

WOMEN'S RESOURCE CENTRE

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

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- Oct. 21st: Friday- Orientation for new Board Members 6:30-8:30
- Oct. 22nd: Fall Retreat for Board Members at the Center 9-5pm
- Oct. 25th: Volunteer Orientation 2pm - 3pm
- Oct. 25th: Panel on "Womens Herstory" St.F.X. Nicholson Hall
Room B33 or 138 at 7:30pm Everyone Welcome
- Oct. 28th: "Women In Recovery" Group
Re: Alcohol/Substance Abuse
- Nov. 2nd: AWA Board meeting at Resource Center 7pm
- Nov. 4th: Friday Weekly Brown Bag Lunches - Guest Speakers
Drop by and chat. Keep in touch with your women
friends. 12noon
- Nov. 5th: "What Shall We Tell The Children"
A day of learning and reflection on new reproductive
technologies. Seton Academic Center - Mount St.
Vincent 10am - 5pm

ANTIGONISH AREA WOMEN AND COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:

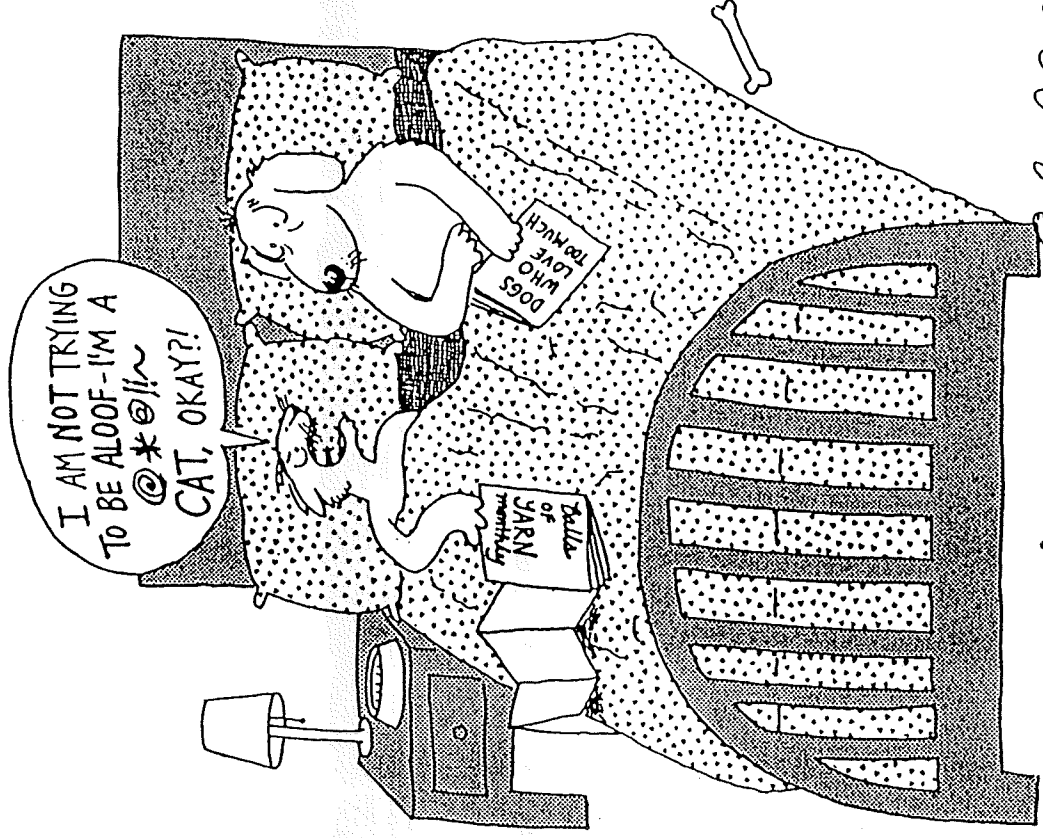
The AWRC's project on Women and Community Economic Development is well underway. The general purpose of this project is to co-sponsor with other interested agencies in the community presentations on contemporary approaches to community economic development, with a particular perspective on the opportunities and obstacles facing women in this field.

Research activity is currently (autumn '94) underway, comprising interviews with three sets of local women: current small business owners, rural women engaged in informal income generating activities, and women interested in creating their own jobs and/or setting up their own businesses. A "Community Roundtable" or workshop on women and CED will be held in February.

Martha McGinn is in charge of this work. If you have an interest in it, please call her at the Centre. 863-6221

... Long the opposite side of
 this page on your 'judge or
 skeleton board, then left... PRESTO!
 a cartoon to share with friends, etc.
 ;)

©1992 Ben Burd



EXASPERATED?
 TRY TO THINK OF YOUR MATE AS A
 CROSS-CULTURAL EXPERIENCE!

14.

USAGE STATISTICS OF THE ANTIGONISH WOMEN'S RESOURCE CENTRE

The Centre's latest annual report details the issues we deal with on a day-to-day basis. The total number of calls and visits we handled between April 1, 1993 and March 31, 1994 is 3844. You can see in the table below how the interest in different issues compares against others. The Centre's work tends to generate activity in certain areas, and specific unaddressed needs in the community will cause increased interest. Sometimes it is a combination of these and other factors. The calls and visits originate with individual women needing direct service and information; representatives of other groups we are developing programs with; AWA members, AWA/AWRC volunteers, and Board members assisting with Centre work and vice versa; and other organizations networking with us around specific concerns.

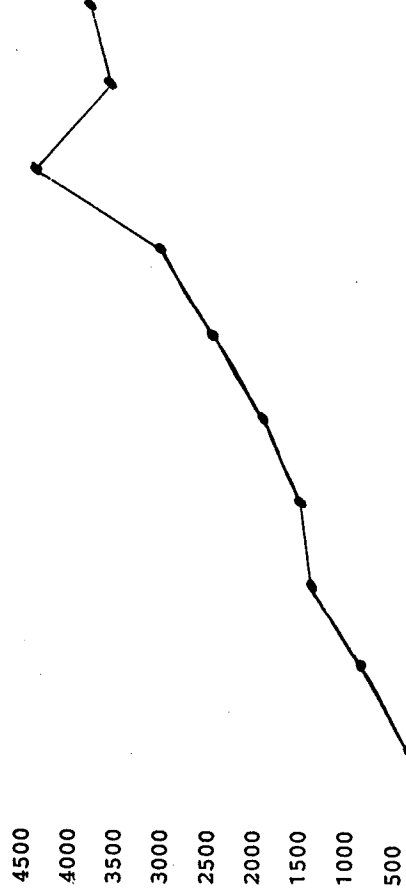
Table 3
Subject Matter of Calls to the Centre

Nature of Call	Number of Calls
Abuse (Relationship)	163
Sexual Assault/Sexual Abuse	286
Sexual Harassment/Discrimination	102
Business	23
Childcare	8
Education & Training	88
Employment	48
Finances	75
Health	128
Reproductive Health	34
Housing	154
Legal	84
Parenting	84
Sexuality	11
Social Assistance	121
Women's Centre	290
Poverty	176
Sexrole Stereotyping	17
Other	112

We have grown steadily over the years as can be seen in Figure 4, below, and we continue to grow now that we have funding from the Province. We are expanding our counselling and support work, providing group experiences for women to work on their issues, training volunteers, and we have expanded and improved our physical space. The work of AWA projects (e.g. the Sexual Assault Project and the Adolescent Health Project) breaks new ground continuously and helps us to respond better to community needs. Please share this information with others and help women to feel comfortable using the Centre. We can meet many needs!

