

NEWSLETTER

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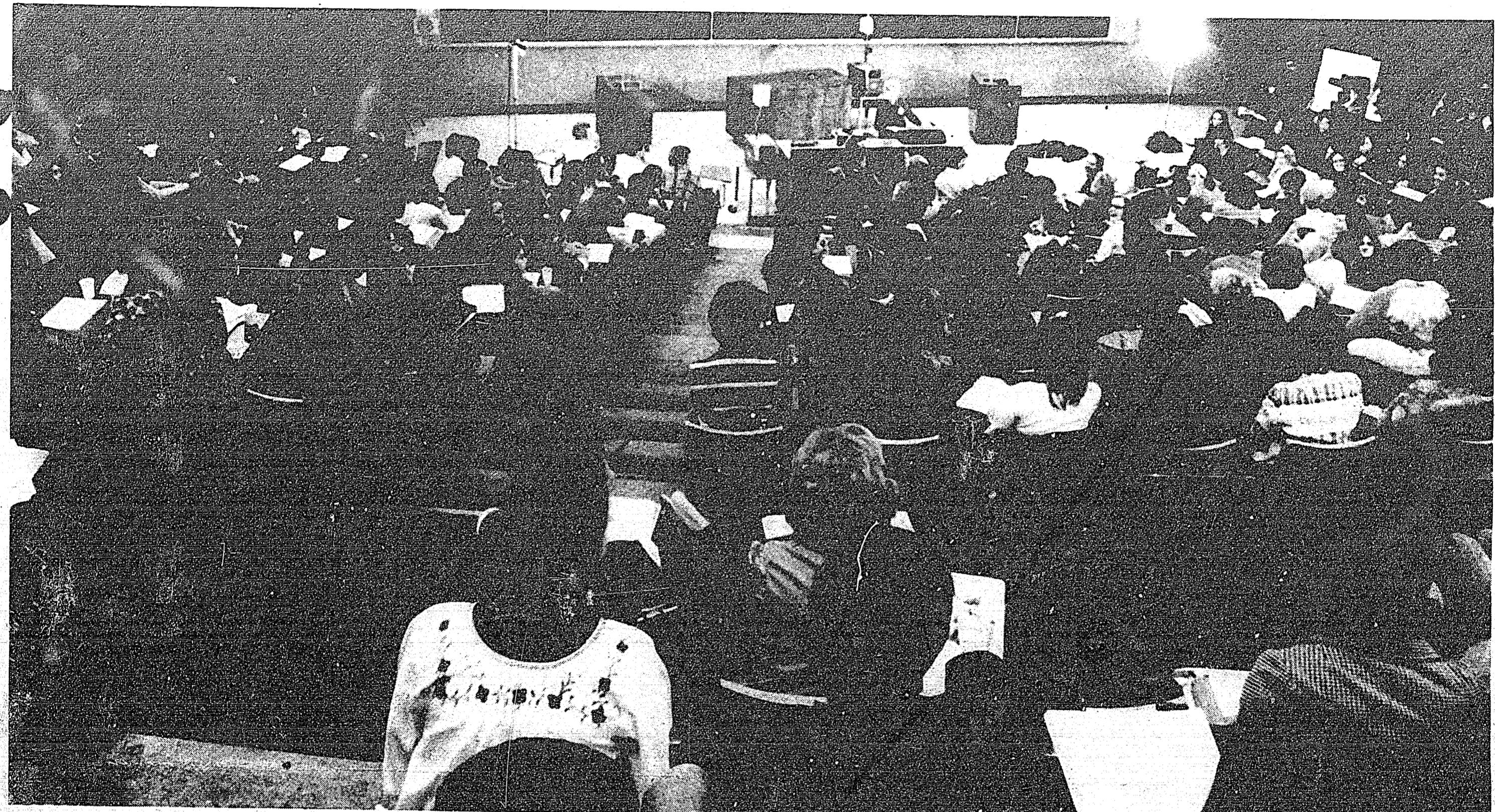
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Status of Women

SPECIAL EDITION

BCTF conference on sex discrimination



Grace MacInnis, NDP MP for Vancouver-Kingsway delivers a strong message to an enraptured audience at the Simon Fraser conference. She had harsh words for the education system, saying it teaches only yesterday's wisdom.

