

a Women's
Liberation
newspaper



Vancouver

Volume III No. 9

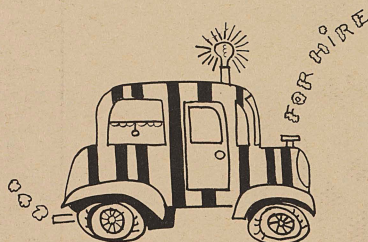
Oct, 1971

25¢



MALE-DOMINATED ART.

looking for work?



PUSHING HACK

Part of a continuing series to help women who are looking for work, to pool our own experiences about what kinds of jobs are available, what wages and conditions are like, and how you go about getting those jobs. If you have information that would be useful to other women, please write us.

AVAILABILITY: There is a high turnover rate for cab-drivers so almost anyone can get a part-time job. A spare-driver calls in either the evening before or the morning of the day they wish to work to see if there is a car available. Steady drivers drive the same shift of the same car every day. Every new driver begins as a spare-driver, whether or not you get a steady car depends on whether you want one, whether there is one available, and how much the owners like you. It takes anywhere from a week to a year to get a steady car. A reasonably competent driver who isn't a trouble-maker would probably get a steady car in a few months, depending on the turnover. At the moment, all men with B licenses are driving trucks until the dock strike in the U.S. is over so it's a good time to get a job driving cab.

MONEY: Spare drivers take home 43% of the fares and all their tips; steady drivers get 50% plus tips minus deductions. I made about \$1.50 to \$1.75 an hour for about the first year and am now up to \$2 and over. I don't think anyone would make any less. Most people make more. A good driver who isn't scrupulous about ripping off owners and fares makes a lot more.

QUALIFICATIONS: You must like driving and it helps to have a sense of direction, although this is not strictly necessary. A thick skin helps a lot. Women have driven cabs as long as there have been cabs in Vancouver and during World War II there were almost no men drivers. However, passengers comment at nausum and people tend to think it's all a freak show. You're likely to get into more trouble downtown than other areas of the city and a few of the women drivers prefer not to take trips downtown. Most of us, however, aren't particular; you get used to it all fairly quickly and you get a wider variety of passengers from the downtown area.

WHY SHOULD ANYONE BE A CAB DRIVER? You get to know all about the city and its inhabitants and who lives where and does what which appeals to both social scientists and insatiable gossips. Also, you're on your own and can refuse to do anything you don't want to do. Although drivers are often fired for no reason (and usually are), as long as they're working they don't have a boss. There is a certain arrogance that goes with being a cab driver: due to superior driving skills, greater knowledge of the city, and the right to refuse to do things you don't feel like doing.

STEP I: Getting A Permit from the Cops First decide whether you want to work in Vancouver or Burnaby. (North shore cab companies will not hire women drivers.) In Vancouver, proceed to the taxi detail at the cop shop at 312 Main. Fingerprints will be taken and sent to Ottawa to check for criminal records. The cop told me they were particularly interested in ferreting out hostlers, drug-pushers, sexual offenders. He also said a previous conviction doesn't necessarily mean no permit; the cops would investigate your present life and if you were reasonably sensible and didn't hang around with hippies, it might be all right. My experience was that all women are considered whores until proven otherwise, but you only have to see these people once, the following years the cab company gets permits renewed for its drivers. Time: 4-6 weeks.

STEP II: B License. While waiting for the permit, study a book obtained from the Motor Vehicles Branch and practice driving. The test is both a written one and a road test. This is like the regular driver's test with a few more bits of information added and fewer errors allowed. The road test must be taken with a car that seats 6 passengers. The classifications have recently been changed but I think the license for driving the cab still allows you to also drive buses with 24 or less passengers and trucks up to 12,000 lbs.

STEP III: With your new permit and license in hand, proceed to the cab company of your choice and ask to see the manager. From talking to drivers, I would list the companies as follows:

- 1) Capitol Hill (if you don't dig downtown traffic)
- 2) Yellow (no dress restrictions and any length of hair allowed)
- 3) McClure (airport runs are profitable)
- 4) Black Top (such bastards no one wants to work for them so jobs are always available)
- 5) Benny's
- 6) Forum Empress

In Vancouver, all companies with the exception of Advance hire women drivers.

STEP IV: Orientation You'll be required to buy a map of Vancouver, and be told about how to work the radio, how zones are arranged and myriads of other details. Each company has different rules. Before you begin driving passengers around you must know:

- 1) the way to the airport
- 2) location of bus and train stations
- 3) some idea of where each dock in Vancouver, Burnaby, North Shore, New Westminster, is
- 4) location of the nearest hospital in the district you're in.

The rest can be learned on the job. Learn to use the map. Despatchers are very friendly about telling you how to get to anywhere.

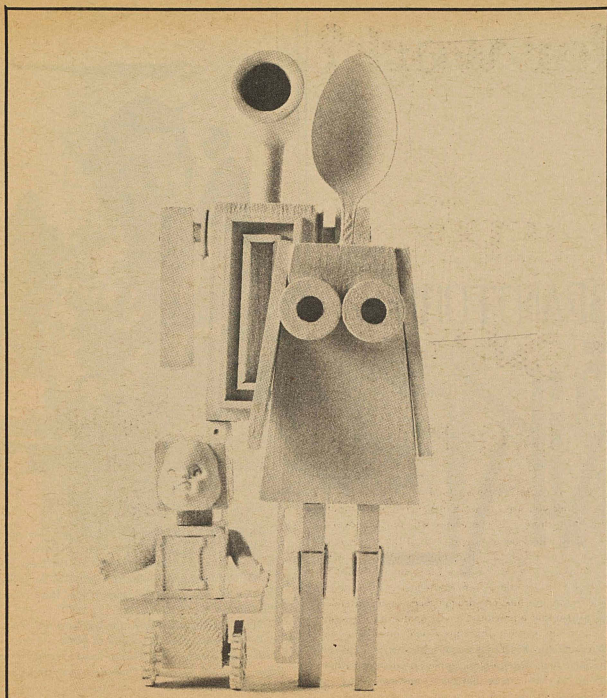


On Saturday, Sept. 25, the working women's group picketed the co-owner of Sandringham Nursing Home in support of the nurses' aides on strike in Victoria. There were about 25 of us with signs outside 2918 Mathers in West Vancouver. Mr. Shepherd was at home, but ignored the demonstration just as he has attempted to ignore the strike. He has refused to negotiate at all with the women who have been on strike for nearly a year.

The main issue in the strike — as so often with strikes of women — is the right of the workers to a union agreement, particularly the right to job security and to refuse to work overtime. Before the strike, the women all made \$1.50/hour, the minimum wage. Yet money is not the main issue. Their wage demands are, if anything, far too modest: They are asking \$1.50 to start, increasing gradually to \$2.00/hour after two years of work.

The hospital is functioning with scab labor, and has been for almost a year. This strike, which can be a breakthrough for women who work in private hospitals across Canada, may depend on our support for its success.

Contact Mr. Shepherd and express your support for the strikers. The strikers have put out a tabloid stating their case. If you can distribute copies, contact the Canadian Union of Public Employees, or the working women's group: Margaret 685-1187 or Jean 298-8430.



FEMALE COMPLAINTS

I.

Here I am, again, sitting in my doctor's office and I'm trying to explain. I can tell he's already impatient and I feel awkward because what I've got isn't fatal: he's got people waiting outside with *serious* problems. I can't afford to sound bitter or resentful or even to question his treatment: I'll be labelled a difficult patient, even ungrateful, certainly undeserving of any gentle attention. So I stop talking and resign myself to his expertise.

The problem of course is that I have a vaginal yeast infection. Again. It comes in varying degrees of discomfort: occasionally, in the mildest form, the primary symptom is a whitish discharge accompanied by an irritating itch; other times the soreness and burning are almost unbearable and even sitting down, not to mention sex, is painful.

Almost every woman has had (or will have) vaginitis. The usual treatment is a medication in suppository or cream form, used for ten days and this is often sufficient to clear up the infection.

The hitch is that this itch is generally chronic and can recur repeatedly, often four or five times in a year. The treatment becomes less and less effective, though it can be augmented: the grand attack involves oral medication and the doctor may recommend that the woman's usual sex partner use an anti-fungus cream to prevent the infection from ping-ponging between them.

Does all this sound familiar? We all have some working knowledge of vaginitis and some of us chronic sufferers have even managed to capture extra hints from our doctors: like, wear cotton underwear (because nylon retains moisture and heat, creating an ideal environment for the yeast) and don't sit in a hot bath.

The grapevine provides even better information: keep the medication on hand and use it while you're menstruating (a good breeding time for the yeast), don't wear any underwear, if possible, to prevent

friction in the area, don't take anti-biotics which lessen your natural resistance.

Even before it was official, I suspected that the birth control pill was having *something* to do with my persistent vaginitis. But, when I broached the subject to my doctor (in those tentative moments before he examined me) he brushed aside my suggestion: you're having sex more, he said, and I stopped talking and went into that state of vague guilt I've already described.

Now I know that all of us (men as well as women) fall too easily into the passive-patient role. The doctor is an expert after all and we don't know how to interpret the data he accumulates from his examination. Even more, we want to trust his reassuring just-a-minor-matter mutter. And we certainly don't want to alienate him by expressing too many doubts. So, we don't challenge him or even ask very many questions.

And since women are especially practiced in both peace-keeping and passivity, we invariably find ourselves plaintive and/or mute in the doctor's office. In a clinic the experience for a woman is even more self-negating and unsatisfactory.

What would happen if women decided to take fuller responsibility for their bodies and their health? What if we insisted that the medical profession concentrate considerably more energy and research on the side-effects of female-ness, like painful menstruation, and vaginitis and (that other chronic problem) unwanted pregnancy? How would it be if we demanded respect as well as inspection in the doctor's office and in the clinic treatment room?

I see this struggle as central to our revolution as a sign of our sense of dignity as women.

II.

Most doctors are men. They've never had a menstrual cramp. Which really does account for much

of what we perceive as indifference to our pain. But that biological ignorance is not a valid excuse for off-hand, sometimes inadequate or even brutal treatment.

Among us there's quite a collection of horror stories. There was the girl who stopped taking the pill and didn't have a period for a year: her doctor, noting she was single, wondered why she was anxious. "You don't want to get pregnant anyway." He didn't even examine her. There was the woman who had an I.U.D. inserted and cried a little from the pain: the doctor became angry and berated her for not having confidence in his skill. That was me.