Figure 4
Utilization Increase

CONTACTS



84/85 85/86 86/87 87/88 88/89 89/90 90/91 91/92 92/93 93/94

YR.

SISTER ISABEL MAC DOUGALL LIBRARY

This is a list of books we have added to the library recently. Come on in and check them out!

HEALTH:

"The Family Medical & Prescription Drug Guide"
...an encyclopaedia of illnesses and drugs commonly prescribed for their treatment...very up-to-date.

"Cancer in Two Voices" by Sandra Butler and Barbara Rosenblum...Barbara and Sandra "...share the experience of living with cancer...provokes you to be in touch with all your life's choices..."

"The Dance of Intimacy: A Woman's Guide to Courageous Acts of Change in Key Relationships" by Harriet Golhor Lerner, PhD, author of "The Dance of Anger"

"Feeding the Hungry Heart: The Experience of Compulsive Eating" by Geneen Roth..."If you look at thin women with painful pangs of envy, if you think your life would be perfect if only you could lose five or ten or a hundred pounds... you will know exactly what the women in this book are talking about, and for the first time you will find out what to do about it." (Susie Orbach, author of "Fat is a Feminist Issue")

"Reinventing Your Life: How to Break Free From Negative Life Patterns" by Jeffrey E. Young Ph.D. and Janet S. Klosko, Ph.D.

SEXUALITY: "Women's Sexuality After Childhood Incest" by Elaine Westerlund...a "study of the aftereffects of childhood incest. Clinicians and survivors alike will benefit from this knowledge and from the author's carefully thought-out and tested treatment recommendations." (Christine A. Courtois)

PORNOGRAPHY: "MS. Magazine, Jan. Feb. 1994: PORNOGRAPHY: Stop it? Use It? Ignore It? Does women's equality depend on what we do about it?" Conversation between Andrea Dworkin, Marilyn French, Norma Ramos, and Ntozake Shange.

SOCIAL JUSTICE: "Becoming an Ally: Breaking the Cycle of Oppression" by Anne Bishop..."This book is my attempt to answer some of the big questions of my life: Where does oppression come from? Has it always been with us, just 'human nature'? What can we do to change it?..." (Bishop)

"Women Respond to the Men's Movement: A Feminist Collection" edited by Kay Leigh Hagan..."MAKE NO MISTAKE ABOUT IT: Women want a men's movement. We are literally dying for it...We have to use our instincts when deciding what to trust. We need to ask questions... Then women can find allies in this struggle for a future that has never been." (Gloria Steinem) "Feminists long for men to heal..." (Starhawk)

"Six Women's Slave Narratives" "...allows us for the first time to see clearly the full dimensions of the literary achievements of black women..." (Eric J. Sundquist, NY Times Book Review)

ECONOMICS/ENVIRONMENT: "No Place Like Home: Building Sustainable Communities" by Marcia Nozick...points to a healthy community as the goal of society and provides a blueprint to achieve it. This is must reading." (David Suzuki)



Oona Landry and I recently attended a conference in Winnipeg for women's centres across Canada. It was an exciting and informative event. The conference planners have formed a steering committee and will further the agenda developed at the conference. The priorities for the next two years are

- 1) enhancing communication among centres across the country, possibly by computer network,
- 2) involving our centres in the Social Programs Review, and
- 3) lobbying the Federal Government for continued support of women's centres.

It was inspiring to see the level of cooperation and openness of the diverse group of women as we worked to achieve consensus. We were a shining example of good political process. I wish I had it all on video-cassette!

Katherine



WOMEN IN RECOVERY
INITIAL MEETING
FRIDAY, OCT. 28
AT THE CENTRE

IF YOU ARE CONCERNED ABOUT YOUR USE OF ALCOHOL AND/OR OTHER SUBSTANCES. PLEASE JOIN US! WE WILL BE DISCUSSING HOW WE WILL WORK TOGETHER & WHEN & WHERE WE'LL MEET, ETC. NO FEE. CALL THE CENTRE FOR INFO.



THE CANADIAN SOCIAL PROGRAMS REVIEW

If you are interested in issues relating to the review of Canada's social programs, (UIC, Student Aid, Social Assistance, education and training, Child Tax Benefit, etc. please let me know. A workshop will be coming up to help us voice our ideas and concerns.

*Katherine
Reed*





themselves and the people they care for. We responded to these needs almost continuously throughout the summer in spite of the upheaval created by our renovations. Women come to the Centre for assistance and information concerning many issues such as mental health, physical health, poverty, parenting, education & training, employment and unemployment, social assistance, legal matters, child care, and housing.



We try to assist each woman in ways that enhance her control over her life and we try to affirm women in their struggles. We applaud the victories, be they small or large, and we laugh with women who occasionally recount bizarre or ironic "twists of fate". This is one of the most enjoyable aspects of working at the Centre. It is a privilege to be a catalyst for positive change in someone's life.

It has been a very busy summer and early fall. We are beginning some new groups, (see announcements in this edition of "AWAre") and we have been cooperating with some local committees and projects. The AWA Sexual Assault Project is currently working to address the needs of survivors of sexual violence. AWA members, AWRC staff and volunteers are involved in some of the project's committees which focus on specific areas of concern identified by the research. The committees are identifying gaps in services and resources and proposing ways to address them.

We participate in the recently-formed Antigonish Family Support Society (ACFSS). ACFSS delivers parenting education, provides opportunities for parents to share information and resources, and will act as a voice for issues related to family life in the Antigonish Area. ACFSS is linked to a regional project called "Kids First" (funded by Health Canada) and will be involved in overseeing the work of the Antigonish "Kid's First" Outreach Coordinator. This project will bring additional support and education to the community for families, in much the same style as the AWRC does for women.

We have just wrapped up our "Women Helping Women" training program. This program was provided to women's centres around Nova Scotia by The Self Help Connection in Dartmouth. It helped approximately 20 local women acquire new skills and information to help them set up and facilitate self help groups to address a variety of needs. Some of the areas of concern were parenting, sexual abuse, spousal abuse, eating disorders, alcoholism, and job-seeking to name just a few. If you are thinking about starting or joining a self-help group, give us a call and we'll try to link you up with like-minded people.

Barbara Hayes has joined the Resource Centre staff to fill a vacancy left by Lorraine Keating who has moved to Halifax to pursue a career in teaching. We'll miss Lorraine's gentle manner and exuberant sense of humor. It is wonderful to have Barbara and her considerable skill and experience in working with women. She will be coordinating volunteers, so if anyone is interested and has a little extra time...

