

Status of Women Journal



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HAPPY INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY!

March 8 is a day of commemoration and remembrance. It is a time for reflection on the achievements of women in their struggle for equality. It is also a time for reflection on the work, and dedication to ideals, that continues to motivate those who, facing seemingly insurmountable odds, remain true to their belief that the world must and will become a better place. When we contemplate where we have come from, it is beneficial for us to contemplate where we are heading and to focus not only on the world that is, but also on the world as it must be.

As we observe another March 8, we remember that the date was chosen because it commemorates the struggles to eradicate poor working conditions in the garment industry in New York in the early years of this century. We are also reaching out to individual women everywhere who are continuing the work to eradicate every poor and unacceptable condition in today's society. When we march and hold special events on March 8, we are drawing attention to what we stand for. We hope and believe that in this way, we will stimulate interest and actions throughout the year. Women everywhere are uniting their voices and speaking out against injustice, oppression, violence, poverty, and abuse of power in all its forms.

Whatever you choose to do to celebrate International Women's Day, whether it be to read this journal and to talk with one other person or to organize and participate in a district-wide event, remember that you are on the continuum of awareness and are dedicated to the improvement of the quality of life of all women.

International Women's Day celebrations are a regular occurrence in many schools and communities around the province. Here are some popular activities:

- ▲ Inviting a woman (or a panel of women) to speak (in a classroom, at an assembly, at a no-host lunch or dinner; to students, to teachers, to co-workers, to parents, or any combination of the above: morning, noon, or night) on women's issues
- ▲ Inviting a prominent female public figure to speak
- ▲ Inviting a woman who works in a non-traditional job to speak
- ▲ Inviting women from other cultures to speak about the roles they have and the relationship they have to "women's issues"
- ▲ Inviting a man to speak on being pro-feminist and the effect of that on his relationships including parent/child relationships
- ▲ Showing a film or video, followed by discussion
- ▲ Displaying posters, art works, written works, historical information, statistical information, career information
- ▲ Writing for newsletters, and having students write for their school newspapers
- ▲ Raising money for a woman's support group, shelter, or charity
- ▲ Taking slides around your school and discussing the activities and role-modelling being depicted. (Look for stereotypical and non-stereotypical content. Discuss overt and covert sexism.)
- ▲ Encouraging the teacher-librarian to highlight resources that portray females in the full spectrum of life
- ▲ Initiating classroom projects that teach children about the amount of sexism still encountered in Canadian society ■

GETTING RESTARTED: OR REINVENTING OUR WHEEL IN RICHMOND SCHOOL DISTRICT

Louise deBruijne, Status of Women Contact, SD 38 (Richmond)

Since joining the Richmond School District, I have been happy to contribute to the restarting of the Status of Women Committee in my district. I say "restarting" sadly, because the committee was well established a few years ago, with a budget and active bargaining-committee representation; but the committee dissolved and has had to reach right back to the grassroots, calling for school representatives and women to sit on the committee.

But reinventing the committee is an opportunity inasmuch as some of the former Status of Women Committee members have moved into other key positions in the union. Through connections with the committee, those women had gained skills, attended workshops, and become comfortable in the BCTF and affiliated institutions. I count on those women to nurture our committee's growth and to make room for it at the executive meetings when I ask for a share in the local's (shrinking) material resources.

The year of my involvement with the Status of Women Committee has helped me consolidate my real self with my teaching self: the feminist with the teacher/helper role I try to project at school.

I have also been pleased with the support from the larger BCTF Status of Women Committee. First there was immediate financial support: a spring and a fall workshop: four days in total, two of which were funded by BCTF. I met the metro committee with Jean Chan and Wendy Matsubuchi, facilitators who showed their concern as to how I would revitalize Richmond's committee, and Carole Caldwell, an approachable person with an efficient telephone manner and an ability to "source" materials and answer questions.

The handbook pages on how to start a committee worked well; I merely had to type an invitation, call for members as it outlined, and get a room booked. The handbook proved to be an excellent resource. I particularly appreciate the step-by-step outline and concerns at which the committee could take aim. The handbook regarding violence, *Thumbs Down*, in French and English, is included. The lesson plans are easily adaptable to a variety of classes and books on hand.

My experience to date has rejuvenated my hopes to put women's issues where they belong in Richmond: in focus, in front, and informed. ■

THE LEGACY OF DECEMBER 6

Wendy Matsubuchi and Heather McLeod

Wendy Matsubuchi, a member of the Status of Women Committee and of the Family Violence Advisory Team, is currently teaching in North Vancouver while completing her master's degree in modern languages and special education at UBC. Heather McLeod is past-president of the Stikine Teachers' Association; she is currently a Staff-Rep-Training associate completing her master's degree in Canadian history and women's studies at SFU.

What were you doing on November 30? We were at a University Women's Club meeting at Hycroft House in Vancouver, where Suzanne Laplante-Edward urged us to act against various aspects of violence in our society.

Laplante-Edward is the mother of one of the 14 female engineering students murdered in Montreal December 6, 1989, at L'Ecole Polytechnique. She was in Vancouver to speak to a number of groups and to organize and MC the Women's Day of Remembrance Memorial, whose program included the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra.

The gunman declared hatred of feminists as he singled out women to be shot. However, in the 1990s, we have come to realize violence against women is not always so blatant. It can be seen as a continuum, with the majority of victims not being murdered by their partners but being abused in subtle ways. One hundred twenty women were murdered by their partners this year in Canada; thousands more suffered physical, emotional, or sexual harassment and abuse, which included actions such as dominating leadership, cleaning out a bank account, deliberately abusing family finances, public humiliations, and controlling and withholding love, money, or information. Furthermore, Laplante-Edward supports Susan Faludi's backlash theory that "the economic victims of the era are men who know someone has made off with their future—and they suspect the thief is a woman." As Elizabeth Aird writes in the Vancouver Sun, when economic hardships collide with misogyny and a violent culture, women die. While some people believe that violence itself is on the rise, others feel that only the reporting of violent crime has increased.

Laplante-Edward helped found the Foundation of the Victims of December 6 Against Violence, a group that organized for gun control, which resulted in the new federal legislation. Although Laplante-Edward feels that Justice Minister Kim Campbell's law is mediocre, she also believes the achievement of an actual law is a good beginning. The foundation's efforts have since been redirected to issues of violence on TV, in advertising, in movies, in toys... Indeed, Laplante-Edward is always first an activist, and she even goes so far as to call for censorship, perhaps by having citizens serve from time to time to establish the norms of their community, as for jury duty or a system already in place in France. Other actions include keeping watch over print, TV, movies, games, and local businesses to ensure that offensive products and advertising are decried, and

boycotted if writing, phoning and faxing government, owners and advertisers do not bring results. Laplante-Edward advocates a top-down approach to advocacy and believes that private citizens should inform the Prime Minister, MPs, MLAs, and the presidents of the CRTC, television stations, and commercial enterprises when they find materials distasteful. She is skeptical about self-regulation by the broadcasting industry, promised for 1993. Likewise, she sees no early or voluntary end to war toys. Larami Corporation manufactures the high-powered Super Soaker 100 gun, which can be loaded with chemicals instead of water. Kenner makes the Terminator 2 Power Arm doll whose removable left arm can be replaced by a spike, claw, or missile launcher, and Mattel's Captain Hook Tri-Hook has a hard plastic cuff with interchangeable hook, dagger, and saw.

Throughout her talk, Laplante-Edward emphasized education and action, without which behavior cannot be changed. We remembered that the feminist exploration of rape established that rape by acquaintances not only exists, but is far more common than rape by strangers. Similarly, our understanding and action on the issue of violence toward women has begun to identify and condemn all aspects of male violence toward women; women are seen as victims or survivors—not instigators. This should lead to a significant decrease in public tolerance of violence.

After the talk, discussion was animated. Margaret Fulton (dean of women at UBC and adjunct professor in UBC's Language Education Department) emphasized the effect of patriarchy, misogyny, and the systemic violence that oppresses women in our cultural and historical traditions. Another thought-provoking contribution was made by a young female engineer who pointed out that women in non-traditional professions sometimes feel unable to speak for themselves because they're so outnumbered; she said her employer is implementing a sexual harassment policy only to avoid the more severe legal complications were such company policy not to exist.

Laplante-Edward's son Jimmy spoke passionately on the White Ribbon Campaign, recently established by men wishing to demonstrate solidarity with women against violence: he argued that many young men wish to show where they stand on the issue. Some people feel that this is a female battle to be fought only by women; whereas others want men to be as involved as possible.

A variety of political strategies have been employed historically in different situations by feminists and other socio-political activists. The issues change, but the pool of possible assumptions and their accompanying strategies essentially remain the same. Thus in each instance, we go to the pool and start to make choices. Should we start at the highest level of government? Or should we start with grassroots organizing, in the home, with our own children? Is getting to the money behind TV networks and advertising most important? Or must we start with education within the school system? Should women work with or without men's assistance? Being a feminist dictates neither a woman's political assumptions nor her political strategies regarding the way society works and how to change it.

Teachers have developed, and continue to develop, strategies for dealing with violence in schools. The BCTF Code of Ethics ensures that students will learn in a safe environment. Some associations and boards have worked together to provide sexual harassment policies to protect all members of the school community. Steps have also been made toward achieving a non-violent workplace for teachers: clause language on non-sexist environment and sexual harassment ensures that a teacher will not suffer harassment or sexist environment caused by students or board employees. It is appropriate for the grievance procedure to be used to resolve such disputes. Indeed, the issue of violence is of

such magnitude, the Fall '92 Representative Assembly directed that a task force research and report on violence in the schools.

Classroom activities and resources help us educate children regarding violence. Children, sometimes witnesses to violence themselves, need to learn about healthy relationships and conflict resolution to stop the cycle of abuse. Great sources include the CTF's "Thumbs Down" and the NFB's videos. According to the OSSTF Status of Women Committee, helpful classroom activities include assembly presentations, talks from local crisis centres or shelters, fundraising for women's groups, surveying the school to uncover issues and possible solutions, making posters, resolving conflicts peacefully in roleplay, voicing concerns to the local mall, municipal centre and library, showing videos or films, and distributing special school calendars with pictures, art, quizzes, and stories regarding the issue of violence.

We are emerging from an era that could boast few commonly accepted procedures available to teachers, students, local associations, and school boards for resolving "messy situations" in a just manner. The December 6 tragedy made us question old assumptions about violence against women. Now we must use both old and new strategies for a fair and safe world for everyone. ■

CONCERT FOR REMEMBRANCE, 1992

Louise deBruijne, Status of Women contact, SD 38 (Richmond)

On December 6, 1992, women across Canada gathered to remember the 14 women murdered in the epidemic of violence against us. In Vancouver, the Concert for Reflection was organized at Christ Church Cathedral by Suzanne Laplante Edward, mother of Anne-Marie, one of the 14 murdered women.

We heard short speeches by Mary Collins, federal minister of status of women, Penny Priddy, B.C.'s minister of women's equality, and Dawn Black, member of Parliament for New Westminster/Burnaby. All four emphasized the date as a catalyst for changing society and taking action against the systemic

assaults against women. Mary Collins has commissioned a eulogy in which the December 6 massacre marks the end of innocence and the beginning of responsibility by everyone for violence in Canada.

Dawn Black's private member's bill for a National Day of Remembrance and Action was passed

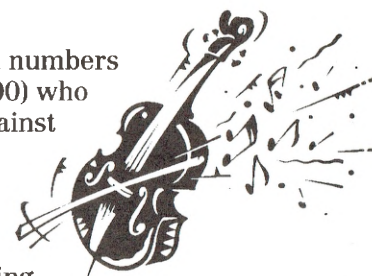
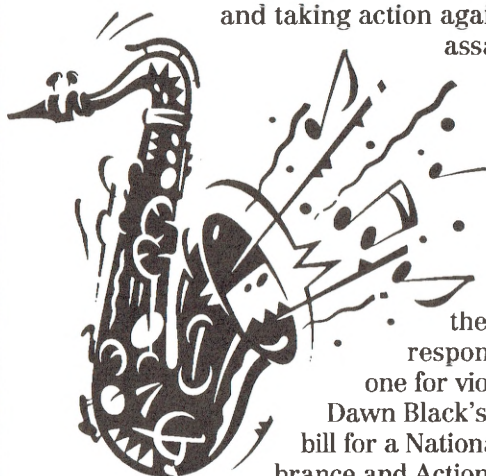
because of the ignorance and denial in Canada that the majority of women are killed by men in their own

homes. She urged that the awareness of violence against women include not only awareness of physical assaults but also awareness of emotional and spiritual battering by male companions, lovers, family members, and spouses.

Penny Priddy cited the high numbers of children (50,000 to 70,000) who have witnessed violence against their mothers or their caregivers.

Suzanne Laplante-Edward bonded us together by saying aloud the names of the 14 women. She described each woman: her unique achievements, her stolen dreams, and her unique perspective on being a woman.

After the Vancouver Symphony and the Cantata Singers had performed the Requiem, Opus 48, by Gabriel Faure, I went downstairs to thank them. I heard, outside where the women of the Cantata Singers were changing, a glorious peal of laughter. Their voices were loud, joyful, exultant. I saw as colorful a spectacle as I had seen on stage. I was struck by their youth and their self-confidence. They knew the message of December 6, and their voices rang into the hall with courage and laughter—as the 14 would have wanted. ■



RICH WOMAN, POOR WOMAN

Reading this anonymous poem, believed to be by a Chilean poet, is a great way to begin discussion on class point of view and women's position. It is beautiful read in two voices. It came to me from a young woman while I was at SFU.

Kay Bremner, Status of Women Contact, SD 47 (Powell River).

I am a woman.
I am a woman.
I am a woman, born of a woman, whose man owned a factory.
I am a woman, born of a woman, whose man laboured in a factory.
I am a woman, whose man wore silk boots and constantly watched his weight.
I am a woman, whose man wore tattered clothing, whose heart was constantly strangled by hunger.
I am a woman who watched two babies grow into beautiful children.
I am a woman who watched two babies die because there was no food.
I am a woman who watched twins grow into popular college students with summers abroad.
I am a woman who watched three children grow, but with bellies stretched from no food.
But then there was a man.
But then there was a man.
And he talked about peasants getting richer by my family's getting poorer.
And he told me of a day that would be better and he made the days better.
We had to eat rice.
We had rice.
We had to eat beans.
We had beans.
My children were no longer getting summer visas to Europe.
My children no longer cried themselves to sleep.
I felt like a peasant.
I felt like a woman.
A peasant with a dull, hard, unexciting life.
Like a woman with a life that sometimes allowed a song.
And I saw a man.
And I saw a man.
And together we began to plot with the hope of the return to freedom.
I saw his heart begin to beat with the hope of freedom at last.
Some day, the return to freedom.
Some day, freedom.
And then,
And then,
One day,
One day,

There were planes overhead and guns firing in the distance.

There were planes overhead and guns firing close by.
I gathered my children and went home.

I gathered my children and ran.

And then they announced that freedom had been restored.

And then they came, young boys really.

They came along with a man.

They came and found my man.

Those men whose money was almost gone.

They found all of the men whose lives were almost their own,

And we had drinks to celebrate.

And they shot them all.

The most wonderful martinis.

And they shot my man.

And they asked us to dance.

And then they came for me.

For me.

For me, the woman.

And for my sisters.

For my sisters.

And then they took us.

Then they took us.

They took us all to dinner at a small, private club.

They stripped from us all the dignity we had gained.

And they treated us to beef.

And they raped us.

It was one course after another.

One after another, they came after us.

We nearly burst we were so full.

Plunging, plunging, sisters bleeding, sisters dying.

It was magnificent to be free again.

It was hardly a relief to have survived.

The beans have almost disappeared now.

The beans have disappeared.

The rice I have replaced with chicken or steak.

The rice I cannot find it.

And the parties continue night after night to make up for all the time wasted.

And my silent tears are joined once more by the mid-night cries of my children.

And I feel like a woman today.

They say I am a woman. ■

WOMEN IN MANAGEMENT—THE LEADERSHIP ROLE

Sherry Philpott-Adhikary, Status of Women Committee co-chairperson, SD 28 (Quesnel).

