



WOMEN'S EDUCATION DES FEMMES

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WOMEN'S EDUCATION DES FEMMES

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Submissions

WEdf invites all readers to submit articles, ideas, poetry, humor in all forms, commentary, reviews and resources. Please send submissions care of the Editor, WEdf, 47 Main Street, Toronto, Ontario, M4E 2V6. Material should be non-sexist, non-racist and about women written with a feminist perspective. Submitter who wish their material returned should include a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Writer's Guidelines are available on request.

Letters

We'd love to hear from you - about anything. Write to the Editor, WEdf, 47 Main Street, Toronto, Ontario, M4E 2V6. Letters may be edited for length.

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Cover

The cover for this special issue was designed by L. Emily Elliott, a Montreal illustrator and graphic artist.



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EDITORIAL

Weaving a Durable Vision

BY SUSAN WISMER GUEST EDITOR

I can't remember if I ever really expected that the feminist project - the building of a truly peaceful - and equitable world - would be completed in my lifetime. I think that once, perhaps, I did. But I don't now. I'm sure that I will pass it on, with all its hope and sadness, to my daughters and their granddaughters and their children after that. Meanwhile, however, life goes on. In my own work, it's a constant struggle to weave the warp of my ideas about what should be, with the woof of my knowledge of what is, into a cloth durable enough and beautiful enough to be worn and used every day.

In 1987, during the course of the research which was eventually published as *Women's Education and Training in Canada: A Policy Analysis* (CLOW, 1987), I was privileged to talk with other adult educators from across the country who are engaged in the same kind of effort as I am. They too contend with broken threads, unavailable colors and designs that don't look on the loom as they did sketched out on paper. Small wonder that they were quite reticent when I asked them to share with me their thoughts about an ideal future. In the end, though, they did a masterful job of describing for me a shared vision of a world based on choice, non-violence, nurturance, mutual respect and empowerment. They talked about seeing women represented in positions of all types at all levels throughout society; of equal valuing of work done in the formal and informal sectors; of freedom from the threat of violence; of greater control over the amount and type of paid and unpaid work that women do; and greater control generally over the conditions that determine the quality of women's lives. When they talked they sounded hopeful, determined and, sometimes, delighted.

It was less easy to be hopeful and delighted when we turned to examining women's situation in today's Canadian society. The wage gap yawns in front of us. We are surrounded on all sides by the barriers of a job market in which most women are still confined to a small range of occupations and to the lowest paid, most insecure jobs within that range. Women trying to hold together a life that includes both paid work in the formal economy and the unpaid 'informal' work of family life find that the pieces tend to fly apart despite their best efforts. Most disturbing of all, we found that formal education and training programs for women have, so far, been able to make hardly a dent in all of this. We decided that, while education and training is certainly necessary for further progress toward greater equality for women, it is not sufficient. Moving ahead - at this moment in history at least - will require an integrated effort involving not only education and training,

but also equal pay for work of equal value, employment equity, and a redefinition of the relationship between the traditionally isolated spheres of work and family life.

Which brings us to the theme of this issue - feminist approaches to economic development or more specifically, community economic development. Community economic development is an integrated approach. It brings together paid and unpaid work and economic, social and environmental goals. It starts from the ground up, with the needs and interests of those who want to make changes in their lives, and proceeds along pathways toward greater self-determination for individuals and groups and greater self-reliance for communities. It emphasizes education: both formal (specifically directed toward the acquisition of technical skills and knowledge) and informal, (based on experience and on the transfer of 'learning to learn' skills across a wide spectrum of knowledge).

Increasingly, it seems, women across the country in hundreds of locations are becoming involved in community economic development with the idea that it might be one way to move closer to a more equitable, choiceful and peaceful world. Community economic development is exciting. It integrates education, new work opportunities and a valuing of family and community in a way which few more institutionalized forms of endeavor can. But, like any tool, it lies in the hands of its user. It can be employed skillfully or poorly and for a variety of purposes. It is no guaranteed 'vision catcher.'

In this issue we have brought together, for you, a sampling of women's experiences, a kind of 'report card' for your examination on how feminist approaches to economic development are currently being used in locations across the country. I'll leave you to draw your own conclusions on just how useful a shuttle it will be for your own efforts to weave a pattern that brings together the shared vision of what could be, with a knowledge of what is, in this sad and hopeful world of ours.

Susan Wismeris a partner in *Development Initiatives Inc.*, a consulting firm to groups and organizations on social, economic and employment related issues. She has her masters in Adult Education and lives in Cuelp, Ontario with her partner David Fell and their two daughters Sarah (7) and Rachel (3).

ÉDITORIAL

Une toile durable

PAR SUSAN WISMER RÉDACTRICE INVITÉE

Ai-je jamais vraiment espéré que le rêve de toutes les femmes, à savoir ériger un monde équitable où règne la paix, se réaliserait pendant mon existence? Je ne m'en souviens plus. J'y ai peut-être cru à une époque. Mais aujourd'hui, je n'y crois plus. Je suis convaincue que je le léguerai, espoirs et tristesse y compris, à mes filles et à mes petites-filles, qui le transmettront à leurs propres filles. Entre-temps, la vie se poursuit. Dans ma profession, je lutte constamment pour tisser avec mes convictions (ce qui devrait être) et mes certitudes (ce qui est) une toile suffisamment solide et durable que je puisse porter tous les jours.

En 1987, au cours des recherches que j'ai effectuées et qui ont mené à publication de *L'éducation et la formation des femmes au Canada: une étude sur la politique générale* (CCPEF, 1987), j'ai eu la chance de rencontrer des éducatrices de tout le pays qui travaillent dans le même sens que moi. Elles font face aux mêmes problèmes, aux mêmes désillusions. Il n'est donc pas étonnant qu'elles aient montré si peu d'enthousiasme quand je leur ai demandé de me dire comment elles envisageaient l'avenir idéal. Au bout du compte, toutefois, elles me firent avec brio une description du monde tel qu'elles le rêvent, un monde se fondant sur le choix, la non-violence, l'éducation, le respect mutuel et la montée du pouvoir des femmes. Elles ont parlé du rêve qu'elles nourrissaient de voir les femmes représentées dans tous les métiers et dans toutes les fonctions, à tous les niveaux de la société; de la valeur égale du travail rémunéré et non rémunéré; du sentiment de liberté éprouvé si la peur de la violence disparaissait; du contrôle plus grand à exercer sur la somme et le type de travail que les femmes fournissent dans les secteurs rémunéré et non rémunéré; et de façon générale du plus grand contrôle à exercer sur les conditions qui déterminent la qualité de vie des femmes. Pendant ces discussions, elles donnaient l'impression d'avoir espoir, d'être déterminées et quelquefois même d'être enchantées.

Nos espoirs et nos joies s'évaporèrent quand nous nous sommes mises à analyser la situation de la femme dans la société canadienne d'aujourd'hui. Le fossé qui existe au niveau des salaires nous a coupé le souffle. Nous sommes cernées de tous côtés par les barrières qui se dressent sur le marché du travail, marché où les femmes n'exercent qu'un nombre restreint d'emplois, ceux-ci étant en plus les moins bien payés et les moins sûrs parmi ces métiers. Les femmes qui tentent de mener de front leur travail professionnel (rémunéré) et leurs tâches domestiques et familiales (non rémunérées) trouvent que leur vie se désagrège en dépit de tous les efforts qu'elles fournissent. Ce que nous avons trouvé de plus alarmant est le fait que ni l'éducation des femmes ni les programmes de formation

leur étant destinés n'ont fait jusqu'à présent l'ombre d'une différence. Nous en avons conclu que, si l'éducation et la formation sont de toute évidence nécessaires, elles n'en sont pas moins insuffisantes. Pour aller de l'avant, à notre époque en tout cas, il faut qu'on allie nos efforts pour poursuivre non seulement l'éducation et la formation des femmes, mais aussi pour obtenir qu'à travail de valeur égale il y ait salaire égal, l'équité en matière d'emploi et que soit redéfini le rapport existant entre la vie professionnelle et la vie familiale, sphères qui dans notre société sont par tradition isolées l'une de l'autre.

Voilà qui nous amène au sujet de ce numéro, soit la façon dont les femmes abordent le développement économique, ou plus spécifiquement le développement économique communautaire. Le développement économique communautaire se veut un tout. Il rallie le travail rémunéré et non rémunéré ainsi que les objectifs économiques, sociaux et environnementaux. Il part de zéro en se penchant sur les besoins et les intérêts de celles qui veulent procéder à des changements dans leur vie et poursuit son ascension pour donner aux individus et aux groupes une plus grande autodétermination et à la collectivité une plus grande confiance en soi. Il met l'accent sur l'éducation, celle scolaire pour acquérir des compétences et des connaissances techniques, et celle officieuse, qui se fonde sur l'expérience et sur la mutation des compétences dans un vaste champ de connaissances. On a l'impression que dans tout le pays des femmes s'intéressent de plus en plus au développement économique communautaire car elles estiment que c'est peut-être là une des façons de jeter les fondations d'un monde plus équitable, où il soit possible de faire des choix et de vivre en paix. Le développement économique communautaire est vraiment excitant. Il englobe l'éducation, de nouvelles possibilités dans le domaine de l'emploi et accorde une valeur certaine à la famille et à la collectivité. Mais comme pour tout outil, encore faut-il savoir s'en servir. On peut l'utiliser avec dextérité ou mal, dans mille et un buts. Il ne porte pas en garantie la mention « Attrape-rêve ».

Dans ce numéro, nous vous livrons des exemples divers pour que vous jugiez par vous-mêmes de la façon dont les femmes abordent le développement économique à différents endroits du pays. Je vous laisse le soin de tirer vos propres conclusions. Vous vous rendrez sans doute compte toutefois de l'utilité qu'il revêt pour qui veut canaliser ses efforts et tisser une toile où se fondent les rêves que nous chérissons toutes quant à ce qui devrait être et le savoir de ce qui est vraiment en ce monde triste et pourtant plein d'espoir où nous vivons.

Susan Wismer est associée à Development Initiatives Inc., une compagnie de consultation se penchant sur les questions liées à l'emploi, l'économie et l'éducation. Elle habite à Guelph, Ontario, avec son compagnon David Pell et leurs deux filles.

Building Communities for Change

INTERVIEW WITH JOAN KUYEK BY SUSAN WISMER

Entrevue avec Joan Kuyek par Susan Wismer

"Le féminisme, c'est plus que le droit de choisir quand avoir un enfant ou d'obtenir des soins pour ses enfants. Ce que remet en question le féminisme est beaucoup plus fondamental, à savoir la répartition du pouvoir et des richesses dans le monde. Le développement économique communautaire entend se pencher sur le problème que pose l'inégalité de la répartition des biens et faire en sorte que les dollars restent le plus longtemps possible dans la collectivité, au lieu qu'ils n'aillent directement aux banques, aux sociétés de prêts sur hypothèques ou aux corporations propriétaires de supermarchés. Au gouvernement et dans les grandes compagnies, développement économique signifie en général ne pas contrarier l'élite. Nous devons mettre sur pied des plans économiques communautaires qui reflètent une optique différente de la collectivité. Nous devons créer une collectivité de base de façon à pouvoir partager ce que nous avons. Dans ce pays, si tout le monde partageait sa richesse, chacun de nous aurait 75 000 dollars par an. Un groupe de femmes de Sudbury a proposé au gouvernement de l'Ontario d'exploiter une ancienne ferme, située à une trentaine de minutes de la ville, qui jadis recevait des prisonniers et produisait suffisamment de légumes, de viande et de produits laitiers pour nourrir ces pensionnaires. La proposition était la suivante: mettre sur pied une forme d'agriculture régénératrice et des coopératives de travailleurs qui s'occuperaient de cultiver la terre, de traiter les produits laitiers, de construire des bâtiments, de promouvoir le tourisme et de gérer un foyer de placement familial. Nos recherches semblaient indiquer qu'il faudrait dix ans pour que l'exploitation soit financièrement autonome. Entre-temps, il faudrait que le gouvernement accorde une subvention de 2 millions de dollars pour que les bâtiments soient rénovés, etc. Au début, personne ne nous prit au sérieux. Quelque temps plus tard, toutefois, le gouvernement fit une étude du projet, étude qui lui coûta 80 000 dollars et dont la conclusion fut que le projet n'était pas réalisable. Le gouvernement n'avait d'aucune façon pu évaluer les conséquences qu'auraient eues à long terme notre projet sur le sol, le bien-être de la collectivité et sur les enfants. Ce que le gouvernement fit : il vendit les terres au prix de 65 dollars l'acre au Département de la Défense nationale qui les convertit en champ de tir. Je pense que nous sommes en pleine crise politique dans ce pays et qu'il est temps que nous commençons à bâtir le genre de société où nous aimerions vivre. Nous devons être soutenues pour pouvoir prendre des risques. Je suppose que c'est la raison pour laquelle je m'efforce d'ériger des collectivités fortes ».

Joan Kuyek s'occupe d'organisation communautaire depuis 23 ans. Depuis deux ans,

elle travaille pour l'Église unifiée.

SUSAN: Right now you're working as Economic Justice Coordinator with the United Church. What does that mean?

JOAN: As Economic Justice Coordinator of the United Church of Canada, I'm the National Animator for a project called The Church and the Economic Crisis, which means I work with United Church people to help them understand how the economy works and to feel empowered to change it. I travel all over the country putting networks of people together, trying to help people in churches talk with community activists. We fund ten regional projects. One is at Six Nations Reserve in Ontario where a young woman named Kathy Hanhawk is working with young people on the reserve to help them understand how the economy works and what it has to do with land claims.

SUSAN: Has your current work changed your thinking about the meaning and importance of feminism?

JOAN: I think it has been affirmed for me. It has reinforced the sense I've had over the last number of years that feminist issues aren't only freedom of choice and reproductive rights and childcare. They're issues that deal with basic questions of the distribution of power and wealth in the world. And, increasingly, everywhere it's women who are beginning to take leadership and assert the primacy of their values. I believe that we, as women, have a lot of organizational skills and experience that are hard for men to get- about building community, about helping people learn to trust each other and work together, about making the world safe for our children. It's up to us to change the world, nobody else is going to do it.



Joan Kuyek

SUSAN: There is a lot of emphasis currently on community economic development and, in terms of government money, lots of emphasis on entrepreneurship as the strategy of choice. What are your thoughts on the pitfalls and potentials of community economic development and entrepreneurship as feminist approaches to economic development?

