



THE EDUCATION CONNECTION

A conference co-sponsored by

The Canadian Congress for Learning
Opportunities for Women
and Mount Saint Vincent University
Halifax, October 17 - 19, 1980

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C.C.L.O.W. also wishes to express appreciation to all of the women in Halifax and Moncton who skillfully arranged the myriad details which accommodated our program to an unexpected 450 participants. Special thanks to Angela Julien of the Halifax Social Planning Department, Dr. Joyce Kennedy of Mount St. Vincent University, Therese Melanson of Moncton University, Joan Brown Hicks of the Halifax Library, and Dr. Janet Eaton our conference co-ordinator.

INTRODUCTION

THE EDUCATION CONNECTION was the first C.C.L.O.W. conference to reach out beyond our current membership. In October 1977, in Winnipeg, 40 women educators met to create a national network devoted to increasing and improving learning opportunities for women. In April 1979, in Banff, 65 members of the C.C.L.O.W. national network met to share expertise in certain key areas of our work, and to create a flexible organizational structure for C.C.L.O.W. Now, in October 1981, 450 women and men took part in a bilingual conference in Halifax to explore the connection of poverty, aging, career options and rural life with women's learning needs.

The variety of backgrounds and expertise of all of the conference participants was both stimulating and challenging. The conference was planned to bring together both providers of learning programs and the women who need them. It was alive with sharing and the bonds that are the heart of new networks. Workshops were presented in either English or French, with simultaneous translation provided for all major speeches and plenary sessions. This reflects the commitment of C.C.L.O.W. to become more responsive to the special learning needs of francophone women and to learn from their ideas and experience.

Already, the value of the conference is reflected in the many new memberships in C.C.L.O.W., particularly in the Atlantic region. C.C.L.O.W. will continue to hold its national conferences in different regions across the country in order to stimulate involvement from an area and to focus on learning projects and needs in the area.

THE EDUCATION CONNECTION was a many dimensional conference. In addition to workshops, the weekend included C.C.L.O.W.'s annual meeting, entertainment by Cape Breton feminist, Rita McNeil, dinner speakers, Dr. Margaret Fulton and Madeline LeBlanc, and a final plenary to which workshop recommendations were presented for approval and action.

Workshops, speeches, meals and entertainment were planned as a whole, an event which would renew our personal-political-educational network. One of the participants remarked that the "discovery that C.C.L.O.W. offers support helped (me) in establishing (my) own priorities".

KEYNOTE ADDRESS: DR. BERIT ÅS

Berit Ås is a professor and social psychologist associated with the University of Oslo, Norway. She has an extensive background in research, women's issues and political activity, serving either as member of the Norwegian parliament or as alternate member for the last ten years. Dr. Ås spent some months as a visiting professor in Halifax last year and her impact has been profound.

TITLE: BEYOND PROMISES: A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE ON ADULT EDUCATION FOR WOMEN

The world is in need of sane knowledge. Economic independence is not a sufficient goal to solve the distress in which our society finds itself. Women must take responsibility for influencing the direction of our society. Education must help us to evaluate, criticize and propose new solutions.

In every part of the world, women have fewer learning opportunities than men and the gap between the options available to men, and the options available to women, increases. In times of hardship, women suffer disproportionately. Yet studies done in the early 1970's have shown a negative relationship between a nation's economic and social development and the social, economic and psychological development of its women. Equality of opportunity does not increase in good times.

Four examples of the "downward pull" which oppresses women:

1. in male dominated institutions (including politics, the economy, and social, legal and educational services) women are given the fewest possible positions of power and influence;
2. women must be twice as good as men to succeed in male dominated institutions;

3. liberal laws proposed by men are destructive in the end - for example, the gap between men's salaries and women's salaries has actually increased since the introduction of equal pay laws in the United States;
4. when equal rights are given to groups with different resources, the most powerful groups benefit the most.

Dr. Ås demonstrated the "downward pull" with reference both to her own experience and to her study (published in Convergence, 1975). In her study, Dr. Ås compared women who have never taken part in adult education with women who are or have been involved in adult education programs. She found that those who had been involved in adult education had already much more education and more family support. When asked how long they had waited before they were able to attend adult education, 32% had waited 10 years or more and an additional 17% had waited 5-9 years: Those who had dropped out of adult education programs did so because of economic, day care or health problems, or because the programs they needed were not offered or were offered at impossible times. Finally, 83% of the adult learners had started at a level below where they had left off in previous formal education. The intervening years of isolation in the home had severely eroded both these women's skills and confidence.

Women are betrayed by educational institutions. When we are accused of lacking motivation for adult education, we are the victims taking the blame for our situation. We can only redress this situation with courage and self reliance. We need more sane knowledge in order to root out discrimination and build equality, particularly between men and women.

DINNER ADDRESS: MADELEINE LEBLANC

Madeleine Leblanc has been involved in a wide range of women's issues over the past decade. As the first president of the 'Conseil consultatif sur la condition de la femme, in New Brunswick', she has been responsible for formulating and initiating the activities of the council. Madame Leblanc, as president of the CCCF, reports to the premier of the province.

TITLE: AN ADVISORY COUNCIL: WHAT CAN BE DONE?

I have probably been asked to talk about the work going on at the New Brunswick Advisory Council on the Status of Women because it is still, even after three years, the youngest council of its kind in Canada. We must admit that the gestation period for such an organization is usually somewhat long. In New Brunswick, we will have managed to get the government to adopt, in one year, the law establishing the advisory council, beating the all time record, maybe because 1975 happened to be the International Year of Women.

Our Advisory Council holds a double mandate: we have a responsibility - to advise the government, and a mission - to distribute information to the public so as to encourage a change of attitude towards women. One can't go without the other and we must therefore work on these two levels simultaneously. As Claire Bonenfant, from the Quebec Council, would say, "It won't be the first time women have been asked to do more than two things at the same time". Our New Brunswick Council has discovered that the government speaks only one language, that of public pressure, the language of the electorate. We had to start by distributing much information and by educating the public. We talked about such subjects as violence in the home, sexual harassment and numerous other injustices done to women.

The Council publicized the role it was intent on playing and started listening to the women of the province, first by organizing a toll free hot line for their use, and by holding public meetings in all corners of the province. We made sure we were highly visible from the start and thus created a climate of confidence that encouraged women to break the silence. The Council earned respect with regard to the quality and good timing of its public interventions and the press, both regional and national, demonstrated quite a bit of sympathy towards our cause.

In the past three years, we have discussed the equal sharing of matrimonial wealth, the family services law, the employment regulations, and we have talked about battered women, women alcoholics, drug addicts, women and sports, sexism within the educational system, police ethics and numerous other subjects. We had a lot of success with a self-fulfillment program set up through a make-work project. We organized two provincial conferences, in 1978 and 1980, that respectively brought together 250 and 350 women and resulted in the creation of a whole network of awareness groups and political action groups.

