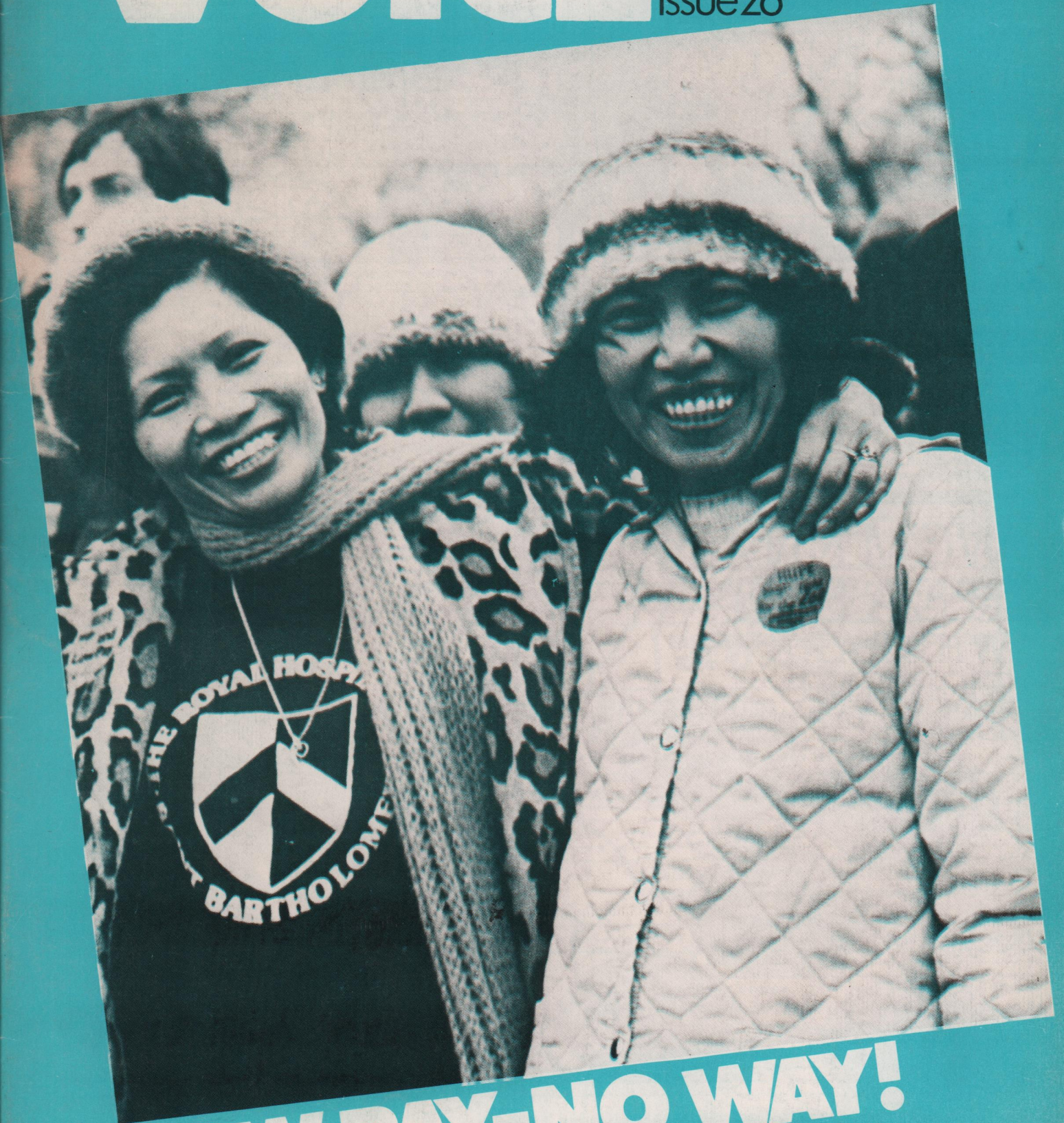


Womens VOICE

February 1979

Price 20p

Issue 26



LOW PAY-NO WAY!
Women fight for a living wage

Team Two

PRESENTS



BELISHA BEACON

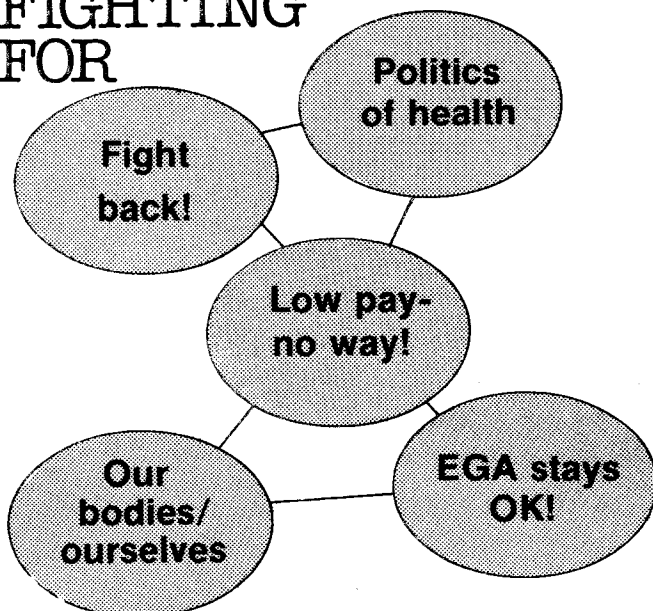
by Eileen Fairweather and Melissa Murray

A fast, funny, irreverent show about Womens Liberation. 13 to 17 March, ICA, London, every lunchtime.

Tour plans: 27 February to 3 March - Kent, Surrey, Sussex. 6 to 10 March - Manchester and area. 20 - 24 March, Derby, Notts, Leicester. 20 to 31 March - London and area. 3 to 7 April - Reading, Oxford, Windsor.

For bookings in these areas and more information, ring Jenny Rees 01 997 2318 evening, 01-969 2296 daytime.

WOMEN AND HEALTH WHAT ARE WE FIGHTING FOR



A one day workshop to bring together women involved in fighting for a better health service and the right to control our own bodies.

Saturday 17th February 1979 10.30-5.30
University of London Union Malet St London WC1
50p at the door

Where to buy books

The Bookplace

13 Peckham High St SE15
01 701 1757
10.-7 except Thurs. 10-1 and Sat 10-6

Large selection of multi racial childrens books, feminist/ socialist literature and own publishing project.

Wedge Co-operative

13 High St., Coventry CU1 5RE.
(0203 25634
Opening hours Mon-Fri 10-5.30
Sat 10-5

Wide selection of feminist books/ Mail order for all left books (add 10% min 25p)

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328 Upper St London N1 Tel: 01 226 0571
Open Mon-Fri 9.30 - 7
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Large selection of feminist and socialist publications

Mail order service.

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167 King Street, Aberdeen
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Radical books, pamphlets and magazines

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21 Little Preston Street, Brighton.
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9.30am to 5pm, Monday to Saturday. Wide range of socialist books.

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Telephone 29057

Monday, Tuesday Friday 10 to 5.30pm. Thursday 10am to 7.30pm. Saturday 9.30am. to 5pm. Non-profit making bookshop of Tyneside. Tyneside Socialist Centre. Bookstalls provided on request.

Full Marks Bookshop

110 Cheltenham Road, Bristol 6, 40491. Tuesday to Saturday 10 am to 6pm. Socialist and feminist books, magazines and local contacts.

Sisterwrite

190 Upper Street, London N1/01 359 2573. Monday to Friday 11am to 7pm. Saturday 10am to 6pm. British and American feminist books. Mail order service.

The Corner Bookshop

162 Woodhouse Lane, Leeds 2.0532 454125 10am to 6pm weekdays, 11 am to 5pm Saturdays. Wide range of feminist books.

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23 Lewisham Way, London, SE14 Buys, sells, exchanges second hand books, Picture framing service, and local crafts on sale.

Corner House Bookshop

14 Endell Street, London, WC2. 01 836 9960. 10am to 7 pm Monday to Saturday. Special section and information service on education.

Grass Roots Books

Newton Street, Piccadilly, and 109 Oxford Road, All Saints, Manchester. 061 236 3112/3 for both shops. 10am to 6pm Monday to Friday, 5.30pm Saturdays.

Photographic gallery (Newton Street). Trade union mail order lists available. US imports and reduced price books.

SOCIALIST FEMINIST NATIONAL CONFERENCE

March 24/25
City University, London

The focus for the conference will be on Socialist Feminist strategy and tactics.

Socialism tends to concentrate on class war, feminism tends to concentrate on sex war. Socialist feminists have tried various ways of putting them together, but to do this properly implies a completely new approach to the ways we organise and in the kinds of politics and theory we produce.

The success of the conference crucially depends on the active participation of groups and individuals.

Please send offers of help, papers (to be typed on A4 stencils), or requests for further information to Socialist Feminist Planning Group, 27 Villa Rd., Brixton, London SW9

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We would like all your ads, letters and articles to reach us by 24 February. Send to Womens Voice Box 82, London E2. Phone number 01 986 6222.

OUR POINT OF VIEW

We all deserve a decent wage



MRS THATCHER says that if she gets in, she won't let workers in essential services go on strike.

Mr Callaghan says that *he* would cross a picket line—so should everyone else.

Mrs Thatcher says that strikers' families should not get social security, and that social security should be taxed.

Mr Callaghan's ministers aim to bleed the poor even further by cutting down social security payments... see page 14.

The press attacks workers at Westminster hospital, on strike after eight domestics were sacked for refusing to work on private wards.

Workers in schools, hospitals, town halls are all taking action against wages which push them deeper and deeper into poverty. Children are suffering, sick patients are suffering, in some areas grieving relatives cannot even bury their dead.

Who is to blame?

Is it the auxiliary who takes home £38 after a 40 hour week? Is it the school dinner lady who takes home less than £30 after nearly 30 hours work? Is it the school cleaners and the caretakers? Have thousands of people gone mad and turned into heartless would-be murderers?

Or is there another explanation.

Labour Minister Peter Shore went on London Weekend television and said that since the government had lost the battle for the five per cent in the *private sector* that was all the more reason to win the battle now in the *public sector*.

Because if they didn't win now (against the low paid), stronger groups of workers would come along and smash it completely.

They are the monsters.

The Labour Government does not give a damn about the low paid. It does not give a damn about the young, the sick or the old. If it did, it would not be shutting schools, closing down kidney units, casualty departments, cancer wards, kids wards—all in the name of *economy*.

The low paid are the people who care about other ordinary working people. They care for them and are kicked in the teeth for doing so.

Their consciences and sense of duty are exploited by men like Callaghan who earns £400 a week compared to their £30. Mr Callaghan can afford a 5% pay rise on £400 a week—that's £20. But 5% to a dinner lady means 1½p an hour more!

So don't attack the ambulance workers for taking action—attack the men who made them do it.

Don't attack the cleaners and

caretakers who are shutting down our schools. Be like the Haringey parents and take up petitions supporting the strikers. If you are a teacher, get other teachers to put out leaflets in support. If you are low paid put out a leaflet explaining why you've been forced to act.

The low paid deserve a living wage—let's ALL fight for it.

Price increase

WOMENS VOICE is going up to 20p next month. It has to. 15p does not cover our printing costs, let alone the price of post, rail fees or phone bills.

We owe the printers £3000. And we have to raise £1000 in a month. So please pay for your back issues. If you owe a lot, or if you just want to help, have a fund-raising, a whip-round, a sponsored swim—anything!

If you like Womens Voice—please pay for it! At present our paid sale is only 51%. That must improve. But an improvement will not stop a price rise.

We will be sending a detailed breakdown of the magazine costs to Womens Voice groups.

Meanwhile, keep on reading, keep on selling and, a message to some—start sending the money in!

IRAN

WOMEN—ON THE THRESHOLD OF FREEDOM

Photo: Jayne Henriques



The Shah of Iran has left the country. The hatred of him by millions of Iranians has driven him and his machinery of oppression away. But what hope can the people have for change? The new government, headed by Prime Minister Bakhtiar is already showing that its respect for "freedom and democracy" is as non-existent as that of the Shah. The army is still being used to put down the people. What can the people of Iran who have fought on the streets for their freedom, gain from the Shah's departure?

Michele Grant talks to Elaheh Povey about the changing position of women in Iran.

Why do you think that Bakhtiar, who has been known as an opposer of the Shah, has now turned against the people?

"Bakhtiar is like any politician, he is one of the very rich and so he sees the mass movement and workers' struggles as a threat to his own position. The workers and the poor people have not faced bullets and sacrificed lives for a handful of people like Bakhtiar. They know that it is they, themselves, who drove the Shah away and in the process of it all a lot of men and women have realised their own power."

What about Khomeini, the religious leader? Are the people prepared to accept him?

"Millions of people still see him as a consistent and open opposition to the Shah, but through their struggles will learn that a "heaven on earth" society is no answer to their problems. At a factory called 'Pars Electrical' a woman addressed a mass meeting of workers on the need for a real trade union where

workers can elect the representatives themselves. Workers everywhere want to see a system where their interests will be considered. The demands are fantastic. You never hear about these things in the newspapers over here. Khomeini is a purely utopian religious figure. Islam sees private property as being sacred and the people don't want that sort of system."

What effect are the struggles having on the position of women?

"Women in my country, are oppressed not only as workers but also as women in the family and society, the family structure is totally male dominated, the restrictions are archaic.

"Under the law the man is the head of the family. Women have no right to marry without the father's consent. No right to choose where to live. No right to travel alone. A man can kill his wife if he sees her with another man because it is an insult to his dignity. Women have no right to take a job without consent. In the countryside 90% of women are illiterate, 20% marry

before they are 14. As a result of family conditions and poverty, some women have to prostitute themselves—in Tehran there is a place for them surrounded by high walls. They are like prisoners there. When they get pregnant the female child usually spends the rest of her life there."