We are very happy to have Vangie Babin on permanent staff at the Centre. Vangie is our office support worker, so hers may be the first friendly voice you encounter on the phone or the pleasant person who greets you at the door. You may recognize her from her brief work-experience placement here last fall. She'll just be working part-time, but in the time she is here she the Centre runs like a well-oiled machine. Welcome back Vangie!

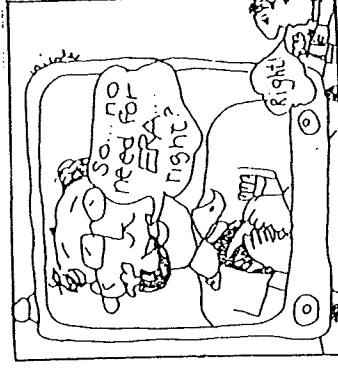
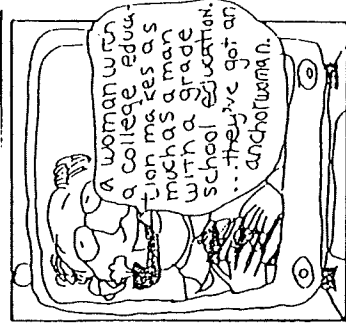
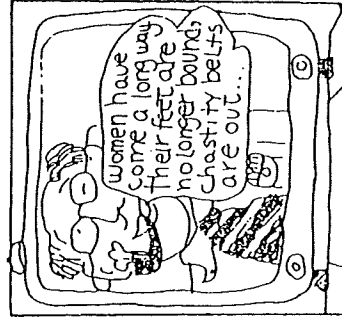
We are resurrecting the Friday "Brown-bag Lunch" series. We will simply have an open agenda, and when interesting items come up we'll try to get word out through "the regulars". Please call the Centre and share any thoughts you have on this. We value your input. This could be a great way for you to introduce friends and newcomers to the Centre.

Continued...

PEI! This leaves only our 12 1/2 yr. old at home who likely regrets being an only child all of a sudden! Being the capable little guy he is, he is doing ok, however! If we can inject a good sense of autonomy into each of our children (oops..I guess we just "nurture" it, they do the work!) and retain our own sense of identity, we have made history too.

Each time I voice my objection to a sexist/racist "joke" and explain the "way" or by being an advocate in some capacity for a student, or a woman in pain, I feel that my association with WIT & now AWA (& Angela) are being affirmed in the most positive of ways...it is not trivia to look for inclusive language where possible, nor legislation. Like one of my other role models, Mary Malone (theologian), I even dare to state I am a feminist, and the history I have just shared with you enables/empowers me to do so! So long for now!

Judy Donovan Whitty
Oct.18/94



Antigonish Women's Association By-Laws

January, 1992

Philosophy

The Antigonish Women's Association operates from a feminist perspective. This means that we are committed to women's values, goals, and ways of knowing. We strive for a dynamical structure that changes as the issues change and as the voices of the women themselves change. We celebrate the diversity among women and are committed to offering information about issues and options in a balanced manner so that all women, regardless of their point of view, are able to trust that the Association is an organization that supports women. The Board of Directors for the Association is a working group committed to the ideal of consensus in decision making; the consensus of the collection of women's voices among us. There is active encouragement for all women to feel free to develop, and to voice, their own point of view. There is a lateral structure within the Board of Directors, and the Board encourages participation and input regarding decisions from the membership at all times.

NEWS FROM THE CENTRE

by Katherine Reed

Greetings AWA members, friends, and users of the women's centre and volunteers. If you've visited the Centre lately, if you've probably seen the results of our recent renovations. If you haven't seen it yet, come on down! I'm sure you'll be pleasantly surprised. It's beautiful!

Speaking of good reasons to visit the Centre, we continue to add books to the Sister Isabel MacDougall library. Some of these were donated and some were purchased. We have some fantastic materials now on women's sexuality, health, recovery from sexual abuse, spousal abuse, alcoholism/substance abuse, and some great resources for self-help groups.

The total number of calls and visits to the Centre for the months of June, July, August & September was 1086. Roughly one third of these contacts involved women needing "direct service". Direct service involves responding to the needs of individual women when they are seeking information, navigating through a life crisis, or simply trying to make the most of life for

THE TIMES, THEY ARE A CHANGING ! (as in the song)

In preparation of the upcoming International Womens Year, a good number of us formed what came to be called WIT - Women In Transition. Being pioneers, it never occurred to us that that name might already be claimed - which it was! Some other province had it already and it was not inclusive as it was specific to women in distress...however, we didn't know that & went merrily on our way using the WIT in a way that was to include any and all who wanted to learn more, share & make a tangible moment! A core group was responsible for most of the planning, leg work, fund raising etc. - all as volunteers of course. An in depth history on this would take too many pages so I will just say we worked hard to become more aware of what we each needed, identified these gaps and tried to fill as many as possible! Eventually 1975 arrived and there were so many events/collaborating with groups from other areas, kitchen meetings - and fun. And eventually it was over. For some of us it was the beginning - taking soc. at X, working outside the home, the "founding" of the first licensed day care, (Sara Stouffer) (after the Student Co-Op one that is,) etc. I did not go back to St.F.X. music (did much later), but instead went into the two year nursing diploma at St. Martha's along with four other older parents like myself! My classmates always seemed surprised to discover I had two little ones aged 3 & 6 to care for in between trying to meet everyone's needs in hospital! It was a challenge that taught me to be very organized and to prioritize and to stay focused in class, because there was no time to study later, with meals to get, children/husband to feed & all the rest of the million things parents do! I graduated, worked & continued studying at St.F.X. - enter Angela Miles, Soc. Dept. who touched many of our lives. I was very pregnant throughout her class, then was breast feeding -she didn't even raise an eye brow and ask me to leave the class if the child had to stay as well, unlike my earlier experience with a Prof. (yrs. earlier). I was made to feel welcome, as were my peers and none of us were ever the same! We learned why things are as they are, why inequities occur and what we can begin to do to start "change".