And how many of us have experienced humiliation as we lay on that examining table with our legs apart, our feet in stirrups, waiting for the doctor to come in, hoping he'll know which patient we are, and that he'll examine us gently this time?

Well, there have been some good experiences too, I know, and Vancouver does have some good doctors.

Who are they? Our first action as women concerned with our own health could be the compilation of a medical directory, listing the doctors, general practitioners and gynecologists who have treated us well and respectfully. We could explain our criteria and the doctors who aren't included might get the message. Some competition for patients wouldn't harm us!

III.

Once we allow ourselves to ask questions, they will flow freely.

1. What are the statistical details about the risk of the Pill? Are there studies of women who have taken it for more than five or six years? What are the differences amongst the various brands? How does your doctor decide which pill to prescribe?

2. Is vaginitis a major health problem these days (it would seem to be)? Is any new treatment being developed? Would diet help inhibit the chronicity of the infection?

3. How does the I.U.D. function? (A friend fished the I.U.D. container out of her doctor's wastebasket when he left the room and learned that it should be removed after two years because of calcium deposits on it. No one else we knew had received this information from her doctor.) Other than expulsion, the main problems with the I.U.D. are that it causes lengthy periods and it hurts. Would exercise help?

4. And what about other new methods of birth control? For men, maybe?

5. What reception does a young and/or unmarried woman get when she approaches a doctor asking to have her tubes tied? (Guess!) Is any method being developed to make that procedure more easily reversible?

6. How are women as patients? From the doctors' point of view? Could we learn how to do more, regular self-examination (for lumps in our breasts, for example)?

Some answers we could discover ourselves: there are many reports available on the risk of the pill and some of us could study these. Medical journals publish articles on all our burning issues. A study group of interested women could uncover a great deal of information which would be valuable to all of us. An extremely comprehensive article on vaginitis which appeared recently in the *Georgia Straight* is an example of the kind of material women need to collect and share.

In other cities, women have established medical information services and their material would be available to us.

On another level, we could communicate directly with members of the medical profession, perhaps organize a conference to discuss medical problems relating to women, and attitudes towards women patients as well. We could express our concerns to the Medical Faculty where the problems I've described are nurtured.

We need to work on ourselves too. Maybe a Women's Night at one of the free clinics in town would give us a structure to discuss our medical needs and prepare ourselves to face the doctors more confidently and thoughtfully.

But for anything to happen, we need each other. There is a meeting planned for Sunday, October 17 at 2pm at the Women's Centre (511 Carrall St.) for any women who have suggestions, energy (or more complaints to inspire us!)

BRANTFORD STRIKE

Medicine is big business in North America, and women confront it as workers as well as patients (see p. 3). In BC the past year has seen the long strike at Hosken (part of Shoppers' Drug Marts) now settled, and the continuing strike of nurses' aides at Sandringham hospital in Victoria.

In Brantford, Ontario, women workers are taking on another aspect of the medical business. On July 16, 150 workers, members of the Canadian Textile and Chemical Union, struck Texpack, demanding an increase of 65 cents an hour over a two-year contract. The present take-home pay for most is less than \$65 per week.

The company, Texpack, used to be a family-owned (Canadian) company which manufactured gauze dressings, for hospital use and filter materials for industry. In 1964 the Canadian taxpayers gave the company two grants under the Designated Area Plan to assist them in expanding their production, which included the construction of a new \$1 million plant at Brantford. Because of its increased sales and profits, Texpack was purchased by American Hospital Supply Corporation (AHSC, headquarters in Evanston, Ill.) in December, 1965. In May 1970 *Fortune* magazine listed American Hospital as the 14th fastest growing American corporation. In that year the company recorded sales of \$450,000,000 with profits exceeding \$15 million.

PROFITS COME FIRST

On July 19, 1971 the Canadian Textile and Chemical Union exposed the fact that American Hospital was dumping World War II army bandages on the Canadian market. These bandages were shipped to the Brantford plant where they were removed from their original boxes and repackaged in boxes marked "made in Canada" and "sterilized." Texpack admitted that the bandages were not resterilized and ceased guaranteeing that. The company was making a huge profit on these bandages having them for 7 cents and selling them for 50 cents each. They were distributed primarily to industrial sites to be used in giving first aid to injured workmen! The company claims that firms purchasing these bandages knew what they were getting. I'm sure they did — but did the workers who were being bandaged know what THEY were getting?

On the day before the strike was declared,

Texpack issued a letter to its employees in which it boasted that "our Corporation has weathered strikes of up to nine months duration" and threatened to "immediately begin hiring permanent strike replacements." They taunted that if a strike were called, "we intend to win." The company's final offer was 10 cents per hour in each year of a two-year contract.

The workers are up against a huge monopoly that refuses to budge. And the courts and police have been working hand in hand with American Hospital. Picket lines have been attacked by the police. In one case, 33 policemen were involved in the arrest of one woman.

The police repression has been severe. By September 7th over 50 people had been arrested, some brutally. The head of the union, Kent Rawley, has been charged with arson. Mel Watkins of the NDP Waffle group, and 9 members of the executive of the United Steelworkers of America Hamilton (Stelco) local, have been arrested for violating the injunction by picketing and face a possible sentence of 2 years.

The United Steel Workers of America, United Auto Workers, Teamsters, and United Electrical Workers have all pledged their support for the striking textile workers. A parade of over one thousand union women and men defied the injunction by marching past the plant in Brantford.

STRIKE SUPPORT FROM BC

On August 5, 1961, a conference of trade unionists in Vancouver recommended that BC hospital employees refuse to handle Texpack products or any product of AHSC. In Vancouver four companies are owned by American Hospital:

- 1) American Hospital Supply (Canada), 127 Kent
- 2) Canadian Laboratory Supplies Ltd., 1240 SE Marine

- 3) Texpack Ltd, 1122 SW Marine
- 4) BC Dental — Donco, 605 W. 8th

The three hospital supply companies here apparently have contracts with ALL Vancouver hospitals and most BC hospitals. BC people are subsidizing American products and profits through their publicly financed hospitals. Products supplied to our hospitals have been declared hot by the CTCU.

The CTCU needs financial support, as well. The costs of injunctions and other court proceedings are high, and they need strike pay. Send donations to: CTCU, 11 George St., Brantford, Ontario.



A TALK WITH MADELEINE PARENT

Madeleine Parent is 53 years old and has been involved in the Canadian Trade Union Movement for 30 years. She is secretary-treasurer of the Canadian Textile and Chemical Union, and active in the strike. She was in Vancouver in August, and Dara talked with her.

The first organizing drive she was involved in was at the Dominion Textile Plants of 6000 workers in Valleyfield, Quebec. In 1946 a strike was called. In those days, the women of Quebec were so strong and militant that it was not necessary to set up an independent women's group within the union. No one questioned their ability. When goon squads and the Quebec Provincial Police tried to attack men on the picket lines, women and children appeared and thwarted the attack. A few days before the final votes were to be cast Kent Rawley, a union organizer, was arrested and a warrant put out for Madeleine. She went into hiding in order to arrange bail, to be able to negotiate and ensure that ballot boxes were not stuffed. During the negotiations 500 women marched through the streets singing and banging pots and pans. The strike was won, including an equal pay for equal work clause, for the first time in Quebec.

In 1965 she moved from Quebec to Brantford, Ontario. "In Quebec, women had always been involved but in Ontario they had no background of militancy and though they were still active it was much more difficult."

In Madeleine's union there is a woman president and several female officers so the women feel quite strong although there are still many problems to work out regarding male domination. "It is only the very experienced, class conscious male worker who understands that women being used as cheap labor are a threat to them."

Women can never afford to let down their guard, because as soon as they do they'll get it in the teeth. There must always be women on the negotiating team to ensure that discriminatory deals aren't made. "Never trust a man to do it, no matter how enlightened he may seem to be." The women on union boards must also be elected by women workers. Often men appoint women to a token position which, in practice, does nothing for the women employees.

Madeleine has found that employers always expose their sexism when negotiating over maternity leaves. In one case the boss maintained that "if women want to indulge they have to pay the price." Madeleine responded by asking "How many times have you lost your job for indulging?"

The Canadian Textile workers at Brantford are carrying on the tradition of women textile workers around the turn of the century who fought long and hard to organize some of the first unions in North America. They deserve all our support.

AVERAGE EARNINGS OF FULL-YEAR WORKERS 1965

	MEN	WOMEN
Managerial	7920	3351
Professional & Technical		
Clerical	7602	4226
Sales	4713	3263
Service & Recreation	5287	2077
Miners, Crafts-men, etc.	4120	2099
	5290	2756

Royal Commission on the
Status of Women

Compared with August, 1970, total employment in Canada rose by 245,000 to 8,517,000, but it decreased from the July figure of 8,554,000... The actual drop in employment over the month resulted from a 48,000 decrease in female employment against an increase of 11,000 in male employment.

Globe & Mail, Sept. 17/71

COMPARE THIS TO YOUR OFFICE!

	START RATE	AFTER 1 YR.
File Clerk	473	568
Steno	559	654
Clerk Typist	533	628

An example from the wage scale effective April 1/71 at Gill Alltrans Express, an office covered by the Office and Technical Employees Union. And that is aside from the most important fact that women who have a union contract cannot be fired or laid-off on the whim of the boss.

For as long as we can remember,
we have had to fight.



STRIKE against
17 to 20¢ Per Hour



Farm striker, Pennsylvania, 1938

UNi♀N

In July and August, the working women's workshop sponsored a series of noon hour discussions at the library downtown. Since then, a group of working women has been meeting evenings (about once every two weeks) at the library to plan future actions.

We have decided to call a conference for October 30 and 31 to launch a new organization of working women. What we need is a union that can fight for contracts where existing unions have not, and is also much broader in membership and goals than the existing unions.

But we are still a small group (25 or 30 at each meeting) and we can do little ourselves.

JOIN US!

CONFERENCE TO LAUNCH THE WORKING WOMEN'S UNION

OCT. 30 - 31 ST

AT
CENTRAL PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH 1100 THURLOW
(1 BLOCK W. OF GURRARD)

A WOMEN'S UNION COULD:

FIGHT FOR UNION CONTRACTS - WAGES, WORKING CONDITIONS & JOB SECURITY. There are 277,000 working women in BC - but most of us face our problems as individuals - we ask for a raise individually, we are hired and fired individually and with no protection. As individuals we are powerless; as working women organized we can have tremendous power.

