



## Stepping out of line

By JUDY ANDREW

NYM HUGHES, YVONNE JOHNSON and YVETTE PERRAULT are calling women to step beyond the lines drawn by patriarchal society.

They are lesbians and feminists who are working to give women tools to change their lives. The tool they've helped to create is a resource manual called *Stepping Out of Line—A Workbook on Lesbianism and Feminism*.

The manual is a valuable resource for all lesbians and feminists interested in not only understanding the cause of oppression but also in working for change.

A project of the lesbian feminist communities of British Columbia, *Stepping Out of Line* is the result of over 10 years research and the work of more than 100 women.

No woman can afford to dismiss the connection between the oppression of women and the oppression of lesbians. *Stepping Out of Line* focuses on that connection. Lesbians are a threat to the structure of society as it stands now because of the implicit rejection of male control over women's lives and bodies.

Woman-loving is negated in a society that worships the male ego. Any woman who is assertive and independent can be threatened with the label of lesbian, as a way of keeping her in line.

The workbook is divided into two main categories: "The Workshop" and "Organizing for Change."

The workshop offers women a flexible structure that helps to create an environment where each participant can feel safe to express themselves. It creates an environment of warmth and support by ensuring that guidelines such as confidentiality and commitment to the group are agreed upon before the workshop starts. Participants are encouraged to feel, because, as the book states, "breaking the silence on lesbianism can be very intense."

From here a process of defining what being a lesbian means for each individual begins. It is through this process of naming and defining that the participants can move to dispelling the myths surrounding sexuality.

The manual offers its own working definition of lesbianism: "A lesbian is a woman who

prefers other women on many levels: sexually, emotionally, intellectually, psychically — and who defines herself as a lesbian."

The workshop links personal experiences with structures in society. Certain prevailing ideologies, such as individualism and Christianity, are examined critically to determine how they oppress women. The workshop moves towards developing a vision for a society which respects differences and capabilities and does not oppress people due to our sex, race, class, disability, or sexual orientation. The goal of developing feminist consciousness is to look critically at the imbalance of power and to develop means of redefining power.

"Organizing for Change" speaks to women from personal voices; how you know you are a lesbian, dealing with the medical profession, protection on the job, violence against lesbians, dealing with families and friends, lovers and sexuality, to name a few. This is vital information for people interested in the lives of lesbians, and is used in conjunction with the workshop.

The powerful documentation tells women that our voices count and deserve to be heard. It compels all readers to act towards stopping oppression now.

*Stepping Out of Line* provides concrete strategies towards working for change. It provides somewhere to start. There are resources included to encourage connection and networking with other lesbian/feminist organizations. After each section there is a "Further reading" list.

The authors acknowledge the lack of coverage to lesbians of working class and different racial background. Undoubtedly, it is a shortcoming of the book, and a criticism that prevails in the feminist movement.

The original idea for the workshop came about at a 1974 meeting of the lesbian caucus of the British Columbia Federation of Women. The caucus was created because lesbian rights were not visible within the policy of that feminist organization. Thirty women gathered together determined to make people aware of the specific harassment they suffered because they were lesbians, but also to make it understood that any feminist analysis must include the experience of lesbians. Consciousness-raising workshops to dispell myths and fears were developed and eventually compiled into *Stepping Out of Line*.

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(CCC) of the municipality of Lac Du Bonnet, Man., between 1980 and 1984, which is exposed to the narration of Walter Robbins.

It is likely that what AECL claims is only a research project into the long term storage of radioactive waste will become a dump for nuclear waste, quite possibly from around the world. But what about the perceptions of both camps, the nature of their propaganda and conduct, and its larger implications?

