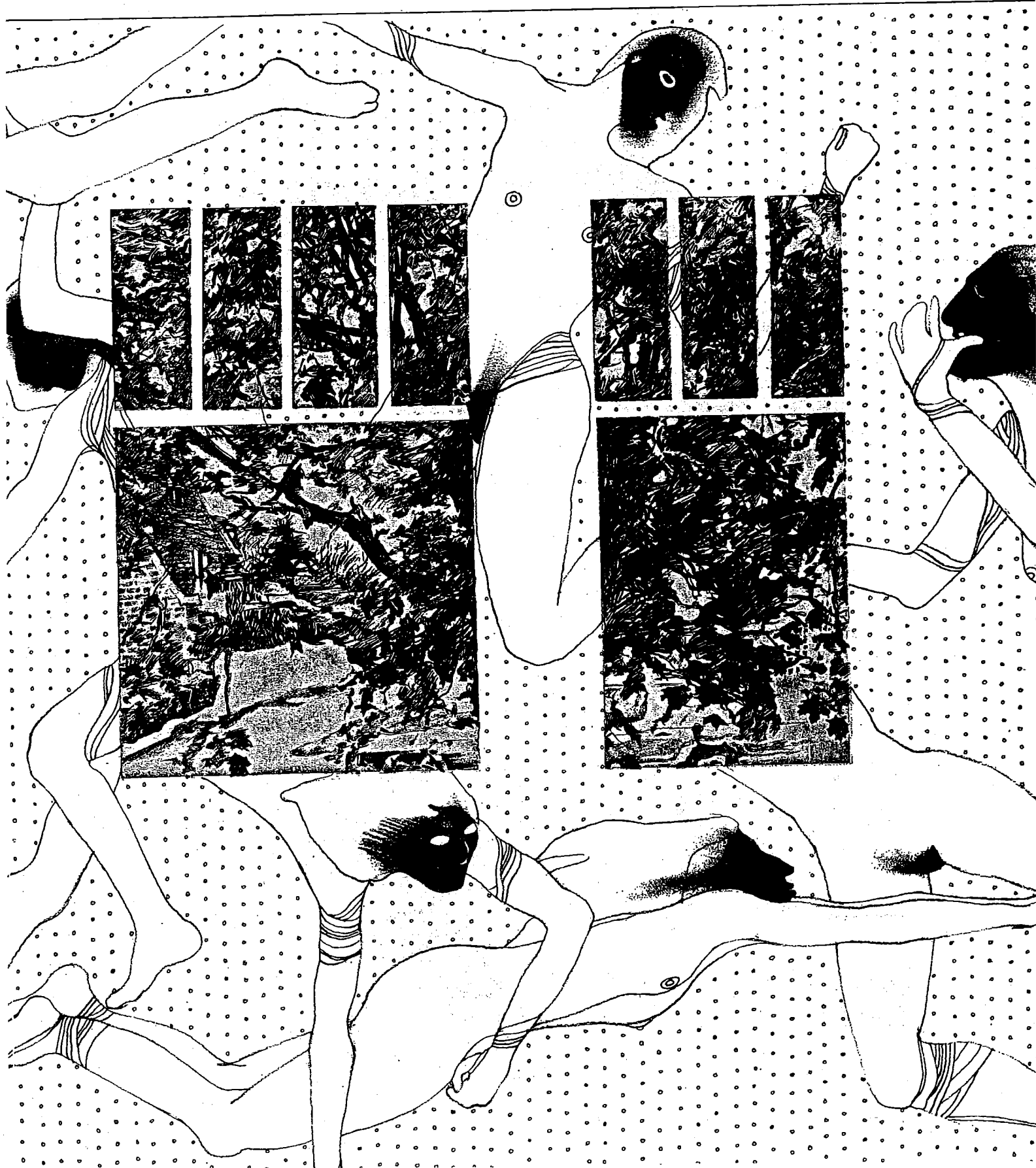


Women

and Environments

Vol. 5, No. 2, Summer 1982

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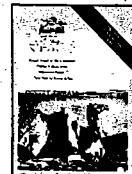
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Editor
Gerda R. Wekerle

Circulation
Murray Evans
Hester Vair

Promotion
Mary Newton

Editorial Assistants
Joanne Egan
Heather Miles

Design and Layout
Wendie Mitchell, York University
Department of Communications

Typeset
Irene Kearns, York University
Department of Communications

Printing
Muskox Press

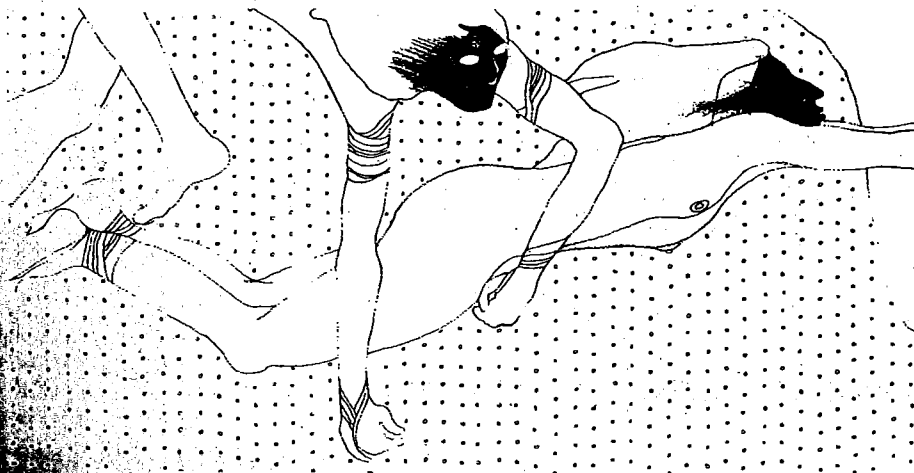
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Pat Foote-Jones

Editorial Office
Faculty of Environmental Studies,
York University, Downsview, Ontario,
Canada M3J 2R2
(416) 667-3012

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a word from us

One of our features in this issue, *Women as Urban Developers*, provides us a much-needed success story of women as active agents in economic and urban development. But this is not a story of women pulling themselves up from poverty single-handed. It illustrates the necessity for start-up funds, job training, and government programs to support grass roots initiatives. As social programs are dismantled in this time of recession, the supports for self-help projects are eliminated, leaving the poor, and women in particular, to their own devices. Yet this article illustrates that the very women who are seen as a drain on the city's resources can become a powerful force for change, creating new jobs and a viable community with some initial assistance from the wider community.

In Canada, women's groups are also be-

coming more experienced in using existing housing and urban improvement projects to assist women. On International Women's Day, March 8, ground was broken for the Constance Hamilton Co-op, a non-profit housing co-op of 32 townhouses and a six-unit communal house. In the space of two years, an all-woman board of directors hired an architect, Joan Simon, found a suitable mid-town site, and obtained funding through an existing federal program which provides subsidized mortgages and rent subsidies. Women in other Canadian cities are viewing this as a model for further women-initiated projects.

The Women's Design Network in Tucson, reported on by Janice Monk, reminds us that local groups of women in the planning and design professions continue to put knowledge into action in cities across the

country and throughout the world. In Toronto, the newly formed Women in/and Planning group has 180 members after one year. A May conference on Women and Planning attracted 150 participants and resulted in working groups on co-op housing design and standards, transit improvement, and daycare design and location regulations. Organized women and planning/architecture groups have been formed in Cincinnati, San Francisco, Los Angeles, and New York. Active groups exist in the Nordic countries, Germany, New Zealand, and the U.K. To facilitate networking, future issues will report on other organizations of women active in environmental design/planning and eco-feminism — their priorities, tactics, and successes.

RESOURCES FOR
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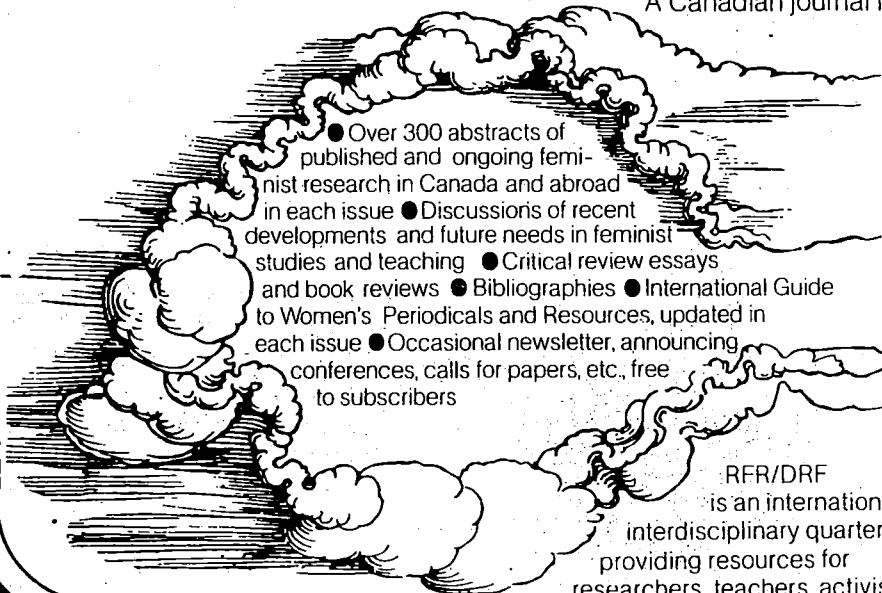
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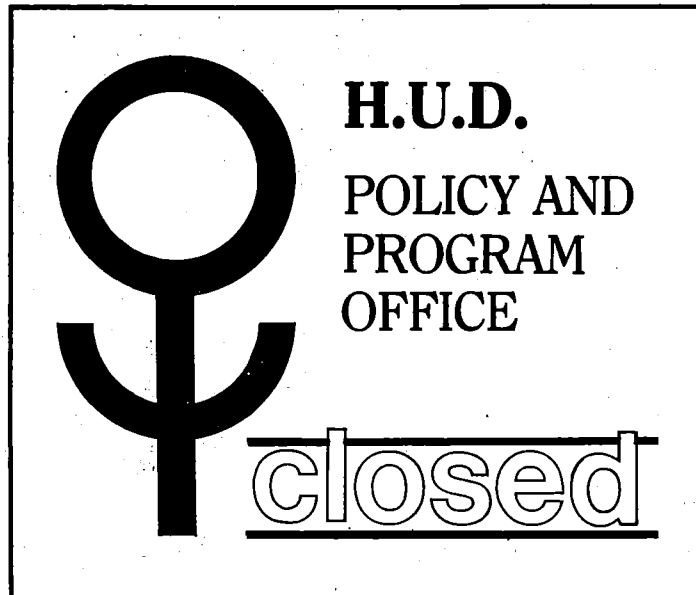
HUD Advocacy for Women Ends

The Women's Policy and Program Office, a division of the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development since 1977, has become another victim of Reagan's cutbacks. This decision denies the women of America the opportunity to input into the system that develops the policy that affects them. The purpose of the Women's Policy and Program Office was to ensure that HUD programs and policies incorporated the special concerns of women. A Consumer Forum was initiated giving women a chance to participate in policy formulation. The success of this venture was evident through an attendance of over 450 women. The Reagan Administration has substituted a special assistant to the Secretary for Women's Issues. It is doubtful that this substitution can effect anything more than superficial response to women's concerns. It lacks the broad based participation which was such a vital characteristic of the Women's Policy and Program Office.