This article addresses some issues facing women contemplating educational leadership, both inside and outside the union.

Young women need to see more role models in leadership and management positions both within and outside the schools." (*Royal Commission on Education: Summary of Report.*) The controversy remains, though, as to whether we, as union members, should be encouraging women to aspire to management positions and give up the support the union offers.

According to some who have opted to move into management, the move is not easy. The old-boys network is alive and well. Women in management believe that they have less credibility than their male colleagues, less respect for their positions. Female managers struggle to maintain their own style of leadership; they fear being swallowed up by the system and forced to conform to a male model of leadership.

One such woman felt she was being forced to change her approach to working with people. The workload was so extreme that it left little time for building positive working relationships with employees. Given the time constraints, her whole philosophy of working as part of a team was an impossibility. She was feeling coerced into conforming with a male model of leadership, and she was having to work twice as hard to prove her worth and receive the recognition she deserved.

Women in all careers face similar situations. A whole list of complications compound the problem. Women in education administration in B.C. no longer have the support of their former union; in some cases, women who were avid union supporters are now viewed as spies and ostracized by their former colleagues. Women face the possibility of sexual harassment by colleagues feeling threatened by the new position of power. Women who conform to management expectations may be simultaneously viewed as hard-nosed and without backbone. At times, there seems no way that a woman can win at being a manager.

The Royal Commission on Education: Summary of Report recommended "That the Ministry of Education and school district hiring practices give explicit attention and emphasis to the potential appointment of females in management and administrative positions."

Ministry of Education statistics for the 1991-92 school year indicate that women made up only 20.9% of B.C. principals and 28.6% of B.C. vice-principals. In 1990-91, 16 out of 75 school districts had no female principals. The statistics also show a discrepancy in administrators' average salaries:

1991-92 AVERAGE SALARIES

Principals		Vice-principals	
Male	\$71,923	Male	\$64,437
Female	\$69,536	Female	\$61,623
Difference	\$2,387	Difference	\$2,814

Chris Ward, minister of education for Ontario, in March 1989 stated, "Right now, we must shake ourselves from apathy and recognize that simply employing women in the educational system is not enough. It is time to fully utilize their skills, knowledge, and ability at all levels. Do this, and we can provide a balanced representation of positive role models for our students."

Perhaps doing this would promote gender equity and opportunities for female learners and graduates, but maybe we should also be thinking of ways women can take leadership roles within the union that will have the same effect.

I spoke with a random selection of classroom teachers, administrators, secretarial staff, and ancillary assistants within my school district. I asked them, "If you were management, what one thing would you change or implement that would complement your philosophy of leadership?" The ideas were varied, with an interesting comparison between male and female respondents.

RESPONSES

Staff decision making. I would have people work as a team rather than in isolation. (female)

There is not one direct thing I would change, but a lot of times, the principal doesn't have the time to spend talking with staff to build relations. (male)

I would work on a collaborative model to meet the needs of students through a team approach. Everyone needs to have a common shared vision. (female)

More consistency in who does what. The roles need to be clearly defined. (male)

I'm a strong believer in discipline. If the child is well behaved, then they are learning. Consistency in approaching all educational issues will aid learning. Respect goes hand in hand with discipline. (male)

I would set my standards. Employees need to know what the expectations are. I would ask for input (How were things done in the past?) (male)

I would have an awareness of what was going on, but not control the situation. I would [rank] things happening and divide the tasks up to be delegated. (female)

If I [were] management, I would appreciate others' opinions, listen to what they say, and use it. I would respect the person. (female)

There would be more distribution of responsibilities; [e.g.], the budget. I would offer more opportunity for collaboration. (female)

I would stay true to my beliefs about leadership and not be drawn into a male model of leadership. It's okay to be yourself. (female)

If I [were] the principal, I would ensure that all teachers were meeting the needs of students by utilizing changing philosophy in education. (male)

It appears that most of the males focussed on process-type changes—consistency in roles, discipline policy, standards and expectations, curriculum—with the exception of one male, who felt he didn't take enough time to build staff relations.

The females focussed on interpersonal skills and

relationships—teamwork, collaboration, delegating responsibility, respect, and staying true to one's beliefs.

Almost all people who were asked the question assumed that management referred to the position of principal or vice-principal. It seems that if women aspire to management, few positions are within the union. Within the union, however, are many different opportunities for women in leadership roles.

Involvement in your local or at the provincial level of the BCTF is a rewarding learning experience. Being a department head in your specialty at the secondary level is a way of sharing your expertise with colleagues. District staff positions such as curriculum implementation helping teachers provide unlimited interaction with colleagues and an opportunity to demonstrate a collaborative style of leadership. Such involvement also provides excellent role models for girls, young women, and female colleagues in the school system. Such role modelling can change the attitudes of female students and open the door to equal opportunity. ■

WOMEN OR LADIES? WHAT'S IN A WORD?

Helen Wilkes, provincial Status of Women Committee member

Once upon a time in my not-long-ago adult past, I despaired of ever becoming a true lady. I feared that I would always have my foot in my mouth, and that I would never be able to rein in all the passions that propelled me to speak out. Now I'm glad that those energies are still with me, and that I can direct them toward becoming a wholly integrated woman.

Why do I refuse the once coveted title of lady? Why have I thrown that aspiration into the trash along with my rusted eyelash curler? Why can I rejoice in my femininity without constantly constraining my nature like some espaliered tree on a stone wall? Why can I revel in being a woman yet bristle when I am called a lady?

What are ladies? They are females who have time, as in the expression *ladies of leisure*. In by-gone days, ladies often used this time to knit or do needlepoint. Nowadays, ladies spend much of this time in stores buying products to beautify either themselves or the homes that are a major status symbol for them and their husbands. For this reason, ladies often also have a *cleaning lady* who helps them to polish the dining room table and the silver knick-knacks to a gleaming lustre. In some cases this frees the lady of the house to do suitable volunteer work in the ladies' auxiliary of the local hospital.

What are women? They are flesh-and-blood females with their own lives and problems, as in the expression *working woman*. They work at home and in the workplace. They have many human attributes. During physical exertion they actually sweat rather than perspire discretely. Their sexual appetites and responses may be equally immodest. Working women, by definition lack the "class" of a lady. When angered, a working woman

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eyelash curler?

might raise her voice or use profanity. However, a lady would either smile sweetly or graciously change the subject.

Ladies are always heterosexual. Their life focusses either around the man in their life or around the man they wish they had. Because the source of their happiness is always someone else, they are susceptible to mood swings, migraines, and a host of "feminine" symptoms.

The need to hide or downplay their strengths in order to appear non-threatening may also result in low self-esteem. Since catching or retaining a man is central to their existence, ladies often resort to playing games. Champion players are often found among very young

girls, who still have no opinions and who hide their insecurities behind down-cast eyes or a mane of cascading hair. However the masters of the game are usually experienced wives, who can sound convincing even as they utter the phrase, "Whatever you think best, Dear."

Women get on with life whether or not they have a partner. They tackle the issues that need attention, on the homefront, in the workplace, or in the society at large. They write, they act, they protest. The women of this world march to take back the night. The women care deeply, speak passionately, and view one another as sisters across the barriers of class, culture, and color.

In the past, the term lady may have been a compliment. Today it is used by those in power in a demeaning fashion.

Ladies often defend the status quo both socially and politically. Indeed they may take a leading role in criticizing female behavior. They are as quick to label women who are too bold in dress or manner as "tramps" as they are to label women in tailored business attire as "unfeminine." For ladies, moderation is always of primary concern. Nothing in excess, nothing extreme, controversial, or dramatically different.

Women do not point the finger at other women who may have chosen another path. They view with compassion the women of color, the minorities, and the visibly different for whom the ladder of success is more difficult to climb. They respect the women who clean toilets and scrub office floors at night. They admire the women whose course of action keeps food on the table and a roof overhead, no matter what the personal cost.

Ladies do not discuss certain subjects, because such matters cannot be viewed dispassionately. What men do and how men behave when not in the company of "ladies" is high on the list of taboo topics. This allows them to steadfastly ignore what is meant by pornography and the relationship between pornography and violence toward women. This allows them to ignore the fact that most prostitutes, male and female, are paid for

servicing middle and upper class men, mostly married, who alone can afford their prices. Ladies look the other way; to notice the street scene is beneath their dignity.

Women feel real pain when they see the mostly young people who ply the night streets. They know that most prostitutes are underage—or were when they first hit the street. They know that most prostitutes were abused as children, and that the ability to say yes or no to a john on the street is a luxury they have never known. Women know that prostitutes have learned to disassociate, to leave their bodies, to go into their heads, the only safe place they have ever known. They know that prostitutes have given up all hope of "real" happiness, of a "decent" life with people who genuinely care.

Ladies view feminists as unfeminine. Women view feminists as courageous sisters who have blazed the trail to a better life for all women. Ladies see men as the source of their power. Women may see men as a source of physical pleasure and emotional connection, but they know that personal power must be rooted within each individual. Ladies may enjoy the luxury of dependency, but women know that being genuinely adult means choosing a path that promises more than a life of weakness, passivity, and ignorance. Being a woman may be more difficult, but the rewards are well worth the effort.

In the past, the term lady may have been a compliment. Today it is used by those in power in a demeaning fashion. Ellen Goodman of *The Boston Globe* writes about Jean Harris, the former headmistress of an exclusive private school who was convicted of murdering her lover, the Scarsdale diet doctor. Harris describes prison as "society's warehouse for the criminal, the insane, the abused and abusive." She notes that in that demoralizing place, where women are subjected to strip searches and a host of humiliations, they are allowed one bizarre courtesy—to be called "ladies" (reprinted in *The Vancouver Sun*, January 8, 1993).

Do I still expect men to hold a door for me? Of course; it is only common courtesy. I also hold doors open for others, male or female, because it is rude to slam a door in someone's face. Do I still want to be called a lady? No thanks. I'm glad I'm a woman. I'm proud to be a woman. ■

NOT SIMPLY BLACK AND WHITE

(CONCEIVED IN NAIROBI, 1985; BORN IN OTTAWA, 1992.)

*Lorrie Williams, Local Association Representative, former Status of Women Committee member
SD 40 (New Westminster)*

I may be white, but
my blood is just as red
as yours.

I menstruate.
I give birth.
I get beaten and raped
like you.

I may be white, but
my sweat is as profuse
as yours.

I work for \$0.68 on the male dollar.
I work in the lowest-paying jobs.
I work from sunrise to sunset—and beyond
like you.

I may be white, but
my anger is as real
as yours.

I rage about racism.
I get nauseated over pornography.
I feel the strangulation of discrimination
like you.

I may be white, but
my tears are as salty
as yours.

I weep over injustice.
I cry for those who shouldn't die.
I sob for all my sisters
like you. ■

THE STATUS OF WOMEN QUILT: AN UPDATE

Lorrie Williams, quilt co-ordinator

To celebrate the Status of Women's 20th year and the BCTF's 75th, a quilt was presented at the 1992 Annual General Meeting. Some former members had designed and made squares. All other members had their names put on other squares worked into the quilt.

Diane Stevenson, of the Quilters' Guild, was hired to do the quilting. The committee deliberately chose quilting to recognize this "woman's art" form.

Delegates at the AGM were impressed by the quilt, which will eventually hang in a quilt case at the BCTF Building. Stuart Schon, a Surrey teacher, started a campaign for men to fund the construction of the quilt case. A female cabinet-maker will make the case. Also, a catalogue will be produced explaining the significance of each square and the purpose and development of the whole quilt project. ■



THE 1992 STATUS OF WOMEN CONTACTS' TRAINING CONFERENCE CONFERENCE SUMMARY

The 1992 Contacts' Training Conference, "For Wellness Sake" was held in the Delta River Inn at the end of October. During the course of the two-day training, the local Status of Women contacts heard speeches and attended workshops on wellness from personal, professional, and union points of view. They also attended zone meetings.

Registration began on the evening before the conference. At that time, the members of the provincial Status of Women Committee were on hand to greet contacts as they arrived. Bookstore displays were in place, and an informal atmosphere prevailed.

The conference opened on Friday, October 30, with a breakfast and a plenary session. Ray Worley, the president of the BCTF, welcomed delegates. The text of his speech follows this article.

Marianne Alto, from the Ministry of Health, spoke next. She talked about the work of the Ministry of Health and its developing of a strategy for providing the best and most equitable delivery of health care. As well as considering classic health care issues the ministry hopes to develop a long-range health plan that will meet the specific needs of a widening circle of individuals. There remain many issues to resolve to achieve a balance between expending money on services and on the provision of information.

Throughout her talk, Alto blended her remarks on the work that the Ministry of Health does with the work the teacher contacts do. She commended the contacts for juggling their multiple roles and for the energy that they devote to making women's advancement a priority. She cautioned them, however, to make sure that they not allow their work to take over how they live. She suggested that they not overload themselves with trying to meet the expectation that because they are in one of the classic women's professions they should be everything to everyone. When they take on issues, they should begin in small ways. She reminded them that the best and the most satisfying route to change is working with people one to one. She said, "If you can help one person understand, you have accomplished much."

Alto challenged the conference participants to continue their work on issues and to continue to work together supportively—speaking, writing, and advocating for what they believe in.

Zone meetings were held for the rest of the morning. During those sessions, the contacts met with the other contacts in their zones and with their zone co-ordinators to learn more about the Status of Women Program and how to run a successful program in their locals. It was a time of reacquaintance for some contacts, a welcoming time for others. There was lots of sharing and flow of information.

During the afternoon, the delegates attended workshops: Women and Aging, Bargaining, Financial Planning, Education Change—Issues Affecting Wellness, and Stress and Time Management.

Following a free evening on Friday, the delegates began Saturday by attending a second zone meeting. That was followed by the second series of workshops: Health Issues for Women, Reflexology, BCTF Wellness, Art as the Route to Wholeness, and Gender Equity.

A networking lunch on Saturday was followed by a session called "Dealing with Resistance." The two presenters, Kathleen MacKinnon and Susan Crowley, outlined forms of resistance contacts may encounter as they attempt to initiate activities in their locals. They suggested ways for contacts to counter criticism, and ways of redirecting their energies into activities that will advance the goals of the Status of Women Program.

They suggested to the contacts that they consider resistance as it applies to all areas of their lives. What do they do about it? They must also accept that if "what we want is a revolution, we should expect resistance." Having a sense of humor is a good way to handle resistance. But this does not imply tolerance for sexist jokes. At times, it is appropriate to make a point by not laughing. Crowley said that when she meets resistance, she sometimes reverts to what she does best: she teaches. As an example she said that the difference between gender and sex is a concept that takes time to teach. Because resistance sometimes comes from lack of knowl-

edge, teaching and learning need to be happening.

Contacts face the problem of being the visible person: the personification of the program. When this happens, we try to find support. We talk to each other. We find that we need the women in the network to support us. It is comforting not to have to explain each other to each other. We can also find kindred spirits in books about women's history, and women's meditations. Women require a place of trust for bringing out their skills and talents.

MacKinnon spoke about a role for "late bloomers." As each of us progresses through life, we find that it all fits and that there is a context for feminist perspectives. The process can be scary. A person can become active or can go into denial. Each person who has become active needs to self-analyze and learn about herself. MacKinnon said about herself, "I choose a lot of things for myself. I attribute that to being a feminist and to the support I get from women."

Another important caution in dealing with resistance is to "choose your battles." The contacts were advised to make careful selections of what they are going to work on. It is neither possible nor desirable to take on too many projects at once. Having a committee, even a very small one, gives the opportunity to discuss ideas, plan, and implement activities together.

The delegates shared some of their experiences and frustrations and received helpful suggestions from the presenters and from other delegates.