ESTABLISH COMMUNICATION & MUTUAL SUPPORT BETWEEN WOMEN IN DIFFERENT UNIONS & INDUSTRIES, ORGANIZED & UNORGANIZED, EMPLOYED & UNEMPLOYED. Women are often in small plants or offices, where it's difficult to win strikes without broader support - through boycotts, picket lines, leafleting.

RESEARCH & CIRCULATE INFORMATION ON THE LAWS THAT AFFECT WOMEN WORKERS. Many women are working overtime for no pay at all, working long hours without a break, working for less than the minimum wage. Most of us do not even know the few rights we have!

FIGHT FOR EFFECTIVE LEGISLATION FOR EQUAL PAY & AGAINST DISCRIMINATION. The present Human Rights Act, which is supposed to guarantee the rights of women workers, excludes women from important sections and includes a section on equal pay that is not only useless, but negative, because it forces women to compete with the men they work with and spy on them to gain their rights.

WORK FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF CHILD-CARE CENTRES, PARENT-CONTROLLED, 24 HOURS A DAY. Many women work shifts (hospital workers, telephone workers, etc.) and cannot use the existing child day care centres. Existing unions have not taken up problems of women workers that go beyond the work place. But the need for child care is of major importance for working women, and for our children.

SET UP A CO-OPERATIVE OF TEMPORARY OFFICE WORKERS. Office Overload and other such businesses make tremendous profits by hanging on to a third to a half of our wages when we have to work temporary. There is no reason why, as office workers, we couldn't set up a co-operative, so that we would get higher wages for our work, and charge the companies the same or even less.

Effective action in any of these areas would have to involve hundreds of working women. The conference can be a beginning. Come to the conference. Bring your friends and women you work with. Better yet, help us plan it. If you would like to get involved, call Jean 298-8430, Janet 254-7977, or the Women's Centre 684-0523.

We would like to send out some written proposals before the conference, to be discussed at the conference. If you are coming, please complete this form and mail it to Working Women c/o 511 Carrall St., Vancouver 4, B.C.

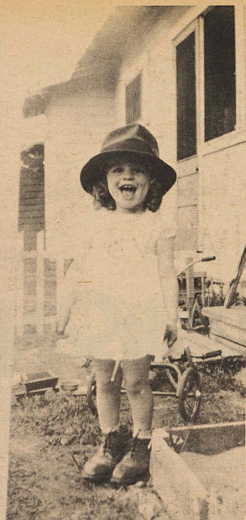
I would be interested in workshops on:

Child Care..... Production of literature OTHERS (please list them)
by & for working women.....
Work within unions..... Organization of public meetings.....
Equal pay & the Human Rights Act..... Involving new people;.....
A co-op of temporary office workers..... Publicity - getting our ideas into the press, TV etc.....
I will need child care during the conference.....

NAME ADDRESS CITY

PHONE WORKPLACE KIND OF WORK

If
they
need
a
space
to
play...



The Community Co-operative Child Care Project was funded by an Opportunity for Youth grant to research the need for Child Care facilities in the Greater Vancouver area. One of the women involved in the project had a pre-school child and lived in a government-subsidized housing development. She was interested in organizing community child care right at home. Since I lived close by, I agreed to help with the experiment. This is a summary of our summer work—a lot of activity and no results!

High density living in the form of government-subsidized housing developments is becoming more and more a way of life for large numbers of families. These developments usually consist of a number of apartment buildings standing close together on a small black-topped lot. The main object seems to be to cram the maximum amount of people into the minimum amount of living space.

Families living in this type of housing need play space, recreational facilities and supervised child care services in order to decrease the tensions generated by so many people living in such close proximity to each other. However, these are usually not included in the building plans because they are considered unnecessary frills, already available in the community at large. The results of such short-sightedness are evident in the problems visible immediately the apartments become occupied.

The Richpark housing development is a privately-owned, federal government (Central Mortgage and Housing) subsidized complex of approximately 245 apartments located at Williams and No. 3 Road in Richmond. The income level of tenants is fixed by the government at \$5200 minimum to \$9000 maximum. This is subject to periodic revision. The rents range from approximately \$120 for a one-bedroom apartment to \$145 for a three-bedroom apartment.

The average number of children per apartment is 3.1. There are more pre-school than school-age children. These small children must play unsupervised in a small black-topped playground. Many have been hurt falling from slides and swings onto hard asphalt. Who can blame them if they prefer running in the halls, digging up the shrubs or having a game of tag in the parking lot? In bad weather (about eight months of the year), they can only remain in their apartments.

We took a door-to-door survey to determine the feasibility of starting some type of community child care programme for these pre-schoolers. The results showed that a variety of child care services were badly needed by Richpark tenants.

There were working mothers who needed full day care for their children. There were non-working

mothers with more than one pre-school child who needed a nursery school and kindergarten programme. There were parents who wanted a drop-off baby-sitting service. Everyone agreed that facilities should be located in the housing project, supervised by qualified personnel and reasonably priced. Many mothers were willing to volunteer some time to help staff a centre.

An appointment with the Richmond director of social welfare came next. He was very familiar with the problems at Richpark and suggested the owner be asked to make two apartments available for a child care programme and recreational activities.

The owner of the development was contacted by telephone. He gave guarded approval to the idea but refused to meet us for discussions. We were told all negotiations should be with his management staff. However, the management staff when contacted refused to even discuss the matter seriously. They said that C.M.H.C. would never allow apartments to be used for community child care. Later, a Richmond alderman told us that C.M.H.C. had indeed turned down the original Richpark plans, approved by Richmond Council, which had included adequate recreational space.

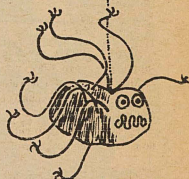
We paid a visit to Tom Goode, the local Liberal M.P., and discussed the whole situation at Richpark. He was very enthusiastic about having child care facilities located in high density housing projects. He said he'd check into the reaction at C.M.H.C. and even offered to pay the rent on one apartment for a year if the owner agreed to make the space available.

After several fruitless encounters with management staff, we submitted a formal written request for space to the unavailable owner. We also wrote a letter outlining the situation to C.M.H.C.

However, these high and mighty people, tenants are obviously non-persons and child care facilities beneath their notice. Neither has bothered to answer our letters.

So, consider this. There were children who needed child care facilities. There were volunteers ready to set up and help staff a child care centre. There were parents who were prepared to pay a reasonable fee to send their children to such a centre. There was even an offer to halve the rent money. But there was no space, and no communication with the people who control use of the space. Yet at least three different official bureaucrats we encountered during the time we were working on this told us that the tenants must organize improvements for themselves. Then government would gladly help them to help themselves. Ironically, Central Mortgage and Housing is a department of the same federal Liberal government which funded the Community Co-operative Child Care Project.

Miss Muffet Strikes Back!



"It's time for Miss Muffet to hold her ground!" say feminists who have organized to help Miss Muffet defend her tuffet.

Feminists on Children's Media is a collective formed last summer by women concerned about the stereotyped female image presented by children's books. Members come from a wide cross section of women's liberation groups, as well as unaffiliated women. Many members work in fields relevant to children's literature and many are mothers. The group felt that the rigid sex roles depicted in children's books were detrimental to the development of both boy and girl readers, and set out to reach publishers, librarians, and parents on this problem.

The feminists' first project, based on extensive research, was a program presented to a joint meeting of the Authors' Guild and the Children's Book Council last October 15. Through slides, tapes, and readings this study examined the influence of sexism in picture books, award-winning fiction for older children, and school readers. In all three categories books about boys far outnumbered books about girls; boys were generally depicted as active and intelligent while girls were passive and silly; and men were shown in a variety of occupational roles, while women were portrayed almost exclusively as housewives.

The audience of writers and editors gave this program an enthusiastic response, and it has since been repeated as one of the events preceding the presentation of the 1971 National Book Awards. The feminists have also given the program for PTAs, women's liberation groups, and for organizations of librarians, teachers, school administrators, churchwomen and writers. Some of the material in the study has been incorporated into magazine articles (January School Library Journal and March Redbook), the group's activities have been described in several newspapers, and representatives of the collective have been invited to present its viewpoint on local radio and television shows.

The current project of Feminists on Children's Media is *LITTLE MISS MUFFET STRIKES BACK*, a bibliography of recommended books about girls. This booklet (which is excerpted in the March *Women's Day*) is an annotated listing of over 200 fiction and non-fiction books for children from three to fifteen. The selections range from old favorites like Kate Douglas Wiggin's *REBECCA OF SUNNYBROOK FARM* to such modern classics as Scott O'Dell's *ISLAND OF THE BLUE DOLPHINS*, but all have in common their refreshingly non-stereotyped portrayal of girls and women. The bibliography may be obtained by sending a self-addressed, stamped (12 cents American), legal-size envelope plus 35 cents in coin per copy to Feminists on Children's Media, P.O. Box 4315, Grand Central Station, New York, New York, 10017.

REPORT ON SEXISM IN CHILDREN'S BOOKS:

A study of contemporary children's books has revealed consistently sexist patterns both in widely used reader series and in trade books recommended by prestigious organizations. The study was conducted by Feminists on Children's Media and presented at a joint meeting of the Authors' Guild and the Children's Book Council. It found the following patterns typical:

- A heavy preponderance of boys' stories
- The younger sister-girl "nimny" syndrome
- Boys, older and taller, outnumbering girls in most illustrations
- Boys portrayed as smarter, with greater initiative and achievement
- Father working and playing creatively with children
- Mother forever wearing aprons and cast in supportive, passive roles
- Men assuming a wide variety of roles and activities
- Women almost exclusively portrayed as mothers and teachers
- Girls encouraged to choose only traditional roles: housewife, secretary, nurse...

These books are a major tool in the socialization of our children. They convey a cultural ethic in which boys are encouraged to be aggressive and daring and, in general, to achieve, succeed, dominate; while girls and women are portrayed as passive, supportive, domestic beings — helpless, inactive and, often enough, even stupid. Boy readers are given a wide variety of male images from which to draw inspiration. Girls are given few role models beyond that of mother, and even she is generally portrayed as passive and dull.

The books examined to not even come close to portraying the world as it is today. Furthermore, they do a great deal of damage in preventing the full development of individual potential in girls — and even in boys — because of the strict sexual stereotyping conveyed.

Big Momma always wanted a daughter...



Last issue we printed a story idea by an American professor. The story was to be about two little girls, Elena and Aviva, about Big Daddy and Marge, his wife. Since Big Daddy couldn't

have boys he taught his girls to compete and achieve and not to be just like other (ordinary) women. We said at the time we didn't like it much. Tim's reaction to it follows...