Photo by Carol Gordon

MacInnis charges

Education system has failed to keep up with the times

'As long as we have women content to be just women and men content to be just men we'll carry on this lovely dog-eat-dog competitive struggle of men trying to keep women down and women trying to erupt,' said keynote speaker Grace MacInnis, stressing the importance of co-operative effort to overcome sex discrimination.

MacInnis, Member of Parliament for Vancouver-Kingsway and a long time advocate of women's rights, was addressing the 500 people attending the BCTF sponsored conference on sex discrimination in education, held March 16 at Simon Fraser University.

MacInnis had harsh words for the education system. In far too many cases, she said, education is teaching only yesterday's wisdom. She explained that yesterday's wisdom clearly defined the roles of the sexes. 'Men were supposed to be active, aggressive, manly and seeking their role in the community, while women were supposed to be very gentle, sweet, obedient and, above all, passive.'

Technology has upset this pattern, she said, but the education system has failed to keep up with the times. 'Until we recognize this in our educational work, and bring our ideas into line with our technology, we are not going to get out of the woods.'

Holding up a counselling pamphlet presently used in Ontario she quoted advice to young girls to choose easy jobs rather than to break into jobs traditionally held by men.

'But your choice may also be influenced by the fact that you are women. If you are interested in chemistry you'll find it easier, and perhaps just as satisfying, if you go into home economics rather than trying to break into the petroleum industry,' she quoted.

MacInnis linked this pamphlet to the Chinese binding women's feet to keep them small, saying that the pamphlet 'is head-binding of the worst kind.'

MacInnis advocated a recommendation from the Royal Commission on the Status of Women that called for family life programs.

'In the earliest years of public school a program of family life education should be taught that will be centered on the motivation of teaching changed relationships between the sexes — not indirectly but directly. Facing boys and girls with the fact that from here on in they are not going to be competitors, they are going to be partners.'

She felt that the schools should deal with such topics as contraceptives, family planning, birth control and abortion.



Photo by Carol Gordon

'You see these are things that I think are the province of education. I am not talking about conventional subjects of education. Sure we should have them. We need them for trades and occupations and for opening minds. But we need these other subjects as a pivotal motivation for the new kind of living,' she said.

She urged all people present to try to get men to work with them and to introduce the topics she discussed in education. 'It won't be easy, but it is pioneering.'

MacInnis concluded by stressing the importance of responsibility along with rights. 'We've just come through a stage where everybody is so conscious of their rights. It is time now, that we teach children from the earliest moment and all through life that for every right there is a corresponding responsibility.'

The audience responded to Ms. MacInnis' stimulating address with a prolonged standing ovation.

Non-sexist child rearing

Simple reversal of roles won't work

Non-sexist child-rearing cannot be accomplished until our society is non-sexist, Meredith Kimball, a psychologist from UBC, told participants at the afternoon session of the conference.

This ideal society, she said, would not be attained by a simple reversal of sex roles. 'If we say women are going to be aggressive and men are going to be dependent — that is as sexist as the kinds of values and implications we have today.'

Nor would this non-sexist society mean an end to individual differences. 'Rather, greater individual variations would be evident because traditional sex roles tend to narrow the range of options open to both women and men.'

Kimball explained that children learn very early — two or three years old — that certain jobs and behaviors belong to males or females. Sex roles are learned at home and from television, books and schools.



Meredith Kimball

Claudia Stein explains family life program

One of the workshops at the conference — Human Sexuality Programs in our Schools — was designed to help teachers establish and conduct successful human sexuality programs in their schools.

Claudia Stein, leader of the workshop and co-ordinator of Vancouver School Board's special project on family life education, stressed the importance of establishing the right kind of atmosphere, and the right kind of approach. It is fundamental not to have a laid-on curriculum — a specific curriculum limits the area for discussion. Rather, one tries to establish a process — a framework that could be used anywhere but the content would differ according to the needs of the people involved.

Interaction with others is important — sharing, discussing and looking at attitudes and clarifying values. Emphasis should be on 'self.'

Stein found that students responded well to her program and many were willing to meet after school 'to get more deeply into relationships and feelings and emotions.'



