read, discuss, edit or change the articles. And the fourth weekend we will meet on both Saturday and Sunday at the Peak office at Simon Fraser University to layout the paper - come any time from morning to evening. One night each month after the paper comes back from the printer we will have a mailing party at the Women's Centre at 511 Carrall St.

The immediate crisis is over, but if the Pedestal is to continue many more women must be involved in its production and distribution. We invite you to join the collective. Come write, re-write, layout, draw, do phoning and interviewing, sell the paper and put it in stores, answer letters and plot and plan future issues and wider distribution. Come to one of the meetings, or phone: Pat Hoffer 731-5412, or Anne Goldstein 522-1167, or Pat Uhl 681-3964, or Jean Rands 298-8430, or Evelyn Berry 733-1902, or Margaret Beamish 685-1187.



FILMS

Women's Centre
511 Carrall Street

Friday, October 1 I'm No Angel (Mac West)

Friday, October 8 Applause (Helen Morgan)

Friday, November 5 The Devil is a Woman (Marlene Dietrich)

Showings at 8pm and 10pm
Admission \$ 5.50

Raymur

This winter the women living in the Raymur Place low income public housing project organised a sit-in across the railroad tracks which run the project and the school their children attend. They forced the railroad not to run the trains during the hours their children were going to and from school.

Now an overpass has been built over the tracks. (It had long been promised, but only their militant action forced the promises to be fulfilled).

With victory on this issue has come increased activity. The project now operates a cooperative store to sell food at reduced prices. They have a government funded child-care centre operating now, and they are negotiating with local and provincial governments for some land adjacent to the project on which they plan to build a community centre.

FEMINISTS PLUS

There are several schools of thought about what a rap group is. To some women it means a "bitch" session. These are usually the women who feel uneasy about spending too much time exploring the ways that they themselves are oppressed and who are more comfortable talking in abstracts about the liberation of women.

There are also the women who think that a rap group is a form of therapy for those who participate. The implication here is that those women are sick. There is nothing sick about women talking together about their common problems and finding out how to change some of the conditions that are the cause of these problems. Hardly therapy; surely political action.

The Vancouver Feminists Plus came into being about a month ago and holds weekly rap groups. It was formed by a few women who have been or still are involved in the women's liberation movement. These women wanted to get away from the larger type of organization in favor of a smaller, more intimate discussion group. The response from other women has been most encouraging. It seems as though a lot of people felt the need for a group such as this.

To some of the new women who come, the thing that surprises them most is the fact that they can spend an enjoyable evening in the company of other women; something some of them have never done before.

It is too early to say what will happen in the future. Feminists Plus hope to see a number of these groups springing up all over the city - in people's homes or in community centres. This would mean that women in any part of town would be able to take advantage of a rather unique kind of experience.

Feminists Plus meetings Wednesdays, 7pm at 654 W. 7th Ave., phone 683-1187 or 873-2288.



FEMINISTS

A group of independent feminists, some of them former members of larger women's liberation groups, have weekly meetings at the homes of the members. These meetings are in the form of small discussion groups at present but the women intend to become more action-oriented around issues such as day-care, equal pay, etc.

The meeting is usually held on a Thursday and the person to call is Carol, at 681-1790.

SWACC

Status of Women Action Co-ordinating Committee has a membership of 250. The membership is made up of women (and men) from all levels of society. Their executive has representatives from the three political parties, the University Women's Club, Church and poverty groups.

They meet once a month from the fall to spring at the University Women's Club. Their first meeting of the fall will be held at Christchurch Cathedral at Georgia and Burrard on Sept. 20th. This meeting will be concerned with child-care. Pat Jordan, MLA, will take part in panel discussions along with a representative of the BC Government Employees Union and Gladys Maycock, who is on the licensing board of day care centres in BC.

SWACC has an ombudswoman, Rosemary Brown, who works with several resource people to help women who feel that they have been discriminated against in employment etc. The address of this service is Box 3682, Station G, Vancouver 8.



... Gay Sisters ...
coffee house • 509 Carrall St
Saturdays • 9pm

UBC

Women's Liberation at UBC will again be sponsoring weekly Monday night discussions on a variety of aspects of Women's Liberation this fall. These discussions are open to all interested women. For further information about time and place and the activities of the campus group come to the new women's office, Rm. 215 in SUB.



WOMEN'S ALLIANCE

The Women's Liberation Alliance is a non-exclusionist, action-oriented group working for the equal rights of women. Our program includes such demands as equal pay for equal work, equality before the law, 24 hour child-care, and free abortion on demand. A busy group, we carry many activities.

