

Washington Area Womens Center
1736 R Street, N. W.
Washington, D.C. 20009

232-5145.....232-7533

April, 1973

Two project groups are being focussed on this month: Women's Health and Abortion Project and the Domestic Relations Project.

Women's Health and Abortion Project

The Women's Health and Abortion Project consists of two groups, both of which had been functioning autonomously for over a year. The two groups, the abortion counselors and the health collective merged for resource purposes and information-sharing when the Women's Center opened in August.

The purposes of both of our groups are the same: (1) to provide women with an awareness of their medical and human rights so that they are better equipped to confront the male-dominated, uneducative medical profession. (2) to educate women about their bodies so that they have some control over their own health and lives, and (3) to provide services that enable women to receive quality health care.

Not only do the abortion counselors provide referral and pregnancy testing, but we serve as patient advocates. Having formed our group before D.C. liberalized its abortion laws, we have experience in examining and rating clinics and doctors performing abortions to make sure that procedures and care are of high quality and that women are treated as people. Good ratings are given to clinics that include counselors as an integral part of the abortion team.

The health group which formed a year ago in reaction to poor treatment by insensitive male doctors, as well as the overall medical profession, has done several things. In the area of community outreach, we made a videotape on what it means to become a women's health group, concentrating on self-help and political analysis of health care. We also provided and continue to provide self-help demonstrations for different women's groups throughout the metropolitan area. The latest project is the Women's Health Clinic, which runs out of the Washington Free Clinic every Saturday morning, sign-in time 9:00 A.M. The clinic provides an educational experience for all involved, as well as diagnosis and treatment of specific problems. Free speculum and copies of "Our Bodies, Ourselves" are given out after an initial consciousness-raising self-help demonstration. Then all women present are divided into teams and examinations are performed. Services provided at this time (we hope to expand) are UD and vaginitis testing and treatment, pap smears, pregnancy testing, and referral, and birth control counseling. The clinic has one doctor, a fourth-year medical student, a medical technologist, trained lab technicians and trained paramedics, plus the aid of the abortion

counselors. Education is of the utmost importance, and so there is an ongoing teaching team each week, learning by practical experience. All women are invited to participate.

Together, the Health and Abortion groups have met to undertake certain projects. We have been researching the possibility of a mobile VD unit for women, have done investigation on menstrual extraction, and are becoming involved in legal procedures and investigation of drug experimentation on women. Both groups feel the necessity of not only providing services, but of keeping up with the latest medical developments concerning women and an ongoing political analysis of health care.

For further information, contact:

Women's Health and Abortion Project
483-4632 at 1736 R St., N.W.

or

Women's Health Clinic - 965-5476 at
1556 Wisconsin Avenue, N.W.

The Washington Free Clinic has an opening for a paid administrative collective member, starting May 15. We are only accepting women for the position, which would bring the collective to a status of three women and two men. The salary is a take-home pay of \$75.00 per week. If you have experience in health care, or are interested in the politics of health care and its delivery and want the job, contact Janet or Barbara at 965-5476, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday or Friday afternoons after 2:00 P.M.

Attention, women physicians or friends thereof: The Women's Health Clinic is interested in having another doctor join our group. If you are interested in women's health problems and in sharing your skills and can work either Saturday mornings or Wednesday evenings (we would like to expand), please contact Barbara Lewis at 965-5476 after 2:00 P.M., Monday-Friday or leave a message.

The Domestic Relations Project

The Domestic Relations Project Group provides information and support to women facing domestic crisis and teaches women to handle some of their own legal problems. We realize that the breaking up of a marriage can be a traumatic experience, both emotionally and economically. We operate on the premise that it can be a tremendously politicizing process if the woman's needs are met and her experience is viewed in a political context. This means that the woman must see that her case is not unique, that the situation which she encounters in

dealing with both her husband and the legal system is a reflection of the power men have over women. It is one of the goals of our group, therefore, to help women see this, and to give them the knowledge essential to gaining control of their own lives.

We are helping women to meet their own needs in several ways. During our office hours in the Women's Center, women come in or call with problems and questions concerning divorce, separation, annulment, and support. We attempt to explain to a woman the alternatives and options she may or may not have. If we cannot help her, we try to find a place that can. We also feel that it is important for a woman to understand her rights in dealing with the legal system or with her husband, so that she can be strong and stand up for herself in her encounters with them. We explain her rights in dealing with the legal system or with her husband so that she can be strong and stand up for herself in her encounters with them. We explain her rights and what she can expect to any woman coming to us for help. Hopefully, some measure of self-confidence can be gained, and the woman will learn to rely on herself and other women whenever possible.

The Domestic Relations Project is also trying to establish a housing referral list for women who want to or have already left their husbands, and want to live with other women in a similar situation. The women can then provide emotional support for each other as well as share expenses, housekeeping and child care responsibilities. We also hope to provide short-term emergency housing for women leaving their husbands.