Shirley Avril, co-ordinator Gender Equity and Women's Programs, with the Ministry of Education and Ministry Responsible for Multiculturalism and Human Rights, was the closing speaker. She said each of us views the world through our own particular lens based upon our experiences. "We must love ourselves where we are. We must accept ourselves where we are." She advised the contacts to be realistic and to reach out from the places where they are as women and as teachers, even though there are inconsistencies and contradictions associated with that. She noted that we are equal but not the same. We must nourish that diversity and practise linking with others. We have the knowledge that girls can be anything they want. Our challenge is to show them how. Avril concluded by suggesting, "Wherever you are, find someone with less experience, and extend a hand. Be available, share her experience, and let her share yours. Each of us also needs to find someone with a little more experience and allow ourselves to absorb new thoughts, new views." It was a gentle message and a good thought with which to begin the journey home.

The full text of Shirley Avril's address appears in this journal. ■

A WORD FROM THE BCTF PRESIDENT

*From the speech to the Status of Women Conference, October 30, 1992
Ray Worley, BCTF president, SD 22 (Vernon)*

I was struck by the first objective of this conference: to provide strategies for achieving wellness. It reminded me of an anecdote I told at the summer conference. I'd been thumbing through a book entitled 501 Ways to a

"I have never been able

to find out what a feminist

is: I only know that people

call me a feminist whenever

I express sentiments that

differentiate me from a

doormat." — REBECCA WEST

Happy Life. Number 113 was "get your priorities straight. No one on his or her death bed ever said, 'Gee, I wish I'd spent more time at the office.'" I thought that an appropriate reminder for teacher leaders as they prepared for all the pressures of a new school year plus the responsibilities of a position in a local association. I hope they've been more successful in following my advice than I myself have so far.

There's a definite connection between this advice, wellness, and feminism. We all know how much wellness, physical and mental, depends on our achieving a balance between work and recreation. We know, as teachers, how easily work can crowd out time for recreation, even time for family and sleep! Achieving wellness requires taking control of your time, asserting an agenda that recognizes and respects your needs as an individual. That, to me, is an essential feature of feminism.

In 1913, Rebecca West expressed that feature very well: "I have never been able to find out what a feminist is: I only know that people call me a feminist whenever I express sentiments that differentiate me from a doormat." Exactly. And doormats don't promote wellness.

The Vancouver Sun had a series recently: Women in History. I particularly enjoyed the biography of Amy Dalglish, a woman who personified connections between wellness, assertiveness, feminism. She was the first Canadian woman to challenge the law that married

women had to take their husbands' surnames. Amy Dalglish was a political activist. She ran for office in Vancouver municipal politics. Ian Waddell remarked, "She was everywhere—at all the marches, at all the meetings...Her causes were those of the working people, for women and for social reform."

Dalglish was involved in grassroots movements for international peace, women's equality, and abortion rights.

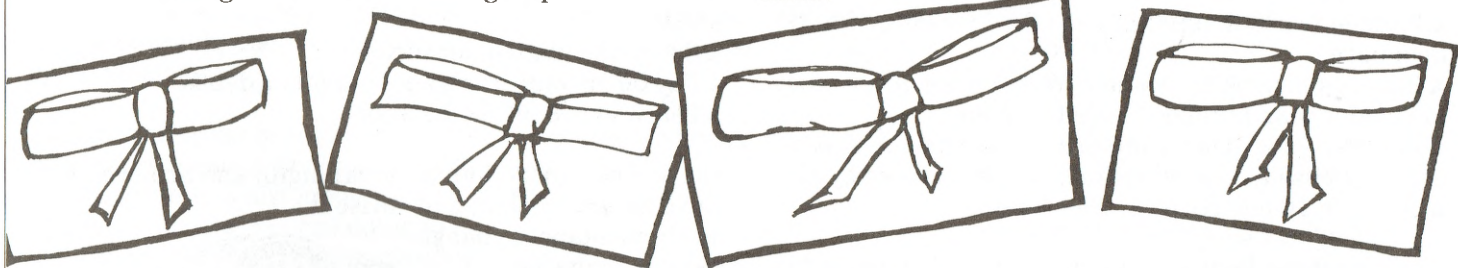
And she climbed mountains when mountain climbing was considered conduct unbecoming a woman. As a climber, she further defied convention by wearing breeches, when long skirts were the rule for women engaging in outdoor pursuits.

Amy Dalglish, for me, personifies wellness—the engagement of the whole person toward personal, public, and professional goals. She climbed mountains in every sphere. We can all learn from her example.

Like Amy Dalglish, we teachers are climbing mountains, the mountain ranges of political barriers and societal behaviors.

No behavior seems more prevalent in our society than violence against women of all ages. The tragedy in Courtenay last week was the latest incident in a seemingly never-ending chain. The goals of the Status of Women Program remain as relevant today as they were nearly 20 years ago, when first adopted, and one of those goals is the elimination of violence against women.

I would like to report to you this morning one recent BCTF initiative related to this topic. The White Ribbon Foundation originated in Ontario. A group of men



encouraged others to wear white ribbons from December 1 to 6 in memory of the women murdered on that day in Montreal in 1989. The campaign had widespread support, and men across the country were encouraged to form committees to organize similar activities at their workplaces and in occupational groups. The BCTF Executive Committee endorsed the campaign earlier this fall and made a financial donation. Material on the campaign has been sent to local association presidents. I have called a meeting for next week to organize a committee to promote the campaign in the BCTF Building. It is appropriate for men to take the lead in this campaign, because, overwhelmingly, men are the ones responsible for violence against women. I hope that many BCTF members will have their awareness of this issue raised through the campaign this year.

The final objective of this conference relates to the federation's campaign to restore local autonomy in funding for education, improve local autonomy in education change, and preserve local autonomy in collective bargaining. The link between this campaign and the Status of Women Program may not at first be obvious. But, there is a definite link. Local autonomy means that classroom

**Amy Dalglish . . . was the
first Canadian woman to
challenge the law that married
women had to take their
husbands' surnames.**

teachers have more influence on funding, education change and bargaining issues. And 60% of classroom teachers are women.

A shift to provincial bargaining would inevitably diminish the numbers of members directly negotiating, just at a time when more women are on bargaining teams and taking a leading role as bargaining chairs. A provincial master agreement—an obviously chauvinistic title—would not contain all of the best provisions dealing with issues like maternity leave and non-sexist environments, which have been beacons in local agreements for others to move toward. The local breakthroughs from which all have benefited would no longer occur. A move to provincial bargaining would be a step back to the doormat.

An important part of this conference for you as you plan the work ahead in your locals will be to consider ways in which you can promote discussion of the campaign for local autonomy among your colleagues.

As usual, colleagues, as there were for Amy Dalglish, there are steep and rocky mountains ahead for us to climb.

In Amy Dalglish's last days, when she was frail and sick with cancer, she couldn't talk very much but one thing she always did, her daughter related, was to hold your hand.

That, for me, becomes a metaphor for how we can all gain strength from collective effort, by joining hands to work together to achieve our goals.

I hope that you will find through this conference renewed strength to continue in your local to advance the goals of the Status of Women Program for the benefit of all students and teachers in our schools. ■

REFLEXOLOGY

*Report on a Workshop at the Status of Women Conference, October 30-31, 1992
Irene Proulx, Status of Women contact, SD 66 (Lake Cowichan),*

On walking into the room, I saw two rows of chairs face-to-face along the centre of the room, discarded shoes and socks against the wall, and people in a relaxed mood. Donna Jean McKinnon, the facilitator, was getting the group settled. The workshop was going to be fun—no room for embarrassment.

What is reflexology? Practitioners believe that the foot is the mirror of the body. Through stimulation and deep relaxation, the body will heal itself and also assimilate food and medicine better. Circulation will improve. Reflexology began in China some 500 years ago. On being brought to North America around 1900, it gained acceptance here as an anaesthetic. For women, reflexology is effective in caring for the skin, PMS, menopause, insomnia, cysts/cancer, headaches, and many other problems.

After telling us briefly about reflexology and demonstrating the techniques to be used with the thumb and fingers and hands, McKinnon set us to work. She moved from pair to pair to answer questions and assist us.

We sat facing each other with the right foot resting on the other's left thigh. This allowed us to work on someone, while experiencing the massage at the same time. Quite a way to meet someone! My partner, from Fort Nelson, did a great job. We learned that the foot has zones that relate to the various parts of the body. For example, the base of each toe is related to the neck.

The laughter and chatter must have been heard out in the hall. We were an involved bunch! Thanks, Donna Jean McKinnon, for an enjoyable, relaxing, and informative workshop. ■

FINANCIAL WELLNESS

*Report on a Workshop at the Status of Women Conference, October 30-31, 1992
Jean Chan, Status of Women Committee co-chairperson, SD 35 (Langley)*

Globally:

- ▲ Women perform more than 65% of the world's work.
- ▲ Women earn 10% of the world's income.
- ▲ Women own less than 1% of the world's property.

In Canada:

- ▲ Women working full time earn \$.67 for every \$1.00 men earn.
- ▲ Families headed by women are 4.5 times more likely to be poor than families headed by men.
- ▲ Within a year of separation, a woman's total income drops by 70%; a man's disposable funds increase by 43%.
- ▲ Seven in 10 elderly poor are women.

Knowing these facts on women's financial status in life, I enthusiastically went to "Changing Our Fortunes: Financial Planning for Women Teachers," facilitated by Elizabeth Worley and Alice McQuade. During the workshop, we looked at our goals and lifestyles, set some personal goals, and then set financial goals to realize those personal goals. We gained some short- and long-term financial planning skills.

Even for the financially illiterate, the ideas of financial planning were comprehensible. The financial and economic terminology was demystified, and most participants could understand the broad financial and economic issues. The workshop will not change your whole financial life, but it is a launching pad whence you can start to confront your finances and take some action in

creating the financial status you want. This workshop may be booked through the Status of Women Program.

Here are some tips to becoming financially secure:

- ▲ Save and invest 10% of your gross income.
- ▲ Contribute the maximum allowable amount to your RRSP.
- ▲ Carry adequate insurance.
- ▲ Pay down your mortgage and other debts.
- ▲ Learn to live off the balance.

Set realistic goals that are meaningful and achievable. Have an action plan, and revise it as circumstances change.

Deduct, defer, or divide tax whenever possible. Pay off all non-deductible debts. Inform yourself about the financial landscape through seminars, magazine articles, books, etc. Financial planners are around to advise you if you have neither the time nor the inclination to make and execute a financial plan. Find one with whom you are comfortable working. ■



FINANCIAL PLANNING

*Report on a Workshop at the Status of Women Conference
Louise deBruijne, Status of Women Contact, SD 38 (Richmond)*

The workshop on financial wellness, by Elizabeth Worley, arises out of the tragic picture of poverty: usually a woman, alone, heading toward retirement with her only financial resource the Canada pension.

The workshop cited financial budgeting skills we require to start to change this picture. Elizabeth Worley offered Canadian statistics (a woman earns 68 cents to a man's dollar); she said the notion that women need little financial instruction as part of their education still exists, and she said that few women are aware of the financial desperation awaiting them if they fail to plan. (Failing to plan is planning to fail.)

The workshop gave us an opportunity to work out net worth, a personal monthly statement of expenses and, most important, our unique financial goals.

The workshop focussed on personal financial empowerment of women in a society that undervalues women's work, and imposes rules that devalue women's paid work and unpaid caregiving. The workshop sounded a warning to us to get our finances in order and to act politically to end the cycle of women and poverty. ■

EDUCATION CHANGE AND WELLNESS

Melinda Lehman, Status of Women contact, SD 85 (Vancouver Island North)

During our recent Status of Women Contacts' Training Conference, I attended Anita Chapman's workshop "Education Changes: Issues Affecting Wellness." She spoke of paradigm shifts, changes in our thinking. Using science as her example, she pointed out that we are in a shift in education that hasn't reached its peak yet. I was amazed at how Chapman tied together the education changes we are undergoing and feminism's open ideology.

At that point, she brought in wellness as wholeness. She had us look at the seven feminist ideological themes and what we are doing in education now. As a primary teacher who has been working with the new program for three years, I found this to be an easy task and was surprised to see the similarities between the two. Chapman then spoke of wellness issues being the same as our new program goals. I was pleased to hear her say, "The most important thing we bring to the classroom is US." The shift we are caught up in is compatible with feminism and offers opportunities for women. It is a good time for women in education, as it is positive for us and our children.

As the workshop came to an end, I was aware of the connection between feminism's trends, education changes, and wellness as wholeness. If you ever have the opportunity to hear Anita Chapman speak, don't miss it!

Feminist Ideological Themes

End patriarchy/hierarchies
Respect life, and meet human needs
Transform personal, social relations to end systems of subordination
Integration
Staff committees
Learning for Living Program
PAC
Student-led conferences

Empowerment and Process
Enabling, non-violent problem solving
Inclusiveness—process as product
Conflict resolution
Collaborative
New Grad Program
Journals
Problem solving
Peer tutoring
Locally developed courses

Personal is political
Connections
Personal growth
Status of Women/Program Against Racism

Professional autonomy
Learner-focussed goal
Whole child
Communication with parents

Unity/diversity
Respect differences
Preserve uniqueness, diversity as a source of strength and growth
Wholeness, holistic approaches
Multiculturalism
Trying to change texts
Mainstreaming
Multiaged groupings

Validation of the non-rational
Non-linear, multidimensional thinking
Integrating public and private spheres
Process of problem solving seen as subjective
Many truths
Student-led conferences
Assessment and evaluation
Learning styles
Reflective responses

Consciousness-raising
Renaming, recreating reality
Self-reliance
Values
Revolution as process, not event
Social responsibility
Retreat
Changing language ■

KEYNOTE ADDRESS TO BCTF STATUS OF WOMEN CONFERENCE

OCTOBER 31, 1992

Shirley Avril

I began in the women's movement in 1971. In Victoria, the group that gathered for that first conference with Judy La Marsh was pretty homogeneous. We were all white, most had a university education, and most were in heterosexual relationships if not traditional marriages. We were the women with the time and inclination to consider the role of women in the public milieu. But, as ordinary as we were, we brought a passion to what we soon called our "action group." We believed that stereotypes had hurt us all. We believed that the personal was political and that how we lived our lives would really change the world. We learned, sometimes slowly and painfully, that we had absorbed and adopted racism, classism, homophobia, and misogyny. We learned to love ourselves, and we learned to love each other.

As our horizons broadened and the world of the '80s became smaller, we learned that inequality of women crosses all cultural, ethnic, social, physical, and political barriers. We learned that misogyny and sexism aren't just little oversights. In the beginning, I believed if I could just explain well enough how women had been left out of the conversations of science, of history, of politics (the conversations of life) if I just pointed out the problem, explained how it pained me—the world would right itself. We learned quickly that the systemic and systematic devaluation of the perceptions, experiences, and contributions of women had led to a second-class status for women everywhere.

Twenty years later, I believe that this inequality is rooted in an institutionalized and self-perpetuating power differential that can be described as a dominator/dominated model. The

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men, as people of color are

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model comes from the work of Eisler in *The Chalice and the Blade*.

This model helps me to understand the links among all inequities experienced by disadvantaged groups and individuals. All women are dominated by men, as people of color are dominated by whites. All women are mar-

ginalized and rendered invisible, as are the people with physical and mental disabilities. All women are despised, as is one religious group by another. The use of the word *all* is essential to the concept that none of us is free until all of us are free. Identifying and strengthen-

ing of the links between disadvantaged people are key to replacing the dominator/dominated model with a collaborative/linking model. Multitudes of us want a different way of living.

Exploring this partnership or collaborative model and finding ways to integrate it into our lives is the key to continued success of the women's movement. We must link rather than rank, nourish diversity rather than celebrate sameness, and share power rather than struggle to keep it.

What might this look like in a school district or school?

▲ an educational and social climate in which all students are encouraged to develop to their fullest potential in all curriculum areas

▲ curriculum that enhances student awareness of gender issues such as stereotyping, violence against women, discrimination and devaluing and omission of the perceptions, experiences, and contribution of girls and women

▲ development or acquisition of resources that reflect and encourage the participation of women and girls in the economic, political, and social fabric of all cultures and throughout history

▲ positive and pro-active adult role modelling of non-sexist, collaborative relationships on the part of all school board personnel

▲ district staffing policy that recruits and promotes women and men equally throughout the school system

▲ the consistent use of inclusive, neutral or parallel language (e.g. she and he, chair rather than chairmen, technical quality rather than craftsmanship, men and women rather than men and ladies)

▲ development of student awareness of non-traditional career and educational opportunities for both women and men with reference to the economic and personal benefits related to choices

▲ counselling that provides equitable support and challenge for personal, social, cultural, and economic opportunities from counsellors of both sexes to all students.

