

THIS NEWSLETTER'S BEEN A LONG TIME COMING.....

We've been busy and lots has happened. The difficult part is getting access to the resources to print it/ collecting materials to do it/ and co-ordinating our own time and energy to make it happen.

THANKS to Catholic Social Services Committee for the use of their Gestetner, to MOVE for cheaper stencils and paper.

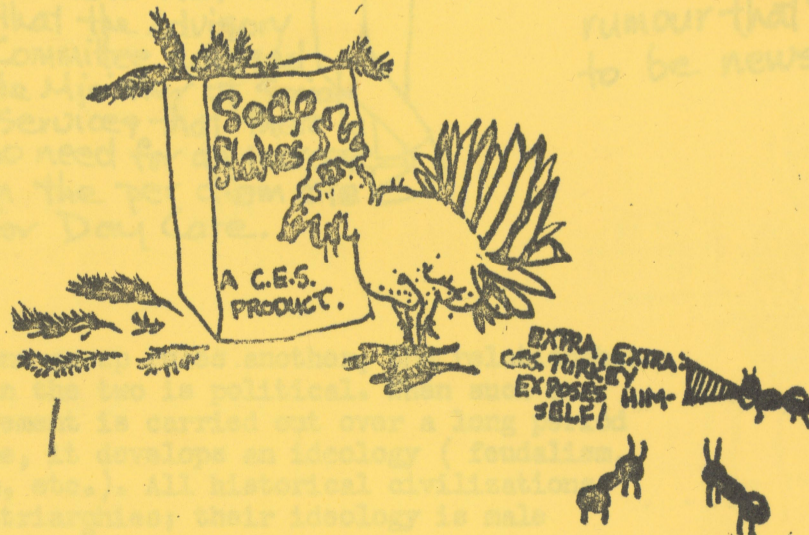
(We wish to acknowledge the great service MOVE used to provide and to again express our regret at its passing)

REEL LIFE REPORT

brought to you this time by JAY, VICKI, CATHY, GERT.
Box 992, Halifax, NS

IN THIS ISSUE....

- ★ Can women fly ?
- ✂ PORNOGRAPHY
- ★ Can anyone really love a feminist ?
AFTER ALL ... what is love ?
what is a feminist ??
what is reel ???
- ★ Will PHOTO-HERITAGE find a HOME ?
- ★ What's really been happening over the past year ?
- ★ THE REEL NEWS, PLAINLY REEL
- ...and a message for Lynne Carie, MISinformation Officer at C.E.S. for his unresearched opinion in the May CES Newsletter:



VIDEO TAPES WE HAVE BEEN WORKING ON..... ☆☆☆☆☆

ANNA MAE AQUASH: REEL LIFE has video taped Johanna Brand (who has published a book called "The Life and Death of Anna Mae Aquash") and Mary Laffert, sister of Anna Mae when they spoke at the North End Library, Gottingen St. Anna Mae (Pictou) Aquash is from Shubenacadie and was a leader in the American Indian Movement. She died on the Pine Ridge Reserve and was buried quickly without identification, her hands cut off and under highly suspicious circumstances. This tape is still being edited but will be available to community groups soon.

HALIFAX WELFARE RIGHTS ORGANIZATION: THE POWER HEIST - Comments by people who are on a low income or fixed income about the N.S. Power Corp. proposed 25% increase.

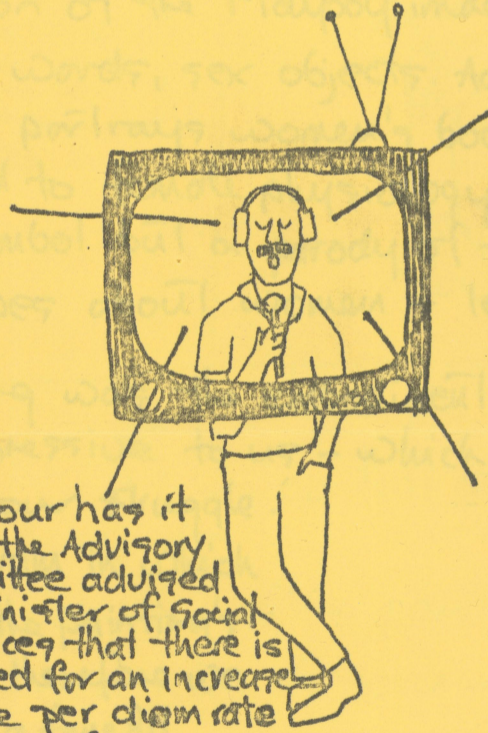
COALITION FOR DAYCARE - remember the Province House confrontation with Regan?

