



AWARE



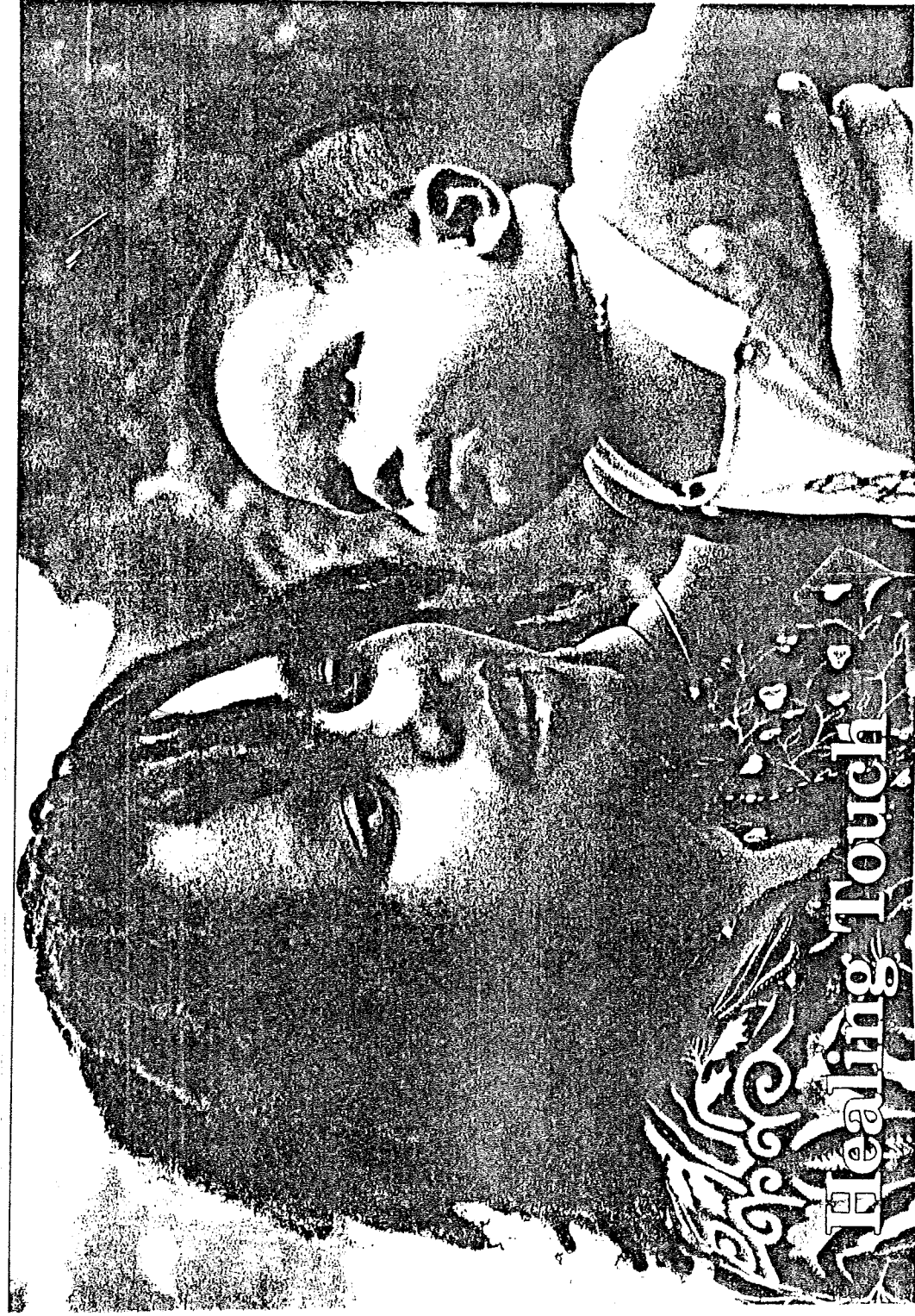
NEWSLETTER PUBLISHED BY ANTIGONISH WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION

RESOURCE CENTER

863-6221

MAY 1989

HEALTH AND HEALING



The World Health Organization, in the preamble to its charter defines health as a "state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity". The World Health Organization goes on to say that health is not just a result of socioeconomic development and stability but that health is a basic investment in economic stability.

The human energy generated by improved health can be channelled into sustaining economic and social development. In other words good health makes economic sense for society.

The existing medical care system must change because at the present time and in its current configuration it is unable to deal with health as defined by the World Health Organization. In fact, the medical care system ignores

health and concentrates on disease. In the medically controlled model of "health care" a minimal amount of money is spent on occupational and environmental issues and their relation to health or ill health or on education to prevent disease and promote health. Instead resources are directed towards drugs, surgery, hospital maintenance and construction and hi-tech equipment. The existing sick-care model does practically nothing to support our health and it is costing society a fortune in the process. Allen and Hall (1988) state: Only ten percent of the improvement in mortality can be traced to medical intervention, and that is specifically related to the treatment of infectious diseases through the use of antibiotics. All other improvements in health, including decrease in morbidity and mortality rates from infectious diseases, are the result of general public health efforts, improved nutrition and better quality of life. (p. 27)

Part of the problem with the medical model, in addition to its preoccupation with disease, is its definition of disease. The medical model defines disease as an individualistic, biological phenomenon that appears in a human body. This is a very limited and not particularly useful way to understand illness and disease because it ignores the complex interactions between people and their environments. By environment we mean the social, political, economic and ecological context in which a person exists.

In the past few years, however, many people and groups have become increasingly aware of the problems created by the medical care system and the particular interests it serves. The system has come under increasing scrutiny and it has been women who have made the most cogent criticisms and who have offered the most creative alternatives.

Basically women have exposed the medical care system as a patriarchal organization with a disease/illness focus that has lead to an expensive, fragmented system where treatments end up creating

more ill health. In addition it ignores the actual social conditions which create illness. The health of humans is determined not by medical interventions but by our behaviour, our food, our environment and our relations to others.

The ways in which women have been dealt with by the medical care system, historically and today illustrates clearly the problems of the existing system. Dissatisfaction with the existing system, however, has encouraged and necessitated women to develop alternative resources, activities and understanding of health and illness.

Women and their health have been the subject of medical interest for the past one hundred and fifty years. Traditionally the medical care women received was based on the premise that the medical care provider knows best. In addition most of women's "health care" has focused on the reproductive capability of women. A number of writers have examined and documented how modern medicine, since its development in the 19th century, has used and abused women. This use and abuse of women has been viewed as a reflection of the anti-woman bias of society generally: medicine defined all female functions as inherently pathological and therefore requiring medical treatment. Recent history continues to illustrate that women are still perceived as abnormal and requiring treatment for a wide variety of what are essentially normal processes -

- pregnancy, birth, menopause.