Our first responsibility is to advise the government on issues having to do with the condition of women. We advised or tried to advise on all the subjects mentioned above and realized that, to be heard, we needed more force of persuasion than that of a small Council with a staff of twelve. Since no intra-governmental organization supervises the enforcement of recommendations, the Council must constantly put pressure on the authorities. We have not, for the moment, asked for such an organization, choosing for now to deal directly with the different departments.

To prove our efficiency, we must also prove that the changes we advocate have great support. In New Brunswick, we can count on the help of numerous groups and individuals. One only has to think about our awareness campaign on the condition of battered women, a campaign that, with great publicity and enormous backing from the women and the media, finally convinced the government to finance a pilot project to create a half-way house. Of course, we don't always have this much luck. But many other projects proved successful, like the one on ethics within the police force and the one on the development of services for alcoholic women. We have met with many setbacks. For

example, the action plan on the condition of women presented to the government last June met with no success and led finally to a public denunciation by the Council. We know that many politicians would love to muzzle us. We also know that the serious ones realize that it is our duty to denounce abuse and to bring to the attention of the government and the people all questions that worry women. Our Councils have nothing but an advisory capacity, of course, and they do need the support of women if they are to survive.

DINNER ADDRESS: DR. MARGARET FULTON

Margaret Fulton, President of Mount St. Vincent University, is the only woman president of a Canadian university today. In this position, Dr. Fulton has encouraged a feminist perspective in curricula, in counselling services and in community outreach.

TITLE: MID-DECADE WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN

The dinner speaker on Saturday evening was Dr. Margaret Fulton, President of Mount St. Vincent University and C.C.L.O.W.'s representative at the Non Governmental Organizations' Forum of the Mid-Decade World Conference on Women held in Copenhagen in the summer of 1980. Dr. Fulton began her report on the conference by comparing the experience in Copenhagen to that of the original International Women's Year Conference in Mexico City in 1975.

A major difficulty in Copenhagen was the lack of adequate facilities (8,000 delegates attended, 2,000 more than were at Mexico City). No one auditorium would accommodate more than 600 people while providing adequate translation facilities. Criticism of the logistical problems is in no way a reflection on the Danish Government, it must be stressed, since without their generosity in hosting the conference, it could not have taken place. It was originally scheduled for Tehran in Iran. The confusion caused by space problems was compounded by the total inadequacy of the male-run newspaper, Forum 80. This paper not only failed to provide proper coverage but also printed sexist cartoons which provoked many protests from delegates.

The Mexico City conference adopted a World Plan of Action, providing guidelines for the ten year period from 1975-1985 in the areas of equality, development and peace. The World Plan of Action proposes that women should have: equal status with men in law, equal education and employment opportunities, equal rights within marriage and the family, and equal access to political and professional careers. In Copenhagen, the plan was under revision at the official conference. Although it was supported by 94 of the 120 nations represented, four national delegates, including Canada's, opposed the plan and 22 abstained. Canada's reasons for voting against the plan included the objection that the conference had been diverted from its purpose of addressing the inequalities between men and women by a relatively small number of delegations who introduced nationalist and

anti-zionist references into the document.

Those who had attended both conferences were not surprised at this outcome. Such political axe-grinding and the lack of improvement in the world wide status of women since 1975 only reinforce the knowledge that real decisions of international importance are not made at such conferences; they are made elsewhere, mainly in the United Nations Assembly itself. This body, which decides for women even that there should be a decade to be dedicated to consciousness raising, has only 8% of women in its membership (including clerical staff). 1975 figures indicate that the general assembly had 180 women delegates to 2,369 men.

The climate of the Copenhagen Conference was quite different from that of Mexico City, with tensions resulting from economic insecurities around the world being influenced by tensions resulting from rising nationalism.

The politicization that destroyed consensus at the official conference also affected the N.G.O. Forum even though there was no direct input or connection with those proceedings. In spite of this, the forum did important work in bringing a strong feminist perspective to bear on issues of concern to all women; peace, ecology and the environment, health and literacy. While all these issues were seen to be of major importance by women, it was also recognized that world expenditure on the arms race is now over \$1,000 million per day. There are twice as many soldiers as there are doctors, teachers and nurses. Women and children are condemned to illiteracy, disease, starvation and death. This in a world where, according to a recent U.N. report, women number half the inhabitants of the globe, are one third of the "official" labour force, perform two-thirds of the world's actual labour, receive only one-tenth of the world's income and own less than one percent of the world's property.

Nevertheless, it must be concluded that the Copenhagen Conference represented an occasion of energy, connections, participation and hope. The World Plan of Action had revision problems. Yet the very special women involved and the feminist perspective presented at the conference combine to provide the groundwork for action by networks of women around the world. Even if such conferences themselves fail, the fact that they have taken place is a large step forward in making women and their concerns visible. The after-effects will be momentous if women implement the plans made and translate them into action in their own countries. Women at the conference represented the willingness of women the world over to work toward creating a more humane society, one which rejects the old male power games and changes the rules which have held women subordinate.

The EDUCATION CONNECTION conference and the work of C.C.L.O.W. is itself an important part of the follow-up work that is to be done. The World Plan of Action gives women a lever to use to force their governments into providing the necessary funds to bring about some real and lasting changes.

WORKSHOPS

SOCIALIZATION

COUNSELLING HIGH SCHOOL GIRLS - MARIE PATRICK

Marie Patrick has been employed on a special women's program, Pro Feminae, funded as an outreach project by the Canada Employment Commission, since 1974. In her capacity as co-ordinator, she works with women of all ages who are entering or re-entering the labour force.

The workshop was presented as a sharing experience; a sharing of materials and resources, gathered from many quarters over the last 10 years. The material presented has been used in various forms and combinations in the classroom and in Professional Development periods with teachers and guidance people, and made available to university people in preparation for seminars, papers, studies and projects. The intent of the workshop was to present a small sampling of resources, audio-visual material, etc., which could suggest an approach the workshop participants might not have used, some awareness tools which would assist them when working with young women in school.

The participants responded well to the sharing aspect and provided the requested comments, experiences and concerns, resulting in a very animated and stimulating session, for Marie and for a good percentage of the participants who stayed on long after the scheduled time to get names, addresses, ask more questions and carry on with discussion of mutual concerns.

The workshop was very well attended in spite of the early hour on a dreary Sunday morning after a long and intensive Saturday. Some very exciting and satisfactory situations have developed as a result of the workshop: newspaper interviews, a request for a magazine article, radio interviews and invitations to speak and continue the sharing of a very sincere concern for the young women still in school.

SEXISM IN EDUCATION - GRETA DOUCET

Greta Doucet is a researcher and sociologist who is currently co-ordinator of personnel education at Moncton City Hospital. She has a background in home economics, health care and insurance, and in 1978 co-ordinated a conference organized to study the needs and problems of women in new Brunswick.