The foreign press give the impression that these women have no tradition of struggle, that they don't really understand socialist ideas the same as the men might. How would you answer that?

"Women have a tradition. From 1891 till now they have always been involved but they have always been crushed. For instance between 1911 and 1925 several women's leagues were set up to campaign for equality. One particular group "Pake Saadat" celebrated the 8th March as Womens' Day.

"Because women for the last few years have become a part of the workforce, they see the need to fight their oppression now more than ever before."

On TV and in all the photographs of the fighting in Iran the women are veiled. Does that mean that most women want a religious movement?

"Normally Iranian women don't wear the chador—the veil. The Muslim leaders told them that if they were to take part in the demonstrations they would have to wear the chador. They did so rather than stay at home. They see themselves as an integral part of the fight against the Shah.

"Recently a group of housewives, women factory and hospital workers went to the building of the Hamadan newspaper Kayhan to protest at the distribution of a leaflet. The leaflet stated that women should not leave their homes unless wearing the chador. The women protested that those who had distributed the leaflet had forgotten that one of the purposes of the Iranian revolution is the liberation of women.

"Thousands of women have been involved in the fight to overthrow the Shah. They have organised their own demonstrations and suffered their share of the massive death toll. Under the Islamic government, they will be ruled by the Koran—they must be obedient to their husbands, brothers and fathers. Khomeini would treat women no better than the Shah.

"Freedom for women means more than throwing off the chador—freedom means the freedom to organise alongside the men at work and on the streets.

"This new freedom and dignity will not be given without struggle. Neither will the liberation of all workers in Iran. We must build a revolutionary working class party which embraces the women's demands as an important part of the struggle. Women must be involved in the formation of that party.

Iranian women are on the threshold of a freedom denied them for years!"

SOLD OUT NOT BURNT OUT



Photo: Jane Henriques

BIRTH OF OUR POWER

FORTY per cent of workers are women. But you sometimes wonder when the trade union leadership is going to notice.

Very few union negotiators ever seem to think about trying to improve conditions for women workers. In particular, for many women, starting a family means giving up work.

Many couples rely on two incomes, and having a baby means instant financial hardship. For single mothers, the prospect is even harder. And when the children get to be school age, or old enough to leave at a nursery, or with a minder, (if you can find one or get a place) the mother has to begin again at the bottom of the job market.

For many months Womens Voice members in Nalگو have been campaigning to improve maternity rights. We want:

- * full maternity rights to include part-time workers
- * immediate right to maternity leave with no qualification period
- * 63 weeks on full pay
- * the right to your job back at the end of 63 weeks' leave.
- * no loss of increments or other service benefits

- * the right to return on the same grade of work for up to five years
- * six weeks fully paid paternity leave
- * sick leave when the child is ill
- * time off for parents to attend clinics
- * child care facilities at the workplace

It will be a fight to get the union negotiator to take this up with the employers. So roll up your sleeves, sisters, at the conference on Maternity Rights. The conference has been called by the Lambeth and Edinburgh Gas branches of Nalگو.

• Ann Darby, Lewisham Nalگو

RESIDENTIAL WORKERS CHARTER DEMANDS

- 1 Pay parity with field workers.
- 2 35 hour week.
- 3 Democracy in the home.
- 4 Allowance for unsocial hours.
- 5 Improved training.
- 6 No compulsory residential posts
- 7 Equal rights with private tenants and decent living conditions for those tenants who are resident.
- 8 No split shifts.
- 9 Meals taken with clients to be free.

GREY-SUITED, 50-ish, with paunches, hardly any women. That's our union leadership. They sold out a long time ago. They are more like managers than trade unionists. They are the ones who sold out our six-month long strike.

We feel that we were quite naive at the start of the strike. In a large union you often don't get involved unless it affects you directly. We didn't even know the rules of our union.

The position of the leadership is very strong. We were always looking to them. We let them—locally and nationally—make decisions for us.

They were allowed to slow down the dispute. That slowed down other areas in boroughs that hadn't come out on strike. Other people wondered if it was worth their while even coming out when they saw how confused the situation got. The union leadership started negotiating a national settlement when we wanted the right to negotiate locally. That stopped a lot of branches coming out.

The union called the Special Conference which should have been called in October—not now. Delegates from three branches with 8000 votes weren't allowed into the Special Conference. They didn't get their credentials in the post and were told they would be allowed in, but weren't. The Chairman didn't

even allow this to be discussed. And it's meant to be a democratic union! We lost one amendment by 2000 votes, and could have won it if our delegates had been allowed in.

We should have all put our claims in together. You expect the union leadership to carry out decisions made at conference. But they don't.

You are not just fighting your employers, but your own union. The strike has made people feel they want to be more active. We don't have a Nalگو Action Group in Islington, but we want to start one now. We had our own members crossing our picket lines. And it made me angry that these people would not even come to our union meetings to argue about it.

We came out for local negotiations. At last year's conference we passed that, but the Executive hadn't done anything about it. It was the action in Tower Hamlets and Southwark and Newcastle that forced the union to take action.

Some people feel that we should resign from the union because it was a total sell-out. But that just allows the same people to control it. And where else can you go? We are local government workers. You can't split off from the others. We have to stay and try to build up our own organisation. But it's hard.

• Mary Bratley, Islington Nalگو.

STATE MUMS REBEL

RESIDENTIAL work, caring for children and old and handicapped people in homes, has traditionally been seen as 'women's work' and still the vast majority of residential workers are women.

We work under poor conditions for low wages—after all, as 'caring' comes naturally to women we are expected to work all hours for love, not money.

As 'State Mums' we have for years tolerated working an exhausting jumble of shifts including weekends, early mornings and late evenings, for less than £50 per week. A generous 'bonus' of £2.30 is thrown in for every over-night duty.

Discontent has been widespread for years but we have no tradition of militancy because:

- * few workers have joined the union
- * N.A.L.G.O., the relevant union, has shown no interest in organising residential workers.
- * the homes are isolated from other workplaces
- * the small number of workers in each home
- * the emotional blackmail used by management and the employers.

The Residential Workers' Charter Group was set up a year ago by a handful of residential workers who were determined to break this tradition. The idea spread like

wildfire and within months Residential Workers' Charter Groups were set up within most of London's boroughs and in several local authorities

We are breaking down the isolation and beginning to organise. There have been local meetings, leaflets and bulletins have been produced, the all-London meetings take place regularly and the first national rally on 20th of January was a success.

Residential workers have now made their presence as an organised force obvious within Nalگو. Last year's Conference agreed the basic claims of the Charter Group after a petition and a lively picket outside.

Residential workers turned out to support the Day of Action last September and since then in many boroughs they have been supporting the field workers' claim by refusing to admit or re-admit children into homes and have carried out a policy of non-cooperation. Several boroughs have applied to ballot for all-out strike action and there have already been some one-day stoppages.

In one short year we have come a long way. Confidence in our own strength and potential organisation has grown tremendously and is still

• Liz Dyles, Wandsworth

WOMENS AID WEEK OF ACTION 5-12 MARCH

1 out of every 4 violent crimes reported is **wife assault**. More and better refuges for battered wives (and their children) are needed. Contact your local Women's Aid group to help them organise for the Week of Action. If you don't know where it is, ring the National Women's Aid Federation, 01 837 9316.



Photo: Angela Phillips

Police protecting Soho porn on the Reclaim the Night demonstration? No this is a photograph taken on International Womens Day last year. The picture of the woman is advertising Jaffa orange squash-the caption 'juicy, fruity, fresh and cheap!' 'This Ad Degrades Women' stickers are available from Womens Voice, Box 82, London E2. If you want to complain about advertising, write to The Advertising Standards Authority, 15 Ridgmount Street, London WC1.

RECLAIM THE NIGHT

Whatever we wear
Wherever we go
Yes means yes
And no means no

2500 women walked through Soho on the night of Saturday 20 January. We shouted out the telling slogan you see above with real passion. We carried torches, we linked arms, we made a fantastic noise, just yelling and whooping.

It was so exciting to be so safe, more than safe, and to see the Soho spivs who usually interfere with our progress down the streets, standing in amazement along the pavements. None of them tried his customary pick-up procedure. None of that smile-love-it'll-never-happen or cor-getemoff or slurping noises.

Outside Raymond's Revue bar there seemed to be more men getting a mouthful from us than

there were inside staring out of their lonely eyes at commercialised breasts. I think a lot of them felt sympathy and by taking our anger on to the street the point must have got through to some men. All men aren't the enemy, the system that oppresses us oppresses them too.

NO COMMENT!

'AN astonishing assault course has been invented for would-be Army officers... capturing showgirls' garters at naughty nightclubs.

The saucy snatches are part of an initiative test to check the calibre of ambitious cadets.

The reward for teenage cadets who display steady nerves—and fingers—is a place at the elite Sandhurst Royal Military Academy.'

Daily Mirror, 22 January 1979

INTERNATIONAL ACTION

Women Demand

- * the right to control their own bodies
- * the right to contraception
- * the right to free abortion
- * the right to refuse forced sterilisation

We Appeal

- * for an international show of solidarity in support of a woman's right to choose
- * for a massive mobilisation of women, students and youth, working people and the Labour Movement, political and human rights organisations, and immigrant organisations to support our call for an International Day of Action on a woman's right to abortion, contraception and against all forced sterilisation.

International Day of Action - March 31st 1979

+SAVE OUR HOSPITALS+SAVE OUR HOSPITALS+SAVE STOP THE CASUALTY CUTS

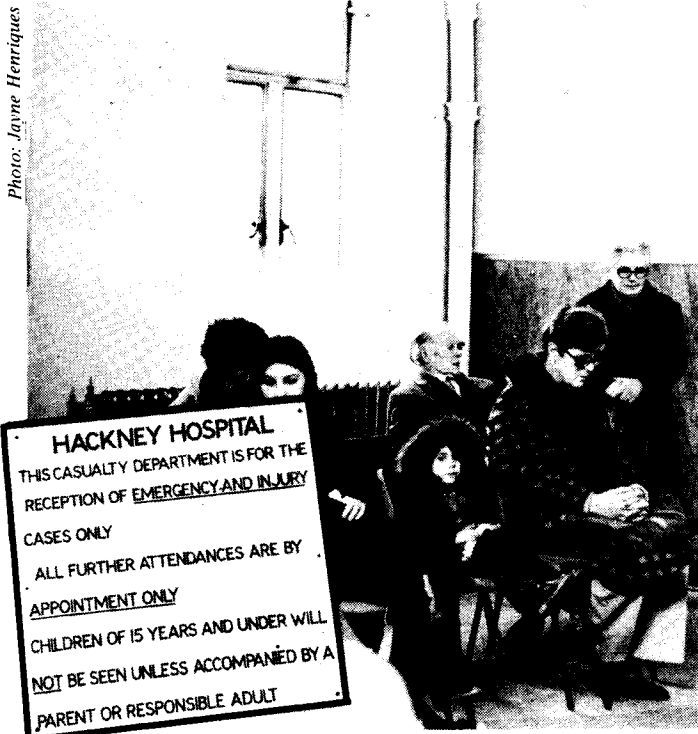


Photo: Jayne Henriques

PRINCE OF WALES

THE Prince of Wales Hospital, Tottenham, North London, is threatened by the Regional Health Authority. They plan to close the medical wards and accident and emergency units and turn the hospital into a geriatric dumping ground.

The local Community Health Council invited Sir Harry Moore, chairman of the Regional Health Authority, to speak to them and justify their proposals. Over 100 members of the local community turned out on a bitterly cold night in response to leaflets put out by the Labour Save Haringey Hospitals Campaign and Lea Valley Womens Voice Group.

Sir Harry and his three 'experts' dressed up in long words and statistics their plans which in effect are cuts that will mean that there will be no casualty department in the Tottenham/Haringey area.

Workers from local factories like the GLC Supplies Depot told Sir Harry how vital the casualty is with so many factories along the Lea Valley. Other residents stressed the problems for mothers and children.

The anger of the meeting was increased by the utter arrogance and indifference shown by the Regional Health Authority experts. The overall impression was that despite strong protests from every one at the meeting, the members of the Authority have already made up their minds.

Anyway, we left them in no doubt that we will fight to stop yet another

hospital going to the knackers yard to 'balance the health authority books'.

• Jenny Davidson, Lea Valley Womens Voice

BETHNAL GREEN

CASUALTY at Bethnal Green Hospital is now closed. The two nearest surviving casualty departments are even more overloaded than they were before.

The District Management Team first tried to close Casualty at the Green on 1 July 1978. They had rather stupidly advertised this fact and staff had come out on strike immediately at the news. They started a work-in on 1 July which continued for exactly one month. Over 1000 patients were treated and several patients were saved who would almost certainly have died if casualty had been closed.

We treated more people during the month of the work-in than usual. On 1 August, the nurses were moved on to the other wards and so casualty had to close. But local people continued to occupy casualty until just before Christmas. They did this to stop management moving out equipment and to demonstrate that we were all determined to carry on fighting.

The occupation continued 24 hours a day, seven days a week. We learned a lot about each other from this experience and many of us have made lasting friendships, particularly the women involved.

The campaign ended with the workers' decision to allow the builders in to carry out the conversion to a geriatric hospital. We did manage to squeeze these con-

cessions:

- The opening of a minor injuries unit staffed by local GPs and supervised by a permanent hospital doctor.