The concerns being raised by women are that the treatments are creating more disease and ill health themselves. In addition, women are recognizing the fact that disease labels ignore social/environmental causes of ill health and view it as an individual event.

What is required is a new, broader concept of women's health which will lead to a broader concept of health for all. And most importantly this new view must come from women themselves.

Women understand that our state of health reflects our lives. Women's health is determined by the whole of

women's lives -- by the work we do, the kind of housing we live in, the food we eat, an our relationships with others. Our health is not totally encompassed by our biology even though we cannot separate our biology from other aspects of our lives (Kenner, 1985). We also recognize that women's problems with the organization of and delivery of health care cannot be solved within the

context of the medical system alone. It is crucial that we become aware of the aspects of economic and social life that make us unhealthy and of the ways in which diseases are socially constructed. The solutions required must involve broader social change. Our discussion of what is wrong with the medical care system is very much a reflection of our concerns about society in general.

RECYCLING UPDATE by Candy Ballard

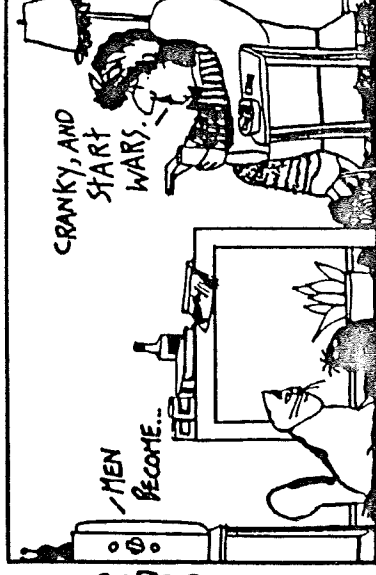
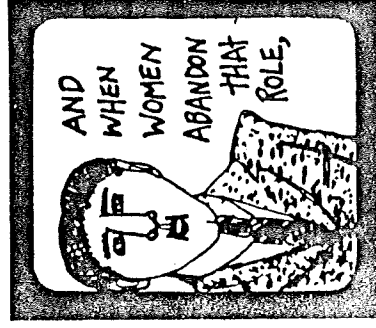
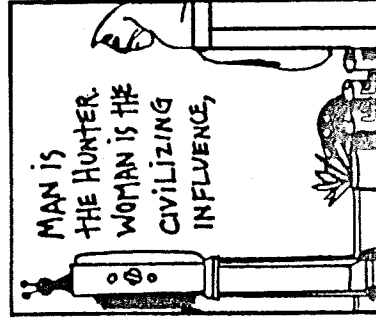
Several months ago three local women, Ann Camozzi, Candy Ballard and Liz Hagell formed the Antigonish Recycling Interest Group to address the issue of waste recycling in our area. After studying ideas and alternatives already in progress in other communities of similar size, it was decided to form a Working Committee made up of members from local organizations, the town and county councils and private citizens. It was felt that a unified effort would best provide an efficient system of waste recycling to all parts of the community. Funding will be sought through provincial and federal government channels as well as within the local municipality.

On Tuesday, March 18, Ann Camozzi gave a talk to the Antigonish County Council on recycling. The talk was well received and it was decided that council members Alan Bond and Duncan MacInnis (Landfill Committee) should represent the Council on the Recycling Working Committee. The Committee will be formed after the next Town Council meeting, May 15th.

When the committee is formed other members of the community will be asked to participate and dates will be set for regular meetings. Funding will be applied for and a feasibility study for a blue box program started.

It is hoped that a program to recycle paper, tin and glass wastes, initially, will be in place by the fall of 1989 to correspond with the fine paper recycling project presently being organized at St. F.X.U. by Liz Hagell. This program is also scheduled to begin in the fall.

We are presently at the preliminary planning stages only - nothing is written in stone. Anyone interested in working on the committee call Ann 863-5984, Candy 863-5631 or Liz 863-4476.





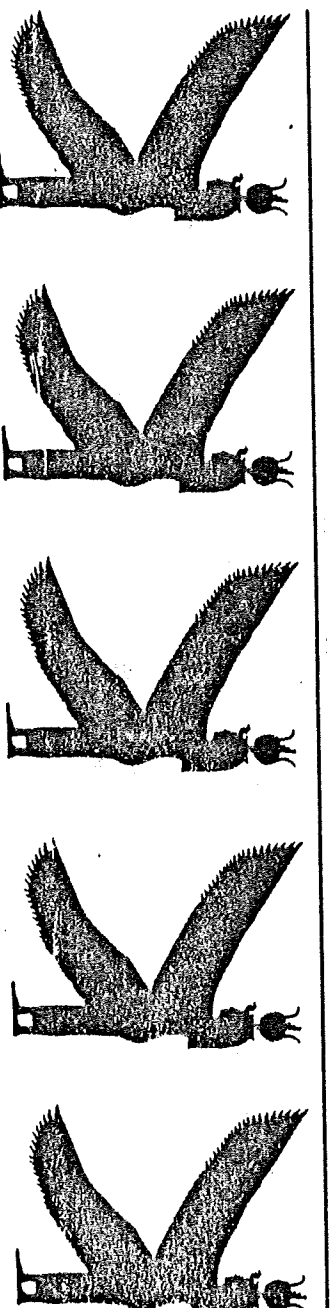
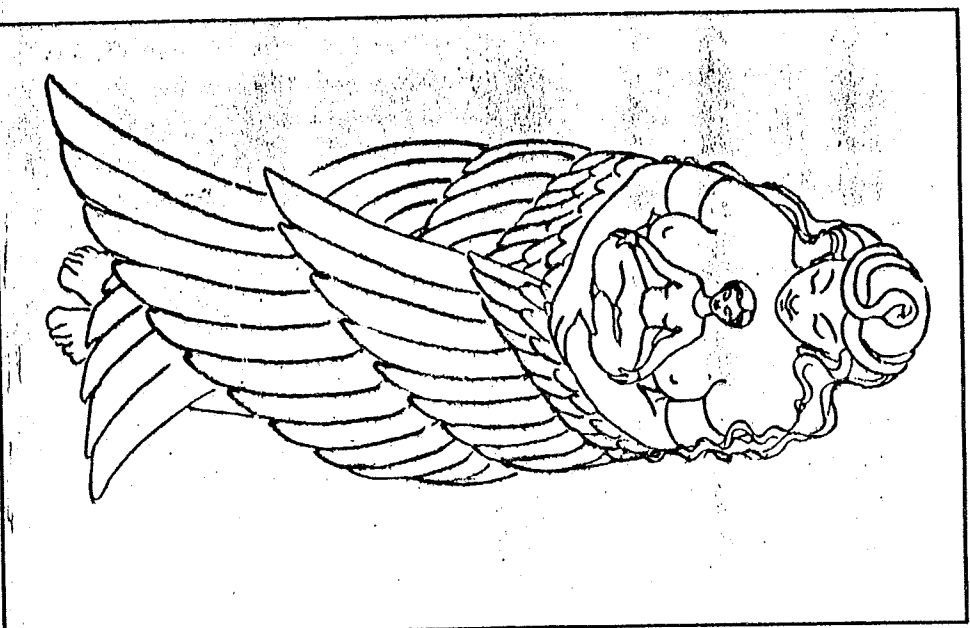
Isis: The Goddess As Healer