This workshop involved participants in a role play of a meeting between a local school board and prominent community members in order to discuss the need for "de-segregating" home economics and industrial arts courses so that boys and girls would take either or both. (This kind of role play is based on a model, The Movers Game, which has been developed in the United States.)

Following the role play, workshop participants analyzed the themes which had been illustrated. Teachers, students and the business community all have vested interests in preserving the "status quo". Socialized roles are also very deeply embedded.

Strategies for change must involve professionals, parents, students, communities.

RE-ENTRY

WOMEN RE-ENTERING THE LABOUR FORCE - LILLIAN ZIMMERMAN

Lillian Zimmerman is a social worker, currently a faculty member in the Department of Continuing Education and Human services of Douglas College, in British Columbia. She developed and directed a comprehensive Women's Studies program there from 1972 - 78. Recently, Lillian represented Canada at the UNESCO International Seminar on "Opening up to Women of Vocational Training & Jobs Traditionally Occupied by Men", in Frankfurt, Germany in November 1980.

"Re-entry" is a recent phenomenon, probably involving close to one million Canadian women. We do not know their numbers, or anything much else, as little study has been done. This workshop reported on research conducted for a Masters Degree at U.B.C. in 1979 on the social and economic problems of women attempting to re-enter (or enter) the labour force after years spent performing societal sanctioned work in the home. The consequences to them of their confinement to the domestic sphere were examined by interviewing 51 women at three C.E.I.C.'s* in Vancouver during their active attempt to find work. The respondents, a highly articulate group, talked about their own perceptions of the barriers they face, their feelings about counselling, need for education and training

opportunities, their own perceived inadequacies, experiences with ageism, etc. This data was then analyzed for fit, or lack of it, with C.E.I.C. and other needed services. It didn't fit.

Two other aspects of the study were discussed: a report on Prime Time, a three-year demonstration project in Victoria, B.C., which engaged in community services for mature women, and an analysis of the inadequacy of the Canadian social security system for re-entry women - a system still grounded in the continued assumption of women's dependence on a male breadwinner.

The workshop was informally conducted. Over 150 women attended and took part in formulating recommendations on the learning opportunities required by re-entry women.

* C.E.I.C. - Canada Employment and Immigration Commission.

STARTING OVER - SECOND OPTION -
CORINNE GALLANT & MADELEINE DUFOUR

Corinne Gallant is a professor of philosophy at the University of Moncton. She has been involved in a number of women's projects and was influential in the formation of a Consultative Council on the Status of Women in New Brunswick. Recently, she has helped to establish a re-entry program, Nouveau Depart.

Madeleine Dufour is a counsellor in the Nouveau Depart program sponsored by the Montreal Y.W.C.A

Madeleine Dufour, co-ordinator of the program at the Montreal Y.W.C.A., took the first hour to explain its origin and objectives. She also indicated which clientele it is intended to reach.

Corinne Gallant, who set up the program for the women at the University of Moncton, gave more specific details on the possibility of organizing more of these programs in other communities within the Maritime provinces.

This program, which reaches women from 35 to 55, aims to help them make a new start in life. It offers them a series of courses aimed at helping them to rediscover themselves, orient themselves and get ready either to take on a new job, go back to school, do volunteer work or go about any other change in their lives.

Women from the north east, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island, showed a great deal

of interest towards the setting up of such a program in their regions.

Future meetings have been scheduled in order to discuss the implementation of this program in Caracquet and Prince Edward Island.

WOMEN'S ACCESS CENTRES - ANNE IRONSIDE

After obtaining her M.S.W. in 1972, Anne developed the Women's Resource Centre in the University of British Columbia's Continuing Education Department and has pioneered and expanded on the concept of life planning, women's access and educational brokering. Her publications include the influential report on Women's Access Centres prepared for the B.C. Ministry of Education, Science & Technology, in 1979.

A policy to establish Women's Access Centres was developed by the British Columbia's Ministry of Education in 1978. It acknowledged the special counselling and information needs of women in life/career planning. Nine community college based centres have been established, mostly in rural parts of British Columbia.

The content of this session was the her story of the development and implementation of that policy as well as an account of the methods used in The University of British Columbia, Centre for Continuing Education, Women's Resource Centre on which the original proposal for the Women's Access Centres was based.

CONTINUING EDUCATION OF WOMEN: AN INTERNATIONAL FOCUS - BERIT ÅS - & SIDNEY PRATT

Berit Ås is a professor and social psychologist associated with the University of Oslo, Norway. She has an extensive background in research, women's issues and political activity, serving either as member of the Norwegian parliament or an alternate member for the last ten years. Dr. Ås spent some months as a visiting professor in Halifax last year and her impact has been profound.

Sidney Pratt worked as a community developer and educator in Brazil for six years. She has been working with immigrant women in Toronto for the past seven years. Most recently she acted as resource person for the International Panel on Migrant Women, held at the Mid-decade Forum during the United Nations Mid-decade for Women Conference in Copenhagen. Sidney is currently working for the Ministry of Culture and Recreation of the Ontario Government.

The topic of this workshop applies to women who come to Canada as well as Canadian women who go abroad. Most immigrant women come to Canada attached to men. The consequences of being in Canada are that they are either isolated housewives, students, or

work usually as marginal labourers, clericals, or semi-professionals. A number of women help their husbands operate small businesses.

One obvious need for education among these women is that of English or French as a second language. Some are not literate in their own language. This obvious need often obscures other vital needs for education pertaining to the laws, their rights, to political participation, life skills, health and sex education.

Less obvious is the need to be educated for long-term goals, to develop a class consciousness, and to break down myths and stereotypes. Groups working with immigrant women have attempted to put this kind of education in a socio-political context. When the immigrant women understand what is going on in their situation, they become more courageous. The women no longer see themselves as having individual problems.

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CREATIVE OPTIONS

WOMEN & NON - TRADITIONAL OCCUPATIONS - CATHY MULROY, LISA AVEDON & HEATHER BISHOP

Cathy Mulroy is a process labourer in Inco's Coppercliff refinery in Sudbury, Ontario. Cathy worked very closely with the Wives Supporting Inco Strikers during the September 1978 - June 1979 strike at the mine. She is now a member of the Sudbury Women's Centre.

Lisa Avedon is co-ordinator of the Occupation Selection and Preparation Program at Conestoga College, Kitchener, Ontario. She developed the Introduction to Non-traditional Occupations program at Conestoga College; and was instrumental in both the organization of a provincial conference on INTO held early in the year, and in the establishment of a provincial committee on non-traditional employment for women. Her involvement with CCLOW has been at the national, provincial and local levels.

Heather Bishop is a song writer, musician, singer, and pioneer in the field of trades training for women. Heather was and instructor and co-ordinator for the first Pre-trades Training course at Red River College, Manitoba. She has also been a project manager for a Canada Manpower Training Improvement project and a Community Development Officer for the Saskatchewan Human Resources Development Agency.