HELEN GRANDY = Human Rights Commission Sex Discrimination Appeal Process that Fails Women.
Documentation of Helen's experience with sex discrimination at Atmus Equipment Truro, N.S.

18 CHAIRS. A TRAVELLING EXHIBIT OF THE N.S. MUSEUM is the subject of A TRAINING TAPE which looks at the problems of travelling exhibits. The tape was used in a workshop at a National Museum Conference.

Also available - "Here Today" documentation about the Neighbourhood Work Activities: Pipeline funding and what community groups think about that....

An Atlantic Video Festival is being planned for November. If you're interested in participating - write THE VIDEO THEATRE 1571 Argyle Street, Halifax.



Rumour has it that REEL LIFE has been awarded the Lavender Diesel Award for duty beyond the call of liberalism" in 197 by G.A.E.

Rumour has it that the Advisory Committee advised the Minister of Social Services that there is no need for an increase in the per diem rate for Day Care.

Well, that's all the rumour that's fit to be news.

"When one group rules another, the relationship between the two is political. When such an arrangement is carried out over a long period of time, it develops an ideology (feudalism, racism, etc.). All historical civilizations are patriarchies; their ideology is male supremacy."
- Kate Millet

NEVER RETRACT, NEVER APOLOGIZE,
NEVER EXPLAIN; GET THE THING
DONE AND LET THEM HOWL
- Nellie McClung

In the Summer of '77, FEEL LIFE participated in a political action at the Turret, the space run by Gay Alliance for Equality in Halifax. We spray painted a sexist mural in protest and then presented the following statement at the next general membership meeting of the G.A.E. outlining our anger, and the reason we chose to act first.

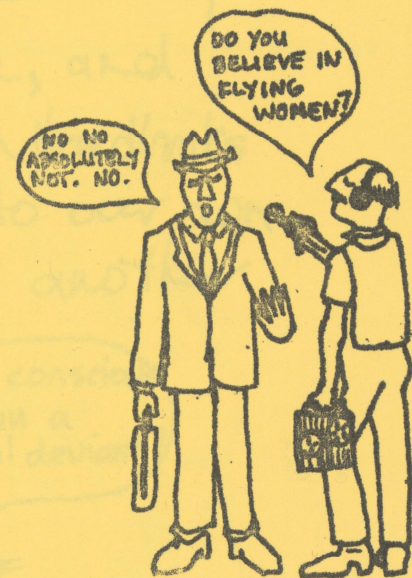
We also scheduled a time for the next evening when we would be present to talk about sexism.

"The painting at the Turret is to us a blatant objectification of women, and as such, an insult. In society at large women are consistently portrayed as bodies to be beautified in a stereotyped notion of femininity. As women struggling for control of our own bodies + sexuality, we can only interpret this kind of objectification as an insult.