In many ways those two years had to be the most exciting of my life! Looking back at our efforts of '74 and '75 in holding kitchen meetings, public talks, was a beginning...what we lacked was a foundation. Angela's course work and sharing taught us to question/think for our selves (if we didn't already)...to see that there are gender imbalances due to power imbalance, to question it, and to voice it. I suspect that with this type of foundation and our good intentions, our original WIT group would not have had to fold over a philosophical question that divided our membership. As we are about to enter 1995, it delights me that we, AWA, can discuss such issues and collaborate on policy as we will in November. We have made history by hanging on & celebrating our 10th Anniversary in a town that has not always made our existence easy mostly due to "myths" that circulate -we continue to see fresh interested faces at events & dropping into

the Center (and hopefully becoming Members of AWA!) & still a place for the "warriors of old" such as myself, Barbara, Oona et al- (those who know me know that I mean that term in the most empowering sense such as the "phoenix rising from the ashes," no room for offence, here!) We each have made, and continue to make our mark in history - I watch Susan and Barbara with the Adolescent Health Project & their wonderful activities and regret that my nearly 16 yr. old has to miss out as she attends a girls school in Sydney, CB...she is making her own history by leaving secure surroundings (family) in order to be able to attend a school with "real windows that open", a small student population, no carpets, and where you can dare to raise your hand and ask a question without being considered "nerdy"...where she can feel alive, empowered, and is achieving academically, as well as being healthy in the school environment, something that she cannot experience here as yet. Our 21 year old was privileged to study under Ann Louise Brooks (X) who influenced her greatly in pursuing her dream to spend this year in England (she loves it!) but still hopes to attend Grad school (Soc.) someday! I realize our oldest (just turned 25!) is making history when I tell 'non believers' that yes, he is going to be a chiropractor - two yrs. to go in Toronto & is engaged to a wonderful young woman from

Native Women

"The healing movement of native women is strong and pretty consistent right across the country," says Bea Shawanda, a Calgary-based native family consultant and one of the few people who have had the opportunity to visit native communities throughout North America. "We have a cultural belief system that says a woman is the foundation of the community, and if she's not well, the community's not well. Women know that inherently, but we've gone through generations of cultural oppression, and only lately are we breaking through that. We've come to realize we *have* to survive now — for the sake of our children."

Strong traditions of freedom, equality and mutual respect — once the bedrock of native society — began to crumble about 100 years ago through the deliberate efforts of a white government bent on total assimilation. Bands were forced to leave their homes and hunting grounds and relocate on small pockets of land. They had to abandon their own laws and obey new ones written in a language they didn't understand.

Across Canada, Protestant and Catholic missionaries were granted the right to force native children from age six to leave their families and live in residential schools — a practice that continued into the late 1960s. In many of these schools, the children suffered physical abuse, sexual abuse and public humiliation; in virtually all schools, children were punished for speaking their own language or performing traditional ceremonies.

Traditional dances and spiritual ceremonies were illegal throughout Canada until 1951; from the mid-'60s to the early 1980s, thousands of

native children were taken from their homes and adopted by nonnative families — 3,000 in Manitoba alone; and native people were prohibited from voting in federal elections until 1960.

But the attempted assimilation of native people in Canada did not have the desired outcome. With the culture oppressed, the languages near extinction and the traditions all but forgotten, the social problems were only beginning. Now that the hunting and fishing grounds were gone, men were deprived of their traditional roles as providers, and poverty was rampant. With the children wrenched from their communities and deposited at residential schools, families broke apart.

While the activism of native women might seem similar to the mainstream women's movement, the two are quite unconnected, with vastly different belief systems. Nonnative women have been struggling for equal rights; native women are struggling for sheer survival. Many nonnative women want to break out of their traditional roles as wives and mothers; native women want to strengthen those roles. Most nonnative women are coming from male-dominated traditions; in traditional native society, everyone is born equal. As Shawanda says, "Native women don't need to be liberated. We're already free."

— native women have felt compelled to make changes to themselves and their own families. "A big part of our motivation is desperation," says Pam Paul, a policy analyst at the Native Women's Association of Canada in Ottawa. "Family violence, sexual abuse and child abuse have escalated to a point where women are standing up and saying, 'This isn't our way. We didn't used to abuse our children and divide our families. These ideas have come from outside.' We have a vision of what we were and what we should be; we're trying to recapture that vision."

THERAPEUTIC GROUP

FOR

WOMEN ADULT SURVIVORS

OF

CHILDHOOD SEXUAL ABUSE

FROM PAIN TO HEALING



DATE: Starting November 1

TIME: 6:30 pm

For information and registration
phone 863-6221



8. Among the traditions of the indigenous people, one of the most important is the belief that children are gifts from the Creator and must be cared for — and so, of course, must women, who bring these treasures forth. This ancient lesson is being relearned through various programs on reserves and in cities. At Andunhyaan (the Ojibwa word for "our home"), a shelter for native women and children in Toronto, women must attend a life skills course with traditional culture that reinforces the women's self-esteem.

"Without proper care, treatment and respect of women, life would not go on," says Colette Deveau, the shelter's executive director. "Most women have heard that in their early life, but they closer to mainstream society they get, the more the role of women tends to be forgotten." Along with teaching women how to deal with fear or abandonment and build confidence, the life skills course helps them learn to budget, find an apartment and a job, and raise their children in a way to prevent a recurrence of violence in the next generation.

It's a slow, painstaking and frustrating process, but native women are succeeding in gathering up the scattered fragments of their culture and, out of a recent history of oppression and tragedy, drawing the strength to heal themselves, their families and their communities.

What remains now is for native men to take their place beside the women and children in helping to heal themselves. "Women have been doing all the work so far, but we need the participation of men," says Deborah Francis, coordinator of native services for the Children's Aid Society of the Districts of Sudbury and Manitoulin. "We have men in our caseloads; we have boys in our group for abused kids. By the year 2000, our goal is to have men and women working side by side in the community."

Until that happens, native women will continue to strengthen themselves, to reestablish their extended families, to reinforce their harmonious connection to nature. "When women know that they are not only life givers but life bearers, they can serve lovingly," says Bea Shawanda. "Once you understand that link with Mother Earth, then you have your rightful place in the sun." •

from: Canadian Living
October, 1990

HELP WANTED

People to sell tickets for our Autumn draw. People who have done so before, we would be delighted if you could do it again. This is an opportunity for many of our members to help out. The more of us who sell tickets the easier it is for all of us. Please contact the center. NOW. SOON.

WOMEN, SILENCE AND EDUCATION

By: Katherine Winlo

Women, Silence and Education. Three words that seem to be interconnected in our Herstory.

"Growing up without opportunities for play and for dialogue poses the gravest danger to the growing child." Lev Vygotsky uttered these prophetic words in 1962, putting to paper, written down in journals, studied and stamped with his name as a very male centered educational system demanded, what every woman has known since time immortal.

This reminds me of my own education. A place of silence especially for the women. Of linear thinking and one in which only one person knew the answer. An answer that was there in and of itself. I could not understand the proses of this thought, I was not allowed to see it. I could only hope that by memorizing whatever was put out one day, maybe, I could spontaneously articulate a fully formed thought that was right.

Somehow, I think I had it better than my previous sisters.

Today it does not seem strange, unnatural or immoral to see women of all ages, classes, races etc. attending formal (male) educational institutions. Those first women, what they must have gone through...(now insert any derogatory word used for women). If you do not respect someone's humanity you will get angry, what you do with that reaction is your responsibility.

Women like Carrie Derrek

is not the property of one but where individuals from their own perspectives talk out the process of a thought. Each persons thoughts are valid and should be regarded with care. We can only come from our own perspective. Sounds fabulous!!!

a botanist, who became the first woman appointed to the academic staff of McGill in 1912. Jennie Trout and Emily Howard Stowe, two women most responsible for advancing medical training for women. Most women doctors were unable to practice in Canada so became medical missionaries. One woman took her fight to the parliament to get permission to practice in Canada.