Big Momma always wanted a daughter, but McGee, her husband, could only produce male sperm, so they had only boys, McGee and the boys, Waldo and Alvin, tried hard to please Big Momma. They opened jars for her and carried the washing up the stairs, but soon found out that this was no substitute for a daughter, so they tried being girls.

They watched a lot of TV to find out how to do it right, and that's how they got to get their hair dyed. It hurt a lot, but they would give anything to please Big Momma. Waldo was the first to start shaving his legs and under his armpits, and Alvin was the first to buy a Plaything Bra. When the vaginal spray came out, it mortified them that they didn't have the right equipment to use it on, but they bought a can anyway, to put in the bathroom and help Big Momma to get over her disappointment.

Pretty soon they found out that they got rashes under their arms and stubble on their legs from shaving. Their hair started to fall out from too much bleaching, and they didn't really have more fun being blonde. They couldn't breathe properly because of the bra, and were fed up tugging at it all the time to keep it in place. Waldo read an article in an underground newspaper that told how feminine hygiene sprays caused yeast infections, so they were really glad that they never had cause to use it.

But their biggest disappointment came when they went to look for a job. Finally Waldo got on as an assembly line worker in a transistor radio factory, and got to be very good at it, so he applied for supervisor. He was turned down because the company didn't think he'd be strong enough to wheel around the heavy boxes that contained the finished product.

Alvin wanted to be a life guard, but wasn't big enough to save people, so he became a swimming teacher instead.

But they decided that they were really fed up with what they got themselves into, and didn't at all like what girls are supposed to be.

Through the Women's Liberation Movement they found out that women didn't like it either.

Worst of all, it became apparent to them that in order to qualify as "real women" they would have to get married and raise a family.

So they said: "To hell with Big Momma! She'll just have to accept the fact that we are MEN."

They let their hair grow back to its natural color, stopped shaving their legs and armpits, threw out their bras and vaginal spray, and bought a can of He-Man after-shave lotion.

They got fired from their jobs and Waldo got hired on as a supervisor, Alvin as a life-guard.

They bought Playboy magazine and pined the centerfolds all over their rooms, and learned how to slobber over them and read all the articles faithfully. To re-orient themselves into a MALE world, they went to a lot of stag, where they learned that sex is dirty or else why was everyone watching those lewd movies? They learned to swear a lot and drink a lot and they felt sick a lot, but were afraid to admit it for fear they would lose their status as men.

Their jobs as supervisor and lifeguard didn't pan out to be as great as they thought they would be, the only advantage of them being that the pay was higher and when they were feeling mean from a hangover or something, there were people there whom they could boss around.

After a while it became apparent that their new role as men wasn't any more attractive than the female role, but they had great difficulty admitting this fact because in our society it is a taboo for people to admit what their true feelings are. Waldo and Alvin began to wish that people could relate to each other simply as human beings and admit to each other that they need each other to feel whole.

One day, when Waldo and Alvin were feeling especially depressed, they met two sisters named Elena and Aviva who had also been through the mill.

They saw a lot of each other and liked each other very well, and thought they would set up a communal house, which they did, to the embarrassment and consternation of both their parents, Big Momma and McGee, and Big Daddy and Marge.

In the process of living together and learning from each other, the two sisters and brothers had terrible fights and problems which seemed like they would never ever be solved, but they found that with honesty and trust in each other and a lot of affection, they could get over the worst of their problems eventually, and they gained new faith in each other and got along so much better with other people, because now there was someone to share with, which made all their trials worthwhile.



That the great mass of women have been totally ignored in history except where they appear as adjuncts to men is not difficult to prove to most people. . . History (of art, politics, literature, etc.) as related by males has engraved upon women's minds a male image of the world.

(excerpts from *The Fourth World Manifesto*
Women's Liberated Georgia Straight
Occupation April 8-13, p. 7)

the female is fertile, and discipline
(contra naturam) only
confuses her

Who has, head held sideways
Arms out softly, touching,
A difficult dance to do but not in mind.

(Gary Snyder "Praise for Sick Women"
Modern American Poetry, Ed. Donald Allen
p. 307)

she carried no standard
as I saw her; impossible to be a citizen
there is no such thing anywhere, in any country
I could have shot her down, had she been a marine.
She was a housewife.

(Ed Dorn, "The Problem Of A Poem For My
Daughter, Left Unsolved," *Geographies*, p. 11)

At which stage, for reasons of cause or not, sun
and moon go up into the sky to assume forever their
planetary duties. But sun finds there is one thing he
must do to moon before human beings are satisfied
with her. He must knock out one of her eyes. . . So
he does, he knocks out one of her eyes, and lets
human beings have what they want. But when he
does more, when, occasionally, he eclipses her
entirely, some say that it is only a sign that the two
of them continue to fight, presumably because sun
cannot forget Moon's promiscuity, though others say
that moon is forever erratic, is very much of a liar, is
always telling Sun about the way that people on earth
are as much misbehavers as she, get drunk, do things
that she does, in fact, the old ones say, Moon is as
difficult to understand as any bitch is.

(Charles Olson, "Human Universe," *Human
Universe and Other Essays*, p. 14)

Male-dominated art is male-dominated art. No one
reading the above-included quotes would assume that
they were written by women. And this is the type of
art that predominates in our society. From the
Rolling Stones' "Under My Thumb" to Jimi
Hendrix's "Hey Joe where'd you get that gun in your
hand" this is the art that assaults our senses daily and
is an integral part of our culture. And in poetry it is
no different.

Men may think they are being "basic" and
"primitive" in resorting to such chauvinism as found
in Olsen's poetry but in reality it is a characteristic of
capitalist society that nowhere else have we seen such
complete subjugation of women. And the poetry that
supports this subjugation simply backs up the
dominant ruling class in a more sophisticated form
(by placing the blame for the evils of the world onto
women through their mythology).

The fact that Ed Dorn uses women in his poem
"Problem of the Poem For My Daughter Left
Unsolved" as a symbol for all that is corrupt in
debauched American society (much like the Guess
Who's "American Woman") is indicative of a
particular view of women.

And, furthermore, the fact that he should go on
for the next three pages to describe in detail the
nauseating nature of this corruption in terms of
women is indicative of his own view of women:

the women are

set loose to wander spiritless
their marks are deep cuts on the neck, moist eyes,
sagging nylons
eyes painted to dry everything, loose figures of despair
or hard flesh prolonged by injections and tucks into an
isolated youngness

(Ibid., p. 13)

Furthermore, he continues without sympathy and
ends as with a curse or a Marxist prophecy of the
withering of the state:

MALE-DOMI

The sum of her
shall perish, has begun
to perish in the darkness
in the prescribed field of misery
and she shall hardly avoid the destruction
of her nature
a material of birth
as a car of new life
not new, novel, the life
is older than we know as prima materia
and soon there will be no more need
for waitresses or telephones, doctors' wives
and automobilists, they wither
on their still green vine, no more tears
to water life, no more varicose veins

In fact, he almost goes back to Eve as responsible
for the fall of the universe:

the Kaddish will be said
not as a formal memory
but for the working of a curse Venus
will be likewise a curse transmitted
for a secure experience
of Eve for some isolated engineer
who said if I don't do it somebody else will
(Ibid., p. 14)

Which is exactly the way I feel about commenting
on his chauvinism: "If I don't, somebody else will."
The writer of this paper does not wish to discuss the
chauvinism and sexism of people like Ed Dorn ad
infinitum, it bears too monotonous a resemblance to
all other chauvinism; we would also like to provide an
alternative to it or as Gladys McLeod says:

to study the immediate and
sub-historic earth we must
extend also language beyond out
language into the very nucleus
from whence it came

But above all we want to talk about things the way
they really are. No mythology, no matter how
groovy, will do if it obscures the basic social reality.
Although we may talk of the "tribal" later on, even
the tribal will be discarded when it too becomes a
mythology. We propose to study the "immediate and
sub-historic earth" without the obscuration of
male-dominated language and the mystification of
false myth.

What gives rise to the tremendous and hideous
chauvinism and abstraction of male-dominated art?
To begin with, it lacks a connection with the gut, or a
basic sense of the emotional, which is to say the
social reality. Secondly, the poet as myth-maker is a
medium for his society and does not exist in a
vacuum so that the chauvinism of a monstrous and
inhuman society is likely to be present in his work as
well as the culture that surrounds him. And the poet's
mythology or use of mythology to some extent
reflects the society that surrounds him. Or as Jane
Harrison says:

Perhaps I was prejudiced for I found to my joy
that most of my old "heresies" that had seemed to
my contemporaries as "rash" were accepted by the
new school as almost postulates. Such heresies were:
that gods and religious ideas generally reflect the
social ideas of the worshippers; that the food supply
is of primary importance for the religion; that the
daemon precedes the full-blown god; that the great
motive is primary to the masculine divinities.

(Jane Harrison, *Thesias, A Study Of The Social
Origins of Greek Religions*, p. ix)



Briefly expressed, the mythology that lies behind
and is used as a rationale for male-dominated art is a
very stereotyped role definition, based on women's
maternal function. It is the idea of woman as the
Great Mother, Nature, the World or the Earth
(although she may sometimes be the Moon) and man
as the Sun, law-giver, rational being, formulator of
Reason and Meaning. Hence Snyder's idea of the need
to "discipline" the female. So it is, also, that for
Olson, man's means of participation in Nature or the
World is through the sexual, the phallic, hence the
tremendous stress upon the phallus. And it is at this
point that I think Olson falls down. First of all he
commits the fallacy of male-dominated language,
which assumes that men are the only people who read
or write poetry. The fact that he goes so far as to
equate one's influence as polis with one's ability to
have heterosexual intercourse (i.e., conquer the
female) still does not mean that he makes the link
between the sexual and the political, only indicates to
me an extraordinary pre-occupation with his balls or
with the masculine cult of virility. I doubt that Olson
would understand Jerry Rubin's statement about the
revolutionary nature of long hair.

Male-dominated art . . . from the Rolling Stones'
screaming "Under My Thumb" to Jimi Hendrix
singing "Hey Joe where'd you get that gun in your
hand?" this is the trip we have blaring into our ears,
assaulting our senses every day.

But the poets I have discussed in this essay are
sophisticated, intelligent men, not stupid or illiterate.