The unit will not have any facilities for major surgery, so will be restricted to stitching, treatment of minor burns, etc. I suppose for local people it is better than nothing, although it worries me that treatment of some major injuries may be delayed by people thinking that casualty as such has been reopened, and then having to be sent on elsewhere.

We think it likely that the District Management Team will try to get out of this service by saying that they can't find enough GPs to staff it. So it is up to us to publicise this potential service to GPs, many of whom have been staunch supporters of the campaign.

But we have to be quite clear that

this is *not* a casualty service and *not* a victory for us. We have not forced management to change either their plans or their budget.

- Out-patient surgery will stay.

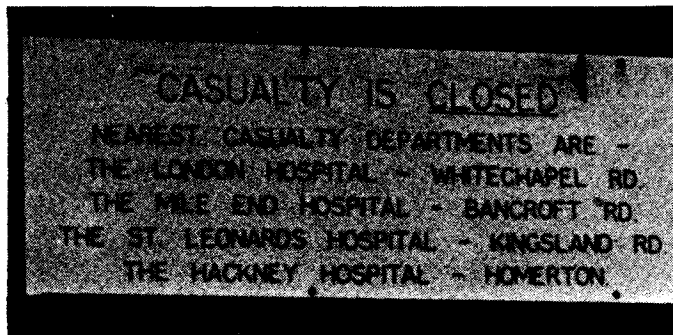
Again this is a minor and inadequate service and no victory for us. The key thing is that no major surgery facilities are being regained.

- The continuation of 40 medical beds beyond the spring.

We'll have to fight to make sure they're kept indefinitely.

The hospital is going to become a geriatric hospital, and is still due to close *completely* in four years. The campaign has dissolved itself and is launching a new East London health crisis committee to make sure at least the concessions we have got are carried out properly and to continue fighting health cuts wherever they occur.

- Ann Sargent



EGA HANGS ON!

TWO years after the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson Hospital was supposed to close, we are still hanging on.

The 'Save the EGA' Campaign is pressing for the area health authority to mend the EGA lift. It would cost £10,000; this is peanuts and should come from the routine maintenance which Ennals promised anyway.

Doctors and shop stewards in the hospital support the idea of raising money through public subscription to get the lift mended. While sympathising with what it must be like working in a hospital where the lift has been out of action for three years, the Campaign considers such a course of action a serious mistake. It is the thin edge of the wedge for private medicine. And you don't fight the cuts by getting people to pay twice for their hospital—once from their taxes and another time from their pockets.

What can you do to help us? Send a delegate to the 'Save the EGA' Campaign which meets every Tuesday at 7pm in the EGA Hospital, 144 Euston Road, London, NW1.

Publicise the fact that the EGA badly needs nurses. (Nurses wishing to apply should ring the EGA

Nursing Officer, 387 4646).

Send a donation to 'Save the EGA' 155 Upper Street, London, N1. For more information, write to the above address.

- Robin White

FIGHTBACK

A NATIONAL conference on 'Health and Cuts' is being organised for end May/June by Fightback (an independent, nationally co-ordinated campaign against cuts in the health service).

The broad aims will be to widen the base of support for struggles against NHS cuts from both health workers, and others affected by cuts (industrial workers, women at home, tenants' groups etc), linking the fight for better health with the fight against cuts. The production and causes of ill-health (hazards at work, poverty, bad housing, low wages etc). How to counteract the isolation of various struggles. Building and drawing together the lessons we have learned so far; and how to develop a clear strategy on fighting cuts.

Look out for fuller details of this very important conference next month.

TWIN SET SCABS

COMPLETE with twin sets and pearls, blue rinses and fur coats, 120 women demonstrated in Bury town centre last Saturday against all strikers. They were opposed by a counter demonstration of 80 workers, women and men, calling for solidarity with the lorry drivers, the water workers and all low paid.

Olive Avery, organiser of the women, approached the counter demonstration at the very beginning, insisting that her group had no political motivation, though one of the banners flaunted by the group read 'death to the secondary pickets'.

This was carried by Nancy Hurst, one of the leading lights of the local Conservative Party. And prominent among these 'non-political' protesters was Elsie McBriar, National Front candidate for Bury and Ruislip.

These women paraded around Bury precinct, literally in circles, singing Rule Britannia and Land of Hope and Glory.

This sort of assault on the working class is guaranteed to bring the lice out of the woodwork. The Front turned up but slunk around in the shadows.

The women dispersed at 1.00pm to the strain of 'The Workers United will Never Be Defeated'.

Half an hour later the British Movement began to sell pamphlets in the precinct. These were taken from them, ripped up, and the sellers needed a police escort to get away in one piece.

There is no place in Bury for the lunatic right.

• J. Reilly, Bury

OLDHAM

'WE'LL support the lorry drivers, Railmen, social workers too While the public sector fight For a fair wage is their right We all support the strikers, Why don't you?'

(Tune: Jesus loves the little children)

Housewives United demonstrators were amazed to find a large counter demonstration awaiting them at Peir Head in Liverpool on Sunday 21 January. The women, mostly well dressed and middle aged, along with a few misguided pensioners, claimed that they had had enough of strikes and shortages.

The publicity stunt for their campaign backfired as their meeting broke up. The ringleader had the audacity to stand on the podium to address her supporters until we informed her that she was standing on a trade union podium and she quickly climbed down.

Chanting and singing we certainly convinced them that there are plenty of women and men on Merseyside who support the lorry drivers and all other workers fighting for a living wage.

Here is an extract from a bulletin handed in at the Ever Ready factory by the Wolverhampton Womens Voice Group.

On the back page the Ever Ready Women's Voice bulletin had a half-page article about cystitis and a self help cure for it, taken from a Health Education leaflet. At the bottom was an explanation of what Wolverhampton Women's Voice group does and how to contact them.

NUPE STRIKE

The National Union of Public Employees has called a one-day strike for today in support of a claim for a £60 wage for a 35 hour week. Most of NUPE's members are forced to work in jobs which have long and inconvenient hours with poor pay.

As school dinner ladies and caretakers are among the workers who will be on strike today many children will be unable to go to

school. As usual it's we women who'll lose a day's pay to stay at home and look after them; it's we women who'll be worrying about them of we can't stay off work. It's about time that the bosses, who need our labour to keep their companies going, recognise that women have two jobs to do and pay us a decent wage and provide us with nurseries.

AMMUNITION FOR THE FIGHT

WOMENS VOICE needs money—your money! We're put the cover price up this month to meet the increased cost of printing. It isn't only printing costs that we have to pay we have telephone bills, postage, rent and all the rest of the bills that pile up daily.

The money you send in to pay for the magazines—does just that and nothing more. We are asking every

Womens Voice group to send us £2 each month—the best way to do this is to take out a bankers order. By coincidence there happens to be one printed below—all you need is a stamp and an envelope and we're in business.

In addition to groups taking out a Bankers order some of you may be able to afford sending us some each month independently. Even if it is

as little as £1 a month it all adds up.

Already this year we have produced two national leaflets and posters for the low pay campaign. Get the money rolling in! Women are fighting back help us to meet the demand for ammunition.

So how about it sisters dig deep—you know it makes sense.

• Womens Voice Steering Committee

BANKERS ORDER

A

To Bank
Address

BANKERS ORDER – PERIODIC PAYMENT

Please pay on the first (1st) of to

Co-operative Bank, 110 Leman Street, London, E1.

(08 - 03 - 08)

for credit to account number 50091454

the sum of £

in words—

and continue to make similar payment monthly on the 1st (first) of each month until this order is cancelled in writing charging such payments to the debit of my account.

B

Other details (if any)

C

Signature	Account number
Name	Date
Address	

- 1 Fill in the name and address of your own bank in part A
- 2 Indicate in part B if this order cancels a previous one, and give details
- 3 Be sure to give your own account number in part C
- 4 When complete, forward to the National Treasurer, PO Box 82, London, E2.

NO MORE MAKING DO... WE WANT A LIVING WAGE



WE MUST STICK TOGETHER

Sheila McGregor interviews Birmingham school meals worker Maureen Groves. 'TODAY the only way to get a rise is to go on strike. The government offer was atrocious. It would have meant the difference of a £1 a week in my money—before tax!' Maureen Groves is married to a lorry driver, has four kids and works in

school meals. She was on strike on January 22nd.

'I thought the demonstration was great, particularly when I saw the school meals women. Strikes prove they can't manage without you.

'Most low paid workers are left to the back of the queue. Women would work for next to nothing because it's that little bit extra. The authorities know that. We couldn't afford to give the job up even if we are low paid. That's why they don't bother about our wages.

'I reckon the union should encourage the women to get more involved so that we in the kitchens know what is happening. The shop stewards should be encouraged to go to more meetings, and not just wait for postal instructions about what to do.

'As long as we keep together we've got a chance of winning. They're always underestimating the women, saying they won't stick together. I hope we stick together in our school.'

Working in school meals is a tough job. Maureen works from 8.15 am to 2.30pm. For £28¾ hours a week she gets £30.97 before tax:

'It's real hard work. We do the potatoes, veg and gravy side—a week on potatoes and veg and then a week on sauces.

'From the minute you get in you have to start peeling the potatoes. A few years ago when there was a potato shortage they brought in dried and cut our hours. Now we're back to normal potatoes we still

haven't got back those hours we lost. If there are fewer children eating dinners, your hours get cut again.

'After we've done the cooking, we start cleaning. We help wash up, then we clean all the stoves, ovens, potato machines, fryers and the like.

'After our dinner break we sweep and scrub the floors. Then there's the window and the brasses. Everything has to be spotless.'

On top of all that Maureen is a wife and has another job to do:

'If John has to go to Southampton he has to be up at 4am. I have to get up with him and make him something to eat. My days start when he has to go out. I have to be on call all the time. Often enough I've had to cook at 10 or 11 at night. If they ever get an eight hour day it'll be great.

'People think lorry drivers earn fantastic wages, but if John just does a flat week without weekend work or a night out he picks up the flat rate £53 for 59 hours. How can you live on £59 with four kids?

'I agree with the strike a hundred per cent. Unless they'd gone this far and brought the country this far they'd never have got anywhere.'

GOOD ORGANISATION PAYS

LIKE virtually every other union, COHSE nationally is dominated by men. The same is true of our branch, *Middlesex Hospital 640*. Although about 70% of the membership are women, most of the stewards and branch officers are men. Branch meetings have over 100 people, and are run on strict procedural lines. This is intimidating for some experienced male trade unionists, let alone women who've never spoken in public before. Of course nearly all the speakers at any meeting are men.

How can this be overcome, so that we women can make COHSE our union, in fact as well as in name?

As large meetings can be so frightening, major branch meetings such as the one where we took the strike vote for January 22 should be followed by smaller sectional meetings, where discussion can be much freer. The militancy which the student nurses at the Middlesex displayed at the special meeting called for them before the 22nd, surprised even their steward. They'd never have been so vocal at a branch meeting.

In many hospitals, the majority of the ancillary staff, domestics etc., are immigrants, most of whom, of course, are women. Often, they cannot follow the business of branch meetings, which are conducted exclusively in English. There is some attempt (not nearly enough) in our



**NO
£0W
PAY**

'It's empty-like our pockets.'

branch to translate matters into Spanish and Portuguese, for the Filipino domestics, so that everyone understands what's going on, and what they're voting for. If this isn't done in your branch, and you've got members who don't understand English, and lack the confidence to ask for translations, make sure it happens in future.

The most important thing of all is to *talk* to women workers about the union, and how it affects them. Talk to them in the office, in the linen room. In the pay queue, while they clock on—anywhere. Go round and see those who don't come to union meetings, tell them what's going on, what decisions the branch has made, and why. It's not enough just to issue a circular after a strike vote, telling everyone they're coming out next Monday. You need to go through the arguments, convince everyone of the need for strike action, that it means more than just losing a days pay.

Sue Dorey, receptionist, Middlesex Hospital COHSE.

BLAME THE CUTS NOT US!!!

I'M A student nurse at a big London teaching hospital, and I know I've got it easy—compared to others! There's masses of fancy equipment and in the day time most wards are quite well staffed—at least with student nurses.

Yet even here nurses are getting fed up with cuts and low pay and the disgusting working and living conditions.

Some of us who are in COHSE joined the January 22 one-day strike. This was not just to support the ambulance workers and the ancillary staff but because we need to fight together for our interests too.

Most nurses at my hospital are in the Royal College of Nursing (RCN) or not in a union at all, but more are joining COHSE every week—because they see that at least we have more chance of getting things done.

Organisation was what this strike was all about. As soon as our union branch (about 1000 members) voted to strike, we called a special meeting for the nurses to get their support. Our branch officials wanted to play it down at first, but the nurses themselves, especially the students, were keen to act.

We got together and produced a leaflet for all the patients and the other ward staff—explaining our action and the reasons for it. When the patients heard that 5% to us student nurses meant less than £2 a week, most of them were right behind us. One even said that we should all go out on strike indefinitely—and he was a patient in hospital at the time!

Leaflets like this are really important. The hospital administrators seem to do their best to cause confusion and ignorance about any industrial action.

The result is that as usual people blame the unions for anything and everything that goes wrong in the hospital—things that are nearly always the result of money shortages and NHS cuts.



risk, many on the dole, and making more work for the women who end up looking after the young, the old, and the sick—unpaid?

Strikes by hospital and council workers might cause some hardship in the short term, but by striking we're trying to provide for the future: for the homes, lives and families of public sector workers, and for decent health and social services for all workers.

• Shareen Campbell
1st year student nurse & shop steward
COHSE

Flashback to the January 22nd London demo against low pay. Will the fighting spirit be allowed to evaporate? It is up to the women in all the unions involved to go to their branch meetings and demand all out strike action. It's the only way to get everyone a fair deal.