Cathy Mulroy discussed her painful beginning in a "non-traditional" job. The miners, all of whom were men, threatened her and made passes at her; their wives shunned her. Now she has proven herself to her co-workers and gained their acceptance. However,

management still does not place women in carpentry, maintenance or underground work.

Since many women receive training for non-traditional occupations through programs in educational institutions, what is experiences in these programs can be a critical factor in the determination of their future directions. Therefore, it is important to examine the positive aspects of this kind of training, the problems, and to consider some possible solutions to the problems.

Lisa Avedon presented material designed to stir participants into thinking about the negatives and positives of non-traditional occupations and what they as women are capable of doing.

Heather Bishop gave an overview of the prairie model of pre-trade training courses for women and outlined the available courses all across Canada.

The workshop concluded with a discussion of the women in trades organizations and support systems needed.

LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES IN UNIONS - KATHY KUSISTO, LAURELL RITCHIE & ANN HARLEY

Kathy Kusisto does historical research on a contract basis. She has been a part-time co-ordinator/researcher with the Women and Work project in Halifax. She has also organized workshops such as "Women and Occupational Health" and "From Waitressing to Welding".

Laurell Ritchie has worked for over eight years as an organizer with the Canadian Textile and Chemical Union whose membership is based in Ontario and is largely female and immigrant. On behalf of her union, she has been active in the National Action Committee on the Status of Women, the Coalition for Equal Pay for Work of Equal Value and the Ontario Council of the Confederation of Canadian Unions.

Ann Harley is the Director of Professional and Personal Development in the Faculty of Continuing Education, University of Western Ontario, where she is responsible for most non-credit courses and seminars. Prior to this, Ann has worked extensively in the fields of labour education, education for older adults and affirmative action.

Kathy Kusisto considered unionization as a strategy for women in the struggle to gain justice and equality in the paid labour force. She talked of conditions for working women in the Halifax area and of the difficulties faced both in organizing non-unionized women and in furthering women's interests and concerns within the existing union structure.

Laurell Ritchie also addressed the need for women to unionize and to be able to both

assert and defend their rights. Noting that a union certificate is only a license to struggle and not a guarantee of anything, she proposed a number of issues and strategies around which women workers need to organize if they are to achieve their aims.

Ann Harley gave a brief overview of where union women are in Canada regarding paid educational leave, drawing on the recent report of the Commission of Inquiry on Educational Leave and Productivity (June 1979). After describing the report and its recommendations, she discussed the importance of the issues it raises for women. Ann suggested that by supporting the inquiry, demanding that its recommendations be discussed publicly and that; the government ratify the ILO Convention on Paid Educational Leave, CCLOW would be working toward an environment which is more supportive of creating learning opportunities for women.

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LEARNING SURVIVAL SKILLS

FEMINIST COUNSELLING IN SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES - ALICE BREAU, MARIE-ANGE FOURNIER & HUBERTE GAUTREAU

Alice Breau is a professor of social work at the University of Moncton. She has worked on a number of committees and projects concerned with women's issues, was co-president of Conference 80 - Women and the Economy, and is vice - president of the New Brunswick Association of Social Workers.

Marie Ange Fournier is a professor of nursing at the University of Moncton who has been very active in the New Brunswick Federation of Nurses during their recent struggle for fair wages.

Huberte Gautreau is a professor of nursing at the University of Moncton and currently is involved in the establishment of a transition house for battered women, Carrefour.

This workshop dealt with the recent trend for feminist counselling in the areas of health and social services.

The first part of the talk described how the job of social worker reflects a division of labour based on the sexes; how social sciences still promote discriminatory and extremely dangerous theories regarding the psychological, intellectual and social development of women; and how these theories are being questioned through feminist interventions.

The second part of the talk tried to show how, in the area of health, services available to women create dependence on a sexist medical model, and to show how this dependence

on male control is closely linked to the general oppression of women.

This workshop brought together around 20 participants. Discussions proved to be very animated and fruitful; many women shared personal experiences which tended to corroborate the presenters' critical analysis of the structures and systems of existing social and health services.

The participants recognized that the submissiveness of women in these areas was closely linked to the submissiveness of women in general.

WOMEN AND DRUG DEPENDENCY - JOANNE COWAN - MCGUIGAN

Joanne Cowan-McGuigan has a masters of social work from the University of Toronto. Since 1978 she has been director of Women's Programs for the New Brunswick Alcoholism and Drug Dependency Commission. She is the author of a review, Alcohol in New Brunswick.

The women of New Brunswick demanded, in 1978, that services be established for their sisters suffering from drug abuse. The Chairman of the Alcohol and Drug Dependency Commission responded by appointing a person who would be responsible for setting up appropriate programs.

The Commission now employs four women staff in their Programs for Women Division. Their mandate is twofold: to develop programs to reach chemically addicted women, and to ensure that treatment programs meet the specific needs of the addicted women. Among the programs offered are support groups, where ideas and information are exchanged and support is provided, with the staff members fulfilling the role of the facilitator.

The primary focus of Programs for Women within the Commission is public education. This is required to assist women suffering from addiction in admitting their illness. It is felt that the greatest damage done to such women is to label them "emotional" and to allow or assist them in becoming cross-addicted to both alcohol and prescribed drugs.

The participants at the workshop were enthusiastic about the quiet and efficient manner in which women are supporting each other in the province.

WOMEN'S SELF PERCEPTION - FRANÇOISE BOUDREAU

Françoise Boudreau is a professor in the Sociology Department at the University of Guelph. Her areas of specialization are the Sociology of Health and Medicine, Social Psychiatry, the Family and Interpersonal Relations.

Françoise summarized several studies of stereotypes that women have about themselves. Women tend to underestimate their abilities, particularly in the areas of decision making and paid employment.

Women's self esteem is related to positive evaluation by others, and the feeling of being loved. Men's self esteem, on the other hand, has been shown to be related to a sense of mastery over their lives and their environment. Professional women have experienced increased self esteem as they have gained increasing control over their lives.

Education is a crucial factor in raising self esteem as it increases options for independence and control. However, this education must include emotional and physical as well as intellectual development. Bert Komzak of Toronto has demonstrated that increased self-assurance, assertiveness and higher I.Q. scores were related to advanced karate training for women students.

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LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR DOUBLY DISADVANTAGED WOMEN

LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR RURAL WOMEN - SUSAN WISMER

Susan Wismer has extensive experience in adult education and a particular interest in community development. As a Rural Community Development Worker with St. Lawrence College in Kingston, Ontario, she worked on community-based educational programs, literacy development, community economic development and community building. Susan is co-author, with David Pell, of Community Profit, a book which describes various Canadian efforts in community-based economic development.

Rural women come from many different places in Canada and live many diverse lifestyles. What they share is a lack of access to urban services, and isolation. Formal learning opportunities are few. For the rural woman, her classroom is everything around her - home, family and community. She has no teacher; she learns in dialogue with her friends and neighbors and in interaction with her world.