JOAN: Let me start with community economic development. Most of us understand community economic development to mean the development of local self-reliance through the production of wealth for the community. Even in poor communities, a lot of wealth comes in: welfare cheques, wages from seasonal jobs, mortgage money, construction jobs, and so on. Most of it goes out again immediately, either to landlords who do not live in the neighborhood or who pay it to a mortgage company, to supermarkets that are owned by corporations, to chain corner stores and to banks. Community economic development, as we understand it, is trying to address this problem and make the dollar turn over as many times as possible before it leaves the community, thereby creating jobs and income.

But this is not what many government and corporate people are talking about when they promote community economic development as a way to maximize corporate profits or to win support from the local electorate. In large parts of Canada, including Sudbury, where I come from, leadership, resources and population are being sucked into the large cities. Farming communities are being depopulated, single industry towns are finding that new technology is depleting their workforces. Fishing and farming are increasingly being run by mechanized corporations that require fewer and fewer workers.

Community economic development, as the government plays it, is too often used as a way to keep local elites happy. Money is put into investment funds that allow people to start small businesses and to test out expansion ideas. Communities like Sudbury are just littered with the corpses of small businesses that people tried to start. The concept that you're free just because you owe your life to a mortgage company instead of to a boss is very questionable.

I think we need to develop community economic development plans that are based on a vision of a community that is different. Entrepreneurship says find your market niche and build on it. I think that's self-defeating, in terms of the person themselves and in terms of the kinds of communities we want to build. I think as a society we have a responsibility to raise children. I think we have a responsibility to share wealth. I think we have a responsibility to look after people. I can't see that entrepreneurship programs that encourage women to go off mother's allowance so that they can work 40 hours a week plus look after their kids on almost no income are any kind of advance.

SUSAN: You and I attended a conference together last May in Vancouver on Women and Community Economic Development. At the conference, a group of black women from Nova Scotia made a strong presentation regarding their need to be recognized and included on their own terms. It seems to me that what they were talking about lies at the heart of any vision of feminist economic development. What thoughts do you have on this aspect of bringing feminist development alive?

JOAN: I think that the question of privilege is really important for white middle-class feminists to face up to. I think we have to start looking at ways we can create base community in our work, so that we share what we've got. I can't feed all the poor people in Sudbury. But what I can do is help to fund organizations that fight for change. Being poor in a place where you are supposed to understand why people have more than you do is an awful experience. The reality in this country is that if everybody shared their wealth there wouldn't be anyone destitute. We would all have \$75,000 each every year.

I think that poor people ask us to understand that our interests lie with them, to fight for justice in the economic system and basic social transformation. If we don't fight with them for those things we might as well be telling them that their pain is irrelevant.

In terms of race, I think we need to start having representation for racial groups that is no longer token. Which often means leaving some of our friends out of a meeting because we want to make room for other people to get some control. It means understanding that we have a lot to learn from third world women's struggles. They know a lot more than we do about building resistance and building change, building base community that can support change.

SUSAN: Let me ask about you and your home community of Sudbury. Tell me about your experiences there in trying to build a more equitable and sustainable community.

JOAN: We do all sorts of things. One example that leaps to mind is the Burwash prison project. A group of us in Sudbury decided to form an organization called the Sudbury Citizens Movement. Together we developed an idea for an abandoned prison farm, thirty minutes' drive from the city on the Trans Canada highway. The farm had over 26,000 acres of forest and grasslands. It was on a major canoe route and close to a provincial park of extraordinary beauty. Three thousand acres were cleared land, and had once raised enough food to feed the entire prison population of 700 and a small village that was on the site. Fourteen years before it had been self-sufficient in vegetables, meat, and dairy production.

The year before the provincial government closed it down in a construction boondoggle, they spent \$4.5 million renovating the sixty-nine houses, thirty-eight bed single staff quarters and the six shops and three barns. There was also a gymnasium that had never been used, big enough for two basketball courts. A feasibility study was done in 1975 by a large consulting firm, indicating that a number of business ideas were feasible, but would only create about 8 to 10 jobs each. Our group spent two entire years working out a plan for the site, and proposed that it was an ideal place for a regenerative form of agriculture and an interlocking set of worker cooperatives engaged in farming, dairy processing, construction, tourism and the establishment of a group home for kids who were presently in foster care. Our own feasibility study indicated this plan might be self-sufficient within ten years, but it would require about \$2 million investment from the province in order to bring the housing, etc., back up to standard.

We spent two years pressuring the government to take us seriously. Finally, we reached a level of community acceptance that forced the government to respond and they hired a consulting firm to do a feasibility study. The study cost \$80,000. Many of the same conclusions were reached except where they said we were not feasible because we could only create 35 jobs in five years, and would not yet be self-sufficient.

They had no way to measure the impact of our proposal on the long term health of the land or the forest. No way for them to measure the long term benefits for the children that could be there. No way for them to measure the benefits of restoring the housing instead of tearing it down. In fact the indices of "success" were such that the government sold the land to the Department of National Defense at \$65 an acre for a rifle range, and destroyed the houses.

What this example makes clear is the need to demystify the kind of mentality and language that separates social, political and economic spheres of life, and then attaches value only to the economic. We need a vision of a world that goes beyond cost benefit analysis, or we need to expand that analysis to take in more than the individual's present well-being.

SUSAN: And what about the future? What thoughts do you have about your personal role in reclaiming a better world?

JOAN: A few years ago we had a group called the Neighborhood Action Project. About

every six months we'd get together all the people we knew who were involved in community action and we'd do a day of workshops. We'd do visioning, make up some songs, have a potluck dinner with all of our kids there. And dance. It was fun. We haven't done that for two years and I think we're ready for more of it.

I'd like to start doing that sort of thing much more deliberately in my neighborhood, to start treating my friends as people I would want as allies. Maybe we could set up a buyer's club and start buying our groceries together. Maybe we should be taking a look at buying up some of the housing in the area and making it non-profit, so that we could have rent-geared-to-income units. Then when some of us are losing our jobs, we could stay in our homes. Why couldn't we have a greenhouse? Close one of our streets and put a greenhouse down the middle? Maybe we could talk about having a van that did transportation for things like kids' sports. It's worth a try and as we get older, it becomes more important.

I think too that politically we're coming to a time of incredible crisis in this country. I think we have to get our act together and start rebuilding this world. We've got 30 years, I don't think we have more than that. The greenhouse effect, the erosion of the ozone layer, the pollution of the waters, and acid rain have reached total crisis proportions. In me, as I'm talking about this, there's a desperation that's really really deep. I talk to my children and I say "The world you'll live in is going to be very different. I don't want you to be privileged kids because you won't have the skills you'll need to cope with what's going to happen in this world." We can't go on pretending that the skills they need are how to be good consumers and great hockey players.

We all know there's something wrong. And what we need is the kind of support that enables us to take the risks involved in declaring ourselves on the "other side." I guess that's why my own interest is in building communities.

Joan Kuyek has been involved in community organizing for 23 years, during which time she has also been a nurse's aide, a service representative at Bell Canada, a community college teacher and a community legal worker, among other things. She is the author of a book, The Phone Book: Working at Bell Canada (1979), and is the mother of two. She has been in her present job with the United Church for two and a half years.

Grounding our Beliefs on Women and the Economy

BY DIANA ELLIS

Nos croyances fondamentales sur les femmes et l'économie

par Diana Ellis

À Vancouver, le Centre de recherches sur la condition féminine a travaillé en collaboration avec des femmes de la collectivité pour élaborer des hypothèses fondamentales sur les femmes et la place qu'elles occupent dans l'économie. Il s'agit de déclarations auxquelles elles sont parvenues en discutant et qui peuvent servir de point de départ pour mettre sur pied un plan d'action. Nous vous donnons quelques exemples de suppositions fondamentales et certains commentaires pour étayer nos idées.

1. **Les activités familiales et domestiques des femmes font partie intégrale de l'économie, bien qu'elles soient invisibles.** S'occuper de son foyer signifie entre autres maintenir les membres de sa famille en bonne santé morale et physique. Ce soutien est considéré comme normal, plus d'ailleurs que tout autre travail qu'accomplissent les femmes.
2. **La famille est autant une entité économique qu'une entité sociale.** Les politiques du gouvernement, dont l'imposition sur le revenu, les allocations familiales, les pensions de retraite et les prestations sociales montrent que la famille est considérée comme une entité économique.
3. **Le travail que les femmes fournissent pour maintenir le bien-être de leur famille et de leur foyer a une valeur économique.** Une étude a évalué qu'au Canada, en 1981, le travail des femmes au foyer était équivalent à 3540% du produit national brut.
4. **Élever des enfants est une activité économique qui exerce une influence sur l'économie et que cette dernière influence.** Après une grossesse, la participation d'une femme à la main-d'oeuvre dépend des revenus de la famille, des possibilités qu'elle a de trouver un emploi et de la disponibilité, du coût et de la qualité des soins qu'elle peut espérer pour son enfant.
5. **Tout le monde a le droit d'être indépendant financièrement.** L'égalité des chances signifie que hommes et femmes devraient pouvoir accéder à l'indépendance financière de la même façon, soit grâce à une éducation appropriée, à une formation professionnelle et à des services de soutien, soins des enfants et agences d'embauche entre autres. Pour de plus amples

renseignements, veuillez vous adresser au Women's Research Centre, #101, 2245 West Broadway, Vancouver, C.B. V6K 2E4.

Diana Ellis est conseillère indépendante sur des questions portant sur la condition féminine, ce qui comprend entre autres aider les femmes à s'organiser et animer des manifestations sociales. Elle est membre du Comité s'occupant des femmes dans l'économie du Centre de recherches sur les femmes depuis 1976, année de la fondation du Centre.

Recent government trends encouraging the involvement of women in economic discussion lack a genuine commitment to make visible the contribution to the economy of women's work in the home, community and labor force. Instead, pilot projects are designed to integrate women into the economic mainstream without looking at the mainstream role women *already play*, or understanding the supports women need for more active participation. Policy planning that talks about including community needs still does not specifically name women as members of the community, and some alternate models of economic development actually serve to keep women marginal.

The many reasons for continued exclusion of women from economic discussions are documented elsewhere (1). This article examines the tactic of working with community women to develop "grounding assumptions" about women and their place in the economy, which can be used to develop action strategies suitable to their needs.

The Women's Research Centre, based in Vancouver, British Columbia, works with women's groups and individuals to assist them in getting information, analysis and skills to take action on issues. The focus is action research. In 1976 the centre, working with the Northern B.C. Women's Task Force on Single Industry Towns, did community research resulting in a report (2), a conference, and the National Film Board documentary "No Life for a Woman". At the request of northern women the centre was further involved in a study, completed by community research teams in Fort Nelson (B.C.) and Whitehorse (Yukon Territory), of the impact of the potential construction of the Alaska Highway Gas Pipeline on women and their families (3). The community women participating in the research went on to become involved in various commissions and planning groups concerned about the development of mega-projects in their regions.

In 1986 the Women's Research Centre used its decade of experience to put together a kit on Women and the Economy (4). The kit contains articles, analysis, an annotated reading guide and a set of grounding assumptions about women's relationship to the economy. The grounding assumptions in this article are taken from the kit. We use them as handouts for discussion groups, as the basis for talks and workshops, and for helping other groups to develop their own grounding assumptions to reflect their particular community.

The Process

Grounding assumptions present a basic analysis of a situation and offer a useful place for discussion to start. They are statements that need not be broken down any further; statements that can begin comfortably with "We believe that..". The process of developing them is simple. Women start by responding to the question, "What do we know about the

economy, our community and ourselves?" Some sample probes might be: "Let's describe what we do in the home, family and community", "What happens in our town to make money and how does our work relate to that?", "What kind of work is exchanged between people for no money?", "How does money come into and leave our community?" Questions such as "How do we know this?", "What impact does it have?" are also asked throughout the discussion.

When the answers to these sorts of questions are compiled, the women ask themselves, "What are our assumptions about this?" and develop a set of basic statements of belief, sorting through the material of the first discussion to pull together common ideas and develop new understandings. The basic statements they arrive at are their personal grounding assumptions on women and the economy.

From this point, participants can identify strategies ranging from action research for community economic development strategies, to lobbying or forming discussion groups. One group in a small resource town found through discussion that they were not as anti-industry as they had thought, and a resulting strategy was the formation of a new advocacy relationship between the group on the one hand and the local industry, the government and labor on the other.

The major benefits of the process are empowerment and grounding. Women find it empowering to actually see and understand their role in the economy and the on-going strategies they develop are grounded on their own stated needs and experience. What needs and experience tell us is that without realistic action on childcare, without appropriate access to training, without paying women a living wage, and without consideration of the depth of work women already do (and its impact on women's potential involvement in the labor force) economic development initiatives - no matter how innovative - will not work for the average Canadian woman.

The Assumptions

The following are grounding assumptions and background comment developed by the Women's Research Centre.

1. Women's work in the family and household is an integral but invisible part of the already existing economy.

* Managing the household involves food budgeting and shopping, planning and cooking nutritious meals, cleaning up, preserving food and possibly planting/maintaining a garden. Women's home maintenance work includes planning and doing daily and seasonal cleaning, overseeing or doing repairs, making sure the home is comfortable for all who live in and visit it. Women also plan, budget and shop for most goods in the home, including clothing, and do the washing, ironing, sewing and mending of clothes.

* Women's maintenance of health and relationships within the family and household includes supporting other family/household members in their work and social life, acting as an emotional buffer between other members and their work, community and home, caring for family members when they are ill and preventing illness generally. This emotional support is taken for granted more than any other part of women's work.

* The responsibility of caring for children includes feeding, clothing, cleaning,

transporting, emotionality supporting and keeping children safe at all their developmental stages. Women are usually responsible for locating necessary childcare or baby-sitting so they can participate in the labor force, go to appointments or have an evening out.

2. A valid analysis of the economy must include an understanding of the sexual division of labor in the family, household and labor force.

* Women's involvement (entry, exit, re-entry) with the paid labor force is directly affected by the birth and subsequent care, or arranging for the care, of children.

* The number of hours women are available to work for wages, participate in overtime, training, promotion and relocation are influenced by their family and household responsibilities.

* The type of work women do in the paid labor force is part of a sexual division of labor.