**NO
LOW
PAY**



Very cold but determined parents, teachers and pupils outside Creighton School, Haringey.

OPEN THE SCHOOLS PAY THE STRIKERS

HARINGEY teachers have issued a statement in support of the striking school workers—so have Hornsey and Lea Valley Womens Voice, who have also organised a parents' petition in support.

It is important that this kind of action is taken up by teachers and parents all over Britain. This is the only real way to counter press and television hysteria, and the viciousness of smug well-paid and well-fed politicians.

Let them try making do on these kinds of pay rises: Meals Staff: 1½p per hour. Assistant Caretakers: 4¼p per hour, £1.70 per week. This would give an assistant caretaker £41 a week take-home, less than half the national average.

The claim is for two-thirds of the national manual workers' average. Hardly greedy is it?

**GET OUR
CHILDREN BACK
TO SCHOOL!
PAY SCHOOL
WORKERS'
CLAIMS
IN FULL**

**womens
Voice**
WINDOW POSTER

These window posters are available from Womens Voice.

HACKNEY

HACKNEY Womens Voice started a new sale outside Hackney Hospital. We gave out the national Womens Voice Low Pay Leaflet, with details of the Day of Action printed on the other side. The leaflet went down well, being read by all who took them. We sold two Womens Voice that day, and on our next visit sold six.

The national leaflet was also used in Hackney Schools, with a special message for school cleaners and dinner ladies on the back, and the women decided to take action on the 22 January.

The leaflet was well received everywhere and distributed for industrial sales, to explain the case for the 35 hour £60 campaign in Hackney and work towards a Womens Voice Meeting on Low Pay in mid February. We intend to continue selling Womens Voice and leafletting our hospitals and schools and will try to leaflet other public sector work places and factories.

HOW TO WIN

As the article on these pages show, good organisation and a well informed membership is the first step. But the kind of action taken is crucial too. As one woman worker we spoke to on the demo said:

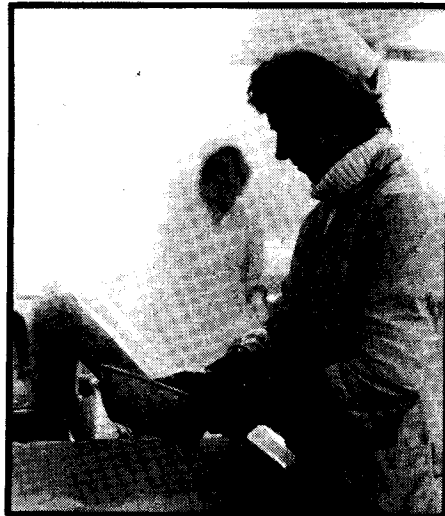
'I support all-out action, it's the only way.'

She works for the health service, sterilising instruments. If she and her colleagues went out, nine hospitals in the Stanford Le Hope area would be paralysed. There are other workers with similar power.

There are many with far less. Pulling out workers for one day stoppages here and there can be confusing and really demoralising. A shorter (and it would be shorter!) but much better kind of action would be an all-out strike for everybody.

So hold meetings among yourselves to discuss all-out action then go and fight it out at your branch meeting.

It's your union, so let your voice be heard.



HAVING a baby is usually painful for at least some of the time. But the fear and tension that comes with not knowing what is being done to us, and being out of control, makes things a lot worse. This article, about drugs given to women during labour, is taken from **Our Bodies Ourselves**.

'Drugs are the most common method doctors use for dealing with pain in childbirth. Often they are given routinely, sometimes when the mother does not want them.

Almost every drug given to the mother during labour crosses the placenta and reaches her baby. If the baby is premature, smaller than average or in poor health, the consequences can be dangerous. Even a normal baby can suffer and we mothers can sometimes suffer more from the after-effects of the drugs used in labour than we might have from labour itself.

Many drugs which dampen down the mother's reactions will have the same effect on the baby. Infants whose mothers had received drugs during labour and delivery have been shown to have slower development in the first four weeks of life, (though not all babies are affected, nor are they permanently affected).

Sedatives, Tranquillizers and Hypnotics: tranquillizers relieve anxiety, sedatives induce a feeling of calmness or drowsiness, and hypnotics induce sleep.

These are commonly given in the first stage of labour 'to take the edge off your contractions'. They can depress the newborn baby. For example, sluggish breathing is common among babies whose mothers receive sedatives, and **Valium** is thought to interfere with a newborn's ability to cope with cold. The total dose of **Valium** should not exceed 30mg. Other tranquillisers commonly used are **Sparine** (or **promazine**) and **Phenergan** (or **promethazine**).

Tranquillisers may be helpful in allowing the mother to relax between contractions. However, she may find herself falling asleep until the contraction reaches its peak, and then she may panic and actually experience more pain than she would have without the drug.

Analgesics: these reduce pain.

The most commonly given analgesic is **pethidine**. It is usually given by injection in the thigh, takes 15 minutes to take effect and can last for 4 hours. In spite of its widespread use, it is not particularly effective and it does have side effects. A recent paper shows that three quarters of the women investigated received no relief from pain at all. Pethidine is a narcotic (like heroin and morphine) and all narcotics have a serious effect on the breathing movements of the foetus, and can make the newborn baby unresponsive.

Although some women just feel 'high' from the effects of pethidine, others feel sick, unreal and out of control. Some people believe that many unpleasant experiences during labour are in fact caused by the effects of even small doses of pethidine.

In some hospitals pethidine is given routinely. You can refuse it. 'But your refusal may be met with bewilderment, contempt or disbelief.

Inhalation Analgesia: this is pain relief that you inhale, usually through a face mask. The

WOMENS HEALTH

You make the choice—doctors can be wrong

one most commonly used is **gas and air** (usually **Entonox**, which is a mixture of oxygen and nitrous oxide). It appears to be more effective than **pethidine**, producing satisfactory relief in almost half of those who use it. As yet there is no evidence that **Entonox** has harmful effects on the baby.

One overwhelming advantage of inhalation analgesia is that you can administer it yourself. **Entonox** takes some 15 seconds to work so you should start breathing the mixture at the beginning of a contraction, tailing off at its height. Most hospitals explain well before labour how to use the machine.

Regional Anaesthesia: These are injected into the body, and remove sensation entirely from part of the body. **Epidural anaesthesia** is perhaps the most common

form of anaesthesia. It is an injection in the area around the spine, and it results in a completely sensationless labour in 90 - 95% of cases, while leaving the mother awake and alert.

Epidurals must be given by specially trained anaesthetists, since a mistake can lead to serious consequences—in the extreme, paralysis death or foetal injection. However, since epidurals were first used in Britain in the 1950s, there has only been one death due to an epidural.

Epidurals often cause low blood pressure, and subsequent lack of oxygen to the baby. The direct effect of epidurals on the baby can inhibit sucking and cause 'floppiness'.

Also, the use of forceps to deliver the baby is two to three times higher with epidurals. Forceps to pull the baby out is sometimes necessary because the epidural reduces the woman's desire to push.

If we do decide to have an epidural, then we should be able to have one. But epidurals are not widely available on the NHS. While at Kingston in Surrey, over 50% of women have them on the NHS, in the country as a whole only 2% have them.

Our Bodies Ourselves is a must for all Womens Voice groups. The language can be a bit 'heavy' at times, but there's lots of information and it's the kind of detailed honest information that few doctors have the time or inclination to give.

Our Bodies Ourselves, a health book by and for women. British edition by Angela Phillips and Jill Rakusen. Penguin £3.50

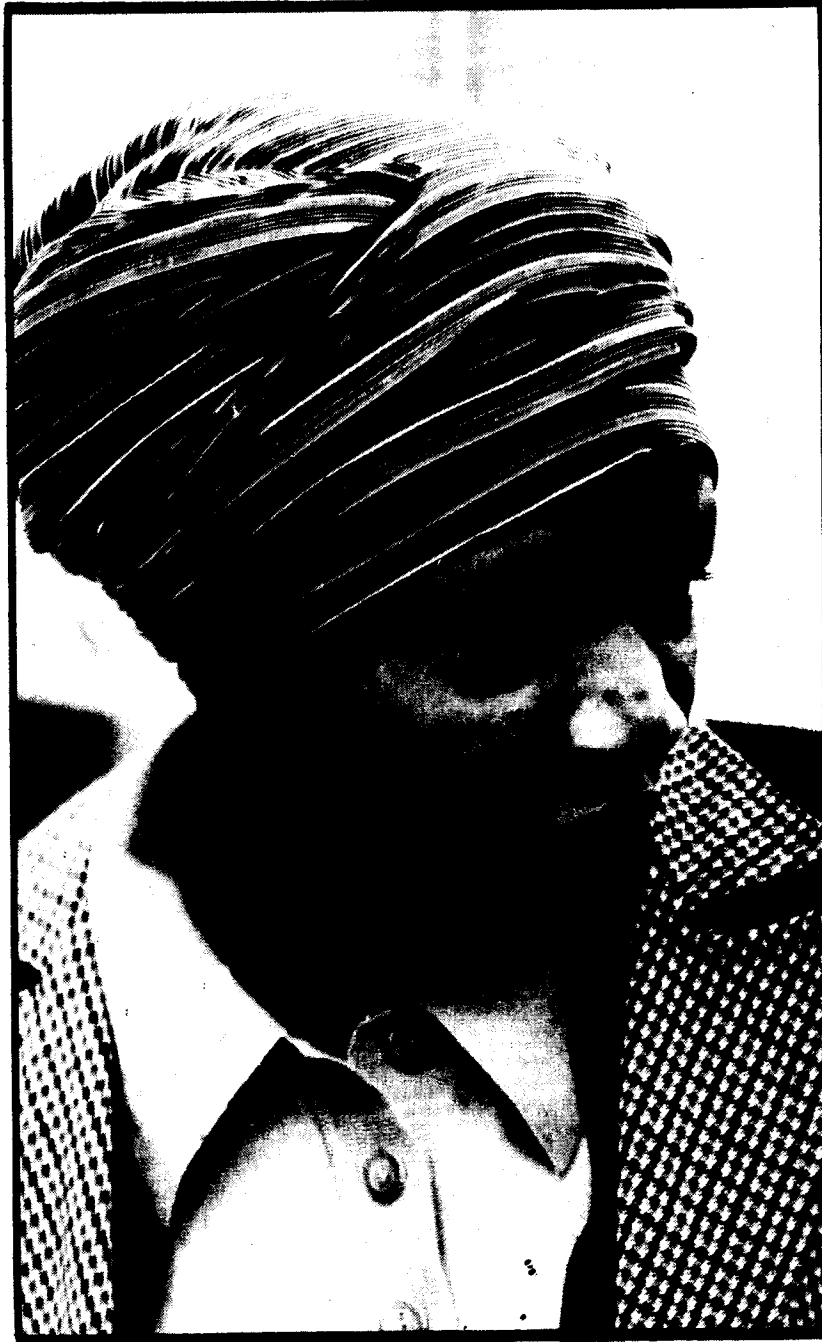


photo: from 'Our Bodies Ourselves'

BLEEDING

Doris Douglas

I've been in care since I was 12 and have been looking for a job for a year now—I'm 17; they have sent me to loads of interviews but I still haven't been offered a job. I went to an interview with Sainsbury's and the girl who talked to me said I'd have to take my turban off if I wanted a job. I said I was prepared to do so but when the employment office rung her up after the interview, she went on about my turban and said I couldn't have the job. Then I went round to this place in Islington. I knew the man was mucking me about. He kept saying he had to see other girls and telling me to come back again. In the end I knew he wasn't serious. So far I haven't been able to get anything from Social Security. They make me so angry. You have to answer so many questions and I have to keep getting letters from my social worker because I haven't got any parents. I don't have any money of my own. I can't leave the Home till I'm 18 but in any case if I don't get a job or somewhere to stay, how will I be able to live independently?



What we think

We didn't get a welfare state from some bunch of do-gooders in parliament. We got it because the powers-that-be were scared to death of the militant mood among ordinary people after the second world war. It is true that a Labour Government introduced the welfare state. But it did so at a time when arch Tories like Quintin Hogg MP were saying "If you do not give the people reform they will give you revolution." Now Labour is trying to take back what they had to give thirty years ago.

SOCIAL

Five million people rely "supplementary benefit" unemployed. The government is now these miserly and humiliated. Here are some of them:

- OUT Payments for the
- OUT Payments for the
- OUT Payments to school unemployment
- OUT Payments to the separation or the *Such people who of the word 'des*
- IN Cuts in Social S
- BUT 400 extra sex s treated as 'indep open door page
- IN A more complic and cut down p *Those most in r Mothers under* No extra payme thousands more No extra payme severely inconti

They even want to deny security decisions.

Patricia Greenland

I live with a friend who gets £23 invalid benefit and £3.24 from social security every week. Although we live in my council flat, he completely controls the money. He gives me £1.50 on a Monday and £4.50 on a Tuesday; I can't buy any clothes and we haven't got proper bedding or furniture. The SS refuse to give me a penny because they say he can support me. They tell me the only way I will get something is if I move out of my own

THE POOR

AL SECURITY

on a miserable pittance called 'to keep alive. They include one-half of the considering proposals which would reduce paying payments even further.

se in exceptional need.
se on special diets (e.g. diabetes)
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se suffering through strikes, marital
ough being forced to leave a violent home.
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itute'.*

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oopers to spy on women who wish to be
endent' from their husbands or friends. (see
25)

ted system designed to discourage claims
yments.

eed would suffer most.