*I am Nature, the Mother of All
Mistress of the Elements,
Sovereign of the Spirit.
Queen of the Dead,
Queen of the Immortals.
The single embodiment of all goddesses and gods.
My will governs the movements of the stars.
The winds of the seas.
And the dread silence of the underworld.
I am worshipped under many aspects.
Known by countless names.
I am Isis.¹*

She was invoked in the ancient scriptures as Lady of Healing, Restorer of Life, Source of the Healing Herbs, the Great Sorceress Who Heals.² Her worship originated in ancient Egypt and spread from the Middle East to Asia Minor, Europe, and Great Britain, extending in time from the dawn of recorded history to the fifth century C.E.³ Ancient, yet ageless, today Isis is reawakening in the hearts of women as we rediscover our own healing powers.

A goddess of myriad facets, Isis was revered as the creator and sustainer of the cosmos, the source of life by whom all living beings are nurtured and to whom they return in death. She is often represented in Egyptian art as holding the *ankh*, the sacred symbol of life, denoting Her identity as the Lady of Life,⁴ the personification of the life force itself.⁵ Her compassion was believed to be as infinite as her wisdom, and She was especially revered as the divine physician with the power to heal the body, mind, and spirit.

Although Isis was regarded as the universal Mother—She was the patroness of women in particular. As the Giver of Life,⁶ who presided over both birth and death, She was the protectress of women in childbirth and the comforter of the bereaved. Isis's very human emotions and the qualities of love, compassion, tenderness, and perseverance which She exemplified endeared Her especially to the hearts of women. In Isis, women found a source of support and inspiration for their own lives. Isis proclaimed Herself in ancient hymns as the Goddess of women and endowed women with power equal to that of men.⁷ She has been called one of the first exponents of women's liberation.⁸



Isis Healing Meditation

Go to a quiet place where you can be by yourself and not interrupted. Sit in a chair, set your feet flat on the floor, rest your hands on your thighs, let your back be straight, and close your eyes. Center and relax yourself by taking deep, slow breaths. Visualize yourself surrounded with radiant white light.

When you have finished these preparations, start imagining yourself journeying to a Healing Temple to receive healing for yourself. When you arrive, stand before the Temple's main doorway, and examine its shape, size, color, and design. Now, reflect on the healing you need and seek. When you feel ready, go through the doorway and enter the Temple.

In the center of the Temple is the Great Goddess Isis. She stands facing you. Her winged arms are outstretched. She is radiant. Healing Love energy emanates from Her body and fills the Temple. She welcomes you and asks you to speak about the healing you are seeking. You tell Her what you want to receive. Healing for. Then, She tells you to come forward and receive Healing in Her embrace. You step forward, and she holds you to Her heart, gently enfolding you in her winged arms and in Her Love and Healing Power.

Now, experience Her energy flowing throughout your whole being as you chant "Isis, Isis, Isis" over and over. Let your consciousness merge with Hers. Absorb as much Healing energy as you sense you need, then imagine Her opening Her arms and stretching them out at Her sides again. Picture yourself standing before Her with your own arms outstretched and give thanks to Her. As you visualize this, rise up from the chair in which you have been sitting during this meditation and stretch your arms out. Open your eyes and feel Isis Healing energy radiating from you as you look around the room. Then, hold your hands to your heart and affirm to yourself that you will allow the power of this Healing meditation to flow through your daily life.

—Selena Fox, Circle Sanctuary



HEALING AND HEALTH.

The Ancient Art of Healing is rooted deeply in Womens Culture of caring and sharing. From the Beginning of time Women have been most intimately connected with birthing, nurturing, preparing and storing food, caring for the sick and dying. These experiences have increased our sensitivity and awareness and through them we have developed healing methods and practices essential to health and well being.

Before the advent of the age of technology people lived closer to the earth, the rhythms of their lives and the rhythms of the seasons. People were guided by intuition. The connection between inner and outer worlds body and minds, thought and action, were strongly sensed and felt. Healing springs from these connections, and from the recognition that there exists a universal life force which flows through and around all living things, animate and inanimate. This life force or energy is channelled between people when healing occurs. This energy flows through us and when it is blocked dis-ease occurs. When our bodies, minds, and spirits are connected and in balance our energy is flowing and we feel a sense of health and well being. Healing is a re-uniting of and balancing of all aspects of our selves, emotional, physical, intellectual, and spiritual.

Healing is an act of loving, self healing an act of nurturance and self love. Thoughts, emotions, past experiences, --positive and negative affect our health and well being. If we have repressed feelings of anger, grief, loss self hate, if we believe and internalise messages that we worthless stupid, in adequate, unloveable, ugly, unvalued human beings our energies are blocked, traumas are locked in our bodies, and illness and disease manifest in our bodies minds, and hearts. We become self haters, powerless victims who mistrust ourselves and cannot believe in our essential beauty, power for self healing, and possibility for hope and change. To work towards change all these aspects of our lives

have to be examined explored, and experienced from the perspective of being in control, having power and inner resources, using positive power of love, positive techniques restore our balance, and restore us to ourselves. Healing is an inner journey where we confront our beliefs about sickness and health, our beliefs about our power to heal, recognition of why this particular illness? how it connects with the rest of our lives and experiences, and willingness to change and look honestly at our patterns of behaviour, our thoughts, our connection to everything around us.

Tools for change, "Come to our senses, come to our selves." Meditation to still our minds and listen to our inner selves. Deep relaxation through visualization and relaxation exercises, healthy diet, regular pleasant exercise in fresh air, adequate rest and sleep, freeing of emotions, and repressed feelings in a safe environment, continued activities that center and restore balance. Music, laughter, hands on massage and healing work. Prayer for guidance and self protection on a daily basis. Believe in our unique beauty and ~~well~~ our place in this world and our right to respect as valuable human beings., and daily affirmations "I am returning to wholeness and health as the natural state of my being" Wholeness and health is the natural state of my being"....