Our general meetings, where major decisions are made, are held every other Tuesday night, while every Tuesday night from 6:00 to 7:30 we have an abortion counselling service. When we are involved in a major action or campaign, the work for this is done at Thursday night work sessions. Recently we began to hold rap sessions every Wed. night. These informal discussions have proved to be very popular especially with women who are newer to the movement. They give women the opportunity to get to know one another while at the same time they find that they are not alone in their consciousness of the oppression of women.

At the moment, the Alliance is engaged in one of the biggest and most important things the group has seen since its formation. We have initiated a call to form a coalition for repeal of all abortion

laws. A planning meeting was held last Aug. 16 at the B.C. New Democratic Party headquarters. This meeting was endorsed and financially supported by over 50 women and women's groups.

A proposal made by Sharon Hager, WLA member, to organize a major public conference open to all women and representatives of women's groups who want to work towards a coalition for repeal of the abortion laws now was carried. This conference will be held on Oct. 2 and 3. The meeting also established that the theme of the conference be "let women decide - repeal all abortion laws now." There was a strong feeling within the meeting that the conference be a women's conference and it was voted that men should be excluded from the decision making part of the conference.

After the meeting several volunteers for a working committee came forward and the first meeting of this committee was set up for Sept. 2.

If you are interested in learning more about the Women's Liberation Alliance and the abortion coalition, phone 684-3535 or better yet come down to our headquarters to a meeting at 1776 Alberni St.



UBC Course

Women's Liberation at UBC is sponsoring a Women's Studies Course this year. Non-students are welcome to participate. Called "The Canadian Woman: Our Story," the course will consist of a series of lectures, panels and discussions on women's liberation from the perspectives of history, literature, the social sciences and radical politics. The presentations will be held in the Student Union Building on Tuesday nights throughout both semesters and followed by discussions in smaller seminar groups led by women active in Women's Liberation at UBC or in the city.

AGENDA FOR FALL TERM:

- Sept. 28—Introducing the Canadian Woman
- Oct. 5—Biological Determinism
- Oct. 12—Women & the Industrial Revolution
- Oct. 19—Socialization of Children
- Oct. 26—Children's Media
- Nov. 2—Determining Women's Roles
- Nov. 9—Portraits of Women in Canadian Literature
- Nov. 16—Institutions of Authority I: Women & Religion
- Nov. 23—Institutions of Authority II: Women & the State
- Nov. 30—Institutions of Authority III: Women & the Family

The spring course outline includes topics like women and sexuality, alternate life styles, women in groups, the suffrage movement in Canada, working women, consumerism, the Royal Commission, women and revolution and several others.

For further information about course content and how to register write to Women's Studies Programme, Rm. 215, UBC, Van. 8 or phone Sharon Boylan at 228-4509 or Lyn Swo at 733-4630.

a secret with your sister?

When was the last time you shared



ANGELS & DEVILS

A film series illustrating the various and sundry ways in which women may respond to their roles...

- September 30 I'm No Angel (Mae West), 1933, 88 min.
- October 7 Applause (Helen Morgan), 1929, 80 min., b&w
- October 14 Murder She Said (Margaret Rutherford), 1961, 104 min., b&w
- October 21 Boys in the Band, 1970, 124 min., color
- October 28 Cat Ballou (Jane Fonda), 1965, 105 min., color
- November 4 The Devil is a Woman (Marlene Dietrich), 1937, 80 min., b&w
- November 11 No program: Holiday
- November 18 Burn, 1971, 112 min., color

Burn, starring Marlon Brando as an English agent provocateur, is an explosive film about revolution, directed by Gillo Pontecorvo (*Battle of Algiers*).

Showing Thursdays at 12:30 and 8 p.m.
at Simon Fraser University
\$3.00 for series ticket * \$5.00 individual admission

For more information, contact the
Centre for Communication and the Arts
phone 291-3725

SFU Women's Centre

A small group of women at Simon Fraser are trying to interest a larger number of their fellow women students, staff and teachers in starting a Women's Centre on campus this fall.

We hope to get a lounge where we can sit and discuss women's liberation in an informal atmosphere, with literature about the movement and specific information about birth control and abortion and resources available to women in the city and on campus. We have prepared a leaflet for distribution at registration talking about the proposed Centre and calling a meeting to discuss plans for it on Thursday, September 9th at 4:30 PM in the Council Chambers in the Rotunda.

SFU Course

On the initiative of one undergraduate woman, SFU will be offering a course on women through the Geography Dept. Based on the premise that sex is a fundamental determinant of cultural activity in every society, the course will endeavor to show the beginnings of family life, styles of living in primitive and peasant societies, and women's roles in industrial societies, both capitalist and socialist.