6 would not be allowed to claim at all.

nts towards heating bills—it's cheaper to let

old age pensioners die of the cold!

nts towards laundry bills—except for the
ent.

claimants the right to appeal against social



Sheila Stewart

I've been in hospital for two weeks. I've just come in to claim 2 weeks' money from Social Security. This woman was about to hand over my giro when another clerk

grabbed it from her and said I couldn't have it. They just pick on you. I've got a drugs problem which is why I was in hospital. Every time they make it more difficult for me, I get depressed and go back on drugs. I'm

supposed to get £18 a week but I haven't had anything at all for 3 weeks. I have had no heating at all and am living on porridge and bread and butter. But it's no good saying anything to them. If you say 'look, its really cold and I've got no heating,' they just look at you. They must have families. They must sleep with their husbands so they must have some feelings. But all they do is degrade you, they seem to have no warmth at all. They try to make you feel guilty. And you can't lose your cool with them because they immediately call the police if you lose your temper.

What we can do

Firstly, if a member of the DHSS staff tries to humiliate you, don't let them get away with it. Some of them try to get at your dignity and self-respect by implying that you are somehow guilty of a crime when you go to claim money; they act as if it is *their* money which they are dishing out. If you stand up for yourself, it'll encourage other people in the queue to feel more confident. Get to know everything about your rights and push for them. If you know anyone who is having hassles, get the local Womens Voice group to take up her case—the worst thing about being on social security is the way it isolate people! Write and tell us of your battles.

The National Campaign against the Supplementary Benefits Review has been launched to fight the new proposals now being considered by the government. Get in touch with Jason Copeland c/o Harlesden Advice Centre, London N.W.10 (01-965 2590) for information and details of the campaign.

What can stop them

The kind of fighting spirit behind the present strike wave of lower paid women and men, lorry drivers, ambulance drivers, train drivers, water workers, and many many more. The kind of fighting spirit which will again make them exclaim: "If we do not give them reform, then they will give us revolution!"



ouncil flat into a
ostel so that I can

prove my
independence.

When women move they move the world!

INTERNATIONAL WOMENS DAY

INTERNATIONAL Women's Day is now celebrated by all women, but when it began it was the one festival of the year for working women. A festival that celebrated the power of working women to lead the whole of the working class in breaking the chains of their oppression.

The first International Women's Day was on March 19th, 1911. It was called by Clara Zetkin, a leading German socialist, and one of the leaders of the huge working class women's movement that had grown throughout Europe during the late 1800's. The date was chosen to commemorate the fall of the Prussian king with the uprising of German workers in 1848.

In 1913 the date was changed to March 8 in honour of the courageous demonstration by the New York garment workers, who took to the streets on March 8, 1908 demanding the vote, and end to sweat-shop conditions, and for childcare facilities. In doing so they helped pave the way for one of the first industrial unions in the U.S.A.

In 1917, when the working women of East London, led by Silvia Pankhurst, were organising against the war, their Russian working class sisters were building a massive

movement of women demanding the return of their men from the trenches. They also demanded communal facilities to support them as they worked long hours in the factories, and for a reduction in the price of bread so that they and their children would not starve as their husbands got blown to bits for the glory of the Tsar.

On March 8th 1917, in defiance of their local Bolshevik leaders, who advised them not to demonstrate on International Women's Day the women textile workers in Petrograd struck the mills and marched on to the streets.

They sent deputations to the metal workers; they sent messages into all the factories; they called on all the workers in the city to support them. In a huge and angry demonstration they called for the return of the men, higher pensions for the wives of soldiers and sailors, a reduction in bread prices—and so they sparked the revolution.

Within three days the Tsar had abdicated. The next period was fraught with the most terrible poverty and hardship while Russia tried to recover from the war, fight a civil war against the ruling-class they had overthrown, fight off invading armies on six fronts, and build the new workers' state. But the women were rewarded by making greater steps towards their own liberation than had ever been made before.

As I sit writing this piece, four small children are playing noisily around me, there's a meal to cook, and the washing piles up. There are virtually no provisions for our children when they are not in school. A sick child often means the loss of a day's pay. If you are a single parent the chances are that your children will be taken into care as you struggle hopelessly to keep them healthy and warm. In Russia after the revolution, as a result of the vigorous campaigning within the Communist Party by the leaders of the working women's movement, the Zhenodotl, many free nurseries were set up. There were communal laundries to deal with the washing while the women were at work, communal restaurants where hundreds of families could eat a wholesome meal, and communal housing with water, heat, and light.

They argued that running a home and raising children were the responsibilities of

society, not individual women.

At first the new workers' state did not consider women's needs as important as men's. As the men returned from the war wanting jobs in the factories, women began to be sent home. But the Zhenodotl vigorously opposed this. Women were breadwinners too, and they fought successfully to have employment based on need and ability and not on sex.

Russia simply couldn't survive as a single socialist state. She was forced to develop her own capitalist economy run by the State.

Tragically, the Russian economy had been wrecked by the outside capitalist world. Poverty was widespread and so was corruption amongst the top officials of the Communist Party. In this atmosphere Stalin gained strength and power and the days of his distorted communism began.



High taxes were imposed on the basic necessities of life, like bread and heating fuel, piece-work was introduced, strikes were made illegal, and women lost many of the gains they had fought so hard for. Once again abortions, which had been made legal and free, were outlawed; divorce, which had become easy and cheap, was made difficult and expensive; the bearers of large families were given medals. International Women's Day became a 'celebration of motherly virtues and cosy family life'.

But mothers are the workers too! And if we have little power at home to change our position in society, we certainly do in our workplaces! Many so-called, and highly profitable 'light industries' throughout Europe and Britain are almost entirely worked by women. The service industries and vital clerical jobs too. It is clear that women have the power to *insist* on a better deal. Why should we receive so little from a highly technological society, which we have played a huge part in building? And where we are so often used as machines because we are cheaper.

This year, on March 8th, down your tools, leave the kids with the men, desert the switchboards, typewriters, kitchen sinks and bedsides. Come out and celebrate the festival of working women! Join the International Women's Day celebration in your area. Demonstrate for better lives for women. And see how they get on without us!

At this time especially we should also demonstrate our support for oppressed women all over the world, many of whom, like those in Iran and South West Africa, are risking their lives alongside the men and even leading them in forging a revolution—just as the textile workers of Petrograd did on March 8th 1917!

• Jane Henriques



WOMEN

Dear Womens Voice

We would like advice about a firm which Edinburgh Womens Voice group is trying to organise.

The firm employs fewer than 30 people and the 15 girls who work there take home £22.60 for a 40 hour week. There is no holiday or sick pay. The girls get half an hour for lunch, two ten-minute tea breaks and two three-minute toilet visits a day.

The firm makes ice-cream wafers. Chocolate is scraped off the floor and put back into the machine. Accidents are frequent—one girl got the finger-nails of her right hand ripped off. She'd been told to clean a moving machine and caught her fingers in the chain. She came in next day in bandages, too frightened to take time off work in case she got sacked.

'Not only are they stupid, they're ugly as well,' the manager once commented to a visitor. One girl fell on the greasy floor and dropped a stack of pallets. A supervisor said, 'Have you any idea how much you've just cost the company?' then dragged her into personnel for a telling off. Personnel told her off then shouted at her to get out for dropping wafer crumbs on the office carpet.

In the summer the heat is boiling and clouds of wasps surround the machines. But worst of all is the noise—production is at its height in summer. The girls go home bad-tempered, with headaches and ringing in their ears. The noise damages hearing we're sure. We are certain that one girl we speak to is partially deaf through working there.

The factory inspector doesn't seem to have much effect. It's normally known three days in advance when he's coming. On surprise visits he's given tea and kept chatting while the factory is cleaned up.

When he does come out of the office he mentions the spiders' webs, warns them again about the unguarded machinery, then wanders out.

We heard about this factory after the Asian women previously employed there had been sacked for joining a union. The firm then took on school leavers because then they could pay them even less.

After we heard about this we got in touch with two of the girls, who came to our



AT WORK

meetings and joined the Transport and General Workers Union. They went off with more forms to sign up the rest of the workforce. Unfortunately only one more girl joined before the supervisors heard about it, and set up a useless 'workers' committee' to deal with complaints.

The personnel managers seems to know who one of the girls is and she is 'sat with' every lunch hour to make sure she doesn't try and recruit people into the union. At the moment we're scared to put a leaflet in in case it rebounds on the two girls and aren't even call in the factory inspector, please help!

Dear Sisters,

It certainly sounds a terrible place. First of all remember that the girls who are trying to get a union set up must not do anything until they have been there six months—then they will be protected by the Employment Protection Act. Secondly because this firm is anti-union and will certainly sack any 'trouble-makers' no matter how long they've been there—you Womens Voice group must do all the work.

You should put in a leaflet explaining how the employers are breaking the law. And that permanent damage is being done to young girls' hearing. Here are some points to consider (and for your first leaflet):

1) The chocolate from the floor is an

offence, so call in a public health inspector, who could have a look at the dirty toilets while he's at it.

2) The unguarded machinery is an offence, find out how long it's been like that.

3) No girl should clean a moving machine.

4) Any injury however small should be written down in the accident book. If the girl's injury was not written down the firm has broken the Health and Safety law.

5) From the sound of it, the noise of the machines is above the official safety limit of 80 decibels. The girls should have their ears tested to find out if they have suffered ear damage. We'll put you in touch with an Edinburgh 'expert' on health and safety who will be able to give step by step advice.

6) After you've got some well documented facts on the above points write to the factory inspector about them. Explain that he has to test the machine when it is in full production.

7) The girls inside can deny all knowledge or interest in trade unions until enough people have signed up. Sign up the girls by calling a series of recruitment meetings which must be held outside the building.

8) Meanwhile continue to put in the bulletins and get as much support as you can for any confrontation or victimisation by getting in touch with the trades council and finding out about any good TGWU militants or other experienced trade unionists who can give you advice.

9) Find out what firms the company deals with and whether they are organised.

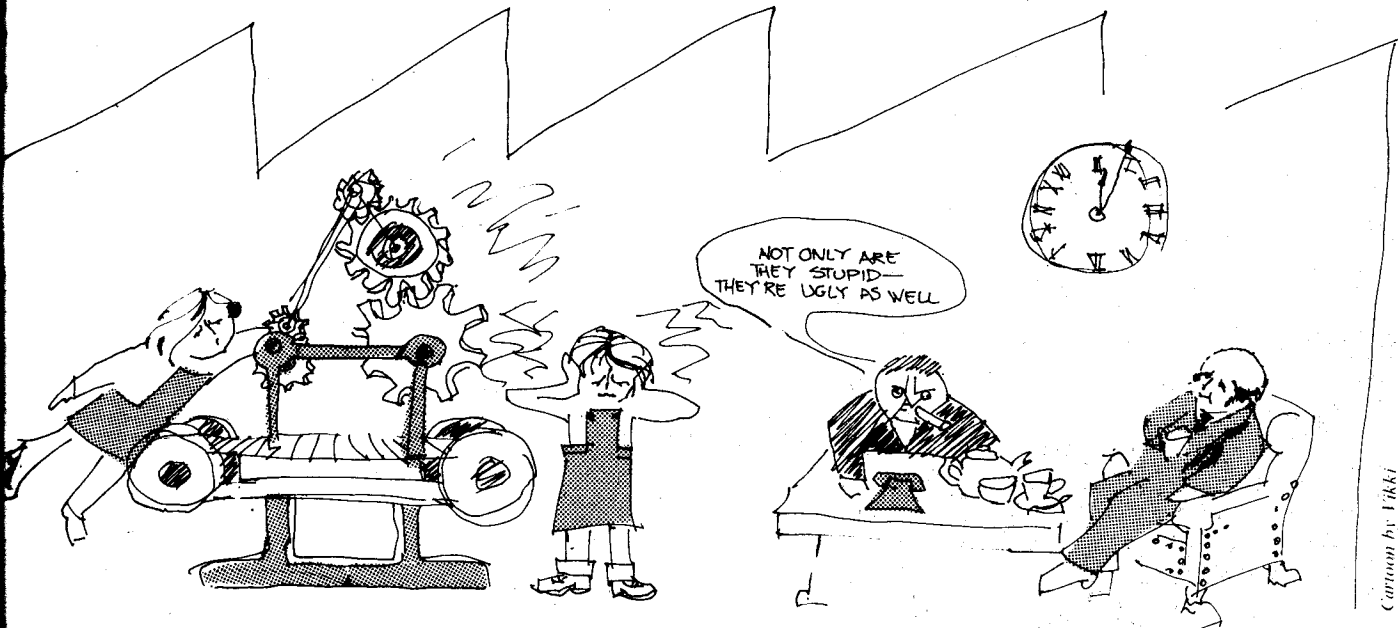
10) *Take your time!* Put in leaflets with good information, pointing out the hazards and the injustices and explaining the protection which organised workplaces enjoy.

You can be building a strong case for the union and building for a possible strike at the same time. Meanwhile the women and the men may start joining in ones and twos.

Best of luck.

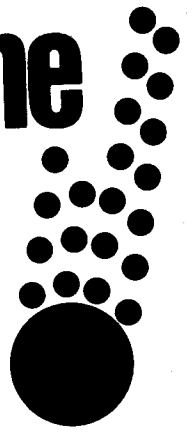
Christina Potrykus

We are sending Edinburgh a detailed reply. If you have any workplace problems large or small, write to Women at Work, Box 82, London, E2.



Cartoon by Vikki

MUSIC: one sells the other doesn't



MUSIC is an industry and the products it sells are very carefully packaged. For women in the industry this means one thing sex. Look at any successful female singer. Whatever the image, it is always based on sex.