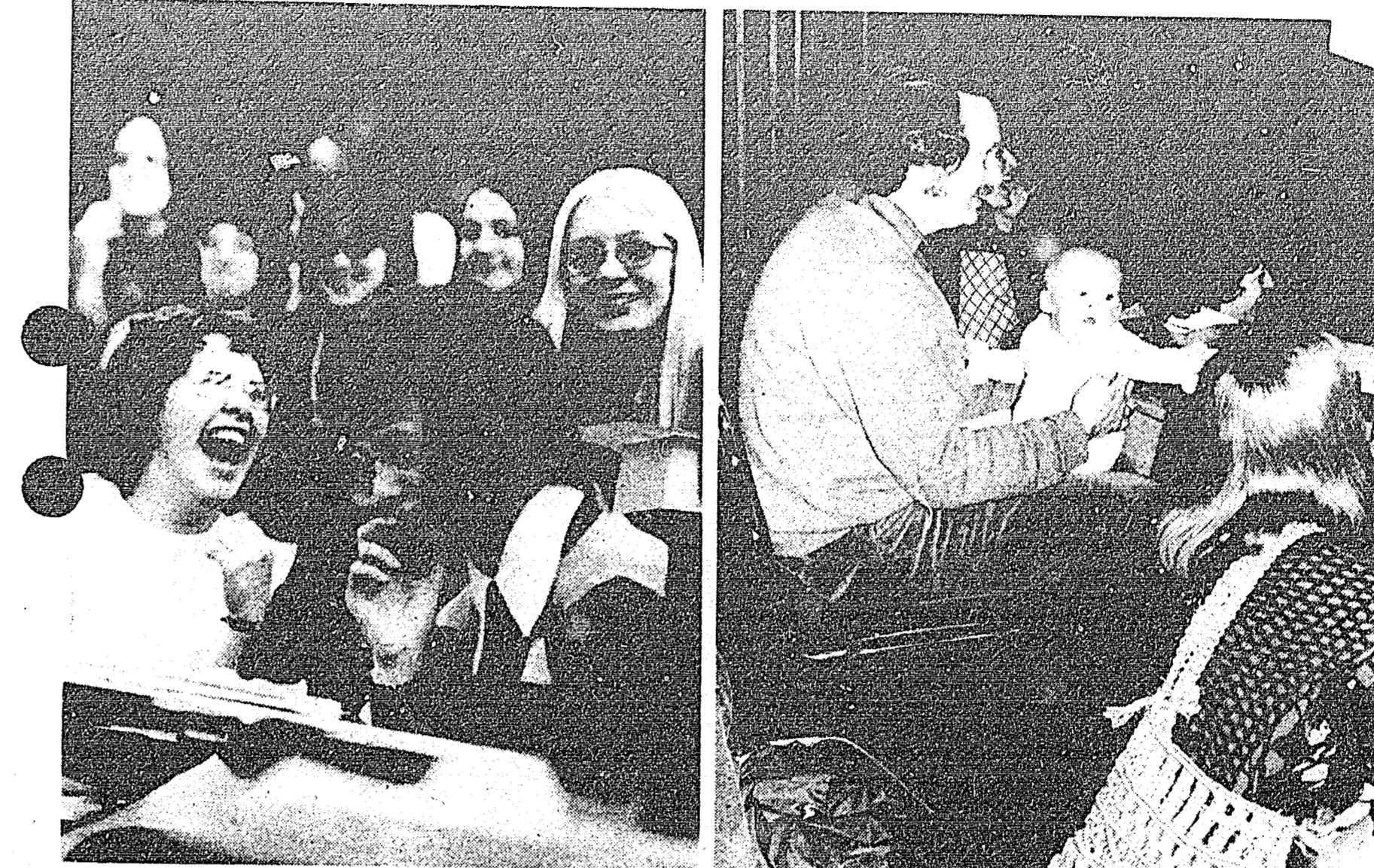
Claudia Stein

500 attend BCTF conference at Simon Fraser



Participants registering at the conference.

Photos by Mary Casselman



Good fun mixed with deep thought.

BCTF President Jim MacFarlan also participated.

Cherniak says:

Women must be self directed

The art of self defense involves becoming aware of any of the internal or external forces that keep you from being and doing all that you want to do or be, said Dr. Saralee Cherniak of SFU Counselling Services, conducting a workshop on emotional self defense for women.

'Women have very much been confined to the inner world of emotions, and to the extent that our energy is there, we can't deal effectively with the outer world.'

Cherniak explained that just as children are socialized to learn their sex roles, women are socialized to maintain these roles.