We are in the process of establishing support groups for women in transition in order that they may get together and learn from each other's experiences.

An important project of the D.R. group is pro se divorce. This is a divorce in which a woman acts as her own attorney. We are now in the middle of our first case, and when it is completed, we have to begin teaching other women to do their own divorces. A handbook has been prepared, which details the processes of filing, preparing papers, and appearing in court. At this time, we are only trained to handle uncontested divorces where property settlement, child custody, or support payments are not involved or have been already agreed upon, but we hope to expand to include other types of cases later. We are looking into the possibility of teaching women to write their own separation agreements. While pro se legal actions are much less expensive, our main objectives are to teach women the skills and confidence necessary to deal with the ominous and overwhelming legal system, and to present a challenge to that system. We hope to expose the male orientation of the law and the many ways in which it oppresses women. Any woman interested in pro se divorce should call or come by during office hours.

The D.R. group is actively seeking new members and will be holding training sessions in April. No experience is necessary. Our meetings are held on Sunday night at 8:30 at the Women's Center. Members may establish their own office hours. Anyone interested in joining the group or in finding out more about it may come to a Sunday meeting, or call or come by the Women's Center during office hours.

Monday	2:30-5:30
Tuesday	12:00-5:00
Wednesday	8:00-10:00 p.m.
Thursday	10:00-5:00

We can be reached at 232-5145 or 232-7533 (Women's Center)

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN THE CENTER & don't know where to put your energy, you may want to STAFF THE PHONES IN the main office. If you are new to the Center its a good way to find out what is going on and to meet people. BECAUSE THE PHONES ARE STAFFED 12 HOURS A DAY, WOMEN ARE ALWAYS NEEDED.

PHONE DIRECTORY

Women's Center	232-5145 or 232-7533
Women's Legal Defense Fund	232-5293
National Organization for Women (NOW)	387-6895
Women's Clinic	965-5476
Radio Free Women	338-4727 or 387-6063
Abortion Counsellors	483-4632

A new edition of "Rape Prevention Tactics" is available at the RAPE CRISIS CENTRE. If you would like a copy, call 333-RAPE.

Quote of the Month:

"Loserism is when oppressed people sit around and think up reasons why they can't do something. Well, just DO IT. Thinking up reasons why you can't is the Establishments' job."

Flo Kennedy.

The deadline for the MAY NEWSLETTER is Sat. April 14th. If you have any announcements, articles, or other material for the newsletter, leave them in the envelope marked "newsletter" at the Women's Centre, or call the Centre.

A meeting will be held on Sunday April 15th at 3:30 to organize THE NEWSLETTER. A lot of work is involved, including typing stensils, printing and planning a format.

A COLLATING PARTY is planned for Sunday April 22nd at 3:30. There will be free Beer. Help put out the newsletter and have a good time with other women.

The Women's Center would like an ELECTRIC STAPLER donated if anyone has access to one--old but in working condition would be fine. It would speed up collating large mailings such as the newsletter (well over 900 names now); The Introductory packet; and the Rape Crisis Center Newsletter etc.

Also A HANDSAW--in 'sharp' condition would be a real asset to our do it "herself" tool collection.

April

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
I	2	3 FCC Orientation: 7:30pm	4	5	6 Music, drama and poetry 9 pm Mothers' CR: 7:30 pm	7 Music, drama and poetry 9 pm Art Workshop: 2:30 pm
3 FCC Training: 5-9 pm	9 Poetry Reading: 8 pm-- Rita Mae Brown Lois Gomillion	10 Music 8 pm: Meg Christian FCC 7:30 pm	11	12	13 Music, drama and poetry 9 pm Mothers' CR: 7:30 pm	14 Music, drama, poetry 9 pm Art Workshop: 2:30 pm
15 FCC Training: 5-9 pm Gen. Assembly writer 2 pm Newsletter 3:30	16 Jody Aliesan- Feminist song- Collating Party	17 FCC 7:30 pm	18 FCC Open Orientation 7:30	19	20 Music, drama and poetry 9 pm Mothers' CR: 7:30 pm	21 Music, drama, poetry 9 pm Art Workshop: 2:30 pm
22 Newsletter Collating Party FCC Training: 5-9 pm	23	24 FCC 7:30 pm Meg Christian: 8 pm	25	26	27 Music, drama and poetry 9 pm Mothers' CR: 7:30 pm	28 Music, drama, poetry 9 pm Art Workshop: 2:30 pm
29 FCC Training: 5-9 pm	30					

Women's Center Calendar April 78

TWENTY QUESTIONS

WHAT?