A similar story occurred with the nursing profession. Women have been traditionally been healers, and caring for the sick was not a departure from their traditional sphere; but being highly educated to do so and paid for it was. All progress considered, educational systems are still male dominated/orientated in structures and ways of knowing.

Women have our own ways of knowing. The silence of our culture towards women's development of self, voice and mind dampen are own understanding and articulation of this knowing. We each know, but sometimes there is too much clutter from our culture muffling ourselves.

How to change such a vast institutional system...? Understanding ourselves, the idea that the world is not one dimensional but multi. Ideas of education such as the Midwife concept. In it the midwife-teacher assists in the emergence of consciousness not imposing their ideas onto the student. All are students and teachers. What facilitates this is the process of dialogue, where the "answer"

Maybe we should all read "Women's Ways of Knowing" and start our own revolution of education. It's all there, all we need to do is open the door. Actually, the revolution has already started from within and from outside. It has always been there!

ANTIAGONISH WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION

BOARD OF DIRECTORS 1993-94

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ANNUAL AUTUMN DRAW

Big prizes. Good odds. Eleven chances to win. One thousand dollar prize; ten one hundreds!!! Great chance to win some Christmas money.

\$20.00 a ticket
Please try your luck. Get your ticket soon. Tickets are on sale at the Women's Center NOW.



[On work: "You complain, my poor husband, of your ten hours of work. Look at me! I've worked fourteen hours, and my d isn't over yet." "Am I unknown? The only human point of a b

WORKSHOP SERIES

on

"WOMEN AND SELF-ESTEEM"

Sponsored by: Antigonish Womens Resource Centre

A series of four workshops to start beginning of November
Saturday mornings 10am - 12noon

TOPICS INCLUDE:

-Womens sex roles and socialization
-Body Image
-Anger/Depression
-Sexuality

Limited Number
Cost - \$10.00 a session (subsides available for low income women)

For further information and to register call
Barbara Hayes at the Center
863-6221

Contributors to this Newsletter

Eileen Cameron Henry
Sylvia Parris
May Goring
Barbara Hayes
Katherine Reed
Katherine Winlo
Martha McGinn
Judy Whitty

ATTENTION:

Your chance to become a volunteer...
Come to our Volunteer Orientation
Tuesday, October 25th 2pm-to-3pm
Learn all about what volunteers
can do at the center.
WE NEED YOU!!!

I recently passed my 87th birthday. And I could have wept because I wasn't a young girl entering university. Why? I didn't want to be young for what youth offers, slim waist, high breasts and a quick stride that says, "I'm on my way to great things!" I wanted to be twenty-one with my B.A. in my hand, and all the choices in the world.

When I walked out into the world I walked straight into the Great Depression, and choices of where to go and what to do to make a living were so limited as to be useless. With a B.A. I could teach, go into nursing, take a course in typing and shorthand, and become a stenographer, and with years of experience finally become a secretary. But, as I had gone to Dalhousie on a scholarship there was no money to even think of these so-called careers. A distant relative gave me a job in the Traffic Department of Tel and Tel. I did a traffic study of long distant calls from Sydney to Halifax, and a new line was installed. I gave up and got married.

Then came the Second World War, and suddenly I was needed. I was educated, so I was able to take over the Ration Board, secretary of the Red Cross, got into Wartime Prices and Trade Board, and eventually the local weekly, The Antigonish Casket.

Looking back is sad. Today in University I could take Journalism, Public Relations, Business Admin., Radio Work, or T.V. writing and broadcasting. But I am 87 years old. I learned all those skills the hard way, by doing them, because I was thrust into the hard school of experience, and it all adds up to not having the background all women have today. She can be an engineer, a doctor, a dentist, an editor of a paper, a politician, a Major in the army - every job in the world is open to her.

Take advantage of what you can be today, so that when you are 87 you will have reached all the goals my generation only dreamt about.

Eileen Henry

Some Important "First" Women and Events in Nova Scotia

- 1887 The municipal franchise was granted to widows and spinsters in Nova Scotia.
- 1890 Annie Isabelle Hamilton of Brookfield became the first female graduate of Dalhousie Medical School and for several years practiced in Halifax's North End.
- 1895 Emilie Carrier LeBlanc ("Marichette"), an activist who worked for women's education and suffrage, began writing a series of articles for L'Evangéline on the lives and aspirations of Acadian women.
- 1897 Selena Jefferson began a 50-year teaching career as a pioneer in educating Black Nova Scotians.
- 1917 The passage of Equal Guardianship of Infants Act granted women equal powers, rights and obligations for the care, custody, education and control of their children.
- 1918 Most women were granted the right to vote in federal elections across Canada. Nova Scotian women were permitted to participate in provincial elections; Asian and native women were denied suffrage until 1948 and 1960 respectively.
- 1928 The Supreme Court of Canada decided that women are not persons under the terms of the British North America Act.
- 1929 After the famous "Persons" Case was heard before the British Privy Council, Canadian women were granted full political freedom.
- 1946 A female teacher who married was no longer required to leave the profession.
- 1969 Rachel Marshall of Millbrook was the first woman to be a band chief on a Canadian Indian reserve.
- 1971 Canada Labour Code Amendments included protection from discrimination based on sex and marital status.
- 1974 Coline Campbell became the first woman to represent a Nova Scotia riding in Parliament.
- 1980 New Democrat Alexa McDonough became Canada's first female party leader.
- 1981 Halifax Transit Commission hired its first permanent female bus driver.
- 1984 Daurene Lewis of Annapolis Royal became Canada's first black woman mayor.
- 1986 Connie Sparks became the first Black woman appointed as a judge in Nova Scotia Family Court.
- 1989 Marie Dechman was the first Deputy Speaker of the House.

- 1793 Rose Fortune, Nova Scotia's first black businesswoman, operated a baggage handling business in Annapolis Royal.
- 1879 Sarah Maude Doane was awarded a B.A. by the University of Kings College, but refused to attend the convocation ceremony "because of all those men".
- 1884 Acadia University conferred its first degree (a B.A.) to a woman, Clara Bell Marshall.
- 1884 The federal government introduced the Married Women's Property Act recognizing the rights of married women to hold property.
- 1885 Margaret Newcombe became the first woman to receive a degree (a B.A.) from Dalhousie University.



1897 Selena Jefferson
Photo courtesy of the Black Cultural Centre for Nova Scotia

celebrated our Tenth Anniversary this year. We have grown and expanded our services. The work we have done over the years has and continues to be kind of work womens activism has taken up in the past. At the turn of the century one Historian dramatically summarised what womens voluntary associations were doing in the following list.

Building Libraries: lobbying for clean water, overseeing and profoundly influencing the development of public education, promoting housing reform, designing measures to protect public health, teaching prisoners, creating museums, orchestras public libraries, organising peace societies, supporting prohibition, trying to abolish child labour, funding, colleges for women, inventing school lunch programs, investigating tenement housing and poor working conditions for women, and the list goes on....