B. Hayes.

For information on upcoming "Healing workshop" check Calender of events ...



A QUESTION TO PONDER

Do we need to restructure the AWA so that members are better able to participate? How could we best do this? Has anyone had experience with a better model of organization? We would appreciate any thoughts you may have on these questions.

MENSTRUATION RECONSIDERED

In her book Red Flower,
Rethinking Menstruation Dena
Taylor (1988) states:

I want to help to dispel the
idea that menstruation is
shameful, that it should be
kept hidden. We need to
recognize this part of our
cycle, to be aware of its
subtle and powerful effects
on us and to use these in
ways that enrich our lives.
(p. 1)

What follows are a number of
comments and ideas which may
help women to examine their
own experiences and gain new
insights into an event which
we all share.

Menarche (men-ar'-key) means
"moon" and "beginning". It
refers to the onset of
menstruation. The onset of
menstruation is the result
of the combination of a
number of factors including
age, body weight, bone mass
and diet. For many girls in
our society menarche is a
negative or frightening
experience or at best a non-
event. Do you remember your
first period? Who prepared
you? How did they do it?

Many cultures celebrate
menarche as the beginning of
fertility, the passage into
womanhood as a recognition
of the power of women and
the connection of women to
the rhythms of the Earth and
Moon. At the end of this
article is an example of
what a menarche celebration
in this culture might look
like.

Taylor discusses many
aspects of menstruation in
her book including an
examination of menstruation
and sexuality. She states
that many women feel more
sexual around the time of
their periods and that sex
during menstruation is not
abnormal.

How this sexuality is
experienced depends on
cultural attitudes and also
upon the extent to which
women accept or reject
them.

As long as we think
menstruation is unclean and
unattractive, we will also
think our sexuality is
unclean and unattractive.
(Weidger, 1975, p. 125)

Of course menstruation is
not an exciting, unifying
event for everyone. Many
women experience
menstruation as a painful
process. It is important to
recognize and understand
this reality. One way of
understanding the pain and
tension surrounding
menstruation is to become
more aware of the changes
that occur through the
entire cycle - whether they
are negative or positive
changes. A monthly chart
like the one included here
is a useful way of tuning
in to your body. While most
of the symptoms listed are
negative it is useful to
include positive ones as
well such as increased
energy, creativity, elation
increased sense of power.
By understanding the rhythm
of our own cycle we can not
only work around the
changes but, more
importantly, we can work
with them.

Women are rhythmical beings,
following the moon's cycle
of waxing and waning.
Ovulating and bleeding. We
have an opportunity every
month to "descend", like
Persephone, into the
underworld, the underworld
being our self, our soul,
our deepest being. And from
these depths we can emerge
with knowledge, insight, new
creations.

Menstruation is a time for
sleeping and dreaming,
meditation and dancing. A
time for healing, being
creative, figuring things
out.

And yet it is precisely this
phase of our own cycle that
we are taught to ignore, to
be ashamed of, even to
despise. What a terrible
loss for Woman. (Taylor,
1988, p. 109)

Honoring Ritual

If you want to celebrate a young woman's menarche in a beautiful way that won't embarrass her but yet will support her and acknowledge the importance of this huge life change, the following ritual will be appropriate.

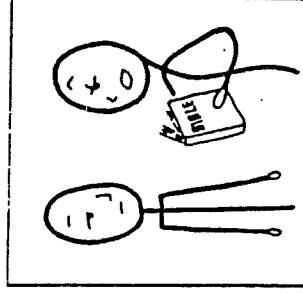
Have the young woman take a special bath or shower or take her to a sauna or hot tub. She can imagine this bath as cleansing her, washing away the things of childhood she no longer wants, and preparing her for entering adulthood. Flowers and fresh herbs can be floated in the water to enhance the special feeling of the day.

Following the bath, the girl can be given new clothing to wear as a symbol of her new status.

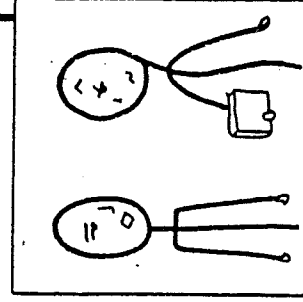
Women friends and women relatives prepare a meal with all of the young woman's favorite foods. Or everyone can meet in a restaurant which has a ritual atmosphere to it. Guests recall their own transitions into womanhood and younger guests can share their expectations. The ceremony can be done with humor and seriousness without any moralizing which adolescents naturally resist.

Following the meal, each guest gives the young woman a gift: flowers, a conch shell, carved images of goddesses, pictures of spirals, lunar calendars, jewelry, new clothing, small makeup kits, books, poems, and quilts. Each guest in turn might say why she is giving it to her and express her wishes or hopes for the future.

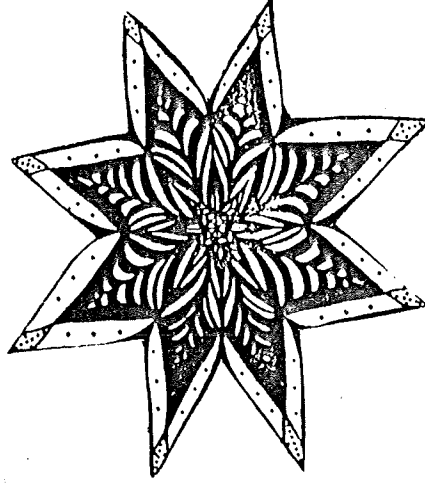
Simple and direct as this ritual is, it will give the young woman a clear message that even though puberty is full of change and confusion, it's natural and it's good and right to celebrate this time.



I CAN'T FIND A SHRED OF EVIDENCE
THAT PAINFUL MENARCHALISM WAS A
WORLD. WHAT ARE SUCH ASSERTIONS
BASED ON?



MASCULINE INTENTION.



CHART

SEVERE: disabling. unable to function

This chart is reprinted with the permission of the Women's Health Clinic, 304-414 Graham Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3C0L8

TEENAGE PREGNANCY AND PARENTHOOD

by Jean Anderson

Teenage pregnancy and parenthood is a major concern in this country.