How do we, often alone or in small groups in a district, effect such change?

We in the women's movement have always been tugged between individualism and collectivism. We want personal power; we work for individual success. We look at our individual experience and reclaim its value as part of our process and informing our analysis. Yet it is our shared experience that energizes the movement. We see that ours is not a unique experience but shared in some way by women everywhere. I speak in favor of working together, making as many links as possible in as many directions as possible. Our society emphasizes

the power of the individual; it values "bootstrappism"—you know, pull yourself up and all that. Individuality is essential to challenge the biology-is-destiny concept—that natural talent theory that causes all of us to dismiss our potential. But there is danger in the cult of individualism. With individualism, lack of success (and success is always defined in some external-authority sense) is viewed as a result of laziness or personal failure. It does not acknowledge that ethnic heritage, class, gender, sexual orientation, and physical and mental ability often lead to constraints. With an analysis that is sensitive to difference we compensate for those constraints and increase the chances of real success. We can do that for ourselves, our students, and one another. It is the linking, the nourishing of diversity, and the understanding of social constructs that will support our success.

With this perspective on individualism, we can acknowledge that one person, one teacher in one classroom can promote equality but can never, alone, change the system. If we work together, we have ongoing support and a much wider perspective. When we are bogged down, someone somewhere is succeeding. We can rejoice and take heart in that success. It rejuvenates us for our own efforts.

We are promoting a profound social change—a new world view.

We all approach the change process a different way. I suggest we use four lenses to view this process and consider the feeling that comes from each view.

One, meeting needs, we know very well. We are exemplary helpers. In times of flux, when even the mundane seems unpredictable, those of us in caring mode begin to feel incompetent.

Two, accomplishing goals, is also familiar to us. Everyone "knows" that goal setting and achievable, measurable objectives are important in education and in life. We manage very well and accomplish a great deal. In times of flux, those of us in accomplishment mode experience confusion. What goals can we set when even the mundane is unpredictable?

**Now is the time
to dream the
dream, vision
the future.**

Three, power and conflict. Every issue or situation can be interpreted through the lens of who gains or loses what or who does what to

whom. As women, we recognize power moves and empire building. We can participate when we must—when the dominators cannot/will not function in a "power with" mode. However, even when our goal is justice, when power is in flux, we are in constant conflict.

At this time in history, in social renewal, in the course of the women's movement, I believe we also need the fourth lens of faith and meaning. We must be poets and healers. We must inspire one another and the world. We must restore love to each of the other lenses.

Beyond meeting needs, we must honor the spirit in each other, in our students, and in co-workers. Beyond accomplishing goals, we must find the vision that will restore meaning and purpose to our goals. We must live beyond power that breeds conflict. Let us assume power of influence, power of expertise, power of knowledge. Let us share power. Power is like love—perhaps it is love. When you share it, it grows.

We are all in different circumstances when we come to this challenge—this opportunity. We bring to the situation or the question our own experience, our cultural heritage, our abilities. This means that along the continuum from total unawareness to glorified being, where we are is predicated upon a multitude of choices that we make each day.

It is very important that we love ourselves where we are, that we accept ourselves where we are. If you have just come crashing into, as a friend of mine



used to say, "the bars of your cage," and you are hurt, confused, and raging because you didn't know you had been in a cage for the first 30 or 40 years of your life, love yourself in the cage. The cage is not your fault. Now is the time to plan your escape, to call your friends and find

out how they escaped, and read the feminist literature for the escape stories. You are not a bad person for being in a cage. Put all your energy into getting out and not one ounce into feeling guilty.

If you think you have been out of the patriarchal cage for years, remember you are not out because you are a better woman than the one still inside. You simply have had a different experience. And stay alert! Your cage may just be bigger.

Let me encourage you to try these things:

1. Acknowledge the contradictions you experience as a teacher. You are the authority by virtue of your position in a traditional hierarchy; yet your purpose is to empower students. Also, as a woman, your work, your being, has been historically undervalued.
2. Give attention to differences. The liberal perspective of treating everyone the same leads to (in fact, has firmly entrenched) inequities. The reason is obvious—

we are not the same. Our inclination, when we think of "equal" is to treat everyone as if they were mainstream—white, able-bodied, heterosexual, male. Acknowledge in your teaching that the degree to which hard work pays off is limited, to some extent, by social constrictions.

3. Reclaim the history and symbols of those who have been historically invisible. Nourish that diversity.

4. Acknowledge your own limitations. Attempting to be non-sexist is doomed to fail because you are just one person in one classroom. While you can promote equity, you cannot create it, which brings us back to linking.

5. Practise linking with other equity movements and practise antisexism, antiracism, anti-ableism, anti-homophobia. Only by highlighting the realities of social constructs that bind us can we be agents for change.

For example:

1. In providing diverse and positive role models for students, we imply that girls can be anything. If we neglect to also share that there are formal, informal, ideologi-

cal, and material deterrents, then the students, on facing that discrimination, will feel they are at fault.

2. We have ideals of how texts should portray the world. But the stereotyping that is there is often an honest picture of the world, and it can be used to develop critical thought. A sanitized text will leave many students invisible, neglecting to reflect their experience.

Naming the realities of students and ourselves is the first step to deepening awareness. It leads to a shift in consciousness and a change in practice.

Wherever you are on the continuum of analysis or understanding, sensitivity or awareness, find someone with less experience, and extend a hand. Be available, share her experience, and let her share yours.

Each of us also needs to find someone with a little more experience, and allow ourselves to absorb new thoughts, new views.

Together, forging links wherever possible, we can dream the dream and create the future we envision. ■

TEACHER EDUCATION AND WELLNESS OF THE PROFESSION

Jean Chan, Status of Women Committee co-chairperson, SD 35 (Langley)

On Friday, November 20, and Saturday, November 21, 1992, I attended the Teacher Education Forum 1992, the fourth conference put together by the College of Teachers. The participants represented the three universities (and their satellite degree-granting colleges), the Ministry of Education, the BCTF, and the Principals and Vice-Principals' Association. The theme was "Collaboration in Teacher Education: Seeking Ways of Working Together."

I was delighted that the theme would be collaboration and that the keynote speakers would be Sandra Hollingsworth and Leslie Minarik. I had read several of Hollingsworth's articles on feminist pedagogy and on education in general. In setting the theme, the college and many others recognized that teacher education cannot remain in its ivory tower. Teacher education will be a shared responsibility of the whole educational community. Collaboration is less the expert/mentor and

**Teacher education will
be a shared responsibility
of the whole educational
community.**

more the coming together of equals to share, learn, reflect, and support one another. It creates an environment of trust. That those responsible for the education of our future teachers, as well as the

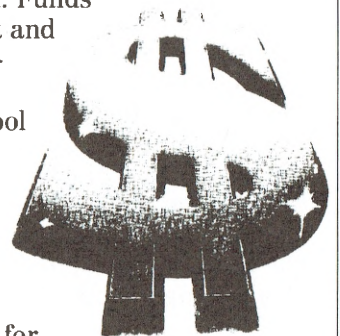
student teachers themselves, set the educational agenda and share the responsibility bodes well for the profession.

With collaboration among the universities, the districts, and the schools, sometimes with union input as part of the collective agreement, the student teacher gets most of his/her teacher education in the school, with the sponsor teachers playing a greater role. The student teacher sees congruency between theory and practice.

What is the collaborative model in teacher education? Different models exist throughout the province. There are SFU's Alaska Highway Consortium on Teacher Education (AHCOTE), the Northwest Teacher Education Consortium (NWTEC), and the New Caledonia Teacher Education Consortium (NewCalTEC). Also there are UBC's West Kootenay Project and UVic's East Kootenay Project as well as their long-standing Intern Program. There are the Native Indian Teacher Education Program at UBC and the Science Education Program from

UBC and SFU. In the Lower Mainland, there are the Prince of Wales Project in Vancouver and projects in Surrey, Burnaby, Delta, and Richmond. Collaborative models are still not the mainstream in teacher education, but the universities with these programs find collaboration successful and are pushing for expansion.

In some collaborative models, the whole school shares the responsibility for student teachers. Groups of student teachers are matched with the school, and a faculty associate and a faculty member may be assigned to that school as well. This often creates a mini teacher-education centre in that school. Funds may be matched by the district and sometimes the union. Teacher-education classes are decentralized and taught on the school site, and professional development opportunities are available to teachers and student teachers in the program.



What's in it for the practising teacher? Shared responsibility for student teachers and increased professional development (one of the benefits of having a mini teacher-education centre on the school site). What's in it for the student teacher? A much more realistic picture of the working life of a teacher (the student teacher in the collaborative model usually stays at the school site for eight months).

Funding in education is always an issue, and moving into the collaborative model not only will require the shifting of resources but may also require extra resources. Other problems are associated with the shift (space, time constraints, etc.). But the promises of collaboration are many. It encourages reflection and change in educational practices as well as the promotion of professional growth across all levels of the educational community. It connects research with pre-service/in-service education and practice. From a feminist perspective, we welcome such collaboration, where there is equality of power and equality of voice for all members in teacher education. Collaboration in teacher education is a healthy and welcome practice that endeavors to educate teachers in a holistic, collegial, and realistic way. ■

YOUTH CONFERENCE "EQUALITY '92" A SUCCESS!

Joanne Stygall, Reprinted with permission from West Coast LEAF

The first ever Youth Conference sponsored by West Coast LEAF, and held from November 13 to 15 in Vancouver, was a success according to both delegates and organizers. One hundred and sixty delegates from across British Columbia talked, listened, and heard about equality issues such as date rape, employment equity, sexual harassment, racism, sexism, and violence.

Barriers to equality (systemic discrimination, racism, sexism, power imbalances, ableism, and homophobia) and strategies to overcome these barriers were explored through workshops, speakers, discussion groups, and presentations by the delegates themselves.

Equality '92 brought together a unique mix of women and men between the ages of 16 and 21. Participants from diverse backgrounds brought their individual perspectives to the issues raised at the conference.

Kecia Larkin, a 21-year-old First Nations woman, brought the Opening Ceremony audience to a standing ovation. Reflecting on the compound discrimination she faces, Larkin spoke about her choices and decisions as a pregnant woman with HIV.

Overcoming adversity and having the courage to speak out became themes for many of those in attendance. The workshops provided delegates with a safe environment to discuss their experiences of gender inequality.

Olympic athlete Charmaine Crooks shared her strategies for self-motivation and personal empowerment. Her speech offered the audience tools to enhance self-esteem and set personal goals.

Evelyn Lau, who published her first book when she was 18, read selections from her new book of poetry, "Oedipal Dreams." She may have inspired some of the insightful presentations of *The Living Newspaper*—the delegates' dramatic recap of the weekend's events.

Many of these skits were open and honest discussions about the experiences of young mothers, survivors of abuse, and young men in the '90s.

Rhona Raskin, a registered family therapist and host of "Sex, Lies and Audiotape" on Z95.3 FM, lived up to her reputation as a frank and humorous speaker. She addressed issues of sexuality and media stereotyping, and she emphasized the importance of accepting ourselves and our bodies.

The "You be the Judge of That!" show, hosted by lawyer Victoria Gray and "starring" LEAF volunteers, gave delegates the opportunity to voice their opinions on controversial issues such as censorship, pregnancy discrimination, and the battered-wife syndrome by stepping into the courtroom of four LEAF cases.

On Sunday, the delegates met to outline goals and action plans for the future. Some of their ideas were, "to work for positive change," "to start talking circles: safe places where youth can discuss real issues," and "to bring awareness to others about equality."

Delegates Speak Out

Delegates were asked to fill out a written evaluation of the conference. Over 90% said the conference was excellent or good overall, and 92.7% felt the Conference addressed issues important to them. As well, over 60% of respondents said they would be interested in being involved with West Coast LEAF.

Here are some of the things the delegates said about the conference:

"Real life learning. Real life situations."

"Everyone was nice. Liked the T-shirt. Most importantly, the issues discussed were really relevant to today."

"This is a great opportunity for young women to learn how to stand up for themselves."

"Keep up the good work, LEAF!"

"There is a great deal of promise for our youth to create positive changes in society. It was inspirational hearing what my peers had to say, and I am looking forward to sharing the information gathered."

"I loved this! It was a wonderful experience that has changed my life and thinking. I'm very excited about using the information I've learned." ■

TOWARD E=QUALITY THE 1992 CTF STATUS OF WOMEN CONFERENCE

The Canadian Teachers' Federation's 12th National Conference on Women and Education was held from November 26 to 28 in St. John's, Newfoundland. Approximately 300 women and men attended the conference from all across Canada.

The theme, Quality of Life, was addressed in all the sessions. Each of the theme speakers took the participants further along the path of understanding the magnitude of achieving quality and equality. Violence against women and children has tremendous impact, either directly or indirectly, on the culture and on the lives of all citizens of this country. Some sessions raised awareness of the extent of the problem and presented suggestions for achieving solutions. The empowerment of women through their own efforts and through collaborative efforts was another major focus of the conference.

The conference consisted of guest speakers, theme presentations, and workshops. Some of the workshops were follow-up sessions to the guest speakers' topics and to the panel topics: some were free-standing. In the

**... Silence condones and ...
evil grows when good people
do nothing ... rise up and
share your power.**

latter group was the BCTF workshop Women and Aging, facilitated by provincial Status of Women Committee member Penny Macpherson.

Allan MacDonald,

CTF president, opened the conference, observing, "We are on the road to equality, but there is much left to do." He reminded us of our representational responsibilities and our obligation and challenge to report on the content of the conference.

Morley Reid, president of the Newfoundland Teachers' Association, welcomed participants to the conference in Canada's oldest city in Canada's youngest province.

Sandie Barnard gave a presentation entitled "Rise Up: Fire and Yeast in Women's Words." Throughout her talk, she radiated her belief in words as tools for achieving equity. She modelled her contention that women are good speakers. Their words can be like fire, full of warmth, energy, and possibility; like yeast, "irrepressible, and won't be pushed down." She contended, "When you speak out, the world will be better" because the status quo will be challenged. She has observed that women are more afraid to speak out because of what it takes out of us. But finding our voices lets us share power.

We should value speaking and those who speak. Only

through our speaking, will ideas be heard. She reminded us that Gloria Steinem exhorted us to make a pact to speak out for social justice: it is outrageous and liberating. She extolled the value of hysteria if that is what is needed to make change. She said that when the "life-affirming force is upset," it is essential to speak up. This speaking up and out will lead to a kinder, better quality of life. She asked, "Do you know that silence condones and that evil grows when good people do nothing?" She encouraged us to be fair and to help students to be sensitized. We have power, and we can open up power for others. "Rise up," she urged participants, "and share your power."

The Honorable Audrey McLaughlin thanked the participants for the work they do and for being there working with and for the children of Canada. She spoke about readying our children for tomorrow. She talked about the need to embrace diversity and to provide what is needed to make Canada better. She said that teachers have this responsibility, but so does society as a whole. She pointed out that female politicians have raised issues that have "expanded the base of what is a political issue." On the conference theme, she acknowledged that senior powerful positions are antithetical to quality of life. She also observed that the economic equation continues to ignore the human equation as well as the female one. She encouraged participants not to "fall prey to the way that we are powerless."

Catherine Stewart is a consultant and therapist who has worked with school boards since the early '80s. On behalf of the Metro Toronto Special Committee on Child Abuse, she developed and implemented a sexual-abuse-prevention program that has been introduced to elementary schools in Metro, in addition to other communities. On behalf of METRAC, she has provided sessions on sexual assault to 80 Metro secondary schools. She has assisted many schools and organizations directly in responding to incidents of sexual abuse and harassment, and in program, policy, and staff development. She has worked with parents, teachers, and students following disclosure of child sexual abuse.