3. Women's vulnerable position in the economy is based on the sexual division of labor.

* Women's vulnerable position in the economy is partly determined by her class position but even her class position is vulnerable since it often depends on her relationship to a man.

* Women's responsibility for the care of children (and the lack of affordable quality childcare) means women working in the paid labor force who become pregnant have to make a decision about how and if they will continue working after their child is born. They may have to work part time or be under-employed, thus earning less than a living wage, becoming more prone to lay-offs and cutbacks.

* Many women with children choose or are forced to choose not to work for pay at all thus becoming dependent on the state or a partner's income.

4. All changes in the economy have different impacts on women and men.

* When an economic crisis such as a recession causes a drop in family income, women's household management and service work increases because stretching the household budget and managing of family stress is considered women's work.

* The introduction of microtechnology to the workplace specifically changes the nature of the clerical and service work that is done, due to the sexual division of labor, largely by women.

* Resource development such as offshore oil, logging and mineral extraction is often located away from settlements and family, thus the price of a paycheck for a man is often separation from family and community life.

* Wherever or however economic booms and crises occur, women are responsible for managing its impact in the home and, to a large extent, in the community as well.

5. The family is an economic as well as a social unit.

* Government policies such as taxation, family allowance, pension and welfare are

described as social policies but they also use the family as an economic unit. They are not static; they develop and change depending on government's socio-economic values, choices and priorities.

6. The work women do to maintain family and household is of economic value.

* One study estimates that for Canada, in 1981, the value of household work equaled between 35 - 40% of the gross national product (GNP: the added accumulation of the value of goods and services produced in a community) (5).

7. Raising children is an economic activity that influences and is influenced by the economy.

* When there is real choice to have children the decision is often based on a family's economic security.

* Women's continued participation in the labor force after childbirth depends on family income, the possibility of employment and the availability, affordability and quality of childcare.

* The quality of services affecting children, such as education, health, recreation and economic opportunity, varies by region depending on the socio-economic priorities and policies at all government levels, and many families have to make choices about where they live based on those quality of service issues.

8. Everyone has the right to economic independence.

* The basic components of economic independence are adequate shelter, food and an annual income above the poverty line. Equality of opportunity, a basic belief of Canadian society, implies that men and women have the same opportunities to use the tools needed to reach economic independence. These include appropriate education, job training, and support services such as affordable childcare and employment.

We welcome discussion about the use of grounding assumptions, the process of developing them, and experiences in working with women on economic development. Please call or write the Women's Research Centre, #101, 2245 West Broadway, Vancouver, British Columbia, V6K 2E4, (604) 734-0485.

Diana Ellis works as a freelance consultant on women's issues, organizing skills and social animation and has been a member of the Women and Economy committee of the Women's Research Centre since its inception in 1976.

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No bosses Here! Management in Worker Co-operatives

BY MELANIE CONN

Pas de patrons ici! La gestion dans les coopératives de travailleuses

par Melanie Conn

À la Société de la formation professionnelle pour les femmes de Vancouver, voilà comment nous définissons le développement économique communautaire (DEC) : une méthode pour exercer un plus grand contrôle dans le domaine de la création d'emplois stables et un moyen d'utiliser nos propres ressources. Ce qui nous intéresse surtout c'est que le DEC peut, en faisant participer les femmes à la planification et aux activités économiques, donner à celles-ci plus de pouvoir. L'une des façons d'y parvenir c'est par l'intermédiaire des coopératives car les travailleuses sont propriétaires de l'entreprise. Les coopératives comportent bien des avantages pour les femmes. Celles qui n'ont pas un gros capital peuvent rassembler leurs ressources pour démarrer une entreprise ou se joindre à une entreprise déjà existante. Qui dit gestion démocratique du lieu de travail, dit heures souples pennettant d'accommoder la vie professionnelle et la vie privée, élimination des dangers pour la santé ou temps d'avoir des échanges avec ses collègues dans la journée. Les membres d'une coopérative doivent se comporter comme des patrons. Les travailleuses participent à toutes les décisions, de l'élaboration du plan d'organisation financière aux innovations en matière technique; elles doivent acquérir des compétences pour pouvoir prendre des décisions et résoudre des conflits. En 1987, ma collègue Sandra Berman et moi-même avons organisé un cours de formation pour

les femmes qui travaillent dans une coopérative. Le programme, qui durait 26 semaines, comprenait des leçons en classe et des séances sur le terrain, c'est-à-dire dans une coopérative. A l'heure actuelle, toutes les femmes qui ont suivi le cours, à l'exception de deux, travaillent (plusieurs dans des sociétés coopératives) ou ont repris des études. Le cours nous a appris que la formation en gestion coopérative doit se fonder sur l'épanouissement et le perfectionnement personnels.

Melanie Conn travaille avec Community Economic Options depuis 1985. Elle s'y occupe du développement économique communautaire, moyen de donner aux femmes plus de pouvoir, d'un point de vue éducation et recherches et agit en tant que conseillère.

I work for Women Skills Development Society in Vancouver with a program called Community Economic Options. The focus of our work is community economic development (CED) which we define as a strategy for gaining greater economic control: control over the creation of stable employment, control over the use of our own resources. Our particular interest is in the potential of CED as a strategy to empower women through participation in economic planning and activity. Given the nature of the definition, CED often involves unconventional forms of business. One of these is the worker cooperative where workers are owners of the business. As members of the co-op each worker-owner also has one vote, a condition ensuring democratic control.

Women and Co-ops

The co-op structure is particularly attractive to women for a number of reasons. Co-op ownership allows women with little available capital to pool their financial resources in order to start or join a business. The group setting in a co-op counteracts isolation and provides support for learning new skills and improving existing ones. Democratic control of the workplace can also mean flexible work hours to accommodate domestic responsibilities, the elimination of reproductive health hazards or simply having time for personal interaction during the workday. Legal aspects of the co-op structure help to reduce the traditional alienation of workers from their work in that profits are shared by worker-members and limited liability offers a degree of individual protection from economic failure.

But if the co-op structure offers many unusual benefits, it also presents unique challenges. One of these challenges is to define management in an enterprise where on the one hand there are no bosses and on the other hand everyone is the boss! Another challenge is to provide effective education for worker-owners to undertake their responsibilities in relationship to management. The co-op concept appeals to some potential members precisely because of the opportunity to take on a more responsible role - and sooner - than conventional employment might offer. Others find it more difficult to shift their expectations of themselves in relationship to the demands of the co-op.

Defining Management in a Worker Co-op

Worker-owned co-operatives are sometimes described as "self-managed." This reflects the ownership structure that gives every member-worker equal access to control of the business. In some small co-ops, management responsibilities are shared by all the workers with decisions made by consensus. Other co-ops - usually those with more than 10 members - have designated management personnel. In these situations, co-op members (singly or in committee) may take on management roles or the co-op may hire management from outside the membership. Whichever the case, in a worker co-operative the management is accountable to the membership *who are the workers* rather than to absent shareholders.

Accountability to the membership of the co-op means that management serves the interests of the member-workers. It means that managers carry out the policies and directions set by the members for the business. It means that management decisions and performance in general are evaluated by the members. It does not mean that the group holds a meeting every time the office runs out of paper clips! It should not mean that every worker is free to give direction to the manager or the management committee at any point during the working day. Most co-ops establish guidelines for management activity and accountability in their initial development stage, although this may not prevent conflicts over typical management issues, such as, production schedules or procedures.

Education and Training Needs

Co-op members are workers who need to think like owners. In addition to their daily work-load they take part in making policy decisions about every aspect of the business, from financial planning to technological innovations. This means they need to be familiar with many technical aspects of business and to have overviews of their own enterprise and of the industry in which they operate. Co-op members also work and plan together. They need to feel confident about participating in meetings as well as being informed about the issues. They need well-developed skills for participation in decision-making and for resolving the conflicts that will inevitably arise.

In the spring and summer of 1987, I had the opportunity to present a unique course for women in co-operative enterprise training. My colleague Sandra Berman and I developed and instructed the 26-week program at Douglas College in New Westminster, British Columbia. Called Co-operative Employment For Women, the program was funded by CEIC under its Job Re-Entry component. There were 19 full-time participants, women who had been out of the paid workforce for at least the previous three years. The program involved classroom training as well as on-site experience in co-op sector work settings. Our goal was to address the educational and training needs of potential worker co-operative members who had varying levels of formal education, work experience and group participation skills.

The course was organized to integrate personal and group skill development with training in the technical aspects of co-operative business. The training was presented in nine blocks, alternating work placement periods with classroom sessions. All participants received "job-specific" training in basic computer skills, some participants received additional training either in computer graphics or in food management, depending on their work placement.

In a worker co-op, the management is account- able to the membership who are the workers rather than to absent shareholders.

The work placement component of the program involved a total of 14 weeks of on-site training. The co-operation of the work placements was a critical factor in the success of this particular educational process. The settings used were intentionally varied. They included a small worker-owned bakery, a co-op restaurant, housing co-op resource groups, and a large credit union central, among others. Placement contact people were enthusiastic from the outset about participating in a program to promote education about the co-op sector.

The keystone of the program was the Feasibility Project. In the first training block, participants divided into small groups, each choosing a particular business idea; a computer teaching service for home-based women and an artists' marketing network were two of the ideas selected for further study. Participants were given the opportunity to apply classroom and work placement learning by sifting their experience and new information through the feasibility project. Reflecting the process a new co-op group would follow, the project began with an emphasis on personal/group- building skills and research into co-operative structures. As the program proceeded various facets, such as Financial Planning and Legal Structure, were examined and resolved. During the final week of the program, each group presented its feasibility project and business plan to the group, in one case complete with sound effects and in another with extensive computer graphics.

Thinking Like Owners

Sandra Berman and I are currently involved in research to evaluate the course as a tool for training women in democratic business structures and we have been interviewing the women who participated in the program. All but two are either working or have returned to school; seven are working in co-op organizations, five as a direct result of the program. One feasibility projects had examined the possibility of a co-op to promote the work of women artists. Following the completion of the program the three women involved in the project continued to develop their idea. They successfully applied for a Federal training grant to increase their skills in bookkeeping, marketing and computer graphics and are now in the process of bringing their idea to life as the West Coast Women Artists' Society.

As researchers, we have been specially interested in examining the relationship between the concrete co-op/group training and the personal changes that occurred. There is no question that the program was empowering. For all the women it was a very meaningful experience, for several it was a turning-point in their lives. Many of the women now define themselves in much stronger terms than they did initially: they see themselves as people who can "stand up for what I want", who "can take risks", who "have something important to say."

As educators, we are interested in understanding how personal development can be

integrated into teaching co-op sector participation. Previous co-op experience was not required of every individual who entered the program, although almost half the students had some co-op background (several lived in housing co-ops). At the start of the program, many of the women expressed anxiety and insecurity about co-ops and co-op business training in particular. However, as the personal and working relationships developed, their confidence increased and they began to take on more responsibilities in their classroom studies and at the work placement. Several participants have told us they could now imagine themselves as active participants in a co-op as a result of the information and support they experienced in the program.

Although we have not yet completed our evaluation of the program, we have re-affirmed the importance of the link between personal empowerment and change on a larger scale, in this case through the establishment of democratic business structures. It is clear to us that for co-operative management training program to be effective, it must be built around individual growth and development.

Melanie Conn has been working with Community Economic Options since 1985. She is involved in education, research and consulting in the area of community economic development as a strategy to empower women.



La «revitalisation» économique de Pointe St-Charles

PAR NANCY NEAMTAN

Pointe St. Charles Revitalization

by Nancy Neamtan

Less than five years ago, the Pointe St.-Charles community in Montreal was facing economic crisis. Over 30% of the people were on welfare, 15% were unemployed, and the neighborhood's land was a prime target for speculation. The Pointe St.-Charles Economic Program (PEP) was created in 1984 by a coalition of local community groups in an effort to save the neighborhood. Its goals are to create permanent and decent jobs for local residents, help train the unemployed, give new life to the overall economy and develop the financial tools necessary to do this work on a long term basis. The program's founders are, with one exception, all women. PEP has helped individuals and groups set up small businesses by offering low cost management consulting services and small loans or loan guarantees. With two other Montreal community corporations, PEP established the Montreal Employment Development Fund to offer risk capital to new businesses. PEP has been involved in various forms of job skill training to help people in the neighborhood prepare for the newly created jobs. Dozens of local residents (welfare mothers, housewives, young people out of work) have been hired into neighborhood businesses.

The Program has been vocal in pressuring various levels of government and the private sector and out of this pressure was born the Committee for the Renewal of Employment and the Economy in the Southwest of Montreal (CREESOM), made up of government, private sector, union and local representation, whose mandate is to find measures to improve the local economy. In terms of jobs created, the numbers eliminated from the unemployment and welfare statistics, the rate of profit, PEP has been astoundingly successful, but much work is still to be done. Many women have benefited from the program since their needs, such as childcare or emotional support, are often community based. PEP's project has shown that economic success is related to harmonization of many factors, to assuring co-ordination between job creation and training and between investment and technical support. By this process of development our economy is democratized.

Nancy Neamtan has been active in the Quebec community movement since 1968. She is a founding member of PEP and works presently with the institute for Community Economic Development.

Voilà à peine cinq ans, la collectivité de Pointe StCharles à Montréal se trouvait face à plusieurs problèmes économiques pressants. Le taux de chômage était atterrant: plus de 30% de la population touchait des allocations d'aide sociale et 15% celles d'assurance chômage. De plus, le quartier étant proche du centre-ville, il représentait une cible de choix pour la spéculation foncière, ce qui faisait peser une menace sur les habitants: les loyers risquaient d'augmenter et ils seraient peut-être forcés d'aller vivre ailleurs. Les groupes communautaires se rendaient bien compte que la survie de la collectivité était en jeu. Ils savaient aussi qu'ils pouvaient s'appuyer sur le fort esprit communautaire qui régnait et sur un réseau d'organismes puissants pour prendre en main la situation. Après avoir analysé soigneusement plusieurs modèles de développement et avoir fait des recherches à leur sujet, il fut décidé de créer le Programme économique de Pointe St-Charles (PEP).

