

dean of women's office . . .

reference point for women students

I am quite sure many women students are curious about the purpose of the Dean of Women's Office - because certainly many others on and off campus express uncertainty. People's assumptions vary from the idea that it serves an "in-loco parentis" function and is therefore no longer valid - the idea that it has a moral control function and should therefore be resisted - or the idea that it serves a disciplinary function - and should therefore be avoided.



Like many positions it is really not static and has evolved and changed its focus through the years. I would see it as primarily *reference point for women students*. We try to help women students as they first come to campus to know what facilities exist that are of interest to them either as women, or just as students. We try to know as best we can how women students generally are experiencing our campus. We try to keep up with various campus organizations so that we are in a position to help students make choices about extra-curricular activity that will satisfy them. We serve as the faculty consultants to various women's organizations.

Students may come to see any one of us just to talk about University in general, or themselves and their life here. They may come to talk about career plans and whether they are taking appropriate subjects or whether they should talk to someone in their faculty or in Student Counselling. They may come because they are unhappy with their courses - their marks - or their living arrangements. Sometimes we arrange other appointments for the students - or help them assess the pros and cons or moving -



or help them choose some relevant volunteer work that will aid their career goal setting - or help them evaluate different extra-curricular activities in relation to their time, interests and talents.

Recently we have been busy also helping with a number of special projects. Through information from this office a number of students attended the Calgary Seminar on 'Women' held in the fall. This has helped in the planning for the University forum "Women Today and Tomorrow". Various staff members have helped with some of the planning. We've helped too with the planning for the new Day Care facility. We've been involved with the Women's University Club about a special bursary for mature women students, and through this a group of single parent families who are managing on social allowance have become active in planning with the committee about various steps that might be helpful to them. They are a courageous and vital group who despite their own pressures are taking time to help others who may be in a similar situation.

Several staff members live in and are available to the Women's Residence government in our various residences. Staff also serve on various G.F.C. committee such as Health Services, Housing & Food Services, etc., to help keep women's point of view in focus where it may differ from men's. Two staff members are graduate students with part-time appointments to the Dean of Women's Office and help to provide us with greater awareness of the student's

point of view.

It's always helpful to know the names of people and here they are:

Dean of Women - Isabel Munroe
Assistant Dean
(Campus Office) - Martha Munz (now Mrs. Gue)
(Lister Residences) - Mrs. Carol Wardell
Assistant Dean-Part Time (Campus Office) - Mrs. Henriette Aubin
(Pembina Residence) - Mrs. Penny Petrone.

Now for women's week -

I was delighted to be asked to write something for Casserole because I do have a great deal of interest in women's role in the world - particularly in relation to the present and future. Women's liberation, like men's, is evolving in relation to changes in the world which sometimes seem to free people from drudgery, and sometimes, like automation, threaten to de-humanize rather than free us. When I sought my first job after completing professional education, I was almost turned down because "my father could support me!" I note that simply to give some slight historical perspective about our changing world, and women's role in it.

Karl Stern a psychiatrist has suggested in his book *Flight from Women* that part of our present difficulty stems from the fact that we have over-emphasized logic and science and underemphasized emotion and sensitivity. A number of women psychologists and psychiatrists are beginning to emphasize some of the attributes of women that should be both

better understood and better utilized to create a more balanced society.

Universities happen to be male dominated although generally somewhat unaware of this, because of such a total focus on intellect and a general assumption that intellect is the same for men and women - except of course that women are accused of "getting emotional" and, thereby distorting the intellect! New knowledge casts doubt on this assumption that intellect is truly identical (or that men don't distort through emotion!) A woman psychiatrist, Anne Schaeffe has an interesting perception that women frequently "buy into the male system" and thus negate their own most effective qualities and fail to help create the balance so badly needed in our world (and maybe in the University)

No matter how you view yourself as a woman, or how you view women from a male perspective, most of us would agree that male and female roles are undergoing some changes as a result of changes that are occurring in Society through population pressures, more effective methods of family planning, greater mobility etc. I am sure almost everyone will find real stimulation and "food for thought" in the women's forum program entitled "Women Today and Tomorrow" which has been so ably planned by women students.

Isabel A. Munroe (Miss),
Dean of Women

Legal Information For Alberta Women

Initially the problem area for Alberta women seemed to be the lack of general information relating to laws of the province and the dominion. As a result, the Women's Bureau updated a pamphlet originally written and distributed by one of the province's Attorney Generals, and continues to enlarge upon this specific type of information and distribute it throughout the province. The "Laws" booklet is updated annually, with approximately 25,000 copies distributed each year. General questions relating to laws are answered by phone, letter, radio and television interviews. Areas which seem to concern Alberta women most are brought to the attention of the government through the Executive Council, under which the Bureau operates.

Other specific information is distributed on request by Bureau "Fact Sheets". These encompass topics from "Landlord and Tenant"...to "Pensions and Social Allowances"...and "Women on Juries". A new pamphlet on re-education and retraining for the mature woman will be off the press this week...and another booklet, "Wills and Estates for Albertans", has been distributed by the tens of thousands and is also due for revision because of Benson's new tax bill.

Last spring the Bureau name was changed simply to "The Alberta Women's Bureau". Reasoning behind this was the

fact that there is a Department of Youth, Culture and Recreation which looks after the cultural aspects for women and women's groups; and the fact that the "Information" connotation seemed to override many more pertinent aspects of the Bureau's existence, such as that of helping co-ordinate various services for women. The Bureau also co-ordinates a Citizens' Advisory Board to the provincial government. This Board considers problems as highlighted by Alberta citizens in relation to the Royal Commission on the Status of Women and points up additional areas of concern needing immediate attention. Their job included an in-depth study of status problems and a long look at related proposed legislation...followed subsequently by recommendations to government in the light of the Royal Commission Report.

Without quoting the actual Women's Bureau Act, it is simpler to say that the Bureau has a "provincial" outlook. It is not specifically serving a given area or a given group...but is intended to highlight problems peculiar to women throughout the entire province. Specific questions, such as locating a family counsellor or social worker, are handled by agencies such as AID.

The Alberta Women's Bureau is located in Edmonton in the Legislative Building...phone 229 - 3970 or 229 - 3946. Director is Mrs. Irene MacGregor.