Suzi Quatro is a good example. Her aggressive, 'heavy metal' image may seem unfeminine in the traditional sense, but basically it was just another male fantasy. Micky Most, her producer, does not hide the fact. He put it like this: "where there's a void there's a chance of success." and that means a void in the sexy packaging stakes.

And have you noticed how Suzi is now being softened up and made more feminine? Now there's a good reason for that. It's to do with what they call "extending the life of the product". You see, if the image is made a bit more bland then it will appeal to a wider audience and perhaps even an international audience, explains Micky

Most. For instance, Punk is too British so you have to weaken it to make it sell all over Europe. Sounds a bit like canned food doesn't it—take away the real taste and replace it with an artificial one.

Tina Charles is the epitome of that sort of packaging. In fact Maurice Oberstien who is her producer said "She's the girl next-door, she sells as the girl next door, *she is unidentifiably average.*"

We talked to two women who face the problems of trying to succeed in the music business whilst attempting to avoid the typical sexual packaging and sexist attitudes that they are confronted with.

Denyze D'Arcy plays saxophone in a band from Liverpool called the Ded Byrds. She is the only female out of the six members. On stage she wears "sexy" clothes—black leather boots, black pencil slim skirt, sometimes a red beret. Denyze says she doesn't

really feel happy in those sort of clothes "I'd be much more comfortable in jeans and a tee-shirt, standing up there in front of all those people I feel very uneasy, in fact sometimes it gets so bad that I can't wait to get off stage. It's the strain of it all you see."

Jenny Barnett sings with a band called Belt and Braces. Jenny recalls having the same problems when she first started. "I used to have a dress with a very low dip V—I had very, very big tits. One night someone said to me 'did I know why everyone was coming to see the show'—I didn't, but I do now! Every night we got massive applause—I thought I was wonderful, I thought it was my singing that attracted them!"

Denyze: "This whole thing about being a sex object, it's very hard for me because sometimes you want to be sexy, you're getting into the music you're playing and you're excited by it all and being sexy is just the same as

being how you feel. But then you have to stop and think if you're coming across as a sex object."

It's a problem that all feminists have to face. We know that there's a dividing line between sexuality and sexism but it's very hard not to be influenced by what other people think, and in the music business you're on show in front of lots of people. The music critics, the sort of people who really have a say in how successful you become aren't very interested in the fact that you yourself don't want to be a sex object—sex sells.

Jenny: she made a decision to start appearing on stage in her normal clothes. "I never wear dresses on stage. I don't know how the kids receive me. I don't wear make-up. I don't have any stage image at all. I don't think the girls look at me and think, 'oh god, I'd like to look like that'. I don't know how to define myself as a singer in a rock band, I have great

ROME WOMEN FACE FASCIST ATTACKS

At 10.15am on January 9, fascists armed with machine-guns fire-bombed the studios of Radio Citta-Futura (Radio 'Future City') a left-wing free radio station in San Lorenzo, a working class district of Rome. Between 10 and 11 every morning Radio Citta-Futura is run by a women's radio unit, Radio Donna. At the time of the fascists' attack a housewives' collective were doing a programme on contraception.

As the women tried to escape four of them were shot down—two with fractured femurs—all with other wounds and serious burns. The fifth woman was ordered to back up against a wall, lift her skirts and was then machine-gunned in the genitals. Bullets have been removed from her womb, bladder and pelvis. She is still on the danger list. Until the transmitters were destroyed the attack was broadcast.

Within a few hours eight to ten thousand women gathered in the area and demonstrated all day. On the following day, the Women's Movement called for a general strike and demonstration of women—and some 30-40,000 women marched in Rome. Strike action was patchy but for the first ever spontaneous attempt by women at a general strike it was considerable.

Even fewer women have the chance to work in Italy than in England. Many women in the south have to content themselves with taking work into their homes; they get paid at very low piece-rates and, of course, have no union rights or the chance to get together with other women.

Things are better in the north but women still have to face heavy attacks from the Christian Democrat government and the Catholic church.

The Women's Movement was born from the struggle for the right to divorce in 1974. Now the Catholic church have declared that they will excommunicate anyone having to do with divorce or abortion.

In May 1977, 19 year old Giordiana Masi was shot dead by the police at a festival to

commemorate the victory of the Divorce referendum. (That was the referendum that finally made divorce possible in Italy.) Italian women have to put up with a great deal of violence not only by the state but in the home too.

The women's liberation newspaper *Donna* conducted a survey which found that 50% of women interviewed were beaten by their husbands. 60% of the women had suffered violence at the hands of men, including their brothers.

One woman spoken to said that the women's liberation movement had made men feel guilty about their attitude to women and that this sense of guilt made them behave even worse.

But the Italian family has always been patriarchal—honouring men at the expense of women. This problem has been made even worse by the economic situation.

Widespread unemployment has meant that many young women cannot leave the family home, therefore the 'old family model' has been strengthened—women make and bring coffee to the male members of the household as they lie in their beds!

Who attacked the station?

The group who made the attack—NAR (Nuclei Armati Rivoluzionarie) is a fascist underground group. Its members stay secret so that they can carry out acts of violence like the one on the radio station, without being found out.

But this group has definite links with Pero Rauti, the man tipped to be the next secretary of the neo-fascist parliamentary party Movimento Sociale Italiano. So the fascist group which mutilated the women at the radio station have links with the fascist members of a recognised parliamentary party.

Looking at the state's and church's attitude to women and the fascist violence at Radio Donna, it does not take much imagination to realise how much women fighting in Italy have to contend with.

• Betty Collins



Pictures of Jenny, who works with the Belt and Braces band, by Virginia Turbett. Which image sells?

problems in that. The song, I've just written is all about that:

See me, see my face
I don't wear make-up
I must be a disgrace
I don't shave my armpits
I've got hard-bitten hands
I've got hairy legs
I must be a man."

Denyze: "I know that people don't think of me as the sax player in the band. I'm the girl who also happens to play an instrument."

Jenny: "I don't think people understand the dilemma women performers face. We have to live with the audience giving us bottle all the time. Talk to any woman performer, she'll tell you the same. Men have it so easy, they have no complications. They don't have to ask themselves questions all the time. For women, even holding the mike can become a sexual thing."

Denyze says that she wouldn't describe herself as a feminist at all, but that has a lot to do with bad

impressions. "I have this image of hysterical bra-burning feminists, and yet really I agree with most of what you say, especially when I think about my mum, she's had a hard life—I couldn't stand for it and I recognise that the women's movement has a lot to do with the fact that I think like that."

Jenny has also been influenced in the same way: "My mother's life made me think. She has been married for 37 years, she hasn't been touched by her husband for 15 years, she cooks his food—the whole lot. About four or five years ago I started to think all these women in the movement can't be wrong. I felt that I had to stop defending men—my first response to women's lib was that you had to hate men—it's a pity that women looking on don't see that's not what it's about and don't explore it a bit."

• Michelle Grant

Just the way you are

—by Billy Joelle
 sung by Barry White
 This song appears to flatter women, encouraging us just to be ourselves:

Don't go changing, trying to please me

*You never let me down before
 Don't imagine you're too familiar
 That I don't see you any more*

But the man in the song doesn't really want his partner to be herself, he just wants her to stay the same:

I need to know that you belong with me.

The same old someone that I knew
 He claims to be making no demands of the woman at all, but actually he is demanding that she mustn't change, she mustn't develop — if she did she might outgrow her need for him.

I heard a phone-in programme where several women complained how they had got married very young, had a few kids, and now (at the age of 22 or 23) wanted to branch out, go to evening classes, make new friends, and their husbands wouldn't let them, terrified presumably in case their wives developed into independent personalities.

I don't want clever conversation

*I don't want to work that hard
 I just want someone to talk to
 I want you just the way you are
 (Dumbo!)*

In other words, I have my male friends for intellectual stimulus, so don't go putting on airs, you don't have to be brainy so long as you're sympathetic. (Can you imagine the same lyrics sung by a woman to a man?) The guy assumes that everything the woman does, is done with him in mind. It never occurs to him that she might have aspirations of her own.

*Don't go trying some new fashion
 Don't change the colour of your hair
 You always have my unspoken passion*

Although I may not seem to care
 And how many times have we heard that one before? (The strong silent type.) He won't speak his love, only his lecture: Don't do this, don't do that! Don't change whatever happens! Back in your rut where you belong!

Patronizing rubbish, but ever so popular in both Billy Joelle's and Barry White's versions. It's just so easy to listen to, it's hypnotic. I'm always humming it myself!

Lucy Toothpaste

A guide to your rights

Marriage Breakdown Housing and the Law Manchester Women's Handbook No. 2.

35p from bookshops or from Manchester Law Centre (Publications) 595 Stockport Road Longsight, Manchester 12

Do you want to leave your husband or boyfriend? Are you worried about finding somewhere else to live, about the children or about money? If so then I'd advise you to get a copy of this booklet. It's a step by step guide to your rights,

which is clear and understandable without being oversimplified. It has sections on Going through the Courts, Getting Your Own Accommodation, Living By Yourself and also a list of useful addresses and a guide to legal terms. This booklet brings together lots of information previously only available from a wide range of sources.

Buy it, we all need to know about divorce, separation, housing rights, fighting eviction and where to go if we are battered.



Coronation Street: What does it make you think of—grey Salford terraces, Len Fairclough talking about 't'cooncil' in the Rovers, Stan Ogden not making enough by window cleaning to get Hilda out of curlers? Well that may have been what it used to be about. But veteran addicts like me have noticed a startling difference. Hilda Ogden's refusing to cook Stan's dinner—she's taken up painting and wants to become a fully rounded person, Deidre Langton has given lecherous Ray Langton the push and is learning to cope as a single mum and the rest of the programme seems preoccupied with the problems of Gail, Susie and Elsie, and Mavis.

In a word Coronation Street has gone womens lib. I kid you not. The scriptwriter has gone mad and is treating us to a strong dose of what women do think and say in your dark Lancashire side street.

What's it all about do you suppose?



Has womens lib got so powerful that it has reached the sexless strands of Ena Sharples hairnet? It would be nice to think so.

In fact what has really happened is that the thirteen million regular viewers were getting a bit jaded with the unreal diet of men hanging round the pub all day with nothing to do except moan. Viewing figures were dropping. So they changed the script. More about women—makes it more bitchy, nasty,



INTERESTING. It's livened up the programme all right. But it's got about as much to do with real women as the old programme had to do with real men. It's a patronising figment of the middle class imagination.

But what I can't understand is—why do I and thirteen million others watch it with religious regularity? Could it be it's nice to know there's folk dafter, pettier and worse off than you are?

• Anna Paczuska

Interiors



Interiors—a film directed by Woody Allen

The tension and unsureness underlying Woody Allen's comedies are up front in *Interiors*. The 55 year old mother is an interior decorator. She tries to keep her world in order by decorating it in plain beige, white, grey. Very cold. Obsessive, almost fanatical.

She's an unhappy woman, caught in the cold trap. Her husband decides to leave her, goes on holiday to Greece, meets an easy-going, sweet woman called Pearl. Pearl wears hot red dresses, makes jokes, does card tricks, dances. So that's the end. Although the three daughters try to help their mum pick up the pieces, she can't do it.

The mother is a woman who says 'I've given my whole life for you' (and she has) but thinks that is reason enough to get her own way. A woman who has sacrificed everything—no-one asked her to or even wanted her to—but she did and she will hold it over your head. A woman who has done everything it says you should do in *Good Housekeeping* and *Women's Own*.

But it hasn't worked. They want to lead their own lives. And though the elder two bear the marks of being their mother's daughters the youngest has escaped to become a glamorous television actress in third-rate film.

Woody Allen analyses the self-destruct mechanism of the upper middle class family, their yearning to be creative, their success in financial and career terms, and the void created when their time becomes their own. This film is about the tragic loneliness behind the apparent beauty of the world the mother has created for herself. No-one is to blame, the family just doesn't cater for the tragedy of middle-aged lonely women.

• Jenny Jackson



Consumer Wrongs

Dear Womens Voice,
Do you ever get the feeling that you're always in the wrong? The other day I went into a boutique hoping that the clothes would be slightly different from the usual multiple products. This boutique looked inviting presumably because there were no lights on. I picked a couple of sweaters off the rail, and took them over to the window to see what colour they were. The screaming noise of the burglar alarm as I carried them over to the door was enough to warn me to put them back and get out.

Consumer rights?
Julie Fancy

The Exception that Proves the Rule

Dear Womens Voice,
I work for a printing firm in Hackney, who for once in my life do not discriminate against me because I am a single mother.

Not only are they understanding and helpful when the children are sick, but each day at four o'clock my boss lets me stop work and go to collect my little girl from the nursery, and then my little girl returns to work with me for the

final hour until five when I finish.

Perhaps more firms should take example of this, and enable women to work—fulltime—it's difficult enough for women to find jobs today without being discriminated against before you have finished writing your marital status on the application form along with the size of your family.

Christine Fellowes, Hackney

Prostitutes - A Bad Job

Dear Womens Voice,
Though by no means a party-line feminist, I was angered in the extreme by the line taken in the article 'Prostitution: A particular kind of job' (WV 25). The article shows an all too evident attitude of celebration towards prostitution.

It states quite bluntly that this 'profession' is as good a choice as any other and sees retreat into prostitution as being preferable to remaining in other jobs. This perspective is as self-defeating for women as it is reactionary. How are we to better our prospects for equal pay, opportunity, labour rights, etc, if we all retreat from the field of struggle?

As for prostitution, a job in which any man can spit over your body for the price of your sustenance and shelter, it is sometimes quite literally, the shittiest job of all.

As for the money, though this may seem a small fortune to

women in low-paid jobs, it is no more than the nose pickings of what prostitutes' male clients receive.