Cette corporation, établie en 1984 dans le sud-ouest de Montréal, s'est développée grâce à plusieurs organismes de quartier qui avaient formé une coalition pour protester contre les nouveaux programmes de bien-être qu'avait annoncés le gouvernement du Québec alors même que des usines de la région continuaient de fermer leurs portes et que des milliers d'emplois disparaissaient. Le PEP a essayé avec dynamisme de redonner vie au quartier dans l'intérêt de la population locale. Ses buts sont clairs: créer des emplois permanents et aux conditions acceptables pour les habitants du quartier, aider les chômeurs à recevoir la formation et la préparation voulues pour qu'ils puissent entrer sur le marché du travail, redonner vie à tout le secteur économique de la région et mettre au point les outils financiers nécessaires pour poursuivre sa tâche à long terme. Le succès qu'a remporté le programme a dépassé certains des rêves les plus fous de ceux qui l'ont créé, ou plutôt celles puisque, à une exception près, ce sont des femmes qui ont mis la corporation sur pied.

Ce n'est que très récemment que les organismes communautaires ont commencé à s'occuper des questions économiques. Au Québec, le mouvement communautaire a toujours été puissant mais, jusqu'à tout récemment, il évitait de se pencher directement sur des questions d'ordre économique. Mais comme les récessions répétées, la montée de la nouvelle idéologie de droite et l'amenuisement de l'Etat providence ont imposé des coupures salariales aux syndiqués et ont entraîné des coupures dans des services sociaux, les groupes communautaires se sont vu contraints de s'attaquer aux questions économiques pour être en mesure de défendre leurs revendications traditionnelles.

Depuis quelques années, des réseaux communautaires ont créé plusieurs corporations de développement économique communautaire pour que les valeurs et les perspectives d'avenir du mouvement communautaire soient propagées au niveau du développement local. Et dans la mesure où ces organismes dynamiques et innovateurs sont nés du mouvement communautaire, ce sont surtout des femmes qui les administrent.



Lachine Canal, Pointe St-Charles

Dans le secteur de la création d'emplois, le PEP a aidé des particuliers et des groupes à mettre sur pied de petites entreprises en leur offrant gratuitement ou à moindres frais des services en gestion; il a également permis à certains dans la collectivité de démarrer leur propre affaire en leur procurant des petits prêts ou des garanties de prêts, faute de quoi ils n'auraient pas pu le faire. Le PEP a travaillé de concert avec des entreprises existantes pour que des emplois n'y soient pas supprimés et a aussi apporté son soutien à des projets d'expansion grâce auxquels de nouveaux emplois sont créés.

Le PEP a récemment lancé deux entreprises pour son propre compte; la corporation communautaire en est la seule propriétaire et ce sont des femmes de la collectivité qui les dirigent et les administrent. L'une est un service informatisé de comptabilité pour les petites entreprises (CRESO) et l'autre un cabinet d'experts-conseils en matière de développement économique communautaire et local (IFDEC). CRESO est dirigé par une ex-bénévole du PEP, qui s'est formée toute seule, et qui, voilà quatre ans, subvenait péniblement à ses besoins et à ceux de ses trois filles, mois après mois, avec pour seules ressources un maigre chèque du bien-être social.

Le PEP a fait preuve d'une grande créativité, surtout dans le domaine du financement des petites entreprises, en étant l'un des principaux instigateurs du Fonds développement emploi Montréal. En utilisant l'effet de levier de la presque totalité des 300 000 dollars que le gouvernement du Québec avait mis à sa disposition pour l'investissement, le PEP s'est joint à deux autres corporations de développement communautaire de Montréal, la Ville de Montréal et le Fonds de solidarité du Québec, pour créer un fonds d'investissement de 2 millions de dollars. Le Fonds offre un capital-risque pour les frais de démarrage des entreprises qui créeront des emplois dans trois quartiers du sud de Montréal, dont Pointe St-Charles. Les trois corporations communautaires exercent un contrôle majoritaire sur le fonds.

Outre la création d'emplois, le PEP attache aussi une importance prioritaire à la formation professionnelle. En raison du grand nombre de personnes qui n'avaient pas travaillé pendant de longues périodes (femmes chefs de famille, femmes au foyer, jeunes qui n'ont jamais occupé d'emploi stable), il fallait insister sur plusieurs types de formation pour aider les gens à se préparer aux emplois nouvellement créés. Le PEP a aussi mis sur pied sa propre banque d'emplois grâce à laquelle des douzaines d'habitants du quartier ont été embauchés dans des entreprises voisines.

Le PEP a également joué un rôle-clé en exerçant des pressions sur les différents niveaux du gouvernement et sur le secteur privé pour que ces derniers interviennent dans cette zone urbaine à l'abandon. Parmi les initiatives qu'ils ont prises, l'une des premières fut d'élaborer un plan complet de développement urbain pour riposter au manque de planification de la municipalité et au spectre grandissant d'une urbanisation destinée aux nantis. Grâce à ce programme, des commerçants du quartier ont aussi bénéficié d'un soutien pour former leur propre association, première étape pour redonner vie à l'artère

commerciale du quartier.

Au printemps 1987, après qu'on eut annoncé la fermeture de deux autres usines, entraînant la disparition de 1000 emplois, le PEP s'est joint à des syndicats locaux et à des groupes communautaires de Pointe St-Charles et des quartiers avoisinants pour former Urgence Sud-Ouest. De ce mouvement de pression devait naître le Comité de relance de l'économie et l'emploi du sud-ouest de Montréal (CREESOM). Ce comité se compose de représentants des gouvernements municipal, provincial et fédéral, du secteur privé, des syndicats et de la collectivité locale. Le PEP siège au comité et l'analyse qu'il a faite des problèmes sévissant dans la région a servi de point de départ à la mise sur pied du plan de travail du comité. Le mandat du CREESOM n'est pas seulement d'étudier la situation; il se doit aussi de proposer des mesures concrètes visant à améliorer l'économie locale et de trouver les moyens de mettre en oeuvre ces mesures. Le premier rapport sera publié au début de 1989.

Après quelques années d'existence seulement, que peut-on dire de ce projet pilote? Si l'on s'en tient aux normes officielles appliquées à l'économie (nombre d'emplois créés, nombre de personnes qui ne touchent plus les allocations de chômage et les prestations sociales, taux des bénéficiaires, etc.), les résultats obtenus sont encourageants, bien que très modestes en comparaison des besoins existants.

Pourtant, ceux qui ont participé au PEP et ceux qui l'ont observé de près ou de loin s'entendent à dire qu'il s'agit certes d'une expérience positive et stimulante, mais que le développement économique communautaire, qu'il se fasse à Pointe St-Charles ou ailleurs, mérite un soutien plus grand et des signes d'encouragements plus nombreux. On s'est rendu compte que pour que des projets de développement réussissent, il fallait que tout le monde dans la localité y participe. Dès le début, ceci ne fit pas l'ombre d'un doute à Pointe St-Charles. Lorsque ses habitants se mirent à analyser les problèmes de sous-développement du quartier, ils proposèrent très rapidement des mesures qui témoignaient de leur profonde connaissance des problèmes quotidiens et d'ordre pratique: changer l'itinéraire de la ligne d'autobus pour permettre la reprise des activités commerciales, adapter certains programmes de formation et maintenir des zones d'urbanisation mixtes pour laisser place à l'initiative dans le domaine économique.

Il est également évident que pour redonner vie au quartier, il ne suffit pas de promouvoir un seul aspect du développement. L'« entrepreneurship » n'est pas la solution en soi. Pas plus que ne le sont les cours de formation professionnelle ou les placements commerciaux. Le PEP le sait par expérience. En dépit des résultats encourageants qui ont été obtenus dans le secteur des petites entreprises, ceux qui n'ont que peu d'années de scolarité, ceux qui n'ont que très peu d'expérience professionnelle et ceux qui sont au chômage depuis longtemps sont rarement en mesure de "créer leur propre emploi". Ce que ces personnes demandent au PEP de leur donner, c'est une formation, des conseils et surtout un emploi à leur mesure. Il faut pouvoir harmoniser les nombreux facteurs qui font marcher l'économie, soit coordonner la création des emplois et la formation, faire des placements bien pensés et bénéficier d'un soutien technique.

Des projets de développement économique communautaire, comme le PEP, ouvrent de nouvelles portes aux femmes. Pour pouvoir aider les femmes, chefs de famille, vivant de l'aide sociale, à réintégrer le marché du travail il faut leur offrir le soutien de la collectivité

ainsi qu'une formation professionnelle, deux choses que les programmes du gouvernement ne font pas. Les problèmes de la réintégration des femmes sont souvent intimement liés à la collectivité. À qui peuvent-elles confier en toute sécurité leurs enfants? Comment va réagir leur mari (ou ex-mari) alcoolique? À qui pourront-elles parler les soirs où elles douteront d'elles-mêmes et où l'anxiété les envahira? Le développement économique communautaire permet de se servir des ressources communautaires pour venir en aide aux femmes pendant cette difficile période de transition.

D'un point de vue strictement féministe, l'instrument le plus puissant que le PEP a créé est sa capacité de démystifier tout le processus du développement économique et de montrer que des problèmes soi-disant complexes et hors d'atteinte ne sont pas en fait si difficiles à aborder. L'expérience du PEP a surtout permis à celles qui y ont participé de se rendre compte qu'en tant que femmes, et en tant que mouvement communautaire, elles avaient non seulement quelque chose à dire, mais qu'elles avaient aussi de nouvelles idées à proposer et de nouveaux moyens d'aborder les problèmes en matière d'inégalité économique.

Il y a cinq ans, il n'était pas question de discuter publiquement de l'avenir économique de Pointe St-Charles et du sud-ouest de Montréal. Aujourd'hui, ce débat est public, mais en plus aucun politicien ni aucun fonctionnaire n'envisagerait d'élaborer un plan sérieux sans y faire participer la collectivité. En outre, nombre de grands thèmes qu'a avancés la collectivité ont été repris par d'autres. Le développement économique communautaire est un outil précieux lorsqu'on veut démocratiser l'économie et peut-être est-il par là même un instrument pouvant donner aux femmes une plus grande égalité sociale et économique, aujourd'hui et demain.

Nancy Neamtan s'occupe activement du mouvement communautaire québécois depuis 1968. Elle est l'un des membres fondateurs du Programme économique de Pointe St-Charles et travaille à l'heure actuelle pour l'Institut de formation en développement économique communautaire (IFDEC).



Fermée en 1984, cette usine a été remplacée par des immeubles

Yukon Women in Business

BY BETTY IRWIN

Les femmes du Yukon en affaires

par Betty Irwin

En décembre 1987, la Direction générale de la condition féminine du Yukon a reçu une subvention en vertu de l'Accord de développement économique Canada-Yukon pour effectuer une étude complète sur les femmes d'affaires du Yukon. Le CCPEF du Yukon siégeait au Comité consultatif du projet. Ce qui suit est un résumé des résultats qu'a livrés l'étude et des recommandations qui ont été faites. Résultats: Au Yukon, les femmes sont propriétaires à part entière ou partiellement d'environ 31,4% des entreprises; 35,5% seulement des entreprises sont la propriété complète d'une seule femme, et parmi les autres seul 1,2% des femmes sont associées à une autre femme; les économies personnelles représentent le moyen de financement le plus fréquent (57,8%), suivent les prêts bancaires ou commerciaux (25,4%); 45% des femmes ont investi 5000\$ pour démarrer leur affaire; en tout 70,1 % ont dépensé 25 000\$ ou moins; 31% des femmes d'affaires avaient fini leurs études secondaires, plus de 26% détenaient un diplôme universitaire ou collégial et plus de 22% n'avaient pas fini leurs études au collège; 6,5% des femmes interviewées émient d'origine autochtone, ce qui est assez représentatif de la participation limitée des peuples autochtones au secteur rémunéré de l'économie; les femmes se sont plutôt lancées dans les affaires pour des motifs personnels que pour des raisons financières. Dans leurs réponses, les femmes mentionnaient aussi l'importance qu'elles attachaient à la qualité de leur vie et à la possibilité d'offrir des services à la collectivité. Recommandations: il faut faire de plus amples recherches pour mieux comprendre le rôle que jouent les femmes dans l'économie; il faut faire plus de recherches sur le rôle que jouent les femmes dans le secteur non rémunéré de l'économie; il faudrait envisager de créer une banque de ressources /compétences nécessaires/renseignements. On peut se procurer un exemplaire de cette étude auprès de la Direction générale de la condition féminine, Gouvernement des Territoires du Yukon, Casier postal 2703, Whitehorse, Yukon Y1A 2C6.

Betty Irwin est membre du CCPEF du Yukon et du Conseil consultatif du Yukon sur le statut de la femme. Elle est technicienne en électronique et copropriétaire d'un atelier de réparations d'appareils électroniques à Whitehorse.

In 1986 the Yukon Government began a series of consultations with people of the Territory, addressing participation in the economy, the economic climate and the allocation of natural resources. During this process, which was called "Yukon 2000", there

were a variety of recommendations on how to support women in business; however, there was no data available on women's involvement in the Yukon business economy.

In December, 1987, the Women's Directorate of the Yukon Territorial Government received funding from the Canada-Yukon Economic Development Agreement to conduct a comprehensive study of women entrepreneurs in the Yukon by assessing the involvement of women in both the informal and formal economies. A steering committee was set up to further define the terms of reference and monitor the project; representation consisted of the Women's Directorate, Department of Economic Development, Yukon Status of Women Council and the Yukon Chapter of CLOW.

The objectives of the study were to determine the extent and degree of the participation of women in business; what type of women enter business; and what problems women face in starting and maintaining a business. The information gained will prove invaluable to both government and non-government agencies in the development of policies and programs to assist women in business in the Yukon Territory.

A number of limitations were placed on this study which affected the results obtained.

First, there was no existing database of any kind with which to collate the information.

Second, the survey was done during the "off season and many seasonal businesses could not be reached. Third, the amount of

information obtained was limited to a 15-20 minute telephone conversation, so it cannot be assumed as a definitive statement on women in business in the Yukon. The Source of the population was limited to those who had some legal status-licensed, incorporated or partnership - and hence the businesses tended to be "traditional" or "status-quo". Because of this, the results can only reflect women's involvement in the traditional/ formal economy of the Yukon, with little hint of the extent of women's involvement in the informal economy. The "informal" economy in this study included only those businesses legally registered with the Yukon Bureau of Statistics. Many Yukoners during the Yukon 2000 process called attention to the "non-wage" of informal economy goods and services produced by individuals, households or community groups as well as businesses, used or exchanged on a largely informal basis. Examples of this would be the harvesting of game and fish for food, or part-time cottage industries, most of whose product is destined for the summer tourist season.