'Women suffer most from being "other directed" rather than "self directed." "Other directed" people, men or women, she said, have little sense of self esteem since they depend on someone else's evaluation of themselves.

'Behavior can be defined neutrally, positively or negatively. But by giving up the power to define what is occurring, women allow themselves to be pushed and pulled at the mercy of significant "others." Self-effacing behavior and false humility can be encouraged by labelling them as modest. Submissiveness and acquiescence can be maintained by renaming them flexibility and co-operation.'



Saralee Cherniak

Marlene Morgan says:

Counselling role can be frustrating, rewarding

Marlene Morgan's workshop on Guidance and Counselling illustrated the sensitivity which obviously marks her success as a counsellor at Kensington School in Burnaby.

Morgan described the guidance role as being frustrating but rewarding. Split girl-boy classes have their drawbacks but do lead to natural exploratory work for young girls on the roles of woman. She stressed the need for guidance people to remember that parents have their own attitudes, children change at different rates, and adolescents, facing change, have a basic need for security of some

kind. 'Be careful not to push too hard — upsetting a balanced child can be as destructive as doing nothing,' said Morgan.

For young girls a delicate balance must be met between the philosophical aspects of the human dignity of a woman — that as a woman she is not limited, and the realities that men and women must work out. The reality, for example, that perhaps the faculties of dentistry and medicine do not yet admit as many women students as men students. This must be spelled out but placed in proper perspective with a healthy degree of optimism.

Ending on an optimistic note Morgan affirmed that there has been a positive change in students especially in the way that they are willing to look at themselves.

Handling put downs well attended

How to Handle Male Put Downs, lead by Sheilah Thompson, director of counselling at Douglas College and Sheilah Allan, a doctoral student at UBC, was by far the most well attended workshop at the conference.

Thompson stressed the importance of being aware of put downs, saying that in some cases insensitivity may cause one to not recognize a put down.

In education the big problems are the subtlety of discrimination and tokenism. 'To counteract these forces women must be able to say two things: that we really do carry our load in the profession and that we really do feel good about ourselves,' said Thompson.

Particular types of put downs were explained as well as techniques for combating put downs. It was stressed that

techniques should be varied because always reacting the same way toward put downs (e.g., with anger) soon renders it ineffective.

Questions like: Do you have

a family? can be countered with: Yes, my mother and father are fine. And when the question of birth control arises, you can ask with horror: What kind of a job is this?



The Feminist Theater Co-op provided humorous skits.

Women in politics

Get involved in politics says Rosemary Brown

Vancouver-Burrard MLA Rosemary Brown urged women to get involved in political action to effect changes.

'After almost 200 years of struggle we're still where we were!'

Speaking to participants at the workshop Women in Politics, Brown said that in the past women's groups have pri-

ded themselves in being non-political — which only helped to keep women subjected and stereotyped.

She said that the unequal treatment she receives as a woman is much greater than any prejudice she has experienced as a black person. 'As a woman, I'm continually treated unequally.'

Women in literature

Anonymous was probably a woman — Rosenthal

Helena Rosenthal led the workshop Women in Literature, focusing on twentieth century women poets. Rosenthal a poet herself, is presently studying for her Master's degree in English at UBC.

Poetry was chosen rather than fiction because Rosenthal felt 'not much had been done in this field.'

She marvelled at women having achieved as much as

they did as there was little opportunity for the development of women as poets. Women were kept home-bound and illiterate.

Poetry, Rosenthal said,

should not be classified according to sex, but, like any art form, judged on its own merits.

Through the reading of various poems Rosenthal demonstrated how women defined themselves both as women and as artists.

'Anonymous,' she said, 'was probably a woman.'

Glass said that teachers are the main hindrance. 'It has been said that the biggest factor holding back improvements in our PE programs is the men and women PE teachers.'



Gale Neuberger



Catherine Carolan

Women in sports

PE teachers limit progress

'By segregating classes by sex the individual traits of strength, co-ordination, rhythm, agility, flexibility and speed are subordinated to the sex role,' explained Dorothy Glass, leader of the workshop Women in Sports.

Glass, a teacher at Campbell River Senior Secondary — a school that has a completely integrated sports program — stressed the importance of developing individual potential

through student involvement in sports on the basis of preference rather than sex.

Statistics from the program at her school showed that many students did not choose the traditional 'male' or 'female' sports. 'When given the opportunity, both boys and girls enjoy participating in such things as yoga, wrestling, creative dance and soccer.'