This workshop considered community-based learning strategies for women. Making use of Paulo Freire's work, and focusing on a woman's place in the economy of her community, the nature and content of learning opportunities for rural women was analyzed. Using a case study, personal experiences, and some background material, participants worked together to apply the analysis to their home situations in Quebec,

Saskatchewan, Prince Edward Island and Labrador.

Some participants in this eclectic group argued that women should not be allowed to give up leadership in projects they initiate, others argued that women should not start projects that will eventually conflict with family responsibilities. Some felt that men usurp women's leadership roles; still others felt that educators should limit their work to the activities more commonly associated with education - that is, with formal education opportunities.

WOMEN & AGING - LOUISE DULUDE

Louise Dulude is a lawyer-researcher specializing in women's issues. She is author of the Women and Poverty report for the National Council of Welfare, Women and Aging for the Canadian Advisory council on the Status of Women, and Pension Reform with Women in Mind also for the C.A.C.S.W. Louise is now researching and writing a report on alimony and family maintenance payments.

This French workshop on women and aging went very well. About 30 women participated, a few of them very actively.

In the first part of the workshop, Louise Dulude gave a talk on the main problems (excluding health problems) affecting the majority of Canadian women past the age of 65: loneliness, poverty, difficulty in making social or business contacts. According to Louise, these problems are not inevitable but stem, for the most part, from the way women have been educated in this society.

After the talk, the discussion was very animated between participants. The main debate concerned whether or not to include homemakers in the Canada Pension Plan/Quebec Pension Plan. Some argued that by acknowledging the work of women in the home, we would be harming and, in the long run, slowing down the integration process of women into the work force. A second group stated that women should get their fair share right now and that we should not wait until the next generation.

LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES AND AGING - GRACE MacFARLANE & HELEN YEO

Grace MacFarlane began her professional career in music and then began to study and finally to teach the sociology of music. Grace obtained her Ph.D. at the age of 57 and spent nine years in teaching and administration before "retiring" - to learn more, she says, in the past three years than she did in the previous 15. She is the author of the Canada council Report on Aging.

Teacher, supervisor, administrator, author and broadcaster, Helen Yeo brings a wealth of experience in various aspects of education to her consideration of the needs of older women. Educated at Acadia University and Harvard Graduate School of Education, she worked on a number of innovative educational projects both within the school system and in the community and has published several textbooks and teacher's guides.

Grace MacFarlane's presentation was entitled "Meaningful Occupations for People after 65" and was composed of material abridged from the report on the topic for the Canada Council. She focused her talk on women and spoke of her research on her own experience and that of her friends aided by exploration of literary writings and some academic material. Dr. MacFarlane identified a number of skills which people develop with age, suggesting that unions should be involved in re-thinking the idea of part-time work in order to make use of such skills as a solution to some of the problems of mandatory retirement.

Helen Yeo focused on single women, that is any women alone. She looked at the results of the economic concerns of managing living expenses on a reduced income. This affects all aspects of the older woman's life as she copes with physical and mental problems as well as with social aloneness. Helen did not suggest that these problems made old age a hopeless or dismal time, but rather one which allows for continued learning and involvement.

Both presenters reminded the group that society is facing the challenge of dealing with its fastest growing minority. Research is necessary to identify needs and ways to make the declining years happier and more constructive for everyone.

ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED WOMEN SPEAK OUT

This workshop was planned by a committee of economically disadvantaged women in the Halifax area, assisted by Joan Brown-Hicks of the Halifax library (also a member of CLOW'S Board of Directors). Planning began with committee members describing the difficulties they face every day, such as poverty, the need for a paid job, difficult social workers, the humiliation of welfare, the need for a social life, the need for education, etc. In order to present these issues most effectively, the committee decided that they would create short skits based on their individual situations.

This workshop vividly portrayed the frustrations of women dealing with the welfare system, job creation programs, single parenthood, and Canada Employment Centres. The visual impact was heightened by the presence of a large painting by Bernice Purdy entitled "At the End of the Rope", which poignantly depicted the sometimes desperate situation of a single parent on welfare.

The issues presented by each scene were as follows:

Scene I

1. Women on welfare are not consulted about their "real" costs of living. They have no say in the decision-making process which determines their financial assistance. As a result, there is no connection between the allowable budget and real financial needs. Recipients are, therefore, forced into sub-standard housing because the amount allowed is too low.
2. Women who are on assistance and who are at home looking after their children should receive at least as much assistance to look after their children's needs as a foster parents receive to look after other people's children.
3. A woman on welfare, staying home to look after her children, should be paid a reasonable wage for the work she is performing.
4. A woman who fights the welfare system and is, therefore, upset emotionally, should not be viewed as someone who just needs to be tranquilized to accept her situation.

Scene II

1. Job creation programs are worthwhile only if permanent positions are available once the program is over.
2. When someone is on social assistance and gets a job placement, she should be able to keep the last assistance cheque to help with the extra costs involved.

3. Job placements should be paid the same wages as those on staff are being paid.

Scene III

1. Manpower workers should get in touch with their clients when courses are available that would meet their needs.
2. Manpower workers should be familiar with the policies of municipal and provincial social assistance.
3. Once a client has been accepted on a course, she should be allowed to keep one more assistance cheque to help make the transition from assistance to training. This would help cover the extra costs involved. (Many women don't even apply to take courses because they have no money to buy suitable clothing).

Scene IV

1. A woman on assistance has the same needs as anyone for a reasonable social life. This should be encouraged rather than discouraged by the welfare system. A woman should not be under pressure for fear of losing her welfare cheque.

Good discussion took place between the audience and the four women after each scene was acted out. Other issues raised by the audience included: the need for universities to change their policies regarding bursaries and scholarships to part-time students and older adults returning to university, and the need for a counselling and employment centre for MicMac women. Examples were given by some of the participants of their successes and failures in dealing with some of these same issues in their home towns.

TRAINING PROGRAMS FOR LOW INCOME WOMEN - SUSAN VANDER VOET & DOT QUIGGIN

Susan Vander Voet is a social worker who has worked for the past seven years as co-ordinator for Opportunity for Advancement, an innovative vocational and life planning program for sole support mothers living on social assistance. Recently, Susan has become Program Director for St. Christopher House Neighborhood Centre.

Dorothy Quiggin is a social worker who has been a program planner and consultant for Humber College. Dot is currently Co-ordinator of Services for the Lakeshore Area Multi-Service Project, Toronto, and a board member with Opportunity for Advancement.

The workshop focused primarily on the Opportunity for Advancement program - a group program for single parent women living on public assistance. It was attended by 100 women, many of whom shared information about programs and issues they were involved

with in their own communities and provinces.

Susan Vander Voet and Dorothy Quiggin led the discussion which dealt with:

1. the goals of the O.F.A. program - to build self-esteem and plan effectively for the future;
2. the format of the program - 1/2 day for 14 weeks with child care and transportation provided;
3. research results of the program and their importance for funding; and
4. the advocacy role of the organization, i.e. teaching advocacy skills and joining with women in advocating on issues of concern.