In Antigonish County alone, from April 1, 1987 to March 31, 1989, 113 babies were born to mothers ranging in age from 15 to 19 years (St. Martha's Hospital statistics). Teenage mothers are very likely to be unmarried, to have less than a highschool education, and to have received inadequate prenatal care. Yet many young, single mothers choose to keep and raise their children, and are often dependent on public services and welfare agencies for financial support. What are some of the issues surrounding teenage pregnancy and parenthood, and what services are available to these adolescents?

To start with, many things contribute to the rising rate of adolescent pregnancy (using pregnancy as a badge of adulthood, acting out fantasies of the "ideal" family, affirming sexual identity) but ignorance and misinformation remain the major causes. The magical thinking typical of adolescence combines with the lack of sexual knowledge to produce unplanned teenage pregnancies: "If I don't think about it, it won't happen"; "If he withdraws or doesn't put his penis all the way in my vagina..."; "I'm too young to get pregnant"; "If I don't have an orgasm...."

Once a young girl becomes pregnant, she faces difficult choices, and her once familiar world is shaken by changes in her physical, social, and interpersonal situation. She has four major options: to be a single parent (with or without support), to marry, to abort, or to place the baby in adoptive care. To make these decisions, she needs counselling and care, as adolescents are often incapable of assessing realistically the implications of pregnancy, or the impact of alternative decisions on their lives. She also needs guidance in dealing with her fear and anxiety, her family, peers, the father of the infant, and school. She may not know where to turn for help, as adolescents do not often look after their own medical needs (making appointments, for example). Without good prenatal care and adequate nutrition, the incidence of medical complications (anemia, high blood pressure, low birth-weight of both premature and term infants) in teenage pregnancies increases.

Support of and assistance to adolescent parents requires the participation of a multidisciplinary team of health care providers, social service planners, and educators. To relieve the economic pressure on these young people, we need programs that help teens to complete high school and to get successful employment. Adolescent fathers, as well as adolescent mothers, need support in order to discuss their emotional responses to pregnancy (pleasure, anger, ambivalence). Topics such as child care and expense, the father's role in the birth experience, and parenting skills need to be part of this supportive counselling.

There are a number of support services available here in Antigonish. These include Community Health Services, Family Court, physicians, nurses, nutritionists, social workers,¹ guidance counsellors,

The Department of Psychiatry at St. Martha's also provides services for those unable to cope with the stress of pregnancy. With such assistance as this, teenage parents can move towards greater maturity, and become the parents they want to become.



SOBEY'S TAPES

We've collected \$25,710.29 in Sobeys's tapes. This translates into \$85.70 for the AWA. Thanks to all of you who save tapes and please continue to do so. A special thanks to volunteer Cindy Webb for tallying them.

We are all our mother's daughters @ the planet's mothers @ the planet's mothers

The mother's battle for her child... needs to become a common human battle, waged in love and in the passion for survival
Adrienne Rich

You who were darkness warmed my flesh where out of darkness rose the seed. Then all a world I made in me; all the world you hear and see hung upon my dreaming blood.

There moved the multitudinous stars, and coloured birds and fishes moved. There swam the sliding continents. All time lay rolled in me, and sense, and love that knew not its beloved.

O node and focus of the world; I hold you deep within that well you shall escape and not escape—that mirrors still your sleeping shape; that nurtures still your crescent cell.

I wither and you break from me; yet though you dance in living light I am the earth, I am the root, I am the stem that fed the fruit, the link that joins you to the night.

Judith Wright

to my first friend, teacher, map maker, landscape aide

Mama

Helen Brent Henderson Cade Brehon who in 1948, having come upon me daydreaming in the middle of the kitchen floor, mopped around me.

The Salt Eaters, 1/1

HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY

DEDICATIONS

for
Elvira Moraga Lawrence and
Mamalia Garcia Anzaldua
and for all our mothers
for the obedience and rebellion
they taught us.

This Bridge Called My Back

MAY

14TH



I long to put the experience of fifty years at once into your young lives, to give you at once the key of that treasure chamber every gem of which has cost me tears and struggles and prayers, but you must work for these inward treasures yourselves.

Hartley Beecher Stowe
to her ruin daughters (1861)



This old woman...
isn't my mother, is not
what I think. She's a spiritual
master trying to teach me
how to carry my soul lightly
how to make each step an important journey,
every motion and breath anywhere
as though anywhere were the center of earth.

Betsy Sholl



I can imagine the pain and the strength of my great grandmothers who were slaves and my great grandmothers who were Cherokee Indians trapped on reservations. I remembered my great grandmother who walked everywhere rather than sit in the back of the bus. I think about North Carolina and my home town and I remember the women of my grandmother's generation: strong, fierce women who could stop you with a look out of the corners of their eyes. Women who walked with majesty; who could wring a chicken's neck and scale a fish. Who could pick cotton, plant a garden, and sew without a pattern. Women who boiled clothes white in big black cauldrons and who hummed work songs and lullabies. Women who visited the elderly, made soup for the sick and shortnin bread for the babies.

Women who delivered babies, searched for healing roots and brewed medicines. Women who darned socks and chopped wood and layed bricks. Women who could swim rivers and shoot the head off a snake. Women who took passionate responsibility for their children and for their neighbors' children too.

Assata Shakur

You are like an everlasting friendship.
You are like a secret almost too wonderful to keep.
You are like the beginning, end, and everything in between.
You are like a spring shower.
You are like the sun shining on me and keeping me warm.
You are like a wild flower in a meadow.
You are like a very knowledgeable volume of encyclopedias.
You are like you and I love you.

Laurel O. Hoyer, age 8

(This to represent all the labored over poems, handwritten and illustrated by small daughters for their mothers on Mother's Day.)

GRANDMOTHERS

I Mary Gravely Jones

We had no pennames, no diminutives for you, always the formal guest under my father's roof: you were "Grandmother Jones" and you visited rarely. I see you walking up and down the garden, restless, southern-accented, reserved, you did not seem my mother's mother or anyone's grandmother. You were Mary, widow of William, and no matriarch, yet smoldering to the end with frustrate life. Ideas nobody listened to, least of all my father. One summer night you sat with my sister and me in the wooden glider long after twilight, holding us there with streams of pent-up words. You could quote every poet I had ever heard of, had read *The Opium Eater*, Aniel and Bernard Shaw, your green eyes looked clenched against opposition. You married straight out of the convent school, your background was country, you left an unperformed typescript of a play about Burr and Hamilton, you were impotent and brilliant, no one cared about your mind, you might have ended elsewhere than in that glider reciting your unwritten novels to the children.