There were 23 complete refusals to respond to the questionnaire. Fourteen of these were by women who acknowledged they were owners. Some reasons given were that the survey was sexist, that they didn't know where the information was going and that, as a principle, they didn't participate in government surveys. The remaining nine were refusals by an individual other than the woman owner. Usually, these were given by men with such rationales as "she doesn't want to be bothered" or "I deal with everything concerning the business."

Some of the findings are summarized as follows:

- Approximately 31.4% of the businesses operating in the Yukon are wholly or partially owned by women.
- Over 40% of these businesses are incorporated, 31.6% as sole proprietorship and 26.4% as partnerships. Women tend to go into business with someone else, with only 35.5% being owned outright by a woman; Their business partner is almost never another woman; only 1.2% of the women in the Yukon are in business with another woman.
- Personal savings was the most often used source of financing, cited by 57.8% of the respondents. Financing through a bank or commercial loan was the next most popular with 25.4% stating they used this source. Sweat equity - the labor and overtime of a business owner that is not necessarily remunerated but which is vital to success - was mentioned specifically by 12.4% of the respondents even though it was not a category on the survey initially.
- 45% of the women used start-up capital of \$5,000 or less. 70.1% overall used \$25,000 or less to start their business. A number of women had lengthy stories on the problems of obtaining any funding from the banks or even from their husbands.
- For those using less than \$5,000 of start-up, over 65% used only personal savings and sweat equity.
- Of the businesses that were owned 76-100% by a woman, 29.2% grossed less than \$10,000 last year. As the category of gross revenue increased for women in business, the degree of ownership decreased.
- Almost 40% of the women started their business at 30 years of age or younger.
- As regards education level, almost 31% had their high school diploma, over 26% had a university or college degree and over 22% had partial college. This is a highly educated group by any standard with emphasis on high school and partial college.

Only 6.5% of the respondents stated they were of aboriginal descent. This number is felt to be representative of the limited involvement that aboriginal peoples and specifically native women have in the formal economy of the Yukon. Statistically, significantly fewer Indian than non-Indian people participate in the work force and unemployment is much higher for Indian people; however, many are involved in non-wage work, such as hunting or fishing, that does not show up in employment or business statistics.

According to the figures gathered, it appears that women do not do long-term planning or preparation before entering a business, and more than half of the women stated that related work experience prepared them for running their own business. Only one in five women prepared themselves through formal course work and even fewer went to school with business in mind and took relevant courses.

The women clearly went into business for personal rather than financial reasons, and of those that gave financial reasons, a number were in direct reference to employment ("I needed a job", "I needed to find work so I created it", "I needed to set something up for retirement") as opposed to wanting to make large amounts of money. Personal goals were given by more than one in every three women, and there was a combined importance of quality of life and providing a community service in the responses.

While a number of women stated that if they had known how much work it was going to be they probably would never have gone into business, few did not consider themselves successful in the business and in reaching their goals. In light of the reasons for going into business, the degree of success appeared to be relative to personal satisfaction as opposed to revenue.

The two biggest problems women have at start-up is with lack of capital, such as getting loans or a line of credit, and with personal/self issues, such as lack of confidence, dealing with sexism, being Native and "feeling very much alone."

The lack of accessible information (specifically marketing and "how to do" public relations), skills and courses, and even lack of time were expressed almost equally by nearly 20% of the respondents, though there was no consistently preferred method of delivering information, skills and courses. There was often concern stated that courses offered were so general that important questions were not answered and practical application was not apparent. There was little awareness of the skill training programs offered by the government or other sectors. While some said they would like to have formal courses such as are offered by the Federal Business Development Bank, others said they would just "like to have someone to call." Clearly, there is a great need for research and program development in this area.

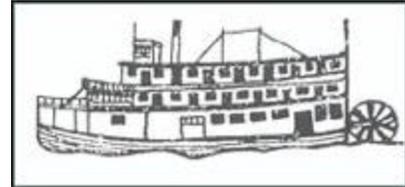
The following recommendations are incorporated into the study:

- In the absence of any data on the business activities of women in the Territory, a consistent information gathering process should be established. More research is needed to broaden understanding of the full involvement and contribution of women in the economy.
- There is a perceived problem in both the treatment of women and the applied policy to women trying to access capital from standard financial institutions and this should be considered a definite area for concentrated research and policy planning.
- Due to the limitations of this study, more research is needed in the area of women's involvement in the informal economy.
- Information that supports capital loans and access to capital for women and specifically women on low income should be made available.
- Consideration should be given to the setting up of a resource /skills /information bank.

- Present programs and services offered by the government and non-government agencies should be assessed to determine their effectiveness and appropriateness in supporting women in the business community.

The Study, entitled "Why Not? - Just Commit and Do It", may be obtained by contacting The Women's Directorate, Yukon Territorial Government, Box 2703, Whitehorse, Yukon, Y1A 2C6.

Betty Irwin is a member of CLOW Yukon and the Yukon Advisory Council on the Status of Women. She is an Inter-provincial and CEASA Certified electronics technician and is co-owner of an electronics repair facility in Whitehorse.



The Women Inventors Project

BY CAROL BROOKS & RACHELLE SENDER BEAUCHAMP

Un programme pour les femmes inventeurs

par Carol Brooks et Rachelle Sender Beauchamp

Le Women Inventors Project est un programme éducatif à but non lucratif de Waterloo en Ontario. Ce sont Rachelle Sender Beauchamp et Lisa Avedon (ex- présidente du CCPEF) qui l'ont mis sur pied en 1986 pour fournir aux femmes inventeurs ou à celles qui désirent le devenir des renseignements, une formation, du matériel de ressource et des moyens d'établir des liens entre elles. Dans la mesure où on s'est rendu compte qu'un des traits caractéristiques du travail et des modes d'apprentissage des femmes est d'être relationnel, la formation a été conçue de façon à comprendre des conversations en tête-à-tête avec celles qui dirigeaient les ateliers et avec les participantes, la construction de prototypes, des expositions des inventions et des séances de remue-méninges ayant pour thème l'expérience des femmes. Pendant la formation, les femmes apprennent beaucoup de leurs consœurs, ce qui fait dire à certaines que c'est là le côté du programme le plus stimulant. Les femmes inventeurs estiment que les barrières qui se dressent sur leur chemin sont à la fois internes, dont un manque de confiance dans leurs compétences, et externes, soit le manque d'argent, de temps et de renseignements. D'après les calculs qu'ont faits des femmes, on estime que 5,6 ans s'écoulent du moment où l'invention commence à germer jusqu'à ce qu'elle fasse son entrée sur le marché. Cependant, les femmes qui ont participé aux séances de formation pensent qu'à l'avenir leurs inventions prendront moins de temps à se concrétiser en raison des

renseignements et du matériel de ressource dont elles disposent maintenant. Les femmes inventeurs d'aujourd'hui sont peut-être les héritières spirituelles de leurs ancêtres de la fin du XVIIIe siècle et du début du XIXe siècle, époque où les activités scientifiques se déroulaient chez soi et où ces femmes ont joué un rôle novateur en matière d'expérimentation.

Rachelle Sender Beauchamp, qui détient un doctorat, est codirectrice du *Women Inventors Project*. Elle est biologiste et a une formation en biologie moléculaire et en hygiène du travail. Elle est cofondatrice de la *Canadian Association for Women in Science*.

Carol Brooks, qui détient un doctorat, est conseillère en éducation. Elle est aussi une des associées de *Quinta Consulting Group*, dont les bureaux se trouvent à London en Ontario. Elle a fait beaucoup de recherches sur les modes d'apprentissage des femmes. Elle a participé à la fondation des *Grandes Soeurs de London* et a été coprésidente du *Comité consultatif national du CCPEF*.

Throughout history women have been important inventors, though they have often been also - anonymous since, as with other types of property, women were not allowed to "own" patents until relatively recently. In general, the old adage "necessity is the mother of invention" holds true. Women's inventions have paralleled their daily activities. For example, the very first patent issued to a North American, in 1715, was for a corn cleaning machine invented by Sybilla Masters (but credited to her husband) (1). Notable women's inventions in the nineteenth century include a reaper, a bellows, several sewing machines and a system for dam building and irrigation.

Women obviously have the drive, creativity and ability to invent successfully but there are still relatively few women anywhere who receive patents on their inventions. According to the Canadian patent office, only one percent of Canadians receiving patents are women; that is, less than ten per year.

The Women Inventors Project, a non-profit educational program based in Waterloo, Ontario, was invented by one of us (Rachelle Sender Beauchamp) and Lisa Avedon (former CCLOW president) in order to improve these dismal statistics. It is the first program in North America aimed specifically at women inventors. It was founded in November 1986 with funding from (among others) the Innovations Program of Employment and Immigration Canada and the Ontario Women's Directorate. The initial mailing list of less than one hundred was comprised of women inventors who were either clients of the Canadian Industrial Innovation Centre in Waterloo or holders of a Canadian patent. There are now over 800 inventors on the mailing list and about 250 women have attended one or more workshops sponsored or co-sponsored by the Project.

The women involved with the Women Inventors Project have developed a diverse group of inventions, including a novel three-way mirror for applying eye make-up or contact lenses, an electronic car mileage recorder, a collapsible prawn trap, a pacifier holder, and artificial intelligence software an addition to the work with adult women described here,

the Project has developed and tested a workshop on inventing for grade 10 girls. Inventions by students have included a solar-heated rabbit hutch, a folder for organizing sheet music and a handbag organizer.)

Barriers for Women Inventors

In interviews with women inventors, we found that their major perceived barriers were both internal and external (2). The major perceived internal barrier was "lack of ability": 86% of a sample of women inventors who did not have a support program cited this lack as a major challenge. This could reflect a general lack of self-confidence though about half of this sample did not feel that this was a problem. The major external barriers cited were finances, lack of time, and lack of information. Although lack of finances is a barrier for all inventors, women generally have more difficulty obtaining financial credit than men.. Time is also significant, since many of these women are juggling three roles: wife /mother, work outside the home and inventing. A study of successful male inventors found that they require an enormous amount of unstructured and uninterrupted time (3).

Training Format

To help women inventors and innovators overcome barriers, the Women Inventors Project designed a training format which fills a three day period, or which can be broken down into short workshop units. The content is based on needs identified by a focus group of women inventors and includes among other things, information and resource materials relevant to the launching of an invention and information on networking strategies. In addition, one workshop session applies assertiveness and communication techniques to actual situations women will encounter and gives them the opportunity to rehearse unfamiliar business and technical terminology. The training format was refined in two three-day programs for 51 women from across the country, all at some point in the invention process.

The women inventors who participated were predominately relational in their learning and work styles, which means they learned and worked most effectively when there were opportunities to relate personally to workshop leaders, to develop a sense of community with other women in the group and to see the relevance of workshop materials to their personal projects (4). In order to enhance the quality of the training, the workshops were especially designed to include time for one-on-one conversing between workshop leaders and participants, hands-on prototype building, role models the women could relate to, displays of the women's inventions, and brainstorming situations from the women's own experience.

Because those whose work and learning style is relational find it important to work through their feelings and sensitivity on anything they are working on, some of the questions in the daily evaluation format were designed to facilitate self-understanding and to help women see their efforts in a positive frame of reference. Much peer learning - learning from each other's experience - occurred during the training; some of the women found this the most stimulating part of the sessions.

Successful male inventors need an enormous amount of unstructured and uninterrupted time.

Follow-Up of Participants

A follow-up study of 48 of the 51 participants was carried out 9 to 12 months later. The women enthusiastically accorded high scores to the training and attributed to it much of their success within the last year. Not only had access to up-to-date invention and business information increased their sense of direction and confidence, but the contact with role models, resource people and other participants had sustained their focus and motivation. Eighty-one percent of the participants had kept in touch with people they had met at the training. Confidence has often been linked with success in the business world and was credited by the women with many of the advancements made during the year as they worked to develop and promote their inventions. The follow-up study revealed that 83% of the participants in one workshop rated their self-confidence as "good" or "very good". It is clear that the training plays a critical role in improving confidence and perception of competency in matters pertaining to innovation and business.

At the time of the workshops four inventions were already on the market and during the year after the training three inventors worked on refining their marketing strategies or strengthening business procedures. In the same year, five new inventions entered the marketplace and others progressed to marketing, distribution, advertising, licensing or business incorporation stages.

Most of the money spent on invention was personal. Several women had found employment in order to pay the costly aspects of invention development: patenting, work with consultants, prototype building, and purchase of business supplies. Only two loans and seven grants had been negotiated.

These women too were acutely aware of the time spent on the inventions and of the value of that time. The estimated amount required for an invention from idea to the marketplace is 5.6 years, calculated according to estimates made by the women themselves. But they also indicated that future inventions will not require so much time as a result of the information and resource materials obtained in the training.

Conclusion

An important trend in the twentieth century has been the relative decline of the "independent" as opposed to the "corporate" or "institutional" inventor. Such professionalization has had a particularly adverse affect on women. For example, as detailed by Shteir and others, in the late 18th and early 19th centuries the locus of scientific activity was frequently the home, and women played important roles as both practitioners and popularizes in many disciplines (5). As science became professionalize, women were marginalized and their contributions belittled or ignored.

Perhaps women inventor/entrepreneurs today, often home-based, are the spiritual heirs

to these "breakfast-room scientists." They provide one model of women coping independently with technology and hint at the type of transformation process suggested by Franklin (6), Menzies (7), and others. In the words of one woman inventor, Deborah New: "I went to an engineering department in Cambridge but they couldn't work on it for me. So I decided to go ahead and learn enough electronics to do it myself. And that's where it became a reality, on my kitchen table at home."

The Women Inventors Project is sponsored by the Innovations Program of Employment and Immigration Canada, Science Culture Canada and the Ontario Women's Directorate. The authors wish to thank Lisa Avedon (Project Co-Director), Marie Le Lievre, (Office Manager) and the many women inventors who gave generously of their time and experience. For more information, see Resources, this issue.

Rachelle Sender Beauchamp, Ph.D., Co-Director of the Women Inventors Project, is a biologist with a background in molecular biology, occupational health and technology transfer. She is the co-founder of the Canadian Association for Women in Science.