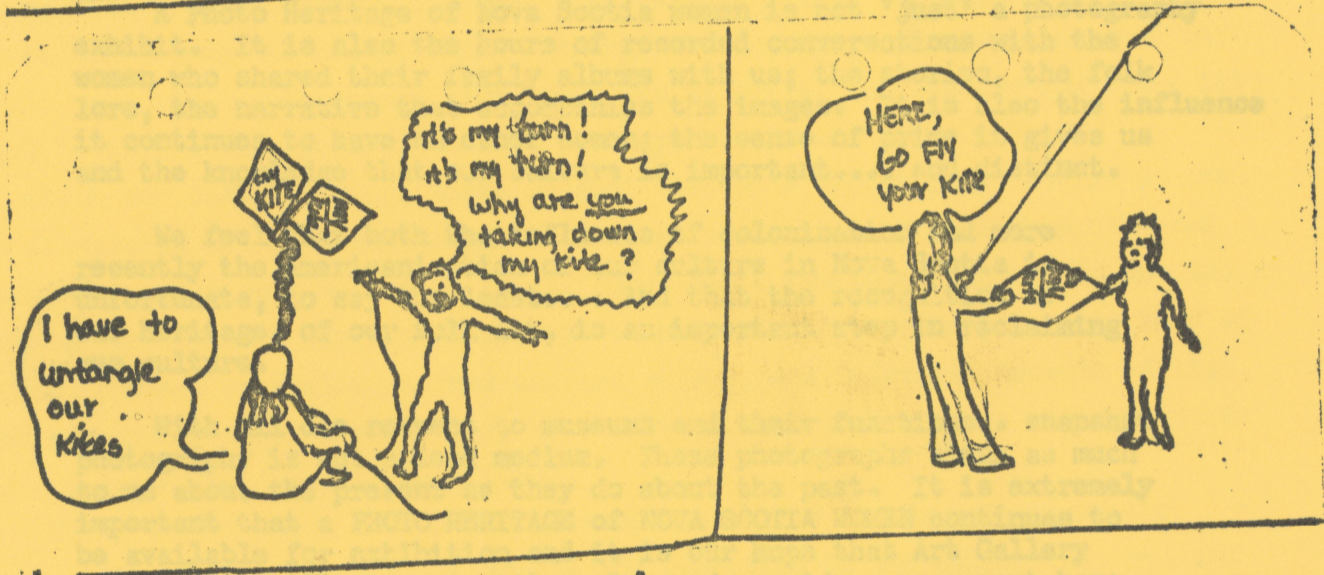
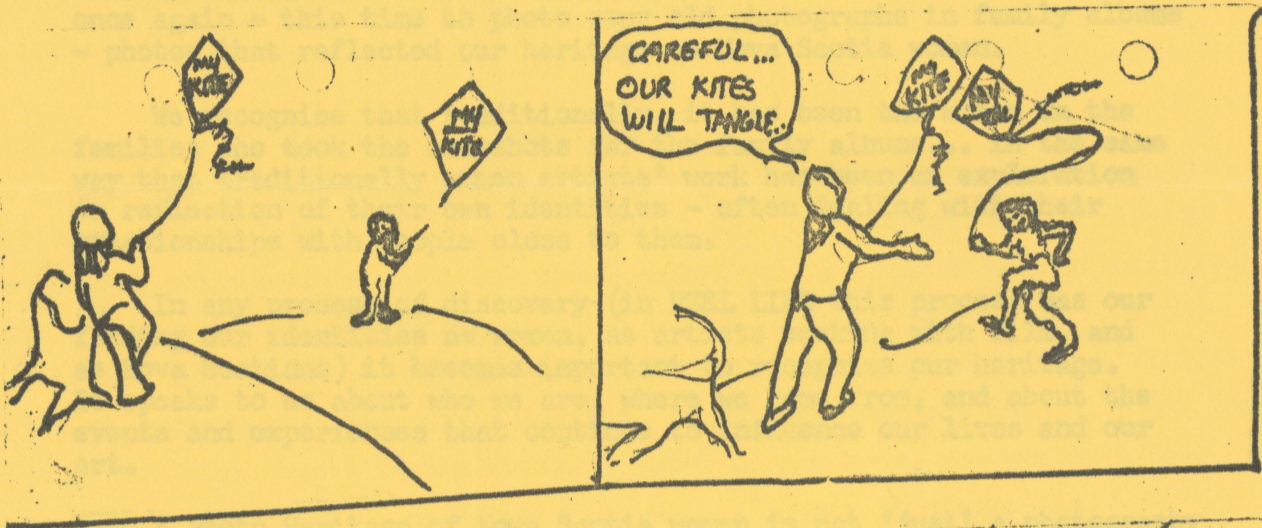
It essentially denotes women's breasts as sex symbols, which is an extension of the Playboy image of women as 'tits + ass', in other words, sex objects. Add to that a style of painting which portrays women's bodies in a fantasy form unrelated to female physiology. To us it is not a meaningful symbol but a parody of the worst aspects of stereotypes about women + lesbians.

This painting was the embodiment of an attitude which is oppressive to us - which is in direct opposition to our struggle.

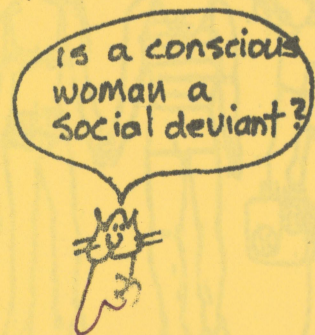
We had no forum in which to negotiate the painting's presence, and therefore we reacted with a forceful response. We also felt it was necessary to communicate the depth of our rage in response to the attitude the painting symbolizes. If the wall had been quietly painted over there would have been no opportunity to publicly express the depth + nature of this insult. Our actions in no way indicate disrespect for G.A.E. aims or activities, or unwillingness to work in the organization



In the spring of 78 we initiated another political action ~~which~~ ^{this} time directed at Forrest House, 'A Woman's Place'. It was a poster outlining our criticism of their actions and blatant exploitation of women, which we delivered in person to Forrest House, stating that we were interested in hearing a response from them. Three weeks later we still had received no response, other than a phone call from a woman working there who said the poster was "great". Taking this to be the response and an indication of their attitude we sent the poster to other community groups and women in the community. It was our feeling, and still is, that oppressive behavior carried on in the name of "the women's movement" cannot go unchallenged by feminists in the community.