Although students enjoy an integrated sports program,



Cherniak says:

Women must be self directed

Another side effect of being other directed, she said, is a strong need for approval and an inability to accept criticism. Many women come to feel that they must be liked by everyone and similarly are obligated to like all others. Criticism becomes very difficult to hear, let alone evaluate, without feeling hurt, tearful and defensive.

The total effect of being other directed causes a self perpetuating cycle, Cherniak explained. 'Self doubt causes depression which causes withdrawal from activity — the very activities that would lead to success and therefore to increased self esteem.'



Saralee Cherniak

Girls are invisible

A workshop on sex discrimination in pre-school picture books and public school textbooks was conducted by Catherine Carolan and Gale Neuberger.

'Books are one place where children find models to emulate. We must provide children with models in various occupations so that their career choice will be based on individual preference and not necessarily long standing tradition,' said Neuberger.

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Gale Neuberger



Catherine Carolan

The status of women program in the BCTF is nearing the end of its first year. This special issue of the Newsletter is intended to inform the membership of the major events and issues of the past year and to encourage interest and participation in the plans for the coming year.

The first year of the status of women program has produced substantial results. The following is a point by point analysis of what has been happening since the inception of the program in September 1973.

- presentation to presidents — Naramata — August 1973
- 72 contact people — most have a committee
- staff person has held personal meetings with 41 local associations
- discussion paper to MLAs — November 1973
- brief to Minister of Education — January 1974
- session on parliamentary procedure — January 1974

• women's conferences attended: Kelowna, Victoria, Vancouver

• other conferences attended: OVTA convention, primary teachers' conference, teacher education conference (brief submitted), Victoria Co-operative Pre-School Association, planning conference for international women's year — Ottawa

• BCTF conference on sex discrimination at SFU — 500 present

• meetings have been held with: Minister of Education, deans of education at three major universities, Kathleen Ruff — Director of Human Rights Act, Department of Education Secondary Advisory Committee, B.C. School Trustees Association, Family Services Centre, Vancouver Status of Women, Victoria Status of Women, BCTF Professional Development and Curriculum Committee, BCTF Part-Time Teachers' Task Force, BCTF

PSAs — eight as well as PSA Council, UBC Centre for Continuing Education — Women's Resources Centre, UBC Women's Office and Women's Action Group, Women's Information Centre — YWCA.

• materials produced: Textbook Study — by Women in Teaching, Cope Kit — by Vancouver Status of Women, Counsellors' Kit — by Vancouver Status of Women,

overstuffed vocational files. Students were exposed to many interesting and successful women in both traditional and non-traditional occupations.

The keynote speakers were Linda Shuto, BCTF staff and Kathleen Ruff, Director of the Human Rights Act. A panel of four women from the fields of law, medicine, journalism and government followed.

Lunch was served by the boys from Foods 12B, followed by a panel of recently graduated students who discussed their personal job experiences and opinions of how working or further study had changed their ideas. Later, women representing a broad spectrum of the working world assembled in various booths to talk informally to students and distribute materials from all over Canada and U.S.A. on different careers and opportunities.

For further information on how to set up a conference of this sort contact Judy Bellis or Gail Robb at Belmont-Fisher Secondary School in Sooke.

Congratulations to Delta

Delta Teachers' Association has granted \$200 to their local status of women committee to conduct a 'careers night' similar to the Sooke program on June 5 at Burnsview Jr. Secondary.

Where are we going?

The second year of the BCTF Status of Women program will focus on the local program and its activities with special emphasis on in-service. Teachers must not only be aware of the harmful effects of sex discrimination, but must implement positive practices in their everyday teaching to eliminate discrimination from education.

The contact person from each local will be the key to success in this endeavor. If you are interested in being the contact person for your local or working on the committee, you should call your local president.

Since the status of women program was initially established for two years, the Task Force on the Status of Women will be examining the progress closely and will make recommendations to the 1975 Annual General Meeting concerning the fate of the program.

If you are interested in serving on the Task Force on the Status of Women, a curriculum vitae form (available from the BCTF), should be completed and submitted to the B.C. Teachers' Federation, c/o Linda Shuto, by June 15, 1974.