NATED ART

Gwen Hauser

untouched? Your hands are on your legs. You see nothing has changed. Except you should not believe me. Believe the poem. She is a better liar

ii

now I know why I dream of whipping you. This kiss speaks no evil. I want to watch her make a lesbian of you. Put your mouth on me. I am a revolutionary. Put your mouth on me. You are a poet. Put your mouth on me. Your mouth why am I dressed in the clothes of painters you like? She is only eleven. Corrupt her My face opposite number five. Opposite number six shave your head. Shave your arms. Shave your belly. Shave your legs. Shave the tips of your breasts. Everything. It is the only way now both your faces have turned up

This is a very interesting poem because it reflects so many things that are wrong with our art and our society itself. First, it speaks of love as evil and sex dirty - "Love. Junkyards of porcelain. Toilets/ We have no right not to believe Yves Tanguy". Second, it speaks of women as evil and equates poetry with woman or the feminine:

Nothing ever changes in hell possible genius in poetry. Women in Scorpio/ Sex. Death.

(Later on Newkirk goes on to use the metaphor of the poem as a woman and goes on to describe various forms of perversion and sadism performed on the poem by Orpheus, the poet.)

Thirdly, it speaks of sexual repression and sterility: You are not a doe. I am not a flower or else why are our sexes left untouched? Your hands are on your legs. You see nothing has ever changed

And last of all it speaks of poetry as corrupt and a lie:

Except you should not believe me. Believe the poem. She is a better liar

How much better and more liberated is the following poem by Diane di Prima, which speaks of art as tribal, communal, political, liberating and part of the life-processes:

let me tell you my brothers, that on May 30th I went to one of our

life festivals dropped acid in Tompkins Square Park with my brothers and sisters danced in the sun, till the stars came out and the pigs drove around us in circles where we stood touching each other & loving, then I went home and made love like a flower, like two

flowers opening

to each other we were the jewel on the lotus, next morning still high wandered uptown

to Natural History Museum & there in a room of Peruvian fauna, birds of paradise I saw as a past, like the dinosaurs saw birds pass from the earth & flowers, most trees & small creatures: chipmunks & rabbits & squirrels & delicate wild- flowers

saw the earth bare & smooth, austere/ly plastic & efficient men feeding hydroponically, working like ants though flatly, without regret (I have unlearned regret)

'WHAT BEAUTIFUL CREATURES USED TO LIVE ON THE EARTH' (Revolutionary Letter No. 9)

Here, as opposed to "the Siamese poet closing in on either side" living in a state of paralysis and hell, we have the poet dancing, part of the people and in touch with the life-forces. Furthermore, love, in this poem is seen as beautiful and fulfilling.

This poem, in my opinion, is possible only because of a certain view of society that Diane di Prima has:

The value of the individual life a credo they taught us to instill fear, and inaction, "you only live once"

a fog in our eyes, we are endless as the sea, not separate, we die a million times a day we are born a million times, each breath a life and death get up, put on your shoes, get started, someone will finish

Tribe an organism, one flesh, breathing joy as the starts breathe destiny down on us, get going, join hands see to business, thousands of sons will see to it when you fall, you will grow a thousand times in the bellies of your sisters

(Revolutionary Letter No. 2)

This view of society, found everywhere in her poetry, advocates the creation of tribal or classless society and through it a return to nature via the communal control of technology. Indeed, as we see from this poem and from the world around us, love is not possible outside a tribal or classless society where man is seen as part of a larger whole, connected with nature and his fellow men and a truly tribal society is such that it creates love and sexual freedom and in so doing the liberation of women.

Technology and mechanization are an essential factor in male-dominated culture. It was, once more, man's means of "conquering the female" or Nature. And just look at the mess he made of his environment and the havoc he wreaked on it in doing so: cars that produce 40% of the pollution in the atmosphere, factories that belch out soot and smoke, cement and concrete jungles of sterility and deadness everywhere. Or, as Diane di Prima says:

the earth, bare & smooth, austere/ly plastic & efficient men feeding hydroponically, working like ants though flatly, without regret (I have unlearned regret)

'WHAT BEAUTIFUL CREATURES USED TO LIVE ON EARTH' (Revolutionary Letter No. 9, p. 51)

Indeed, it is a characteristic of male-dominated art that it is very mechanical and austere, reflecting the environment around it:

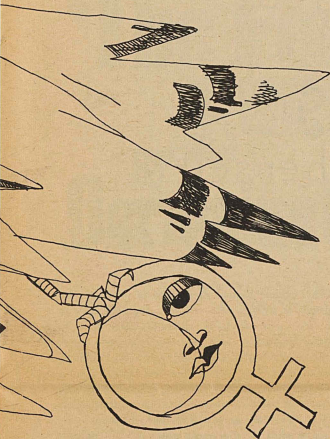
you are bald. & can be anything you want. Do you want to be a woman. Do not answer me. Answer the poem. Do you want to be a woman. The poem is a woman She is only a different grey. her hair is growing back. Walk toward her. Do you see yourself? She is on her knees. She is waiting for you. Corrupt her

All of this sounds very logical, measured and rational. Perfectly fitting mechanical parts. Everything in its place. The poem reflecting the woman. The woman corrupting the poem. The Siamese poet closing in on both sides. Everything completely logical, rational and in its place. Except that something is very wrong, as the poet himself should know.

Why is it that the major writers of our time should resort to such blatant forms of chauvinism? Could it have something to do with a certain definition of poetry which is part of our culture itself? Surely it reflects the society itself of which these writers are a part and in which the few good women writers are largely ignored and unknown. Why is it that Diane di Prima, who has given us some of the best examples of tribal art as opposed to Gary Snyder's theoretical expositions of it, should be read much less than Snyder? (There is very little sense of the communal or the tribal when it comes to Snyder's poetry itself - this exists in his essays but people are nowhere present in his poems.) Why is it that Joanne Kyger should be referred to as "Snyder's woman" rather than the author of her own poems? Again, I think it has something to do with a certain definition of poetry.

Consider, for example, the following definition of poetics written by Allen Van Newkirk, which also reflects a view of sexuality. No woman could have written this:

Love. Junkyards of porcelain. Toilets we have no right not to believe Yves Tanguy. Paint me a place I can see you. I have your thighs in my hands. I speak no evil. Nothing ever changes in hell possible genius in poetry. Woman in scorpio. Sex. Death. what is the animal you've drawn? You are not a doe. I am not a flower or else why are our sexes left



SEX
SEX
SEX
SEX
SEX
SEX
SEX
SEX



CARNAL KNOWLEDGE I

Before seeing the movie, I had heard and read some argument about whether it was a pro-woman or anti-woman movie. In fact, it isn't about women at all. The women are superficially portrayed and disappear (along with the children) after marriage. The movie is about men and their attitudes toward sexuality and women.

It is possible to have two kinds of reaction. One was the more obvious one (for us) which is the rottenness of the bastards and the pathetic absurdity of their hang-ups. It can, however, for those steeped in the male chauvinist culture, be a somewhat bewildering story of two guys who had a rough time. Poor old Jack Nicholson just never met women who were both whores and virgins at the same time, is what was wrong, which only goes to show.

The movie is well done and very funny and it's nice to see it all stripped naked for all the world to see, as it were.

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CARNAL KNOWLEDGE II

The nostalgic strains of the song Blue Moon lured me to the movie theatre. I could relive the horror of the Saturday night stag church dance and in the process feel glad to be far from those days. The movie, however, is not a nostalgia trip although, because of its black humour, one can avoid thinking too deeply about its satiric message while in the theatre.

My first reaction to its theme of sexual infighting was that it was very pro-female, but this should be changed to anti-male. The emphasis is definitely on the male characters. The antithetical personalities of Jonathan, the callow wolf and Sandy, the naive lamb, remain static from their entrance in the film at college to the woefully-minded regrets of early middle-age. Jonathan's approach towards women is more obviously sexual but even the more sensitive Sandy is not able to throw off the mystique of the perfect fuck. In the pursuit of the perfect sexual object Jonathan's ability to love dissolves into a ritual of self-love. In the end a prostitute can arouse him only if she intones a ritualistic incantation over his penis.

The role of woman in the movie is used to highlight the anti-male bias. The two major female characters, Susan and Bobby, are cast as victims. Susan says she wants to be a lawyer and write books;

she marries Sandy and retires to suburbia early in the film. Bobby is portrayed through Jonathan's eyes as a sexual object and when sex fails uses an attempted suicide to inveigle him into marriage and the child she wants. Two key scenes reveal the conditioned course of the victims. The first shows Susan's totally passive response to losing her virginity. One can see her eyes betraying the shock of feeling nothing. This frigidity holds over into her marriage even though she and Sandy strive to prove that the romantic conception of marriage is true. The second scene, involving Bobby, shows the conditioned response to women's fear of age. As Jonathan peers lasciviously down her cleavage she remains coy and compulsively feminine as she reveals her advanced (she thinks) age of twenty-nine. Bobby's fear of age is magnified because her self-estimation is dependent on her body not her soul. These scenes show clearly that both women have capitulated to the insecurities which prey on women who allow themselves to be only realized through their men.

Acts of sex form an enquiry as the title *Carnal Knowledge* implies. But for some the questing becomes an end in itself rather than any form of knowledge.

CARNAL KNOWLEDGE III

I didn't like it. The first sequence with the two sweet young men and Candace Bergen was OK. I even managed to identify with her — she worries whether boys will like her if she's smart and has opinions, she wants to be an author or a lawyer — in spite of the fact that her "complexity" was set up as a (comic?) contrast to the single-minded seduction efforts of the two creepy kids. So when she married the Quiet Shy Anti-Hero and disappeared I got a little upset. As well as pretty sure how the rest of the movie would go. Which it did.

The Quiet Shy type next appears as a Successful Doctor who complains to his old buddy, also Successful, about how terribly, terribly tedious it all is out in the suburbs. The complaints take place in a glamorous high rise apartment in New York. We never get to see how Candace Bergen likes the situation since she's back out there in the suburbs taking care of the two kids and never makes it in to the high rise where the camera is.

And so on through the entire thing. Women appear to illustrate yet another aspect of the sordid history of the degradation of our anti-heroes and then get sent off into oblivion. I can't help thinking that a movie that only explores how crippling male chauvinism is to males is a male chauvinist movie.

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We
have
nothing
to
fear
but
greer
herself

by Diana Kemble

The Female Eunuch (published in paperback by Paladin) is written with wit and erudition. It is an intensely personal book although Greer tries to remain objective. Her own success story (BA Honours, MA with 1st class Honours and a PhD from Cambridge, lecturer in English at Warwick University, magazine writer and TV panelist) colors her attitude towards Women's Liberation. This attitude puts almost total emphasis on the unusual woman:

"The onus is on women, who must not only equal men in the race for employment, but outstrip them."

