

# MOVEMENT MATTERS

## Wave In

TORONTO — Unseasonably warm weather graced an invigorating protest late on the evening of Friday, January 17, in Toronto and in other cities across Canada. Calling the event a Wave In, 60 people—prostitutes, feminists and a number of men—crowded the sidewalks at Church and Carlton to hoot and wink and communicate against C-49, the new law which fines prostitutes and their clients up to \$2000 for the crime of communicating or attempting to communicate for the purposes of prostitution.

While feminists consider the legalities of such an unfair law, activists such as the members of the Alliance for the Safety of Prostitutes are assessing the impact of this law on the lives of women who sell sex on the streets. According to ASP member Boo Watson, the police have been acting undercover, gathering information about individual women whom they suspect to be prostitutes, following them home, or through parking lots or down streets. "What they (the police) will do with this information later is produce it in court, so that a nod or a wink will be enough to pronounce a woman guilty," said Watson.

ASP members are worried that the disruption of prostitution by police arrests will make working conditions more dangerous for the women. "When business gets bad," explains Watson, "women are less likely to turn down

the kind of dates that they might not ordinarily take. If the woman is not in a position to refuse the weird trick, then it becomes an issue of safety."

As of press date, 42 men and 109 women have been arrested by Metro Toronto police morality squad since this bill became law on December 20, 1985.

—Ingrid MacDonald

## Depo Provera

A recently formed national coalition is lobbying the government over the imminent legalization of the drug Depo Provera. The drug is an injectable progesterone, used as a contraceptive. Its use is banned in the US and until now restricted in Canada.

The Canadian government, acting on recommendations of an advisory committee to assess the drug, is likely to approve Depo Provera in February or March of this year. The Canadian Coalition on Depo Provera is asking the government not to approve use of the drug until its safety can be better established. "The existing research is too faulty to allow an understanding of the long term health risks," says Coalition spokeswoman Connie Clement. "Canadians don't need another DES."

Although Depo Provera is considered highly effective as a contraceptive, its known side effects include headache, nausea, weight gain, severe depression and, in half the

women taking the drug, amenorrhea (loss of menstruation altogether). Tests have linked the drug to cancer, and the drug's safety has been a matter of debate for years. Current information does not warrant general acceptance. Studies used by the government as a basis for approval include those of Upjohn, the Canadian manufacturer of Depo Provera, studies which an inquiry board has called "uncoordinated and haphazard."

(For more information about Depo Provera, or the Coalition, write the Toronto Women's Health Network, 414 Rushton Rd., Toronto, Ont. M6C 2Y3.)

## Announcements

### Disabled Women Anthology:

Wanted: Submissions for an anthology about disabled women, by disabled women. Short stories, poems, graphics, herstory, photos, analysis, etc. Non-profit with proceeds to Disabled Women's Network. Topics include affirmative action, sexuality, parenting, violence (battering, rape, incest), accessibility to women's services & the women's movement, and self awareness. For more info write: Joanne Doucette, 122 Galt Ave., Toronto, Ont. M4M 2Z3.

### Coming Together Again

Side By Side, a Canadian feminist resource group, is co-ordinating its second annual feminist sexuality conference, "Coming Together Again: A Women's Sexuality Conference" to be held in Toronto, in October 1986. We are currently seeking proposals for workshops that will explore a wide range of issues affecting our sexuality (e.g. sexual preference, sexual ethics, sexual abuse). We are looking for culturally/experientially diverse feminists to facilitate workshops for this gathering of women. Please write to Side By Side, Box 85, 275 King Street East, Toronto, Ontario, M5A 1K2, for workshop guidelines.

### TRCC's 12th Birthday:

February 14, 1986 marks the twelfth anniversary of the Toronto Rape Crisis Centre. The TRCC is committed to working in solidarity with other organizations and individuals, and looks forward to further communication and contact with those involved in issues of concern to women. The TRCC would like to thank all of you for your support and encouragement over the past twelve years.

### Anti-Racism Group

The Toronto Lesbians of Colour collective and two members of the Toronto Rape Crisis Centre have formed an anti-racism work group. The work group is currently offering anti-racism workshops to women's groups in Toronto.

We feel that these workshops are an excellent resource to continue and improve the working relationships between women of colour and white women. The workshops will begin in mid-January, 1986. A \$25 negotiable fee will be charged.

For more information, and to schedule your workshop, please contact Carol or Michele at (416) 594-2930, or Anna or Stacey at (416) 465-1781.