Summer Short Course — Women Are Persons

July 8-12 Cost: \$30

further information from BCTF

Action for Women Conference — May 25 — Capilano College

further information: Vancouver Status of Women

Status of women

Good results from programs first year



Linda Shuto

school boards in conjunction with BCSTA, articles in *BCTF Newsletter*, special Status of Women Newsletter to contact people, video-tape of Sexism in Schools — by Pearl Lynn.

• plans for: Summer Short Course on Women's Studies, in-service conference in Kelowna — October 5, Kit: in-service for use in locals on PSA days or special workshops, kit: How to Establish Your Local Program — for use this fall.

New vocational horizons for girls at Sooke

On March 6, at Sooke's Belmont-Fisher Secondary School, a conference with a



Gail Robb, l., and Judy Bellis

refreshing approach to vocational counselling was presented, organized by Judy Bellis and Gail Robb, school counsellors.

The original idea was to hold a comprehensive high quality vocational conference particularly for senior girls. In all, about 150 students attended the conference. The benefits of this experience have been: a more interested and aware group of students, renewed enthusiasm to use this and other methods of taking information to students, closer contact with community resources, and

Salary indemnity

All teachers who cannot work because of illness are entitled to apply for salary indemnity benefits after they have used all their sick leave. However, women who are pregnant and ordered not to work by their doctor cannot collect SIF benefits.

This discriminatory regulation is under investigation by the Status of Women Task Force.

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Okanagan conference held on stereotypes

Speakers at the Okanagan Valley Teachers' Convention in March on 'Status, Stereotypes and Sex Roles' were Dr. Bruno Bettleheim of the Orthogenic School of the University of Chicago, Doris Anderson, editor-in-chief of *Chatelaine* and Joan Wallace of the Federal Advisory Council on the Status of Women.

While all speakers abhorred the existence of stereotypes their solutions to the problem differed. Bettleheim explained that women already hold a favored position in society and need only to give housework a

No girls allowed

No Girls Allowed, a videotape produced by Pearl Lynn of North Vancouver, deals mainly with sex stereotyping in elementary schools.

Produced to expose the stereotyped attitudes of young children and the influence of the school system in shaping those attitudes, *No Girls Allowed* originally appeared on Community 10 TV as a segment of the Classroom Corner series.

No Girls Allowed is available from the BCTF Resources Center.

better status, while Anderson gave personal examples of discrimination and deplored the media's treatment of women. Wallace gave examples of blatant discrimination against women in society and implored women to get involved in politics.

The panel discussion was followed by a two-hour workshop in the afternoon.

Committee established

A committee to investigate discrimination in textbooks has been established by the Department of Education as a result of a request from the Task Force on the Status of Women in a brief to the Minister in January. The committee will be composed of representatives from several organizations and community groups interested in education and the status of women.

One book, entitled *Modern News Reporting*, has already been dropped from the prescribed list after the task force pointed out a discriminatory chapter on writing news for women.

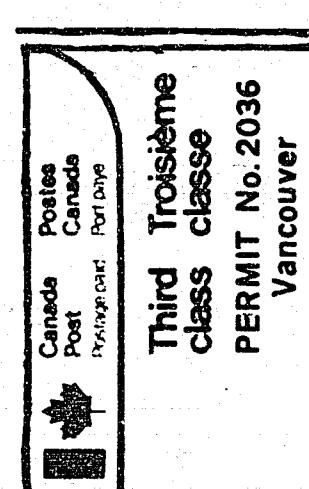
Provincial statistics available

The following information was obtained from a questionnaire sent by the B.C. School Trustees Association and the BCTF to all school boards. The statistical information of each school district is available from L. Shuto at the BCTF office.

NUMBER OF:

	MALE	FEMALE
1. Teachers in your district (including administrators)	10,916.26	12,087.82
2. Elementary a) principals	1,027	219
b) vice-principals	285	7
c) head teachers	108	115
d) co-ordinators or assistants to the principal	110	58.4
3. Secondary a) principals	286	nil
b) vice-principals	288	5
c) department heads	905	163
4. Supervisors	100.66	56
5. Directors	66	6*
6. Teachers who applied for any administrative post in 1972 '73 school year	1,730	155
7. Teachers in primary grades	1,054.45	4,593.30
8. Teachers in intermediate grades	2,364.20	3,621.22
9. Teachers in secondary	6,297	2,991.70

*5 of these are not Directors of Instruction.



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