On Abortion + [★] the right to control our destinies
^{★ ★ ★}
 when the old Women's Centre passed away
 we lost an abortion referral service, and
 since the last of the local Abortion handbooks
 has been distributed... we're left to our own
 resources again. Wanna help print another
 Handbook?



May 24, 1978.

A PHOTO HERITAGE OF NOVA SCOTIA WOMEN project began when women in REEL LIFE began to evaluate art from a feminist perspective. As photographers, film makers, and videographers, our interest in women and film is a particular focus.

In 1974, we toured 22 communities in a van outfitted with films, slide-tapes, videotapes (including our own productions), and publications on women's issues. In 1975, we formed an information/resource centre in Halifax and concentrated on research and media workshops. We booked out our material, gave workshops to women in the community, and published "The Maritime Women's Access Handbook". We also toured Nova Scotia once again - this time to photo copy old photographs in family albums - photos that reflected our heritage as Nova Scotia women.

We recognise that traditionally, it has been the women in the families who took the snapshots for the family albums... in the same way that traditionally women artists' work has been an exploration or reflection of their own identities - often dealing with their relationships with people close to them.

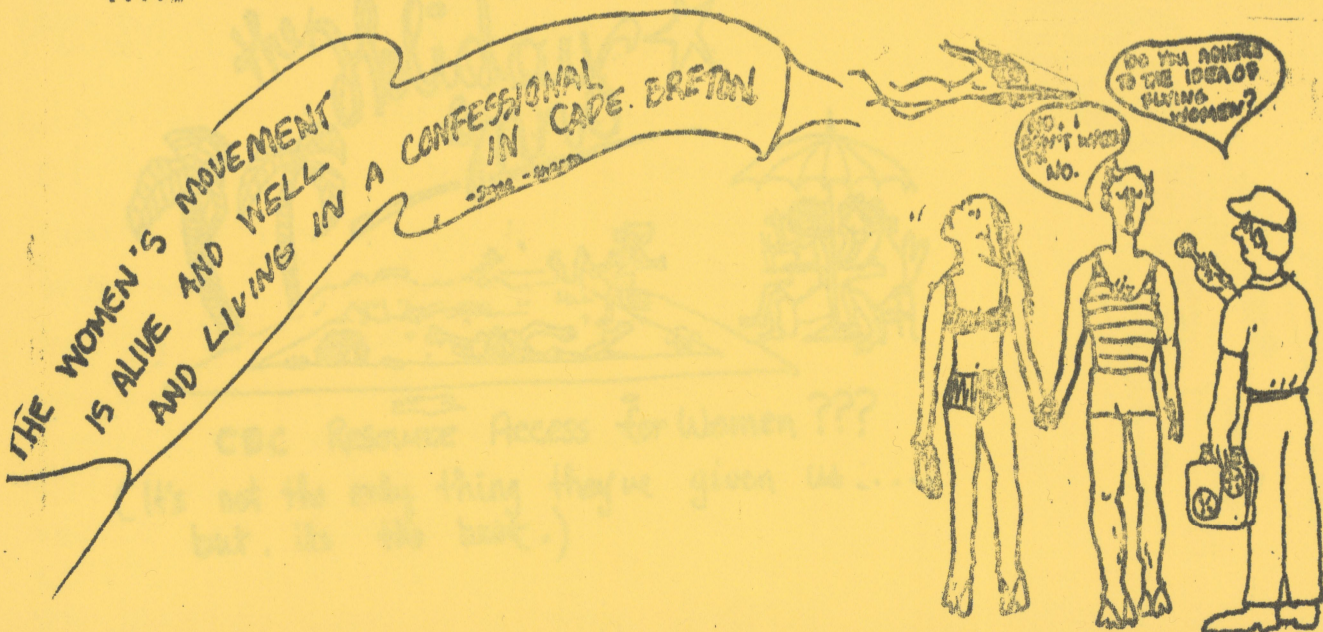
In any process of discovery (in REEL LIFE this process was our finding our identities as women, as artists working with film, and as Nova Scotians) it becomes important to recognize our heritage. It speaks to us about who we are, where we come from, and about the events and experiences that continue to influence our lives and our art.

