

Women in Science and Technology

VANCOUVER — The Society for Canadian Women in Science and Technology (SCWIST) is sponsoring the First National Conference for Women in Science and Technology. From May 20 — 22, 1983 at the University of British Columbia, Vancouver, questions concerning women in the sciences, math and science education for young women and social issues in science will be addressed.

Spurred by the lack of women in the scientific community and the forecasted need for individuals trained in science and technology the conference has chosen to focus on strategies for change. In general terms these concerns involve motivating young women toward scientific careers; analyzing problems common to women in science and highlighting career opportunities available to women in science and technology.

A combination of papers, panel discussions and workshops will cover topics such as: math/science anxiety; job diversification; entering the market-place; innovative high school programs and developing a national network of women scientists. Of particular interest to those teaching science will be a presentation by British scientist-educator, Barbara Small. She will outline and discuss GIST, a special program intended to encourage Girls Into Science and Technology. In the field of mathematics, the conference will feature a seminar and panel discussion with members of EQUALS. Designed and based in Berkeley, California, EQUALS is concerned with encouraging girls into mathematics programs.

Professional and career development will be addressed in workshops such as: Success... revising the Madame Curie Syndrome; Juggling Home, Family and Career; Getting where and what you want and Returning to the Scientific Workforce. Of more general interest will be discussion of Gender Politics, Social Issues in Science and The

Future of Canadian Women in Science. One address which promises to be most interesting is that of Evelyn Fox Keller 'Is Science Male?' and the panel following 'Gender in Science' featuring Harvard scientist, Ruth Hubbard and Rose Sheinin of O.I.S.E.

While these workshops and panels focus largely on the converted, Friday May 20, provides a forum for exchange between young women and professional scientists. The day will include a seminar for students 'Expanding your Horizons', led by Lucie Pépin of the federal Advisory Council on the Status of Women and discussions dealing with Why Science is Exciting; Careers on the Go and User-friendly: Women and Computers. A Career fair will complete the day, offering an opportunity for students and professionals to meet and discuss individual interests, careers and special branches of science. It is hoped that these exchanges will provide the students with a more realistic view of women scientists.

Conference registration is \$100 with a spe-

cial rate of \$25 for University and College students. Please make cheques payable to SCWIST. Further details about programs and registration are available from: Hilda Lei Chung, PhD., SCWIST, PO Box 2184, Vancouver, BC, V6B 3V7. ●

Support Judy Flanigan

GUELPH — Judy Flanigan was fired from her job of six years at Webman Printing in Guelph, for refusing to do camerawork on a pornographic paper. Since then the Coalition In Support of Judy Flanigan has been circulating petitions on her behalf. Petitions are available from: Lin McInnes, 114B Surrey St E, Guelph, Ontario N1H 3P9. The Coalition asks that people return the signed petitions as soon as possible. ●

Women's Movement Archives

TORONTO — The Women's Movement Archives staff invites you to visit their new office at 455 Spadina Avenue, Suite 205, Toronto. The office is open from 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday. Arrangements can be made to visit outside regular office hours by calling (416) 597-8865.

The Archives grew out of *The Other Woman* newspaper that was printed in Toronto from 1972 to 1977. It has grown and is part of the women's liberation movement in Canada. It belongs to those women who are working in the anti-rape, abortion rights, health, labour, lesbian, day care movements and all other struggles which gives us more autonomy over our lives. All the Archives material is accessible and open to all unless donations have specific conditions to be closed to the public.

You can help increase the Archives' holdings by cleaning out your basements, boxes, files and attics. Their holdings consist of newsletters, newspapers, leaflets, flyers, papers donated from groups, buttons and posters. They will accept photocopies of material and can also photocopy your material for you, or help you in sorting through your materials and files.

Nothing should be thrown away. Send your correspondence with women active in other cities, your journals, almanacs, articles you have written, your notes from meetings, photographs. What is junk to you may be gold to the Archives. ●

Scholarship: Theory & Practice, and Politics: Theory & Practice. The division is somewhat forced and a number of the titles could have been more descriptive of the contents. But that is a minor cavil. I found that I read the first few articles at a gallop, finding them engrossing and stimulating: methodological rebellions, feminist critique of scientific method, of values, economics, history; a piece on the Rastafarian movement; a devastating critique of philosophy; how personal is political in the helping professions.

After a couple days off for R & R I proceeded to part two: women's specificity and equality, a key issue, usually carefully avoided; power in the Québec context; a closely argued piece by Mary O'Brien; inspiration translated from the French; and lastly, what about men? Whew!

This is not an easy book to read. It is packed with ideas, abstract concepts, complex insights, all demanding concentration. Academics, even feminist ones, have trouble avoiding some horrendously ponderous vocabulary. Could phrases like "ideological hegemony" not have been translated into simpler, popular English in a book for general readers? Even without the academese this book is not any fast food item.

I recommend *Feminism in Canada* not merely for the high-minded reasons given above. What grabs me is that, at the level of theory, I find much in it with which to agree. Not necessarily in detail or emphasis but in general, *Feminism in Canada* speaks to and for me and my political perspective as a feminist. ●

Borowski vs. Abortion

REGINA — On May 9, Regina's Court of Queen's Bench will be the scene for anti-abortionist Joe Borowski's long-awaited legal challenge to Canada's abortion law. The trial will last several weeks, net Borowski's lawyer Morris Schumiatcher \$250,000 in legal fees, and if successful, prevent any and all abortions in Canada, making them tantamount to murder.