Adrienne Rich



Whenever I feel myself inferior to everything about me, threatened by my own mediocrity, frightened by the discovery that a muscle is losing its strength, a desire its power. Or a pain the keen edge of its bite, I can still hold up my head and say to myself... "I am the daughter of a woman who, in a mean, close-fisted, confined little place, opened her village home to stray cats, tramps, and pregnant servant girls. I am the daughter of a woman who many a time, when she was in despair at not having enough money for others, ran through the wind-whipped snow to cry from door to door, at the houses of the rich, that a child had just been born in a poverty-stricken home to parents whose feeble, empty hands had no swaddling clothes for it. Let me not forget that I am a daughter of a woman who bent her head, trembling, between the blades of a cactus, her wrinkled face full of ecstasy over the promise of a flower, a woman who herself never ceased to flower, untiringly, during three quarters of a century."

Coleene

Ellen Bass

MARY MACLEOD BURSARY

The Antigonish Womens Association is offering a bursary of two hundred and fifty dollars to any woman (mature student) returning to school or training that would require a fee. The bursary is in honour of Sr. Mary Macleod who for a number of years before she died was an active member of our association and firmly committed to working for the Equality of Women. Sr. Mary Macleod was the director of nursing students and a sister of St. Marthas. She was a graduate of St. Josephs Glace bay and did some wonderful work here in Antigonish.

For those interested in applying for the Bursary, our deadline is June first. Applications can be picked up at "The Center" Room 204 219 main Street, Kirk Building.

CANADIAN NATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

C.N. SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM FOR WOMEN 1989. The scholarships are aimed at assisting women to develop skills for blue-collar entry-level jobs in the Canadian workforce. 68 scholarships of \$600 each are being offered.

The Pottle Award annually funds one proposal for a 6-12 month study program for a woman 'working towards strengthening the role of women in building a sense of community.' Applicants must be Canadian citizens under 30 years of age, with post-secondary education or equivalent and demonstrated writing ability.

Other criteria include evidence of a religious commitment, and community interest in improving the quality of life for women.

Not designed for an individual to pursue studies in academic institutions. It is expected that applicants will develop a plan of self-directed activities that will directly benefit women either locally, nationally or internationally in the immediate future.

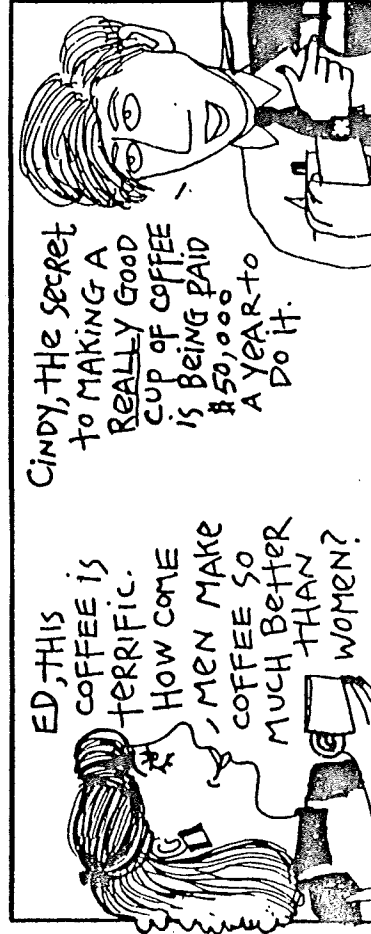
Proposals must be received by May 31 at the latest. For complete details write: Ann L. Pearson, Administrator, The Pottle Award, Ottawa YM/YMCA, 180 Argyle St., Ottawa, Ont., K2P 1B7.

Grants for farm women. In August, the federal government announced an enhanced grants initiative called the Farm Women's Advancement Program, to finance projects undertaken by farm women's groups. The program is designed to support legal and economic equality for farm women, promote their increasing participation in decision-making on the farm and to recognize their important contribution to the well-being of the agriculture sector. Program funding will be provided in the amount of \$650,000 over the next five years.

Criteria for determining priorities are now being finalized in consultation with farm women's groups across the country. For more information contact the Status of Women Canada, 151 Sparks Street, 10th Floor, Room 1005, Ottawa, Ont., K1A 1C3.

FRIENDSHIP QUILT

A few women from the Meadow Green area who came together as a result of the Rural Women's outreach Program have decided to organize a friendship quilt. 1989 is the International Year of the Quilt so we are inviting area women to contribute a square to this quilt. The theme is Home and Neighbourhood. We will need at least 20 squares measuring 12 inches with an additional 1/2 inch seam allowance. They should be of pre-washed cotton or cotton blends, any colour, heartfelt and imaginative. The collection will be pieced together in the fall and an old-time quilting bee will be planned to bring together all the contributions. The finished quilt will then be donated to Tearmann Transition House. Anyone who would like to participate please contact Sian McLean 386-2474.



Canadian Peace Alliance Actions.

The CPA, at its fall '88 steering committee meeting, decided that three peace issues should be at the top of the Canadian political agenda. These are first, stopping the nuclear submarine program, second, organizing a nation-wide protest against the stealth Cruise and, third, protesting NATO's low-level flight tests in Labrador (or Nitassinan, as the INNU call their homeland). Our next peaceletter will outline action on the first two, but the third requires urgent action. The first flight of April was the date for the resumption of low-level flight testing in Nitissian and April 1-8 was designated as week of international protest against these flights. This week, eleven jailed Innu women protesters were acquitted in court. This is good news, but all the more reason for us to write now and remind the government that this decision should herald a recognition of the rights of the INNU, and that the Canadian government must not allow low-level testing, nor the building of a million dollar NATO military base in Labrador.

Below is a copy of the letter sent to the government from the Voice of Women Board Meeting on April 2. We urge every member to send her own letter protesting this militarization of Canada. Your voice does count! (If your require further information on this or on the other actions, write to the VOW or phone 423-8046)

House of Commons
Ottawa, Ont.
KLA 0A6

To The Right Honourable Brian Mulroney

Voice of Women at its National Board Meeting in Toronto joins with Innu women of Nitassinan (Labrador) to protest the militarization of their land by frequent low level military training flights.

The Innu have never signed any treaty relinquishing control of their land to the Government of Canada.

We support the struggle of the Innu women to preserve their culture and livelihood and deeply regret the disruption of their traditional hunting and fishing patterns.

The jailing of eleven Innu women is deplorable especially since we have had reports that the prison conditions are totally unacceptable.