1. Will Enable the women's movement to control information about itself?
2. Will break corporate broadcasting's stranglehold on television?
3. Has the potential to become a primary tool for revolutionary feminism?
4. Operates technically like the telephone system, using a house to house cable, and charging a small monthly fee?
5. Can allow your television set to receive up to 80 channels?
6. Can allow community groups to generate T. V. programming in their specialized interests?
7. Be relatively simple to operate?
8. Can have production studio and facilities in your own neighborhood?
9. Can greatly expand the educational aspect of television?
10. Can be a bulletin board to keep a community in touch with itself?
11. Can provide television time to anyone on a first-come-first serve basis?
12. Can provide emergency health care over the television set?
13. Can operate two-ways; that is can enable you to send signals out of your home as well as receive them in your home?
14. Can help you and a few friends get together by television instead of in person?
15. Can put full library and computer services in your living room?
16. Can be a terrible instrument of repression, watching and recording your every word and action?
17. Is in danger of being monopolized by private corporations at the expense of all of the above good things?
18. But can be regulated by the communities it affects if women inform themselves and act decisively and immediately?
19. Already exists in Reston, Arlington and is in the planning stages in Montgomery county?
20. Is being considered right now by the D.C. city government?

TO HELP PROMOTE WOMEN'S INTEREST IN PUBLIC OWNERSHIP OF CABLE TELEVISION
CONTACT: THE FEMINIST VIDEO PROJECT c/o THE WOMEN'S CENTER.

RENTAL PROBLEM IS....BECAUSE YOU'RE A WOMAN???

Have you ever run into sex discrimination in rental or housing? If so, the Women's Legal Defense Fund Rental Housing Project wants to hear about it. We need complaints to make a case for new ordinances in the Washington area, especially in the District. The D.C. Council will soon consider amending the police regulations to ban discrimination on the basis of sex, marital status, and other categories of discrimination in housing rentals.

If you have ever had a problem, or if you have one now, please fill out this survey form so that we will have some complaints to work with. Send it soon to:

LAC, 2515 K Street, NW, Apt. 610

OR: Leave it in the "Rental Discrimination Complaints" envelope at the Women's Center.

NAME _____

PHONE: Home _____ Work _____ (We may want to talk to you)

MARITAL STATUS _____ (It's relevant here)

What type of sex discrimination case was it?

- _____ a) no single women (but single men okay)
- _____ b) no single women unless man (e.g. father) co-signs.
- _____ c) landlord will not count wife's income in assessing ability to pay
- _____ d) no single women with children
- _____ e) no divorced or separated women
- _____ f) no unmarried couples
- _____ g) other: please explain _____

Where was the property you wanted to rent? (an approximate address is enough. name of apartment complex, if any.) _____

What was the monthly rental? _____ Lease required? _____

Did you deal with the owner or an agent (realtor)? _____

If an agent, what agent? _____

What reasons were you given for the refusal to rent to you? Did the owner/agent refuse you for expressed reasons of sex discrimination, or do you suspect that this was the unstated reason? _____

Did the owner/agent seem overly concerned about your marital status? _____

Did the owner/agent inquire into your birth control practices as a condition of taking into account a wife's salary? _____

Did you ever complain? Did you get the apartment or house? _____

Please add any other details that you think are relevant or significant in this case. _____

SOPHIE'S PARLOR

Sophie's Parlor feels that there is a need in the city for a place for women musicians, poets, actors, to come together to help to create a truly women's culture. There is also a need for women to meet each other in a friendly social setting.

These two needs are being met by the on-going coffeehouse where the creative energies of all women come together to create an evening of joy and excitement.

Coming up are poets Rita Mae Brown and Lois Gouillion reading from their works on Tuesday, April 9, guitarist-singer Meg Christian on Tuesdays April 10 and 24, and feminist song writer Jody Aliesan on Monday April 16. All weeknight activities begin at 8PM and weekend activities begin at 9PM. Mark your calendars and plan to attend both weekday and weekends at Sophie's Parlor.

Call Nancy at 667-4904 if you know of someone who would be good to appear at Sophie's--remember, all talents are needed and appreciated.

A MOTHER'S CONSCIOUSNESS-RAISING group meets on Friday nights at 7:30, at the Women's Center. Child Care is available. A NEWSLETTER FOR WOMEN WITH CHILDREN is being planned. It will mainly feature articles about special problems and experiences of women with children. If you are interested in either of these activities, call Kathy at 332-7062 or Marie at 232-2156.

A major tool for communication within the Women's Movement in Washington is RADIO FREE WOMEN. Half hour shows are aired at 2:30 p.m. on Mondays and 6:30 p.m. on Tuesdays. Vital issues of the Women's Movement are discussed each week. Tune in to 90.1 FM, WGTB. Also listen to SOPHIE'S PARLOR (music exclusively by WOMEN) from noon until 2:30 p.m. Mondays on the same station.