I feel bloody angry at the implication that if women do not become prostitutes they will inevitably become rape victims: what about our right to a self-defined sexuality then? As for the case of the man who goes to prostitutes to escape the inevitable sexual boredom of sexual monogamy, how about telling him in no uncertain terms that his sex life would be greatly improved if we were to stop thinking of his wife (or any other woman) as a mere hole to fuck and started to think of her as a human being with sexual and emotional needs of her own, and yes... believe it or not... a mind of her own.

Roberta Farr

Too Glib

Dear Womens Voice,
When I turned to the article on prostitution in January Womens Voice I was angry and disappointed. The subject was treated glibly with little or no analysis of why the things mentioned are as they are. I was particularly angry as my name appears at the bottom of the article when I did not write it. I did supply factual information and quotes collected while making the film which Mary Gibson mentions.

I was disappointed at the selections she made from this material—drawing heavily on

the emotive and sensational and excluding vital points—particularly the law relating to prostitution which I was assured would be included. A prostitute can be sent to prison on the word of a policeman alone, and all prostitutes, especially those working on the streets, are continually subjected to vicious police harassment, particularly when they attempt to organise.

Little was done to break down the stereotype of prostitutes being like 'a breed apart' rather than women doing a particular job to earn a living. By surrounding quotes with clumsy generalisations, the women quoted were made to seem pathetic and incapable which is definitely not the case. I am also angry with myself, while being in possession of the facts I should have had enough confidence to write the article.
Jacky Garstin

Christmas Draw Results

Winners of South West London Womens Voice Raffle, drawn on December 19th.

1st Prize:- Kodak Instamatic Camera - B Kelly, London, SW16 No. 0950

2nd Prize:- Pocket Calculator - S Howe, Tooting, London. No. 0691

3rd Prize:- Malt whisky - P Bullier, London, SE20. No. 0965

Babycham Ads Sexism!

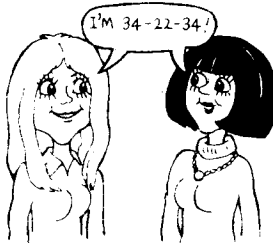
Dear Womens Voice,
Can you do anything about this?

To the advertising manager, Babycham:

We ask you to withdraw the beer mats entitled 'A Girl's Survival Guide' from circulation immediately. The assumption that a girl's main preoccupation that a girl's main at the expense of her friendships towards other girls is both an outdated and an insulting piece of male chauvinism.

These beer mats caused grave offence to the nine women who were in the Wolverhampton pub that night and we were unanimous in our decision to write to you to ask that a firm of our standing no longer indulge in such cheap sexist rubbish. I doubt if you'll sell much

Babycham to women on the strength of that advert.'
Lesley L Williams
Wolverhampton



Babycham Your Lair

1. Sharing

Never have flat-mates who're more attractive than you are. It's the fastest way to lose boyfriends.

Avoid sharing with girls whose sweethearts are stationed in the Falkland Islands—or the phone bill might leave you stationed in Holloway.

Always try to choose people with the same measurements as yours. It's the fastest way to double the size of your wardrobe, absolutely free.

Dear Womens Voice,
Here is some information for lesbian readers: SAPPHO is very good and can be reached at 01-724 3636 any time between 2 and 7pm except Sunday and Thursday.

In Edinburgh there is the

Scottish Homosexual Rights Group—open weekdays 7 to 10pm—weekends 2.30 - 10pm. They offer a befriending service, a bookshop with excellent feminist reading on sale or loan, a women's meeting every Thursday at 8pm, a games room and a coffee bar. Telephone (031) 556 4049. There is also one in Glasgow Telephone (041) 332 1725. Gay Switchboard are on Aberdeen 44613. They hold coffee evenings every Thursday 8-10pm on 163, King Street.

In Fife contact Elaine on Wednesday evenings at Glenrothes 757030. Dundee - contact Jim on 0382 533428.

For further information phone me: *Anne Marie Lacey* on 031 443 3241 weekdays 4-10pm and weekends 12-10pm. Or if you are desperate for help you can telephone at more unsociable hours, but don't make a habit of it!
Anne Marie Lacey

YOUR QUESTIONS



Picture above: This is from the chapter on sexuality in the health book 'Our Bodies Ourselves'. Well worth reading.

turns women on sexually. There are a lot of myths about vaginal orgasms but from the research that has been carried out most women have clitoral orgasms—that is from stimulation of the clitoris by the hand or the penis rather than just by penetration of the vagina by the penis. Of course there are no fixed rules. Every woman's response is different but the clitoris is the source of the orgasm and if it isn't stimulated either before or during intercourse then you're very unlikely to have an orgasm.

The second and main problem is that, like you, most women and men don't talk to each other about sex or about what they find exciting.

A lot of women are scared to admit that they aren't sexually satisfied because they think there's something wrong with them or they think that it might affect the bloke's ego and 'it's all supposed to happen naturally.'

I'm sure most men would prefer to be able to talk to women—talking would improve the sex lives of both people in a relationship. So pluck up your courage and talk to him honestly and openly.

Two books that might help you both are 'Our Bodies, Ourselves' which has good diagrams, and 'The Hite Report'. You should be able to get both these books from your local library. Good luck.

• Alison Kirton

I am fed up with pretending—please can you help?

Dear Womens Voice

I have been going out with a boy for a year and I have been

pretending to have orgasms when we make love. I really can't put up with any more

and I want to tell him. Can you help me.

Anon

Dear Sister

A lot of women don't have orgasms and pretend. I think it's great that you have decided not to pretend any longer.

There are two parts to the problem. First, a lot of men don't really understand what



You can't win your bread and eat

The DHSS says it will end sexual discrimination in Supplementary Benefits by a new 'nominated breadwinner' policy:

1. Where two people live together, one will be the 'breadwinner', and the other the 'dependant'.
2. The man will be regarded as the breadwinner, unless the woman successfully challenges him.
3. To do this, the woman must have been in full time employment for a long period. This will rule out 3/4 of all women.
4. Women who can prove that they've worked full time for this period have to get the man's consent to the reversal of status.
5. If the man objects, one of the 400 'sex snoopers' will decide which individual should become the nominated breadwinner.

The Claimants Union



'I can't buy any clothes and we haven't got proper bedding or furniture. The SS refuse to give me a panny because they say the man I live with can support me'. An extract from social security article pages 14 and 15.

rejects this scheme strongly—equal treatment for men and women can only come by treating everyone as an individual, not as half a couple. Every individual needs a guaranteed minimum income.

For more information, or to join our offensive call Andrea or Monka at 01 607-8117. We have regular meetings of women in the Claimants Union at the Womens Centre, 45 North St., London SW4.

photo: Beethan Kidron

WHAT IS GOING ON?

Public meetings

● **Hackney Womens Voice Public Meeting**—“Women in Iran”. Monday Feb 12th. For further information ring Yvonne 802 4386.

26th Feb discussion meeting on sexism in education.

● **Kentish Town Womens Voice Public Meeting**. Low Pay—No Way! 7.30

Camden Labour Centre, low paid women speakers, plus, film of women workers in struggle. Entrance free-tea and coffee on sale, plus bookstall. Unfortunately no creche but we provide *reliable* babysitters. All women welcome.

● **“Fight hospital closure”**. Central London WV is holding a public meeting on Thursday 25th Feb at the Plough Museum St WC1 at 6.30 pm on the proposed closure of the Soho hospital for women. Speaker: Shareen Campbell—nurse. All women welcome. Tottenham Court Rd tube, Nr. British Museum.

● **S.E. London, Public Meeting**—“How it feels to be an Asian woman in Britain”. 6th Feb. 8pm at Charlton House. Phone Anne Darby — 855 1920.

Women's Voice meetings

● **Aberdeen Womens Voice**. for more information telephone Liz 51059.

● **Acton & Harlesden Ring** Carrie 993 0356 or Pete 969 9812

● **Birmingham Womens Voice** meets regularly at the “Holloway” pub, Holloway Road, City centre. For details of next meeting and baby sitters phone Jenny—440 5794. All women welcome.

● **Black Country Sundays** fortnightly, 2.30, 27 Glen Court, Compton Road, Wolverhampton 23233 for information. Children welcome.

● **Bristol Womens Voice** meets every Wednesday at 7.30pm at the Inkworks, 22, Hepburn Rd., St Pauls. (off Stoke Croft) Phone Bristol (0272) 553 740.

● **Canterbury** every other Tuesday at Jolly Sailor Northgate. Phone Barbara (Lyminge 862742).

● **Chelmsford Womens Voice**. For details of local activities, see Womens Voice Sellers.

NALGO Conference on Maternity Leave and Workplace Nurseries

Saturday 10 February
Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London, WC1.
10am to 4.30pm
Creche provided

Programme includes: *How to get your rights. How to win a better maternity leave agreement. How to win a workplace nursery. Organising women in NALGO: Equal Rights Committees? Do they work?*

Application forms for conference from: Mike Waller, Branch Secretary, Lambeth. NALGO, Blue Star House, 234-244 Stockwell Road, London, SW9 9SR.

● **Coventry** meets every other Wednesday, 8.00pm at The Hertford Tavern, off Queens Road (near the Butts). Phone 450-570

● **Croydon Womens Voice** meets alternate Tuesdays. Phone Maureen 660 0989 or Yvonne 664 3768.

● **Ealing Womens Voice** meets regularly. Phone Maureen 567 7083 or Jane 930 0986 for details.

● **Edinburgh Womens Voice** meets fortnightly on Sunday evenings. Phone Penny 557 0731 for details.

● **Edinburgh Street sale** every Saturday 2-3pm.

Meet from 1pm onwards at the Cafe Royal (behind Woolworths, Princes Street). Womens Voice readers welcome to turn up and give us a hand. For more info phone Penny 557 0731.

● **Exeter Womens Voice** for info ring 0392 38022

● **Finchley and Barnet Womens Voice**, fortnightly meetings, for information contact Anita 883-4968 or Glenis 346-7627.

● **Fleet Street** meets every other Wednesday at the Hoop and Grapes Farringdon St lunchtimes from 1-2. Ring Maggie 822 3780 (work).

● **Glasgow Womens Voice** for information phone Clare (959 8924) or Sheila (424-1048).

● **Glossop, Derbyshire**. First and third Tuesdays of every month at 110 Victoria St., Glossop. Phone Glossop 61873 or Claire Glossop 64735 All welcome.

● **Hackney** phone Pauline (800 3586) for information and babysitter.

● **Halifax** details from WV and SW sellers every Sat 12.30-2.30 Co-op Arcade on the Precinct.

● **Harlow Womens Voice** meets fortnightly on a Wednesday night in Harlow town hall, 8pm. Ring Bron (Harlow) 415953

● **Highbury Group**. For details/babysitting, ring Elana 439-3764 (days). All women welcome.

● **Islington Womens Voice** meets regularly phone Sandy at 802 6145 for details.

□ **Hornsey Womens Voice** meets fortnightly for info ring Jane 348 6712 or Maggie 341 1182.

● **Kentish Town Womens Voice Group** meets weekly:

13 February/Women and the SUS law. Thursday 22 February/Low pay-no way! Tuesday 27 February/Children's rights. Saturday 3 Jumble sale at Camden Labour Rooms. Opens 2.15pm. phone Gail 485 0954 or Vera/Di 267 5059.

● **Lampeter** Tuesday evenings in college. Details from WV sellers or write c/o SDUC Lampeter, Dyfed, Wales.

● **Lea Valley** meets regularly. Phone Mary, (802 9563) for information and babysitters.

● **Manchester University Womens Voice** meets each week at 5pm in the students union.

● **SE Manchester** meets at the “Albert”, Rusholme, 8pm, every other Wednesday.

● **Medway Womens Voice** meets regularly. Telephone Helen Medway 270 684, or Marge 251 362.

● **Newham** meets Tuesdays and Thursdays fortnightly. Phone Wendy 790 2373. Babysitters available.

● **Newcastle meetings** are the second Tuesdays of every month, Bridge Hotel, Newcastle, at 8.00p.m. (Nr. High Levelbridge), Telephone Number: 813877 Newcastle.

● **Norwich**—every other Tuesday 8.30pm “Black Boys pub, Colegate. Or further information phone Norwich 29963.

■ **Preston** We meet every other Tuesday at the Windsor Castle, Egan Street, (near Meadow Street) at 8 p.m. Telephone Mary—Preston 55739 for more information or if you need a babysitter.

● **Just out!** New Socialist Workers Party pamphlet on Iran. The background to the crisis. How Britain supports the Shah. The future. 15p (plus 10p postage). Orders of 5 or more 12p each. Send money to SWP (Iran), PO Box 82, London, E2.

● **Womens Voice badges**. 15p each. (12p for orders over 10) available from Days of Hope, 115 Westgate Road, Newcastle.

● **Reading Womens Voice** meets regularly. For information phone Kathy on 666 800.

● **Sheffield Womens Voice** meetings, fortnightly, The Prince of Wales pub, Division Street, Sheffield. 7.30pm.

● **Shrewsbury** the first Wednesday of every month. Other meetings too so phone 58830 for details.

● **Slough Womens Voice group**. Meets on the first Tuesday of every month at Slough Library, Ring Mary—Slough 24093.

South London meets fortnightly on Tuesdays. Tate Library, Brixton Oval. All welcome.

● **S. West London Womens Voice Group** meet alternate Tuesdays 91 Bedford Hill, Balham All welcome. More info, babysitters contact Marion 673 1329 babysitters ring Marion 673 1329.

● **Stoke on Trent** would anyone interested in organising with Womens Voice in the Stoke on Trent area contact Sandra 814094.