The discussion emphasized the self-help and mutual aid aspects of the groups, the positive impact of the program on women's lives, the follow-up with women from the groups and their ongoing participation in all aspects of the organization.

The evolution of the O.F.A. training program for professionals and its importance for spreading the format and philosophy of the program to others working with low income women and women in other language and cultural groups were discussed.

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ORGANIZING FOR CHANGE

WOMEN EDUCATORS AS AGENTS OF CHANGE - LYNN FOGWILL, MARGARET FULTON & CORINNE GALLANT

Lynn Fogwill is an adult educator who uses community development concepts and the techniques developed by Paulo Freire in her work. Currently, Lynn is free-lancing after seven years working with Grant MacEwan College in Edmonton, Alberta.

Margaret Fulton, President of Mount St. Vincent University, is the only woman president of a Canadian university today. In this position, Dr. Fulton has encouraged a feminist perspective in curricula, in counselling services and in community outreach.

Corinne Gallant is a professor of philosophy at the University of Moncton. She has been involved in a number of women's projects and was influential in the formation of a consultative Council on the Status of Women in New Brunswick. Recently, she has helped to establish a re-entry program, Nouveau Depart.

Lynn Fogwill gave a picture of her particular experiences as an Adult Educator in Alberta, depicting her strengths in the face of obstacles and difficulties. Using a community college course for child care workers as a case example, she highlighted the dilemmas of feminist educators in non-feminist institutions. Lynn suggested the need for integration of education and socio-political realities in analysis and action.

Dr. Margaret Fulton situated the question of Women Educators in the broader context of the history of education and women's place' in that history. She proposed the development of a feminist perspective, consciousness raising and the work of the women's movement as the real catalysts for genuine basic changes in the condition of women throughout the world.

Dr. Corinne Gallant talked of the experiences of the women professors at the University of Moncton, mentioning how these professors have been active in improving their working conditions and introducing women's issues in some disciplines, thereby effecting a change in attitudes and habits.

Because of the very large number of women present at this workshop, the participation was limited to a period of questions and comments at the end of the three presentations.

ORGANIZING WOMEN: A NINE POINT STRATEGY - BERIT ÅS

Berit Ås is a professor and social psychologist associated with the University of Oslo, Norway. She has an extensive background in research, women's issues and political activity, serving either as member of the Norwegian parliament or an alternate member for the last ten years. Dr. Ås spent some months as a visiting professor in Halifax last year and her impact has been profound.

In a taped discussion with Dr. Janet Eaton, Berit presented the following strategy:

1. Always be aware of the precondition or traditions of those being organized. There is always a tradition which influences the way women can be involved. Whether you are mobilizing on a short term basis within an existing association or campaigning on a special issue, it is important to look at the history of women in their own locale.
2. The goal for which you are organizing must be very concrete for the women involved. This concreteness must relate not only to the goal but to the actual practices of women.
3. Always have a combined leadership, preferably a troika; all studies show that women have less free time than ever; therefore we need at least three people to lead a campaign.

4. The leadership should be on a rotary basis.
5. The time span for a campaign should be one which women can handle psychologically. The seven to nine months of an electoral campaign is a reasonable time span.

(Numbers 3, 4 and 5 must be a common feature of all campaigns.)
6. Always gear the organizational structure to the goal to be achieved; you can't build cannons from sewing machines.
7. Always organize for success. Be sure that what is accomplished can be defined as a success. Whereas men tend to be challenged to action by opposition or failure, women are discouraged by the same. Women respond better to achievement and praise, therefore a campaign should always be organized to provide some form of satisfaction and a sense of achievement.
8. Campaigns must have an underlying model or theory; this provides a sense of unity, something to relate to even if the campaign is not successful. Something will be learned about working from that particular model or theory as a basis for organization.
9. The blue print or strategy developed must be kept secret within the organization. This is a problem for women who are made to feel uncomfortable by men's accusations of secretiveness: but it is essential.

STRATEGIES FOR POLITICAL ACTION -
MADELEINE LEBLANC AND DANIELLE FOURNIER

Danielle Fournier is a professor of social services at the University of Moncton and has completed extensive research on women in social service associations. Danielle has been involved in "grass roots" organizing in the Montreal area.

Madeleine LeBlanc has been involved in a wide range of women's issues over the past decade. As the first president of the Conseil consultatif sur la condition de la femme in New Brunswick, she has been responsible for formulating and initiating the activities of the council. Madame LeBlanc, as president of the CCCF, reports to the premier of the province.

This session was an open discussion and exchange of experiences in organizing around various women's issues. Participants agreed that in organizations of both men and women, women become a support system for the organization, and do not hold policy or decision-making positions. Women tend to limit themselves by staying at the level which is most related to their personal situation or experience - often neglecting a broader context.

It is in specifically women's organizations that women take leadership. Unfortunately, the women who are leaders are often the very women who have the greatest needs and the least resources. Those women who have most resources tend to remain uninvolved.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The conference concluded with a plenary session at which recommendations from the workshop sessions were presented for approval by the conference. Some recommendations were referred for clarification. They have been further clarified and are included. Some recommendations were presented in English and some in French. The authors of this report have grouped all recommendations by topic area and have included some rationale where it had been presented as part of the discussion. We have tried to deal with the great number of recommendations by combining very similar ones.

These recommendations have been referred to the Social Issues Committee of the C.C.L.O.W. Board which will prioritize them and decide what action is possible.

1. WHEREAS the social and economic needs of our society would be well served if adult (particularly women's) education is upgraded,
 - BE IT RESOLVED that C.C.L.O.W. support the view that continuing education is the right of every adult.

2. WHEREAS the disadvantaged position of women is strengthened by socialization in which our schools play a vital role,
 - BE IT RESOLVED that C.C.L.O.W. lobby provincial Education Departments
 - to initiate workshops for teachers, counsellors, schools administrators, department staff and students to prepare them for the integration of home economics and industrial arts courses;
 - to promote registration of girls in vocational programs;
 - to make the integration of boys and girls into both home economics and industrial arts compulsory rather than optional;
 - to set up a hiring policy that will set a quota of male and female employees (especially for executive staff);
 - to set up and finance committees responsible for reviewing and monitoring school text-books;

- to replace all manuals with sexist values by manuals which describe roles in a non-sexist manner; and
 - to offer programs to all teenagers which will teach them the importance of preparing themselves for employment.
 - BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that C.C.L.O.W. ask provincial Advisory Councils to approach residential schools and point out to them that there is sexism in education (provide information, workshops or conferences).
 - That C.C.L.O.W. campaign in the news media to prove the importance of non-stereotyped education for young people; that the stereotyped streaming of boys and girls - girls in home economics and boys in industrial arts - be exposed.
3. WHEREAS some women face special barriers that restrict them from participating fully in educational and social services,
- BE IT RESOLVED that C.C.L.O.W. investigate and recommend ways in which rural women, elderly women and economically disadvantaged women can access these services. For example, by:
 - waiving tuition fees;
 - providing bursaries;
 - providing non-traditional delivery of educational programs, such as bringing education into the home via television, books, etc.;
 - pro-rating part-time work;
 - providing a guaranteed annual income;
 - providing payment for maternal children equal to payments for foster children. an
 - increasing welfare payments.
 - BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that C.C.L.O.W. review the Income Tax Act with a view to lessening the financial burden faced by women.