# MOVEMENT COMMENT

## Periodical Process

by Eve Zaremba

Those who check the *Broadside* masthead will notice that my name is no longer listed under 'Editorial Collective'. I have been a member of the *Broadside* collective since its beginnings in 1978. February 22, 1986 marks the eighth anniversary of its very first meeting. This seems as good a time as any to leave it, thereby decreasing its average age by some decades.

*Broadside* has been an important part of my life. I've learned a lot from those years on the collective and taking the rough with the smooth, wouldn't have missed the experience for the world. It's been a gas. So, in parting, I'd like to pass on some thoughts about the whole process.

Being on an editorial collective of a newspaper may be perceived as a position of privilege. If so, then it's not without price. Working on a paper like *Broadside* demands long-term, consistent commitment of nerve, energy and time.

Our collective meets two evenings each and every week with only two short breaks in summer and December. On top of that, there are ten deadlines, ten lay-out weekends, ten productions, ten mail-out days a year. Work on an issue starts before the ink is dry on the previous one. Over and above all that is the constant struggle to find the bucks to pay bills. It takes money and work to get and keep subscribers and advertisers but, since these two sources of funds never cover all expenses anyway, additional fundraising is a perpetual necessity.

Like it or not, a feminist newspaper like *Broadside* is a service which must be subsidized by its community and by the labour of the women who work on it.

Those who imagine that a feminist newspaper collective sits around making crucial editorial decisions, deep in erudite discussion on the content, style and implications of each article; that a lot of time is spent raising fine points of policy or politics, those who believe that is what happens are sadly deluded. The actual number of hours available for meetings of the collective between deadline and publication date each month are insufficient to realise any such ideal. Given a monthly publication, where deadlines are rarely met by contributing writers, and produced by a collective which is part-time and largely unpaid, expectations should be kept realistic.

It should go without saying that *Broadside* does not have an army of researchers, reporters and journalists at its disposal. What

gets covered in its pages, and how well it is covered is mostly a function of whether anyone suitable can be found who is both interested and free to do the job in the time available. Those who are familiar with a given topic or issue are not necessarily writers. Often they lack the time or interest to put their knowledge on paper for publication. Experienced writers/journalists are not in unlimited supply either. Some are too busy to take the lead time necessary for research and then would rather sell their professional work for good money elsewhere. And who can blame them? Inevitably, not everything which deserves coverage gets it. All this is merely a reflection of reality. Putting out a regular publication with no editorial budget, in fact on very little money at all, is a frustrating business.

All this having been said, *Broadside* has appeared, promptly and regularly, for seven years. In spite of the work-load, the collective has been relatively stable: before my resignation four of the nine current members were founding mothers. Contrary to popular belief the collective does not perpetuate itself by recruiting from within the friendship circle of its older members. Quite the contrary, only one of the four latest additions to the collective was known to any of the existing members.

Somehow we are making it work year after year, month after month. In my view, *Broadside's* survival and relative success as a newspaper has been possible because of the

flexibility of its collective process. This process evolved as a pragmatic response to what are, by most standards, impossible odds.

A 'collective' is often understood as a style of organization in which every member must participate in every decision and have absolute veto over every initiative, otherwise all members aren't equal or equally responsible. In this model, the purpose for which individuals came together in the first place, the collective goal, becomes subordinated to a preoccupation with each woman's role in the process and her feelings about it. This is a prescription for frustration and, in many cases, failure. A doctrinaire position on process leads members of a collective into spending more time and energy making sure that nothing and nobody does anything without their agreement, or at least input, than in actually doing anything. As a result, very little is accomplished and what is tends to be repudiated and constantly questioned. Collective solidarity is undermined and eventually the structure collapses, usually amid pain and recrimination.

*Broadside* exists to this day because over the years enough mutual trust and ego strength has been exhibited by members of the collective to prevent it from self-destructing in this manner. Not that we have been immune from problems from both within and without. Nevertheless, as a group we have somehow managed to put the welfare of *Broadside* above individual egos, reputations and even friendships. In an ideal world this wouldn't be necessary, but in this world it is essential. Feminist newspapers like *Broadside* must have a cadre of strong, secure women, who can delegate. They must understand the necessity for collective solidarity; have the nerve to handle hot issues and to stick out their individual and collective necks for unpopular opinions or in support of contributors with whom they do not necessarily agree, and still get the job done. These are survival characteristics without which there can be no feminist press, certainly no press worthy of that name; no paper worth reading or supporting.

In my view, *Broadside* will continue as long as there are enough women working on it who have what it takes. And as long as there are enough women in the community at large who understand what it takes.

For myself, I want to thank members of the *Broadside* collective, current and past, for teaching me so much and for all the good times we've had together. I hope to be able to get my by-line in the paper now and again.



Eve Zaremba

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