● **Tower Hamlets** meets on alternate Mondays. Babysitters available phone Heather 739 6668 (home) or 534 7825 ext. 13.

● **Walthamstow** meets every Sunday 3pm. For details ring Jeannie 531 8340, or Pauline 521 4768.

● **York** Meets every 3rd Saturday in the month at the Royal Oak Goodramgate. Full creche facilities. Food on sale—do drop in!

● **Womens Voice needs funds**—please help us to raise them!! Fleet St WV want to organise an all London social. Anybody interested in helping, come to the Planning meeting on Tuesday 13th Feb at Polytechnic of Central London Union Bar, Bolsover St 7pm

bookmarx

FIRST QUARTER 1979

The **Bookmarx Club** is now an established method for socialists to get the best of new socialist books at a big discount—and delivered to your door.

HOW IT WORKS. You send us £4.50 for which you will receive the books on List A below plus those on one other list of your choice. Extra lists can be obtained for £2.50 each. Don't delay, send in the form now with your subscription, you will save pounds on the retail value of the books (shown in brackets on the list).

LIST A

Bisbee '17 by Robert Houston (no paper edition)

As the US entered the first world war the 'wobblies' (IWW) called for the copper miners of Bisbee Arizona on a vital strike. The mine owners reacted swiftly and brutally. This fine new documentary novel tells the story. A special paper edition only available to club members.

Iran: Dictatorship and Development by Fred Halliday (£1.50)

A thorough history of the state its agents and advisors. Fascinating reading for anyone following developments in Iran.

LIST B

Eleanor Marx (Vol 1) by Yvonne Kapp (£3.95)

First volume of the paperback edition of Kapp's incisive biography of Marx's daughter, a major socialist in her own right. Volume 2 is also available to club members at the special price of £4.50 including postage. (Published price £4.95)

LIST C

Walraff, the Undesirable Journalist (£2.50)

Walraff reports life at the bottom by working there and at the top by infiltrating. This selection of his stories explains why he is hated by those in authority in his native Germany.

Writing (£1.00)

A useful selection of news essays and poems written by working people from all over the country published by the Federation of Workers Writers and Community Publishers.

LIST D

Blood in the Streets (£1.00)

A full report of the recent spate of racist attacks and killings in London's East End produced by the Bethnal Green and Stepney Trades Council.

The Singing Flame by Ernie O'Malley (£2.50)

A historical memoir of Irish republicanism in the early 20s. The singing flame is that gas jet which flickered and died in the free-state prisons. Yet a spirit survived.

LIST E

A Piece of the Night by Michele Roberts (£2.25)

First contemporary British novel of the women's movement. Semi autobiographical, not only for Michele but for many women.

Men in the Sun by Ghassan Kanafani (£1.50)

Seven moving stories of Palestinian refugees. Written by a major figure in the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine who is also the foremost Palestinian writer of prose.

I wish to join/rejoin the Bookmarx Club and enclose £4.50 (+ £2.50 for each extra list)

NAME

ADDRESS

.....

Please send list A + List(s)

small ads

The Other Cinema

Films by women and about women to show at your meetings. Complete list available of the films we have for distribution. Send SAE to The Other Cinema, 12-13 Little Newport Street, London WC2H 7JJ. Telephone 01-734 8508.

Birmingham Womens

Liberation group can be contacted at 76 Brighton Road, Balsall Heath, Birmingham. Newsletter available with list of different groups.

Abortion

New group forming to collect information about abortion facilities and set up abortion counselling and referral service. Deptford Womens Centre, 74 Deptford High Street, 7.30pm, Tuesday 23 January. Ring Jennifer 732 9218 or Wendy 737 4849

See Red Womens Workshop

New catalogue and posters now out. Send SAE to 16A Iliffe yard, off Crampton Street, London SE17.

We are now printing for groups needing posters (+ T shirts) for meetings events etc Phone 701 8314

Pre-school group

Two feminists with 3 children (1½ years previous self-help creche experience), seek other feminists to set up radical alternative pre-school group. W9 W10 W11 area. Contact Carolyn 229 0145

Feminist Education Group

10 week course held on Thursdays 10-12 noon at the Roundhouse downstairs starting January 25th 1979. Fee £7. Free creche. Phone 202 6610 or 202 3024, 40 Bell Lane, NW4

Women and Health

10th March, Conference at Dacorum College Youth wing, Marlowes, Hemel Hempstead. Films, discussions; speakers on radical midwifery and new methods of contraception. Food and free creche available. 10am-5pm. Entrance 50p, 20p non wage earners. Details phone Hemel Hempstead 55536.

Know Your Body, Know Your Health Rights

10 week Women and Health Course organised by Brent Womens Centre and Brent CHC, every Thursday at 8pm from 1st February.

The course will be held at Brent CHC, 16-18 High Street, Harlesden NW10. For details telephone 01 961 2028

Manchester Womens Liberation Day

Workshops, films, displays. 17th February 10am - 5pm Abraham Moss Centre. Creche, and meals available. Register in advance if possible. Contact Debbie 01 224 4360 or Hilary Brown 36 Whitechapel St. Didsbury Manchester 20

Co-operative man needed

Two feminists buying house to raise children need sympathetic male help as GLC only mortgage houses to engaged (heterosexual) couples. Man must be under 30, on rising scale of pay and around for next 6-9 months. £50 reward if necessary. Write to Womens Voice Box 82 London E2.

Join Womens Voice...

WOMENS VOICE fights for womens rights. We want equal pay with the highest paid; maternity leave without restriction; the right to a job; nursery places for all children so that mothers can chose to work; and an end to discrimination in education, training, jobs and benefits; the right to abortion on demand.

To fight for these changes is only a beginning. Womens Liberation means we have to free ourselves from the grip of the rich and powerful whose oppressive rules and ideas are fostered on us from our earliest years. This means we have to fight for socialism too, to free us from a society divided between those who have and those who have not.

To fight we have to be organised: Womens Voice is a sister organisation of the Socialist Workers Party.

Fight with Womens Voice for Womens Liberation and Socialism.

join the fight!

Womens Voice Groups

Scotland
Dundee
Edinburgh
Central Glasgow
Aberdeen

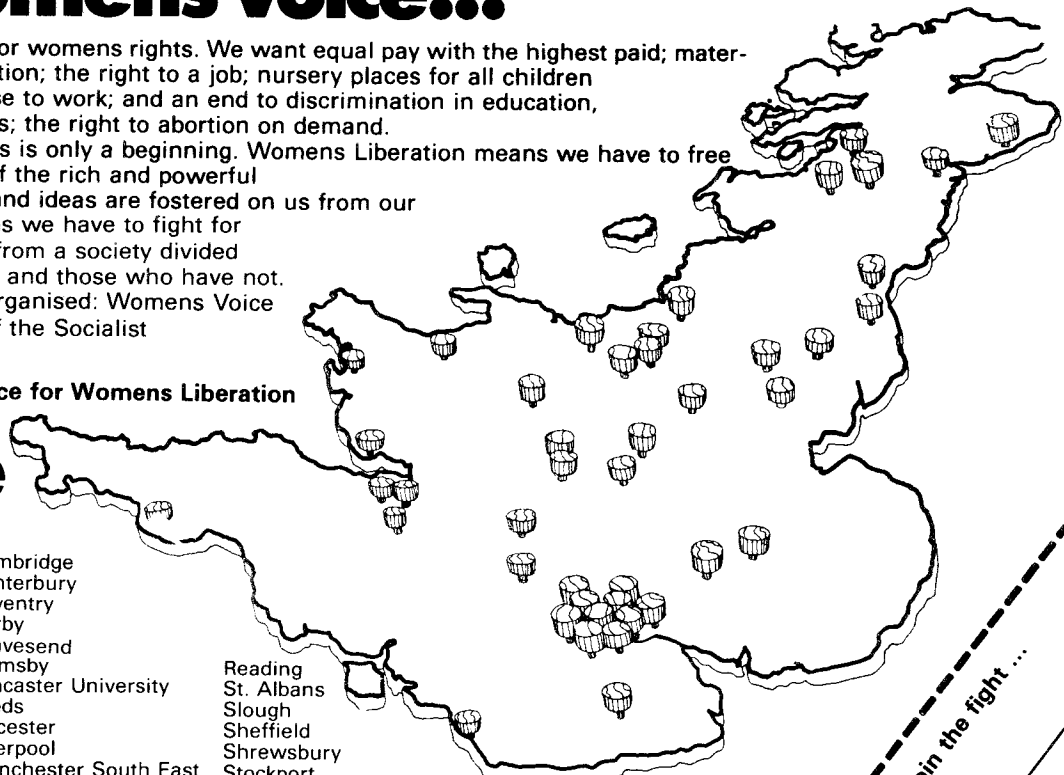
Wales
Aberystwyth
Cardiff

England
Bath
Birmingham
Bristol
Bristol University

Cambridge
Canterbury
Coventry
Derby
Gravesend
Grimsby
Lancaster University
Leeds
Leicester
Liverpool
Manchester South East
Medway
Newcastle
Norwich
Nottingham
Oxford
Preston
Plymouth
Pontefract
Poole and Bournemouth

Reading
St. Albans
Slough
Sheffield
Shrewsbury
Stockport
Sunderland
Wolverhampton
York
London
North East London Poly
Central
Fleet Street
Finchley/Barnet
South

South West
South East
Hammersmith
Bedford College
Lea Valley
Kentish Town
Islington
Walthamstow
Tower Hamlets



I want to join the fight ...

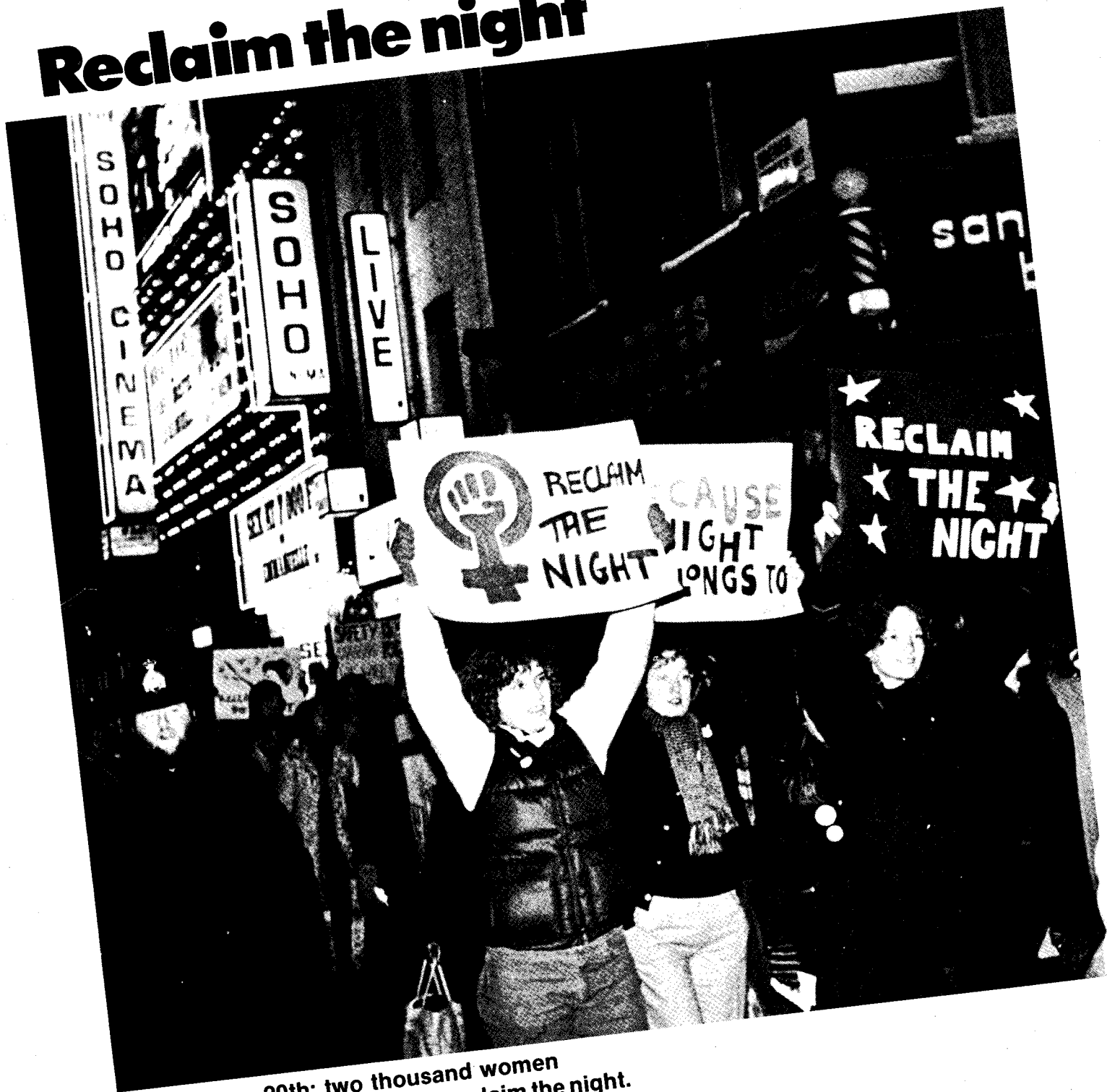
Name

Address

Send to Womens Voice
PO Box 82, London, E2.

January

Reclaim the night



January 20th: two thousand women marched through Soho to reclaim the night. As we chanted 'Whatever we wear, wherever we go, yes means yes, no means no', many of us experienced a joy and confidence in our femininity that we had never had before . . . certainly never in the streets of Soho where the sex shops and the blue film dives are ever present . . . next time there will be even more of us!