A Photo Heritage of Nova Scotia women is not 'just' a photography exhibit. It is also the hours of recorded conversations with the women who shared their family albums with us; the stories, the folk lore, the narrative that accompanies the images. It is also the influence it continues to have on other women; the sense of pride it gives us and the knowledge that our culture is important... and distinct.

We feel that both the influence of colonization and more recently the Americanization of our culture in Nova Scotia is unfortunate; to say the least.... And that the recognition of our heritage, of our folk art, is an important step in reclaiming our culture.

With all due respect to museums and their functions.. snapshot photography is not a dead medium. These photographs speak as much to us about the present as they do about the past. It is extremely important that a PHOTO HERITAGE of NOVA SCOTIA WOMEN continues to be available for exhibition and it is our hope that Art Gallery Nova Scotia will recognize its value and provide a permanent home for the exhibit

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TO BE PUBLISHED SOON: Photo Heritage Catalogue, in print, a description of the photographs in the Photo Heritage of Nova Scotia women Exhibit.
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...the continuing saga of "PHOTO HERITAGE LOOKS FOR A PERMANENT HOME"... The Upshot/Reel Life ~~submitted~~ the request on the previous page to Art Gallery Nova Scotia in an attempt to find a home for the exhibition. A week later we learned that it would not be included in their permanent collection of Nova Scotia Folk Art because their policy says "nothing about the acquisition of photographs"

Reprinted from June 1978 Upstream, an article entitled "Creating a feminist politic" by Lorene Clark:

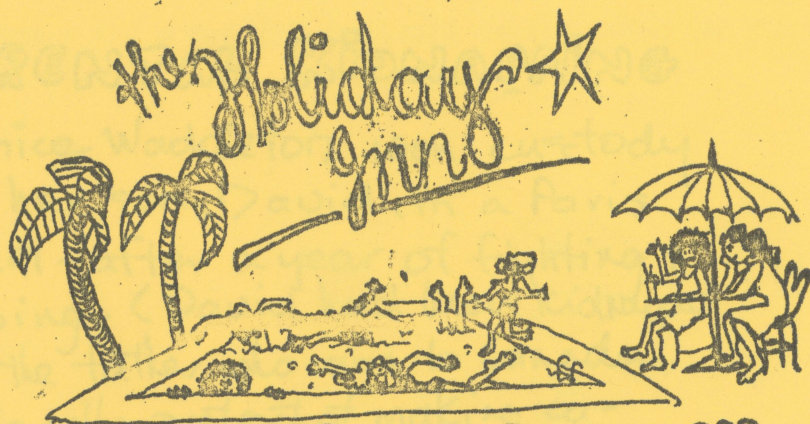
What lies ahead for the Women's Movement?.....

"..On pornography, for example, we're going to be labeled pro-censorship and repressive. There'll be no small-l-liberals on this one. Fortunately we already have a legal precedent for opposing pornography: we don't allow hate literature. People are starting to apply this parallel to pornography. If you can find the right label, that alone can get people thinking and reconceptualizing. I've been looking at pornography- not just to develop an anti-pornography analysis- but also to let people know what's in the stuff. If most people knew, you wouldn't hear any nervous arguments about censorship because it's just so disgusting.

We can get men to change their feelings about pornography just the same way we get rape victims to change their feelings of guilt, humiliation and blame into anger by having them reconceptualize the rape experience as an assault.

Given our social system, shame is just what we'd expect rape victims to feel and in exactly the same way arousal is what we expect men to feel when they see pornography. But what we can do is say "Look, don't you think you should get mad at a social system that has socialized you to have sexual responses to this kind of stuff?" Instead of feeling turned on, and guilty, and defensive because of that, they can become angry because they have felt aroused just as rape victims become angry because they've felt humiliated.

Using this tactic, I've found it much easier for men to understand our perspective. And, after all, if people are committed to the belief that men and women are equals, then they have to concede very quickly that getting turned on by pornography is simply inconsistent with that belief. It's just impossible to be turned on by pornography and have a relationship with women that is a relationship between equals. "



CBC Resource Access for Women ???
(It's not the only thing they've given us.....
but, it's the best.)

TOWARDS A MORE FEMINIST TRAINING....

"Training" is a word to describe an educational experience in which the participants are responsible for their own learning.