Carol Brooks, Ph.D., an educational consultant and a partner in the London-based Quinta Consulting Group, has done extensive research on women's learning styles. She is a founding member of the Big Sisters of London and past Co-Chair of the National Steering Committee of CLOW



Footnotes

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Four Entrepreneurs in Cape Breton

BY JODY ANN MANLEY AND CHERYL CARVER

L'esprit d'entreprise des femmes de Cap Breton

par Jody Ann Manley et Cheryl Carver

À Cap Breton, île située au large de la côte est de la Nouvelle-Écosse, certains programmes qu'a créés le gouvernement pour diversifier l'économie qui repose sur le secteur industriel, secteur dont la stabilité est précaire, ont encouragé l'esprit d'entreprise. Les femmes ont profité de ces mesures pour se lancer dans des affaires fructueuses. Nous vous décrivons dans cet article trois cas marqués par le succès.

Kate's Ice Cream Company Ltd. : Marilyn Zizerson a ouvert Kate's Ice Cream Shop en mai dernier. Les frais pour démarrer l'entreprise se sont élevés à 150 000 dollars (30% de financement personnel et le reste étant fourni par des programmes du gouvernement et des agences de fiducie). Marilyn Zizerson a six employées à plein temps. Tous les jours, elle choisit et prépare seize parfums de crème glacée. La boutique remporte un vif succès et le chiffre d'affaires en mai et juin dépassait celui escompté.

Green house Co-op Ltd. : Lori Hough, Connie Steward et Cathleen MacNeamey ont ouvert leur magasin de plantes, de légumes, herbes fines et de terreau en janvier dernier. Lorsqu'elle ont fait une demande de prêt à la banque, le directeur leur a fait savoir que celui-ci ne leur serait accordé que si leurs maris se portaient garants. Elles refusèrent catégoriquement cette condition et obtinrent finalement le prêt. Elles attribuent leur succès à la qualité de leurs produits, aux objectifs réalistes qu'elles se sont fixés et à leur sérieux en affaires.

Art Plus Advertising, une entreprise d'art commercial, a été ouvert en mars 1987 par Sylvia Ho. Au bout de neuf mois, le chiffre d'affaires se montait à 65000 dollars. Son agence a surtout été financée par des agences du gouvernement qui encouragent l'esprit d'entreprise. Sylvia Ho a aussi fait un emprunt. Il faut maintenant qu'elle arrive à faire reconnaître ses compétences auprès des gens d'affaires qui ont tendance à chercher ailleurs que sur l'île des produits de haute qualité.

Pages Downtown Bookstore a été ouvert par Mary Kay McLeod en mars 1987 dans le but d'offrir aux habitants de Cap Breton une sélection de livres plus vaste et un service de commande spécial. Mary Kay, qui a un doctorat mais aucune expérience en affaires, a tiré parti du talent qu'elle a pour traiter avec les autres. Bien que le financement lui ait posé quelques problèmes, le chiffre d'affaires au bout d'un an était de 120 000 dollars. Elle attribue son succès au fait qu'elle a su faire la distinction entre ses goûts en lecture

et ceux de sa clientèle, mais aussi au fait que la population est avide de livres.

Jody Ann Manley travaille dans le département de Gestion des affaires de l'Université de Cap Breton depuis cinq ans. Elle détient une maîtrise en Relations industrielles de l'Université Queens et une maîtrise en Gestion des affaires de Dalhousie.

Cheryl Carver a aidé Jody Ann pendant l'été 1988 à effectuer des recherches sur les femmes qui sont propriétaires d'entreprises à Cap Breton. Elle vient d'obtenir son diplôme en Gestion des affaires.

A recent report prepared for the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women stated that at least 650,000 women were active entrepreneurs in Canada in 1983 (1). In the same study, it was suggested that by 1990, 65% of new companies will be started by women. On the Island of Cape Breton, off Nova Scotia's eastern coast, a number of women have successfully launched new ventures consistent with the national trend. An account of their experiences provides an interesting case study for two reasons. First, women have not been traditionally involved in business in this area because development efforts have focused on resource based industries such as coal and steel. Second, women who have started new businesses are responding to government initiatives to promote entrepreneurship as a way of weaning the island off its unstable industrial based economy. If women are to be in the forefront of this economic recovery, their stories need to be told.

Kate's Ice Cream Company Ltd.

Marilynn Zisseron operates Kate's homemade ice cream shop in Sydney River, Nova Scotia. Married with two sons, she saw entrepreneurship as the most creative way to get back into the work force full time. "I knew there weren't any jobs out there that I really wanted to do and I was tired of working for other people. Tired of a structured work place where people passed the buck, and where the status quo remained because no one would challenge it." The idea of opening a homemade ice cream shop had been with her for about 13 years; she first tasted the concept while vacationing in Boston. Family responsibilities and lack of money prevented her from pursuing it in a formal sense at that time, but she continued to research the business and was convinced it could be a huge success. In May of 1988, with her sons more independent (aged 11 and 13) and her family more financially secure, Marilyn's long time dream became a reality.

Start-up costs for this business were approximately \$150,000. Thirty percent was supplied from personal financing and the rest came from government programs and funding agencies established to assist new entrepreneurs in the area. She employs six full time staff members and each day she prepares sixteen flavors of ice cream made with only the finest quality dairy products. In addition, milkshakes, floats, sundaes, banana splits and malts are available and the bakery produces fresh brownies, cookies and pies.

Customer response has been very favorable and income figures for May and June are above all projections. Marilyn attributes this success to strict adherence to projected limits as well as confident and quick common sense decision making. Her family is very supportive; both her sons and her husband help out on a part time basis. Being a women in

business has not hindered Marilyn but she says, "Women generally have to try harder to gain a certain level of competence (in others' eyes) so that people give you the respect you need." Kate's Ice Cream, named for Marilyn's golden retriever Kate, has many options for expansion but at this stage producing quality ice cream is the number one priority. The true test will be to make it through the winter when ice cream sales are normally low but, for now, it appears that one of Sydney's newest entrepreneurs has turned a unique concept into a very successful business.

Greenhouse Co-op Ltd.

Lori Hough, Connie Stewart, and Cathleen MacNearney operate the Greenhouse Co-op Ltd. in St. Peter's, Cape Breton. Their business opened in January of 1988 with a product line consisting of bedding plants, vegetables, herbs, perennials, patio plants, planters, hanging baskets, potting soils and conditioners. Lori has been successfully producing and selling bedding plants since 1983 and after hiring Connie, who holds a technical degree in plant science, in 1987 the two of them decided to open a worker co-op. Cathleen joined the team shortly after moving to St. Peter's with her husband.

Being women in business has presented problems for these entrepreneurs. Balancing home and family responsibilities is the biggest challenge; all three are married and Cathleen and Connie have young children. Access to financing was difficult during start-up despite Lori's track record. While loan requirements were modest (start-up costs were \$12,000) the bank manager wanted their husbands to co-sign. When the women adamantly refused this request the loan was finally granted.

Cathleen, Lori and Connie feel their success is dependent on their ability to maintain a good quality product, keep goals realistic and give their full commitment to the business. "We strive for a high quality plant because they are lacking in the local area. People ask why we don't have strawberries and shrubs but we want to expand slowly so we can maintain quality and understand what we are doing," says Connie. Having supportive husbands allows them to make the necessary commitment to the business without neglecting home and family responsibilities.

These women had no previous formal business training but they sought professional advice and attended a seminar on worker co-ops offered by the local university. "We are all interested in the business and need a job, we keep each other going when times get tough," comments Cathleen. Sales this season are anticipated to amount to \$18,000.



Sylvia Ho, Art Plus
Advertising

The co-op presently operates on a seasonal basis and future plans include opening year round with an additional greenhouse. Product line expansion and/or product specialization will also be a consideration.

Art Plus Advertising

Sylvia Ho designs and produces promotional material for new and existing businesses. Her business, Art Plus Advertising, opened in March of 1987 and sales after nine months of operation exceeded \$65,000. Opening this business allowed Sylvia to fulfill a childhood dream. "What I am doing now is what I always wanted to do when I was young." Born in Malaysia, Sylvia studied commercial art in Singapore and later in Halifax, Nova Scotia. She made her decision to open her own business after she became frustrated with her job as a graphic artist for a local firm, which she took after coming to Cape Breton in 1981. Her inability to secure employment elsewhere on the island and her desire to remain close to family and friends left entrepreneurship as her only alternative.

The majority of financing came from government agencies such as Enterprise Cape Breton, the Nova Scotia Department of Small Business Development and a commercial bank loan. Securing money from the bank was the biggest problem she encountered during start-up but she indicates that support from government agencies gave credibility to her business plan and helped her convince the bank manager her proposal was viable. Presently, Sylvia operates her business in her home and while this has been advantageous financially, it leaves her personal life too interconnected with her business.

Sylvia attributes her success to competency, dedication and a strong financial base. She feels that gender is not an issue to consider when judging business success. Her biggest challenge in the future is to gain credibility with the business community. The local people have the attitude that they are getting a better product if they go outside the island. Cape Bretoners must help Cape Bretoners, they have to buy Cape Breton products and services."

Pages Downtown Bookstore

Mary Kay Mcleod holds a Ph.D. in economic history and works full time as assistant director of the Beaton Institute at the university in Sydney, Cape Breton. As an avid reader who was frustrated that she and others like her had to travel to other parts of the country to obtain quality books, she decided to open a bookstore herself. "Why not? I had organized many community historical and heritage societies, and I have been involved with books all my life." Although there was nothing in her formal training to prepare her for the experience of small business ownership, Mary Kay felt she could make her idea a reality. Throughout her career she had developed an ability to work well with others and she was confident she could apply that skill to another occupation. On March 24, 1987, Pages Downtown Bookstore opened its doors. Mary Kay distinguishes her business from chain stores presently operating in the area by carrying a unique line of books beyond the standard best sellers, and by offering a special order service that is well-used. Pages also sponsors guest appearances by well known authors.

Access to financing was the biggest obstacle Mary Kay faced during start-up; she had difficulty getting funding from the bank and at one point a major source withdrew funding. Looking back she offers these words of wisdom, "You need a good lawyer and a sound friend with a sharp mind. If your banker is your friend it helps in maintaining your relationship." The business experienced operational difficulties in the first year when a flood destroyed much of the inventory, but despite the unwelcome water Pages Downtown Bookstore managed to stay afloat. Sales that year were approximately

\$120,000, \$20,000 above projected figures.

Being a woman in business has not presented any insurmountable difficulty to Mary Kay. She feels she was already well known in the community and that being a woman in business has provided her with additional prestige. Her ambition is to see every inch of her store filled with books, and the sense of accomplishment is likely to keep her going. "I'm not ashamed to say it gets a great feeling of pride some days about what I do."

While the case studies reported above would suggest that these women are well on their way to becoming successful business owners, this success is contingent on a continued positive attitude toward developing the island's economy. Clearly, however, the stories illustrate that these women and many others like them can collectively make a positive impact on the community's economic growth and are in the limelight of a new emerging optimism.

Jody Ann Manley has been with the department of Business Administration at the University of Cape Breton for five years. She has a Masters in Industrial Relations from Queen University and a Masters in Business Administration from Dalhousie

Cheryl Carver worked as a research assistant with Jody Ann for the summer of 1988 studying women business owners in Cape Breton, and is a recent graduate of the Business Administration program.

1. Lavoie, Dina. *Women Entrepreneurs: Building a Stronger Canadian Economy*. The Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women, February 1988.

Six Housewife Hesitations

by Zoë Landale

1. Smarmy marm, half-mincing, never convincing about her real desire to stay home and do dishes. Education needs grading-up. You know she wants to be lazy. Crazy to prefer that to making money. 1950's honey, brain made of Betty Crocker cake mix. Half-baked.
2. Making war on laundry for the third time that day, measuring out detergent in a cracked white cup and sneezing. Malevolent intervention: whenever she washes the baby's quilt, the kid immediately spills milk on it. Puffy soft warmth from the dryer. There is no smell so retchingly dead as rotten milk in fabric.
3. All I want is a fix of family far away from the cold night air. I cannot worry about female spring-offs, society-shaping: I'm too busy making a home. Don't groan. Maintaining. Someone has to do it. What do you want, some cute little four-footed dinosaur in an apron to come in and tidy the table where all the mail and

magazines accumulate? Who makes sure the dinosaur's wastepaper baskets are emptied and clean clothes occasionally put away? A two-footed gremlin? Who cleans the gremlin's bathroom sink? Out of the way while I display my awesome female efficiency.

4. Sufficiency not of self. Another income not added. And the brain-drain, watch those suds swirl down the sink for the eighth time in one day and get literal. Definition of a human being: two-handed mess maker. If I create more garbage than anyone else I know, does that make me cleaner or more dirty? I've always wanted to be an executive, frankly. The two-ton briefcase syndrome. Let the cleaning woman look after stale domesticity.
5. The secretary at the party last week ruffling her daughter's black hair. Three children she wants, she'll go back to work again after four and a half months home, the longest her company can get by without her. The resentful blonde whose parents worked all the time. She moved across the continent, misses them from a safe distance.
6. Add three hearts and stir. Cook on tenderness for forty-five career. Remove when nurtured or delicately browned, whichever comes first. Tidy as you go. Around here, that means washing up coffee cups and stray dishes which breed after dinner. Get a dazzling part-time fulfillment and leave it to your children to figure out, why don't you?

*Zoë Landale is a B.C. poet and writer.
Her first collection of poems is called Harvest of
Salmon.*

REVIEW

No Way to live: Poor Women Speak Out

by Sheila Baxter New Star Books, Vancouver, 1988 240 pages,
\$9.95 paper

Review by Georgina Marshall

- In 1985, 26% of all poor families in Canada had incomes under the poverty line, even though the family head worked for the full year.
- One in three female single parents relies on welfare as her primary source of income.
- Food banks have become an established part of making ends meet for the vast majority of people using them. ... Food banks help over 70,000 in B.C. each month. (1)



What does it mean to be a woman who is one of the people to whom these statistics refer? How do such abstract figures translate into real life experiences? There is no way of answering these questions if we haven't been poor ourselves or if we are not on the front lines working with low income people. We can't help but be distanced from the impact of poverty if we don't know what it is it live the daily struggle. Sheila Baxter's book gives first hand accounts of the problems, frustrations, disappointments, shame and anger suffered by women as a result of being female and poor.