In the Womens Center we continue to do very similar work, working on sexual harassment, policies for local businesses, initiating recycling, documenting the issues around lack of quality, affordable housing, supporting women in unions for better work conditions, helping low income women with tax returns, educating on changes to unemployment act, labour laws, employees profits, employers responsibilities etc. Addressing food and hunger issue in Antigonish - providing support groups for Adult Survivors of Child Sexual Abuse - organizing poverty awareness events, preparing briefs on pornography presenting a political skills conference for women, and the list goes on.

Women have been involved in community development in human centered reform and social improvement for many years. It would be fair to say that women are and have been central, not marginal to the making of society and to the building of civilization which is and continues to be the hallmark of womens activism. And the work goes on...

opportunities for other paid employment and because they, too, believed that they had a natural aptitude for the job.⁷

Between 1838 and the passage of the Nova Scotia Free School Act in 1864, which eliminated tuition and introduced greater centralized supervision of public schooling in the province, the change proceeded slowly. In 1851 just under 20 per cent of Nova Scotia public school teachers were women; in 1861 women formed a third of the public school work force.⁸ Feminization was much more rapid in the decade following the 1864 Free School Act. In less than five years women constituted nearly half of all teachers both winter and summer.⁹ In 1870 the provincial superintendent of schools reported that:

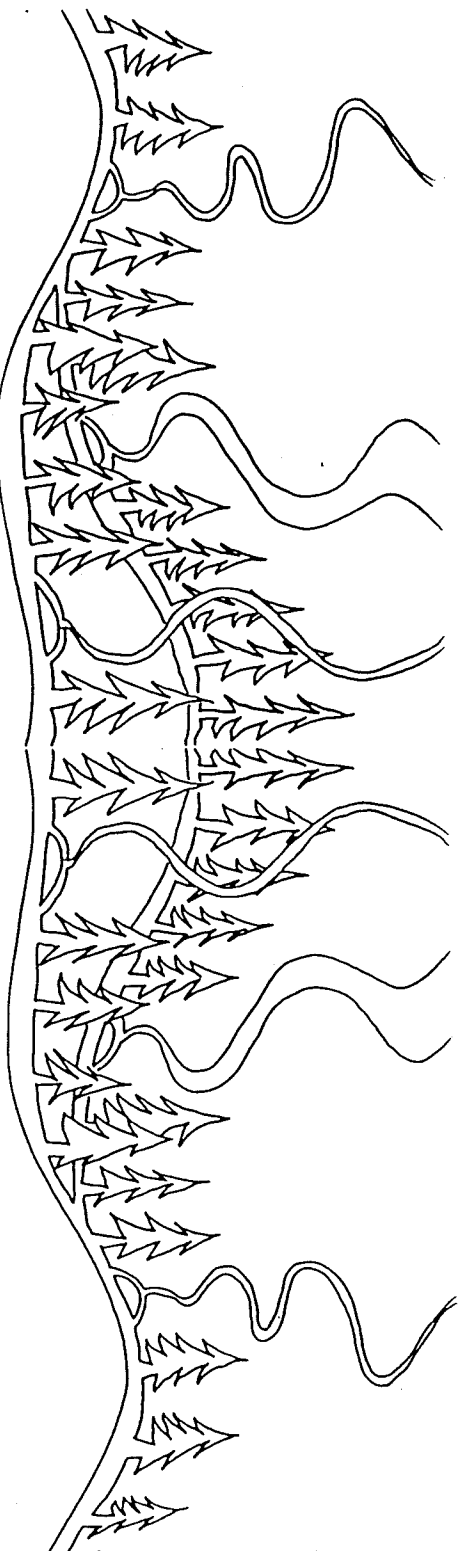
The rapid increase of female teachers, as compared with those of the other sex, is worthy of note. While the former increased 81% in 5 years, the number of male teachers increased only 51%. The proportion of female teachers is greater in summer, 53% of those employed in the summer, 41% employed in winter being female teachers.¹⁰

By the end of the 1870s two-thirds of the province's teachers were women (see Table One).

The relationship between school reform and feminization is obviously an important one. To understand it we must consider both the function of the reformed public school systems and the mid-19th-century ideological concept of separate spheres for men and women. Nineteenth-century advocates of public school reform promised many benefits, but time and again they returned to a single theme: universal free public schooling would provide moral training for the young and produce a generation of hard-working, law-abiding citizens.¹¹ The inculcation of these social and political values was generally more important to the aims of school reformers than the provision of either religious or intellectual education.¹² Reformed public school sys-

tems, therefore, required a large work force capable of teaching the values and attitudes deemed appropriate by the school reformers, as well as a smaller number of administrators and teachers with strong academic background for the senior (and especially the male) students. The recruitment of women as public school teachers seemed natural to 19th-century legislators, school administrators and parents who were imbued with the separate spheres ideology.¹³

Reformed public school systems occupied an ambiguous place in the mid-19th-century social landscape. They created institutions in which some of the work of the private sphere — the training of children — was performed in a public arena under the jurisdiction of the state. They attest to the difficulty of applying the middle-class ideal of a division of labour along sexual lines, an ideal that confined male activity to the public world of economics and politics and female activity to the private world of the family and reproduction. While it seemed natural that women, suited by nature to the moral training of children, should be hired as public school teachers, public schools were more than extensions of the domestic sphere. They were also arenas for both collaboration and competition between men and women. The boundaries between the private and the public spheres were not always clearly defined, and were under constant revision. This overlapping of the private and public spheres had important ramifications in the teachers' struggle to gain recognition for their work.





"The personal is political"
Womens Herstory in the Making
Womens Activism in Antigonish

Women's Activism and Women's Herstory. These words conjure up a time of restive passion, and inspirational commitment to affecting change in womens lives and freedoms.

In Antigonish this restiveness was felt, the awakenings of feminist consciousness was stirring in the early seventies and the work continues to this day providing change in many womens lives, and in the opportunities and quality of life available to them.

In the beginning of the decade for women (1975 - 1985) a small group of women formed "Women In Transition". The aims of Women in Transition (WIT) were

- : to aid in the educational, recreational and social development of women in the Antigonish area.
- : to establish a human resource development center.
- : to serve as an information clearing

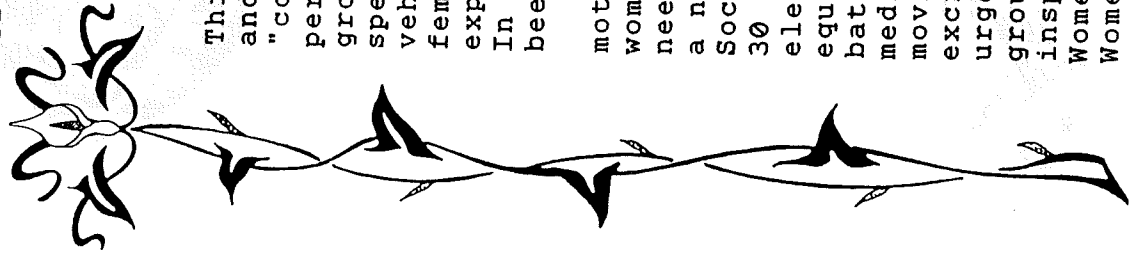
house of projects and organizations.