Her talk, "Toward Zero Tolerance: Responding to Sexual Abuse in Schools" challenged the conferees to adopt zero tolerance. Stewart spoke about her experiences. She called on teachers to try to learn about sexual abuse and to establish a bridge to safety for victims. She reported that victims do not always get the help they seek and need and quoted one person as saying, "I thought if I told someone, they would do something about it. That didn't happen." She commented that child sexual abuse is pervasive. One disclosure brings others. She referred to a Government of B.C. study that revealed that an investigation of 30 offenders discovered 2000 offenses.

Many people are not prepared to deal with sexual abuse. Denial fundamentally threatens our getting help to the victims. Suicide is not uncommon. It is essential to keep victims' needs first. "Teachers are supported," she said. "Victims are often not supported: their parents are not

Stewart warned that teachers and schools wishing to move toward zero tolerance will need fortitude because they will encounter social ostracism and criticism.

supported." Many victims are ostracized: they are doubly betrayed. Existing policies and procedures are inadequate. They lack information on action and follow-up. Previous disclosures have seldom been acted on. Teachers lack training on how to handle disclosures.

Stewart told the participants that most teachers who are accused are acquitted.

There are many reasons for this:

- ▲ The difficulty of court proceedings
- ▲ Not believing the victims; children are thought to be unreliable witnesses
- ▲ Technicalities
- ▲ Time elapsed

Teachers are generally reinstated. "School boards have a moral and statutory responsibility," she said. She noted that civil suits are increasing. In Ontario, the statute of limitations has been struck down. With reference to teachers' federations, she said that some believe in reinstatement and support teachers' return. "False allegations can be devastating," she said, "But they are rare." Due process is necessary. Some federations advise members not to touch students but she believes that this is punitive and that it distances children. And then there is the problem of tracking, right across the country...

A strongly held belief is that the abuser is "at best, sick; at worst, evil." Any sexual abuse is an abuse of power. The potential for victimizing is immense, and victimizing is often combined with sexism, racism, and disability.

Teachers hold a position of trust. The tolerance of any form of abuse breeds tolerance for other forms of abuse. Victims cannot simply retreat and then come back to a caring, sensitive world. Children need human-rights protection.

Stewart warned that teachers and schools wishing to move toward zero tolerance will need fortitude because they will encounter social ostracism and criticism. But this should not discourage teachers and their organizations from espousing, as does the Federation of Women Teachers Associations of Ontario, a policy of zero tolerance for violence. Policies must be developed to put protection of children first. Teachers can use their power and influence to ensure such protection by demanding policy that will create an "abuse-free learning environment for children." School board policy should address peer sexual assault protection of 16- to 18-year-olds.

Steps must be taken for action, communication, and understanding of interagency protocols. Sexual harassment, racial harassment, and unenforced behavior codes are all forms of abuse. A comprehensive, coordinated, consistent continuum of response is needed. Stewart's final reminder was, "Ninety-nine percent of convicted sex offenders are men. There is a gender bias to the problem."

Kathy Mallett is an Ojibway/Dakota/Metis woman who lives in Manitoba. She co-ordinates the Original Women's Network. Aboriginal women today have challenged their leaders to take responsibility for issues like violence against women and children. Mallett talked about this in the context of how "systems" like residential schools and child welfare have disempowered and almost destroyed the aboriginal family.

She spoke about how disempowering it was for aboriginals to have their children removed to residential schools: the children who were part of the community, not just part of the family. This disempowerment now applies when the children are removed by welfare agencies. The aboriginals feel now that they cannot continue blaming government and agencies.

In Winnipeg, the aboriginal women's committee got organized feeling "awakening, empowerment, over violence issues. They held vigils for women who were murdered, aboriginal and non-aboriginal women. The leadership in the province didn't want to [acknowledge] that violence was happening. The women organized, and the media carried stories. Mallett commented that there was a "backlash—the lowest you can get: women were paid to speak against aboriginal women."

Aboriginal women today have challenged their leaders to take responsibility for issues like violence against women and children.

Sexism within the aboriginal community is immense. Family violence is being denied. But the aboriginal women are beginning to speak out. The Winnipeg group receives letters from people who cannot themselves speak out.

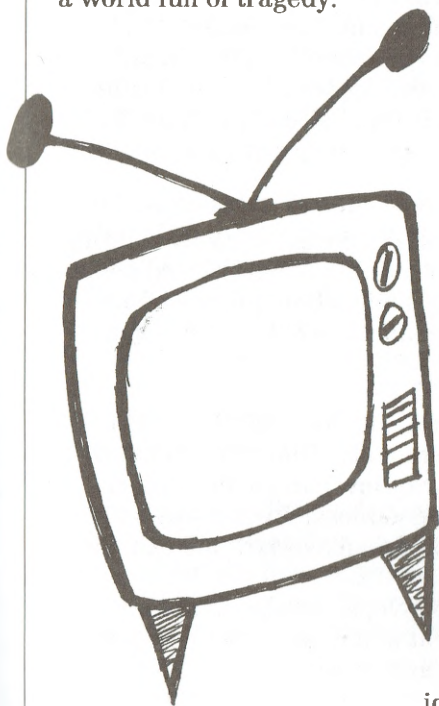
"The healing process must begin." They are trying to come up with solutions. They want to deal with the issue of violence in the extended families that are the aboriginal family model. They are seeking healing for everyone, not just the healing to do with violence. Mallett said, "The welfare system blamed the parents, as bad parents, but taking the children away is not the solution."

As part of the healing process, the women are meeting, networking, and talking. They want to look at the strengths of the community, not just deal with negatives. They are using the healing-circle concept, in

which the participants share, listen, learn, and gather strength from one another.

Dr. Patricia Pitsel, who is a counselling psychologist, an educator, and a consultant, entitled her presentation "Surviving Through Humor." She provided an entertaining, insightful look into the human condition. She began by enthusiastically demonstrating with the participants that humor is a "survival mechanism." After two days of serious, thought-provoking content, everyone was ready to laugh and enjoy some tickling of the funnybone. Pitsel had everyone relaxed and on the verge of tears of laughter within minutes.

"Laughter has a beneficial effect," she told the participants, and the relaxing effect of laughing together at her silly stories and wicked sense of humor and timing was readily observable. Pitsel explained that humor is "looking at what everybody looks at but seeing it in a different way." "I don't know any better way of being wise, than making mistakes. Think about the chemist who stopped at Preparation G." When our attitude is positive and we can see the humor around us and the funny side of events, "we can use criticism we get to do better next time." "Humor allows us to keep on going in a world full of tragedy."



Dr. Myriam Miedzian is an educator and an author whose works have appeared in both the popular and the academic press. She is the author of *Boys Will Be Boys: Breaking the Link Between Masculinity and Violence*. Our children spend vast amounts of time being entertained and much of the entertainment and many of the toys (especially those aimed at boys) centre on violence and encourage the idea that violence is fun.

Miedzian discussed this problem, with graphic visuals on video, and then made some specific recommendations as to how we can begin to deal with it. Her presentation was consciousness-raising and thought-provoking.

Once again, the participants heard that there is a lot of generalized denial regarding violence: this time in entertainment. Society should not be shrugging this off. Our children are surrounded by entertainment in an unprecedented way. The culture of violence is a significant factor in the types of entertainment available. There is a growing attitude that "violence is fun." Ninety

percent of violent crime is being committed by males. This percentage is being accurately depicted in "on-

"The cruelest violence is when children are prevented from becoming themselves because of neglect, exploitation and abandonment."

screen" violent crime. Since 1985, there has been a 217% increase in the arrest of 15-year-old boys. This is part of the pattern of younger and younger violent crime. The children are

immersed in the popular culture, reflecting a gap between the older and the younger generations.

Most slasher films centre on the pursuit of young women and the killing of men. Slashers are always men. Adventure films equal non-stop violence. The Ninja Turtles are causing serious problems for schools. Viewing violence puts boys at significant risk. Film violence is supplemented by TV violence. On the topic of wrestling, Miedzian observed that boys think it's OK to play with wrestling dolls but not with baby dolls. "In the U.S., 25% of families are fatherless. There is some evidence that fatherless sons have statistical chance of being violent. Boys without nurturing role models find it hard to be caring and nurturing fathers."

Miedzian spoke of the message that many boys' toys and games send out: that physical strength is power. She said, "That is not doing much for democratic values." We can't leave the acculturation of children to the entertainment business. We have to face the issue, think about it, and deal with it. "Entertainment is a major, major social force." Television entertainment is accompanied by advertising. Children have seen 350,000 ads by the time they reach the age of 18. Many of these focus on junk food. This should be a health concern to parents. These ads also help to formulate viewers' sexual and materialistic attitudes.

Viewing terrifying, graphic material has different effects on different individuals. There is a desensitizing process for some young boys. These images feed into a macho image. For others there is a scary, nightmarish effect.

Recommendations that Miedzian made on how we can begin to deal with the entertainment violence are in the article written by Sherry Philpott-Adhikary on Miedzian's presentation.

Madam Justice Andree Ruffo is a lawyer and an educator. She is currently a Youth Court Judge in Montreal. She spoke about how we must all believe unconditionally in what each human being can become. Education will help create a world where violence and exploitation need not be feared.

Young people are alone, voiceless and isolated. Now that we (women) have a voice we can help in the understanding of young people. We all see TV images. We

cannot say that we don't know that children are suffering. In Israel, a holocaust monument stands, dedicated to the memory of 1.5 million children. Currently millions and millions of children are suffering and dying. Forty thousand children die daily. Children suffer, are sold, or die. The media coverage of children is in the back of the newspaper. It is easy to say suffering is



somewhere else. Today we must consider that children are human: they are in our schools, neighborhoods, and homes. Some are abused, neglected, abandoned, or addicted at birth.

Children are victims of violence in families, in schools, in institutions. There is cruelty, also subtle violence. It is time to say, "Enough!"

Ruffo gave examples of how children are talking to us:

Through prostitution. What are we doing to end this? They think of themselves as objects. They have been abused in many ways. She reiterated that we must listen to them.

Through drug use. These children are nameless, have behavioral disorders; their drug abuse is not recorded. How did they get there? They are labelled as delinquent, not as drug-users and sent for help.

Through becoming wandering children. There are four to six thousand of these children in the city of Montreal.

Ninety-seven percent of them have a problem with drugs. When children come out of detention centres, where do they go? Back to drugs and violence. We have spent money on them: \$80,000 per year in a detention centre.

Through suicide. They can't live any more. The children are telling us. We are not hearing them. Some of them die slowly, barely surviving. These are children filled with suffering.

Forty thousand

children die daily.

Children suffer,

are sold, or die.

"We need to work with the persons in the classroom," Ruffo said, "not the curriculum." Children need to be fed so that they can learn. Parents need help to learn to help their own children. She cited the examples

of two children whose graduations she had attended. These were children who had come off the street and recovered when they were loved and helped.

She said, "The cruelest violence is when children are prevented from becoming themselves because of neglect, exploitation, abandonment." Competent, generous, efficient adults are needed. Children have no way to make choices. Adults must help, understand, advocate. It is everyone's responsibility to work on changing values. Compassion, generosity, and goodness will build a better world. Parent self-help groups are good because they provide peer help and links to families.

Ruffo emphasized the need to educate to allow children to grow. She also emphasized that children need people to trust and that sometimes a teacher is that person. Teachers have the responsibility to defend; they can alleviate suffering.

Adults need to be in communication with the child in them and to be good role models. They need to know what goals and dreams are. How can children reach absolutes like justice and goodness? Even those with greatly troubled lives have dreams of how life can be.

To be a teacher means to love, to be able to accept imperfections. If we look at and analyze ourselves, then we can work well with others in an advocacy role.

Participants were left with Ruffo's feelings of faith in a future in which a new ethical consensus will be found. ■

THE DISCUSSION CONTINUED . . . PANELS

Delegates to the Toward E=Quality Conference, in St. John's, Newfoundland, heard speeches on topics that affect the lives of girls and women. The first of two panel presentations, The Quality of Girls' Lives, had three presenters: Brandy Robinson, Judi Stevenson, and Dr. Peter Jaffe; the second, Men's Work: Beginning the Conversation, had four: Doug McCall, Roger Davies, Ken Taylor and Dr. Peter Jaffe.

THE QUALITY OF GIRLS' LIVES—PANEL

Before introducing the panel presenters, Heather-jane Robertson, director of Professional Development Services, Canadian Teachers' Federation, spoke briefly about A Cappella (1990) and its drawing national attention to the quality of life of adolescent girls. "The girls wanted to believe that the world was fair," Robertson commented. "We want the world to change, too. Equity is not as widespread as it could be." Robertson then announced that the work will continue in tangible form. The combination of wanting change and working toward it has resulted in the launching of A Cappella, Phase II. The mandate of the second phase is to conduct a project to promote school-community partnerships in response to the issues identified in A Cappella. Three regional workshops are being held during the early part of 1993 (Edmonton, Toronto, and Halifax) to discuss six papers by experts on different aspects of girls' lives described by A Cappella. Each regional workshop will also establish a network to promote change in its jurisdiction. Finally, an action manual will be published for educators and community leaders planning and promoting change.

The first panelist, **Brandy Robinson**, chairperson of the Status of Women Committee of the Federation of Women Teachers' Associations of Ontario, introduced a slide/tape presentation that she created as a supplement to the A Cappella project. The production, entitled *Hear Her Song*, showed adolescent girls sharing their thoughts with one another. Providing glimpses into the girls' lives, it is another method of raising awareness of what girls are saying.

The second panelist, **Judi Stevenson**, an independent social policy researcher and communications expert, spoke about the lives of young girls as revealed through the A Cappella project. She reminded us that "A Cappella begins the time when we will discover the other half of the school population: the girls." The ethnographic project reported, by using the girls' own words, things that matter to them, their experiences, what their lives are like, and the context in which they live. (Dr. Jaffe, in his later remarks, addressed part of that context.)

Stevenson spoke of developments in the equity/equality debate. Equity represents a new deal for women in that it takes account of, and is sensitive to, difference. Equality, as equality of sameness, is being rejected because it is too simplistic. Nor is it acceptable to maintain a position of neutrality in dealing with issues of equity/equality.

Throughout A Cappella, the girls had a lot to say about

education. Sixty percent of them reported the pleasure of participation in school life, and they value high achievement. They also told of negative aspects of their school experience: teachers' attitudes and behavior, boys' comments, favoritism, the feeling that they must prove themselves, and the feeling that often school doesn't deal with anything substantial. Stevenson quoted research done by Shakeshaft in 1986 that reveals that where there is a choice, schools slant toward boys, and what is good for males is not necessarily good for females. The girls said they feel that their needs have been largely ignored, and they are looking for a "gender curriculum" that addresses those needs. The girls also expressed dissatisfaction about what they are not being taught and issues that are not part of the curriculum: sexism, feminism, global issues, social responsibility, health issues. Not surprisingly, the girls loved the A Cappella project because it focussed on them.

In conclusion, Stevenson provided what she called strategic handles for helping girls in schools. Work on curriculum, making it gender fair by building in the "evaded curriculum": gender issues and gender sensitivity. Work with boys. Work with parents. Lobby for better teacher preparation so that all teachers understand gender issues. Build equity coalitions in communities.

Dr. Peter Jaffe was the third presenter. He is a clinical psychologist with the London Family Court Clinic, and a member of the Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women. In his extensive writing and clinical practice, Jaffe deals with the effects of violence and abuse.



He spoke movingly about violence and the backdrop, the unsettling context, it provides for the lives of adolescent girls.

"There is violence in the lives of young girls: it is the reality across the country." The study of victims/survivors of violence against women reveals that the country is violent. Violence is everywhere you look. Two women die in Canada each week: killed by their partners. There is a great deal of horror about violence, not only in the number of incidents but also in the level of tolerance that society exhibits toward the commitment of violent acts. Jaffe pointed out that often for victims "the silence is worse than the violence: it's not the acts of my enemies but the silence of my friends..." Because of this silence, he suggested, victims are further victimized. "They are the ones who have to leave town."

Jaffe believes that despite the horror, there is a great deal of hope. School systems can do something about dealing with violence and changing attitudes and behaviors. He outlined four themes for engaging the education systems in change.