Sheila Baxter has lived and worked as a welfare advocate in the downtown eastside of Vancouver for some years. The research for the book took place in 1986, during which time she interviewed over fifty women of different ages in the eastside of Vancouver. The women were Black, Asian, white, and Native Indian; a mix of lesbian and heterosexual with various backgrounds of education and income levels. The published interviews, which range from a few words to a few pages in length, are interspersed with wonderful photographs and essays from noted Canadian women on issues of poverty. The intensity of the personal stories keep the women and children in focus when we skim the figures and read about the shortcomings of our social welfare programs.

Each woman was asked three questions: Why are you poor?, What do you think could be done about it? and Do you think you will always be poor? The responses make evident that the many personal reasons for poverty, whether due to poor health or low wages or being a single parent, are directly related to our socio-economic structures which fail to provide adequate income security programs, enough jobs, decent wages, and so forth. The analysis that poses poverty as a social problem is voiced by virtually all of the women. But knowing this on one level and being confronted by prejudice on another means that they feel low self-esteem. Sheila notes lack of self-worth to be one of the most common problems encountered.

The book is not easy to get through. The reader is exposed repeatedly to the sadness and the injustices of women who are "forcibly poor." The emotional charge inherent in this form of research is overwhelming at times, but it is necessary to hear over and over again how women are systemically disempowered.

The one criticism of the book I will put forth is the seeming hopelessness of the women's lives. This is effected by the presentation of events in the chapter on advocacy and is done in two ways. First, in the course of relating problems faced by women and the outcomes when advocacy was attempted, Sheila neglects to include the specifics of many cases. This results in the reader gaining little understanding of the welfare appeal system and ways in which a woman or her advocate can challenge ministry interpretation. Secondly, a bleak picture is painted of the potential for women to take control of their lives when on welfare. In the advocacy chapter, woman after woman declines to appeal the denial of benefits. I agree that women are fearful of retribution by their welfare worker if they are "problem" clients but there are many, many women who do appeal or seek advocate intervention and who are successful in getting benefits. As Jean Swanson, the anti-poverty activist noted below, states, "When you become known as a fighter, no one wants to tangle with you."

Jean Swanson, coordinator of a B.C. coalition of anti-poverty groups called End Legislated Poverty, affords analysis and strategy to overcome the debilitating effects of poverty. She illustrates how the market-oriented economic system works against women in poverty by such actions as eliminating rent control and keeping welfare rates and wages low so that people have to work for below-poverty wages. By connecting the personal to the political, she examines ways in which we can promote change rather than spend "energy adapting to situations others create."

Another poverty rights activist and writer, Dorothy O'Connell, raises class issues in her essay, "Poverty and the Common Woman." Women separated from women by economic barriers, and contempt for women by women who stay in the home are just some of the issues leading to the examination of structured inequality as it relates to women.

The voices recorded in this book are those of B.C. women and the welfare legislation dealt with is that of the B.C. government. But *No Way to Live* is a book for every Canadian because poverty is legislated across the country. As Dorothy O'Connell points out, "it is government policy to keep a certain portion of the population poor."

Georgina Marshall is a community worker for First United Church in Vancouver, B.C. She is involved in anti-poverty and advocacy issues.

1. Statistics are quoted from information in the book, pages 43,152 and 119.

A Guide to Business Development for Non-Profit Organizations.

Women Skills Development Society: Community Economic Options.

52 pages, \$10.00 (British Columbia: Douglas College 1987).

Review by Paula De Coito

This guide is deceptively well-researched, well-organized, and well-written.

"Deceptively" because the managerial and editorial competence of the authors may blind the reader to the latent role of the Guide in contemporary Canadian society. That role is one of support for the privatization policy of our governments. Furthermore, the Guide can be interpreted as an indirect contributor to the ghettoization of women business entrepreneurs in low-income areas.

Reflecting the ethic of co-operation in the non-profit sector, the Guide is the joint product of Women Skills Development society, Douglas College (British Columbia), and the Ministry of Advanced Education and Job Training (British Columbia). Although it is written specifically for non-profit organizations, the concepts and insights it presents are of value to all would-be entrepreneurs. The authors do not duplicate the many "how-to-start-a-small-business" books already in the marketplace. Instead, they itemize the kinds of decisions that non-profit organizations have to make when considering the option of starting a new business and describe activities which they can undertake in order to make effective decisions.

Nine areas of decision making are discussed in the nine chapters of the Guide. These include, among others, financing a project and choosing a legal structure, and in addition there are substantive lists of resources, a bibliography, and suggestions for "further reading".

The average volunteer or staff member of a non-profit organization is not likely to be intimidated or overwhelmed by the wealth of information in the Guide; the authors employ a conversational tone. Moreover, their language is straightforward and their style direct. Altogether, the Guide provides a service for business entrepreneurs who have been long ignored by the mainstream Guides on business ownership and management: private non-profit organizations.

The value of this service notwithstanding, there is some reason to be cynical about the appearance of the Guide at this time. When the Mulroney government won its landslide victory in 1984 one of the first policies it announced was that of privatization. Recently, a report of the Premier's Council of Ontario urged the liberal government of that province to contract out more of its professional and technical work to the private sector. One can expect the private sector (for-profits and non-profits) to develop strategies to take advantage of the many entrepreneurial opportunities facilitated by such privatization. Indeed, the private non-profit sector is well positioned to compete with the private for-profit sector. This is due in no small part to their traditional image as a sector concerned not with the almighty dollar but with the welfare of the ordinary citizen. A business development guide at this time helps the non-profit sector to capitalize on that image.

Further analysis reveals that the Guide (unintentionally) contributes to the

ghettoization of women entrepreneurs in traditional areas of women's paid work. The private non-profit sector is female-dominated and is known to have an unstable and meager financial base. If this sector gets into the business of creating new businesses, it will only be offering entrepreneurial opportunities for women in low-income fields. Of course, half a loaf is better than none at all. The new businesses will provide jobs and non-profit business owners will argue that owning their own businesses helps them to become more fiscally autonomous and less dependent upon their major founder, the government. This is a concrete benefit of business ownership for non-profit organizations.

A Guide to Business Development for Non-Profit Organizations is a fitting product for the contemporary economic scene in Canada in which entrepreneurs and intrapreneurs are being hailed as the architects of the future, economic expansion is regarded as the norm, and concepts such as global "marketplace" and "multi-nationals" are commonplace. It is a scene in which self-reliance and self-development are the primary social values. When seen in this context, the Guide can be interpreted as a strategic tool for facilitating increased self-reliance and expansion for the private non-profit organizations. One wonders what will be next on the business agenda of this sector: mergers, corporate take-over, collaboration between non-profits and for-profits, off-shore production? More guides for business development will have to be published.

Paula De Caito is the president of the social Planning Council of Peel (Ontario). She holds a Ph.D. from the University of Toronto, for which her thesis addressed Canadian women entrepreneurs.

Women and Community Economic Development Conference

Douglas College, New Westminster, B.C. May 27-19, 1988

Review by Susan Wismer

"We believe that CED (community economic development) can make a difference in women's lives. At this conference, we will assess the potential of this strategy. We will start from women's experiences and examine these and other critical questions with both social and economic goals in mind." (From the conference brochure.)

Organizing a national conference from the extreme western end of Canada has its own special challenges. Not the least of these is convincing potential founders that the whole enterprise is possible. It was not clear until scarcely a month before the conference was due to begin that the minimum funds necessary would be available. For close to a year the idea of the conference was supported by nothing more - or less - than the commitment of women from Women Skills Development Society who were convinced that a conference on women and community economic development was timely and necessary, and the

network of volunteers across the country who worked with them to consider the conference agenda, identify workshop leaders, develop mailing lists, and make travel arrangements.

But when the 200 registrants for the conference began to arrive, there was little evidence of the stresses and strains of putting together a major national meeting on a spider's web of volunteer effort, except perhaps in the tired and relieved faces of the organizing committee. The welcome was warm and well organized. The people did come from all across the country. And the program of workshops and speakers covered the broadest possible range of topics and interests.

Women involved in community economic development projects across Canada gave presentations at workshops and on panels on everything from home-based catering to the development of jointly ventured investment funds involving assets in the millions of dollars. Participants talked at length about the need for vision, and for strategies that start not from government programs or market niches, but from the basic needs which they and their families have for shelter, food, clothing and a generally decent life. People from opposite ends of the country found they shared similar ideas and hopes and could benefit from the lessons of their mutual experience.

The most memorable moment, however, did not result from the careful advance planning of the organizers. It came during the final plenary session of the conference. A group of women from Nova Scotia read a carefully prepared statement which said that as women of color and as poor women, though they had no wish to disrupt the proceedings, they felt we all should know that they and their needs and interests had not been adequately recognized. Their daily reality is one in which children are admitted to hospital as a result of malnutrition. Nothing at the conference was likely to change that. In a statement which moved many people to tears, one woman reported that her teenaged daughter, still in hospital at the time of the conference after a suicide attempt, has said she could not stand to live in a world where women do not support one another. In response, many participants wrote letters to be carried back to the woman's daughter.

There could have been no more powerful reminder that despite the considerable accomplishments of women involved in community economic development and despite its apparent promise as a pathway to a more peaceful and equitable world, the journey will be a long one, and it must begin at the beginning, with those who are the least advantaged in Canadian society.

Conference proceedings are in preparation. Further information is available from Women Skills, Community Economic Options, 4340 Carson Street Burnaby, B.C., V5L 2X9.

Susan Wismer is the guest editor of this issue of Women's Education des femmes.

RESOURCES / RESSOURCES

Organizations

The Home Businesswomen's Network

c/o Wendy Priesnitz
National Co-ordinator 195 Markville Road
Unionville, Ontario L3R 4V8

Formed in 1986, this national group provides a support network, a forum for the exchange of information and current publications and works to document and legitimize the home-based business movement in Canada. Annual membership fee is \$25.00 and includes a regular newsletter, an annual directory of members and a discount on publications available through the mail.

Women Plan Toronto

736 Bathurst Street
Toronto, Ontario
M5S 2R4 (416) 588-9751

This Toronto-based group networks with other women's groups across Canada and around the world on issues important to women living in urban communities, like affordable housing and safe transportation. Their resources include information, publications and a workshop entitled "Women in the Man-Made City."

Call for Submissions

Anthology of Canadian Women's Feminist Humour

Poems, stories, jokes, sketches, short essays, drawings, cartoons, photographs, journal entries, stamps, songs, postcards, lists, catalogues, documents, collages, letters, headlines, marginalia and anything else are acceptable. New work is especially encouraged but exceptional previously published or exhibited work will be considered. Send submissions with a self-addressed, stamped envelope and one line biography to: Janice Williamson, Department of English, University of Alberta, Edmonton Alberta, T6G 2E5.

Grants /Scholarships

The Elsie Gregory MacGill Memorial Award

Nominations are now being accepted for this award which commemorates the work of

Elsie Gregory MacGill, distinguished professional engineer and a leader in women's issues. Nominees must be Canadian citizens who have made an exceptional contribution in education, science, technology or relief of poverty, by which the public benefit was or will be served. Contact the Elsie Gregory MacGill Memorial Foundation, 30 Chelford Road, Don Mills, Ontario, M3B 2E5.

Film / Video

Women Breaking Through

National Film Board of Canada

A cross-curriculum A-V resource guide is now available from the NFB for secondary schools. The selection includes films on historical struggles, political feminism, the arts, peace, sexuality, careers, and the family. For a copy contact the National Film Board, P.O. Box 6100, Station A, Montreal, Quebec, H3C 3H5.

Books & Publications

The Book for Women Who Invent or Want To

By Elizabeth Wallace

The Women Inventors Project, 1987

#500, 22 King Street South

Waterloo, Ontario N2J 1N8

Resource information, advice, strategies for networking, marketing and financing is included in this book for women interested in inventing.

Focusing Forward Kit

by Nancy Wright

Canadian Congress for Learning Opportunities for Women c/o Linda Roberts 2745

Connolly Street Halifax, Nova Scotia B3L 3M8

This kit outlines how to plan and implement a workshop for women on education, training and employment topics. The kit is a result of a project sponsored by the Secretary of State Women's program.

Taking Care: A Handbook About Women's Health

by Mary J. Breen

Peterborough YWCA 216 Simcoe Street Peterborough, Ontario K9H 2H7 free

A handbook in "plain English" about health topics including stress, patients' rights,

sexuality and menopause. It has proven a valuable tool also for ESL and literacy learners.

A Guide to Fighting Sexual Harassment in the Workplace

by Bonnie Robichaud

The Bonnie Robichaud Defence Committee, P.O. Box 149 Osgoode, Ontario KOA 2W0
\$3.95

Written out of Robichaud's own successful case against the Department of National Defence, this booklet is of use to victims and advocates. It is produced with the assistance of the Ontario Women's Directorate.

Herstory 1989

Thunder Creek Publishing Co- operative Suite 209, 1945 Scarth Street Regina,
Saskatchewan S4P 2H2 132 pages, \$8.95 coil-bound

A desk calendar produced by the Saskatoon Women's Calendar Collective, each page features a different issue or the biography of a Canadian woman.

Becoming a Parent: A Guide to Maternity / Parental Leave and Benefits in Canada

Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women 110 O'Connor Street 9th Floor, Box
1541, Stn. B Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5R5 free

A guide to and analysis of the current benefits available in Canada.

Women in the World

Edited by Lyn Reese and Jean Wilkinson Scarecrow Press Metuchen, New Jersey 220
pages, \$19.95

A 436-item bibliography, to help junior and high school teachers identify worthwhile books and curriculum materials about women's role throughout the world and history .

1988 Canadian Women's Directory

Les Éditions Communqu'Elles 3585 St-Urbain Montreal, Quebec H2X 2N6 350 pages,
\$9.95 + \$1.00 postage

Contains nearly 2,000 names, addresses and phone numbers of women's groups and associations, subdivided by province or territory.