For example: how available is most information related to the priorities and planning of large

disposal of nuclear waste. It is important that we should be aware of Atomic Energy of Canada Limited's (AECL) foray into turning a place somewhere under the Canadian Shield into a hotbed for nuclear waste. It is this initiative, and the as of yet unsuccessful efforts of the concerned citizens committee

## The TOP SECRET Tory Handbook

what every new MP must know \*

Qs and As for newly elected MPs	High profile: hair and make-up by Mila
The Ps and Qs of parliamentary behaviour	Le Chef silk foulard necktie, with Pivnicki knot
Mila-Style (Reactionary Chic)	F.C.C. (Fat City Connections) mobile telephone
What Tories should drink (alias The Right Stiff)	The Presidential Chivas Regal Blue — A classic 5 piece
Bumper-stickers for Tories	Turnbull & Asser Oxford cotton shirt, barrel cuffs by Le Porc
How to handle the Grits	Gucci briefcase. Contents: 2 cartons Du Maurier Grand Luxe Cigarettes, Irish songs and blarney policies
How to handle the NDP	Black classic lace-ups, from East of Centre Block shoes
The Mulroneys-Style accessories	
What shall we do with Joe?	
French phrases you should know	
Best embassies for a good time	
Pivnicki ends in "i" and other ways of courting the ethnic vote	

\*and what every Canadian should know

## How to eat like a Tory

BY JEAN LeBLANC

PRIVATELY CIRCULATED to the hundreds of new Tory members before the election, *The Top Secret Tory Handbook* is now available to the common Canadian. The book describes a satirical guide for those who wish to eat, sleep, drink and think Tory for the rest of the century.

A wide variety of topics are covered, ranging from Brian Mulroneys to bumper stickers. The handbook shows us how to look like Brian and Mila, how to eat what they eat and how the

couple lives. Perhaps Mila said it best, "All I did was give up my career, my life's work, my self image, and Brian has just as easily and willingly given up drinking and smoking. Well, he promised!" Apart from the enjoyable adventures with the Mulroneys, the book explores the inner workings of government in an oversimplifying but very entertaining description of every aspect of government.

All things considered it is quite an enjoyable book describing the new Conservative government in Ottawa in a very amusing manner.

private or government corporations? For the average concerned citizen what is supposed to be available for public scrutiny seems about as available as if it were in the bottom of a locked filing cabinet in the basement of an abandoned house on another planet. So much for accessible information related to planning which affects any may be of concern to the public. Furthermore, bureaucracies tend to produce "intelligence" in support of their own ambitions, which lacks a perspective that is not wholly centric to that organization. They also have massive propaganda resources supporting their initiatives.

Much material generated by anti-nuclear or environmentalist groups does not attempt to present itself in a strictly scientific or technical manner — nor should it, but it should understand the complexities of the issue. This is one of the problems with Robbin's narrative, it is almost trite in comparison with the better literature put out by these movements. He also makes a mistake common to the less professional of citizen's advocacy groups involved in the environmentalist or anti-nuclear

movements. He likens unrelated events. The disaster of Three Mile Island cannot be compared to research into waste disposal; nuclear wastes cannot undergo spontaneous combustion; nor can they pollute the biosphere during the term of their half life when buried 700 or more metres below the water table given the ground flow of water through pre-Cambrian granite is no more than 2-3 centimetres per hundred years.

These larger questions are not raised in the book, but they are the most interesting ones given the issue at hand. One thing that is inexplicable is AECL's efforts to suppress public hearings into their affairs. Public hearings would serve as a forum for opinion, and would allow the people to decide what is right and what is best. One thing I thought we had all learned was that while the democratic function may not be perfect, it is at least the best method of problem-solving in matters of public concern.

"Getting the Shaft: The Radioactive Waste Controversy in Manitoba" by Walter Robbins, published 1984, is available from Queenston House Publishing Co. Ltd., Winnipeg for \$2.95.

## Getting the Shaft a melodramatic tune

By MARTIN TOMLINSON

THIS LITTLE MELODrama does not recommend itself in glowing terms. So don't bother with *Getting the Shaft* unless you are masochistically inclined towards ill-disposed observations on the deep underground