Many people express uneasiness about the term "training" because it suggests a kind of manipulation, or force or mechanical skill development. It therefore may be useful to compare training to the traditional education experience we are all familiar with.

Training means that the participant has some knowledge of her own goals, objectives and/or needs and seeks out an educational experience that is structured to allow for personal and group growth. Unlike traditional educational experiences, training has leaders as opposed to teachers; and participants as opposed to students. In a training event, participants learn what they want to learn - or need to learn, and to the extent that they can learn. The participant is encouraged to get in touch with her goals, philosophy and resources and learning is facilitated by leaders skilled in group and individual learning processes. This ethic can be seen more clearly in opposition to the usual school teaching structure which brings a prescribed body of knowledge to the passive recipient students, and where teachers' credentials are related to the 'content' material and status they have been able to accumulate, i.e. - degrees, authorship, and social position.

Feminists are women who are taking their power back to themselves and are working for social change. Feminist training is simply good training where a feminist can learn in an atmosphere that is open and accepting. To REEL LIFE's experience there have been few chances for this kind of training.

Recently a C.U.T. (Community Urban Training program) was held in Halifax. This event was sponsored by the Churches and is primarily directed towards training for Ministers and lay people in the Churches who are involved with social change. Its main focus proposed to develop skills and awareness of system analysis.

For some time now, REEL LIFE has been concerned about feminist training and has sought out, as well as created events for and by feminists. In view of that and because two members of REEL LIFE were privileged to attend the CUT training these suggestions for changes are offered in the hope that others - people/organizations/ churches, may recognise the potential CUT offers and thereby help CUT to evolve, develop HAPPEN!

CUT must now be all that's left of a unique resource for training in Nova Scotia. It is not funded through Government, and is not tied to 'man'power employment training.

PARENTAL KIDNAPPING

Janice Waddleton won custody of her son, David, in a Paris court - after a year of fighting + hoping. (David had been kidnapped by the father who came to Canada under the pretext of making co-parenting arrangements with Janice.) REEL LIFE + women's groups in Vancouver helped Janice raise funds to pay the costs.... Watch for another BENEFIT for JANICE soon in Halifax ☆☆☆



programs. The bursaries available allow this training to reach people who cannot afford training that is free of any strings.

The control for the program rests with a local committee that has built-in renewal and feedback elements: the recipients of CUT training are invited to become members of the committee so that they can help administer the next CUT event.

CUT roots and structure have very powerful potential for good training.

The following suggestions for improvement we hope will be discussed by the committee and be useful as well to others who need to get a sense of some of the training available in Nova Scotia.

- * In Nova Scotia, ACTC (Atlantic Christian Training Centre) and MOVE have modeled a process of interviews with participants prior to the event to help participants sharpen their goals and expectations and to help leaders get in touch with the expectations of the event's population.

CUT would do well to follow this example.

- * The content material of the training be more local. The trainer should have a knowledge of the Atlantic, at least the Maritime experience of social change. The materials or constructs for analysing and organizing should be of a variety that would allow for the needs of all participants. (It appeared that the educational instruments, tools- the system analysis constructs, applied to people who were not themselves directly involved in an issue - who did not see themselves as the potential or real victims in the set of oppressive conditions needing changes. Rather, the constructs instead applied to persons interested in organizing others: i.e. professionals seeing a problem, designing corrective measures, then going out and getting the victims to push for changes.)

- * The skid row plunge should be totally altered. This very brief, deceitful, safe excursion into the community succeeds mostly in compromising a community worker's ethics. This model of training experience was designed in Chicago, and we are told is successful in Toronto, is in direct conflict with Nova Scotian morality. All the participants who did this plunge in Nova Scotia reflected in various degrees on its disturbing compromising ethic. So serious was this ethical conflict that for us the suggestion is that the skid row plunge be dropped and replaced by a new design that could get at an experiential awareness of the state of our social support system.

The CUT training event was the second only event ^{As Hind} I've ever attended that made serious attempts to analyse the social control of women (among other valuable critiques) CUT leaders allowed this to happen. It is in our experience that feminism, feminists and feminist training usually meet a solid wall of defensiveness that hardly gets us beyond what the word conjures up in people's minds. CUT is important to us, and it is important too that it get in touch with Nova Scotian culture and rid itself of the Toronto colonialism accidental or intended.