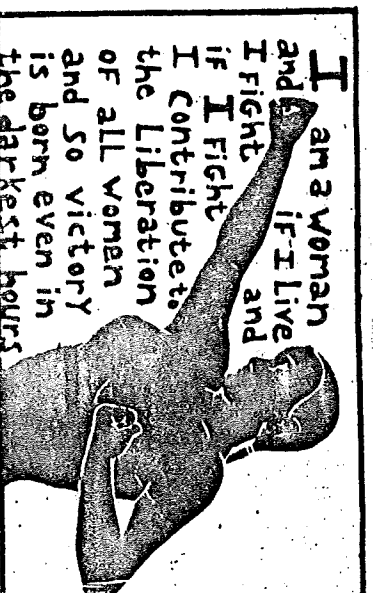
With other concerned people around the world we are joining in a week of protest (April 1-8) against militarization of Innu lands without their consent.

Sincerely and
in peace with justice,

Grace Hartman

Grace Hartman
on behalf of the Canadian Voice of Women for Peace

c.c. Mr. Bill McKnight, Minister of Defence
Mr. Douglas Lewis, Minister of Justice
Mr. Ed Broadbent
Mr. John Turner
Mokami Status of Women Council



NEWS FROM THE CENTRE

The question on most people's lips these days is, "Has spring finally sprung?" On the balmy days between snow storms the crocuses do open, the floors are covered with mud from children's boots, students don shorts and ditch socks, robins hop about and women bound into the Centre with renewed vigor. Yes, once again we can congratulate ourselves on having braved the snow, ice and mud of another Nova Scotia winter.

The past couple of months at the centre have been action-packed - what with the various workshops, calls for action on numerous issues and the ongoing crises brought on by the poverty that too many women in this town and county face daily. The cracks women fall through in our social welfare system are beginning to resemble the Grand Canyon. It is unlikely Mr. Wilson's forthcoming budget will offer any safety-net. It is more important now that ever that our anger against social injustice motivate us to act - to write letters, to form issue groups, to rally and encourage each other to persevere in our struggle for justice and equality. We must fight feelings of discouragement and negativity because they lead us to apathy and inaction.

The AWA is reviving the Social Action Committee. The committee will meet every two weeks to discuss and form an action plan around the most pressing issues of the day. AWA members are encouraged to participate in this committee in whatever way you can - by bringing issues and action-plans back to your workplace, by distributing information, by writing letters, by coming up with ideas, by cheering us on - it's up to you. If the committee is large enough, members won't feel compelled to attend every meeting. The first meeting will take place Thursday, May 11th, 7:30pm, at the Centre.

We would like to thank all the women who took time to write the Women's Program, Secretary of State, to protest the granting of \$21,000 to REAL WOMEN for them to hold a conference on women's equality. The Centre sent telegrams protesting this funding to Brian Mulroney, P.M.; Gerry Weiner, Secretary of State; Judy Wright, Director, Women's Program; Barbara MacDougall, Minister Responsible for the Status of Women; Kay Stanley and Sylvia Gold, Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women.

A group of 54 Antigonish town and county residents (many AWA members) signed a telegram sent to Tom MacGuiness, Minister in Charge of Administration of Human Rights Act, N.S., asking that gay and lesbian persons be given full rights and protection under the human Rights Act. Notice of this telegram was sent to Bill Gillis. The Conservative Caucus is still discussing the matter. Both the Liberals and N.D.P. support inclusion.

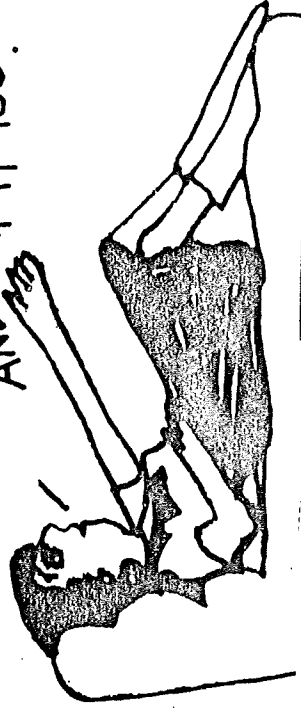
A telegram of support, on behalf of the AWA was sent to the INNU women protesting the establishment of a NATO military base in Labrador.

CLOW has undertaken the task of writing the HERSTORY of the women's movement in N.S. Cindy Cowan is working as the rural contact who will help put it together. We are asked to think about our own herstory in preparation for a meeting in May. This is an exciting project and a chance to remember and celebrate our own journey as the AWA and Resource Centre. We especially need the input of the women who founded the association.

On that note, I'll apologize for the disjointedness of this report wish us all a warm, energetic spring!!!



DOCTOR! I WANT TO
HAVE MY CAKE
AND EAT IT TOO!



UPCOMING EVENTS

The next AWA board meeting will be held May 4th, 7pm. Members are welcome.

Barb Hayes will lead a SELF-HEALING WORKSHOP, May 9th. Barb is doing a similar workshop for transition house workers in Tatamagouche as a way for them to renew and re-affirm themselves in their work. She will use a variety of techniques, including visualization and music movement, designed to help women reach and work with their inner selves. This workshop will be limited to eight women. Pre-registration is required.

CONNECT! our provincial association of women's centres will be meeting in Bridgewater May 23rd. Any member wishing to participate in this meeting please call the Centre.

HEARING INTO BEING is a technique for allowing our creative voices to emerge and problem-solve. It works by allowing women time to speak uninterruptedly, without positive or negative feedback, on a given issue for a specific period of time (15-30 minutes). Very rarely do we have the opportunity to explore and speak without interruption. By first speaking what we know we can travel through to new ideas and follow them wherever they lead - often to new insights. May 31st we would like to explore our paths, personal and/or professional within the women's movement, looking for alternative ways of tackling our old issues. If you would like to examine your own path or our communal path please come and let your creative, inner voice speak.

May 28th is INTERNATIONAL DAY OF ACTION FOR WOMEN'S HEALTH. The focus of the day, "A Call to Women for Action", is reproductive rights and is co-ordinated by the Women's Global Network on Reproductive Rights. Worldwide up to a million women die each year in pregnancy, childbirth and clandestine abortions. Many more women survive with complications and damage to health from the same causes. Women are encouraged to "continue to campaign for the reproductive rights which will give women the power to prevent our own deaths, the control to determine and provide the kind of health services which support these rights, and the social conditions which make women's good health possible."

In recognition of women's right to reproductive autonomy the Resource Centre is planning a workshop on BIRTH CONTROL. We will examine both old and new methods of birth control and discuss the side effects and safety factors of each. A date for the workshop has yet to be set.

NEW RESOURCE CENTRE LIBRARY BOOKS CHECK THEM OUT!