This group had at least 50 members, women from Antigonish town and county. Some of these women had been involved in "consciousness raising groups of the sixties where the term "the personal is political" was coined. The primary focus of these groups was the telling of and listening to womens stories - speaking the truth of their lives. Consciousness raising was a vehicle for personal liberation and as such womens theory of feminism came directly from the examination of personal experience as it related to the larger context of the political. In these groups women realized, became conscious of, how they had been socialized to accept their status as not equal to men.

Women were relegated to the domestic sphere (instinctive mother and homemaker). At the same time this work was de-valued, women coming together at their home had many question and changes needed to be made in many areas. Following the inception of WIT a non credit university course entitled "Women Today" given by Sociology Professor Angela Miles held and captivated a group of 30 women and one man. The response to the classes were electrifying as we examined issues - such as womens work -pay equity- womans childcare, double workload, poverty, wife battering, sexual harassment, rape-incest-women and the media, (The movie killing us softly was shown) pornography (the movie "Not a Love Story") These classes were full of the intense excitement generated by the outrage women felt about these very urgent and oppressive conditions. By the end of the course a group of very committed women with the enthusiastic and brilliant inspiration of Angela - went forward to found the Antigonish Womens Association and apply for funding to open the Antigonish Women's Resource Centre.

It was a marvellously exciting time - women wanted equality- equal opportunity as those ~~opposed~~ ^{Ascribed} to men. Our time and work respected. We wanted equal pay and access to jobs traditionally done by men - judges, lawyers, politicians, engineers etc. We wanted our men, brothers, sons, husbands to share household work and assume responsibility for child care!! We worked to change the conditions many women suffered in the home. The family, once considered a safe haven in a cruel world was for many women and children a place of terror, fear and brutality (and continues to be).

Women were being exploited by men sexually, politically, and economically. Women wanted change and were not willing to wait. Sisterhood was embraced by women - we were sisters, we would work together. Robin Morgans' book "Sisterhood is Powerful". "The feminine mystique" by Betty Freedan, "The Female Eunuch" by Germaine Greer. These were books that startled and electrified our consciousness and stirred us on to action and in the years that followed much has been achieved. The Women's Resource Centre has initiated projects, workshops, educational events. And influenced social policy regarding womens issues. We



BLACK WOMEN'S HERSTORY

Last in Line

Who am I? Girl? Women?
Black Girl? Black Women?
Who must I serve?
Who must I protect?

The Family.
We must not allow them to destroy the Family.
Our children need this man to call daddy.
My needs, my needs must come at the end.

The Community.
We must not let them destroy our community.
If I call and they take my man away, he may not back.
They'll blame me. They'll say I'm one of them.
We must protect our community.
My needs, my needs must come at the end.

Black girl, Black women.
Shudder in the shadows of your home.
Your house, your community.
Don't cry out loud.
Your needs come last.

Your needs come last.
Family, Community, and so on and so on.
Your needs come last.
What's real! What's important!
Then your needs at the end.

It's all for the Family.
It's all for the Community
That's what they tell you.
I know the verse well.
My needs, my needs come last.



South Lee Telfair

Let us rewrite the poem and have it end as so:

It's all for Family.
It's all for Community.
My needs, Family needs, Community needs.
They are in line. They are together.
None shall be first. None shall be last.

Sylvia Paris

"SEPARATE SPHERES"

*The Feminization of Public School Teaching
in Nova Scotia, 1838-1880*

JANET GULDFORD



In 1838 the Nova Scotia Assembly decided that local school boards could hire women.¹ The Assembly was responding to a shortage of public school teachers and the decision was popular with both school boards and women teachers. Within 40 years women made up two-thirds of the public school work force in the province.² Both the recruitment of large numbers of women teachers and its consequences illustrate the ambiguities and contradictions inherent in the 19th-century, middle-class gender expectations usually referred to as the ideology of "separate spheres."³ The feminization of public school teaching, and the gender ideology that encouraged it, had important implications for the struggle of Nova Scotia teachers to achieve professional wages and decent working conditions. Women were recruited as teachers because school administrators and politicians, persuaded that men and women belonged to separate spheres of activity, believed that women were inherently suited to the care and teaching of young children. But this widely shared gender ideology was inimical to teachers' claims to professional status, claims based on the possession of a set of acquired and scientifically based skills and knowledge. This contradiction inhibited successful collaboration between men and women within the public school work force and prolonged the struggle for higher wages and professional autonomy.

Women did not begin teaching school in Nova Scotia in 1838; rather, it was from that date that women teachers began to move from private schools to state-subsidized public schools.⁴ Moreover, despite the periodic expression of fears and reservations about the feminization of public school teaching, Nova Scotians appeared to regard the development as a natural one. The femi-

nization of public school teaching accompanied the creation of the reformed, state-supported elementary school systems in North America and Britain, a phenomenon that has attracted considerable attention from historians in the past few decades.⁵ As David Allison, the superintendent of schools for the province, reported in 1877: "It may be desirable that we should have more male teachers, yet we are not to expect that Nova Scotia will be an exception to . . . almost every country where common school instruction [is] freely brought to the people."⁶

Contemporary observers believed that women teachers were recruited because they were willing to work for low wages and because, according to the prevailing ideology of gender roles, women had a natural aptitude for working with young children. Women became teachers because they had few

Continued on page # 8.5.



What is history? We must distinguish between the unrecorded past—all the events of the past as recollected by human beings—and History—the recorded and interpreted past.* Like men, women are and always have been actors and agents in history. Since women are half and sometimes more than half of humankind, they always have shared the world and its work equally with men. Women are and have been central, not marginal, to the making of society and to the building of civilization. Women have also shared with men in preserving collective memory, which shapes the past into cultural tradition, provides the link between generations, and connects past and future. This oral tradition was kept alive in poem and myth, which both men and women created and preserved in folklore, art, and ritual.

History-making, on the other hand, is a historical creation which dates from the invention of writing in ancient Mesopotamia. From the time of the king lists

of ancient Sumer on, historians, whether priests, royal servants, clerks, clerics, or a professional class of university-trained intellectuals, have selected the events to be recorded and have interpreted them so as to give them meaning and significance. Until the most recent past, these historians have been men, and what they have recorded is what men have done and experienced and found significant. They have called this History and claimed universality for it. What women have done and experienced has been left unrecorded, neglected, ignored in interpretation. Historical scholarship, up to the most recent past, has seen women as marginal to the making of civilization and as unessential to those pursuits defined as having historic significance.