I wish to thank the participants who made the CUT training a valuable experience - and a special gratitude to the women who dared to expose social control of women



Write to us c/o P.O. BOX 992, Halifax, Nova Scotia ★★
We no longer have a space now that MOVE is gone, but
you can find us at the Video Theatre, Argyle Street/4265935

Reel Life has some 16mm films available free to community groups, women's groups and all other interested individuals, who would be willing to pay the cost of shipment. We ask that schools and institutions give us a small donation ($\frac{1}{3}$ of the regular rental fee charged by film distributors) for use of the films to pay maintenance and repair costs.

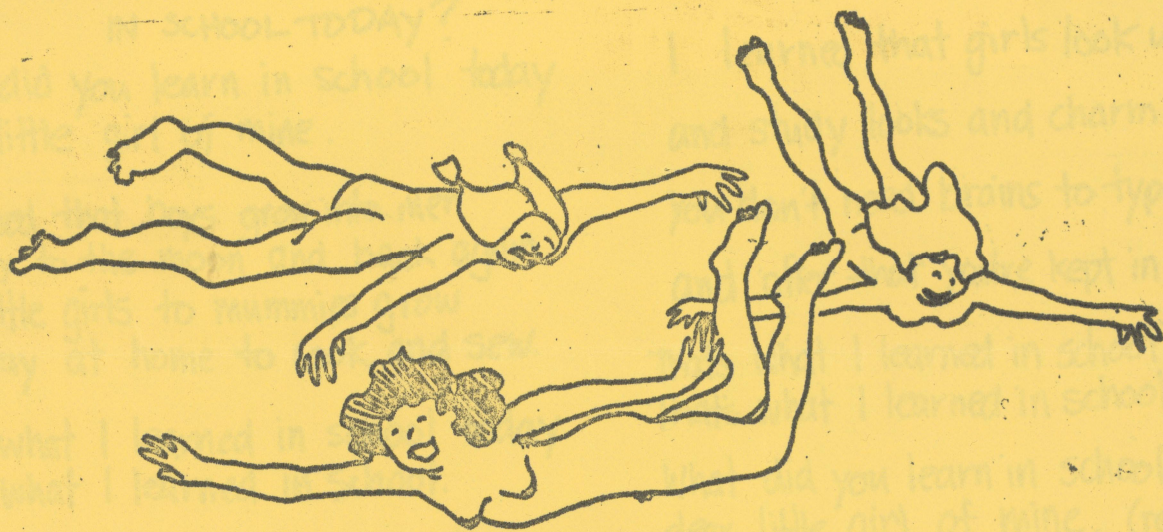
It Happens To Us, Amalie R. Rothschild U.S.A. 1972, color 30 min. A series of interviews with women from various social and economic backgrounds who have had abortions.

Anything You Want To Be, Liane Brandon U.S.A. 1972, b/w 8min. A film that looks humourously at the "choices" young women have.

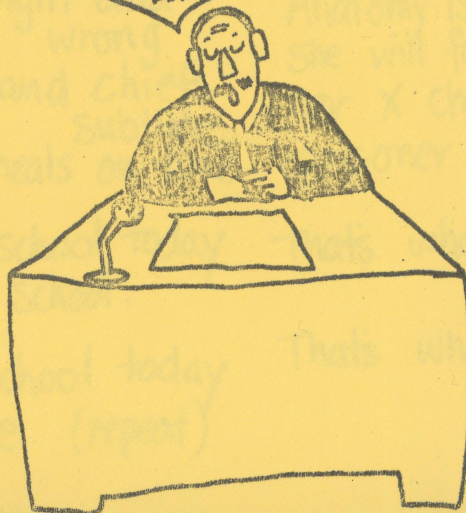
Growing Up Female, Julia Reichart & Jim Klein U.S.A. 1972, b/w 50 min. A documentary dealing with the social control of women, from real life experiences of girls and women from three years to forty years old.

Joyce At 34, Joyce Chopra U.S.A. 1972, colour 28 min. A biographical film about a film makers first child, and her feelings about juggling both careers.