She is conversant with feminist and radical political organizations and is aware that they may be displeased by her "fantasy that it might be possible to leap the steps of revolution and arrive somehow at liberty and communism without strategy or revolutionary discipline." This is a seductive idea but hardly a practical one.

Perhaps because of her disastrous family life, Greer is opposed to the small family unit. She hopes that communal living will alleviate both woman's "super-menial" state and the guilt felt by both children and parents. The mother feels obligated to accept the responsibility of conception but at the same time she is often lonely in her self- or husband-appointed task. As the children grow up they are more companionable but they then want to be less at home. The mother is forced by her loneliness to impose restrictions and pry into their more and more inscrutable lives. Guilt begins with the mother who feels she must always be available and is passed on to the children who because of their guilt become less and less available. Greer's solution is to organize a family of several loving friends who would share responsibility and impart their various skills to the children.

She says that women must realize that their usual lot is not necessarily improved by marriage and children; instead they must supply meaning to their lives from within themselves and not be dependent on others:

"When children are falsely presented to women as their only significant contribution, the proper expression of their creativity and their lives' work, the children and mothers suffer for it."

The Female Eunuch

BY Germaine Greer

\$6.95



Women often feel that they are incapable of injecting creativity into their lives and even if they have managed to salvage some of their ego after being conditioned not to be selfish (Mother: let the men deal with it, dear) their job chances (leading to at least economic independence) are not likely to be very exciting. As Greer says "in most cases women are not offered a genuine alternative to repressive duties and responsibilities: most would happily give up unskilled labor in a factory or the tedium of office work for the more 'natural' tedium of a modern household, because their energies are so thwarted by the usual kinds of female work that they imagine even housework would be a preferable alternative."

The question of women's lack of energy is expanded in the chapter called *Energy*. This section offers reasons why so many women complain about tiredness. Greer is convinced that women's energy has been "systematically deflected from birth to puberty, so that when they come to maturity they have only fitful resource and creativity." The subject of female conditioning is covered angrily and well. This conditioning serves to further the concept of femininity and the prevailing system of role stereotyping and consumerism. Although this section is beautiful in its strength we are again presented with the concept of the superstrong woman who is not likely to need the women's liberation movement or help from her feminist sisters. For the few strong women who can change their own lives there are many more who need support in their first tentative steps.

In her chapter, *Resentment*, Greer catalogues many of the social games that women play at parties. Their solution to being patronized by men leads them to "madness and aggression," but she points out this does not achieve any better effect than submissiveness. Women's destructiveness is caused by the realization that they are there as appendages. It is easy to lose the ability to contribute to conversations between men and women. Instead the women group together and chat about the latest exploit of their children or the color of a new dress. This is

understandable given the amount of time most mothers are able to spend on activities of interest to others. Women who want to strike out from the stereotype are often inhibited by the male reaction to their tentative opinions. Greer's solution to this sexual polarization is her now familiar exhortation to become a superwoman.

The usual dismal picture of female employment is buttressed by statistics of injustices in England. The verdict is that "by and large women themselves are not interested in the problem." Perhaps because their energy is insufficient to meet the demands of work, home, husband and children. The vicissitudes of secretaries, actresses, nurses and teachers are well described but when the author goes on to give examples of those women who are successful, her stance seems to capitulate to the inhuman male business world of ulcers and coronaries.

Another one of Greer's tenets is the use of sex as a revolutionary tactic:

"Men are the enemy in much the same way that some crazed boy in uniform was the enemy of another like him in most respects except the uniform. One possible tactic is to try to get the uniforms off."

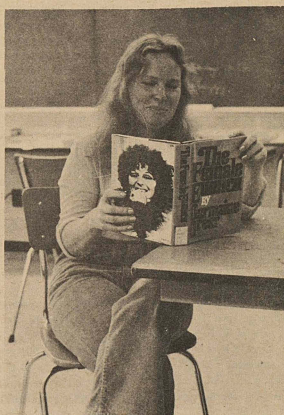
This is a dubious solution and inconsistent with her previous chapters on her horror of sexual games.

Greer is committed to the idea that woman is limited by physiology only by her own reaction to it. She says that many of the so-called weaknesses of women are self-induced or accepted through the childhood conditioning process. The monthly trauma of menstruation is put into a matter-of-fact perspective which allows for the pain and depression of some but asks that "women... be aware of this enlistment of menstruation in the anti-feminist argument and counteract it by their own statements of the situation." We are our bodies but what we can do is a matter for us to find out, not to remain tied to the opinion of parents, lovers and admen.

The use of the word "eunuch" in the title is persuasively developed in the chapter on the

stereotype. Greer details the extent to which women adorn themselves or are adorned by men. In the process of becoming the "Eternal Feminine, she is neither sex, for she has herself no sex at all. Her value is solely attested by the demand she excites in others. . . . She need achieve nothing, for she is the reward of achievement." She elaborates further on the castrated woman: "Her essential quality is castratedness. She absolutely must be young, her body hairless, her flesh buoyant, and she must have no sexual organ. . . . Her expression must betray no hint of humor, curiosity or intelligence, although it may signify . . . vivacity and idiot happiness."

The Female Eunuch is informative, telling and amusing. Unfortunately, by the end, the heroine, the castrated woman, has been submerged by a welter of facts and the dynamism of Germaine Greer's personality.



MARRIAGE IS FOREVER

THE BRIDEGROOM'S GUIDE Jennifer
S. Macleod Reprinted from *The Village Voice*

Oh, lucky you! You are finally bridegroom to the woman of your dreams!

But don't think for a minute that you can now relax and be assured automatically of marital happiness forever. You will have to *work at it*. While she may have eyes only for you *now*, remember that she is surrounded every day by attractive young men who are all too willing to tempt her away from you. And as the years go by, you will lose some of the handsome musculature of your youth: you will have to make up in skill and understanding what you will lack in the bloom of youth. It will be up to you to make your physical relationship so exciting, so totally satisfying to her, that she won't be tempted to stray!

Yes boys, we are talking about SEX. Don't turn away in embarrassment. For if you are to *hold* that wonderful woman, you will have to practice and work hard at making her sex life as marvellous as it can be.

But how?

Here is what you need to know and do to succeed in your marriage, your greatest challenge in life - and the one that will be utterly essential to your wife's future happiness and thus your own.

1. Let's start in with the essentials. You should always be available to your wife whenever she wants you. It is of course your husbandly prerogative to say no, but you will be wise never to do so unless you are really ill, for that may tempt her to turn to other men to fulfill her essential needs. She cannot do without sex, so you as a smart husband should always be ready to provide it.

2. That means that you should never let yourself get too tired to perform. The cardinal sin for a husband - and a good way to lose the wife you love - is to fail at your duty to achieve a good erection and sustain it until your wife is fully satisfied. So never let your work or anything else get in the way of plenty of rest each day, regular but moderate exercise, and plenty of protein in your diet - and stay away from excessive alcohol.

Remember that women's sexual needs vary. Some need it more often than others, and some (lucky you if you are married to a real woman like that!) can achieve multiple orgasms in a single night of love, if you can do your part!

3. "But how about *me*?" you may ask. "How about my sexual needs and satisfactions?"

Now men's passion, of course, is important, but satisfy your wife's pleasure and don't worry selfishly about your own. For sooner or later you will discover the ecstasy of truly mature male *coital* orgasm that can be induced only by total surrender to the exquisite sensations of a woman's orgasmic contractions. This type of mature male climax will be attainable by you when you learn to inhibit the juvenile tendency to ejaculate prematurely, and await your wife's orgasm while sustaining your erection. Be glad if it is a *long* wait, because this will prolong and intensify her pleasure.

4. Because your juvenile sexuality is centered in your penis, you may think that the central act in intercourse is the capture of your penis by your wife's vagina. Don't make that common mistake! Always remember that the secret of the successful sex act - the one that brings about the wife's orgasm which in turn triggers the husband's ejaculation - is excitation of the wife's clitoris.

There are of course many techniques of clitoral stimulation; I need not go into them here because they are readily available in marriage manuals; they also give information that will be helpful to your wife in assisting you to your full erection. She should understand that she, too, should not be too selfish in her concentration on her own pleasure!

5. Remember that your first duty is to your wife. So if you fail to satisfy her (and yourself, too) in the above-described natural way, you should talk to a good psychiatrist who specializes in this kind of problem. She will help you if, for instance, you have not yet fully accepted the natural masculine role that will bring you the joy of selfless service to others instead of the futile envy of women's natural leadership role.

6. But you may find that sometimes you do not achieve the ejaculation that usually comes in response to your wife's orgasm, especially if your wife is one of those who have multiple orgasms. . . understand that men's passion sometimes does not match that of women. Don't be embarrassed - *talk* with her about it. She may be able to help with a little more foreplay to help stimulate you.

It should not be necessary, in a happy and loving marriage, for a man to resort to husbandly artifice in feigning an ejaculation that does not actually take place. But do keep in mind that her female ego does depend on her believing that she satisfies you fully and deeply, so beware of bruising her self-image by any word or action that might lead her to believe she does not completely meet your sexual needs.

7. Now for a practical matter: assuming that you, like most modern couples, want to limit and space the growth of your family, your wife and you should decide together what method of contraception you wish to employ. Most likely, you will choose one of the fine methods available to the modern husband. Consult a qualified urologist. She will explain to you several methods, their advantages and drawbacks, and your wife and you can make the final decision.

One widely used method is the insertion of sperm-killing liquid into the urethra before intercourse. She (your doctor) will show you how. You may find it awkward and uncomfortable the first few times, but soon you will get the knack. If you are a truly considerate husband, you will do this routinely every evening as you prepare to retire, so that you will never have to keep your wife waiting while you make your preparations. A drawback of this method is that it does occasionally fail. And some wives - especially busy, successful ones for whom the time required for the abortion is a hardship - blame the husband for the slip-up, thinking that perhaps he did not take the proper precautions.

The other widely used method is of course the Caplane, a powerful formulation of various hormones

that render you infertile so long as you take it without fail. There are minor undesirable side effects in some men: you may gain weight around the abdomen or buttocks, get white pigmentless patches on your face (which you may be able to conceal with beard or face-bronzer), or suffer some morning nausea. But be patient - these effects often decrease or even disappear after a few months. The one serious drawback of the Caplane is that you are several times more likely than otherwise to suffer eventually from prostate cancer or fatal blood clots. But these ailments are relatively uncommon anyway, so that many couples consider it worth the risk, especially since this is the one method that is 100 per cent effective.