First, name the violence. People must talk about the violence, name it, get hysterical about it if necessary, become aware of its frequency, and prepare to engage in activities leading to change.

Second, understand the violence. Family and domestic are not the correct words to describe what happens. Violence is the abuse of power, and 95% of violence is perpetrated against women and children.

Third, intervene. "Success [in school settings] is not possible for students/staff if they are living in a war zone," said Jaffe. Meaningful intervention strategies include the following: professional development on the topic of violence and violence prevention; pursuit, with school boards, of policies and action regarding harassment; familiarization with the reporting responsibility for teachers who know about violence toward girls or their mothers; and use of Employee Assistance Plans.

Fourth, plan for prevention. Awareness activities are essential. Too few teachers pursue this issue. There must be a safe climate everywhere. For example, harassment policies need to be seen, and aired. Ongoing followup is essential. Unfortunately, initiators of redress are often revictimized.

In addressing equality, Jaffe said, "We aren't going to end violence until there really is equality." He then cautioned against accepting budget arguments or recession arguments as reasons for delay in curbing violence in our society. He reminded the audience, "It is a matter of priorities...We can't afford not to have equality...to end violence!"

Jaffe concluded with the haunting suggestion from the past, regarding equality and so much more: "Keep asking, 'Why Not?'"

MEN'S WORK: BEGINNING THE CONVERSATION—PANEL

Only limited progress can be made toward improving the quality



of life of girls and women, until changes in male socialization and behavior occur within and outside schools. The panel explored ways of thinking and working with male experience. The courage of the group of men who addressed this topic before an audience of women was commendable. Their commitment to be in the forefront of change

and their sincerity were inspiring.

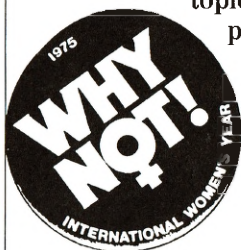
Doug McCall, the moderator of the panel, is a private consultant currently acting as co-ordinator of A Cappella—Phase II for CTF.

The first speaker was **Roger Davies**. He is an adult educator interested in social justice. He is also the co-ordinator and lead writer for a curriculum project on gender justice and anti-violence education for junior secondary school students.

Davies contemplated what would lead to fairness, equity, justice, and peace. He reflected that in "bad" situations there is denial. He was searching for a way for men to develop shared values. Men who want to work for change must have courage and must begin to develop the dialogue to make change occur. Men also need to recognize existing power structures. Each man will bring to the dialogue his experience: his class, his race, his age. Men need to talk about the lives of women in order to understand them. Davies also noted that "men do not have a singular view of anything in society."

Men must try to reach other men, to talk with them, in informal settings. Davies spoke of the growth of men's support groups throughout the country. When such groups are small, meaningful discussions take place.

Davies posed the questions, "What is it like to be a teenager? Why don't we love teenagers?" He observed that men sometimes put down teenagers because the teens reflect something within themselves. He suggested that it is necessary to analyze cultural violence, as expressed by examples ranging from the military to rock videos. The next step is to stand up to these expressions of violence and work for change. He advocated working with teenagers, encouraging the formation of young, supportive groups and gender-justice groups. It is important, he said, that both young men and young



women be given opportunities to express their lives.

Davies advocated that when anti-violence projects are embarked upon in school settings, both the school and the community should take the project on.

Dr. Peter Jaffe was the second speaker. He began by saying, "It is not easy raising boys in the '90s." He then told us that his son's favorite sport is "ice-wrestling." Jaffe spoke about how messages are relayed in our society and how images are built. In referring to the White Ribbon Campaign, Jaffe noted that who supports



that campaign and who speaks to men about its value are extremely important. He said, "If Don Cherry, Mark Messier, or Wayne Gretzky says it, men listen."

Jaffe went on to observe, "It is a challenge being feminist/pro-feminist parents." The things such parents are struggling with are all around. Ninety-four percent of video games are violent. The average 15-year-old has seen

15,000 televised killings. Such viewing desensitizes the viewers, and actual violence is trivialized. Eight thousand acts of violence per year are shown on TV cartoons: the cartoons that five-year-olds watch. Violence is also depicted in the mainstream culture on CD covers and in the words of songs. Inappropriate messages come from unexpected and high places—from judges, for example.

Jaffe advised us to react to violence and to act. "Write when you read something outrageous. And encourage others to do so."

The final speaker was **Ken Taylor**, president of the Yukon Teachers' Association and active in his school, community, and organization in challenging inequality.

Taylor was challenged to address "How adult males can, should, and must take responsibility both for the violence perpetrated against women in society, and for leadership in the reduction and eventually elimination of that violence." He told the audience that it was painful to realize "these things are going on." As men become enlightened, they know that there is lots of room for change.

In speaking about relationships Taylor commented on the use of control. Boys mimic men in their relationships and in their behaviors toward girls. He said that anyone who teaches must lead by example, emphasizing that *teaches* is to be taken in all its contexts.

Taylor focussed on what could be done within the context of schools and the education system. He suggested that it is necessary to raise consciousness through curriculum to create a critical mass: one that values women as much as men. Real change, he believes, will happen when enough men are working toward it. Awareness efforts need to be directed at male secondary teachers. Boys, at all levels, must be engaged in discussions about violence and its eradication.

"Men need help," he concluded. We must persevere.

During the question period that followed, a number of points were stated or reiterated. With regard to poverty, it was asserted that the relation between poverty and violence is a myth. Certainly hopelessness and disempowerment are associated with poverty, but there is no causal relationship between these feelings and acts of violence. With regard to making progress in curtailing violence within our society and culture, it was suggested that we need to begin where we can, raise awareness of the violence and then deal with it. Support groups are necessary. Men need to hear young women's stories, but they need to be supported, too. Young men need to be shown how to behave. They need to define violence because they often think that unless blood is drawn, violence has not occurred. ■

SAY NO TO VIOLENCE

Sherry Philpott-Adhikary, Status of Women Committee co-chairperson, SD 28 (Quesnel)

I was fortunate to be a delegate to the Canadian Teachers' Federation Twelfth National Conference on Women and Education, held in St. John's, Newfoundland, November 26-28, 1992. All the speakers were of high quality and thought provoking. One of the presentations that stands out in my mind is that of Dr. Myriam Miedzian: "The Culture of Violence: What It's Doing to Our Children."

Children in our society spend more time watching TV, movies, and video games, and listening to rock and rap music than they spend in school or with their parents. Much of the entertainment, and many of the toys centre on violence, and encourage the idea that violence is fun.

The average Canadian watches 21 hours of TV per week. By the age of 18, most people have witnessed more than 26,000 murders on TV. We are raising a "Violence is fun" generation. We have an anything-goes attitude about what film portrays. Most horror movies include in their plot a villain pursuing one or more women. A third of the audience watching gore/horror films is children.

Have you ever listened closely to some of the heavy metal or rap lyrics? They speak of violence against women, rape, lust, and bigotry. Children of all ages are listening to this music and repeating the lyrics. The message to today's youth condones violent behavior.

TV All Star Wrestling not only condones physical violence, but also portrays racist views. The depiction of minorities as devious or dumb is racism in its purest form. One third of the wrestling audience are children under 12. Children believe that wrestling is real fighting and not a staged act for monetary gain.

Entertainment is the second largest business, after weapons, in the United States. In the last four years, 235 studies have been done on the effects of viewing violent behaviour and whether it encourages violent behaviour. There is a statistically significant connection but Dr. Miedzian emphasized that no one has said that every boy who views violence will become violent.

Dr. Miedzian made several recommendations on how we can begin to deal with violence in our society.

Television

▲ We need strong educational programs for parents concerning appropriate viewing for children and the influence of TV violence.

▲ We need lock boxes that restrict access and control

viewing as standard equipment when televisions are sold.

▲ We should lobby for a children's public broadcasting station with quality children's programming with a pro-social slant, showing children how to deal with violence and problems.

Other Entertainment and Toys

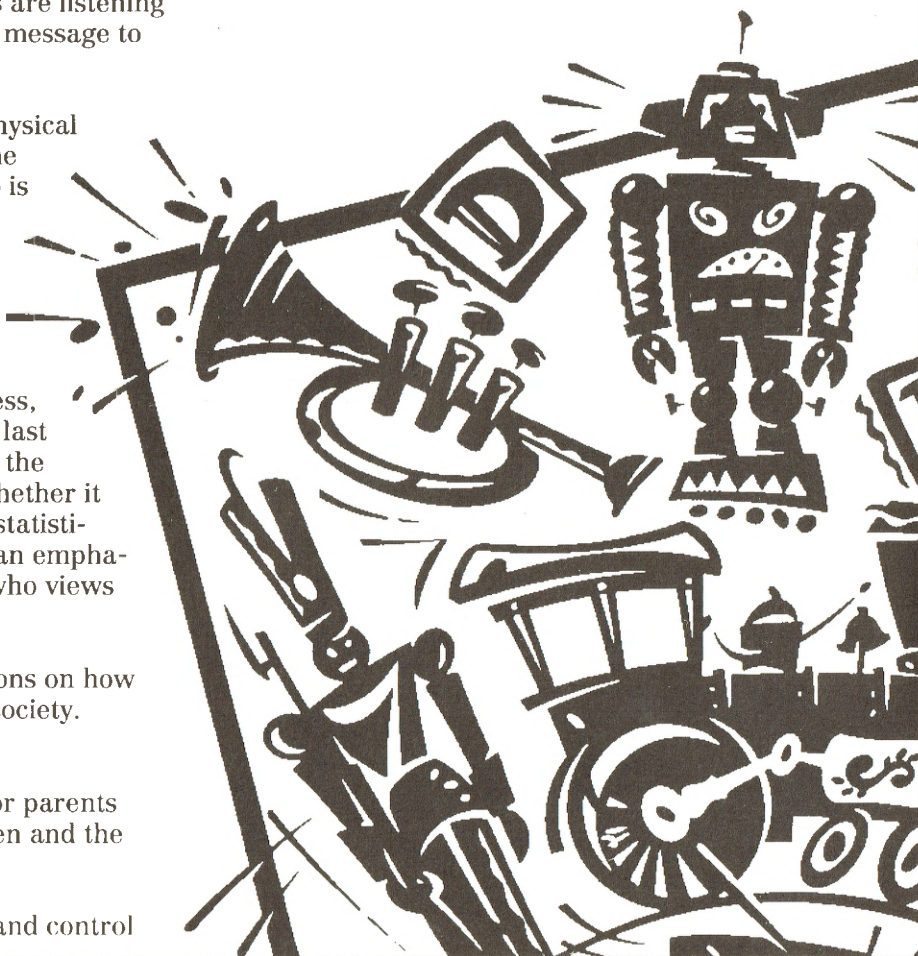
▲ We need stricter policies and regulations on what is appropriate for children.

▲ We should expand into all areas of the entertainment business to ensure that protective regulation is in place.

▲ We should have the same standard on violence as we have about pornography. Legislation and regulations should be in place protecting children from exploitation.

▲ We should ensure that students are educated as future parents.

Violence has been an acceptable part of our society for too long. We need to begin to implement and expand on the recommendations presented in Dr. Miedzian's presentation. We need to say no to violence. ■



BCTF FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION PROJECT

This project is funded by the Ministry of Education and the Ministry Responsible for Multiculturalism and Human Rights.

It will prepare a cadre of teachers to facilitate, for Late Intermediate school staffs, workshops focussed on:

- ▲ raising awareness about family violence, and
- ▲ helping teachers implement strategies aimed at breaking the cycle of family violence

Shorter presentations on family violence will also be available.

The work of the project is guided by an advisory team composed of BCTF and ministry representatives. Thirty teachers from around the province are being trained as Family Violence Prevention Project associates. The

associates will help develop workshop framework and support materials.

Focussing on the Learning for Living curriculum, the workshop will emphasize development of the knowledge, skills, and attitudes essential to healthy relationships, including such topics as communication skills, anger management, conflict resolution, and strong self-esteem. It will provide information about domestic violence, including violence against children.

The workshop will be piloted in May 1993, and will be available for delivery to schools in the 1993-94 school year.

Lisa Pedrini is the (half-time) project coordinator. ■

BCTF TASK FORCE ON VIOLENCE IN THE SCHOOLS

The Representative Assembly instructed that a task force be established to examine violence in schools, including violence against teachers. The task force began in January 1993, and it will report to the Executive Committee in June 1993.

The Task Force is to prepare a report that:

- ▲ describes the extent of violence in B.C. schools, including violence against teachers;
- ▲ explores teacher and student attitudes and beliefs about violence;
- ▲ examines factors which influence the level of violence in schools;
- ▲ summarizes current initiatives to prevent,

reduce, or eliminate violence in schools at the local, provincial, and national levels and indicates which of those initiatives are appropriate and useful in the B.C. context;

- ▲ solicits input and involvement from parents and students in the conduct of its business and development of its recommendations;
- ▲ makes recommendations for both short- and long-term actions, for the BCTF and for institutions and agencies outside the BCTF, to address the issue of violence in B.C. schools.

Lisa Pedrini is the co-ordinator of the Task Force. ■

MORE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY, NOT LESS

Marian Dodds, Home Economics Department head, Windermere Secondary School, Vancouver

(Reprinted from THESA Newsletter, Vol. 32, No. 4, June 1992)

I have always been proud to be a home economics teacher, and, in particular, I have always been a strong promoter of our discipline as being on the leading edge of awareness of social issues and action, both in curriculum development and in bringing home social responsibility in the classroom. Despite the cooking-and-sewing

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image we sometimes feel we have, I have consistently found, through the numerous workshops and presentations I have done for home economics teachers over the past decade, that we are a socially aware group, in touch with the needs and concerns of our students, and keen to do our utmost to help our students lead positive and

productive lives. Coming from this perspective, I was deeply disturbed to read the article by THESA President Lynne Terlinden that appeared in the December (1991) issue of the THESA Newsletter.

The premise that social issues are not directly related to teaching contradicts my beliefs about the necessity for caring environments that must exist in our classrooms and our schools overall if we are to enable our students to achieve their full potential. In particular, I am shocked that a PSA leader would support the curtailment of BCTF social programs when our PSA has repeatedly offered professional development workshops at conferences and published articles that would indicate an understanding of the unique and powerful role played by home economics as a discipline that supports social responsibility. Consider the fact that Family Management and indeed the entire new curriculum for home economics places a strong emphasis on global awareness and gender equity.

The point made that we can all do this in the classroom but that our union has no place dealing with these issues reveals a considerable lack of understanding of the big picture. Were it not for the hard work of the BCTF Status of Women group, there would have been no mention of gender equity in the Year 2000 document, which has subsequently guided the development of new curricula. Having co-ordinated the BCTF Status of Women Program from 1983 to 1986, I know the impact a strong provincial program can have on attitudes and effecting change. It was the BCTF Status of Women

Committee that laid the groundwork for clauses in our contracts regarding sexual harassment, part-time and substitute teachers, and maternity/ paternity/adoption leaves. The women in the program were the first to press for better benefits for part-time and substitute teachers, most of whom were women. Women teachers with young children asked for support for job sharing and part-time teaching to enhance the quality of their family lives, and it was the Status of Women group that brought their issues forward. Since the vast majority of THESA members are women, it is clear that many of us have benefitted from these efforts.

The BCTF Executive Committee is a democratically elected body that makes decisions based on federation policy, which, for the most part, is voted on at the Annual General Meeting by a large cross section of members, using parliamentary procedures. The examples of what the BCTF has "done on your behalf" that appeared in Ms. Terlinden's article were taken out of context and misled the reader. For example: "Sending \$1,000 to the Boilermakers Union." Does Ms. Terlinden



tell us why that was done? Do we know how much money other unions donated to us during our job actions last year? Certainly in Vancouver, when we were on strike last year, we received a large amount of financial support from many unions. In a world where we are daily re-

mindful through the media of escalating environmental crises and our need to work globally toward solutions, does it make sense to adopt an "I'll take care of myself, and the rest of the world can take care of itself" attitude? It is understandable that busy teachers do not have time to study every detail of every decision that is made on our behalf, but anyone who feels strongly about an issue can certainly use the democratic processes to put forward his/her position. Our federation would be strengthened if every member could attend an Annual General Meeting and participate in this process.