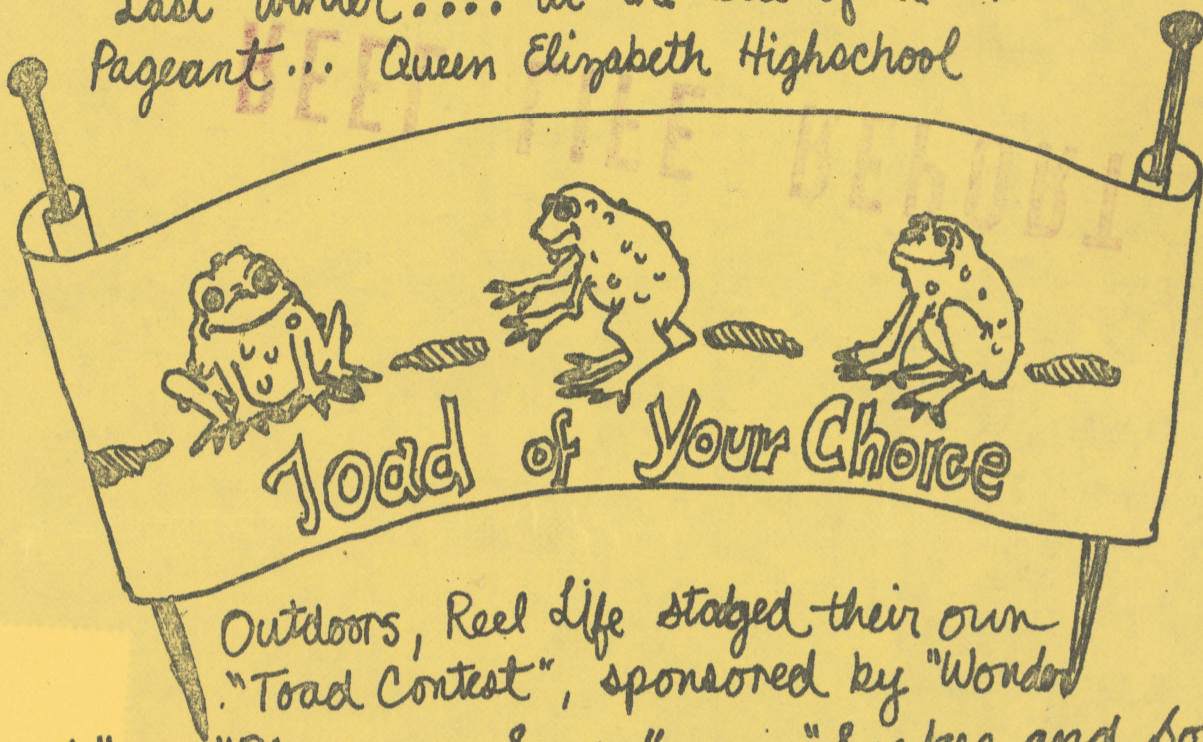
Woo Who? May Wilson, Amalie R. Rothschild U.S.A. 1972, colour 33 min. When May's husband tells her his plans for the rest of his life don't include her, (she's 82) she embarks on a new life as an artist in New York, and talks about her joys and frustrations.



AND SO TO END THE NEWS FOR TONIGHT... WE CAN CONCLUDE FROM OUR MAN ON THE STREET INTERVIEW THAT IN FACT, WOMEN CANNOT AND WILL NOT FLY.



Last winter.... at the site of the Miss Teen Halifax Pageant... Queen Elizabeth Highschool



Outdoors, Reel Life staged their own "Toad Contest", sponsored by "Wonder Wart", "Pimpo and Sneers" and "Snakes and Bone". We invited people to vote for the 'Toad of their Choice'. The list of criteria... good smile, good legs, good warts. We sang songs and distributed literature on female schizophrenia.

WHAT DID YOU LEARN IN SCHOOL TODAY?

What did you learn in school today dear little girl of mine.

I learned that boys grow into men and fly to the moon and back again but little girls to mummies grow and stay at home to cook and sew.

That's what I learned in school today That's what I learned in school.

What did you learn in school today dear little girl of mine. (repeat)

Father in heaven is wise and strong and men decide what's right and wrong

They're doctors lawyers and chiefs and 'mummies' get their meals on time. ^{sublime.}

That's what I learned in school today That's what I learned in school.

What did you learn in school today dear little girl of mine. (repeat)

I learned that girls look up to and study looks and charm and ^{boys} poise. You don't need brains to type and file and after that you're kept in style.

That's what I learned in school today That's what I learned in school.

What did you learn in school today dear little girl of mine. (repeat)

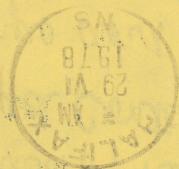
History shows what men achieve and mischief stems from Mother ^{Eve}

Anatomy is destiny which means that she will forever be condemned by her X chromosome to be a prisoner in her own home.

That's what I learned in school today

That's what I learned in school.

N.S. Women's Action Committee
c/o Peggy Morrison
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Ardale, N.S.



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