So talk it over with your wife: this is one of the first, and most important, decisions for you to make together as woman and husband.

8. Now for a subject that may seem trivial: your appearance and dress. Don't overlook it - it is a vital ingredient in marital happiness.

Every woman likes to be proud of how attractive her husband is, so dress to please her. If she likes you to show off your youthful figure, by all means do so! Broad shoulders can be accentuated by turtleneck jerseys (with shoulder pads if needed), as can the well-tapered waist. Small, firm, well-shaped buttocks (very much in fashion this year) can be set off by well-cut, clingy stretch pants.

And if you need the help of corsetry (as many do, especially as the years go by), today's well-constructed corsets make a good figure within the reach of almost every man. And they can be surprisingly comfortable, even for wear all day long. They can help you attract those wonderful compliments from your wife and her friends that are music to every man's ears!

One last piece of advice: the time may come - hopefully not for many years - when you can no longer provide your wife with all the sexual satisfactions that are her birthright. Your potency will decline, while her sexual appetite will increase well up into her 50s and 60s. That is the time that attractive younger men will tempt her. Build up the non-sexual as well as the sexual aspects of her life with you, so that even if she strays to others from time to time, she will happily return to you and the warm and affectionate home that you provide for her.

If and when that time comes, do not nag her or make her feel guilty. Remember that she has strong sexual needs that must be met, and as long as she does not hurt any young men by deceiving them that there is hope for a permanent relationship, your home can still be a happy one. You are hers forever, and knowing and appreciating that, she will always come back to you.

If you do your job well - for husbandhood is the true career for all many men, worthy of all your talents - you will keep your wife happy and hold her for the rest of her days. Remember that marriage, for a man, should be Life's Great Adventure. So relax - relax - relax - and enjoy it!





THERE I WAS AT THE TRAIN STATION WITH \$10,
NO PLACE TO STAY. NO FRIENDS. AND I COULDN'T UNDERSTAND THE LANGUAGE.

Being Quebecois is something that I am proud of, but having to leave my own country because of unemployment is disgusting. My parents decided that I should be a secretary, like it or not. Being poor with ten kids, I was the only one they wanted to send to college for one year, because I didn't seem to be in a hurry to get married. Most of my sisters babysat for a huge family of up to 15 children for \$40 a month. They finally got married because there wasn't any other solution for them, and no better job around.

My five brothers left school after grade seven, helped on the farm for a while, went to cut wood in winter time for a few months. In the summer you could pick potatoes for 25 cents a barrel in New Brunswick. Right now my father is working in a sawmill for \$1.00 an hour. Most of the jobs are for two or three months. After that people collect unemployment or pile up debt.

After my dad left twelve commercial, I couldn't find a job except in Montreal or Quebec City. One out of forty graduates got a job around my town, Rivière-du-Loup. My parents encouraged me to go to Montreal where the situation is not much better because of the big shots saying, "Sorry, we only hire bilingual people or English speaking." Those men should learn French themselves. So I went to Toronto to learn English. It wasn't easy. Toronto isn't a very friendly city. Welfare wasn't easy to get five years ago. There I was at the train station with \$10, no place to stay, no friends, and I couldn't understand the language.

Most of the Quebecois babayst first get the idea of the language. I phoned to answer the ads in the paper, but most of the women hung up on me. I don't blame them—I wasn't able to converse with them. Finally someone hired me for room and board in exchange for my work, but no salary. I wasn't too pleased with the idea but I didn't have any choice. There I was cooking, cleaning, taking care of two kids who couldn't speak and most of the time the lady spoke French with me. A month after, I decided to look for something better. Most of the families I worked with treated me like a slave, like they treat all black women, but never like a member of the family. Some places you have to eat separately, no friends were allowed to visit you except on your

day off. I worked from 7:00 am to 11:00 pm, 6½ days a week. It was very depressing and homieseking. Seven months later, after several jobs at \$10 a week, I tried office work, *but* I didn't have any fun. My French accent scared everybody away. They think if you don't speak the language properly you must be too dumb to do the job properly. I got the feeling that they didn't like Quebecois very much. I went back to a family where I was treated a little bit better, earned \$20 a week and got two nights off, so I went to night school to improve my English. Six months later I was trying again but could get nothing but waitressing jobs. I was still a slave, but the pay and the tips were good enough so I saved some money and paid my parents back for my education.

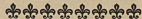


One year later I got a job in an office, but speaking and writing English are two different things, so I was fired after three days because I didn't have enough experience and was too slow on the typewriter. With a little bit of patience, I got a job at the Royal Bank of Canada as NCR machine operator at \$50 a week. Two years later I was making \$65 a week. Then my parents sent my younger sister to me and expected me to help her. For one year she passed through the same oppression but I helped her financially. I didn't want her to be a baby as long as I had, so I took another job day times and kept my job at the bank at night, working 16 hours a day to send her to hairdressing school. This is what she always wanted to do. She is very good at it today and is going back to Ouchew where she can find a better job.

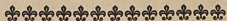
When I came to Vancouver I had the same problem looking for a job for three months, and I spent all my savings. Finally there were two choices: go on welfare or take anything, like babysitting, waitressing, etc. Being Quebecois didn't help very much and Manpower doesn't have much to offer you except very bad jobs, and you have to take them. I worked in many restaurants, being laid off because of slow business. In most places they expect you to do everything for \$1.50 an hour: be busboy, cashier, waitress, and cleaner. One day the owner fired me because he saw me putting tips in my pocket at the cash register and accused me of stealing money.

Another job that I got from Manpower was unclean. There I was – cashier, cook, dish washer by hand, waitress and cleaner – all five jobs for \$1.50 an hour. The owner always complained that I used too much water for the dishes. “It costs electricity, you know,” she kept telling me. “Check if the light in the washroom is off,” and “Don’t forget to charge 10 cents for warming up coffee for the customers.” Then one day I was fired for not knowing how to cook pies and muffins.

So I collected unemployment for one month. Then they found me another waitress job that I didn't like and I quit for something better. But the job didn't come through. The unemployment asked me to pay back the \$60 because I quit my job for no reason. I went to an appeal with a friend of mine to fight for my rights, and won the case because I had had another job when I quit. Working in a restaurant isn't pleasant because the owner tells you all the time that he will look for another girl if you don't do what you are told to do, and asks why don't you look for another girl if you don't like it. Here, there are a lot of people who are just like this. They hate their job, even though they have to pay back the money for even a little thing you do wrong because there are two people who can be right: the customer and the owner. Sometimes you just live like leaving, but you need the \$210 a month to live.



I don't blame anybody for refusing to take jobs like picking berries or cutting grass, but this is what the government expects you to do after university.



I hope after the revolution people will share the work and will work with the boss, not for the boss, because there shouldn't be any more bosses or private property. There shouldn't be any more races for more and more money to be on the top. People will relax much more, respect and help each other more often. It will be like a big family. There shouldn't be any more slaves or unhappy people. Everybody should have basic needs like food, clothes, housing, education. And with free education, more people will be more competent at different jobs.

Not too many letters this month, folks...
write and tell us
what's happening...

Why we are leftists

Dear Ingrid,

In your letter in the last Pedestal, you remark that you wish we weren't leftists. I presume you mean by that, that many of us active in women's liberation feel that only a completely new kind of society can solve some fundamental problems that most women — and men — face. You feel that such problems can be solved within the present organization of society.

What are some of these problems? The main one is an unequal distribution of wealth.

Alice James has written a paper called "Poverty, Canada's Legacy to Women," which clearly shows how this affects the lives of a great number of Canadian women. The publications of the women's bureau of the DBS or the Status of Women report do the same thing. Second, and connected with this unequal distribution of wealth, is the unequal distribution of power. By this I mean both the ability to help make decisions about how society is to operate and the ability to make decisions about one's own life. Women are

entirely excluded from the first kind of decision making as are most men. And almost all working people have little control over important areas of their own lives — the kind of work they do, how that work is to be done, what happens to their neighborhoods, towns, etc. From these general problems follow the individual tragedies of kids who drop out because they can't get meaningful work (or any work at all), people who die too soon because they lack proper food or medical care, talents wasted and lives spent in alienating labour. And these are only the problems here at home — the 'free enterprise' system is tied in with the war in Vietnam, hunger in Latin America, high infant mortality in Quebec and shortened lives of native Canadians.

The purpose behind production in this system is profit. Production for use is almost incidental (note the hard work and money put into advertising to create new uses). Originally such a system of production served a real purpose — the building of an industrial society. But we now have the possibility of enough for everyone — this is a very new thing in human society. We no longer need a system which was built on the premise that there wasn't enough to go around. We need to remove the idea of

profit from production so that we can begin rationally producing for use.

The question of how to begin to change is not a simple one and it does not have a simple answer. It is impossible in a letter to do more than give the barest outline of the reasons why I have come to feel that reforms within the same general organization of society are hopeless.

First of all, the basic organization is into those who own and those who work for a wage. These owners control wealth and power in their society (see Domhoff's *Who Rules America?*) since they control the production of goods and services. It is this control, and not money itself, that is the foundation of the real wealth of this society and therefore, control of production means a key position.

Women have a special place in the hearts and pocketbooks of the owners. We raise the children, cook the meals, sweep the floors for their workers, all for subsistence pay and love. When we get jobs outside the home, we work for low wages, we take part-time and temporary jobs when we're needed. When we're not needed, we go back to being housewives and we're not even counted in unemployment figures. Some of these things may change — some reform

under capitalism does happen, if only to prevent explosions. But even if our special role were to vanish (not likely), we would still live in a system based on unequal control of wealth, and on profit.

It is for these reasons we are leftists. I see a certain amount of reform possible, but only to a certain point. We are asking for things incompatible with the basic organization of capitalism.

If you want to give left ideas a fair chance, you owe it to yourself to make the effort to find out what they are — don't just dismiss us because the ideas are strange and frightening or because of the bugaboo of what goes on in so-called "communist" countries. There are lots of books that are good (even Marx's). Here is a more or less random list of the ones I found interesting: William Domhoff, *Who Rules America?*; Paul Baran, *Political Economy of Growth*; William Hinton, *Fanshen*; E. Burstein, *Economic Transformation of Cuba*; Frank Furedi, *Wretched of the Earth*; David Horowitz, *Free World Colossus*. My own thoughts about how women fit into the system are reprinted in the book *From Feminism to Liberation*, E. Althach, ed., along with Peggy Morton's excellent article 'A Woman's Work is Never Done.' Give some of them a try. M. Benston



STREET WALKER

Why sweet memory
Love and all that shit
Words, words
And I
Loving here am desolate

Sweet memory
And hordes of lechers
Rising in the sea
With one face, one face, one face.