Neighborhood Women's Network News, June 1981

In Memoriam Joyce Skinner

A Scholarship fund has been established in the memory of Joyce Skinner, Director of the Women's Policy and Program Office, HUD, who died recently. Priority for these funds will be given to women of color and/or of the Third World to make it possible to attend future WSPA events. Donations should be made payable to WSPA, Joyce Skinner Fund and mail to: Katrin Adam, 8 Fulton St., Brooklyn, NY 11201



URBAN PROJECTS REPORT BURIED

The long-awaited report on the national competition to identify and promote creative solutions for women in urban environments has been completed by the *Division on Planning and Women of the American Planning Association* but it has not been published. In 1980, the Division received \$25,000 from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to sponsor a competition and invite women's groups to submit written descriptions of their innovative solutions to the nation's urban problems. This 144 page report provides short, first-hand descriptions of 45 existing women's projects and proposals. These include women's economic development projects, self-help housing, women's spaces, health and social services, community development, land use and transportation planning. They are an inspiration to all women.

Due to changes in priorities at

HUD, this material is not available to the public. Efforts to find a commercial publisher have been unsuccessful. According to Mary Deal, past director of the Division on Planning and Women, "**The compendium will have to stay unpublished, a closet classic as it were, unless some publisher appears.**"

The suppression of this material is a disaster for the women's movement and those interested in women and environments.

Please write to HUD and The American Planning Association — and **demand** that this material be made publicly available.

The report — **Planning to Meet the Changing Needs of Women** — A compendium developed from a National Competition to Identify and Promote Creative Solutions for Women in Urban Environments.

Contact: Office of Policy Development and Research, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Washington, D.C.

American Planning Association
1313E. 60th St.
Chicago Il. 60637

SUICIDES BY WOMEN LINKED TO HOUSING SHORTAGE

In the fall of 1981, the shortage of emergency housing for homeless women led to the suicides of four women, says a staff member of Nellie's Hostel for Women in Toronto. All four women, ranging in age from 25-45, had spent some time at Nellies and it was the feeling of the staff that their deaths were directly linked to a lack of affordable and supportive housing. As rooming houses for low income people are renovated and inexpensive rental apartments are converted to condominium, women suffer the greatest costs — they have less money, and often have children. The number of emergency spaces for women in Toronto is well below the number available to men — 994 for men, and only 134 for women and children. This crisis in housing for women has prompted the formation of a Women's Housing Coalition which sponsored a community meeting March 18th. For information 416-537-6498

WOMEN FREEZE IN THE DARK

The Winnipeg Women's Building opened in 1979 as a place where women can meet, help each other and obtain a variety of other services. It also houses Wen-Do, People on Welfare, a free clothing depot, Women in Trades, a women's theatre group, a women's graphic company, and the Winnipeg Women's Cultural and Education Centre.

Although a success in women's support, its future is very uncertain. This past winter, the building could not afford to pay its \$6000 heating bill and was reduced to heating one room at a time from a small wood supply. It has never received a government grant of any significance and is now in desperate need of funding. Any assistance would be appreciated.

Contact: Yvette Parr, The Women's Building, 730 Alexander Ave., Winnipeg, Manitoba R3E 1H9

WOMEN IN GEOGRAPHY

U.S.

The Specialty Group on Geographic Perspectives on Women, one of the most active in the American Association of Geographers, has over 100 members and is sponsoring several sessions at the Annual Meeting of the American Association of Geographers in San Antonio, Texas, April 25-28, 1982. Roger Miller is the organizer and chair of a special paper session "Geographic Perspectives on Women". He also has a list of papers dealing with women which have been given at past AAG meetings. Most can be obtained for the price of xeroxing.

Contact: Roger Miller, Department of Geography, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN 05455

U.K.

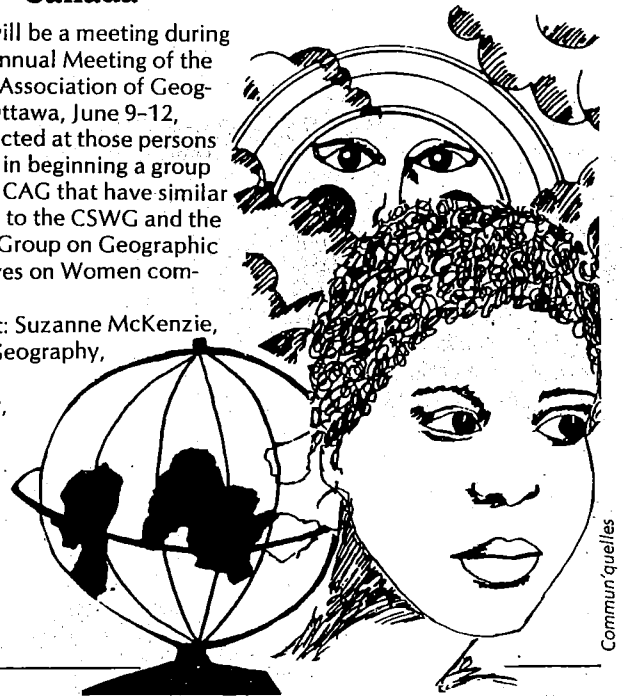
Jackie Tivers presented a paper on spatial constraints on women with young children at Hull in 1978 at the IBC annual meeting. The reaction served as a catalyst and led to the first organized IBC session on women. A working group was formed — Women and Geography Working Party. In 1981 the group applied for official Study Group status within the IBC with a membership of 40 which has now expanded to nearly 100. The application was made in April and was denied with expressed fear that the group might be too political. The group is re-applying and continuing their work planning sessions and conferences.

Contact: Sophie Bowlby, Geography Dept., Whiteknights, Reading University, Reading, England RG6 2AB

Canada

There will be a meeting during the next Annual Meeting of the Canadian Association of Geographers (Ottawa, June 9-12, 1982) directed at those persons interested in beginning a group within the CAG that have similar objectives to the CSWG and the Specialty Group on Geographic perspectives on Women combined.

Contact: Suzanne McKenzie, Dept. of Geography, Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario.



Communiquelles

A proposal for a First International Session of the Women's School of Planning and Architecture (Summer 1982) has been submitted to the international network of feminists involved in community development which WSPA members Phyllis Birkby and Mary Vogel began building last summer at the U.N. mid-decade Forum on Women. Anyone interested in developing an agenda for an International Women's School of Planning and Architecture.

Contact: Mary Vogel, c/o Mary Sell, 2232 Kalmia Ave., Boulder Co. 80302, or Phyllis Birkby, 51 Market St., New York, N.Y. 10002

WOMEN IN/AND PLANNING

This group was formed in Toronto and meets once a month to discuss a wide variety of planning issues from a feminist perspective. Past discussions have included research and action priorities for women in planning, implications of recent demographic changes in Toronto, the Constance Hamilton Co-op designed for and by women.

Contact: Judith Kjellberg, Center for Urban and Community Studies, 150 St. George, Toronto M5S 1A1

Women In A Man-Made World

HOUSEWARMING

The National Congress of Neighborhood Women, held a Housewarming to celebrate the opening of a Washington office on April 7, 1981. The attendance was considerable including community activists, federal and local policy makers and public interest groups. The headquarters of this group are in Brooklyn, New York. The NCNW-Washington was established as an action office with the objective of analysing national priorities and public policies from the perspective of how they impact upon poor and working class women. They have begun a training program of group sessions to build a strong leadership support network.

Neighborhood Women's Network News, June 1981

Taking Place — a film about women and the built environment, made by Emma Henrion Jenny Lovell and Gwyn Kirk, arising out of the New Architecture Movement Feminist Group Conference on Women and Space. The film (Super 8 with sound, 15 mins) is intended as a starting point for discussion for women's groups, college students, youth groups.

Available from Jenny Lovell, 7 Oxford Gardens, W10 (Women's Research and Resources Centre Newsletter)

WOMEN AND CONSTRUCTION

A new chapter of a U.S. based association to help women employed in the construction industry has opened in Toronto. The National Association of Women in Construction has a base in Calgary and Edmonton, and 270 chapters in the U.S. It was started in Texas in 1975 with the primary aim of giving support, guidance, and assistance to women who work or would like to work in this sector. The Tor-

onto group has established a work pool, listing available jobs and workers, and plans to set up a scholarship fund for women interested in pursuing studies in construction related areas. They also sponsor workshops, seminars, lectures in local schools and visits to construction sites.

WOMEN IN SCIENCE

Two new groups have formed to ensure equality of opportunity for women in the sciences. The Canadian Association for Women in the Sciences and Engineering attracted 300 women for a two-day convention in Toronto last summer. The second group developed from a branch of an American association for women scientists. Both groups encouraged women to enter scientific and technical fields and to oppose the discrimination experienced in the male-dominated field.

Contact: Canadian Association for Women in the Sciences and Engineering, P.O. Box 6067, Postal Station A, Toronto, Ont. M5W 1P5 and Canadian Association for Women in Sciences, c/o Donna Brown, 165 LaRose Ave., Apt. 1012, Weston, Ont. M9P 3S9

RURAL WOMEN



- A selection of research papers was presented at the First National Farm Women's Conference in Ottawa, December 1980. These include:
 - Equal Partner or Just a Wife: Farm Wives and Property Law in Canada
 - The Invisible Pitch Fork: Portrayal of Farm Women in the Canadian Media
 - Credit Where Credit is Due: Women and Farm Credit in Canada
 - Going, Going: Land Use and Agriculture in Canada
- All available free from:
 Women's Programme, Secretary of State, Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0M5, (819) 994-3310

• Resources for Feminist Research is planning an issue on rural women in industrialized and developing countries for March 1982. The issue will address legal rights, critical needs such as access to land, water,

credit, technological skills, agricultural exploitation, housing and education.
 Contact: Department of Sociology, O.I.S.E., 252 Bloor St. W., Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5S 1V6

• Over 200 delegates representing rural women in the north-east met for a conference held at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst on May 17-19, 1981. The major theme was the need to develop greater self-reliance and control within the rural communities.

Contact: Pat Sackery, County Extension Service Rural Development Specialist, 206 Stockbridge Hall, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, Mass. 01003

WOMEN AND FOOD NETWORK

The first objective of the Network is to expand the number of people interested in the role of women in the world food system. The second is to serve as an ongoing resource for communication for those who have a professional interest in this field.

Contact: Kathleen Cloud, Project Director, 24 Peabody Terrace, Cambridge MA 02138

Women and Survival

KAREN SILKWOOD DECISION OVERTURNED

The U.S. 10th Circuit Court of Appeals in Denver, Colorado has overturned a previous decision of the U.S. District Court of Oklahoma which awarded \$10.5 million in damages in the Karen Silkwood case. The Federal Court threw out the lower court ruling saying that cases involving radiation injury are the responsibility of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and cannot be tried under state law. According to a Kerri McGee attorney the decision implies that state laws "are preempted by federal law" in the regulation of the nuclear industry. Gerald L. Spence, lawyer for the Silkwood estate, said the decision may be appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court.

Contact: Karen Silkwood Fund, 1324 N. Capitol St., Washington D.C. 20002
 (World Information Service on Energy)

TECHNOLOGY

A conference will be held in Ottawa on June 25-27, "Women and the Impact of Microtechnology". Topics include: training and re-training, changing employment patterns, the automated office, health and safety, privacy and confidentiality, quality of life. Displays of microtechnology hardware and software, panel sessions and small group workshops.

Contact: Conference Committee on Women and the Impact of Microtechnology, c/o P.O. Box 236, Station B, Ottawa, Ontario, K1P 6C4, (613) 563-3576

NATIONAL WOMEN'S MAILING LIST

The Women's Information Exchange, a feminist information technology project, is pleased to announce the National Women's Mailing List.

For the first time, women

throughout the nation will be able to voluntarily sign-up to receive mail in a variety of interest areas — from women's culture, sports, politics, and health, to mailings about women's spirituality, non-traditional employment, and issues regarding violence against women. The list of interest areas reaches into every field that touches women's lives.

Individual women and women's organizations are invited to participate in this vital information and communications resource. Registration is FREE, donations are encouraged. To obtain registration forms or further information, contact: The National Women's Mailing List, 1195 Valencia St., San Francisco, CA 94110

WOMEN'S PARTY FOR SURVIVAL

This political organization is led by women and registered with the Federal Election Committee as a political party. Their

goals are related to the elimination of all nuclear weapons in research and production. They are promoting a Department of Peace to negotiate constructive solutions as a more acceptable alternative.

Contact: Women's Party for Survival, 56 N. Beacon St., Watertown, MA 021172
 (617-923-9542)

From WEB Newsletter, Vol 1, Issue 1.



Alison Parsons

Women's Design Network — Tucson

The Women's Design Network of Tucson, Arizona, is a group of about thirty women professionals and students in architecture, urban planning, landscape architecture, interior design and related fields. Since its founding by University of Arizona architectural designer Helen Kessler and Assistant Professor of Architecture Sandra Davis Lakeman in December, 1979, the Network has developed a program of service to members, the community, and the design professions. The goals and specific activities of the group have evolved from membership discussions aided in the early stages by a woman trained and experienced in group facilitation.

Programs for Members

The Network meets once each month on a Sunday evening in a member's home for a potluck dinner or dessert combined with an organized presentation or discussion. These meetings provide a forum for sharing knowledge, ideas, and experiences, and for discussing concerns related to professional goals and career choices. Informally, they help to establish professional contacts and provide personal support for women in fields where male domination has been traditional.

A number of the formal presentations and discussions have dealt with aspects of professional design practice — promotion and presentation techniques, costing, scheduling and staffing, contracts, financial planning, and the status of women in the design professions. Other programs have focused on design issues from an interdisciplinary approach with perspectives of planners, architects, landscape architects, etc. on the built environment, a discussion of urban planning in Tucson, a review of feminist research on space and place, and presentations of energy issues in the Southwest, and research on passive solar cooling.

Community Service

The Women's Design Network is trying to raise public awareness of design issues and simultaneously show-case the work of women professionals. To do this, it has sponsored a public lecture series "Design in the Built Environment." The aim is to have a limited number of programs on topics viewed as important. The two programs offered in Spring, 1981, dealt with "Non-traditional Approaches to Low-cost Housing" (a panel presentation) and "A Room of One's Own" (a presentation on her work by architect Judith Chafee). Both were well attended (over 100 at the Chafee program) and received local press coverage.

The Network is also engaged in direct community action, currently with the Tucson YWCA. Members have worked with children and the YWCA board in designing a playground for their day-care center. Construction was carried out by members during Fall, 1981 in cooperation with the Arizona Tradeswomen and Women in Construction.

Service to the Design Professions

The Network members have evolved a philosophy of commitment to interdisciplinary approaches to design which they feel is not widely shared by male design professionals. Through their own work, public presentations, service projects, and contacts with students they hope to disseminate and implement this philosophy as a way of improving the built environment. Through Network discussions and by identifying and publicizing the work of women professionals, members hope to take positions and make representations on local design issues and to promote the

appointment of women to public and professional decision-making bodies. Another important aspect of Network activities is assisting and counselling women students in design fields, on curriculum, career opportunities, and assistance with job placement. The Network recently participated in a national conference for Landscape Architecture students held in Tucson.



Some Challenges

The Tucson metropolitan area does not contain a large number of professional women in the design fields, though there is an increasing number of women students locally in these areas at the University of Arizona. The Network faces two challenges: raising the consciousness of women students, especially outside architecture, and dealing with the lingering tradition of discrimination against women in design fields. A concerted effort is being directed to these problems.

Arranging programs and working with the community make considerable demands on the time of members, professionals and students, as they combine their role as designers with wife, mother, or involvement in other bodies such as the Tucson Women's Commission. The Network is dealing with this problem through wide sharing of tasks. Officers include a coordinator, co-coordinator, treasurer, correspondent, recorder, and advisor. Separate committees arrange the program, handle public relations, develop membership, and organize construction projects. This array means that a high proportion of members had designated but limited responsibility. In addition, the Network is trying not to overreach itself by undertaking more community programs and projects than it can handle well. Most of the early members of the Network continue to participate nearly two years after the founding and new members are joining. The Network continues to reflect on its goals and methods, but clearly is filling a need for women in design and making community contributions.

Further information about the Women's Design Network may be obtained from Helen Kessler, 3000 E. Seneca, Tucson, AZ 85716.

Reported by Janice Monk, Associate Director, Southwest Institute for Research on Women, University of Arizona, Tucson AZ 85721.

FEMINISTS

NEW ZEALAND

Making the Connections

We believe that narrow definitions of feminist issues are no longer sufficient. The environment is a feminist issue because man's (sic) exploitation of the environment and man's oppression of women are closely interconnected. We cannot separate the violence done to nature from the violence done to ourselves. Men's conquering of nature, straightening of rivers, filling of estuaries, exploiting of resources, controlling, penetrating, drilling, reclaiming and subduing is part of a chain reaction that begins from their oppression of women: the burning of the witches, the takeover of childbirth, the binding of women's feet, the savage enfilubation practices, and rape.

Virginia Woolf made a connection between sexism (oppression at home) and war (oppression abroad); as she saw it, the two were inextricably linked. We extend her analysis to include man's exploitation of the environment; an act of the imposition of will rather than an act of understanding, respect, and working with.

We hesitate to say that women are innately more in touch with nature because of their biological makeup; this seems to us to stereotype women and deny men the possibility for growth.

Rather we find a connection with nature for two reasons:

- (1) Identification. We receive and have received the same treatment — abuse and exploitation.
- (2) Because as bystanders, we perceive things more clearly.

Women have not been the destroyers, the warfarers, for century after century; instead we have been involved in birth and nurturing. Hence we perceive the choices more clearly than men. Because we do not have a vested interest in preserving the status quo, we are more free to articulate new directions. If there is to be a hopeful future for the planet Earth, then those people who are in touch with growth, rebirth and nurturing must lead the way. At present those people are ourselves: women.

We cannot narrow down our definitions of what will make a better world. It is not just a world where we can control our fertility, get adequate child care and cease to be discriminated against for being lesbians. It is also a world where aggressive acts such as the aerial spraying of 2, 4, 5-5 no longer take place, where the integrity of living ecosystems is respected, where co-operation rather than exploitation is emphasised, where we participate in decisions about our future, and where the power base is localised, not centralised.

The mind-set that results in the rape of the Clutha is the same

that batters women and overrides their rights. The imposition of nuclear power stations and the denigrating of child care are connected.

Power

New Zealand is the cross-roads. The government is now making decisions which will drive us deeper into the HE (Hyper-expansionist) future. The National Development Act was passed to speed large scale industrial development without the "interference" of grass-roots participation (grass-roots includes women!). This path means a second aluminum smelter, maybe a nickel smelter, an extended steel mill, more exploitation of native forests, exporting of our coal and Maui gas, and conversion of these resources into fuel for the private motor car instead of improving public transport systems. It means vast sums of money and greater multinational control. It means faster destruction of the environment. It means consolidation of centralised male power. It means women's voice will be even fainter than it is now.

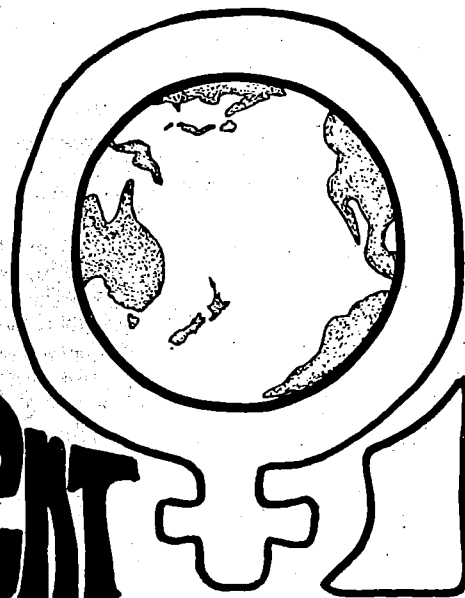
The alternative SHE (Sane Humane Ecological) scenario favours both women and the environment. It is the path towards decentralisation, where small industries and self-sufficiency are encouraged. This "small is beautiful" path tends to equalise power and encourage positive humanitarian values. Women must resist the HE scenario and insist upon the SHE.

War

\$1,000,000 is spent every minute in the world on military activities; the stockpiles of weapons are large enough to kill every woman, child and an 20 times over.

It is the nature of the weapons developed and refined since World War II which endangers life on this planet as never before.

To prevent war by removing the instruments of war is not enough. Prevention of war demands a change in attitude towards people, resources and conflict. Women have a clearer view, a better chance at identifying new directions not only in the areas of personal and collective liberation, but also in the resolution of conflict and the care of the environment.



for the
ENVIRONMENT

Town Planning

The structure of our cities reflects the split between home and (paid) work. Women are expected to put down roots and raise children in suburbs which lack transport systems, access to work and child care opportunities, and support facilities. Here, they are invisible to the decision-makers in the centres. Until there is integration at home, work and community life, women will remain victims of the planning process.

Pollution

Women and children are particularly susceptible to certain types of pollution, for example, nuclear pollution, agricultural chemicals such as 2, 4, 5-T and lead in petrol. Women must have a strong voice on these issues. For too long we have been content to leave such questions largely in the hands of the scientists. It is now clear that the effect on human health of very low levels of physical insult cannot be ascertained by the scientific method. Lack of scientific evidence should not be taken as proof of safety.

Consumerism

Women have been turned into a captive consumer market through psychological oppression which gives us a view of ourselves as inferior.

Hence we have been easy victims for marketers who sell cosmetic goods to "brighten up" the exteriors of ourselves and our homes. There is a connection between the consumerism that damages the environment and the consumerism that damages ourselves. We have enormous power to boycott environmentally and personally damaging products, to say *no* to needless consumption and to the manipulation of women.

Feminists for the Environment, July 1981: This is the outcome of a year's reading, thinking and discussion by a small group of women meeting in Auckland.

Contacts: Jan Crawford, 29 Princess St, Auckland 1, New Zealand and Byrdie Mann, 61 Esplanade Road, Auckland 3, New Zealand.

Technology

Women must take their rightful place in the development and control of technology. We must ensure that the technologies chosen for society are on a human scale, protect our independence from centralised control, and encourage personal fulfilment.

Work

Women's traditional work is both unpaid and undervalued. In the paid work force the position of women is being threatened by economic restructuring, and new developments in technology, such as the silicon chip.

The work ethic is not sustainable either from an environmental, social or economic perspective. We must reassess the relationship between work and income. We must share the work available, making sure it is socially just, ecologically sound, and fulfilling for women as well as for men.

Strategy and Tactics

We wish to work differently from other environmental organisations. Rather than duplicate their work we intend to:

- Highlight the feminist perspective on current issues;
- Mobilise grass-roots involvement of women on key issues, e.g. communicating to women that the second aluminum smelter proposal concerns *them* directly; and
- Take up issues that have not been given priority by other groups.

resources

Women and Environments Courses

The following courses on *Women and Environments* were offered in the past year. For detailed course outlines contact instructors.

Women and Geography

Winter 1982
Suzanne McKenzie
Dept. of Geography
Queen's University
Kingston, Ontario

Planning the Non-Sexist City

Fall 1981
Faculty of Environmental
Studies
York University
Gerda R. Wekerle

Women in Urban Environments

Spring 1981
Urban Studies Program
Stanford University
Colette Meunier
2970B Russell
Berkeley Ca 94705

Women and Community Development

Summer 1981
Cornell University
Jaqueline Leavitt
Division of Urban and
Regional Planning
Columbia University
New York, N.Y. 10027

Women and Environment

Summer 1981
Aegean Women's Studies
Institute
Greece
Bonnie Loyd
Landscape
P.O. Box 7107
Berkeley Ca 94707

Organizations

Women's Development
Corporation
104 Princeton Avenue
Providence, Rhode Island 02907

Women's Construction Employment Program

Box 332
Littleton, West Virginia 26581

Loisaida Women in Community Development

310 East 4th Street
New York, N.Y. 10009

Rural Women Project

505 Linder Street
Friday Harbor
Washington 98250

Women and Conserver Society

Project Directors:
Linda Ryan Nye, Jill Porter
National Survival Institute
229 College Street
Toronto, Canada
(416) 593-1299

Women's Home Building Project

P.O. Box 204
Jellico, Tennessee 37762

Women's Roles in Distressing and Revitalizing Cities

by BRIAVEL HOLCOMB

Contrary to popular beliefs and images, urban places are women's spaces. Although, as Susan Saegert (1980) and others have shown, the environment most usually associated with being female is suburban, in fact central cities have consistently higher sex ratios (there are more females per male) for white, black, or elderly than do suburban or non-metropolitan areas. Clearly cities are predominantly female and the future of cities and that of women are inextricably related.

Immersion in the proliferating literature on urban revitalization has made me aware of two seemingly contradictory roles into which women are cast in the unfolding drama of urban recovery. In some cases women, as both producers and consumers, are attributed with helping reverse the tide of urban decay, while in others the con-

tinuing or growing presence of certain categories of women is seen as detrimental to a city's chances of recovery. Women are both urban saviors and final straws breaking the urban camel's back. This paper discusses the supporting evidence for both roles and demonstrates that the latter is a classic case of blaming the victim. If indeed urban distress is in part a function of women's distress, what are the solutions? Two contrasting types of policy recommendations are discussed.

Women's Roles in Reviving Cities

In explaining why some cities are experiencing revival, urban analysts have suggested demographic and social changes as having contributed to the revitalization, and some have a lot to do with women.

Perhaps the most important one is the increased participation of women in the workforce. The percentage of women participating in the workforce increased from 35 to 48 percent between 1960 and 1977 and, until 1977, the female rates were higher in central cities than in suburbs. The lower 1977 central city rate is probably due to the recession of that year and increased unemployment rates among urban women. (Freeman, 1980)

At the same time that women have been increasingly entering the workforce, there has also been some upward occupational mobility by women. Albeit very slowly, the proportion of women in professional employment and in well paid occupations is increasing. This is reflected, partly, in women's incomes. While women earn considerably less than men, they do slightly better, relative to men, in central cities than in suburbs or rural areas. As discussed later, since low income women are concentrated in cities, the fact that the mean income for women is higher there indicates that the highest-paid women are also urban.

Women's increased participation in the workforce is partly caused by (and obviously facilitated by) postponement of marriage and childbirth to increasingly later ages. Women are marrying later, having fewer or no children, and having their first child later.

All these factors (improved employment opportunity, increased participation in the workforce, increase in age of marriage and first child, decreased fertility) demonstrate that women's role is increasingly in production rather than reproduction. Or, more accurately, women are increasingly using their labour power in production, while maintaining (to a large extent) their roles in the reproduction of the labour force. This means that women are adding to the accumulation of surplus value, especially in cities, while continuing to reproduce a workforce both as mothers and as nurturers.

These changes also mean that there are increasing numbers of households in that highest-household-income category — two career couples. While there are many households with two persons employed in which the combined income is still low,



Alison Parsons

women are financially better off as either a working or non-working spouse than they are as heads of households or as single people.

In summary, as women increasingly enter the workforce and have occupational upward mobility, their incomes rise and so, also, does the "disposable" income generated. This growing disposable income which does not have to be spent on rent, food and basic clothing stimulates consumer demand for the kind of goods and services which convey at least the image, and perhaps the reality, of urban revitalization — trendy clothes, quiche in fern-hung restaurants, boutique bijoux, or the paraphernalia of the health and fitness addict.

More nebulous, but of considerable significance, are the changing tastes and preferences of women in housing. For an increasing proportion of women the suburban split level dream house resembles a nightmare of time and money expended in its upkeep. Instead, the romantic space for young couples is clearly the converted loft, epitomized in Jill Clayburgh's movie, "It's My Turn," and replete with semi-opaque glass tile room dividers and enough room to allow the couple psychic, as well as material space.

Thus the changing aspirations, achievements and tastes of women have contributed to an increased demand for renovated, central city housing where singles and couples can enjoy urban amenities, reduce commuting costs, and consume upscale goods and services. Women are, then, stimulating revitalization.

Women's Role in Adding to Urban Distress

Other urban analysts (and sometimes the same scholars who explicate the previous set of explanations) attribute the continued decline of cities to the presence of dependent populations who contribute little to economic productivity and represent a drain on the city fiscally. These "dependent populations" are overwhelmingly female. They include single women heading households and elderly women.

Female headed households increased considerably between 1970 and 1977 both in central cities and in the U.S. as a whole. Female headed households have low incomes and are more likely to be in poverty than husband-wife or male headed households, particularly if the woman is black. There is a greater incidence of poverty among families headed by females than couples or males. The average 1977 income of families with female heads in central cities was a little over a third of that for all families. Sternlieb and Hughes conclude that "The decline of income among blacks in the central city is clearly linked with the outward migration of husband-wife families and the residual dominance of female-headed households" (Sternlieb and Hughes, 1980, 53). They go on to say:

Nationally, however, the incidence of poverty is declining. The data on poverty level individuals partitioned by family status show that every category was reduced from 1969 through 1976, except for women who were heads of families.

The basic problem is even more sharply focused when the data for central cities are isolated. . . . Virtually all the increase in poverty-level individuals was among women who headed families and among their children. . . . The increase in the number of such groups has in turn greatly sapped the fiscal vigor of the central cities while increasing the stress on the services provided by the city.

Women heads of household are emasculating the city!

The second group, which often constitutes what some analysts call a fiscal drain and which is also growing, are elderly women. The sex ratio in central cities among the elderly is higher than for any other place or age group. Although the elderly are often thought to live in rural areas or retirement communities, 63.6 percent of elderly women live in metropolitan areas; 65.3 percent of black elderly women; and 87.1% of Hispanic elderly women live in cities (Markson and Hess, 1980, s128). Many are concentrated in central cities having "aged in place."

Alternative Policy Implications

If these groups of women are, by their dependent presence in cities, causing continued urban distress and militating against revitalization, what are the solutions? One of the most touted is what could be called the "dilution solution." If there are too many dependent women concentrated in cities, then the answer is to disperse them and replace them with more affluent residents. Another word for this is gentrification. However, to attract the middle class back to the city may do little for the poor who are already there, especially in the short run (Holcomb and Beauregard, forthcoming).



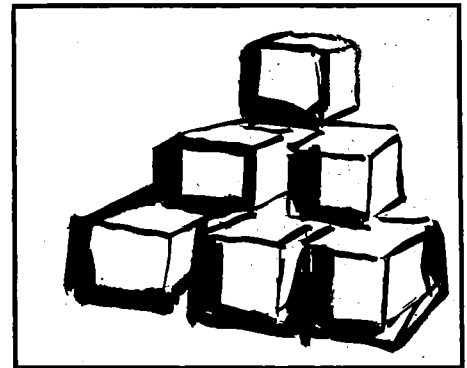
Instead, we should be promoting policies which help city women climb out of poverty and which make their lives less difficult, regardless of income. Such policies include

- Wage labour for work directed towards reproduction of the labour force. Equal pay for work outside the home is a laudable

goal, but does not go far enough in a society in which there is unequal division of domestic work between the sexes.

- Flexible work schedules
- New housing designs which facilitate shared domestic work
- Subsidized child care
- Improved crime control and public transportation

Given the attitudes of the present Federal government towards both cities and women, I am not sanguine about the immediate prospects for either. Such policies as the end of rent control, the cutting of budgets for social services, a two tier minimum wage, ending federal payments for abortion, and a lack of support for ERA, suggest that poor women and declining cities will limp into the future together.



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Briavel Holcomb is the Chair, Dept. of Urban Studies, Rutgers, New Brunswick, N.J. Excerpted with permission from *Transition/The Quarterly Journal of Socially and Ecologically Responsible Geographers*, vol. II, no. 2, Summer 1981.

WOMEN AS URBAN DEVELOPERS

BERTHA GILKEY

Interview by Gerda R. Wekerle

This interview with Bertha Gilkey of St. Louis, Missouri, gives us a "success story" of the enormous capacity of poor inner city women to build on their experiences in the home and neighbourhood and to translate these skills into money-making ventures and services beneficial to the whole community. Contrary to the popular stereotype of women in public housing as a drain on a city's resources, this story shows us the great potential that women have to humanize and revitalize the city.

Gilkey reports on a women-operated economic development project which grew out of a tenant management program in St. Louis public housing and expanded to include daycare, home care programs, the construction of new housing and a neighbourhood shopping mall. Her talks were the highpoint of the conference on Women and Economic Development sponsored by the Women's School of Planning and Architecture, Washington D.C. May 17-20, 1981.

Gilkey, 33, is the Director of the Elmer Hammond and Arthur J. Kennedy Early Childhood Day Care Centers in St. Louis. She is president of the Tenant Affairs Board of the St. Louis Housing Authority and Chairman of the Cochran Tenant Management Corporation.



The way out of the "hell-hole" — tenant management

Gilkey: We started about ten or eleven years ago, back in 1969 when the conditions in public housing in St. Louis got unbearable. We led a rent strike that lasted for nine months because we were not getting the decent, safe, and sanitary housing that we were supposed to get. The crime was beyond your imagination: thefts, vandalism, killings — it had just gotten to be a hell-hole. The residents in nine large public housing developments which included some 22,000 residents decided that "enough was enough". We led a rent strike that lasted nine months. After the rent strike we tried to work with the existing management to make sure that tenants' rights were being protected. We developed grievance procedures, we developed a year lease.

As a result, we worked with Senator Brooks and helped him to draft the Brook Amendment that was passed by Congress in 1975 to provide subsidies for large and rural public housing projects throughout the country. We decided then that we could manage. We went to the Housing Authority and negotiated a management contract. Now they pay us \$8.60 per unit. Back in those days, they paid us about \$6.20 per unit. We started managing in 1976.

We manage the oldest public housing in St. Louis, some 3,000 units which house approximately 15,000 families. We have a manager, assistant manager, resident manager, management agent and clerk. Those individuals work for our Board. We pay the salaries of our staff who ultimately manage the entire housing authority property; they supervise the maintenance staff, security, custodians — the whole works.

The Ford Foundation was the mother of tenant management in St. Louis. It gave six months training for the Board and management. We became a model for the rest of the country. NAHRO (National Association of Housing Redevelopment Officials) came up with a housing management test and all our people passed. They also took a university housing management program. Since 1969, we created some 750 jobs in the city of St. Louis. These are all permanent jobs held by residents in the nine public housing developments. Besides creating jobs in our own local community, we also had input into the Housing Authority's personnel policy and part of their mandate that residents will be given first priority in any jobs that come up.

The first step to economic self-sufficiency: a cleaning company

Wekerle: How many of these people doing the custodial work and management are women?

Gilkey: 99% are women. Our maintenance company is 22 women. We started three



years ago. We used CETA funds to train our women; we went out and got a private cleaning company, which had already been in business, to provide training for our women. After they trained for a year, we went to the Housing Authority and asked them to allow us to clean three buildings. We would charge them nothing. The women were being paid through CETA (a federal government job creation program). We just wanted to show that we could do it.

We did it and we did so well that the Housing Authority started getting petitions (ment job creation program). We just wanted to show that we could do it.

We did it and we did so well that the Housing Authority started getting petitions from other buildings that were not receiving our cleaning. Before the year was up, the Housing Authority was begging us to put the other six buildings under our company. We took them and now we have a \$97,000 contract with the Housing Authority. We have made \$27,000 with this company. We have increased the salaries, the fringe benefits; we purchased a van for the company. Now we are getting ready to bid to expand the company and do the maintenance and the custodian work for an industrial park. We have also set up an insulating shade company to do piecemeal work at home. The center is on the first floor of a building. We have used \$40,000 of the syndication money from the sale of our new housing to set this up.

The second step: housing construction

Wekerle: Can you talk about how you have gotten into building this new housing.

Gilkey: After we were able to manage and after we realized that we could do it, we were able to bring down the cost, reduce the vacancies, and manage the public housing in a quality manner, even to a point where we were used as a model for the country. We then asked, "What else can we do?" Employment was one of our main factors for getting into housing. That was one of our objectives because in managing we were saddled with huge amounts of vacancies with absolutely no resource to rehab those units.

We then began to submit proposals to the Community Development Block Grant Program in St. Louis and Model Cities which was another old program. They provided training monies for our residents and materials. We included in those contracts monies to hire journeymen, painters, plasterers, glaziers, electricians, and plumbers. They in turn trained our residents to rehab the units. After they were rehabbed, we could market them. That is how we were able to reduce our vacancies. The residents would rehab the unit; they were trained by the journeymen; it would become a marketable unit; and then we could house the resident in the unit.

After we had done this for four years, we were good. We said, "If we could do all this in an apartment, then we can do some real construction". Next door to our community was a huge 37 acres of land that had been sitting vacant for years and years where a lot of our people had been displaced through urban renewal. We were very concerned and it became a priority in our community that we build houses. That was one of our long range plans. We made several attempts to build houses and the City said, "You have no experience and therefore you cannot become developers of housing". We then hooked up with a private developer who was also community-conscious. We went to the City again. We already had a track record because we'd been able to turn public housing around and told them we knew what we were doing. They were convinced. We gave them a very solid plan. We'd done a lot of planning with the community, designing the housing to make sure it was what we wanted and that it enhanced our community.

(Using \$21 million of HUD money, the project includes rehabilitation and modernization of 11 buildings, the redesign of a 12th to house elderly people, and 100 new 2-6 bedroom units. Two tenant management groups are fifty-fifty partners with a private developer. The target date for completion is 1984.)

Wekerle: What kind of housing is it? When women are designing housing, people always ask "Is it any different?"

Gilkey: Yes. First of all, we were concerned as women that it was attractive and enhanced our community; second, we were concerned about the design, that it be good — that it be brick, well insulated — all that became very important to us. The other thing that became important to us as women was space because in the community that I come from 99% of the heads of households are females. Space became important — kitchen space, dining space, and large closets. The closets — you can walk into them — they're huge enough to be another room because we are conscious of space, being women. Support services were important to us. In our design we included a swimming pool and a tennis court. We built next door to a new community center and to a health center, so you've got the comprehensive health and social service program that you need to complement the housing design. Those kinds of things were important to us besides just money and jobs.

The other thing that was important to us as a women's group and a community group was the whole factor of jobs. Not only were we concerned about the labour jobs but we were concerned about the skilled jobs. Our people had four years of training on the job and we knew that they were skilled, apprentice material. Because it was our neighbourhood and we were the developers (the developer selects the general contractor who ultimately selects the subcontractors), we said very clearly to the general contractor that we wanted our people to be hired in skilled apprentice jobs. We then met with the sub-contractors and read them the riot act. "You've got a

problem. We gave you a \$500,000 contract", we said to the roofer, the plumber, and the electrician, "you will hire seven of our people as apprentices". And they said, "Fine, these are our eligibility criteria." We had already taken our people through the test; they had passed their apprentice tests as carpenters, painters, tapers, bricklayers, and roofers, so we had them ready. We said "We have seven people, interview and select from them." We were putting up men and women.

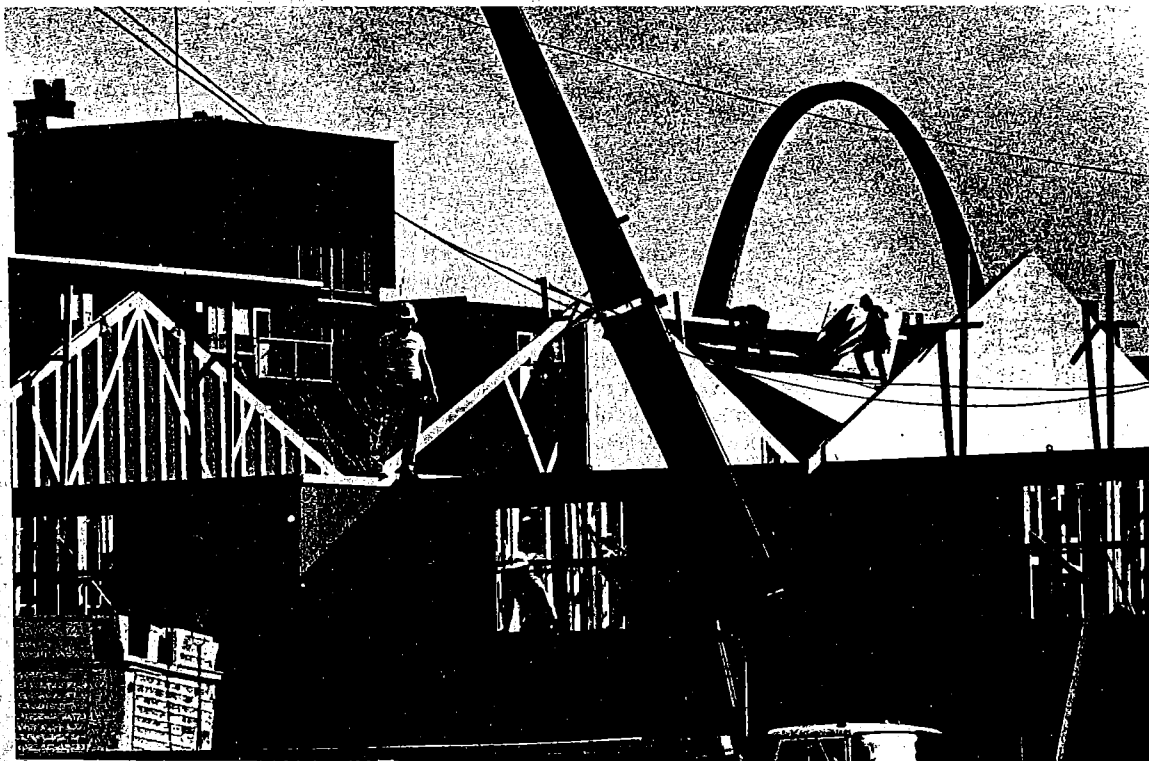
It's very hard for a woman. The first thing is to convince the contractors that she can do the work. They came up with all kinds of reasons why a woman cannot be a painter and plasterer: because she attracts the men, she is too pretty — all kinds of crazy stuff. It has nothing to do with her skills, capabilities, her know-how. When we finally convinced the contractor that if he wants this job he will hire women, then we had to go through the job of convincing the women that they could do it. When I finally beat up on the contractor and got him to accept the women, the women say, "Oh well, maybe I really can't do it; that is really a man's world. Maybe I should take a job as a secretary". That is one of the weaknesses of the program. We have to begin to do a lot of consulting and career development with the younger women and show them the advantages of looking into the skills in the construction fields and the real money that they can make. It is not a man's world; a woman can, in fact, do it.

We have been able to place 14 of our residents making from \$7-14 an hour into that job field. Out of those 14, we have placed five women. To me, that is good but

it could be better. (There are other jobs employing women). We have a woman security force; at least 60-70% of them are licensed guards by the police academy. We have 460 children from the ages of 6 weeks to 5 years old at daycare centers licensed by the city and the state. This employs 47 women. We have early childhood development programs that are not just babysitting services. I am head of one of the daycare centers in one neighbourhood. I set up all the daycare programs in large public housing developments. I operate two of them. The daycare is the only program I get paid for. The rest is free — being a developer and all the other things I talked about — I do that for nothing. We have a chores services program. Women do chores for the elderly people: they provide meals, housekeeping services, going to the doctor with the elderly residents. We have a \$175,000 direct contract with the state of Missouri to provide these services. We also have a transportation program that we provide for the elderly. We have our own van that we bought ourselves out of monies we raised from the community. We have our meals program where we have a special deal with a catering company where we are 50% partners and half of the equity goes back into the community. They hire our residents to do the cooking and serve the meals for the daycare and the elderly programs.

The third step: developing a shopping mall

Wekerle: How does the money from the cleaning company, catering company and development company get disbursed again?



Gilkey: Even though we are partners with a for-profit group, the monies we make go back into our non-profit corporation to offset some of the cuts that Reagan's beginning to make in our social programs. The whole reason why we are into economic development is to take that equity and use it to become our own funders so we don't have to depend on the federal government for subsidy. That's one way that we use the money. The other way is to reinvest the syndication and sales money as well as the equity from private sales back into economic development projects such as our mall.

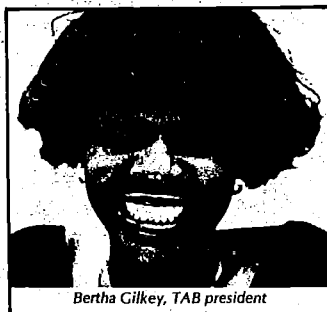
We are building a mall that will create 200-300 jobs for residents: we are going to have a cinema, grocery store, hot cookie factory, Red Lobster, MacDonalds, pub, department store, and a hardware store. We have already done a marketability study; we have done the plans for the mall; we have started purchasing the land where the mall will be built; we have already identified funds that will support the mall. One source will be the money that we make from the syndication of our housing ventures. Another is a Community UDAG we intend to do with the federal government. UDAG is an urban action grant program where the federal government gives monies to a city that submits proposals to encourage private investors to remain in the city by giving them some innovative grants to do a mall or build a store. The Community UDAG is for community groups who want to get into economic development. As we know it, the UDAG has not been killed yet by the Administration and we are eligible to bid on it.

Our final goal is to use the equity that we make from the various housing ventures. We intend to encourage residents by providing alternative housing which is low rise as well as market rate housing for when our residents move into another economic category as they begin to be journeymen. Rather than moving out of the community, we have market rate housing that they can move into. This means that their money just keeps recycling because they will buy from our stores. We can sell food and merchandise for a much cheaper price because we are not trying to make a lot of money. We are trying to sustain and self-support our community. We do that by taking the money and keeping it in the community. It just recycles itself and goes around and around. Then the profits we make go back to help support the people who are still on welfare, the people who are old and cannot work, and the people who are disabled and will always be a part of our community.

Wekerle: You said that you are trying to buy your buildings from the federal government for \$1 because the 40-year annual contribution contract is up. Why have you decided that you want to buy these old public housing buildings that the federal

government says have been nothing but trouble?

Gilkey: First, we're concerned about displacement. If the contract is up and they become the property of the City of St. Louis and the federal government has no responsibility to that development, there will no longer be a subsidy, the rents will go up to market rents, and our people will be priced out. Secondly, we are concerned that we have invested a lot of years and time in bringing these developments back up. And we're concerned that all the money we have been able to attract not be wasted — the UDAG, the Urban Initiatives money. We're concerned that once we bring it back to standard, they will want it back like they always do. No one wants it when it is a headache, but once it shows some kind of potential, then the system wants it back to take over and manage. We're concerned that all this work and these many years of suffering and our life that we have given to this will not be wasted now it is at a place where we can breathe. Once we own the housing and it becomes ours, nobody can put us off. We know we can operate it because we managed it for years when they said we couldn't. There is no way you can manage a huge, dilapidated, poorly maintained public housing development on \$6.20 per unit per month. We did it. And we know it can be done with good planning, good management, and a very strong tenant organization. Once people own something they have a sense of ownership — just like a home — and it becomes theirs. They get a sense of pride, respect, and dignity and all the other things that becoming a property owner gives an individual. So we know that once our people know we own it and it's ours, then all the other good things that America says you get when you own your own home, our people will get too (they take pride right now and we manage it). We think that's the only answer for poor people. They have to be in control of their community — totally in control where all the dollars and all the resources and all the equity that is made in that community recycles itself back and that community becomes a strong economic community where they participate and they are no longer dependent on the federal government. They are paying their equal share. They are no longer a burden to the federal government. In fact, they become an asset. ☺



Bertha Gilkey, TAB president

Terry L. Haywood, **Neighbourhood Women Putting It Together**. The National Congress of Neighbourhood Women, Brooklyn, N.Y. 1980, 58 pp.

The Office of Neighbourhood Self-Help Development of the Department of Housing and Urban Development and the National Congress of Neighbourhood Women co-sponsored a conference *Neighbourhood Women Putting it Together*, October 24-26, 1979. This conference brought together more than fifty women leaders of local and neighbourhood groups from across the United States. The goal was to develop a long-term technical assistance strategy to support the involvement of low-income women in housing and community development programs. Participants were surveyed about the role of women as workers, organizers, leaders and recipients of neighbourhood services. A needs-assessment survey concluded that women's participation in neighbourhood self-help groups decreases or ends when funding is provided for these groups. A number of case studies of neighbourhood organizations which serve women's needs are listed. It is also an insightful example of grass-roots planning and organization.

Contact: The National Congress of Neighbourhood Women, 11-29 Catherine Street, Brooklyn, New York 11211

Patricia Coatsworth, (Ed.), **Women and Urban Planning: A Bibliography**, Council of Planning Librarians, 1981. 21 pp. \$8.00 plus \$1.00 (postage and handling) prepaid to 1313 E. 60th Street — Merriam Center, Chicago, Il. 60637

This bibliography was compiled for the planner and citizen concerned with the new gender-related planning issues these changes have raised. It contains more than 300 topically arranged citations of books, articles, conference proceedings, speeches, government documents, legal comments, dissertations, manuscripts and other unpublished papers that address the issues and analyze the experience of those who have wrestled with them. The bibliography has two parts: a historical perspective covering the period 1840-1965, and a contemporary perspective post-1960. Under historical perspective, the subsections are: professional development; work of selected women making substantial contributions to planning literature; planning for women's needs; and biography-autobiography. Under contemporary perspective, the subsections are: housing, transportation, child care, land use regulation and the family, and professional development-practice. In addition, there are appendices covering where to find material and a list of plans.



BATTERED WOMEN IN RURAL COMMUNITIES

by KAREN CRIST

"All battered women are isolated. This isolation is intensified when there are no neighbours to hear her scream and when she has no car and there are no buses that come within 15 or 20 miles of her house. She may have no phone. There may be four feet of snow." These are a few of the difficulties many battered women in rural areas face, as described by Joann Kamman, one of the founding members of the New England Learning Center for Women in Transition in Greenfield, Massachusetts and a participant at a Rural Family Violence Conference held in Amherst, Massachusetts, in June 1980. The conference was cosponsored by the Franklin/Hampshire Community Mental Health Center and the Center for Women Policy Studies.

According to Kamman and other conference participants, certain characteristics of rural life, such as geographical isolation, poor transportation, lack of anonymity, and harsh winter weather, make it extremely difficult for rural battered women to seek help and find alternatives to living with violence. In addition, attitudes prevalent in rural communities, such as the belief that domestic violence does not occur in rural households, and a strong preference for seeking help with problems from family members rather than from social service agencies creates problems for service providers who are attempting to educate communities about domestic violence and provide services for victims.

Why Does the Battered Woman Stay?

The obstacles a battered woman in a rural community may confront in seeking help can be monumental. For example, many rural battered women cannot get to domestic violence programs or other service agencies. According to conference participants, many women in rural America do not drive, and if they do, they frequently lack access to cars. Bad weather conditions and poor roads make it difficult to travel the unusually long distances to the nearest shelter or hospital. Rural communities generally have no effective public transportation on which a battered woman can rely.

Or, a battered woman in a rural community may be unable to call for help because she does not have a telephone. If she does have a telephone, she may be reluctant to call long distance to the nearest shelter or crisis line because she knows her spouse will see the call on the phone bill.

Lack of anonymity in the community makes many battered women in rural areas hesitant to seek help. If she calls the police, files a criminal charge against her husband, or takes other public action to help herself, her abuse will become public knowledge in the community. This publicity may embarrass the woman or she may fear that no one will believe her or help her. Above all, she may fear the speculation and rumors which may arise in her community.

As in urban areas, if the rural battered woman does call the police, she may not receive the assistance and protection she needs. Most participants at the Rural Family Violence Conference agreed that police response to domestic violence in rural areas is inconsistent and inadequate, and that most police forces do not keep accurate records on domestic disputes. Denise Hormann, conference participant and staff member at AWARE in Juneau, Alaska, cites other problems with police in rural areas:

The police may be concerned and cooperative but unable to be effective due to logistics. . . Police often cannot cross town lines to transport victims to medical care or shelter, because doing so would set a costly precedent or leave the town unprotected. Police have neither the time nor resources to provide victims with transportation or to stay with her to insure their safety, which may be mandated by law.²

Often a judge's signature is required on a warrant to enforce a protection order; but in many rural communities, the judge may not be easy to contact. Many rural judges have to cover several counties and may not live in the same town as the victim.

Several other factors compound the problem of wife abuse in rural areas. Seasonal employment and the high rate of unemployment in rural areas is likely to aggravate existing family tensions, thus contributing to the likelihood of family violence. These factors also make it difficult for a woman to choose to leave an abusive relationship, as she may very well not be able to find a job to support herself and her children.

Battered women may hesitate to leave their homes because there is nowhere for them to move to in their community. According to Hormann, "While only one third of the people live in rural areas in the United States, two thirds of the poor housing can be found there. Housing options are extremely limited and very depressing for the woman who moves out on her own."³

For the rural woman who can find a job and housing, child care facilities are often nonexistent. Furthermore, the woman who leaves a violent home may be socially

ostracized, according to Hormann. "Rural areas seem to emphasize 'coupling' so that a separated or divorced woman faces difficulty in being assimilated into any positive social outlets."⁴

But perhaps the greatest problems facing battered women in rural areas is the overwhelming lack of resources, the lack of services, and few professionals who are trained to recognize and help victims of violence.

Rural America has few health clinics or hospitals; these are usually concentrated in urban areas. For a battered woman seeking help, the nearest hospital may be hundreds of miles away. One can travel through several adjacent counties without finding a mental health center.

There are few family planning services and few services for men who batter in rural areas. Correctional facilities, alcohol abuse

states, identified some of the problems they face in providing services to victims in rural areas and outlined some of the approaches they have found successful in these areas.

Getting the rural community to accept the presence of a domestic violence program is the first task of service providers, according to participants. Domestic violence services may be controversial in communities that do not recognize that the problem exists. Community outreach is usually difficult in rural areas for a variety of reasons. Geographic isolation enhances mistrust of outside agencies and individuals. Social workers are often initially viewed with suspicion or hostility as "outsiders." Where there are no local newspapers, radio stations, or television stations, it may be difficult to inform a community about available services.

Just as battered women in rural areas are



Alison Parsons

programs, and innovative counselling and diversion programs for batterers, where they exist, are most often understaffed.

Above all, safe shelter for battered women is lacking in many rural communities. A battered woman may have to travel a great distance to reach the closest shelter or safe home. Where shelters and safe homes exist in rural areas or small towns, it is difficult, if not impossible to keep their locations secret.

Providing Services in Rural Areas

For a number of reasons, providing services to battered women can be more difficult in rural areas than in urban communities. Participants at the Rural Family Violence Conference, primarily domestic violence program staff from New England

affected by rural isolation, so are social service providers cut off from the support of other concerned people working in the field. In addition, many areas lack adequate physical facilities to offer treatment. There are few resources to train medical or mental health professionals, police, and others to deal more effectively with the problem. Burn-out is common.

In fact, lack of resources seems to be the major problem confronting service providers in rural areas. Kamman describes the problems she has faced in Massachusetts:

For us as a service agency, operating in a rural sphere not only isolates us from the support and stimulation of easy access to other shelter groups, but from a whole variety of human and material resources. Our volunteer pool is much more limited in terms of students and others who have the privilege to work for no reimbursement. We have fewer local training

resources for our staff to help them improve their skills, problem-solve, and prevent the burn-out which is such a risk for shelter workers. We have access to fewer local funding resources, both governmental and private; what limited local funding is available is sought competitively by agencies with budgets large enough to include a grants-person and with the history of having received the same funding for years.⁵

Although the social conditions in rural areas do not cause wife abuse, they do exacerbate it and make solutions more difficult. Life in much of rural America includes barriers that hamper service providers from dealing effectively and sensitively with the problem. However, despite the dearth of adequate resources and personnel, some rural communities have begun to grapple with these barriers.

Service providers in some rural areas have begun to identify the strengths of rural communities and to discover ways to use them to help battered women. For instance, some projects are beginning to use the strong informal support networks that exist in rural areas to serve as a link between battered women and service organizations as well as to serve as a source of support to help the battered women. Developing the capacity of informal support networks to help battered women requires identifying and educating key members of these networks about domestic violence and available services.

In addition, persons concerned about domestic violence in states with primarily rural populations have taken advantage of the accessibility of local, county, and state government representatives and have brought about changes in the law and have developed services for violent families.

Rural service providers have begun to overcome their isolation from each other by forming coalitions and networks to exchange information and techniques for solving problems. The Rural Domestic Violence Conference was one effort to bring together resource people and service providers from rural and small town domestic violence projects.

NCADV Rural Task Force

Another major effort to form coalitions for the exchange of information has been made by the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence's (NCADV) Rural Task Force, which was formed out of a workshop on rural issues held at NCADV's First Na-

tional Conference in January 1980. According to Nancy Gentile, a task force member and NCADV representative from Maine and New Hampshire, "the Rural Task Force is attempting to develop a network of support that will help to alleviate the isolation battered women and service providers in rural areas experience."

One step the group has undertaken has been to identify rural representatives from each state. These representatives will act as contact persons to identify the needs of projects in their states and the available resources. The task force is also developing liaisons with national rural organizations, such as the National Rural Center and Rural America to promote the exchange of information and ideas.

The task force is currently compiling information about rural domestic violence projects based on questionnaires distributed in every state. Thus far, approximately eighty rural domestic violence projects have identified themselves. This information will be used to develop written material on issues relevant to rural projects, which will be distributed at NCADV's Second National Conference in 1982.

According to Gentile, questionnaire responses received thus far by the task force indicate that the most difficult problems facing rural service providers are the lack of adequate resources and difficulties with transportation and communication. Also, the questionnaire responses indicate that many rural projects can afford few paid staff and have a limited pool of volunteers. Of the responses received thus far, approximately half of the rural domestic violence projects have paid staff of three individuals or less, and on the average, there are approximately twice as many volunteers as paid staff at rural projects.

For more information on the Rural Task Force, contact Nancy Gentile, Administrator, Spruce Run Association, P.O. Box 653, Bangor, Maine 04401.

¹Kamman, Joani. "Cost Factors in Providing Battered Women's Services in a Rural Area" (unpublished paper on file at the Center for Women Policy Studies).

²Hormann, Denise and Carol Adams. "Rural Issues and Domestic Violence." In *Family Violence: A Workshop Manual for Clergy and Other Service Providers*, by Rev. Marie M. Fortune and Denise Hormann, pp. 79-81 (on file at the Center for Women Policy Studies).

³Hormann and Adams.

⁴Hormann and Adams.

⁵Kamman.

Karen Crist is on the editorial staff of Response to Violence in the Family. This article is reprinted with permission from Response, vol. 4, no. 8, Nov-Dec. 1981, pp. 1-2. Center for Women Policy Studies, 2000 P Street, NW, Suite 508, Washington, D.C. 20036.

Barbara Matthew, **Women's Work — The Northwestern Ontario Case.** Women and Economic Development Sub-Committee, Northwestern Ontario International Women's Decade Coordinating Council, 154 Whalen St., Thunder Bay, Ontario, March 1981, 66 pp.

This study documents women's employment pattern in the resource-based towns in northwestern Ontario. Largely descriptive, the report concludes that women are interested in receiving training in the skilled non-traditional occupations urgently required in their regions. Integration of women into the major resource industries has met with resistance and women are primarily located in traditional clerical positions. The study concludes that northern communities will lose a major potential source of skilled labour if women are not offered the incentives to expand their education and employment opportunities. This trend may lead to an imbalance in the town's population if the women leave to seek more rewarding and satisfying employment elsewhere. Recommendations are that women be considered as target employees and training candidates for the regional labour force.

Wilbur Zelinsky, Janice Monk, and Susan Hanson, **Women and Geography: A Review and Prospectus,** *Progress in Human Geography* (in press)

This is an comprehensive review of writing and research on the geographic dimensions of women's lives. The review consists of two sections: the first deals with the status of women in geography and the second with studies of the geography of women. Some of the issues examined are: women and environment, quality of life and the status of women, housing, access to transportation, child care facilities, educational attainment, elderly women, third world women and others. The authors identify some of the most promising areas for future research and change: divorce spatial patterns, urban models, women's political activity, attitudinal differences to recreational and tourist attractions, intuition, survey and questionnaire design and more accurate use of titles in research publications and population studies. An extensive bibliography is included for further research.

Contact: Janice Monk, Southwest Institute for Research on Women, Women's Studies, The University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ 85721



Women and the American City. Catharine R. Stimpson, Elsa Dixler, Martha J. Nelson, and Kathryn B. Yatrakis (eds) (Chicago: U. of Chicago Press). 1981. paperback. 227 pages. \$5.95

Reviewed by Novia Carter

Awareness of the special relationships between women and the city has increased dramatically in the last decade. The combined inspirations of the women's movement, marked by unprecedented eagerness for self-examination, the increasing number of concerned women concentrating in environmental design professions, and the production of credible, scholarly inquiries — these factors have all contributed to the growth of this new awareness. *Women and the American City* is the most recent work exploring these relationships.

The book includes eleven articles, an elegant state of the art presentation on "Women in the Urban Environment", nine research reports, and two book reviews. These selections provide the reader with a broad perspective on some key issues.

The topic areas explored in the articles are urban policy, adaptation of immigrant women to city life, women in urban politics and community organizations, urban parks and leisure time activities, gender and urban/suburban life, and four specific problem areas including health, transportation, crime and aging.

These articles are based solidly on U.S. data and information specific to selected American cities. In all cases, the writers have analysed their information both accurately and sensitively. The result is a series of fresh insights that imply beginning and continuing rather than endings. Thorough analysis is based not only on fact, but on some creative reasoning, an activity all too seldom reflected in collections of this kind.

I read with special interest the article on "Women in Urban Parks" by Galen Cranz. The interaction of women with the open space system of parks and public outdoor leisure time areas has not been well explored. This article examines parks and recreation planning from a historical perspective, revealing yet another dimension of sex role stereotyping as it underlies the planning process.

Gerda Wekerle's review essay, "Women in the Urban Environment", is highly successful in assessing the present state of research and policy development. The rapid concentration in the last five years of research and writing on women in urban communities has yielded a plethora of publications. Wekerle has threaded her way

through a morass of detail, organized the material around some key concepts, and produced a highly readable essay, ending with some realistic conclusions and recommendations.

Because so little work has been done in earlier decades on women and the city, many aspects of the interrelationship need exploring. The 1980 landmark publication, *New Space for Women*¹, also inquired into women and their environments. There is no duplication by *Women and the American City*, a fact which merely underscores the need for continuing work in this field.

Both publications will be welcomed by feminists, high school teachers of courses on lifestyles and urban issues, community college and university educators, and students.

¹Gerda R. Wekerle, Rebecca Peterson, and David Morley (eds), *New Space for Women*. (Boulder, Col.: Westview Press), 1980.

Novia Carter is Chair
Department of Family Studies
University of Manitoba

Women's Expressions on the Environment. A Commentary to the Exhibition PAVEJ That Shows the Works of Women Architects, Planners and Artists. Copenhagen, July 1980, 131 pp. \$4.00



This publication is a collection of stories, poems, essays, photographs and drawings by women whose works were shown at the exhibition PAVEJ in Denmark. The aim of the exhibition is "to show that women have begun tackling problems concerning our environment — problems of an immediate nature as well as those more far-reaching." This book is the result of the collective and collaborative work of women artists, architects and planners who wish to explore and demonstrate to others possible alternatives and ideas for creating new and more responsive environments. The following ex-

cerpts are a glimpse at the ideas, dreams and visions these women share:

"Voices of Daily Lives", Inge Erikensen, writer:

"I often feel as if I belong in another reality: it is inconceivable that housing associations, the rich, and politicians dare speak and act as they do. The majority of them never use busses, play schools, metropolitan trams, sport facilities, homes for senior citizens, supermarkets and bars. They don't live in pre-fabricated houses made of concrete. They have no idea what it is like to be there day in and day out, and they don't know what people talk about in these places."

"Daily Life and it's Social Relations", Helle Degn, Member of Parliament:

"We must get busy and change this, so that traffic is no longer a serious threat to our children and ourselves. These changes may cause us inconveniences, but in the long run they will benefit us all. Because it is not a law of nature that we must adjust ourselves to the automobile and its needs. Such has been the case for a long time now. But no more."

"When the Ornament Disappeared", Kirsten Birch, architect:

"The public spaces which do exist are no longer ours — I mean squares, parks, streets and other places where one can breathe and act freely. The only space that 'belongs' to us is our home. Here we feel we are allowed to be ourselves. We are people with an architecture that does not provide the means for self-expression."

"Planning Laws Condition Women", Helle Skjerback, lawyer:

"On the whole we believe that the existence of women (and men) would be easier and richer if there were less distance, and as a result less wasted time and a greater opportunity for contact, between life's different functions: places of work, homes, shops, institutions for children and the elderly cultural opportunities. We fear that the fragmentation and centralization thoughts now being cemented into the regional, township and local plans will freeze us in an alien and barren cultural pattern. We must hurry if we wish to affect change."

Toward a Common Future? by Inge Lind and Lene Vraa, architects:

"So it is our contention that the smaller the functional units of society, the more influence women will have, as well as the 'values of women' which are a result of their experiences in reproduction — and which we can call women's powers of production: care, repair and renewal."

To order write to:
Inge Lind and Lene Vraa
c/o Arkitektskolen
Norreport 20
8000 Aarhus C
Denmark

ECO-FEMINISM

Wimmin of the Earth Bonding is a group devoted to the movement of EcoFeminism which produces a newsletter twice a year with an international distribution. Past topics have included Appropriate Technology, Ecological Agriculture, Health, Survival Techniques, Urban and Rural Women's Community Reports, International News that relates to Feminism and Earth as well as book and movie reviews.

They are also collecting information on books relating to feminist and environmental issues which will eventually become an indexed bibliography. Bibliographic information and critical comments as well as relevant poetry, journal writing, letters, journalistic articles, can be sent to:

W.E.B. Newsletter, c/o Aradia, P.O. Box 7516, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49510

WOMEN AND GEOGRAPHY

Working For Our Future: Opportunities For Women in Resource Development. Newfoundland Status of Women Council, 1980, 57 pp.

This booklet demonstrates the variety of career choices available to women in Newfoundland's increased resource development sector. Brief case studies of women working in non-traditional fields deal with the duties performed, personality types desired, and the necessary educational requirements. Some of the nineteen occupations and careers examined are: marine engineering, planktology, promotion, geology, commercial diving, oceanography, and ice engineering. This booklet is encouraging and yet realistic about the qualifications needed for these diverse jobs largely dominated by men. The final chapter "Know Your Rights", lists the addresses of the local Human Rights Associations across the province.

Available from the Newfoundland Status of Women Council, P.O. Box 6072, St. John's, Nfld, A1C 5X8

Shirley Ardener (Ed.), **Women, Physical Space and Cultural Maps.** London: Croom Helm Ltd., 1981, 224 pp. \$14.00 (paperback)

A cross-cultural, multidisciplinary study of ways in which women use the spaces open to them which contrasts with earlier work on restrictions on women's movements. Includes chapters on: "Women's Space in a Men's House: The British House of Commons," Silvia Rodgers, "The Problem of Privacy in Mediterranean Anthropology," Lydia Sciana.

Tidings is published quarterly and presents eco-feminist news and views. Women are encouraged to send articles, letters, information and resources that are relevant to an eco-feminist perspective.

Contact: Women and Life on Earth, 160 Main St., Northampton, MA 01060
Tidings, May 1981

Black and Green, an ecological anarchist publication with a regional perspective is seeking relevant feminist material.

Contact: Anne Genovese, P.O. Box 373, Burlington, VT 05402

Hysteria is planning an upcoming issue addressing Canadian feminist science fiction, and exploring future environments from a feminist perspective. It will be a double issue appearing in late 1982.

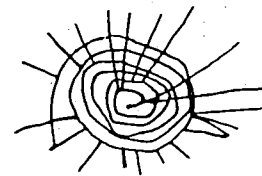
Hysteria, Box 2481, Station B, Kitchener, Ontario

Janet H. Momsen, "Women in Canadian Geography" *Canadian Geographer*, Vol. 24, No. 2, 1980, pp. 177-182

Surveys conducted with the help of the Canadian Association of Geographers give support to the many women who feel discriminated against in their efforts to advance in this field. Across Canada there were only 37 women members of geography departments, constituting 6.2 per cent of the nation's university geography teachers. This proportion is lower than the average for all university departments. The number of women students at the Master's level has increased from 5 to 14% between 1970 and 1979. At the Ph.D. level women represent only 16.7% of the students.

John Hitchcock, **Neighbourhood Form and Convenience: A City-Suburban Comparison.** Major Report No. 19. Centre for Urban and Community Studies, U of Toronto, 150 St. George St., Toronto, Ont. M5S 1A1, 1981. 62 pp. \$3.00

This study compares the relative convenience of four neighbourhoods in Metropolitan Toronto possessing two different locational and land use characteristics (city and suburban) and two different income ranges (moderate and high), for a specified population group, mothers and children living at home. The survey indicates that substantial differences in perception exist between city and suburban neighbourhoods with respect to access to shopping and work. The author concludes that if we wish to equalize residential environments across the metropolitan area, the more important challenge may be to find ways in which suburban areas can be made more attractive to those without children, than to find ways to persuade those with children to choose city (or city-like) neighbourhoods.



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ST. LUCIA, QUEENSLAND 4067, AUSTRALIA.

WOMEN AND PLANNING BIBLIOGRAPHY

I am sincerely interested in being a part of a network of women (and men) striving for a better built environment and (urban) policies that affect our lives in many ways.

I am compiling a bibliography related to women and planning (including urban policies — U.S./Canada) and would appreciate any suggestions, inclusions.

Dana Wolfe
The City of Calgary
Planning Department
P.O. Box 2100
Calgary, Alberta
Canada T2P 2M5

COMMUNITY DESIGN

I'm currently working for the U.F.M. a free university community education organization which serves Kansas State University, Manhattan, Riley County, and numerous other areas of the state of Kansas. We create and develop all types of educational opportunities which are free of grades, credits, costs or prerequisites.

We are currently considering the initiation of a community design center for the Manhattan and surrounding area. We are targeting a broad base of the community, with primary emphasis on women, low-income and minorities in and around the Manhattan area in hopes of creating an awareness of their designed environment and how the environment affects their lives. Along with environmental awareness issues we are hoping to implement courses in job training skills, with future development into a community based business.

Sandy Sandersware
Project Coordinator
1221 Thurston
Manhattan, Kansas
66502

ECO-FEMINISM

I am particularly interested in women's uses of the "natural" environments, with respect both to subsistence uses of natural resources and outdoor recreation. As I am currently working on my doctoral dissertation which looks at gender differences in use of the natural environment, I would greatly appreciate any information on these topics you could send my way.

Paula J. Williams
232-13th Ave. E. No. B
Seattle, Washington 98102

My interests and concerns are knowledge and implications in ecofeminism; research on new values for a better society, for a new humanism.

I want ecologists to be concerned for women; feminists to be aware of the limits of the earth and the necessity of an ecosystem.

I am doing research (on this topic) for a group and am publishing an article in a feminist Montreal review.

Martine Thomas
5221 Jeanne Mance No. 1
Montreal, P.Q.

ADDRESS CORRECTION

Women's Institute for Housing and
Economic Development
Suite 710-712
148 State Street
Boston, MA 02109

WOMEN AND HOUSING

I am beginning a research project concerning women and housing. I feel *Women and Environments* may be a valuable resource for me.

Judy Remington
3233-17th Ave. So.
Minneapolis, Mn. 55407

WOMEN AND THE SOCIAL COSTS OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

We appreciate the review of our book, *Women and the Social Costs of Economic Development*. However, we are concerned that the reviewer has both demanded too much from an exploratory study and at the same time overlooked much of our evidence. Of even greater concern is the implication that we had reached our conclusions before we even began our work. That is a very serious accusation.

Ms. Armour de-emphasized an important fact that was emphasized in the book. This was an exploratory study undertaken for the purposes of assessing women's situation in an energy boomtown, and developing the theory necessary for a more systematic study of social problems in rapidly growing communities. That systematic study is now under way.

Ms. Armour feels we were committed to our conclusions before we began. All conclusions mentioned in the review came out of the research, as did all other findings (that is what exploratory research is all about). Of course, since we had already done a considerable amount of work concerning women and development (see, e.g., Elise Boulding's books, *The Underside of History* and *Women in the Twentieth Century World*), we were looking for things we had found before, as well as for surprises. As for the proposition that women are key equilibrators in the community, an entire chapter was devoted to this topic, i.e., "Women as Integrators and Stabilizers." Regarding the absence of a link between the status of women and their ability to adapt, we cite evidence throughout the book. Our current project will enable a statistical test of this proposition.

Sincerely,

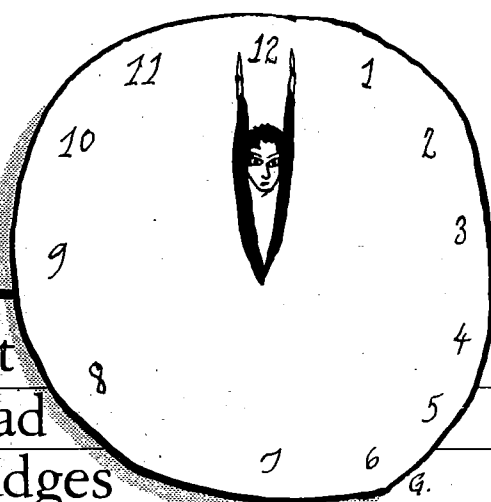
Elizabeth Moen
for The Growth Impact Group

I find your newsletter extremely important to my studies . . . the concept of this newsletter magazine is very exciting.

Vicki Opperman
Northampton, Mass.



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