4. WHEREAS day care services are a prerequisite to women's full participation in our society, and WHEREAS cuts are constantly introduced in the day care budgets of various departments and social and community services, and WHEREAS day care services are not well supported by the general public,
 - BE IT RESOLVED that C.C.L.O.W. recommend to Lloyd Axworthy, Minister Responsible for the Status of Women and Minister of Canada's Employment and Immigration Commission that people's needs, not employers' needs, be the priority and that this priority be reflected in employment policy, for example, by providing day care services at the training site, in schools and in community colleges.
 - BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that C.C.L.O.W. pressure all appropriate authorities to allocate sufficient funds for the introduction and upkeep of day care services.
 - That the benefits of day care services be advertised immediately to inform and change the attitude of the general public.
5. WHEREAS the Canadian Government undertook to provide paid maternity leave at the 1980 Copenhagen Convention,
 - BE IT RESOLVED that C.C.L.O.W. convey immediately to the Canadian Union of Professional and Technical Employees (translator unit) our support for their present fight for 17 weeks of maternity leave at full salary and further that we request Mount St. Vincent University to consider sending a similar message of support for the translators' position.
6. WHEREAS women are under-represented in non-traditional work areas,
 - BE IT RESOLVED that C.C.L.O.W. will recommend ways for provincial and federal governments to support women's work in non-traditional jobs such as by
 - offering tax incentives to companies who provide apprenticeship programs for women and/or continuing educational programs;
 - tying any government funding going to corporations to the number of apprenticeship and/or continuing education programs designed specifically for women.
 - BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that C.C.L.O.W. approach trade unions to urge them to accept a larger number of women in apprenticeship jobs.
7. WHEREAS entrance requirements to C.E.I.C. (Canada Employment and Immigration Commission) programs are often determined by gender and not by skills and aptitudes needed for success on the job,

- BE IT RESOLVED that C.C.L.O.W. will recommend to C.E.I.C. that tests administered to C.E.C. (Canada Employment Centres) retraining applicants be non-differentially graded so that men and women are assessed equally.
 - That C.E.I.C. train special counsellors to serve the particular needs of re-entry women, with emphasis on sensitivity to the individual problems these women face.
 - That C.E.I.C. appoint more women as apprenticeship counsellors and that all apprenticeship counsellors be sensitized to the specific needs of women entering the trade occupations.
8. WHEREAS women's unpaid work in the home contributes greatly to the Canadian economy,
- BE IT RESOLVED that the Federal Government make provisions so that when a head of household with children under the age of 7 works at home, his/her work be valued so that he/she can contribute, without charge, to the Canadian Pension Plan or the Quebec Pension Plan.
 - That when a spouse without children or without children under the age of 7 works at home, his/her work be valued and that it be made compulsory for his/her spouse to pay contributions to the Canadian Pension Plan or the Quebec Pension Plan.
9. WHEREAS women in the paid work force are employed in "job ghettos",
- BE IT RESOLVED that C.C.L.O.W. recommend to C.E.I.C. that they establish a commitment to a comprehensive long-term training program for women to include work exploration (awareness, motivation); pre-job training (to acquire needed academic skills); hands-on skill training (classroom); training-on-the-job [subsidized paid employment similar to C.M.I.T.P. (Canada Manpower Industrial Training Programs)]; and further that these training programs be offered in both traditional and non-traditional work areas which will include a wage during training that is equivalent to or above social assistance levels.
 - That self-awareness oriented classes (in which intellectual, emotional and physical aspects would be considered) be added to curricula for students of all levels and be offered in all educational institutions (schools, community colleges, universities, etc.).
 - That the duration of "Counselling for Women" courses, offered by Community Colleges and Employment & Immigration, be extended in order to include an information session on the physical aspects of self-awareness (karate, self-defense, one's body as a vehicle of self-expression).
 - That C.C.L.O.W. urge provincial levels of government to also fund improved retraining programs that will be more accessible to women who wish to re-enter

the work force, including therefore adequate advertising and financial assistance.

- That C.C.L.O.W. stimulate the development of access centres for women in order to facilitate women's participation in existing programs.

10. WHEREAS health education is essential to women's independence,

- BE IT RESOLVED that C.C.L.O.W. help train and inform us as consumers of social and health services; for instance, C.C.L.O.W. could:
 - make our rights as consumers known;
 - have a conference on health; and/or
 - have more workshops on health at the next conference.
- That C.C.L.O.W. urge federal and provincial Departments of Health to create positions of defenders of the rights of social and health services.
- That action be taken to make the self-assertion program accessible to as many women as possible in order to check any guilt feeling, organize prevention (of alcoholism and drug addiction) and set up support groups.
- That C.C.L.O.W. gather all the experiments that have been made in the field of self-awareness and prepare a reference list.
- That pressure be exerted to obtain a "Market Place" type of television program related to health. Such a program would allow us to inform the general public about drug addiction among women.
- That doctors be made aware of their lack of communication with women and that we suggest complementary training programs for them.
- That a research team be set up to publish a guide for women including strategies based on experience and action.

11. WHEREAS the C.C.L.O.W. membership needs to develop an understanding of power and its uses in political, institutional, and corporate spheres of Canadian society,

- BE IT RESOLVED that C.C.L.O.W. develop an economic analysis of the forces which determine the nature of women's jobs and conditions at their work place.
- BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that C.C.L.O.W. network stimulate consciousness raising groups to study the results of this economic analysis.
- That C.C.L.O.W. include Dr. Berit Ås' "Nine Point Strategy" in the proceedings of the conference to be distributed to all participants.

12. WHEREAS many women are working to upgrade their education,

- BE IT RESOLVED that C.C.L.O.W. retain as a priority its support of paid educational leave for women.
- BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that C.C.L.O.W. request Labour Canada to initiate a national discussion on the Report of the Commission of Inquiry on Educational Leave and Productivity.
- That C.C.L.O.W.'s National Board immediately establish a task force to:
 - review the recommendations of the Report of Commission of Inquiry on Educational Leave and Productivity;
 - formulate recommendations in support of a policy related to paid educational leave opportunities for women;
 - lobby appropriate agencies, such as government for paid educational leave; and
 - write and distribute a position paper to all kinds of organizations such as government and unions explaining the importance of educational leave.

13. WHEREAS the current constitutional debate has relevance to women and women's issues,

- BE IT RESOLVED that C.C.L.O.W. Board Members and staff contact other national women's organizations to find out what their initiatives are regarding constitutional issues.
- That C.C.L.O.W. be a clearing house for information from national/provincial/local C.C.L.O.W. networks regarding the relevance of the constitutional debate and women's issues.
- That CCLOW Board Members initiate workshops or find other ways to help women in their areas understand the connection between the constitutional debate and women's issues.