OUR COMMON FUTURE (THE BRUNDTLAND REPORT) by the World Commission on Environment and Development

HER WITS ABOUT HER: SELF-DEFENSE SUCCESS STORIES BY WOMEN edoted by Denise Caignon and Gail Groves

NO WAY TO LIVE: POOR WOMEN SPEAK OUT, by Sheila Baxter

ENOUGH IS ENOUGH: ABORIGINAL WOMEN SPEAK OUT, as told to Janet Silman

FEMINISM: FROM PRESSURE TO POLITICS, edited by Angela Miles and Geraldine Finn

GOING OUT OF OUR MINDS: THE METAPHYSICS OF LIBERATION, by Sonia Johnson

FEMINIST ORGANIZING FOR CHANGE: THE CONTEMPORARY WOMEN'S MOVEMENT IN CANADA, by Nancy Adamson, Linda Briskin and Margaret McPhail

CONFERENCES

May 4th, PORNOGRAPHY: IS IT FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION OR SHOULD IT BE CENSORED? speaker, Lorraine Clark, Law Professor; Trinity United Church, New Glasgow, 7:30pm, Sponsored by Pictou County Women's Centre.

May 4-6th, EDUCATING FOR A PEACEFUL WORLD - A CONFERENCE FOR EDUCATORS AND YOUTH, Dalhousie University, Halifax

May 5-7th, UNION WOMEN - STRATEGIES FOR INVOLVEMENT, Antigonish

May 5, ALLERGY CONFERENCE, Toronto, for more information call Judy Donovan Whitty 863-1215, after 5pm

May 6, MAYOR'S WALK FOR AFRICA, for relief and long term development in Africa, Halifax, call 422-8338 (OXFAM)

May 8-10, ORIENTATION TO CHEMICAL DEPENDENCY, Pictou

May 11th, CHILD PORNOGRAPHY - CHILDREN AS SEX OBJECTS, speaker Katherine Lambert, Social Worker, Trinity United Church, New Glasgow, 7:30pm, Sponsored by Pictou County Women's Centre.

May 12-15th, NAC CONFERENCE - WOMEN FOR SOLIDARITY, Carleton University, Ottawa

May 13th, VOICE OF WOMEN DAY OF RENEWAL, Unitarian Church, Halifax

May 17th, SURFACING: A CONFERENCE FOR AND ABOUT WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS Halifax

May 26-27th, KEEPING OUR KIDS: DISADVANTAGED WOMEN AND CHILD WELFARE LEGISLATION, Parent's Rights Group, Halifax

June 1-4th, WOMEN'S SPIRITUALITY: EMPOWERMENT AND PROMISE, Ottawa

June 5th, WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY, Join a peace ecology flotilla in Halifax Harbour, organized by the Halifax Peace Campaign, call 434-1354

June 23-24th, CELEBRATING OUR HERSTORY: A C.C.L.O.W. CONFERENCE, St. Mary's University, Halifax

A Victory For The Coalition On Depo-Provera

Upjohn Canada still has an active file requesting permission to market Depo-Provera as a contraceptive in Canada, but for now, the pharmaceutical company has been sent back to the drawing board. Health and Welfare Canada requires more positive test results concerning the long-term safety of the drug.

This decision was arrived at largely due to the persistence of the Coalition on Depo-Provera, an affiliation of women's health and consumer groups. D.E.S. Action Canada joined the Coalition in November 1985 after the announcement that Depo would soon be approved as a widely available contraceptive. As an organization dealing with the tragic results of a synthetic hormone, D.E.S. Action felt that the situation with Depo was similar enough to warrant serious concern.

On September 22, 1986 Harriet Simand and Maggie Caruso of D.E.S. Action were invited to appear before a government panel: Health and Welfare Consultation on Conception Control. They expressed solidarity with the Coalition and concern that consumers might again be victimized by yet another inadequately tested drug.

Stressing that the important issue was to weigh the risks and the benefits, they argued, "...given that the target population for this contraceptive will be a large segment of healthy Canadian women who will not be using this drug to remedy a serious medical ill, then there can be no moral justification at this time for approving Depo-Provera as it remains unclear whether it will cause these women future damage."

Depo-Provera (depo medroxyprogesterone acetate) acts on the hypothalamus-pituitary axis to suppress ovulation. One injection is strong enough to prevent the menstrual cycle for three to six months or longer.

Some of the short-term side-effects of Depo-Provera are abdominal discomfort, depression, nausea, headaches, high blood pressure, irregular menstrual flow, suppression of sexual drive, jaundice, spotty darkening of facial skin and continued infertility after ceasing injections.

The long-term side effects of Depo-Provera on women and their off-spring are not known, but animal and clinical studies suggest that they are: lowered life expectancy, temporary or permanent infertility, anemia, diabetes, uterine disease and permanent damage to the pituitary gland.

WOMEN'S RESOURCE CENTRE

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Antigonish Women's Resource Centre, 204B Kirk Place
219 Main Street. Phone 863-6221

May 1989

- *****
- Thurs. May 4 AWA BOARD MEETING, all members are welcome
Women's Resource Centre, 7pm
- Tues. May 9 SELF-HEALING WORKSHOP, with Barbara Hayes,
pre-registration is necessary, Women's
Resource Centre, 7-10pm
- Thurs. May 11 SOCIAL ACTION COMMITTEE MEETING, Women's
Resource Centre, 7:30pm
- Tues. May 16 DIAPER SERVICE MEETING. Let's get a cloth
diaper service started in Antigonish.
Women's Resource Centre, 7:30pm
- Tues. May 23 CONNECT! MEETING, Association of N.S.
Women's Centres to meet in Bridgewater,
Second Story Women's centre, 10-3pm
- Thurs. May 25 BIRTH CONTROL: A WORKSHOP ON METHODS,
EFFECTIVENESS AND SIDE EFFECTS, with
Alex Keir from Planned Parenthood, St.
James United Church Parlour, 7pm
- Thurs. May 25 SOCIAL ACTION COMMITTEE MEETING, Women's
Resource Centre, 7:30pm
- Wed. May 31 HERSTORY: HEARING INTO BEING WORKSHOP,
Women's Resource Centre, 7-10pm
- Fridays FRIDAY LUNCH. Bring your lunch to the
Centre and catch-up or tell us the latest
news.
- *****

MEMBERSHIP

NAME _____

FEES:

ADDRESS _____

Regular: \$15.00
Low-income: \$ 7.00
Sustaining: \$25.00

PHONE _____ (HOME)
_____ (WORK)

Come visit and have a cup of tea. If you are interested
volunteering your time let us know what your areas of
interest are. Browse through our lending library or
feel free to use the centre as a quiet spot in the middle
of a busy day.