While Borowski has won the legal right to represent Canadian fetuses in court, a judge has disallowed any other interventions in the trial. No one will be representing the thousands of Canadian women who face unwanted pregnancy; in fact no one will be representing women at all. The critical deci-

sion for Canada's future abortion policy lies in the hands of the judge, Joe Borowski, his lawyer, and legal representatives of the federal Department of Justice whose Minister is the avowedly 'pro-life' Mark McGaigan.

Outside the courtroom however, representatives of many women's community and labour organizations, the Regina Pro-Choice Coalition, will be challenging Borowski's case. A press conference and public meeting will take place in the week preceding the court case opening as well as activities during the trial itself.

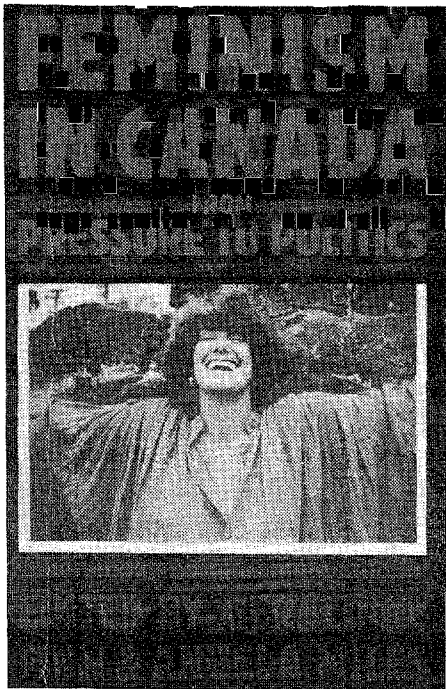
The law in question, Section 251 of the Canadian Criminal Code, in place since 1969, allows for legal abortion when the 'life or health' of the woman is endangered. Since its adoption, deaths from illegal abortion in

Canada have dropped dramatically. The federal government's own taskforce, the Badgley Report, has already documented the regional inadequacies and restrictive nature of the existing law but Borowski's challenge would restrict abortion altogether, making it impossible for a woman in Canada to obtain a safe, legal, medical abortion.

Borowski himself has long been a militant opponent of liberalized abortion laws. His current legal battle over the abortion law was initiated in 1979 and argues that Canada's Bill of Rights and the newly drawn-up Charter of Rights, guarantee the right of life to 'persons' should extend to human fetuses. He is also attempting to obtain an injunction against the federal finance minister to stop the spending of public money on abortions. ●

Feminism in Canada:

New Challenge to Domination



by Eve Zaremba

Angela G. Miles & Geraldine Finn, Eds., *Feminism in Canada, From Pressure to Politics*. Montréal: Black Rose Books, 1982.

Feminism in Canada is a book worth reading with care. Not that it will tell you anything concrete about working-class women, or immigrant women, or lesbians, or battered wives, or single mothers. Not that it presents hot new information on "women's issues" such as rape or job ghettos or whatever. And not that it deals much with respectable "larger" concerns like ecology or nuclear disarmament or imperialism. This anthology is worth reading because it is about women: for the most part women as a category; the class "women", all women. Daring to deal with the specificity of women rather than

with specific kinds of women is fast becoming a rare and controversial endeavour.

Women differ from each other in great many ways; we come in many shades, ages, economic, social and sexual situations, levels of education and consciousness, degrees of powerlessness. In other words, there is much that divides us. The absurdly obvious fact that we are not all the same has permitted people to argue that nothing useful can be said about women, period. Which is a very handy method of avoiding dealing with the really hard questions, the kind which go to the core of feminism.

It is these difficult, radical questions on the nature of human societies under patriarchy, on women's place within them and on the urgent and ultimately crucial importance of feminism, which contributors to *Feminism in Canada* take up.

"...Solidarity among women — defining the world from women's point of view, building women's autonomy as individuals and as a collective power, is not merely the addition of one more 'constituency' to an existing radical politics nor only the articulation of the interests of yet one more special interest group. It is, instead, a qualitatively new challenge to domination...by a group whose relatively recent arrival on the political stage marks a major new departure for progressive struggle in general." (From the Introduction by Angela Miles.)

The book is a collection of thirteen papers — plus introduction and conclusion — by feminists working in nine Canadian universities from Memorial University in Newfoundland to Simon Fraser in BC. Many of the pieces were not written expressly for this anthology: five were prepared for a special inter-disciplinary session of the Canadian Political Science Association in 1981 (it is fascinating to fantasize about what impact papers would have had on any non-feminists

who might have been present); another was originally presented to 30 male members of the philosophy department at the University of Ottawa (how appalled they must have been!); there are two translations of feminist Québécoise writing, both unique in character; and I suspect that the last essay in this volume owes a good deal to the evaluation processes of the Feminist Party of Canada.

Anthologies are often written to order at the urging of the editors. These have their place and function. For instance, the Women's Press anthology, *Still Ain't Satisfied*, contains mostly descriptions of services and organizations and the development of well-defined issues with which the contributors are personally familiar. It is certainly important that the hands-on actions of feminists be documented and analyzed by them as they occur. But it's not enough. We need more long-term, thoughtful, theoretical work to inform our practice.

Crucial intellectual work of redefining and naming, of pushing out the edges of our understanding, of up-rooting established male-stream categories must go on concurrently with everyday feminist political activism. After reading the Miles/Finn anthology, I am pleased to report that this work is being done in back rooms and library carrels of our universities from coast to coast.

The appearance of this anthology should encourage other academic women to examine more rigorously the disciplines in which they currently work, to think heretical thoughts and to dare publish them. It should be pointed out to those who consider academics privileged and safe in ivory towers, that what feminist scholars are saying does not sit well with academic authorities or even their own colleagues. It is doing these women no good "career-wise" to question the very underpinning of established Western academic tradition. Yet that is what they are doing. More power to them.

The book is divided into two parts: