


# **WOMEN**

\$3  
Winter 1986

# **AND ENVIRONMENTS**



**Isolation and Mental Health**  
**Birth Settings**  
**Women and Co-op Housing**  
**Women and Habitat, Nairobi '85**

# EVENTS

**Parliamentary Task Force on Childcare** Will hold hearings across Canada April-June 1986. Application for a hearing must be made by **MARCH 15** to: *M. Rondeau-Parent, Clerk, 151 Sparks St., Suite 308, Ottawa K1N 1C3. (615-995-8633) Briefs by June to same address.*

*March 29*

## **The Future for Women in Science and Technology**

A conference on women and career opportunities in science and engineering, sponsored by the Southwest Institute for Research on Women.

Contact: Jo Ann Troutman, WISE Office, Modern Languages Bldg. 263, University of Arizona, Tucson AZ 85721 (602) 621-7339

*April 5-9*

## **American Planning Association**

meetings in Los Angeles. Five sessions sponsored by the Planning & Women Division: planning for children, safe neighbourhoods, special transit needs of women, downtown places for families.

Contact: Marsha Ritzdorf, 317A Marvin Hall, University of Kansas, Lawrence KS 66045 (913) 864-5934.

*April 9-13*

**EDRA '86: The Costs of Not Knowing** Annual conference of the Environmental Design Research Association in Atlanta examines the impact of the built environment on human health and productivity. What are the effects? The costs of not knowing will ultimately be borne by the occupants, owners and other users of designed environments.

Contact: Willo Pequegnant White, EDRA, L'Enfant Plaza Station, PO Box 23129, Washington DC 20024 USA (301) 657-2651

*April 19*

## **Women Plan Toronto**

Planning workshop at Toronto City Hall. Contact: Regula Modlich, 72 Southwood Drive, Toronto Ont. M4E 2T9 (416) 463-4413

*April 25-26*

## **Women and Safe Shelter: Creating and Recreating Community**

This conference in Chicago will explore creative joint strategies between

community-based organizations, public service providers, government and financial institutions which can address the problems of women and shelter.

Contact: Susan Stall, Women's Studies Program, University of Illinois, 4075C Behavioural Sciences Bldg, Box 4348, Chicago IL 60680 (312) 996-2441

*May 3-7*

## **Association of American Geographers**

meetings in Minneapolis. Panels and paper sessions on statistics and gender, the feminization of poverty, the economic status of women.

Contact: Eve Gruntfest, Dept of Geography and Environmental Studies, University of Colorado, Colorado Springs CO 80933 USA

*May 22-25*

## **World Congress on Education and Technology**

The congress in Vancouver will address the impact of new technology on training, education, culture and society in general.

Contact: World Congress, 1155 West 8th Ave., Vancouver BC V6H 1C5

*May 26-30*

**8th International Federation for Housing and Planning** in Malmö Sweden. The congress will deal with housing, care and service for the elderly, and local planning for increased employment. Sessions on women's issues, May 27 and 29.

Contact: IFHP Congress, 43 Wassenaarseweg, 2596 CG The Hague Netherlands (70) 244557

*June 10-13*

**International Research Conference on Housing Policy** in Gävle, Sweden, organized around three themes: housing and economic research, housing politics and policy, housing and social research.

Contact: Dr. Bengt Turner, National Swedish Institute for Building Research, PO Box 785, S-801, 29 Gävle Sweden

## **Spring Issue Deadlines**

April 30th for Events

April 4th for all other copy

*June 11-15*

## **Women Working for Change: Health, Cultures and Societies**

National Women's Studies Association Conference '86.

Contact: Paula Gray, Office of Women's Studies, UIUC, 304 Stiven House, 708 Mathews Ave., Urbana IL 61801 USA

*July 7-10*

## **Environments in Transition**

Ninth Conference of the International Association for the Study of People and Their Physical Surroundings.

Contact: Secretariat, IAPS, P.O.B. 50006, Israel. Tel: 03-654571 or Telex: 341171 Kens IL

*July 20-23*

## **Canadian Institute of Planners**

Annual meetings in Vancouver will include a session on the effects of transportation on women.

Contact: Doug Halverson, Vancouver 86, 401-21 Water St, Vancouver BC V6B 1A1 (604) 684-2331

*September 28-October 3*

## **World Planning and Housing Congress: Innovation**

The 1986 congress in Adelaide, South Australia will explore four dimensions of innovation: social imperatives, technology, past and present innovations and the process of innovation.

Contact: Secretariat, World Planning and Housing Congress 1986, Box 2609 GPO, Sydney 2001 Australia

*October 15-18*

## **American Association of Housing Educators**

Call for symposia, poster sessions and papers for the annual meeting in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Contact: Sharon Burgess, Family Resource Management Dept., Ohio State University, 1787 Neil Ave., Columbus Ohio 43210 (614) 422-4224

*November 6-9*

**Atlantic Conference on Women and Housing** sponsored by the Nova Scotia Association of Social Workers. Focus will be on sharing information and exploring innovative solutions for the housing needs of women in Atlantic Canada.

Contact: Jane Brackley, c/o Atlantic Conference on Women and Housing, 1094 Tower Rd, Halifax NS B3H 2Y5



## A WORD FROM US

1986 — the *tenth* anniversary of *Women and Environments!* We'll be looking at the story of our founding and growth struggles in more detail later in our anniversary year; meanwhile two items in this issue have especial significance as reflections of our beginnings and of our present situation at the end of the magazine's first decade.

The link to our beginning is provided by Diana Lee Smith's report on the Women and Habitat workshops held in connection with the UN End of Decade for Women conference in Nairobi last July. The first, mimeographed, issue of the "Newsletter for an International Network of People Interested in Women and the Environment" (ie, *W&E*) emerged out of the UN Habitat conference in Vancouver in 1976. Intended as a medium for maintaining contacts between people whom the session on Women in Human Settlements had brought together, it still forms one of the links that serve as a base for the "Global Network on Women and Habitat" announced at Nairobi.

Our present is reflected in the twin articles on women and co-ops. The co-op model has especial significance for us, since we are realizing that cooperative organization is the only way we can sustain our present level of activity in publishing. In her article, Joan Simon focuses on the potential for housing co-ops to provide a secure physical and social base for developing skills. Brenda Farge's study indicates that women's socialization and distinctive organizational style appear to prevent them from taking high profile roles. However, this situation may not accurately reflect women's significant influence in the development and management of housing co-ops, nor the quality of the benefits that they derive from that involvement.

Our own cooperative experience is certainly a positive one, promoting the development of our individual and collective skills, and providing a supportive environment which encourages both our work and our enthusiasm for the future of the magazine. Happy anniversary, *W&E!*

# WOMEN AND ENVIRONMENTS

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# Cabin Fever

## Northern Women and Mental Health

By PAT McINNIS

**W**omen's lives in primary resource towns are very different from men's<sup>1</sup> and place different demands on local mental health services. Many academic, governmental and community studies have identified common environmental factors that result in the labelling of women as "high risk" for developing mental health problems,<sup>2</sup> and a disproportionate number of women are users of the mental health system.<sup>3</sup> But there is a serious question of whether sufficient consideration is given to women's experience when community mental health programs are planned. This area needs greater recognition and stronger action.

The Northwestern Ontario Women's Health Education Project is funded by the Health Promotion Directorate of Health and Welfare Canada to provide — among other objectives — research and education on women's health needs. During the winter of 1983 the project delivered "Cabin Fever" workshops to 220 women in 15 regional

communities; these were not designed specifically for researching mental health needs, but the information recorded informally as part of the workshop process is relevant and important, and so has been released.

Cabin fever is characterized by depression and irritability, and generally occurs during the confinement and isolation of the long winter months in the North. While most women will express positive feelings about living in small, isolated communities, the positive elements are often associated with benefits for their husbands and children. In this workshop series, the women focused on their experience of the difficulties, and these are the feelings they described:

frustrated, resentful, guilty, lonely, apathetic, unmotivated, lethargic, bored, depressed, isolated, cut off, confined physically and emotionally, suffocated, anxious, hostile, helpless, trapped, left out, angry, harrassed, dissatisfied, overwhelmed, victimized, restrained, cramped, unsociable, frightened, tense, sad, powerless, not belonging.

And these are the causes of those feelings:

- cold weather/long winters
- unemployment
- too far from facilities
- staying at home

- labelling — housewife, supermom
- isolation
- lack of work
- lack of career opportunities
- shift work
- transiency
- living away from family and friends
- lack of babysitting and reliable child care
- transportation
- lack of places to go
- lack of facilities/resources
- long distance from family and friends
- lack of community programs
- very limited shopping
- distance to cities
- prices in the north
- lifestyle controlled by spouse's job
- small town life
- lack of living space
- envious of husband's leisure activities/freedom

The same words and phrases kept occurring across all workshops.

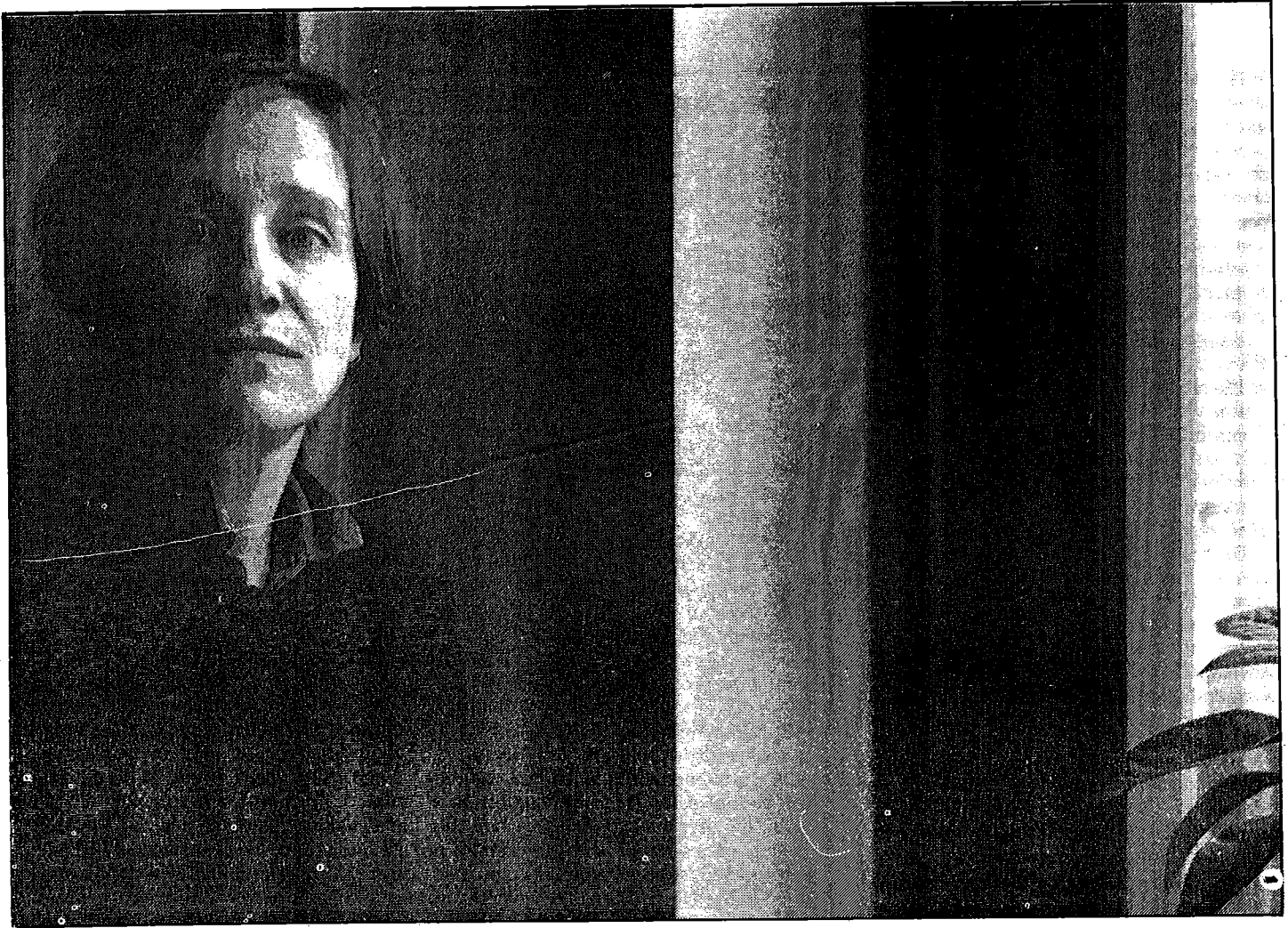
As a follow-up, the Project held "Women and Stress" workshops in the same communities in the winter of 1984. The 15 workshops were attended by 269 women, who were asked to describe the stressors of living in each particular community:

- no community planning for playgrounds

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*Pat McInnis is Director of the Women's Crisis House in Sioux Lookout, Ontario, and previously Research Director at the Northwestern Ontario Women's Decade Council in Thunder Bay.*





KATE LAZIER/RUTHANN TUCKER

- concerned about quality of education for children
- lack of opportunities for Adult Education
- difficulties created by shift work/seasonal work
- personal isolation for women
- transportation difficulties
- separation from extended family
- poor road conditions in winter
- lack of privacy in a small town; no anonymity
- distance to facilities
- transitory population; lack of community spirit
- not enough people to do volunteer work
- lack of shopping facilities; high cost
- limited social and entertainment options
- social life revolves around drinking
- housing is high priced and poor quality
- community has no strong economic base
- limited options for birthing
- women can only get low paying, low skilled jobs, often only part-time
- it's a man's town; women's opinions are not taken seriously
- no appreciation for the work women do in the home
- insensitivity to women's needs
- high cost of living
- any day care available is expensive
- moved here because of husband's job; often sacrificed own career to come
- cost and work time lost to travel to medical facilities
- cold long winters
- traditional male roles and attitudes
- no bus system
- single industry sets the economic climate for everyone

Again, while there were some differences between individual communities, the same words and phrases kept recurring in all the workshops.

Women's experiences and perspectives are necessary and valuable in developing innovative and appropriate mental health services. Their social, political and economic environment must be understood and considered. They can then be helped to understand and resolve the existing environmental problems instead of merely adjusting to the difficulty of living in an isolated, primary resource community.

A critical aspect of this type of mental health intervention lies in facilitating women's understanding of the factors in their environments which cause distress; the emphasis should not be on what is "wrong" with the women, and the burden of responsibility to do something about the problems does not belong to them alone. The goal of inter-

vention should be to encourage self-determination for both the women and the community.

Rachel Aarons was a Gestalt therapist from Toronto who has spent several years living and working with women in a small town in British Columbia. This experience has changed her approach to the mental health problems of women in small town settings. She explains this new perspective and describes the possibilities of action once the process of looking at social, political and economic problems is initiated:

"If we continue to see women individually, we fail to deal with the major factor in their imprisonment — viz the perception of each woman that the problem is *hers alone*. Because she sees it as hers she feels responsible and sees herself as *to blame*. Because she sees it as hers alone, she is prevented from seeing the commonality of women's problems and the sources in the society we live in. Because she feels alone and to blame, she has a limited sense of control, and limited ability to act. She remains depressed and passive. If she could rise above the individual perspective to see the limitations placed on her from without, if she could begin to get validated for her perceptions and support from other women, she would be mobilized to experience personal control and the ability to take action. How can this be accomplished?"

There are no simple solutions. The challenge facing each community mental health program is the development of a perspective which considers the unique stressors impacting on women's lives in their particular community. Within that perspective personal and community change are closely linked, leading to improved quality of life for all. Although counselling will remain an important component of the program, the role of the helper will become increasingly one of the educator and advocate. Previous work has suggested such options as life skills training, support groups, transition houses and women's centres.<sup>5</sup> Community-level changes could include increased training and educational opportunities, increased employment options and a more equal share of community level decision-making.

The reality of daily life in resource towns creates feelings of isolation, depression, frustration, powerlessness and guilt for women residents. These realities must be taken into consideration as a first step in the development of mental health strategies for women in these communities. □

1. J. Evans and R. Cooperstock, "Psycho-Social Problems of Women in Primary Resource Communities," *Canadian Journal of Community Mental Health* special supp. no. 1, Winter 1983: 55-66

2. R. Aarons, "Women and the Small Town Syndrome," paper presented at the National Rural Mental Health Conference, 1981 (available through *W & E*); A.M. Gill, "Women in Northern Resource Towns," in *Social Science in the North*, Association of Canadian Universities for Northern Studies, Occasional Publications no. 9, 1984; M. Luxton, *More than a Labour of Love*, Toronto: Women's Education Press, 1980; D. Nadeau, "Women and Self-Help in Resource-Based Communities," *Resources for Feminist Research*, 11(1) 1982: 65-67; National Film Board of Canada, *No Life for a Woman*, Montreal: NFB, 1979; Northern British Columbia Women's Task Force, *Report on Single Industry Resource Communities*, Vancouver: Women's Research Centre, 1977; J.A. Ramsay, *A Survey of Women's Health Needs in Northwestern Ontario*, Northwestern Ontario Women's Health Education Project, 1984; Women's Research Centre, *Beyond the Pipeline: a Study of the Lives of Women and Families in Fort Nelson, BC and Whitehorse*, Vancouver, 1979;

3. C. D'Arcy and J.A. Schmitz, "Sex Differences in the Utilization of Health Services for Psychiatric Problems in Saskatchewan," *Canadian Journal of Psychiatry* 24(1) 1979: 19-27; B.P. and B.S. Dohrenwend, "Sex Differences and Psychiatric Disorders," *American Journal of Sociology* 81(6) 1976: 1447-1454.

4. Aarons, *op. cit.*: 9-10.

5. See Evans and Cooperstock, *op. cit.*

## Women: Social and Physical Isolation

Conference of the Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women (CRIAOW), Saskatoon, November 1985.

Although the theme holds obvious relevance for sparsely populated areas such as Saskatchewan, geographic location was only one of the many isolating factors explored in the conference sessions. Other factors that serve to restrict women's equal participation in Canadian society was considered, including prejudice, language, law, religious beliefs and economics.

Economic isolation was the focus of a session on "Employment and Social Policy" with papers highlighting the failure of government policies to improve the economic situation of women. Recent initiatives to de-index universal social programs such as Old Age Pensions and Family Allowances were criticized for failing to recognize the adverse effect of these moves on women. Educational institutions were also criticized for their lack of realistic programs designed to encourage non-traditional career choices for young girls. The result, continued isolation of female labour within the labour force through the operation of a segregated labour market, is well documented. Yet, as a session on "Organizational Isolation" amply demonstrated, the experience of those women who work outside the traditional "lace ghetto" areas can be very lonely.

Given the location of the conference, special attention was given to the forms of isolation experienced by native and

rural women. Sessions on Rural and Farm Women, Isolation Related to Native Communities, and Isolation in Saskatchewan discussed both the problems of isolation and the use of such techniques as networking, bonding, and distance education to overcome them. The personal testimonies of two Saskatchewan women, who had pioneered the development of the Homemakers Clubs, the Farm Movement and the CCF, exemplified the female ability to transcend physical and social isolation even during the darkest days of the Depression.

Today's women do not have the problems of communication and transportation faced by earlier generations. Yet the experience of isolation did not end with pioneer days. It persists in many forms and locations. Overcoming physical barriers is only one way of ending female isolation; we need also, to learn more about other forms, both environmental and non-environmental. With knowledge, research and information sharing a start can be made on "women's push to transcend their isolation and expand their horizons." This year's CRIAOW Conference was an excellent beginning.

Paula Bourne

Centre for Women's Studies in Education, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE)

### WOMEN AND DISABILITY/ LES FEMMES HANDICAPÉES



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*Of the more than one thousand workshops held during the Forum of Non-Governmental Organizations in Nairobi, July 1985, Women & Environments will focus on two topics. The Women, Environment and Development workshops organized by the Environment Liaison Centre in Nairobi will be featured in our next issue (Spring 1986). Under the evocative title "Women Nurture the World," the workshop series examined women's status and involvement in forests, water management, energy and agriculture. Our other Nairobi topic is Women in*

*Human Settlements, represented here by a report on the Women and Habitat workshop organized by the Habitat International Council, the Netherlands Council of Women, and the Mazingira Institute in Nairobi. The subject is especially significant as the close of the Decade for Women coincides with preparations for the International Year of Shelter for the Homeless (IYSH), 1987. The connection is a close one, and highlights the further opportunity for focus — and action — on women's problems in housing and settlements.*

# Nairobi 1985

## Women and Habitat

By DIANA LEE SMITH

**T**he needs of female-headed households — which predominate among poor families — were a central issue addressed at the **Forum 85** Women and Habitat workshop, held alongside the UN End-of-Decade Conference in Nairobi last July.

The needs of households run by women must be considered in planning, design, legislation, and in recognition of the need for child care facilities. The needs also include provision for subsistence food production, relieving women's responsibility for water and energy supplies, inclusion of women in construction, and removal of barriers to women's earning opportunities.

Ingrid Munro, who became UN Director of ISYH (International Year of Shelter for the Homeless) last September, opened the workshop with a call for help from Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in identifying habitat issues concerning women. One-quarter of the world's population occupy inadequate, unhealthy or disaster-prone shelter, and 30 per cent of the world's households are female-headed. Problems include disease, malnutrition, lack of employment and income, and excessive demands on their time. Women in these desperate environments work up to 20 hours daily, juggling jobs, child care and domestic duties.

Munro urged NGOs in developing and developed countries to pressure governments and aid agencies on women and habitat issues. Developing country governments should formulate programs and pressure donors to support credit and assistance for women, cheaper building materials that women can handle, women's access to land and housing, participation in decision-making, support for services women need, and removal of legal sanctions on women's work in the home and the informal sector. The burdens of child care on women and young girls has to be addressed. She called on journalists, researchers, political parties and representatives, and on women's groups, to play their roles actively on these issues.

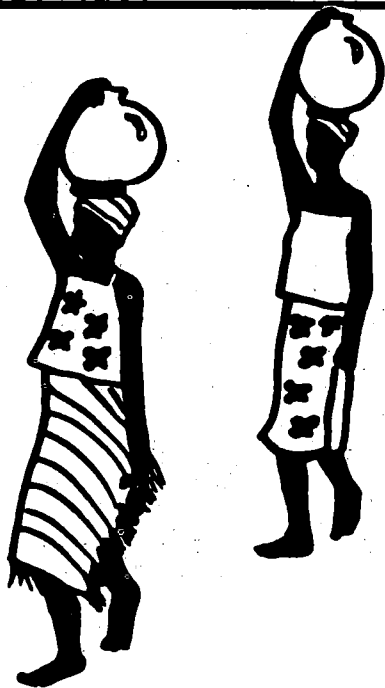
### HOUSING AND INFRASTRUCTURE: WOMEN'S NEEDS AND GOALS TO THE YEAR 2000

The basic issues are common to all women, but particular strategies vary according to culture and technology development. Specific problems addressed by this group include:

**Food:** Rural women and subsistence producers have to compete against large scale cash cropping; they need agricultural inputs including credit. Urban women need planned space for food gardening; employed women need access to communal food facilities.

**Water:** Rural women in developing countries must travel long distances for water,





and poor urban women must cope with scarce and costly supplies.

**Energy:** Rural women, once again, must travel long distances for firewood, while both rural and poor urban women depend on decreasing supplies.

**Access to workplace:** Rural women suffer lack of transport and must often carry heavy loads. Suggested strategies include ox-carts, goat carts, improved yokes and back packs.

**Child care, health care:** Child care must be accessible and affordable for all women with children. For developing country women, especially the urban poor, health is linked to lack of sanitation, refuse disposal, nutrition, illiteracy and unemployment.

**Housing design:** Traditional rural family and support structures get destroyed when people are squeezed into inadequate spaces. Single-parent households need community (and private) kitchens, laundries, cooperative buying, shared toys and equipment.

General issues covered by this group:

- women's need for training on aspects of infrastructure and services;
- the need to recognize women as independent economic entities;
- the usefulness of an integrating approach to service provision involving women's participation in setting priorities, planning and implementation;
- the need for women to participate in IYSH and for women's needs and priorities to be addressed by IYSH.

#### HOUSING NEEDS IN RELATION TO INCOME GENERATING ACTIVITIES OF WOMEN

Women often work in the home because they can combine such work with their subsistence production, child care and maintenance of the home. Such informal sector activity is needed by many women

because it can be easily started by an individual and does not need a lot of capital or skills training. Women are also often pushed into this type of work because of the other demands on their time, and by settlement planning and relocation strategies that ignore their work needs. At the same time, such work in the home is also ignored or frustrated by design, planning and legislation.

The group made the following recommendations:

- 1 Commercial and land use bylaws preventing fairly nuisance-free income-generating activities within the house should be relaxed;
- 2 In designing low-cost housing, architects and planners should provide an appropriate space for women's income-generating activities. The space should be appropriate in terms of local climate, family health and safety, and local cultural norms;
- 3 Urban building bylaws which demand unrealistically high building standards should be changed to permit the use of local building materials and techniques;

*"The number of female-headed households is rising rapidly ..."*

4 Women should be given construction skills. This will allow them to help construct their own houses as well as giving them a marketable skill. It will also prevent cheating by contractors;

5 Market places and small workshops should be easily accessible, properly located and of a design affordable by the poorest women;

6 Urban planning bylaws should make proper provision to allow residents to keep small stock and cultivate vegetable gardens;

7 Women who do income-generating activities within the home often do not have adequate marketing facilities or information due to their isolation in separate households. Therefore institutions which lead to fairer marketing practices and prevent exploitation of female producers or home workers should be developed. Marketing co-ops, training and other support services for women were mentioned.

#### HOUSING PROBLEMS FOR RURAL WOMEN

Women have a substantial task in building and upkeep of the home. In some traditional societies women are responsible for house construction. In others there are taboos against it, but they may still be responsible for collection and preparation of building materials, plastering floors, finishes, maintenance and repairs. The availability

and cost of building materials, both traditional and modern, are of concern to women. Supplies of traditional materials are rapidly disappearing because of cash-cropping and other competing land uses. Rural training programs on use of modern building construction are rarely accessible to women.

Women in some countries do not have the right to establish their own land or buildings. Widows, divorced women, and these days unmarried mothers, live in the compound or dwelling of a male relative. With increasing pressures on land, sons have greater access and more of the young women have to go to towns, some into prostitution or other illegal activities such as brewing. Other families are separated by male migration, the wife remaining on a subsistence farm, but without legal rights. Cultural traditions and family ties protect women to some extent. However, among rural as well as urban women, female-headed households are on the increase and their problems need to be faced.

#### FEMALE-HEADED HOUSEHOLDS AND HOUSING NEEDS

The number of female-headed households is rising rapidly in all parts of the world, both in urban and rural areas. This is a new social development which does not yet receive sufficient attention from policy makers. Migration by men in search of jobs, economic and social problems due to low incomes, age difference between husband and wife, and pregnancies of teenage girls can be considered the main causes.

Taking all households of the world together, at least 30 per cent of them consist of a mother and her children without a permanent husband. This statistic was reflected in this working group, of which 30 per cent of the members (two out of six) happened to be themselves female household heads.

The group stressed that many single mothers are trapped in the vicious circle of poverty. Earning a low income, they cannot afford to pay anyone to look after the children. This restricts them to a small range of jobs which pay little. Having no free time, these single mothers cannot go for further training to upgrade their skills. This again limits them to low paying jobs. In other cases the burden of child care falls on small girls, leading to accidents and lack of female education. Worse still, it leads to growing numbers of abandoned and street children. The provision of adequate, accessible and affordable child care centres is therefore a very high priority.

Many countries have low-income housing projects, but they are insufficient in number. Single mothers suffer most as they are often given a low ranking on the waiting list. Many mothers spend almost 50 per cent of their income on housing. Having so many

responsibilities at the same time makes time very precious to single mothers. Accessible and reliable means of transport is therefore of the utmost importance to them.

The group pointed out that female-headed households in particular need the support of neighbours to share household chores and especially child care. Single mothers should get together in an organization so that they can speak out with a strong voice and defend their interests. They must take part in public decision-making about housing matters, since this concerns the well being of the nation's children.

The group recommended that:

- 1 the needs of female-headed households be recognized as being of great importance;
- 2 the consideration of female-headed households be guaranteed in national and local habitat policies;
- 3 child care centres be developed to enable these women to contribute their potential; this should be included in habitat policy making at all levels; such centres should be available at low cost and 24 hours a day for women on split shift;
- 4 transportation be easily accessible;
- 5 housing for female-headed households be adapted according to their needs and include time and labour saving devices such as food storage and laundry facilities.



### LEGAL CONSTRAINTS AND OBSTACLES AFFECTING WOMEN AND THEIR ACCESS TO CREDIT AND MATERIALS

This group discussed legal aspects of women's access to land, housing and credit, which are very interlinked, as well as customary constraints.

In many developing countries, women's legal rights to land and property ownership

*"The group discussed  
the need to reach  
the poorest, where women  
predominate . . ."*

are restricted, particularly by inheritance laws. This causes hardship, especially to female-headed households already affected by poverty. There is a vicious circle of lack of money to buy land and lack of title deeds as security for access to credit. Many countries have a mixture of legal and customary traditions which are difficult to sort out. Some countries are changing their laws to permit equal access for women. But even where laws are changed, behaviours restrict women's access to land, housing and credit.

Obstacles to women's participation include lack of women decision-makers, women's needs being not included in plans and budgets, rigid sectoral ministries and lack of political strength at the local level, too many other demands on women's time, legislation, customs, some governments' repressive attitudes against women's participation, lack of women's literature and women having to "reach out to a man's world."

The group discussed the need to reach the poorest, where women predominate, and pointed out that "welfare" type policies of governments which assume a trickle-down effect do not work for the poorest. Increasing absolute poverty, the growing gap between rich and poor countries, and the hidden poverty in wealthy countries were also discussed.

The following recommendations were made by the group to the UN:

- 1 Recognition of the different needs of men and women (gender considerations) must be included in government planning, including use of foreign and bilateral aid;
- 2 IYSH must focus on women's needs and priorities and include women at all levels in planning and implementation of activities.

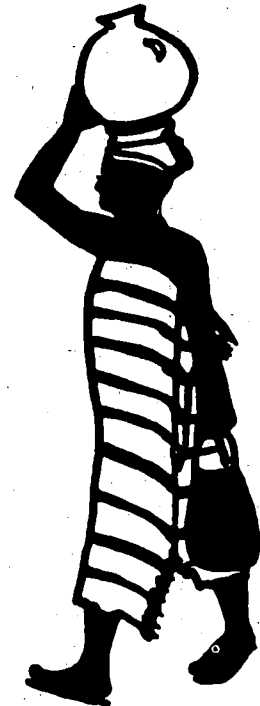
### CONTINUATION AND GLOBAL NETWORK

In summary, Anje Wiersinga of the Netherlands Council of Women said the workshop's objective was to exchange experience on women's needs in human settle-

ments and identify strategies on how to proceed. An additional objective is to follow up the workshop by forming a global network on women and human settlements. She stressed the importance of existing NGOs and networks working together and of linking developed and developing country women.

The workshop registration forms were used to register in the new **Global Network on Women and Habitat**. Interested participants will form the basis of the network which, it is hoped, will link with existing networks and newsletters, including:

- Women's International Network (WIN)
- Match International, Canada
- Settlements Information Network Africa (SINA)
- Women & Environments
- Planners Network (PN)



It is hoped this network will continue to promote and disseminate the ideas and strategies for women launched at Forum 85 and summarized in this document. Those interested in participating in the network should contact:

Habitat International Council, c/o IULA, 41 Wassenaarseweg, 2596 CG The Hague, Netherlands; or Netherlands Council of Women (NVR), Laan van Meerdeervoort 30, The Hague, Netherlands. □

*Diana Lee Smith is the editor of SINA (Settlements Information Network Africa) Newsletter, published by the Mazingira Institute. This report is excerpted from SINA Newsletter no.9, 1985.*

# Integrating Housing and Economic Development

By JOAN C. SIMON

A decade of Canadian Studies has documented how the needs of women have been ignored in the planning and design of the residential environment and in the creation of government housing programs.<sup>1</sup> Women continue to be economically disadvantaged<sup>2</sup> and households headed by women face grave economic and housing problems.<sup>3</sup>

Social housing programs have the potential to address both these women's issues of access to affordable decent housing and economic opportunities. Some commentators argue that social housing programs should be narrowly focused on providing economically disadvantaged individuals with reasonably priced housing which meets minimum building and occupancy code standards.<sup>4</sup> However, the indirect link between housing and residents' economic and social development has been embedded in the philosophy of Canadian social housing programs since their inception. By providing a secure home base from which to deal with the larger world it was anticipated that individuals and families would be better able to cope with their personal problems.<sup>5</sup>

Despite disappointments with social housing programs, the indirect linkages between housing and social-economic well being are important. The social and psychological meaning of a dwelling as a secure refuge from which to address the larger world is well documented.<sup>6</sup> While recent studies have highlighted the influence of neighbourhood based informal social support networks, and the significance of these networks in reducing stress and developing competencies,



CONSTANCE HAMILTON CO-OP

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the direct links between housing and economic development have been largely ignored. These links may be made in three ways:

- An individual may be part of the business of developing and/or managing housing;
- The experience of being a housing consumer may develop skills useful in business;
- The dwelling itself may be the locus of business activity — living in “the shop” appears to be a growing trend in our post-industrial society.

## NON-PROFIT CO-OPS AND WOMEN'S NEEDS

The first use of the program specifically to benefit women was for the development of the Constance Hamilton project in Toronto, the first housing cooperative in Canada — and probably in North America — created exclusively by and for women. In 1979 a board of concerned women was incorporated with the encouragement of Metro Toronto's Social Services Committee. While the creation of decent, affordable housing for women and children was the board's primary concern, there was also a conscious recognition, unique at that time, that the exercise of skills necessary to the operation of a co-op could help women in the job market. The link between housing and economic development had been made.

Except for the unusual by-law provision that only women can be voting members, Constance Hamilton is similar to numerous non-profit co-ops across Canada. We are beginning to see recognition and documentation that



co-op housing has created a socioeconomic environment which benefits the economic development of women. Ironically, the structure of the program at the same time has impeded the creation of physical environments which would facilitate women's work roles.

### WOMEN'S INVOLVEMENT IN THE DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT OF HOUSING

Women have assumed a significant, even dominant role in the development and management of non-profit cooperative housing, thus opening up an employment and entrepreneurial area which traditionally has been a male preserve.

Because development is a complicated business, the federal government encouraged the formation of non-profit development resource groups to assist community groups interested in establishing cooperatives. These provide expert advice on the formation of co-ops, and on their planning and construction; they negotiate with government agencies and mortgage companies and assist in the establishment of management and maintenance practices. Women fill a significant percentage of senior management roles in these resource groups, in direct contrast to experience in private sector as well as in public and private non-profit sector development.

In the private, or market, housing sector only a few women occupy senior positions and most of these are in marketing or consumer relations. Even in federal and provincial housing agencies women have been almost exclusively identified with "human issue" aspects of housing. Only in the past few years have women gained responsibility in the financial — the *power* — areas. Women are still grossly under-represented in the financial and technical area of government housing agencies.

Across the country there are very few women in key management positions in the non-profit housing corporations established by municipalities during the past ten years. Perhaps because this sector frequently has been used as a springboard into private development corporations, the traditional reluctance to admit women to the corridors of power has persisted.

In the private non-profit sector the role of women on boards appears to vary with the type of housing development. Women have assumed leadership roles in creating group homes. Private non-profit senior citizen and family housing groups still seem to invite women onto their boards to signal the social conscience of the group. Women are assumed to have expertise on social issues and playgrounds, not mortgage financing even when on the individual basis the opposite is clearly the case.



CONSTANCE HAMILTON CO-OP

In the co-op sector women have become development experts and their client boards often have women in powerful roles. This relationship between women as clients and women as consultants is important, and the goals of the women have assumed the developer role of putting together the land, the financing and the marketing strategy because they want literally to create communities. Their goal is to empower individuals who would probably never be able to afford homeownership, to control the building and management of their own dwelling. The "monopoly game" of the development process is seen as a means to that end. These women acknowledge the excitement involved in successfully putting the pieces together to make a project work but they are not interested in the game *per se*. They see this as a clear distinction between themselves and their private sector counterparts.<sup>7</sup>

### DEVELOPMENT OF SKILLS IN HOUSING WHICH MAY BE USEFUL IN BUSINESS

The initial development stage of a co-op only lasts for a year or two, while management continues for decades. Developing members' skills in self-management and working as paid coordinators for co-op projects has provided new jobs and new career avenues for a number of women.

The non-profit co-op housing concept demands that members take an active role in the on-going management of the housing

project rather than purchasing services from large firms as is commonly done by condominium corporations. In some instances members also elect to undertake maintenance and repair tasks on a volunteer basis to reduce operating costs. The original Constance Hamilton Board was attracted to the co-op concept because it saw roles in the on-going financial and physical management as an opportunity to develop skills.

A case study of a Toronto co-op in 1984 found that the key motive for women's volunteer involvement was their view of it as an opportunity to exercise more control over their lives.<sup>8</sup> Several of the women interviewed credited the co-op experience with providing them a "second chance". They perceived co-op leadership roles as creating a bridge for them between their private and public lives. The co-op movement strives to be non-hierarchical and non-sexist. The study found that this atmosphere helped women to assume leadership roles and they consciously used the co-op to develop their self confidence. One woman had joined the maintenance committee because "it isn't usually considered a female area to get into . . ." Another woman who had been maintenance coordinator in her previous co-op related "I was respected . . . everyone was saying 'if you have a problem, phone Deedee up' . . .". Seeing other women in leadership roles was also important: "These women were role models for me . . . I think I always felt a need for that kind of independence, but it could never 'spring out' because I never saw the models before."



### THE DWELLING AS A LOCUS OF BUSINESS ACTIVITY

Some commentators claim that the post-industrial economy will result in more people working out of their homes. The Minneapolis College of Art and Design recently sponsored a design competition for a "New American House" which required the inclusion of a workplace component. The winning entry by West and Leavitt is a row of modified town houses, each with a one-story workplace structure linked to the dwelling unit by a corridor kitchen.<sup>9</sup> The designers suggest that one of these office structures might be used for a daycare centre. The problems single parents face of juggling child care, commuting, job and home have led to such advocacy of home-based work places as a solution.

However, the location of co-op projects, the size of the units and the difficulty in financing auxiliary spaces are impediments to the development of business within the project. Co-ops are usually located in residential areas. While individual homeowners may risk running a small business out of their house, the co-op is not in a position to sanction such zoning-by-law infractions. Cost limitations result in rooms built to minimum standards. As a consequence there simply is not a spare room or even empty basement space available. Undoubtedly, homework is more successfully pursued when it can operate in an exclusive zone, as in the West-Leavitt New American House. Spaces for communal activities such as daycare centres are not funded under the Canadian non-profit program and are extremely difficult to finance from other sources.

Small businesses, including daycare

centres, have a high failure rate. It can be questioned whether women who are already in an economically disadvantaged position should be encouraged to risk their over-extended financial and time resources in the creation of a small business. On the other hand, it seems unfortunate that the physical environment cannot be flexible enough to allow for the development of homework places.

### INDIRECT BENEFITS OF CO-OP LIVING

Although reasonable housing charges are an important attraction of co-op living, reasons having to do with quality of life factors seem to be more important. A 1982 survey of nearly 1,900 Toronto male and female co-op members asked residents to rate seven reasons for moving to a co-op. The most important reason selected by 61.4 per cent was the idea of being able to manage one's own housing environment.<sup>10</sup> It would be interesting to reanalyze this data to see how women only, especially those who are single parents, responded. A post-occupancy evaluation of Constance Hamilton reinforces indications that aspects of community are the most important reasons why women are satisfied with co-op living. While many of the women who moved into Constance Hamilton were paying monthly charges in excess of their previous rents,<sup>11</sup> they were attracted by security of tenure, the sense of community promised by co-op living and the anticipation that over time, it would prove to be more economical than market rental.

For some women, co-op housing provides

dramatic improvements in both their physical and social environment. Gerritsma<sup>12</sup> reports that one co-op member who had been living in a bachelor basement flat with her three small children felt "beaten down with no self esteem left." She said "moving to the co-op was like a resurrection for me — I literally came up out of the ground." Gerritsma observed the changes within the co-op from a cycle of dependency to one of independence, "from personal crisis to public involvement and leadership." Clearly some women have found that co-op housing provides the secure refuge and positive social support network social critics have advocated.

Program evaluations which only consider room counts, income levels and housing costs cannot begin to address the broader role that housing plays in people's lives. Yet these broader aspects may be the most important program benefits. The emphasis that co-ops place on creating communities, from the initial development stages through the actual living experience, may demonstrate the meaning of a non-sexist environment. □

1. J. McClain with C. Doyle, *Women and Housing*, Toronto: James Lorimer, 1984.

2. Statistics Canada, *Women in Canada: a statistical report*, Ottawa, 1985, Cat. 89-503E.

3. F. Klodawsky, A.N. Spector, D. Rose, *Single Parent Families and Canadian Housing Policies: How mothers lose*, Ottawa: Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, 1985.

4. As an example of this approach, see L.B. Smith, *Anatomy of a crisis: Canadian housing policy in the seventies*, Vancouver: Fraser Institute, 1977.

5. Various references, ranging from C.A. Hodgetts, "Unsanitary Housing," Commission of Conservation Canada, 1911, to Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation *Annual Report*, 1971.

6. L. Rainwater, "Fear and the House-as-Haven in the Lower Class," *Journal of the American Institute of Planners* 32(1) 1966.

7. Interviews with women working in various housing sectors, Spring 1985.

8. M. Gerritsma, "Innstead Housing Co-op: Women's second chance to lead and learn," Toronto: Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, Dept. of Education, unpublished paper, 1984.

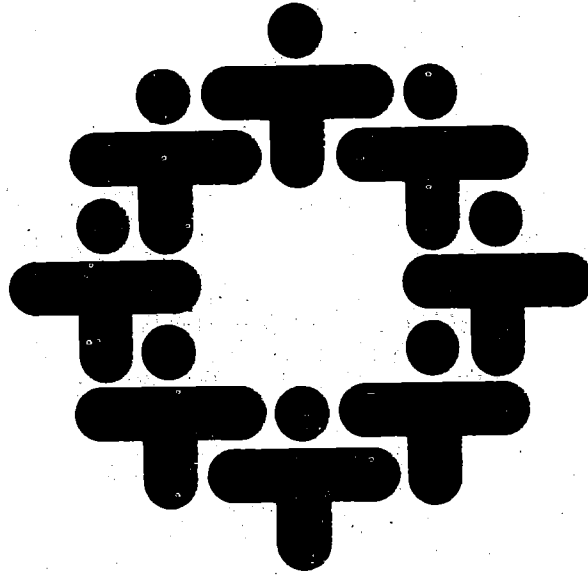
9. J. Leavitt, "A New American House," *Women and Environments* 7(1) Winter 1985.

10. Myra Schiff Consultants, *Housing Cooperatives in Metropolitan Toronto: A survey of members*, Ottawa: Cooperative Housing Foundation of Canada, 1982.

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12. Gerritsma, *op.cit* p.8.

# Women's Leadership in Co-ops:



## Some Questions

By BRENDA DOYLE FARGE

An opportunity to study the involvement of women in leadership roles in co-op housing was provided to me by the Annual General Meeting of the Cooperative Housing Foundation of Canada (CHF), held in Calgary, Alberta in May 1985. I conducted a survey of delegates at the meeting to determine two questions: whether findings on women's involvement in Toronto co-ops could be generalized across Canada, and what are the motives for participating in co-op activities, and the gains derived. A third point that I wished to test was the relative involvement of men and women in the plenary sessions and within the CHF structure itself, and how that would compare with the findings of two other studies which refer to women's leadership in a housing and community context.

84.7 per cent have a woman. Moreover, 59 per cent of all Toronto co-op committee members and 60 per cent of all committee chairs are women. On boards of directors of co-ops, 52 per cent are women; of the executives, 38 per cent of presidents, 38 per cent of vice presidents, 52 per cent of treasurers and 72 per cent of secretaries are women. Women are in a clear majority as co-op members and on committees but tend to be under-represented in executive positions, except for the traditionally female position of secretary. These observations are reinforced by the results of my own survey at the AGM of 102 delegates representing all areas of Canada.

Mary Gerritsma<sup>2</sup>, who interviewed 10 women in leadership positions in Innstead co-op in Toronto, contends that co-ops furnish women with a forum for the development of skills and experience which can be applied in other, more public areas. Carole Gilligan<sup>3</sup> views men and women as having overlapping values and motivations, but with different emphases. With these ideas in mind, I asked my respondents (55 men and 122 women) three questions by which I hoped to draw out the reasons for their involvement in their co-op's activities. Following a question about the number of hours per month that each person volunteers to his or her co-op, I asked the respondents to give two or three reasons for their involvement, whether there were personal gains and whether it assisted them in any way with their career (or future career).

### Comparison of Surveys

#### WOMEN'S AND MEN'S INVOLVEMENT

A 1985 survey by the Cooperative Housing Federation of Toronto (CHFT)<sup>1</sup> found that women constitute a majority of adults in Toronto co-ops: 57.5 per cent of all co-op households have a male resident, whereas

% of women:	CHFT	Farge
• on committees	59	67.5
• on boards	52	53.8
• presidents	38	40.6
• vice-pres.	38	39.8
• treasurers	52	44.1
• secretaries	72	70.7

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### Co-op Involvement: Motives and Gains

Reasons for Involvement	Men		Women	
	No. of Responses	%	No. of Responses	%
Social justice/political/co-op ideology	30	54.5	34	27.9
Help/contribute	16	29.1	18	14.8
Enjoy/satisfaction	25	45.5	53	43.4
Control over environment	12	21.8	26	21.3
Learn/skills/experience	21	39.2	89	72.9
Growth/confidence/self worth	6	10.9	34	27.9
Social/community support	16	29.1	34	55.7

The responses reveal little difference between the men and women in satisfaction with their work or in their desire to control their environments. There are significant differences in other areas, however. Men indicate that their motives stem from a desire to help others or from ideological reasons twice as often as do women. Women, on the other hand, indicate in overwhelming numbers that co-ops offer them an opportunity to learn, to develop skills, to gain valuable experience and provide an important source of social and community support.

These findings confirm the conclusions of Mary Gerritsma and give further proof to Carole Gilligan's claim that, while men and women have considerable overlap in their concerns and values, there are definite and discernible variations in emphasis.

#### THE ROLES OF WOMEN

In observing the plenary sessions I was interested in whether women were publicly identified in leadership roles: to what extent were they representing CHF on the podium or in other official capacities at these meetings; and was their participation from the floor an accurate reflection of their relative numbers. In order to get a sense of these two elements I kept a record of each time a man or woman spoke from the floor as well as of those who participated officially in some clearly designated fashion. Throughout the four-day meeting women spoke 172 times from the floor; men spoke 311 times. The board was represented 34 times, always by a man. Seventeen reports were given by men; seven by women. Though women constituted a majority (57.1 per cent) at this meeting, they engaged in parliamentary processes only half as often as their male counterparts.

An examination of the Co-op Housing Foundation of Canada's structure revealed similar patterns: three of the four managers on its staff are men. CHF's lawyer, auditing

accountant, media representative, and a government relations consultant are all men. Of the board of directors' 10 members only three are women. Also, CHF's development committee, which is responsible for the more technical, political and economic aspects of CHF, is predominantly male. The 1984 committee, including those staff and board members who worked with it, contained 14 women and 38 men.<sup>4</sup> On the other hand, women are over-represented on the education committee; last year's group of 15 members included 13 women.

These patterns conform in some detail to a study done by Tiger and Shepherd<sup>5</sup> on women in the kibbutzim of Israel and to a study by Lawson, Barton and Joselit<sup>6</sup> on women in the tenant movement in New York City. In both cases the involvement of women was extremely strong at the grass roots and thinned out considerably as roles became less personal and more managerial or bureaucratic. Tiger and Shepherd do admit, however, that the *actual* influence of women through less formal channels is probably greater than their participation in the kibbutz assemblies and committees would indicate.

*To judge the influence of women only on the basis of their public "face" would be a mistake.*

Certainly in CHF the actual influence of women seems to belie the picture received through the public forum. The current president is a woman (she chaired half the plenary sessions); the head of the all-important development committee is a woman; women's involvement in two regional caucus meetings was in marked contrast to their representation in plenary sessions — they were vocal and engaged in

the free-wheeling and informal discussions. (When they did speak in the plenary sessions women tended to speak clearly and directly to the point under discussion — unlike some of the men who appeared to use that arena for games of parliamentary jousting!) Moreover, when asked about the sources of real decision-making at the highest levels, board members, staff and committee members each listed invariably recurring names, either a short list of three, two of whom were women, or a slightly longer list of five, three of whom were women. In short, it became clear that to judge the influence of women in CHF only on the basis of their public "face" was to misunderstand the way that women work within this sector.

*Women must struggle against their own socialization as much as with structural impediments*

In her studies on sex differences in the games played by fifth-grade children, Janet Lever<sup>7</sup> notes that whereas girls tend to *play* more, to interact cooperatively with no specific goal, no end point and no winners, boys tend to *game* more, to engage in competitive interactions which are governed by sets of rules and which are aimed at explicit goals. Boys quarrel a lot during their games and seem to enjoy these legal debates over rules every bit as much as the game themselves; girls tend to avoid disputes. Lever sees boys' games as instrumental in the development of their capacities to deal forthrightly with inter-personal competition, to develop cooperative, team skills, as well as to develop organizational skills which suit them well for modern organizational life. Girls' play, on the other hand, may provide a training for the development of delicate social-emotional skills. She points out that girls' play occurs in smaller, more intimate groups than does that of boys, most often in the dyad. It often mimics primary human relationships and the type of age-mixed play which occurs helps them to develop nurturant skills.

In viewing the public roles of women in such settings as large meetings run by parliamentary rules, the question may be less, "Why are women not more involved?", than it may be, "Is this a forum which reflects the manner in which women typically express themselves?" A number of women who are both talented and highly influential in CHF played no public roles whatsoever at the AGM, and this appeared to be entirely by choice.

My study conducted at the CHF annual general meeting points to a number of conclusions. Women are very numerous in housing co-ops and are well represented at the lower levels of organization, both on committees and on boards. The public profile of women leaders at the AGM is not high. This does not however, appear to be an accurate reflection of the influence of women within the sector. Moreover, the relative participation of women in the housing co-op area by far exceeds that of women in other public sectors.<sup>8</sup> The fact that women in CHF are less publicly visible than their male counterparts may speak less of any structural impediments to their mobility than it does of the general socialization of women in our society and the difficulties with which women must still struggle.

Women respondents focused in the questionnaire on issues of community and skill development. Because such a questionnaire points up differences in the foci of men and women, it should by no means be concluded that these differences necessarily indicate any "natural" or inherent differences between them. Rather the significance of these choices must be examined. That such large numbers of women point to these areas as the salient features of co-op involvement is important. It is a direct reflection of the fact that in our society the sources of communal nurturance and opportunities for the advancement of women have been woefully insufficient. Within their co-ops many women have had the happy experience of being both supported and encouraged. Co-op housing, in fact, appears in many ways to be beneficial to the development of women's leadership. □

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PAULINA MIKICH



# Birth Settings

## A Perspective On Our Progress

By SHERRY BOLAND AHRENTZEN

**C**hildbirth. The physical process remains the same; the settings change. New medical technologies, changes in attitudes towards the childbirth process, the institutionalization of the medical profession, advances in health care, consumer-based health movements; all these have influenced the social and physical structure of the settings where childbirth occurs. The alternative birthing centres and birthing movements of recent decades in the United States reflect changes in social values towards childbirth just as the birth environments of past years reflected past technological conditions and social attitudes.

The design and organization of birth settings have significance for most aspects of birth, including the safety — perceived and actual — of the mother and child, the mother's posture and freedom of movement, her confidence and psychological well-being, as well as the opportunity for medical intervention. This brief historical overview, however, explores the birth setting from the point of view of the social exchange that surrounds birth, and the meaning of the physical setting. Sources of information include anthropologists' and medical historians' descriptions of childbirth, stories by women on giving birth, recent surveys, and my own observations of contemporary birthing centres and birthing rooms.<sup>1</sup>

### PRE-INDUSTRIAL SOCIETIES

Women probably began attending each other during birth as early as the Paleolithic Age.<sup>2</sup> Groups were small because adult women could not be spared from their tasks for long. In many cultures, men were excluded from the childbirth setting except when difficulties arose. However, fathers in Brazilian and North American Indian tribes, in Lapland, and the Sandwich (Hawaiian) Islands frequently attended their children's births. Some cultures, such as various tribes in east Africa, felt that a constant watch against evil spirits had to be made during birth, while others, like the Pygmies of the Congo, had a less fearful attitude towards the meaning of childbirth. Medical historians believe that most deliveries in primitive societies were normal, with relatively short labour periods.

Some common characteristics of the birth settings in these societies include the position of the parturient during labour and delivery, and the location of the birthplace. Positions like squatting, kneeling and standing were most common, and various kinds of chairs and stools were sometimes used.<sup>3</sup> As an ironic aside, *Newsweek* reported the "discovery" of vertical delivery by obstetricians in New York in 1981.

Special structures were built in some cultures, such as the Comanche Indian, Pygmy and Chinese. Their location outside the main residence area was generally influenced by the fear of blood or other religious beliefs. The Comanche Indian

woman in labour walked outside the birthing hut on the edge of the village. Birthing stakes outside the hut were provided for her to grasp and squat during a contraction, and squatting over a hole filled with hot stones inside the hut helped her to relax and stretch her perineum.

### COLONIAL TO CIVIL WAR AMERICA

Assistance to the labouring mother by female neighbours and relatives continued through the 1800s. Because of this participation in helping delivery, young women were able to observe several births before they actually delivered their own children, thus acquiring first-hand knowledge about the process and complexities of giving birth. Midwives were common in assisting the mother in childbirth, although midwife diaries frequently note that a major role was in offering reassurance to the labouring woman.

As Wertz and Wertz explain in their excellent review of childbirth in America<sup>4</sup>, birth was considered a social event, with the participation of female friends and relatives. This is not to suggest that childbirth during this period was simply an uncomplicated, joyful event; references to feelings of joy and celebration in giving birth are frequently absent from women's diaries of this period. However, it was a time which brought together friends and relatives in supporting a family event.

*Sherry Ahrentzen is Assistant Professor in the School of Architecture and Urban Planning, University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee.*





A decline in the use of midwives began around the early 1700s, climaxing in the late 1880s. The 18th century witnessed strong advances in medical knowledge of anatomy and the birth process, and the initiation of the professional use of forceps by barber-surgeons to shorten labour. By the mid-19th century, these barber-surgeons (and, later in the century, physicians) began to replace midwives in attending the woman in home birth, along with female friends and relatives. The invention and promotion of a new medical technology — forceps — played a prominent role in the declining use of midwives; only barber-surgeons were allowed to use them.

In some colonial homes birth occurred in a “borning room,” a small room behind the

central chimney, partitioned off from the living areas. In larger homes, women delivered in the parents’ bedroom. For such occasions, these rooms were marked with special “birthing linens.” If a male midwife or barber-surgeon was present, he would wait in an antechamber, only entering the birth room if difficulties arose.

#### HOSPITAL BIRTHS IN INDUSTRIAL US SOCIETY

Birthing began to change from a social event to a medical one. By the end of the 19th century it became fashionable to give birth in a hospital with a trained male physician. Women, especially those of the upper

classes, wanted to go to hospitals because they felt they were more comfortable (especially with Twilight Sleep to reduce pain and suffering), and more sanitary (this was also the period of Christine Frederick and the scientific management of housework). Women’s magazines and upper-class women like Mrs John Jacob Astor heartily advocated hospital births. American hospitals, of course, encouraged these efforts.

In conjunction with the growth of hospitals at the beginning of the 20th century came the development and institutionalization of the medical, especially obstetric, profession. The chief of obstetrics at Harvard Medical School at this time said about the obstetrician: “He must do something. He cannot remain a spectator merely, where there are too many witnesses and where interest in what is going on is too deep to allow of his inaction.” Increasingly, hospitals as places for giving birth became more prominent as the demand for physician education grew. Specialized settings for giving birth outside of the integrated hospital complex cropped up occasionally; these “lying-in hospitals” were often renovated homes.

In 1900, only 5 per cent of births occurred in hospitals, mostly to poor women who could not get assistance at home. In 1921, this figure rose to 30-50 per cent; by 1939, 50 per cent of all US women and 75 per cent of women in urban areas and, by 1975, 99 per cent of all US women gave birth in hospital.

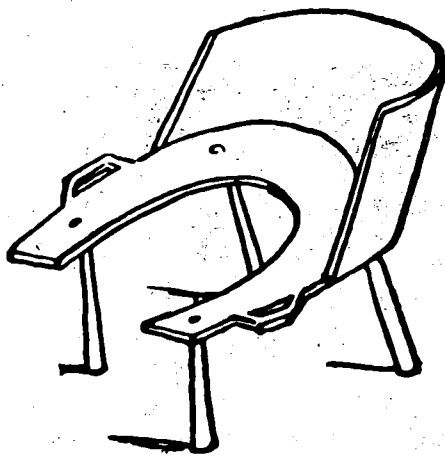
Increasing urbanization separated families so that fewer networks of women relatives and friends were available for support during childbirth. Assistance was replaced gradually by paid, impersonal staff in a hospital setting. The social complexity of hospitals reflects the social status and nature of interchange of participants: a staff organized hierarchically, with predominantly bureaucratic relations based on role and status. “Patients” or patrons had little input to the structure of the birthing process. The notion that the “physician delivers the child” reflects this hierarchical, patriarchal approach to childbirth in the hospital, and contributes to an environment where the women feels isolated, alienated and powerless.

One story told to me about a woman who had her last child 15 years ago reflects this bureaucratic structure of the hospital birth process. Her physician had ordered a saddleblock injection to be given her before delivery. As she was wheeled out of the preparation room on a stretcher, she delivered in the hallway, with an intern “catching” the emerging infant (she had a history of speedy labours). The child was then taken to the nursery, and she to the delivery room where, over her protests, she was given the saddleblock (“doctors orders”)

Institutional obstetric care focuses on an established 5-10 per cent "at risk" population who need special staff, drugs and equipment. The traditional OB unit consists of three separate components: labour and delivery suite, newborn nursery and postpartum nursing suite, an arrangement which reflects the stratification of hospital roles and duties.

As the mother is admitted she is put in a wheelchair. The father is sent out to the waiting room or the labour room. The mother is usually confined horizontally to the bed, a position which prolongs labour (but is easier for the attending physician); she can be given drugs to speed her labour. At the time of delivery she is wheeled on a stretcher to the delivery room, where the father may or may not follow. The setting, in keeping with the illness-centre focus of hospitals, is sterile, sanitary and institutional. After delivery, father goes to the waiting room, mother to the recovery room, and baby to the nursery — a complete physical separation of the new family.

In the past decade, childbirth has slowly begun to move out of the hospital into homes of freestanding birth centres (ie, any health facility or setting which is not a hospital or in a hospital, and where births are planned to occur away from the



*Versions of the obstetrical stool. The simpler ones date from the mid-16th century; the more elaborate one, lower right, from 1701. It has an adjustable seat, hand grips, and a warming pot for the baby. (From R.W. Wertz and D.C. Wertz.)*

cial problems, causing them to seek ways to promote their services to consumers. These trends, as well as awareness of European delivery techniques like Leboyer, have helped to produce the ABCs, or Alternative Birthing Centres.

ABCs involve a change in the physical — and sometimes organizational — structure of the maternity section. For example, Family Hospital in Milwaukee nearly closed its maternity unit in 1973 when it had only 15 deliveries a month. After setting up its ABC, the number of deliveries has increased to over 80 a month. Nearly 1,000 out of the 6,500 US hospitals today have an ABC. However, a change in care philosophy or childbirth practices does not necessarily follow from changes in decor. These "wallpaper" birth centres have sometimes been redesigned for marketing purposes, to give the impression of a more personal, family-focused setting, while still maintaining the traditional medical-oriented childbirth practices.

It is the freestanding birth centre which has most closely met the social and physical requirements of a changed, family-oriented philosophy towards childbirth. In the US, these facilities were often started by midwifery, women's health and community groups, although in recent years practicing physicians have been starting their own.

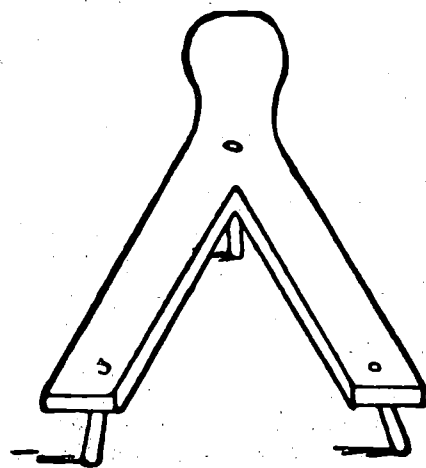
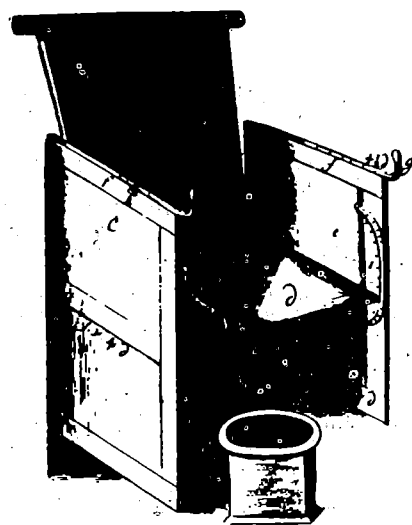
In the freestanding centre, the mother, her partner and family are viewed as the central and directing actors, with others attending the birth. It is the mother who delivers the child, not a doctor. Midwives are frequently in attendance in lieu of a physician. Friends and relatives, both male and female, adults and sometimes children, are often present, representing an extend-

ed family at the birth. These "birthing bashes" can sometimes involve up to 20 people in the birthing room at the same time. Birth is seen as a natural bodily process and family event, rather than a medical-technological management one.

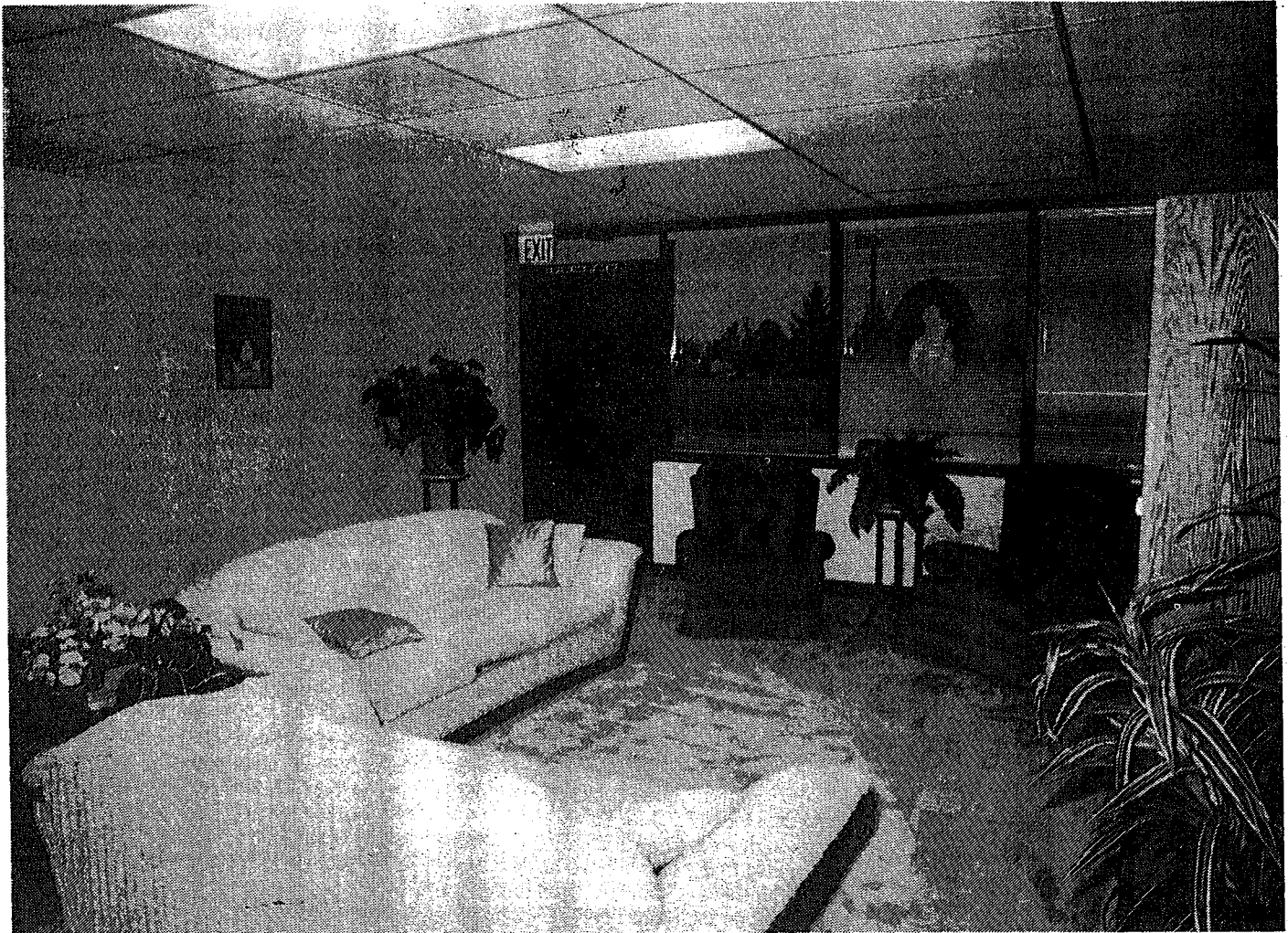
One aspect of the consumer-based movement of the 1970s was a reaction to the medical profession's patronizing attitude that "we know what is good for you." Higher levels of education among women led the drive for more family/woman-directed childbirth. Parents became more aware of the problems associated with use of anaesthetics and technological devices.

There are several reasons why women will choose an ABC over a home birth; they may not live in a state or district with access to midwives; they perceive a higher degree of safety and comfort in giving birth in a "semi-institution" outside the home; they have unsuitable home situations (crowded conditions, multiple families); and the preparation which some mothers prefer not to bother with can be handled by the staff.

There are at present more than 110 freestanding birthing centres in the US, with another 300 in planning stages. Most of these are in Texas, California, and Florida. Common physical characteristics of these ABCs are: access to the entire interior of the setting and outside grounds for the labouring woman and her family and friends; a homelike decor; kitchen facilities and frequently even a play room for children; individual bathrooms, sometimes with jacuzzis; birthing beds, double beds or birthing chairs; and concealment of medical equipment in cupboards or out of the room. Many of the larger ABCs with several birthing rooms are designed on a wheel-and-hub plan, with birthing rooms on the perimeter and emergency/administrative areas in a central area.



mother's usual residence following normal uncomplicated pregnancy). During the 1970s, a preventive health (minimal medical intervention) movement gained strength among consumers in many areas of the US, and the number of women choosing home birth grew. In North America between 1972 and 1975, a period when overall birth rates declined, out-of-hospital births saw a 60 per cent increase. At the same time, the number of hospitals constructed also increased. This situation has contributed to hospitals' finan-



A modern birthing centre room

## HAVE WE MADE PROGRESS?

There are many similarities between the freestanding birth centres of the 1980s and the special birth huts of pre-industrial times (places and furniture for posture and movement, for instance, attendance of relatives and friends). Yet a major difference lies in the family orientation of current childbirth care. Fathers today are often encouraged, and sometimes expected, to participate. Children sometimes attend. This family orientation has been accommodated by the size, layout and atmosphere of contemporary birth places.

Nonetheless, consumer input into the design of the setting is virtually nonexistent, and evaluation is scarce. A more thorough understanding of the relationship between care philosophy and physical design and atmosphere seems necessary. Some hospitals hope that their physical decor alone will convey a family-oriented and consumer-directed attitude towards childbirth, an attitude which may or

may not be available.

The income and educational distinctions between the women who use conventional versus alternative birth places also is an unsettling concern for those who promote the advantages of ABCs. Poor women often do not have the opportunity to choose the type of obstetrical care they want. Ability-to-pay continues to be the most significant element of a woman's pregnancy in the US. Where she chooses to deliver is a matter not only of her personal preference, but also of her insurance and Medicaid coverage, the accessibility of various birth settings, and her knowledge — or ignorance — of the wider range of birthing options available. □

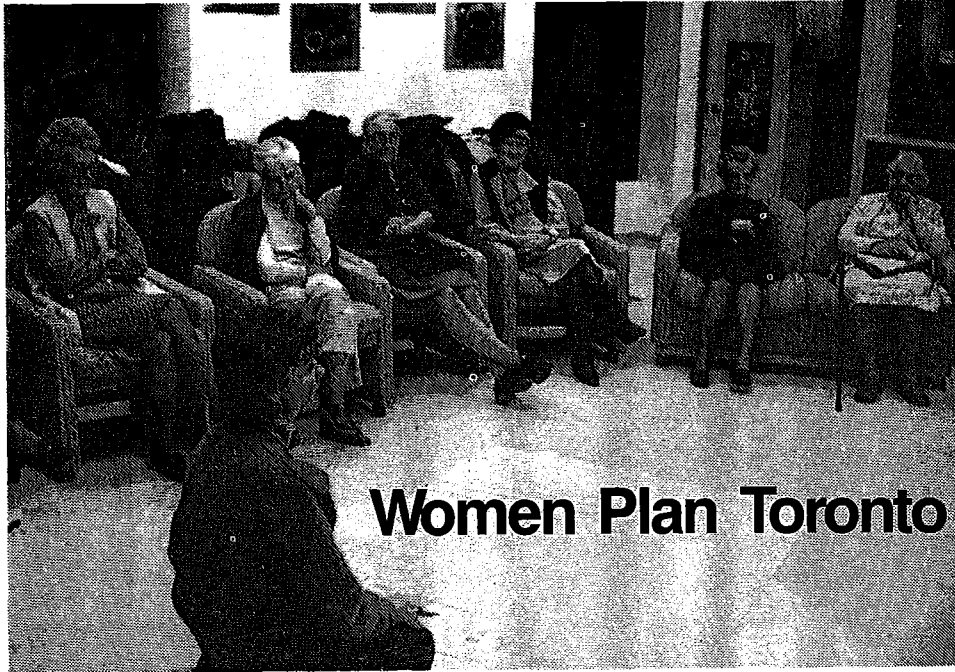
1. References include: J.I. Ashford, *Birth Stories*, Trumansburg, NJ: Crossing Press, 1984; A.B. Bennetts, R.W. Lubic, "The Free-Standing Birth Centre," *The Lancet*, 1982: 378-379; G. Cassidy-Brin, F. Hornstein, C. Downer, *Woman-Centred Pregnancy and Birth*, Pittsburgh: Cleis, 1984; S. Kitzinger and J.A. Davis, *The Place of Birth*, New

York: Oxford, 1978; P. Starr, *The Social Transformation of American Medicine*, New York: Basic Books, 1982; D. Stewart and L. Stewart, eds., *Twenty-First Obstetrics Now!* Chapel Hill, NC: NAPSAC, 1978; US Federal Trade Commission, *Competition Among Health Practitioners. Vol. II: The childbearing center case study*, Washington DC: USGPO, Feb. 1981; R. Warshaw, "The American Way of Birth," *Ms.*, Sept. 1984:45-50; D. Young, *Changing Childbirth: Family birth in the hospital*, Rochester, NY: Childbirth Graphics, 1982.

2. S. Aylsworth, "Birth Environments: Historical background," in P.E. Sumner and C.R. Phillips, eds., *Birthing Rooms: Concept and reality*, St. Louis: Mosby, 1981.

3. D. Haire, "The Cultural Warping of Childbirth," *Journal of Tropical Pediatrics and Environmental Child Health* 19, 1973: 172-191, describes the physiological advantages noted by medical researchers of vertical labour and delivery over the lithotomy, or horizontal, position.

4. R.W. Wertz and D.C. Wertz, *Lying-In: A History of Childbirth in America*. New York: Schocken, 1977.



## Women Plan Toronto

*Women Plan Toronto* is a project currently underway in Metropolitan Toronto, Canada. Its impetus came from "Women Plan London," a consultative process undertaken by the Women's Committee of the Greater London Council (England), which we have adapted to a North American setting. The process encourages women to examine critically traditional urban planning, zoning, design and servicing patterns in light of their own experience, their needs and their aspirations. The goals of the project are the production of a set of planning guidelines which reflect women's needs, and a plan of action on how to put these into practice.

The project is sponsored by Women in/and Planning, a Toronto-based group of planners, architects and other professionals involved in shaping the urban environment, with financial and material support from three levels of government.

*Women Plan Toronto* takes place in four steps. The first is a set of meetings with as wide and representative a range of women's groups as possible, including young, old, immigrant, native, business, home-making, employed, disabled, middle class, transient, single and single-parenting groups. During each session participants sketch and describe verbally their present community, including spheres of activity, concerns, and negative and positive aspects. The facilitator then invites the women to "blue-sky" about what changes they would like to see in their communities if these were planned by and for women. All these ideas are graphically illustrated by the facilitator on a large drawing. Half of these sessions were completed by the end of 1985.

The second step will be an interim report summarizing the sessions and incorporating some preliminary generalizations; this will be available to all session participants and other interested persons. Step three is a

one-day workshop tentatively scheduled for mid-March 1986, where recommendations for changes in planning, design and servicing policies, and strategies for their implementation, will be hammered out. The final step will encompass publication of the workshop results, starting their implementation, and reporting to various interested lay and professional groups. The project is to be concluded by July 1986.

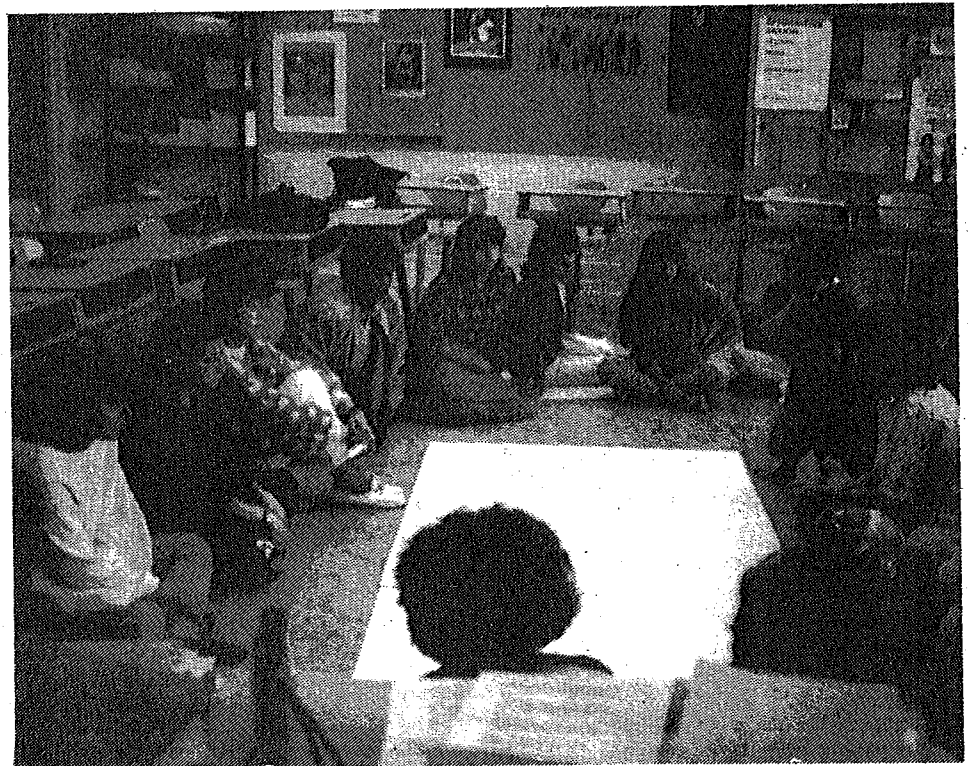
Although we are only halfway through the first phase many issues have already been raised. Mothers of small children resent the limitations on their mobility and activities by the design of our community service, and

transport systems. A coincidence has emerged between the mobility needs of the elderly, mothers with strollers and the disabled. Personal safety in public areas has been raised as an issue by several groups, especially by young women who have not yet submitted to the implicit social discouragement to women going out alone and/or in certain areas and/or at certain times. The incredible shortage of affordable and decent housing was raised by single, transient women as well as single parenting women. The lack, inappropriate location and design of public washrooms, including washrooms for children with or without parents, has been raised several times. More age and function appropriate park facilities have been suggested. Generally, it seems to be absolutely crucial that the provision of services for women take into account the complexity of women's roles and conditions. Efforts are bound to fail if no provision can be assured for child care, transportation, safety, adequate clothing and so on.

Many gaps remain in the research for *Women Plan Toronto*. Yet the project promises to become even more exciting as we embark upon the next phase. We hope that *Women Plan Toronto* will help make Toronto a better place to live for all women and, beyond that, all people.

For more information on *Women Plan Toronto*, contact Reggie Modlich, 72 Southwood Drive, Toronto, Ontario M4E 2T9; (416) 463-4413 or 690-6644 (home).

*Regula Modlich*





## Zoning and Child Care

When the American Planning Association met in Montreal last April 20-25, the five sessions organized by the Division on Planning and Women on the theme "Planning and the Changing Family" were so successful that people waited three deep in the halls outside and others sat on the floor in the meeting rooms. For practicing planners, these sessions shed needed light on problems they were facing in their own communities. One of these problems is child care.

Panelist Marsha Ritzdorf, University of Kansas, outlined the desperate need for childcare in the suburbs. She reported that Seattle and Sacramento have established pro-child policies both to improve the physical planning of the city and to encourage daycare and change employment practices. Edith Netter, Boston Redevelopment Authority, gave examples of cities which encourage childcare. Developers can receive bonuses for providing certain community amenities, a practice known as "linkage". In Hartford, Connecticut, downtown zoning provides developers with 6 additional sq.ft. of space for each sq.ft. of affordable daycare space. In Palo Alto, California, childcare is encouraged in industrial space.

Gerda Wekerle, York University, argued that planners too often view daycare as a problem rather than a benefit to the community. It provides employment at the neighbourhood level; it enriches the neighbourhood by creating activity and making it more attractive to young families; it can contribute to the visibility of service centres for other groups such as the elderly. Daycare centres in schools can provide a feed system which may keep the school open.

The rapid increase of home-based daycare has resulted in public debate and uncertainty in many communities. Planners noted their reluctance to push into the human service area, but the crisis in child care has forced them to re-examine master plans to see what avenues might be open. Concern was expressed that zoning regulations would be too stringent and would inhibit home-based daycare; some planners suggested allowing it to remain illegal so that while the worst violations would be reported by neighbours, growth would not be obstructed. Many communities prohibit home occupations and there is confusion as to whether family daycare falls under this category. Baltimore, for example, lists family daycare as separate from home occupations. Concerns about it range from the number of children to be accommodated, the appropriate amount of outdoor play space, and the impact of additional traffic and noise on neighbours. Planners attending the session emphasized the urgency of providing manuals with answers to some of these questions.

*Gerda Wekerle*



## A Letter from the Director of the Planning and Women Division of the American Planning Association

Dear Women and Environment Readers:

As readers of *Women and Environments* magazine, you are all aware of the awesome scope and potential impact of the issues facing women in the coming decade. Outdated and unresponsive planning, land use and zoning policies are a significant part of that problem. Whether or not a woman can work legally out of her home, the availability of daycare conveniently located in residential neighbourhoods, whether or not communities protect the rights of families with children to find housing, and personal choices regarding the right to live with whom one pleases are examples of decisions which are controlled by the planning commission in your town or city.

Over the past six years, the Planning and Women Division has worked to create a network of professional and citizen planners who share an interest in the issues affecting women in the community which are within the purview of the planning profession. These include issues related to health, housing, daycare, employment, social services, transportation and land use planning. Additionally, the division is interested in issues affecting women as planning professionals... issues relating to hiring, promotion, planning education etc.

In addition to our own work, we strive to maintain a continuing relationship with other organizations which are dealing with issues of concern to our members. Each year, at the APA National Convention, we sponsor a series of workshops covering a wide variety of current issues. At the 1986 conference which will take place April 5-9 in Los Angeles, we are sponsoring five sessions. Topics include Planning for Children, Safe Neighbourhoods, Special Transit Needs of Women, and Downtown Places for Families.

Membership in the division is not limited to APA members. Anyone who is interested is welcome to join. Rates are \$18 regular, \$13 student; for non-members of the APA, add \$10 for each category. Members receive a quarterly newsletter. If you have any question regarding the PAW division or wish to have more information about PAW involvement in planning issues, please call or write.

*Marsha Ritzdorf*  
317A Marvin Hall  
Lawrence, Kansas 66045  
(913) 864-5934

### PLANNING AND WOMEN DIVISION MEMBERSHIP FORM

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_

STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP CODE \_\_\_\_\_

MEMBERSHIP ENTITLES YOU TO: Quarterly newsletter, direct representation in APA national organization, special panels, and conference events.

SUPPORTS ACTIVITIES: Research, sharing professional interests and contacts, promoting divisional concerns in national-state-local governments, providing a clearing house for employment and professional interests.

#### MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

FULL: Must be an APA member; includes newsletter and voting rights at divisional meetings.

SUBSCRIBING SPONSOR: Newsletter, no voting rights.

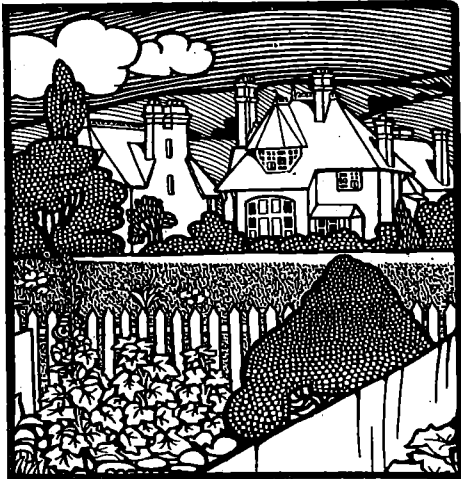
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Send check or money order to:  
APA  
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# CONFERENCE NOTES



## Women's Issues in Housing Policy

A mini-conference at Cornell University, Ithaca, New York, October 24-25 1985; organized by the Women's Planning Forum, a student group within the Department. Frances Fox Piven, now teaching in the Graduate Program of Political Science at the City University of New York, gave the keynote address, on "Gender Politics and Public Policy." Known as a political activist, Piven has written *Regulating the Poor, Poor People's Movements*, and *The New Class War*. She provided a general overview of women's issues within our existing political framework, emphasizing the pitfalls of justifying social programs in terms of prevalent conservative economic arguments. She recommended that planners redefine the debate in social and political terms, and that this approach should take precedence over technical presentations.

Piven set the stage for the panel discussion, "Women Confronting the Inadequacies of Planning and Housing Policy." Joan Forrester Sprague of the Women's Institute for Housing and Economic Development, described WIHED's evolution from its initial architectural focus to efforts to help low-income women start and sustain their own businesses through housing development. She also spoke of recent work with transitional housing, emphasizing its shelter, job development, child care and possible enterprise development aspects.

Janet McClain, Department of Consumer Economics and Housing at Cornell, spoke about the women ignored by housing and planning policies — women who live on the margins, including new immigrants, singles, teen mothers, older and disabled women. Failing to look specifically at women in marginal groups leads to programs suited more to general, middle class, women's needs. Women in marginal groups are often invisible and their needs viewed as tem-

porary; their long-term needs must be recognized by community support services, planning and housing policies.

Edith Netter, of the Boston Redevelopment Authority, described cities as a place for families. Planners should view the world more comprehensively to avoid encouraging segregation by age, sex and income. She spoke of zoning and condominium restrictions which define families narrowly by age and number of children, and emphasized the need to think about planning for children's needs as well as involving children in the planning process.

The conference reminded students, practitioners and the Cornell faculty of the importance of women's issues to all areas of the planning curriculum.

*Robin J. Pfetsch, Johanna W. Looye  
Department of City and Regional  
Planning, Cornell University*

## Transportation Patterns of Single Parents

A session of the Transportation Research Board meetings in Washington DC, January 15 1986, focused on the transportation patterns of single parents. Sandra Rosenbloom, Department of Community Planning, University of Texas at Austin, reported on her comparison of single parents' travel patterns in three southern US cities; Claire McKnight, Urban Transportation Center, University of Illinois, Chicago, discussed her analysis of census data on single parents' travel patterns in Chicago central city and suburbs; Brent Rutherford and Gerda Wekerle, Faculty of Environmental Studies, York University, reported on their studies of single parents' trip behaviour and access to transportation in a suburban community, Scarborough, Ontario.

## Women and Oil

A three-day conference on women and oil was held Sept. 5-7 in St. John's, Newfoundland, bringing together speakers from Canada, the United States, Scotland and Norway, to discuss the implications of the oil and gas industry for women. The conference addressed two themes: women and the offshore labour force, including discussion of offshore work, social relations in the workplace, equal opportunities programs and legislation, and unionization; and implications of offshore employment for the family, including health concerns, sex roles and division of domestic labour and power.

Funding for a 20-minute videotape on

women and oil, which was to be screened at the conference, did not materialize, but a team is being formed to manage production and use of the videotape in community settings. It is hoped that women employed in the offshore oil industry will want to share their experience and contacts in off-camera discussion. Contact: Jane Lewis, Institute of Social and Economic Research, Memorial University, St. John's, Nfld. A1C 5S7. Copies of papers presented are also available from Ms Lewis.

## Women and the City

A full day devoted to feminist urban research at the Canadian Urban Studies Conference in Winnipeg, August 14-16 1985, provided a rich reflection of the range of work that is currently under way in Canada.

Suzanne Mackenzie, Carleton University, traced empirical and theoretical connections between periods of urban change and changing gender roles. Denise Piché, Université Laval, described her research into the differing recreational needs and ways of using space of women adults and adolescents; women's images of leisure are specific to their socio-economic status. William Michelson, University of Toronto, spoke of the divergences between the logistical constraints experienced by employed mothers and their husbands, and the burden that inflexible community infrastructure imposes on non-traditional subgroups (employed women).

Jeanne Wolfe, McGill University, presented her research on an early Montreal feminist and urban activist, Julia Drummond. Joan Simon, University of Guelph, and Gerda Wekerle, York, reviewed the opportunities provided by non-profit housing for women's leadership and empowerment, and its potential as a supportive environment and to promote skills training. Damaris Rose, INRS-urbanization, Montreal, examined the spatial and housing market implications of the restructuring processes occurring within the female labour force.

A round table discussion on future research directions focused on the constraints on feminist work. Problems in the dissemination of research continue to be significant, reinforcing the isolation of feminist researchers. Major problems lie also with data, its collection, quality, relevance and accessibility. A need was identified for a more organized effort to press for gender-sensitive data collection.

The sessions were organized by Caroline Andrew, University of Ottawa, and Beth Moore-Milroy, University of Waterloo.



## Ecofeminism: A Personal Perspective

I have always known that my own life was part of the ecosystem of life on this planet and I have always felt that my own well being, as well as that of the rest of the human race, was inextricably linked to the health of the natural world. This awareness has been a continual source of excitement for me. From exploring the English countryside as a child to studying biochemistry at university, I have always had a passion to understand the nature of life, and to discover the inherent bonds between the human race and other species on this planet. As my academic research progressed, I began to see that life could never be understood using scientific analysis alone. In my quest to understand the natural world through biochemistry I had reduced living organisms to a biological soup, and was attempting to study one metabolic process out of the thousands that occur in every cell. I began to appreciate that this one process was relatively insignificant, unless it was put in the context of the complete living organism and that the whole was indeed greater than the sum of its parts.

This revelation led me to investigate the possibilities of using ecology — the science of living systems — to study the similarities and interconnections of life on this planet. As I proceeded, it became clear how dependent the human species is on the ecosystem and how we are denying this dependency in the name of civilization and progress. I saw how the natural world was being destroyed by the depletion of resources, overpopulation and the introduction of toxic chemicals into the environment, and I felt a deep sense of unhappiness. This feeling prompted me to make a personal commitment to do something, however small, to reverse this trend, and fortunately I have been able to pursue a career that allowed me to do this.

In the last few years my intense curiosity about the natural world has taken a new turn and I have also become inquisitive about the human world. In addition to looking at the human species in relation to the planetary ecosystem, my thoughts have turned to the relationships within the species itself. Specifically, I have begun to relate the position and treatment of women in human societies to the position and treatment of the natural world. It has always been taken for granted that women are closer to nature than men, probably because our bodies have very obvious natural



rhythms, and because of our reproductive capacity. But the links between women and nature run much deeper. Women have been traditionally assumed to be submissive, nurturing and enfolding, but these same qualities have also been ascribed to the earth itself. This can be seen in phrases like "Mother Earth," "virgin resources" and "the rape of the earth." Men treat women the same way they treat the planet and its ecosystem. In fact, historically men have been responsible for much of the desecration of the natural environment, as well as the subjugation of women. Suddenly another piece of my personal puzzle fell into place and I became a feminist almost overnight. It is now clear to me that the goals of ecology and feminism are closely linked. Womens' rights and the rights of nature are related. Improvements in one will likely lead to improvements in the other. Feminism and ecology are both striving to counterbalance the dominant masculine traditions inherent in most human societies. In my opinion, these interconnections have been recognized in the term "ecofeminism." To alter Theodore Roszak's well-known quotation slightly, "the rights of women are the rights of the planet."

*Katherine Davies  
City of Toronto  
Department of Public Health*



## Northwest Big Mountain

A support group spearheaded by elderly native women has formed to defend lands sacred to the Navajo and Hopi from development. The Northwest Big Mountain Support Group is pledged to protect Big Mountain, Arizona from Public Law 93-531 which, if enacted, would result in the relocation of 14,000 people, and mining of mineral deposits in the area. Official deadline for the legislation is July.

The support group is concerned not just about the hardship relocation would pose to the 14,000 native people involved, and the threat to desert life, but pollution, radiation and water depletion which would result from coal and uranium mining.

Meanwhile, native women are becoming militant in their resistance to the proposed law. Sixty-five elders have signed a Declaration of Independence from the United States declaring that the government and Navajo Tribal Council have violated the sacred laws of the Diné (Navajo) Nation.

The Navajo and Hopi have called for a Congressional investigation and are appealing to "peace-seeking women around the world" to support their struggle. Speakers are available, as well as a slide show and literature. Anyone interested in donating time and/or money to the Northwest Big Mountain Support Group, contact: Jane Kelly, PO Box 42640, Portland Oregon 97242, USA: (503) 236-0399

## IN BRIEF

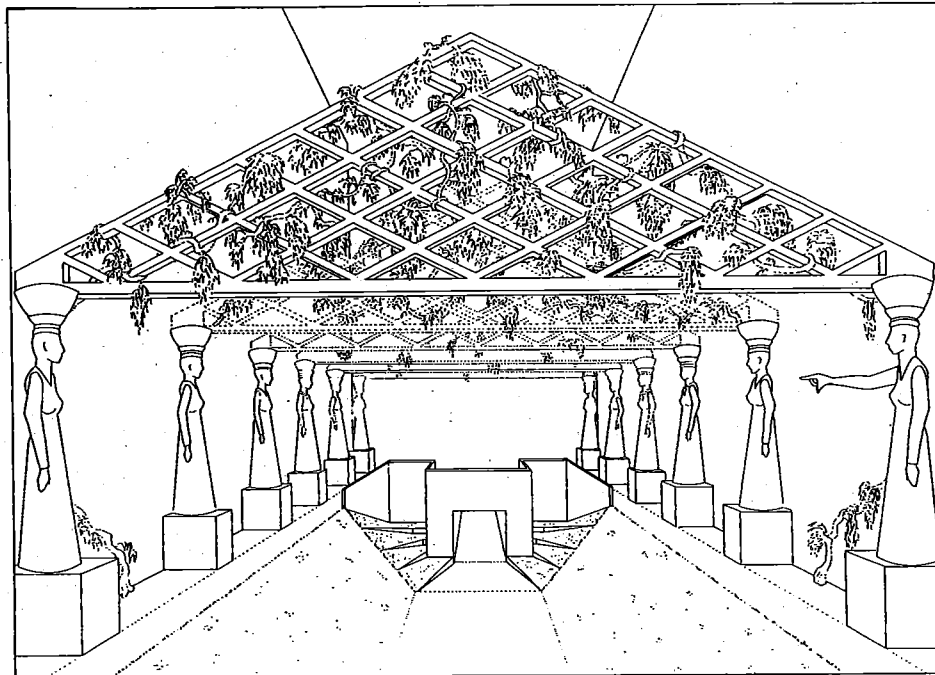
### Architectural Archives

The College of Architectural and Urban Studies and libraries at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University are collecting photographs and drawings of architectural and art work, personal information, letters, documents, written works and audio-visual formats for an archive devoted to the work of women architects. The scope of the archives will be international, dealing with women's achievements in architecture throughout history. Special emphasis is being placed on women who pioneered in the architectural field.

The collection process has three goals: to search for archives of women architects no longer living whose works will be dispersed if not collected; to appeal to retired women colleagues to donate material; to appeal to active women colleagues to donate their early work, and bequeath the rest of their archives to the International Archive of Women in Architecture.

All materials will be catalogued, curated and maintained by the staff of the Special Collections at the Carol M. Newman Library, VPI & SU. The archives will be publicized internationally and made available for research through exhibits, seminars and catalogues. Donors will be reimbursed for the mailing expenses of materials sent, upon receiving proof of shipping cost.

Address contributions to: Robert E. Stephenson, Architecture Librarian, Cowgill Hall, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blackburg, Virginia, 24061, USA.



### Designers' Exchange

OWA, the Organization of Women Architects and Design Professionals, has established an international exchange program to encourage design professionals to make connections with their colleagues around the world. The program is intended not just to facilitate contact between individuals who share similar careers and interests, but with other groups interested in setting up an exchange program. OWA is also collecting information on design firms interested in work exchanges.

Two survey forms are available — one for individuals, and another for organizations. Information will be stored in OWA's data bank, and made available to members through OWA's monthly newsletter. To receive the newsletter, arrange for a newsletter exchange with your organization, or join OWA (\$US 20) — P.O. Box 26570, San Francisco, CA 94126.

To participate in the exchange program, or to be included in OWA's contact list (if your organization already has an exchange program), contact Gilda Puente-Peters, Chair, Exchange Program, 1076 Arlington, El Cerrito, CA 94530, USA.

### Policy Statement on Low Income Housing

Seventy national and 1,039 state and local organizations from the 50 American states, District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, have signed a statement of policy concerning US commitment to the housing needs of lower and moderate income Americans. The statement says "high priority must be given to dealing with this nation's low income housing crisis." This would be accomplished by expanding low income housing assistance programs — the urban programs of HUD and the rural programs of the Farmers Home Administration.

The policy statement opposes the two-

year moratorium on all additional low income housing assistance, and the elimination of the rural housing programs proposed in the 1986 budget. "It is a complete repudiation of Congress's 50-year bipartisan commitment to the right of all Americans to a decent home in a decent neighbourhood at an affordable price. If approved, it would lead directly to increased homelessness and suffering for millions of low and very low income Americans"

President Ronald Reagan's 1981 Commission on Housing discovered seven million low income renter households were paying more than 30 per cent of their income on rent and/or were living in sub-standard housing. Congress has since approved cuts which have pared the federal housing assistance budget by 60 per cent. A 1986 cut would mean a 98 per cent reduction since Reagan took office.

The policy was developed by the National

Low Income Housing Coalition, 1012 Fourteenth St. N.W., Suite 1006, Washington, D.C. 20005/telephone: (202) 662-1530.

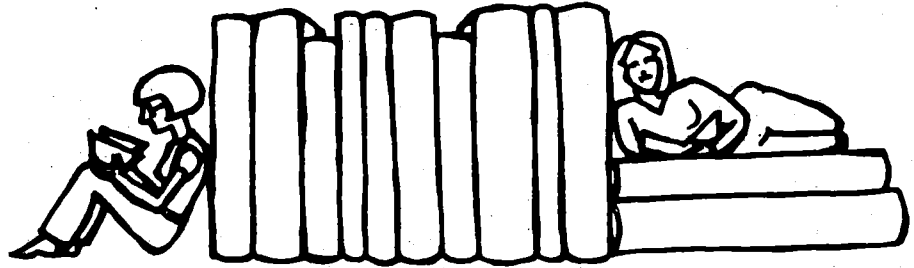
### New Journal on Interpersonal Violence

The first issue of *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, a quarterly devoted to the study of treatment of both victims and perpetrators, is scheduled for March 1986. MSS and requests for editorial guidelines should be addressed to Jon R. Conte, Editor, School of Social Service Administration, University of Chicago, 969 E 60th St, Chicago IL 60637, USA.

### Geography and Gender: An Introduction to Feminist Geography

*Women and Geography Study group of the Institute of British Geographers*  
London: Hutchinson (in association with The Explorations in Feminism Collective), 1984. 160 pp., US \$4.95 paper. ISBN 0-09-156671-1.

Reviewed by MARIE TRUELOVE



BARBARA SANFORD

Written cooperatively by nine people, *Geography and Gender* is the first undergraduate textbook to be published on feminist geography, which the authors define as "a geography which explicitly takes into account the socially created gender structure of society; and in which a commitment, both towards its removal, through social change towards real equality, in the longer term, is expressed" (p. 21).

The reader is led in very gently with a short introductory chapter titled "Why study feminist geography?", an introduction that is necessary since I suspect that the majority of students are not aware that gender is and should be an issue in geography.

The second chapter concerns theory and practice, and is the most difficult. The authors make a heroic effort to explain and evaluate the variety of approaches to feminism, from radical and socialist feminism to phenomenological and humanistic approaches. Here the value of the collective writing approach is most clear: concise, even-handed outlines of each perspective are provided (presumably after countless hours of discussion and argument). This section would fit very well into courses that cover the philosophy of geography, but it is quite challenging for many undergraduates not familiar with feminism. They must first consider the implications of "gender" (socially created distinctions between femininity and masculinity), rather than the simple term "sex" (biological differences between men and women).

The largest section of the book is a series of four chapters providing examples of feminist analysis in geography: urban spatial structure; women's employment, industrial location and regional change; access to facilities; women and development. These chapters do not illustrate all areas of geography in which feminist approaches are useful. Rather the authors have chosen a variety of traditional fields in which to illustrate that a consideration of gender leads to a more complete analysis. Any student should be able to find a chapter containing topics with which she or he is comfortable and somewhat familiar.

The concluding chapter provides material on the proportions of men and women in geography departments and how this has implications for the way geography is

taught. This chapter also suggests topics for students interested in research in this field.

*Geography and Gender* provides many aids to facilitate its use as a textbook or for teaching: index, bibliography, suggestions for further reading and topics for discussion. Its non-threatening tone should make it useful to non-geographers as well.

This book complements *Her Space, Her Place* by Mazey and Lee (reviewed in *W & E Winter*, 1985 by Damaris Rose). While Mazey and Lee provide an introductory documentation of patterns of women's lives in a variety of contexts, *Geography and Gender* is more theoretically oriented and requires a more sophisticated response from the reader. It synthesizes the material available on women and represents an important step in developing gender-based theory in geography. It is a more satisfying book than Mazey and Lee's, providing a basis for connecting feminist analysis, personal politics and research agendas.

I have a variety of responses from those of my students who have been able to read the volume. Many undergraduates who find it interesting and useful also consider it "very radical." Students who are not totally comfortable with a feminist approach find hostility to males in some sections. Some students avoid considering the important issues the book raises, preferring to argue over minor facts presented in case study examples. Others found the chapter on women and development to be the best — partly, I suspect, because it has the least to say directly about their own lives. It takes some courage to accept the implications of the book's arguments for the first time, and initial discomfort is to be expected with many readers. The authors have tried to minimize these effects. Indeed, the focus on traditional areas of study in geography means that issues such as women and poverty and racism have been largely ignored.

The above reactions are those of "beginners" in this field. Reactions vary with the level of political and research sophistication of the reader, and there are probably cultural differences in the ways that Britons and North Americans express themselves, as well as a stronger radical feminist tradition in Britain, that may affect responses.

This book is a very important one, that should be read by students and teachers alike; elementary and high school teachers need to be made aware of its value as well.

New contributions to the study of women's environments will soon be made by the students of today; wide exposure to the ideas in *Geography and Gender* will aid their development.

Marie Truelove teaches Geography at Ryerson Polytechnical Institute in Toronto

### Design Against Crime: Beyond Defensible Space

Barry Poyner

London: Butterworths, 1983.

108 pp., \$29.95

ISBN 0-408-01230-7.

Reviewed by REGULA MODLICH

Oscar Newman's *Defensible Space*, published in 1972, brought the relationship between physical design and crime very forcefully to public notice. Barry Poyner's *Design Against Crime* represents a further link in developing this area. It is a very attractively produced, well illustrated book with helpful and extensive references to the existing literature in this field. It is based on research from English speaking countries. While the book is timely in that western society seems to be preoccupied with crime against both property and person, Poyner's contribution makes one aware how limited our understanding of crime still is.

As if in recognition of this limitation, the book deals with six very specific areas of concern: safer neighbourhoods; preventing residential burglary; vandalism and public housing; street attacks in city centres; protecting schools from crime; and public transport. Furthermore, in several of these areas, only some specific aspects are addressed and the scope of supporting documentation is highly variable.

The author indicates how both social and penal policies have failed to deal with crime. Instead of proposing a comprehensive approach combining social, penal, community, technological and design measures Poyner counterposes *only* design measures. This of course can only be applied to very specific subtypes and categories of crime e.g. pickpocketing at bus stations. The assumption that only opportunistic crime or crime committed on the spur of the moment can be affected by conscious design factors seems

to underly many of the concepts. Yet does it not stand to reason that premeditated crime would take the physical environment even more directly into account?

From a woman's perspective, the book is even more unsatisfactory. Women are and perceive themselves to be particularly victimized by certain types of crime, yet gender-related crime or even a gender-based analysis is almost totally absent from Poyner's considerations. The whole area of rape, sexual assault and harassment, with the exception of so-called "quick grabs" occurring in pedestrian subways, is totally ignored in the book. Yet in most western countries, a great deal of focus has recently been placed on this type of crime. The fact that women are generally reluctant to go out after dark and have to make a conscious effort to reconquer the night surely has something to do with the structure and design of our communities and public and possibly even private spaces. The traditional

method of research which underlies this book inevitably narrows the subject until categorical "scientific" conclusions can be drawn. In the complex context of real communities this appears to be a cumbersome and perhaps ineffective way of solving problems.

Poyner's book leaves the distinct impression that the proposed cure is worse than the crimes it aims to curb. Applying Poyner's suggestions, we should live in houses surrounded by 6 ft. fences with visible private entrances for each dwelling. The unit should be occupied throughout the day, presumably by a full-time housewife. It should be located in neighbourhoods with private streets, as far removed from public housing and mixed uses as possible, although industrial uses and railroads seem to form good protective boundaries! Multiple units are dangerous, especially those with unsupervised common entrances. Schools should present a solid and im-

penetrable exterior; city centres should have very compact night life areas with good and immediately accessible transit. Transit stops should have lining-up guiderails, while subways should really have "big brothers" or at least closed circuit television watching us. What would these "fortress city" design concepts accomplish? There is no guarantee that these measures would have a long-term effect on crime rates.

Thus while this book brings together some interesting findings, it is clearly by no means a definitive word on the relationship between crime and the design of the physical environment.

Rather than pursuing a one-dimensional approach, we need more gender-conscious research and a wider ranging search for solutions which take into account our underlying social and political values.

*Regula Modlich is a planning consultant in Toronto*

## The Double Standard: A Feminist Critique of Feminist Social Science

Margrit Eichler

New York: St Martin's Press, 1980. 151 pp., \$15.95. ISBN 0-312-21823-0

## Doing Feminist Research

Helen Roberts, editor

London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1981. 202 pp., £5.95. ISBN 0-7100-0772-8

## Breaking Out: Feminist Consciousness and Feminist Research

Liz Stanley and Sue Wise

London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1983. 200 pp., £4.95. ISBN 0-7100-9315-2

Reviewed by MIRIAM WYMAN

*"Accepting the validity of other people's experiences, and rejecting the belief that there is one truth in social terms, ought to lead us to a position in which we do three things. First, we should reject positivism's interpretation of the 'researcher/subject' dichotomy. Second, we should take other people's truths seriously. And, third, we should recognize the importance of examining and learning how people 'do' the truth — how people enact the 'objective reality' that we all inhabit" (Stanley and Wise, 109).*

This passage from *Breaking Out, Feminist Consciousness and Feminist Research* might well be the motto for these three books on feminist research in the social sciences. Together, they identify and reinterpret the dichotomy between researcher and researched; they affirm the validity of each person's experience — notably the experience of women both as researchers and subjects of research — and document again the problems inherent in casting research (and experience) in a single mode.



They examine the conduct of research in the light of feminist critique. In doing all of this, they break down yet another barrier — that between the personal and the professional — and set out the changes necessary in society and in ourselves for a truly feminist way of life. And — they are interesting, entertaining reading.

Margrit Eichler identifies three functions of feminist writing — criticism, corrective action, and incipient transformation. Feminist research has succeeded in challenging many of the assumptions held about women, and having done so, it is time "to criticize the knowledge-producing structures themselves, as well as the knowledge produced" (p.18). She defines a double standard as "all norms, rules and practices which evaluate, reward and punish identical behaviour of women and men differentially" (p.16) and points out that this is not a simple distinction. Too often, because a double

standard is systematically applied, identical behaviours are viewed differently due to "the sex of the performer and the social context in which they take place" (p.16). Eichler has chosen three areas in which to examine the double standard — sex roles, sex identity and class analysis, demonstrating that research builds on and corroborates the very double standard researchers set out to examine.

Sexist language is a problem with which we are all familiar. We are less aware of the implications that language structure and tone hold for our view of the world. In a powerful demonstration that non-sexist language is only part of non-sexist writing, Eichler cites a passage on menstrual taboos and then re-writes it in two ways: first in neutral language which highlights the power relationships implicit in the original quote by removing any suggestion of them; and second with women as the active decision-makers and determinants of their behaviour patterns during menstruation. The three passages cannot help but sensitize readers to the tremendous power of the written word.

In the area of sex identity, Eichler's examples include masculinity-femininity scales, the concept of androgyny and sex change operations. Androgyny is a social ideal tied antithetically to notions of masculinity and femininity — it presupposes recognition of masculine and feminine traits and conditions, and therefore reinforces the existence of sex stereotypes.

Class analysis similarly reflects a double standard in the social structure. In her discussion of the family, relationships between spouses, property and housework, Eichler demonstrates that class analysis cannot incorporate sex stratification, that

this model too was devised with men in mind.

Her concluding chapter links feminist science with a program for social revolution. In explicating the necessary connections between critical analysis, careful research and everyday life, Eichler implies a definition of integrity — a world in which the personal and professional can come together to “accord an essential dignity to women as well as men” (p.144). This is a thoughtful and persuasive book which makes powerful connections between feminist research and social revolution, scientific feminism and practical-political issues.

*Doing Feminist Research* is a collection of papers which spans the entire process of research — from background literature to publication. They describe studies of women and their doctors, interviews conducted in a study of motherhood, fieldwork among the Sikhs in the Punjab, stratification studies which define class according to the husband's occupation, occupational studies which rely on the husband's occupation and by definition exclude single, divorced or separated women. Together, they indicate clearly that important issues are too often written out of traditional reports which try to provide “objective” accounts of the research process (what Stanley and Wise call “hygienic research”). Not unusual in an edited collection, the quality of the papers and of the insights varies. This limited criticism is more than outweighed by the fact that the collection exists — that self-reflection, which is not easy or always comfortable, is part of the research literature. This volume would benefit from a concluding chapter that binds the papers together and tries to draw from them guidelines that might illuminate future research endeavors.

*Breaking Out* is very different and, in many ways, firmly anchors the others. Stanley and Wise have taken an intelligent, articulate and passionate look at the realms of feminist consciousness and its relationship with feminist research. Their chapters on socialization and gender role, feminist consciousness, and the research process are particularly interesting.

For a long time, I had sensed links between feminism and phenomenology. Listening to women describe their experiences, learning to acknowledge the validity of each individual's experience, and documenting these differences have been fundamental to the development of feminist literature. The value of description, the emphasis on individual experience and the questioning of what has been taken for granted with respect to experience are fundamental to phenomenology. *Breaking Out* is explicitly phenomenological; it is also the most personal of these books. It pulls together and underscores the fundamental issues identified in both *The Double Standard* and *Do-*

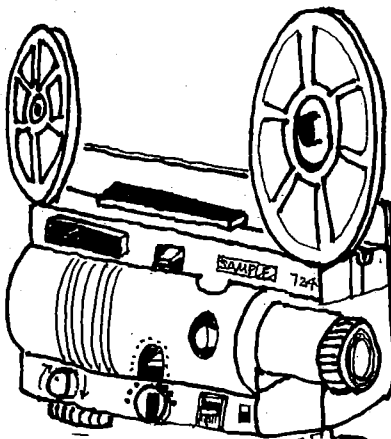
*ing Feminist Research*. Its only weakness, one all too common in phenomenological writing, is that words are placed in quotes to indicate their special meaning, which is very often their actual meaning.

*The Double Standard, Doing Feminist Research*, and *Breaking Out* are highly recommended reading, and they fit well together. They highlight the range of issues in feminist research — doing it, reporting it, analysing it, reflecting on it — all the while trying to live a feminist life with all the anguish and all the understanding that implies. These books allow us to understand better our own work and to evaluate better the work of others. It is a pleasure to see the growing number of feminist publications (and their publishers) presenting these important perspectives.

A brief postscript. As I was preparing to write these reviews, a slim booklet arrived: *On the Treatment of the Sexes in Research* by Margrit Eichler and Jeanne Lapointe. It is

published by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (Box 1610, Ottawa K1P 6G4). Absence of bias is an important criterion in establishing the soundness of a research proposal; this volume is intended to “help researchers arrive at a non-biased treatment of the sexes” (p.5) in research and will be circulated along with SSHRC application packages. It should definitely have much wider circulation. In 23 pages, it focuses on awareness of sex as a social variable in research, use of appropriate language, and a dual perspective in social science and humanities research. It is a crash course in doing feminist (i.e. non-sexist) research and avoiding double standards.

Miriam Wyman is Associate Professor and Coordinator of External Liaison at the Faculty of Environmental Studies, York University.



## A film review

### Quel Numéro What Number

*Quel Numéro What Number* is a film that will make you think twice the next time you phone the operator or scrawl a postal code on a letter. Because director Sophie Bissonnette takes us behind the scenes of a Quebecois supermarket, Bell Canada and the Post Office — companies whose adoption of microtechnologies has radically altered the way workers, particularly women, do their jobs.

A “talking heads” style of documentary, *Quel Numéro* features endless numbers of women workers talking about the effect of technology upon their work. Operators and post office coders talk about the dehumanization of working essentially as appendages to machines in systems of production that were set up without concern for the “human component.” A cashier anim-

atedly tells of the frustration she feels when the computer “goes down” and she is left helpless, unable to fix the machine herself and unable to work without it.

But by far the most striking and detrimental result of the new technology is its use by employers to monitor worker performance. An operator is measured by her AWT (average working time) or the average number of seconds she spends with each caller. “Good” operators do it in twelve seconds. Coders are as good as the number of letters they can code per hour and women on word processors are timed in strokes per minute. Woman after woman talks of the psychological strain that is produced by their employers' threatening use of monitoring techniques. As one coder put it, “the machine can have a bad day but I can't.”

This is, for good reason, a very depressing film. *Quel Numéro* convincingly explodes the myth of the “progressive” nature of technological change by showing how it is wreaking havoc on the lives of women workers. But it fails to show the next step — how we can change this situation. It thus probably would have benefited from a treatment of how women are organizing to change conditions on the work place, in and out of unions.

*Quel Numéro What Number*, or the Electronic Sweatshop, is available through DEC films, an independent distributor of progressive films on women, the third world and labour issues.

Contact: DEC Films, 229 College St., Toronto, Ont. M5T 1R4

Kate Lazier



## MATCH

MATCH International Centre is offering a series of information kits on the status of women in five developing countries — Nicaragua, Peru, Bolivia, Thailand and Cameroon — highlighting the commonality of women's experience throughout the world. The kits include examples of community development projects which enable women to empower themselves, as well as a brief outline of the country's history and economy, socio-demographic statistics, information on women's health, education, and socio-political status, bibliography and list of resources.

Sample themes in the Women of Bolivia kit include women in farming communities of the Andes, peasant women's unions, and urban, peasant and mining women organizing for social change. The Thailand kit focuses on prostitution and urban conditions, women's work and family life in rural areas, and the exploitation of women workers in microelectronics.

The kits are available for \$5 plus \$1.75 per kit for postage and handling (outside Canada add \$4). Send cheque or money order to MATCH International, 401 — 171 Nepean St, Ottawa, Ontario, K2P 0B4.

MATCH is also distributing a 44-page handbook documenting changes in the global status of women since 1950 — a valuable resource for researchers, media, students, teachers and women's groups. The survey contains useful statistics, graphs and analysis of trends in women's work, health, education, and legal and political rights.

Here's a sample of the kind of information to be found in this fact-filled document:

- the unpaid labour of women in households around the world would contribute approximately four trillion dollars — one third of the world's annual economy;
- women comprise 50 per cent of the world's enfranchised population, but hold only 10 per cent of seats in national legislatures;
- women are the sole bread-winners in one-quarter to one-third of the world's families.

*Women: A World Survey* was written by Ruth Leger Sivard, director of World Priorities, a non-profit American research organization, and is available through MATCH for \$7 plus \$1.75 postage and handling.

MATCH International Centre is looking for donations to support its work in developing countries, with the close of the United Nations Decade in 1985. MATCH was founded at the beginning of the decade to help Third World women improve their living conditions. MATCH projects, reflecting the belief that development is a women's issue requiring the participation of women, respond to needs identified by women.



BARBARA SANFORD

One MATCH project, at the women's centre in Mauritius — off the west coast of Africa — has involved women in the production of "satwa," an inexpensive, nutritious baby food. Satwa is an alternative to costly, commercial formulas marketed by multinationals, and will be made available to women throughout the world.

Another MATCH initiative is the Grenfruit Women's Cooperative in Grenada, a group of 12 rural women trained to manage job-creating cottage industries. Their first cooperative venture — producing candied fruit from local produce — opened in September 1983, but was quickly aborted by the US invasion in November. The women's factory was severely damaged, and the cooperative sustained a serious setback, but the women are eager to return to work in a new venture — curing and selling sugar hams.

Donations to MATCH are matched by three from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA).

## Ecoforum 10(2) April 1985

Pre-Nairobi issue on women and their environments, especially in developing countries. Articles include a guest editorial (Diana Senghor) on feminism and environmentalism; Seeing the Linkages in Economic Development; Women, Male Migration and Environment (Anil Agarwal); Why Appropriate Technology Projects for Women Fail; Involvement of Women Crucial in Energy Planning; Community Management of Waste Recycling; Trees and Feminism; and news reports.

Ecoforum acts as a networking publication for non-governmental organizations (NGOs) around the world to share information and strategies related to the interaction of environment and development. It also serves the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP). The journal, established in 1976, is published bi-monthly in English, French and Spanish, and is available from the Environmental Liaison Centre, PO Box 72461, Nairobi, Kenya.

## Women and Human Settlements UN Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat),

PO Box 30030, Nairobi, Kenya, 1985

This 92-page report is presented by UNCHS (Habitat) as a contribution both to the review of achievements of the UN Decade for Women (1976-1985), and to the International Year of Shelter for the Homeless, 1987. The report examines the definition and scope of women's housing, and the rationale for treating it as a policy area distinct from men's housing or shelter for the poor in general. It reviews international data for the developing world over the last 10 to 15 years, examining migration and urban/rural female population densities and characteristics. "Women are seen as objects of change rather than agents of change:" the report discusses the impact of the development process on women and goes on to assess the effectiveness of current policy and programs in the settlements area.

The document offers a comprehensive review of women and human settlements issues, augmented by many tables and graphs, and an extensive bibliography.

## Women in Forestry

Describing itself as "a journal for professionals in the natural and cultural resource fields," *Women in Forestry* covers a wide range of subjects for, from and about women in these fields, including forestry, range science, fisheries, recreation, wildlife, anthropology, archaeology and history. Regular departments feature news and notes, publications, updates, convention and conference information, book reviews and job notices.

The Winter/Spring 1985 issue includes articles on the work of a US Forest Service historian, on a child care centre run by the Forest Service, on developing a scientific career, on managing stress, and on women in the Society of American Foresters.

*Women in Forestry* is published jointly by the College of Forestry, Wildlife and Range Sciences and the Laboratory of Anthropology, University of Idaho, Moscow, Idaho 83843, USA: four issues/year \$15, students \$10, institutions \$30.

## Women and Agriculture

Theme issue of *Agriculture and Human Values* 2(1) Winter 1985. The journal is published by the Humanities and Agriculture Program, Center for Applied Philosophy and Ethics in the Professions, University of Florida, South-West, 13th and West University Ave, Gainesville FLA 32611, USA.



**City Women: Work, Jobs, Occupations, Careers**

*Helena Znaniecka Lopata, Cheryl Miller and Debra Barnewolt*  
 New York: Praeger. Vol. I: **America**, 1984, 302pp. US \$31.95; US \$12.95 paper; Vol. II: **Chicago**, 1985, 551 pp. US \$51.95 cloth only. Available in Canada through Holt, Rinehart & Winston: Vol. I \$47.95; \$19.45 paper; Vol. II \$77.95.

This large study is devoted to an examination of the work done by women in cities in modern America, and the way this work is organized into jobs falling into occupational categories and individual careers. The study grew out of a 1975-79 research project on "The Changing Commitments to Work and Family Roles among American Women and their Future Consequences for Social Security," funded by the US Social Security Administration and carried out at Loyola University in Chicago.

Volume I, the background volume, examines the social science literature which focuses on women in the major urban occupations; Chapter 2 may be particularly useful to a wide range of readers, covering as it does a history of women's work from pre-industrial Europe to recent trends in the

US. From historical perspectives, the study goes on to examine the nature of women's participation in each of several occupational categories: service, blue collar, clerical, sales, homemaker, managerial and professional. Each of these is allotted a separate chapter, and is accompanied by a substantial bibliography.

Volume II presents the micro-picture, taking us in detail through the Chicago area survey of women and their occupational involvement. It analyses the backgrounds and histories, perceptions of the job and of self, and the role clusters, of 1,877 women aged 25-54 in 26 occupational sub-categories.

**The Public and the Private in Architecture: A Feminist Critique**

*Pauline Fowler*  
*Women's Studies International Forum 7*  
 (6) 1984: 449-454

In this short essay, Fowler attempts to bridge the public and private dichotomy in architecture from a feminist perspective. Fowler divides her paper into three sections: in the first, she discusses Hannah Arendt's notions of public and private, largely derived from Aristotle, as well as Arendt's definitions of labour, work and action within the public and private contexts.

The second section focuses on Kenneth Frampton, whose architectural theory is philosophically based in Arendt. Frampton argues that modern architecture is in a state of crisis because the traditionally hierarchical relationship between public and private — hierarchy, as Fowler notes, being a product of patriarchy — has been eroded. Frampton sees an answer in restoring this order, but Fowler advocates a reformulation based on her analysis of feminist philosophers Hanna Pitkin and Jean Elshtain. The final section attempts to apply this perspective to architecture through an "ethical polity."

**Gender Differences in Work-Trip Length: Explanations and Implications**

*Susan Hanson and Ibipo Johnston*  
 In: *Urban Geography* 6(3), July-September 1985: 193-219

Hanson and Johnston use 1977 Travel Demand Data for the Baltimore SMSA for their analysis, finding — as expected — that women's work trips are significantly shorter than men's in both time and distance. This greater sensitivity of women to commuting distance, however, is found to be more closely related to their mobility and labour force characteristics than to their dual roles as wage earner/homemaker, the implication being that greater mobility might reduce occupational segregation.

**Call for Papers**

*Alternatives* is planning its Fall 1986 issue on "Northern Communities: Prospects for Sustainable Development," and invites papers on community economic development, women in development, peace and the north, etc: deadline May 31. For further information and guidelines contact Ted Jackson, Guest Editor — Northern issue, *Alternatives*, c/o Faculty of Environmental Studies, University of Waterloo, Waterloo, Ont., N2L 3G1.

**Parity or Poverty? The Spatial Dimension of Income Inequality**

*Susan Christopherson*  
 Working paper 21, Southwest Institute for Research on Women, Modern Languages 265, University of Arizona, Tucson AZ 85721, USA, \$2.50

Christopherson discusses the impact of company decisions about where to locate their plants on women's employment opportunities. She analyzes historical and recent data on employment patterns in the US with special emphasis on regional shifts and non-metropolitan industrialization.

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**Refuges for Battered Women: Ideology and Action**

Jan Pahl

*Feminist Review* No. 19, March 1985: 25-43

Pahl explores what happens when the ideals of the British Women's Aid movement are put into practice. Women's Aid has emphasized the importance of women exerting control over their lives, of self-determination and empowerment.

The article is based on a study conducted in one refuge over four years, involving interviews with 42 women before, during and after their stay. Results of the study indicate that women who participated in decision-making and house operations were more likely to achieve independence, confidence and control in their lives after leaving the refuge.

Links between the women's movement and the Women's Aid refuges, established in 1971 and numbering more than 200 by 1980, are strong, writes Pahl. "For many women, working in a refuge has offered a way of putting feminist ideals, and feminist ways of organizing, into practice." Jan Pahl is a Research Fellow at the University of Kent at Canterbury.



ALISON PARSONS

**Housing and Economic Development: A Women's Perspective**

Available for \$3 (\$1.50/copy for 10 or more) from Non-Governmental Liaison Service, Room DC2-1103, United Nations, New York NY 10017, USA

Report of a November 1984 symposium in New York, organized by the Working Group on Housing and Shelter of the UN-NGO Committee on Development. It presents papers by panelists Nadia Youssef on urban housing issues for third world women, Joan Forrester Sprague on low-income housing in the US, and a summary of Ronnie Feit's remarks on community development approaches.

**Women and Housing**

In: *Canadian Housing* 2(3) Fall 1985: 20-26

Women's issues in housing were recognized by Canada's professionals involved in housing delivery when the CAHRO (Canadian Association of Housing and Renewal Officials) annual conference in May 1985 devoted a plenary session to Women and Housing. This issue of *Canadian Housing* carries the report of that session, together with complete proceedings of the conference.

**Housing**

Special Issue of *WEB Quarterly*, No. 3 Summer 1985

In the editorial which prefaces this well-planned special issue on housing, *WEB* notes the special difficulty black women face in finding adequate housing. Women in general are disadvantaged by sexism, but black women suffer the double whammy of racism.

In "Race, Women and Housing" Michelle Haniotis picks up on the sexism/racism theme which prevents women from securing a decent roof over their heads, debunking some of the assumptions on which prejudice is based.

An article on violence and design looks at the initiatives in the security of housing estates taken by the London Borough of Southwark. Southwark's design guidelines recognize that women have the right to be consulted on issues such as security, but the article argues that the broader social forces underlying violence to women must also be understood and challenged.

The report on women and housing management chronicles the rise and fall of women in the housing movement — women's loss of power coinciding with the growth of the public sector in housing over the last two decades. Women are now more likely to be involved in welfare roles or administration. The question is asked whether women should accept "traditionally female caring roles despite the low status and low pay, or join the trend of professionalization of jobs like housing management to keep the benefits" — an ongoing dilemma plaguing the women's movement.

Other items in this special housing issue of *WEB* include a report on the Women in Housing Group, originated in 1981 to promote the interests of women both working in and consuming housing services (details are available from Kate Leevers, 3 Patmore Rd, Waltham Abbey, Essex); a review of the IBG volume "Geography and Gender," and *WEB*'s usual useful notes and references in "Bits and Pieces." *WEB Quarterly* is available from 1 Ferdinand Place, London NW 1, England, for 50 p.

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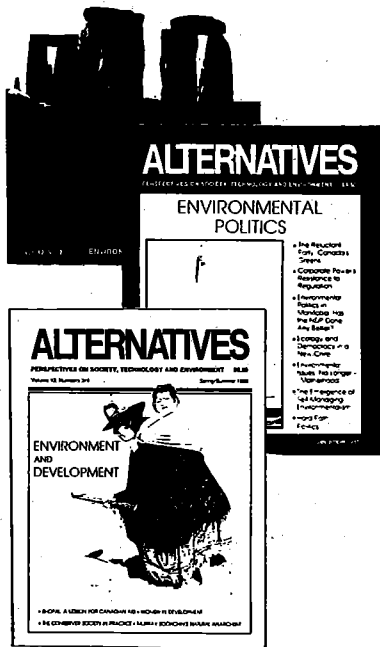
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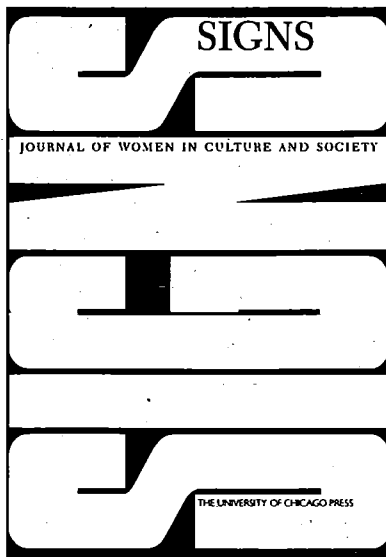
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