14. BE IT RESOLVED that C.C.L.O.W. support the content and recommendations of the Status of Women's Report "Sharing the Power".

15. BE IT RESOLVED THAT C.C.L.O.W. initiate contact with other national women's organizations in order to clarify the mandate of those organizations and to share responsibilities in a mutually constructive way.

16. BE IT RESOLVED that C.C.L.O.W. find ways of encouraging French-speaking women from across the country and from Quebec to join C.C.L.O.W. (including holding the 1982 conference in Montreal, at the University of Montreal, in collaboration with the Department of Educational Sciences), and organizing other women's programs ,in French at colleges, universities and in communities.
17. BE IT RESOLVED that the Nova Scotia C.C.L.O.W. network:
 - support the Nova Scotia Native Women's Association in its request for a women's resource, employment and counselling centre for the Mic Mac native women in Nova Scotia; and
 - urge the appropriate authority to provide women in correctional institutions with educational opportunities within the institution or the community.
18. BE IT RESOLVED that C.C.L.O.W. consider focusing on issues related to the International Year of the Handicapped including the intellectually, emotionally, socially, and economically handicapped.
19. BE IT RESOLVED that C.C.L.O.W. recommend to UNESCO that an International Conference of Adult Education be convened before the end of the UN Decade for Women. It is important that UNESCO recommend to their national commissions that their delegates should represent as broad a spectrum as possible of women concerned with learning opportunities for women.

The following recommendation was proposed by Jackie Stalker at the plenary session and approved by participants:

- BE IT RESOLVED that in view of the importance of Conference resolutions, C.C.L.O.W.'s Conference Planning Committee always allow a minimum of a half-day in order to debate, clarify, and strengthen resolutions and action plans arising from the Conference.

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TELEGRAMS SENT FROM THE CONFERENCE

October 19, 1980

Donald Johnston
President
Treasury Board
House of Commons
Ottawa

Halifax - The Education Connection (October 17-19), a conference in Halifax of 420 women from all parts of Canada, supports the demand of the Canadian Union of Professional and Technical Employees (translators unit) for a minimum of 17 weeks paid maternity leave at 60% of regular salary. The Canadian government must be accountable to its commitment, made at the 1980 Copenhagen Convention, to paid maternity leave.

(A copy of the above telegram was sent to the Canadian Union of Professional and technical Employees in addition to the following.)

Canadian Union of Professional and Technical Employees
Translators Unit
Suite 505, 77 Metcalfe Street
Ottawa, Ontario
K1P 5L6

The Education Connection, a national conference of 420 women, meeting in Halifax, supports your crucial struggle for paid maternity leave, a struggle which unites Canadian women because it touches all of our lives.

* * *

REPORTS: SPECIAL ISSUE DISCUSSIONS

The following discussion sessions were held in order to involve interested conference participants in informal, creative "think-in's".

Francophone Caucus

Joanne Thibert reported on this meeting. An ad hoc committee has been set up to consider a process of francophone outreach. This committee will formulate various options for developing a network to promote learning opportunities for francophone women, and will consider whether this work should be carried on within C.C.L.O.W. or through another mechanism.

Women and the Constitution Meeting

Susan Wismer reported that a small group has met to discuss the proposed Constitution as it relates to C.C.L.O.W. concerns, i.e. learning programs for women. The group recommended that C.C.L.O.W. gather as much information as possible and circulate it among our members, and actively support the work of other organizations. The group recognized the difficulty most women face in trying to relate broad and general constitutional issues to their everyday lives.

CONFERENCE MATERIALS

The following are available from our national office at 29 Prince Arthur Avenue, Toronto M5R 1B2.

Speeches

1. Fulton, Dr. E. Margaret. Mid Decade World Conference on Women. 17 pp. (\$1.50 = xerox & postage)
2. Yeo, Helen. Opportunities and Aging. 16 pp. (\$1.50 = xerox & postage)
3. Avedon, Lisa. Women and Non-traditional Occupations. 11 pp. (\$1.00 = xerox & postage)
4. Zimmerman, Lillian, Women in Transition: The Social and Economic Needs of Women Returning to the Labour Force. (Xerox. 1979. 162 pages. \$2.00 = postage)
An extensive analysis of the needs of re-entry women related to the social and economic context of their transition from unpaid work in the home to paid work in the labour force.

Videotape

5. Ås, Berit. Videotape of Janet Eaton's interview with Berit in which she discusses her Nine Point Strategy for Organizing Women. 30 minutes. Available for three week loan from our Skills Bank in National Office.

CONFERENCE EVALUATION

Overall, participants felt very positively about the experience. 115 evaluations were completed (96 in English, 19 in French). The majority of the ratings of every aspect of the conference were Good, Very Good, or Excellent.

Participants decided that the conference met its major objectives, particularly those of examining the connection between women, their learning opportunities and their economic, social and political status in today's world. They felt that the organizers had been successful in obtaining a high caliber of resource persons, in involving economically disadvantaged women in speaking for themselves, in hosting the first bilingual C.C.L.O.W. conference and in facilitating the sharing of innovative resources, information and programs.

An overwhelming number stated that what they enjoyed most about the conference was

sharing with other women. Many people wanted small groups - interest groups, discussion groups, and geographical groups. Substantial numbers also wanted more free time to meet informally.

More participants found the conference to be a worthwhile experience personally than professionally. They felt that: (1) the workshops, (2) the speeches, (3) meeting informally with other women, and (4) the social events, in that order, added to their personal growth. Most attended the conference to learn and to make contact with other women.

All of the workshops received very positive evaluations. Newcomers to C.C.L.O.W. said they were excited, stimulated, and gathered valuable ideas and information. C.C.L.O.W. "pioneers" and longer term members would have preferred more informal contact, more challenging and involving discussions, and a narrower, more in-depth focus. There is a hope that future C.C.L.O.W. conferences will be smaller, with a stronger feminist perspective and more experiential format.

The unexpectedly large numbers attending presented some organizational and logistical problems. Useful suggestions about how to surmount such problems were offered through the feedback and evaluation process. Participants asked that accommodation in future be "on-site", that brochures be sent out much earlier and with fuller information, that translation and audio visual equipment be better organized.

The process for handling resolutions in the final plenary was considered "too rushed and not sufficiently explicit". Most would prefer that fewer resolutions be brought forward, be more carefully worded, and that follow-up action be more carefully planned.

Day care - "excellent".

Many women heard about the conference through friends or work associates. Another large group received their information through the conference brochure or the C.C.L.O.W. membership newsletter. Almost all were aware of the available subsidies and how to apply for them.

People said:

"Stimulating and energizing"

"Overwhelmed by the amount of information"

" Continue to encourage provincial meetings"

* * *