Thus, the recorded and interpreted record of the past of the human race is only a partial record, in that it omits the past of half of humankind, and it is distorted, in that it tells the story from the viewpoint of the male half of humanity only. To counter this argument, as has often been done, by showing that large groups of men, possibly the majority of men, have also for a long time been eliminated from the historical record through the prejudiced interpretations of intellectuals representing the concerns of small ruling elites, is to beg the question. One error does not cancel out another; both conceptual errors need correction. As formerly subordinate groups, such as peasants, slaves, proletarians, have risen into positions of power or at least inclusion in the polity, their experiences have become part of the historical record. That is, the experiences of the males of their group; females were, as usual, excluded. The point is that men and women have suffered exclusion and discrimination because of their class. No man has been excluded from the historical record because of his sex, yet all women were.

Women have been kept from contributing to History-making, that is, the ordering and interpretation of the past of humankind. Since this process of meaning-giving is essential to the creation and perpetuation of civilization, we can see at once that women's marginality in this endeavor places us in a unique and segregate position. Women are the majority, yet we are structured into social institutions as though we were a minority.

While women have been victimized by this and many other aspects of their long subordination to men, it is a fundamental error to try to conceptualize women primarily as victims. To do so at once obscures what must be assumed as a given of women's historical situation: Women are essential and central to creating society; they are and always have been actors and agents in history. Women have 'made history,' yet they have been kept from knowing their History and from inter-

preting history, either their own or that of men.

Women have been systematically excluded from the enterprise of creating symbol systems, philosophies, science, and law. Women have not only been educationally deprived throughout

historical time in every

known society, they have been excluded from theory-formation. The tension between women's actual historical experience and their exclusion from interpreting that experience I have called 'the dialectic of women's history.' This dialectic has

moved women forward in the hist-

The contradiction between women's centrality and active role in creating society and their marginality in the meaning-giving process of interpretation and explanation has been a dynamic force, causing women to struggle against their condition. When, in that process of struggle, at certain historic moments, the contradictions in their relationship to society and to historical process are brought into the consciousness of women, they are then correctly perceived and named as deprivations that women share as a group. This coming-into-consciousness of women becomes the dialectical force moving them into action to change their condition and to enter a new relationship to male-dominated society.

Because of these conditions unique to themselves, women have had a historical experience significantly different from that of men.

I began by asking the question: what are the definitions and concepts we need in order to explain the unique and segregate relationship of women to historical process, to the making of history and to the interpretation of their own past?

Another question which I hoped my study would address concerned the long delay (over 3500 years) in women's coming to consciousness of their own subordinate position in society. What could explain women's historical 'complicity' in upholding the patriarchal system that subordinated them and in transmitting that system, generation after generation, to their children of both sexes?

Both of these are big and unpleasant questions because they appear to lead to answers indicating women's victimization and essential inferiority. I believe that is the reason these questions have not earlier been addressed by feminist thinkers, although traditional male scholarship has offered us the patriarchal answer: women have not produced important advances in thought because of their biologically determined preoccupation with nurturance and emotion, which led to their essential 'inferiority' in regard to abstract thought. I begin instead with the assumption that men

and women are biologically different, but that the values and implications based on that difference are the result of culture. Whatever differences are discernible in the present in regard to men-as-a-group and women-as-a-group are the result of the particular history of

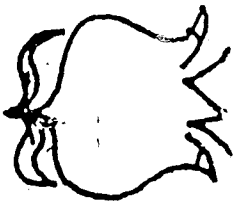
women, which is essentially different from the history of men. This is due to the subordination of women to men, which is older than civilization, and to the denial of women's history. The existence of women's history has

been obscured and neglected by patriarchal thought, a fact which has significantly affected the psychology of men and women.

I began with the conviction, shared by most feminist thinkers, that patriarchy as a system is historical: it has a beginning in history. If that is so, it can be ended by historical process. If patriarchy were 'natural,' that is, based on biological determinism, then to change it would mean to change nature. One might argue that changing nature is precisely what civilization has done, but that so far most of the benefits of that domination over nature which men call 'progress' has accrued to the male of the species. Why and how this happened are historical questions, regardless of how one explains the causes of female subordination. My own hypothesis on the causes and origins of women's subordination are more fully discussed in Chapters One and Two of my book. What is important to my analysis is the insight that the relation of men and women to the knowledge of their past is in itself a shaping force in the making of history. . . .



Women are and have been central, not marginal, to the making of society and to the building of civilization.



AWAARE



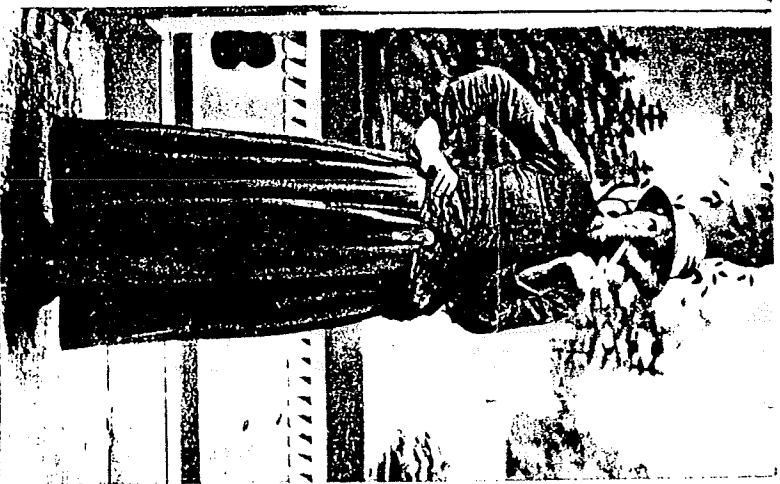
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WOMENS HERSTORY

SEPARATE SPHERES



Writing Women into History

This article is an abridged excerpt from the introduction to The Creation of Patriarchy, by Gerda Lerner (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986).

WOMEN AND HISTORY-MAKING

Women's history is indispensable and essential to the emancipation of women. After twenty-five years of researching, writing, and teaching Women's History, I have come to this conviction on theoretical and practical grounds. The theoretical argument is more fully developed in my book, *The Creation of Patriarchy*, the practical argument rests on my observation of the profound changes in consciousness which students of Women's History experience. Women's History changes their lives. Even short-term exposure to the past experience of women, such as in two-week institutes and seminars, has the most profound psychological effect on women participants.

And yet, most of the theoretical work of modern feminism, beginning with Simone de Beauvoir and continuing to the present, has been ahistorical and negligent of feminist historical scholarship. This was understandable in the early days of the new wave of feminism, when scholarship on the past of women was scant, but in the 1980s, when excellent scholarly work in Women's History is abundantly available, the distance between historical scholarship and feminist criticism in other fields persists. Anthropologists, literary critics, sociologists, political scientists, and poets have offered theoretical works based on "history," but the work of Women's History specialists has not become part of the common discourse. I believe the reasons for this go beyond the sociology of the women doing feminist criticism and beyond the constraints of their academic background and training. The reasons lie in the conflict-ridden and highly problematic relationship of women to history.