The premise that we will all donate our own individual time and resources and that our organization should stay out of it simply is naive. A large and powerful organization like our BCTF has a lot of clout when it comes to federal and provincial matters. One lone individual simply does not have this kind of impact. Consider the issue of violence against women and children. This fall, the Rights of Children Committee and the Status of Women Committee jointly presented a brief on behalf of the federation to a provincial commission.

The brief was based on our official policies, and I am sure when it was presented on our behalf, it carried a lot of weight. When I was on the BCTF staff, a similar initiative was undertaken on the topic of pornography and was presented to the Federal Government's Fraser Committee on Pornography and Prostitution.

What does this have to do with teaching and home economics specifically? Consider the statistics on sexual abuse and violence. Consider the role we have played in lobbying for family-life and sexuality education because, as caring teachers, we know that our students need and want this information. In some districts, teachers could be challenged for even raising these issues in the classroom. Remember when Mr. Vander Zalm had a teacher fired for using a sex-education questionnaire years ago? It is reassuring to

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know that we now have policies that support teachers and would allow us to have legal backing from our federation if we needed it.

International Solidarity is another area that was attacked. I cannot think of much better value for the dollar than that received for the work which many B.C. teachers have done as summer

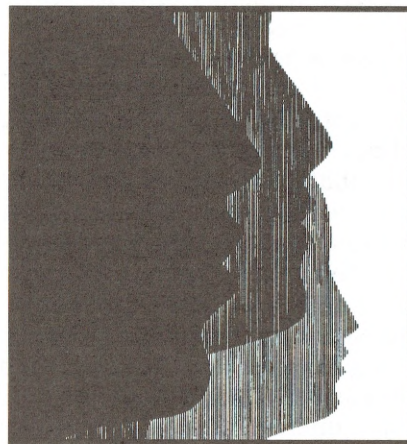
volunteers teaching teachers in developing countries. Project Overseas is a national program through the Canadian Teachers' Federation that sends teams of teachers throughout the developing world. I spent the summer of 1988 teaching in Belize, Central America, as part of that program, and I can say first hand that it is worth every penny spent, not only for the teachers in the developing countries but also for those of us who return to our students with an increased understanding of the global picture and the interconnectedness of our planet. The funding for Project Overseas comes from the BCTF, CTF, and CIDA (the Canadian International Development Agency) in the form of matching grants to the two federations.

The B.C. Global Education Project is a CIDA initiative, not a BCTF program, as the article suggests. Most of the funding for this worthwhile program comes from the Federal Government through CIDA. Interestingly, our Canadian Home Economics Federation has also shown leadership in this area by developing resource packages that help home economics teachers bring global perspectives into their classrooms.

The work done by the BCTF's Program Against Racism is another example of leadership our federation shows in bridging differences and building understanding among peoples of different races and cultures. Cer-

tainly in Vancouver schools we see the necessity for this. In fact, my school board also showed leadership in this area by adopting a policy on racism for the district. Again, this was done in a democratic fashion, and while not every single taxpayer may agree with the money being spent this way, this is the way our systems operate. To suggest that all of this be left up to individuals in their own classrooms is irresponsible. Clearly, we need

to work together for a better world where equality is a reality for us and our students.



I am stunned that the president of a PSA would take such a backward-looking position on matters of such importance. We do need to be socially responsible. None of us can survive on our own little

island of a classroom. Sooner or later, we have to consider the rest of the world. I applaud, for the most part, the work done by the BCTF on my behalf for social issues. And if there is something with which I disagree, I will make sure the elected representatives know my position. To suggest wholesale cutting of some of the most worthwhile programs of the federation suggests to me a serious lack of understanding of our professional responsibilities to our students and colleagues. I have always been proud of the work we do as home economics teachers. The mistake we sometimes make is that we do not let the rest of the world know how much worthwhile work we do. I believe our PSA would be much more effective and credible with members and in the wider world if our representatives took a higher profile in speaking out in favor of more social responsibility, not less. ■

TEEN WOMEN INTO TRADES?

Margaret Reiss, Status of Women Committee member, SD 02 (Cranbrook)

Encouraging teen women to explore opportunities in logging and heavy-equipment industries is one of the positive outcomes of Cranbrook's Project Heavy Duty.

The week-long project, for 25 students, began in spring 1991 through the initiative of Mount Baker Secondary School's Technology Education Department. Three female students participated that first year; six, in 1992. If this rate of increase continues, 1993 should see 12 young women in the program. (No student who has applied to take part has been rejected.)

Training during the first two days consists of learning from community resource persons about business finance, safe operation of heavy equipment, and job opportunities and apprenticeships available. Field trips to local heavy-equipment dealers and a tour of the shops at East Kootenay Community College are also included.

Following the introduction, students "take to the field" for a three-day work period in the bush. Local corporations and contractors supply cats, skidders, excavators, and other heavy equipment—and the workers to teach and supervise the students.

"It's intimidating at first, but once you learn how to do it, it's easy," said one student. ■



ANOTHER ENDANGERED SPECIES IN AFRICA

Lorrie Williams, Former Status of Women Committee member and founder of the Canadian Harambee Education Society (CHES)

According to an article in *The Nation* (Kenya), only one out of five (20%) of all university places in that country is being filled by a woman. This is a decrease from 45% only a few years ago. The author of the newspaper article attributes this to poorly equipped girls' schools, especially in the sciences.

Kenya recently changed from the British O and A levels systems to an 8-4-4 system, and all students must take sciences. Because poor science results for girls drag the grade points down, the girls do not qualify for university. One university professor has called for "positive discrimination" to correct the drastic imbalance.

The Canadian Harambee Education Society is working to provide scholarships for poor, bright secondary school students (preferably girls). The society recently helped a community build a science lab for a new school that will eventually be a boarding school for girls. The students are selected, on the basis of merit and need, by retired B.C. teachers who serve as volunteer agents in Kenya. Most recently, Linda Breault, a Kamloops teacher, was appointed a CHES agent in Tanzania, where 10 girls of the Beribeg tribe will be sponsored for secondary school.

Individuals, classes, schools, and other groups are invited to sponsor a student in Africa. Call 521-3416. "We can't do everything, but we can do something." ■



PLANNING FOR GENDER EQUITY

As a result of ministry activity and funding, more districts are now considering or forming district Gender Equity committees. The following outlines a workshop that introduces gender equity. The workshop was piloted at the Status of Women Fall Training (October 1992), at the North Coast Regional Gender Equity Conference (November 1992), and with the Kitimat District Gender Equity Committee (February 1993). Reaction to all the sessions has been very positive.

Here are the goals of the workshop:

- ▲ To build an understanding of what gender equity is
- ▲ To examine the issues, developments, and activities regarding gender equity policy and initiatives
- ▲ To review efforts and processes of local gender equity committees
- ▲ To provide a forum to discuss regional needs and plans

A variety of activities such as question-writing, brainstorming and goal-setting have been used in the two- to three-hour time frame. The framework used is five steps: Awareness, Assessment, Planning, Action and Evaluations.

These could be broken up for a series of shorter sessions or for presentations to groups with a particular interest. Susan Crowley, the designer of this workshop, is a primary teacher and president of her local union. She has been active in the BCTF Status of Women Program at the local and provincial levels and was a representative to the Ministry of Education Gender Equity Advisory Committee. For more information, call her at work (627-1700) or at home (624-3470). ■

STUDY SHEDS LIGHT ON NORTH AMERICAN "FATNESS PHOBIA"

Reprinted with permission from Simon Fraser Week, October 22, 1992.

Why are North American women obsessed with dieting and staying slim? Is it because the fashion industry tells them they should be thin?

Research by a team of psychologists at Simon Fraser University suggests that these "standards of thinness" probably have more grounding in biology than in the pages of fashion magazines.

"The actuarial statistics tell us that for maximum health, North American women ought to be fatter than they generally want to be. So why this obsession with dieting?" asks Judith Anderson, a research associate in the university's Psychology Department.

Blaming the fashion industry, the movies, or TV doesn't make sense, says Anderson, because dieting is too unpleasant. "Some pretty strong motivational force is at work. Perhaps the fashion industry goes for thin models because women want to be thin for other reasons," she says.

To find out what the reasons might be, Anderson and her research team conducted an exhaustive literature review of 62 human cultures. They examined anthropological descriptions of such varied cultures as Lapps, Persians, ancient Romans, Aleuts, Masai, Maori, and Nootka.

The study looked for any references to standards of beauty in women related to body fat. The results were very interesting, says Anderson.

"We found that while many cultures value fatness in women, a substantial minority of the cultures prefer slender women. Twenty per cent prefer 'slim,' while 37% favored 'moderate' fatness and 43.5% preferred 'plump.'"

But why such a wide variation in standards among the cultures? Is it purely arbitrary, or is something else going on? One answer, theorized Anderson, has to do with the three biological roles of human female body fat: insulation, storage of calories and regulation

of fertility (thin women tend to be less fertile than plumper ones).

To test her theories, Anderson had her assistants correlate standards of beauty in the 62 cultures to a number of ecological and sociological variables related to the role of body fat, such as food supply, climate, the onset of puberty, and degree of male dominance.

The results confirmed many of her theories.

For instance, Anderson's "food security hypothesis" accurately predicted that a culture with an unreliable food supply would have a plumper standard of beauty.



"Fat represents stored calories, and in ancestral populations women preferred to be fat when the food supply was unreliable," explains Anderson. "Men in such cultures would also prefer fatter women, because they survived better than thin ones." The study also confirmed a strong link between climate (cold-climate societies prefer plumpness), degree of male social dominance ("macho" societies favor plumpness; more "equal" societies prefer slimness), and stresses associ-

ated with the onset of adolescent sexuality (the higher the social stress, the thinner the standard of beauty).

The study does not support the view that the fashion industry influences societal standards of beauty in any significant way, or that women are necessarily trying to attract men when they attempt to adjust their weight.

"This study suggests that the biological functions of female fat are important in shaping our attitudes toward it," concludes Anderson. It doesn't answer all the questions, she admits, but it does send an important message. ■

REVIEW OF *WOMEN WHO RUN WITH THE WOLVES: MYTHS AND STORIES OF THE WILD WOMAN ARCHETYPE*

BY CLARISSA PINKOLA ESTES, PH.D.

Betty Lewis, Status of Women Committee member, SD 71 (Courtenay)

Clarissa Estes, a Jungian psychologist and storyteller, explores the history and negation of the wild woman in each of us. The wild woman is the "wild and natural creature, a powerful force, filled with good instincts, passionate creativity and ageless knowing" within each of us. Examining fairy tales and myths, Estes attempts to find the underlying



message for women to help us "reconnect with the healthy, instinctual, visionary attributes of the Wild Woman archetype."

Each chapter uses a story to illustrate the stages of growth in the human female, and occasionally the male. This approach to the psychology of women sheds some light on the conflict between what one's instinctual self feels, desires, and trusts and what one has been taught to feel, desire, and trust.

This book put me in touch with my soul. It is more than an interesting read: it is an opportunity to examine one's choices and future paths—choices women have made and paths they have trod since the beginning of time, recorded in myths and folktales. ■

REVIEW OF *THEOLOGY AND FEMINISM*

BY DAPHNE HAMPSON

Frank Snowsell, SD 23 (Central Okanagan) retired

This book documents a woman's struggle to determine for herself a faith, a religion, and an understanding of God that give her a place as a woman in society.

Daphne Hampson started her career as an historian; she wrote her Oxford doctoral thesis on British response to the church conflict in Germany during the Third Reich. She followed that with a Harvard doctorate on systematic theology. Since 1977, she has lectured on systematic theology at the University of St. Andrews.

This book documents the life experiences that led her to conclude that Christianity and feminism are incompatible and the Christian myth untrue.

Because Christianity centres on a male God and a male Saviour, "a woman can never have the experience that is freely available to every man and boy in her culture, of having her full sexual identity affirmed as being in the image and likeness of God" and "in a white, patriarchal society, 'God' has been shaped in the image of those who have created him."

"Many a woman—in a way which has not on the whole been true of men—has had to turn

her back upon the religion within which she grew up. It simply became impossible. For any woman, apprised of what the history of women has been, the question of theodicy raised by the previous conception of God has made that conception of God unthinkable. That God, moreover, was most clearly not made in her image, and became superfluous as she came to herself and acquired a feminist consciousness."

In the past, as reflected so often in the Bible and the histories of other religions, people have developed a concept of God compatible with the conditions under which they lived, one that gave meaning and reality to their lives. That is the task facing women and men both: in this 20th century, to develop a religion, a concept of the Creator, of "God" that meets the realities of this global, space, nuclear age.

The concepts that met the needs of the folk of the pastoral age in which the Bible originated fall far short of meeting the needs of people in the 20th century. Daphne Hampson's story of her odyssey and that of others seeking understanding is a valuable, stimulating, and challenging study for any individual, man or woman. ■

REVIEW OF THE STRUGGLE FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE IN BRITISH COLUMBIA: HELENA GUTTERIDGE, THE UNKNOWN REFORMER

HOWARD, IRENE. UBC PRESS, VANCOUVER, 1992

Reviewed by Helen Wilkes, Vancouver, Provincial Status of Women Committee member

The title is the only cumbersome part of a book that is otherwise fascinating. From cover to cover, this historical account provides an engrossing overview of the battles fought by other women so that our generation could enjoy a better life.

At each new page and chapter, I wondered why the history books we had been given in school had been so dry, so completely lacking in material that caught our interest. Irene Howard captures life with her descriptive sentences; she skillfully evokes the past through sounds, smells and sights.

They (the Charles Gutteridge family) were attuned to the rude energy of the city: to the street sounds of the muffin man crying "Milko" and the dustman clattering by with his cart, collecting "dust" as garbage was called...Nell grew up breathing London air filled with sulphurous smoke from coal fires, the stench from fish shops and from animal and human waste on the streets, and nauseating fumes from gas lights in poorly ventilated areas (p. 14).

Interspersed with what happened are short, provocative statements on why it happened. At each paragraph, one longs to enter into a dialogue with the author.

In Nell's day, free secondary schools did not exist; secondary education was a class privilege...The boys trained to become members of the governing class, the girls to be wives...The lower classes were restricted in their education by a system designed to make them literate enough to be useful workers (p. 21).

"Not so different from the present," one longs to say. January 9, 1993, and The Vancouver Sun still devotes half a page to one man's prescription for helping schools produce "more competitive workers." The fight for women's suffrage? The words from the past are echoed in the mealy-mouthed platitudes of today's antifeminists who seek to lay at women's feet the full responsibility for the breakdown of society.

The Honourable A.E. McPhillips spoke for an hour in opposition to the bill. He yielded to no man in his love and regard for women; however he warned that they were a dangerous element in society, as the events of the French Revolution made clear. For, disgracefully, they had marched with the men through the streets and stood at the barricades. Those women were responsible for the increase in infidelity, for the growth of atheism and lawlessness; in short for the breakdown of the social order (p. 61).

Irene Howard provides dramatic insights into the policies and principles that governed national as well as local decisions. From her arrival in Canada, in 1911, to her death, in 1960, Helena Gutteridge spoke out against human injustice. She became a power in her union who championed the right of women and of all workers to improved conditions. As an early member of the CCF, she helped ring in the changes that ultimately brought health care to all Canadians. As the first woman ever elected to Vancouver City Council, she led the fight for low-income housing.



Gutteridge was buoyed by a feminist ideology according to which "women constituted a superior breed of human being with a maternal fund of moral rectitude, strength of character, and compassion lacking in the male of the species" (p. 76). The ideology may have been "arrogant and naive" (p. 77), but it gave Gutteridge the impetus for a life devoted to initiating positive social change. Whether fighting for better working and living conditions or for broader issues like world peace, Gutteridge never stopped speaking out. In her last interview, she said, "there's still a lot to be done!" She reminded women that "they owe it to themselves to develop their abilities and to work for a better, peaceful world" (p.258).