What harm with whiteness inviolate
Whitewashed
Tomb of all my longing

And who's to say
Prison songs
And songs shall make us free
Honky tonk angels
All that shines and sings
May still be gold
and make us free
Make us free, make us free

Standing on the corner
Anemone of the night
Waving softly in the sea night air
Patient, rooted
To one grey square

Now let us sing
Famous Men
None half way here
None fallen,
Only men.

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, 80min.

October 14
Murder She Said
(Margaret Rutherford)
1961, 100 min.

October 21
Boys in the Band
1970, 124 m., colour

October 28
Cat Ballou
(Jane Fonda)
1965, 105m., colour

November 4
The Devil is a Woman
(Marlene Dietrich)
1937, 80min.

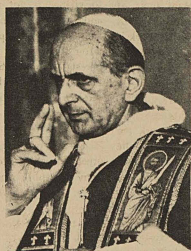
November 18
Burn
(Marlon Brando)
1971, 112m., colour

Showing Thursdays at
12:30pm and 8pm
in C9001, S.F.U.

\$3.00 for series ticket
\$.50 individual admission

—Eve

THE PILL



is a
NO—NO

FROM OUR ITALIAN SISTERS:

Note: Italian sisterhood is flourishing; the Pope isn't the only one who has the word on women here as the establishment would like the world to believe. An open letter to women abroad to give a sketchy account of where we are: March 1, 1971

On February 27 and 28, Roman feminists and delegated sisters from Milan and Trento staged an organised protest (if not so organised, it was exhilarating — the press chose to call it

a "Happening" — at the first so-called National Women's Liberation Congress. The "Movimento per la Liberazione delle Donne" (MLD), the organisers of the congress, are connected with the establishment Radical Party (there was a split some time ago, but a dependency relationship still clearly exists). MLD, made up of some women and many men, grabbed the name "Women's Liberation Movement" before women had a chance to channel a rapidly rising consciousness into something "organ-

ised" — men being such pros at the game. According to first hand reports, women rarely get a word in at their meetings — although sometimes the women are "allowed" to write an article in their neatly laid out newsletter. Their aims and direction clearly come down from above, from the male leadership, and are expressed through a neat set of impersonal reform demands: MLD stands for legalisation/liberalisation of abortion laws, legalisation and distribution of the pill and nursery schools. The ways in which women themselves express their oppression and lay out the struggle for liberation, new methods of struggle, new dynamics, new relationships, a sense of sisterhood, are glaringly missing.

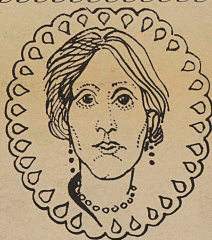
So the first Women's Liberation Congress opened to bring the word abortion, a word all women know and many have dealt with (at least 3 million Italian women undergo abortions each year — 20,000 of them die and many others are left in serious condition) to the fore. TV cameras and bright lights marked the atmosphere. We arrived, about fifty of us, a locally affiliated group of women dealing with our consciousness of our oppression — at Rome's Central Theatre and found the alienating decor of a handsome banquet table, draped in red of course, with the microphone, up on the stage to go with the blinding movie camera lights. A mar- (a gynecologist) and three women were

seated at the chairman's table (it would have been too much if there weren't women up there — huge banner with the words First National Women's Liberation Congress was dangling above their heads). The program was filled with special guest experts in the fields of psychology, psychoanalysis, sociology, law, etc.

On the first day we managed to get the leaders down off the stage, to kick out the television crew and photographers (there were two police agents with cameras with telephoto lens among the photographers), to get some of our ideas across to the women — sometimes calmly and sometimes via spontaneous angry heckles, especially when those "well meaning" old time male feminists scolded us for not being the women they wanted to liberate and pitifully tried to teach us how to behave. We managed to get the microphone a few times to clarify the reasons why we were there, to appeal to all the women, many of whom had travelled many miles after hearing about the well-publicized congress and hoping to find a women's liberation movement, to speak about women's oppression with women, to elaborate a strategy with women, all the women present.

One grey haired, grey bearded old time socialist lost his temper and pride. "I've been a feminist all my life. What will my friends say when they see what kind of women I've been sacrificing my life for."

Virginia Woolf



A ROOM OF ONE'S OWN

Virginia Woolf
in paperback, \$85 from Penguin, or in your local library, undoubtedly

I don't know how to begin this review. What I want to do with it is get you to read *A Room of One's Own*, a book that deals so sensitively and sensibly with such a range of women's concerns that it defies my easy description. I think that you will find it a pleasure to read, that it will fill you with hope and pride, that it will open out problems to your consideration in new ways — in short, that you will be glad you read it. But what can I say about this book — so rambling, yet so concise — that will let you see this?

A Room of One's Own was first published in 1928. It is based upon two talks Virginia Woolf gave in that year, and has the intimate and anecdotal character of a good afterdinner speech or afternoon talk. It's about women and fiction, nominally, but it's also about women's place in society, about what is necessary before fiction can be written, about history, about women.

Virginia Woolf died in 1941. Before that she wrote many novels and works of literary criticism (you should read them, too) and was considered quite the thing in some circles. Maybe you've heard of her. I first heard her name in the title of Albee's play, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf*, and I asked someone

who she was. The man I asked said she was a difficult writer, but brilliant, if minor. For some reason I read her anyway (I was brash then), and I haven't been sorry. I guess all that stuff he said is true (except that most of her books aren't "difficult" at all), but it seems unimportant. What's important is that she's a woman writing from a place entirely inside herself, with a woman's view of the world and a woman's sensibility. I used to be suspicious of all that "a woman's" stuff, and in some ways I still am — you have to be careful about enshrining transitory differences in your attempts to find a clear identity — but reading a woman like Woolf (I haven't found many others like her) after reading a man (and I admit that some men are very fine writers, and understand lots of things) is like swimming in clear water after wading in mud.

In *A Room of One's Own*, Woolf speculates about women's lives, from medieval to Victorian times. What did they do, since they weren't doing what men do — why did they build no bridges, govern no countries, make no money, write no fiction? We all know the answers to those questions, simply, but Woolf considers them complexly. What would it have been like if Shakespeare had had a sister with all his gifts? She makes you see it.

It's not as hard as it used to be for a woman who wants to have pride and dignity — there are other women trying to do it, talking and writing about it, meeting in groups to help each other and acting to gain some measure of control over their lives at home,

at work, with friends and with family. But sometimes even now we stop and wonder, what's WRONG with women that they haven't done all this before? If women are the intellectual equals of men, as we claim, if they have, as we say, almost as much strength and more endurance, then why weren't we all born into a world where our mothers or theirs had already accomplished all we are attempting? Are we a new breed of women, stronger and smarter? (It seems unlikely.) Or are we and our struggles as doomed to failure as our foremothers and theirs seem to have been? *A Room of One's Own* is good for these kinds of blues. Woolf writes about those other women, the ones who might have fought our battles for us, with such respect and compassion that you really see them, and marvel at what they did manage to accomplish. Did you ever wish you were descended from a race of heroines? Well, you are.

Woolf talks too about problems of literature and vision. Kate Millet, in *Sexual Politics*, wrote a manual of resistance for women — she showed us how to stop believing those snide and damaging views of women in popular sexist authors. But Woolf can show you how the whole world is seen differently by men than it is by women. She can show us why we must have women writers (it's not just to answer those annoying arguments that women haven't written and therefore they can't write) and (in a way) how we can become those writers.

Anne Goldstein

OCTOBER 1971

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
PEDESTAL WOMEN'S CENTRE 3 8 PM.	FEMINISTS+ 1068 DAVIE BASEMENT 4 7 PM.	WOMEN'S STUDIES SUB. BALLROOM 5 UBC 7 PM.	FEMINISTS+ 654 W 7th 6 7 PM.	MOVIES * SFU * SEE AD 7 12:30 8 PM.	MOVIES 511 CARRALL 8:00 10 PM	MOVIES 511 CARRALL 8:00 10 PM.
PEDESTAL WOMEN'S CENTRE 10 8 PM.	FEMINISTS+ 1068 DAVIE BASEMENT 11 7 PM.	WOMEN'S STUDIES SUB. BALLROOM 12 UBC 7 PM.	FEMINISTS+ 654 W 7th 13 7 PM.	MOVIES * SFU * SEE AD 14 12:30 8 PM.	8 10 PM	MUSIC AND POETRY HAPPENING WOMEN'S CENTRE 9 8 PM.
PEDESTAL WOMEN'S CENTRE 17 8 PM.	FEMINISTS+ 1068 DAVIE BASEMENT 18 7 PM.	WOMEN'S STUDIES SUB. BALLROOM 19 UBC 7 PM.	FEMINISTS+ 654 W 7th 20 7 PM.	MOVIES * SFU * SEE AD 21 12:30 8 PM.	15	16 PEDESTAL SFU
PEDESTAL SFU 24 8 PM.	FEMINISTS+ 1068 DAVIE BASEMENT 25	WOMEN'S STUDIES SUB. BALLROOM 26 UBC 7 PM.	FEMINISTS+ 654 W 7th 27 7 PM.	MOVIES * SFU * SEE AD 28 12:30 8 PM.	29	23 WOMEN'S UNION CONF. SEE P.5 10-4 (2 SUNDAY)
27 PEDESTAL WOMEN'S CENTRE 8 PM.						30

* Pauline Julien, the noted Quebecoise singer, will give a People's Concert on Oct. 21 at 8:30 in the Queen Elizabeth Theatre. Her art reflects her concern for the liberation struggle in Quebec and as a consequence she was arrested during the October crisis. Tickets are on sale for \$2.00 at Duthies, Vancouver Ticket Centre, Rohans, CKLG, Georgia Straight, City College Second Hand Bookstore and Alma Mater Society offices at UBC.

* The Status of Women Action Coordinating Committee (SWACC) will hold its regular monthly meeting Monday, Oct. 18 at 8 pm in St. Michael's Church at 2474 Prince Edward St. The meeting, on "Women in Public Life," will feature a panel of women successful in politics plus the National Film Board movie "Women on the March."

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!!!!

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