Prix Commémoratif

La Fondation Elsie Gregory MacGill commémore la carrière et les accomplissements de cette ingénieure distinguée et figure importante dans le domaine du statut de la femme. Les personnes nommées doivent être canadiennes, demeurer au Canada, et avoir contribué

d'une façon exceptionnelle aux domaines de l'éducation, de la science, de la technologie ou à l'enraiment de la pauvreté. Les nominations doivent être proposées par écrit par au moins deux personnes n'ayant aucun lien de parenté avec la personne nommée. Envoyez-les avant le 15 avril 1989 au Comité de Sélection du Prix Commémoratif Elsie Gregory Mac Gill, 30 Chelford Road, Don Mills, Ontario, M3B 2E5

À la recherche de documentation

Anthologie de l'humour féministe au Canada

On accepte des poèmes, des histoires, des blagues, des sketches, de courts essais, des bandes dessinées, des photos, des articles, des timbres, des chansons, des cartes postales, des listes, des collages et tout ce qui semble opportun. On aimerait en particulier recevoir des travaux inédits, mais tous ceux, d'une qualité exceptionnelle, qui ont paru et ont été exposés seront aussi pris en considération. Envoyez vos soumissions accompagnées d'une enveloppe timbrée à votre adresse et d'une biographie d'une ligne à Janice Williamson, Département d'Anglais, Université de l'Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta, T6G 2E5.

Livres & Publications

Devenir Parent

Conseil consultatif canadien sur la situation de la femme 110 rue O'Connor b.p. 1541, succ. B Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5R5 gratuite

Cette récente publication du Conseil donne un portrait des congés et prestations de maternité et de paternité au Canada.

Recherches Féministes

Pavillon Charles-De-Koninck bureau 2463 Université Laval, Cité universitaire Québec G1K 7P4

Cette revue scientifique francophone est à visée interdisciplinaire. Elle a pour objectif de contribuer à l'avancement de la recherche féministe par la diffusion de résultats inédits de recherche, particulièrement de recherche empirique. R.F. paraît deux fois par an, au printemps et à l'automne. Tarifs: 18\$ régulier; 16\$ étudiant(e); 28\$ institution; 10\$ prix à l'unité.

La pornographie décodée

par Ginette Busque, Cécile Couderre et Noelle-Dominique Willems La Fédération des femmes du Québec 1265 rue Berri, b. 820 Montréal, Québec H2L 4X4 2 vol. 10\$ + frais postaux

En se présentant sous la forme de deux cahiers de fiches, cette publication poursuit un triple objectif d'information, d'analyse et d'ouverture sur l'action. Elle est, de ce fait, une forme d'aboutissement d'années de questionnement de la part des membres de la FFQ sur l'impact de la consommation de matériel pornographique.

Interventions économiques

C.P. 206, succ. C Montréal, Québec H2L 4K1

No. 20 de la revue (septembre 1988) est une édition spéciale sur les femmes et l'économie. Interventions économiques paraît trois fois par an. Tarifs: 28\$ régulier; 50\$ de soutien; 42\$ institution; 46\$ étranger.

Film & Vidéo

Le pouvoir municipal, un outil à notre portée

Fédération des femmes du Québec 1265 rue Berri, b. 820 H2L 4X4 VHS, Beta, Umatic
3/4

La FFQ offre aux femmes le matériel didactique qui leur permet de faire un apprentissage à la fois théorique et pratique de la politique municipale. Pour les femmes, s'engager en politique municipale constitue un pas important. Le vidéo est accompagné de deux guides, l'un étant destiné à l'animatrice des séances de formation et l'autre à chacune des participantes.

Cowboy

by Linda Wikene Johnson

I wanted to ride
wild horses
break my bones
I thought my sex
would change when I grew up
I rolled mental cigarettes
wore high-heeled boots
and dreamed of riding the hills
night's silent mountains
listening for me
quiet songs sung to the stars
the northern lights
flickering pale lonely fire
in my eyes
the valleys opening their hands
to let me in
daybreaks considered on horseback
frost in my hair
cattle tended on the spine
of the Cariboo
the ribs of the world
I wanted to be a cowboy then
a poet without the need
for words

Linda Wikene Johnson is a mother and a part-time rural mail contractor. Her first collection of verse is called Showcase Animals.

COMMENTARY

Where There's a Will, There's Not Always a Way

BY JOYCE RANKIN

La bonne volonté ne suffit pas toujours

par Joyce Rankin

Women Working Inc. est une école professionnelle privée qui propose aux femmes qui entrent sur le marché du travail non traditionnel un cours d'informatique, un cours de commerce et un programme de réinsertion. Nous encourageons les femmes qui participent à notre programme de réinsertion de continuer à prendre des cours de formation dans l'un des deux collèges techniques de Winnipeg car les femmes doivent avoir une formation reconnue si elles veulent arriver à convaincre un employeur de les embaucher comme apprenties, alors qu'on n'exige pas des hommes qu'ils aient ces qualifications. Emploi et Immigration Canada a accepté de subventionner des places au collège pour les femmes qui ne pourraient autrement se permettre de suivre une formation; hélas, la plupart des femmes sont obligées de se réinscrire au bien-être social, souvent pour plus d'un an, en attendant que Emploi et Immigration Canada fasse le nécessaire dans leur région. Emploi et Immigration Canada n'accorde que des allocations de formation pour 32 semaines, ce qui empêche les femmes de terminer des programmes en technologie, lesquels offrent de meilleurs débouchés, mais durent deux ans. Et tandis que le gouvernement réduit le nombre des places qu'il subventionne tout en s'en tenant à ses objectifs, on accusera les femmes lorsque ces objectifs ne seront pas atteints de ne pas faire preuve de beaucoup d'intérêt ou d'engagement. Si Emploi et Immigration Canada veut prouver la bonne foi de son engagement vis-à-vis de la formation non traditionnelle pour les femmes, il faut absolument qu'il apporte son appui dans les secteurs suivants: achat de places, allocations de formation adéquates, subventions accordées aux collèges pour qu'ils perfectionnent leur enseignement et qu'ils apprennent aux employeurs à ne pas faire preuve de discrimination.

Joyce Rankin est une féministe qui a participé à la fondation de Women Working Inc. Elle s'occupe de la gestion de l'entreprise et enseigne, avec une autre collègue, le cours d'informatique.

Women Working Inc. is a private vocational school registered by the Manitoba Department of Education to offer a computer literary course, a trades literacy course and a

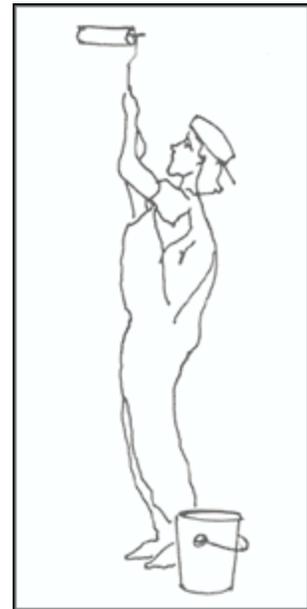
re-entry program for women re-entering the labor force in non-traditional occupations. (Non-traditional means those areas of the labor force in which women's participation comprises less than one third). The re-entry program is a federally funded program under the Canadian Jobs Strategy (CJS) and since its beginning in 1986 sixty women have enrolled to enhance their economic potential by pursuing a trade or technical occupation. Unfortunately, what many of these women have found is that having the courage to challenge stereotypes and the desire to land a job that pays a reasonable salary are not nearly enough to guarantee access to training.

A woman must have formal training in order to convince an employer to hire her as an apprentice. Formal training is not necessary in applying for apprenticeship positions but women entering a trade or technical occupation who have experience in a traditionally female area will not even be given a second glance. A woman already has to work against stereotyping (including her own internalized version), physical requirements, sexual harassment and the myth of added expense to the employer (such as providing a separate washroom); it is a valuable asset to be able to claim a degree of familiarity with the trade. Two technical colleges in Winnipeg offer such training: the Red River Community College and the South Winnipeg Technical Centre. CEIC (Employment and Immigration Canada) has agreed to subsidize seats in these colleges for women who cannot afford to purchase the training they want. The sad reality indicates a greater willingness in the government to return these enthusiastic students to their dependence on welfare.

Marilyn finished our program in June and put her name on the waiting list for the auto mechanics course at Red River College; she was 19th on the list. At the end of September she was informed by CEIC that they would not be purchasing seats at either Red River or South Winnipeg Technical Centre in auto mechanics. Her alternative is to go back on welfare for at least six months, and to try to get welfare to purchase the training later. In addition, CEIC has cancelled the procedure by which, in keeping with their operational guidelines to promote women in non-traditional work, women on the waiting list were bumped to the top. Some women's names never even make it from their application to the waiting list in the first place. For the many women who seek financial independence and security through non-traditional training, the bitter irony of this bureaucratic procedure is the unavailability of welfare while they wait, often for more than a year, for a seat in their chosen area of training.

Even if a woman is successful in obtaining a college seat, CEIC has a 52 week limit per person for time spent in training. All technologist programs are two years long so women (again) are limited to training for the less lucrative technician certificate or other ten month programs.

For the past two years I have been co-chairperson of the Local Advisory Council set up by CEIC for community liaison around CJS. A resolution presented to CEIC National Headquarters and which was accepted called for continuity in training. Yet women who meet the entrance requirements essentially do not have access to training if they do not



currently have the means to pay for their own schooling. In the past, Manitoba Jobs Fund has been helpful in subsidizing positions for entry level women who have found jobs after completing our program and the federal Job Development program has been used in the same way. The provincial program was recently cancelled by the conservative government.

CEIC has also reduced direct purchase training to Red River Community College for academic upgrading. Several fields require Grade 12 math and physics; while math upgrading is included in Women Working's re-entry program, it is impossible for us to upgrade an individual woman more than one level during the 30 week program. South Winnipeg Technical Centre has a program where upgrading is concurrent with the technical training, but the reduction in funding means women who do not already meet the academic requirements have no chance of getting into Red River College, where more programs are offered.

Even if it suddenly became easy for a woman to obtain a training seat in the area of her choice and to tread water financially until she completed her program, her problems would be far from over. Kendra was accepted into the diesel mechanics course at Red River College. She struggled with sexism on the part of her instructor and the students but completed the program and was able to use her training to get a position. Her employer suffered so much harassment from media for having hired a women that Kendra was forced find another job. Her present employer wants no publicity.

So the message is loud and clear. As a woman who wants a job with greater economic potential, variety and mobility, you can only go so far. As the federal government reduces the number of seat purchases while continuing to hold targets, women will be blamed for lacking the interest or commitment when targets are not met. The result? Support will be cut even further. It is imperative that if CEIC wishes to demonstrate its commitment to non-traditional training for women, it must provide the support: in seat purchases, adequate training allowances, funding to colleges for academic upgrading and in educating employers against discrimination. CEIC policy-makers state that CJS can answer all these training needs. But the onus to fight through the process, to gain access to the education guaranteed in our human rights legislation, rests with the individual. As one struggling tradeswoman said, "It's too hard. It shouldn't be this hard."

Joyce Rankin is a feminist and co-founder of Women Working Inc. She is one of two computer literacy instructors and the financial manager for the business.

Agenda

The Women's Legal Education and Action Fund "Fundraising Roadshow"

February 2, Toronto, Roy Thomson Hall

February 3, Halifax, Rebecca Cohn Auditorium

February 7, Calgary, Jack Singer Auditorium

February 8, Vancouver, The Orpheum

Titled "The Women Who Made A Difference /Les femmes qui ont tout changé" the show

will include performers such as Gloria Steinem (Vancouver), Margaret Atwood (Toronto), Buffy Sainte-Marie, Rosemary Brown and others. Contact LEAF, 489 College Street, #403, Toronto, M6G 1A5, (416) 963- 9654.

"Women's Studies Concepts and Reality"
"Concepts et Réalités des Études Féministes"

February 17-19, Brussels, Belgium

Sponsored by Les Cahiers du Grif (Groupe de Recherches et d'Informations Féministes), the emphasis will be on women's studies in the European Common Market. Simultaneous translation in French, English and Italian. Contact Les Cahiers du Grif, 29 rue Blanche, 1050 Bruxelles, Belgique.

"Business Ownership for Women"

February 20-21, Victoria, B.C.

This conference series is sponsored by the Women's Secretariat, B.C. Ministry of Advanced Education and Job Training and the Federal Business Development Bank. Other locations in March include Kamloops and Castlegar. For information contact the Federal Business Development Bank at the conference location.

"The Learning Disabled Adult"

February 16-17, University of Guelph, Ontario

Doreen Kronick will lead this seminar on the learning needs of the semi-skilled and professional learning disabled adult. Contact the Division of Continuing Education, Room 160, Johnston Hall, University of Guelph, Guelph, Ontario, N1G 2W1.

"Curriculum at the Centre/Le Programme: La Clé"

April 30 - May 3, Montreal, Quebec

The overall theme for this national conference on curriculum, instruction and leadership is "Realities, Responses and Responsibilities". For information contact the Canadian Teachers' Federation or L'Association canadienne d'éducation de langue française.

"Feminist Psychology in Canada: Retrospect and Prospects"

June 7, Halifax, N.S.

The ninth Institute of the Section on Women and Psychology of the Canadian Psychological Association will be held at the World Trade and Convention Centre. Contact Dr. Joanne Gallivan, Dept. of Psychology, University College of Cape Breton, Sydney, N.S., B1P 6L2, (902) 539-5300.



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The Canadian Congress for Learning Opportunities for Women (CCLOW) was founded in 1979 and is a national, voluntary, feminist organization with networks in every province and territory. CCLOW advocates equality between women and men by promoting equal participation in our educational, political, economic, legal, social and cultural systems. To overcome discrimination based on gender, age, race, class, ethnicity, and sexual orientation, CCLOW focuses on improving educational and learning systems. Our work and research includes maintaining a Women's Learning Resource Centre, publishing a quarterly magazine (Women's Education des femmes) and newsletter (Minerva), advocacy, program development in local areas and involvement in educational related activities and events.

Le Congrès canadien pour la promotion des études chez la femme (CCPEF) a été fondé en 1979. C'est un organisme national, bénévole et féministe qui a des réseaux dans chaque province et territoire. Le CCPEF prône l'égalité entre les femmes et les hommes en promouvant une participation égale de tous et de toutes à notre système éducatif, politique, économique, judiciaire, social et culturel. Pour surmonter la discrimination qui se fonde sur le sexe, l'âge, la race, la classe sociale, les caractères ethniques et l'orientation sexuelle, le CCPEF s'attache à perfectionner le système éducatif et celui de l'apprentissage des femmes, publie une revue trimestrielle Women's Education des femmes et un bulletin de nouvelles, Minerva, se fait le défenseur des femmes, s'occupe d'élaborer des programmes dans différentes régions du pays et participe à des activités et à des manifestations dans le domaine de l'éducation.



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