Irene Howard has written a masterful book that brings history to life. Her central figure is a true heroine whose words and deeds remain an inspiration for the modern reader. The book is compelling in its subject matter and in its style. It is a well-documented, well-balanced work that one hopes will be a model for the history books of the future. ■



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REVIEW OF *YOU JUST DON'T UNDERSTAND: WOMEN AND MEN IN CONVERSATION*

BY DEBORAH TANNEN

Laura Rose, *Status of Women contact, SD 55 (Burn's Lake)*

Deborah Tannen, Ph.D., in her book, *You Just Don't Understand: Women and Men in Conversation*, describes the differences in communication style between men and women as comparable to those people from different ethnic backgrounds, regions, and class backgrounds. Some people can spend most of their lives without coming into close contact with people of vastly different cultural backgrounds, but they can't avoid people of the other gender.

Ms. Tannen identifies her field as controversial and tries to balance her arguments. She points out the dangers of oversimplification by citing the failure of some studies seeking to prove the dominant male theory. Because there are numerous influences on an individual's communication style other than gender, Tannen gives frequent examples from her own experience. I found myself easily identifying with this style.

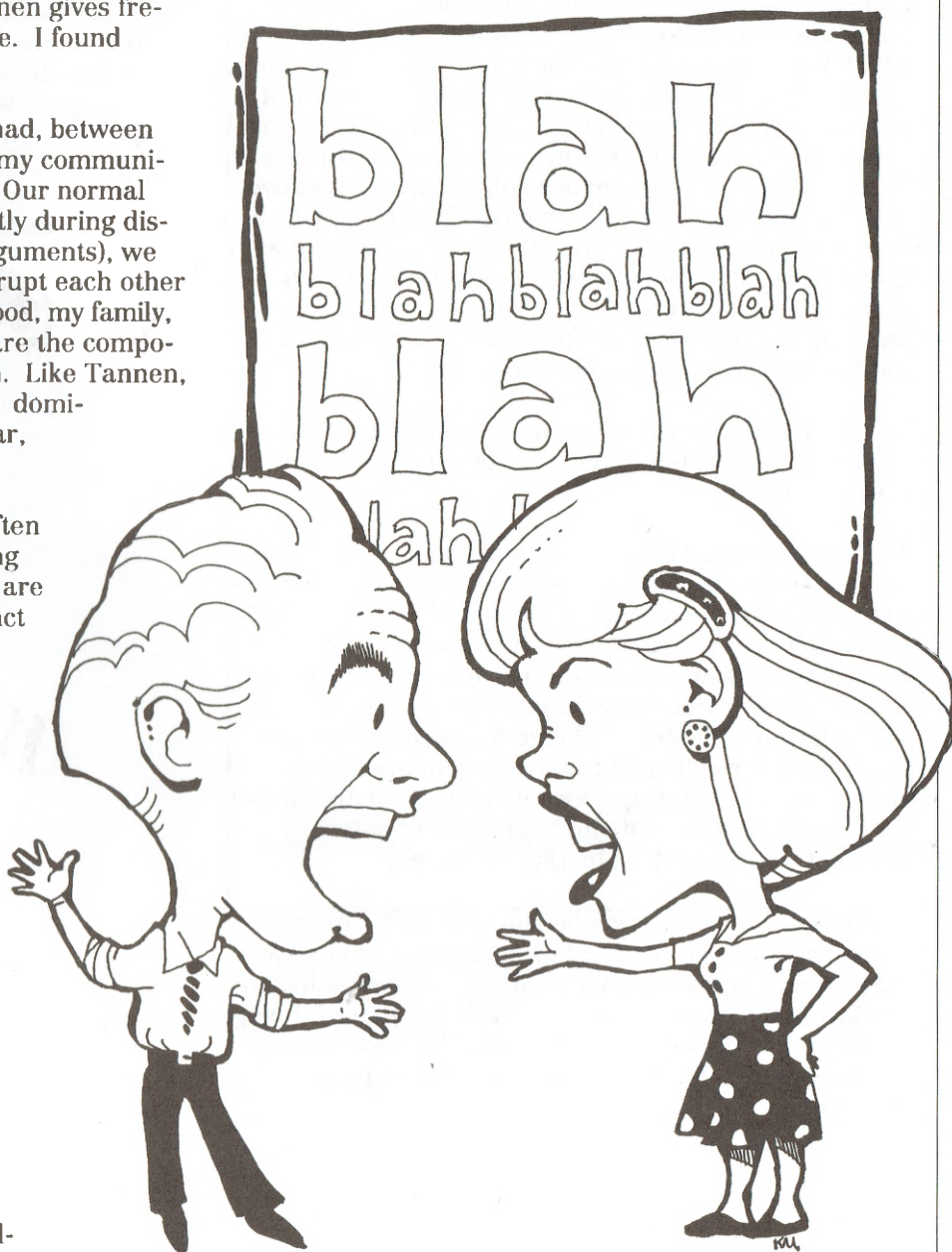
Growing up in the same streets my dad had, between Little Italy and Little Israel in Winnipeg, my communication style was distinctly non-Waspish. Our normal speaking voice is loud, we touch frequently during discussions (which outsiders describe as arguments), we display emotions regularly, and we interrupt each other without bias. These to me, my neighborhood, my family, my patients, and my university buddies are the components of a good and healthy conversation. Like Tannen, I'm shocked to hear myself described as: dominating, masculine, aggressive, too familiar, rude, or obnoxious.

Tannen states that in her studies, men often find the communication styles both among themselves, and in mixed gender groups are the same. Women, however notice distinct difference in communication among themselves compared to mixed gender situations. Women evidently change to the predominantly male communication style in mixed groups, or they fail to communicate well at all.

Tannen observes, "Women who talk like men are judged differently—and harshly... The male is seen as normative, the female as departing from the norm. And it is only a short step—maybe an inevitable one—from different to worse.

One of my most annoying memories is of a principal's failure to look at me when we spoke, unless it deteriorated to a yelling match. I was understand-

ably intrigued to note that Tannen has studied pairs of males and pairs of females discussing something serious. She'd accessed videos of children from Grade 2, Grade 6, Grade 11, and 25-year-old adults. She found that the subjects had more in common by gender comparisons than they did by age comparisons. The boys and men all sat at an angle from each other and rarely made eye contact during their discussions. The girls and women sat directly across from one another, often touched and kept eye contact throughout their discussions. The females also took turns well and in speaking had an, "I share an experience, you share a similar experience" pattern. The males tended toward lengthy soliloquies, with one usually emerging as dominant, both by directing the topic of the discussion



and by taking more time speaking. The dominant male interrupted far more than any of the other subjects within the range of ages, male or female. He also used his interruptions to either verbally put down the previous statement of his partner or redirect the conversation.

Tannen suggests that such striking differences occur between males and females of all ages because they are raised in different worlds. The expectations parents and society have for female babies differ greatly from those they have for male babies. A girl can become prime minister today, but she still must do so in a male-dominated world. The parents express their expectations by raising their children differently, according to gender.

Girls are expected to conform far more than boys are, and many parents continue to punish girls for failing to conform to rules, but reward boys for showing independent thought and character. As a result, females' world view focusses on connection and intimacy, while the males' focusses on status and independence. Young males continue to participate in more team activities in which one dominant male emerges as leader, and the others follow his lead. Meanwhile, the girls are most often socialized in small informal groups for play, where activities are decided more by consensus. According to Tannen, boys also pursue more physically competitive activities and girls more co-operative activities, which are controlled by ostracism of those not complying with group rules. In interviewing teen-age girls Tannen found that the most popular girl can be considered stuck up because she must turn down so many potential friends to remain popular.

Tannen's findings and my own experience growing up are not so very different, despite the fact that I grew up 30 years ago.

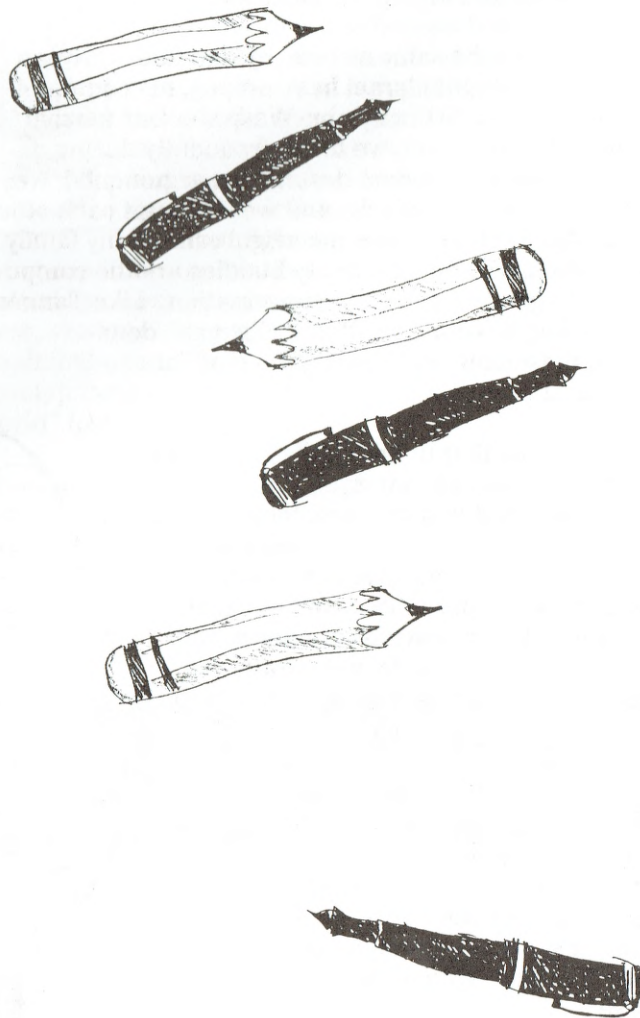
My colleagues and I have been appalled to notice the current trend, in which today's teen women have fewer expectations of themselves than we did in the late '60s. Even after seeing many more female world leaders today, students are saying there is little use in trying, opting for early marriage despite statistics on divorce. With Margaret Thatcher's being branded unfeminine and a bitch for acting aggressively on many issues, which her male colleagues would have been applauded for, maybe girls are noticing that equal opportunity does not mean equal evaluation or success.

Tannen summarizes this phenomenon well. "As in so many areas, being admitted as an equal is not in itself assurance of equal opportunity, if one is not accustomed to playing the game in the way it is being played. Being admitted to a dance does not ensure the participation of someone who has learned to dance to a different rhythm." ■

REDUCE THE RISK: A WOMAN'S GUIDE TO PRACTICAL STRATEGIES FOR AVOIDING ASSAULT AND ENHANCING PERSONAL SAFETY

This 12-page booklet stresses awareness, avoidance, assertiveness, and action as keys to reducing the risks of violence against women and their children. Written and compiled by a senior instructor for Women Educating in Self-Defense Training, the guide provides safety tips on how women can minimize the potential for assault while engaging in everyday activities. Copies of the English-language booklet are available for a donation of \$2.00 from Women Educating in Self-Defense Training, 2349 St. Catherines Street, Vancouver, B.C. V5T 3X3, telephone (604) 876-6390.

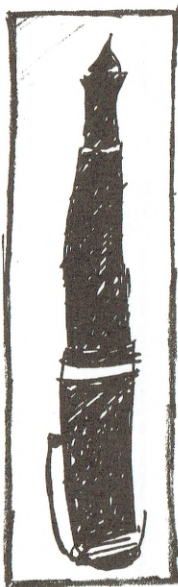
(Reprinted from Perspectives, Fall/Winter 1992, with permission of the Communications Directorate, Status of Women Canada. ■



THE BETTER IDEA BOOK: A RESOURCE BOOK ON GENDER, CULTURE, SCIENCE, AND SCHOOLS

This book was published through a collaboration between CTF and the Ontario Women's Directorate. Its intent is to show context for girls. In introducing this book at the CTF *Toward E=Quality* Conference, Heather-jane Robertson advised that "things have to change more than the curriculum in the classroom." The first half of the publication is a multifaceted discussion of the relationship between girls and mathematics, science, and technology. It includes discussions on trends, events, and connections that have influenced the ascendancy of math, science, and technology; gendered science and gendered schools; the quality of girls' lives as portrayed in four studies; and some help in understanding and decoding the data available on this topic. The discussion ends with conclusions and recommendations that, when all are achieved, will have created schools and learning experiences for girls that are considerably more sensitive to girls' needs. The second half of the book is an annotated bibliography of background materials and curriculum resources to encourage females to enter the fields of mathematics, science, and technology.

Individual copies of the publication are available from the Canadian Teachers' Federation, 110 Argyle Avenue, Ottawa, ON K2P 1B4 for \$10.70 each. ■



CHOICES FOR CHILDREN: PICTURE BOOKS PRESENTING FEMALES AND MALES IN A VARIETY OF ROLES

This a bibliography compiled by Laurie Tighe, an elementary school teacher and Status of Women contact in Sooke, and Brenda Watson, a secondary school teacher-librarian, also from Sooke.

The bibliography identifies primary literature that presents females and males in a variety of roles and situations. The list is organized and indexed to themes that are reflected in the primary curriculum as well as to themes that exist in the literature itself. Family relationships, friendship, feelings, bravery, children at play, and stories from other places and times are some of the themes. The publication was made possible by funding from the Ministry of Education and Ministry Responsible for Multiculturalism and Human Rights-Gender Equity Program.

CHOICES FOR CHILDREN

Picture Books Presenting Females and Males in a Variety of Roles

Compiled by:

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October 1992

Compiled for the
B.C. Teachers' Federation

Funded through a grant from the
Ministry of Education and Ministry Responsible for
Multiculturalism and Human Rights-Gender Equity Program

To order this bibliography, send a cheque or money order to BCTF Lesson Aids Service, 2235 Burrard Street, Vancouver, BC V6J 3H9.

BCTF members, \$4.95
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Barbara Hartley and Marion Morrison

BCTF members \$5.50, Non-BCTF members \$6.60 (GST included) ■

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BREAD AND ROSES

words by James Oppenheim

music by Caroline Kohlsaat

F B^b C₇ F




As— we come march - ing in the beau - ty of the day, A

B^b F B^b C₇ F




mil - lion dark - ened kit - chens, a— thou - sand mill lofts gray, Are

A D₇ Gm D₇ F



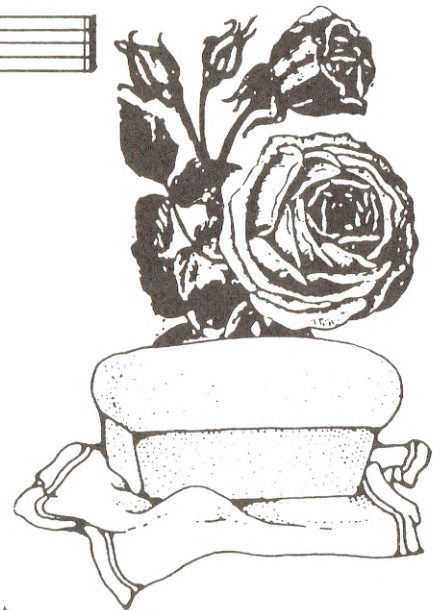
touched with all the ra - diance that a sud - den sun dis - clos - es, For the

B^b F C C₇ F



peo - ple hear us sing - ing, "Bread and ros - es, bread and ros - es."

2. As we come marching, marching, we battle too for men,
For they are women's children and we mother them again,
Our lives shall not be sweated from birth until life closes;
Hearts starve as well as bodies; give us bread but give us roses!
3. As we come marching, marching, unnumbered women dead
Go crying through our singing their ancient cry for bread.
Small art and love and beauty their drudging spirits knew.
Yes it is bread we fight for but we fight for roses too!
4. As we come marching, marching, we bring the greater days.
The rising of the woman means the rising of the race.
No more the drudge and idler—ten that toil where one reposes,
But a sharing of life's glories: Bread and roses, bread and roses!



Inspired by the New England textile strikes of 1912, Bread and Roses has become an anthem to women's rights, evidenced today in one of the most significant social revolutions of all time.

Songs For Labor prepared by American Federation of Labor CIO, 815 16th Street N.W., Washington, DC 20006.
Dorothy Shields, Department of Education.

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Opinions expressed in articles are those of the writer and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the Provincial Status of Women Committee.

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