Students in the course will undertake group research projects on aspects of women's life in contemporary society, which will be presented in the class.

Hopefully, the course will be offered in succeeding semesters as a lower level course open to more students and potentially it could be the nucleus of a women's studies program at Simon Fraser.

GEOG. 404-2 GEOG. OF GENDER Course Enrollment 30
Faculty: Robert Horsfall Guest Lecturers: Pat Hoffer, Andrea Lebowitz, Margaret Benston, Yvette Lees, Wendy Eliot-Hurst



and note: each person who sends \$10.00 or more for a subscription becomes a Sustaining Subscriber and will receive a FREE Women's Liberation Balloon with the first issue!!!!

Whither thoo goest

QUEBEC

Women's Liberation
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Pat Brezford
6124 Pappereil, HALIFAX
Carol Hamilton-Smith
748 Forest Hill Rd., FREDERICTON

ONTARIO

Shirley Greenberg
5 Commanche Dr., OTTAWA
Janet Rogers
c/o ANIS, KINGSTON
Ellen Hunter (745-7442)
745 George St., PETERBOROUGH
Women's Liberation
223 Church St., TORONTO
New Feminists
Box 597, Sta. A, TORONTO
TORONTO Women's Caucus
c/o Deirdre Bekerman, 13 Pinewood
HAMILTON & Dist. Women's Liberation
297 Westworth North
R. Feiler (821-9393)
Apt. 4, 86 Yarmouth, GUELPH
Pat Dewdney
38 Craig St., LONDON
Toni de France
565 King E., KITCHENER
Women's Liberation
Box 461, SASKIBURY

MANITOBA

Women's Liberation
516, 606B, 416 Main St., WINNIPEG

SASKATCHEWAN

Women's Liberation (242-5830)
517 Lansdowne, SASKATOON
Women's Liberation (525-6252)
2259 Cameron, REGINA
Women's Liberation
324 Grandview, MOOSE JAW

ALBERTA

Lorna & Linda Rasmussen
725-10th St. S., LETHBRIDGE
Jo Ann Dundas
215-2nd N.E., CALGARY
Sybilline House (432-7685)
11028-85th Ave., EDMONTON

BRITISH COLUMBIA

PEDESTAL Collective
1378 Water St., VANCOUVER
VANCOUVER Women's Centre
511 Carrall St., 684-9523
VANCOUVER Working Women
Jean 298-8420, Evelyn 733-1902
VANCOUVER Feminists Plus
685-1887 or 873-2288
VANCOUVER Independent Feminists
call Carol 681-1790
VANCOUVER Women's Alliance
1776 Alberni St., 684-3535
VANCOUVER Gay Women's Drop-In
Saturday, 9:00, 509 Carrall, 687-5927
Status of Women Action Coord. Ctee.
Box 3682, Sta. G, VANCOUVER
UBC Women's Liberation,
Rm. 215, SUB, UBC
VANCOUVER Day Care
261-1729
VICTORIA - Terry Ingils
1278 Centre Rd., No. 4, 384-5894
NELSON - Bonnie Ann Dukwa
Chem. Dept., NDJ

If we have omitted your group, or if we have an address or phone number wrong, please drop us a line to let us know.

send to: The Pedestal,
137B Water Street, Vancouver

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(FOR A FRIEND)

Does your library have the Pedestal?
Do your women friends and relatives subscribe?
Does your women's liberation group distribute it?
Do you take the Pedestal with you when you talk to groups?

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	September '71		Feminists Plus 7 P.M. 654 W. 7th see p.14	Independent Feminists see p.14		GAY Sisters 9:00 509 Carrall
	← Sunday Pedestal 8:00 Women's Centre Quilting Bee 2:00 6 Women's Center	Women's Union Meeting 7:00pm rm 307 main Library	1	2	3	4
		7	8	9	10	11
	Pedestal 8:00 137 B Water St		Feminists Plus 7 P.M. 654 W. 7th	Independent Feminists	Women's "SUG BAND" 8:00 Women's Center	GAY Sisters 9:00 509 Carrall
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
	Pedestal 8:00 137 B Water St		Feminists Plus 7 P.M. 654 W. 7th	Independent Feminists		GAY Sisters 9:00 Pedestal - SFU
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
	SWACC - 1st meeting of fall UBC Group 20 see p.14		Feminists Plus 7 P.M. 654 W. 7th	Independent Feminists		
	Pedestal SFU	UBC Lecture Series Begins	Feminists Plus 7 P.M. 654 W. 7th	Film SFU 12:30 & 3:00	Movies 8:00 & 10:00 October 1	
26	27	28	29	30		