

63 talks

Year-End Report
Ruth Wynn Woodward Endowed Professor
Marjorie Cohen
July 25, 1990

Being the Woodward Professor has been a wonderful experience for me. Like those who have held the position before me, I have been exhilarated by the attention and activity: it has been a heady experience, although sometimes exhausting. While I was warned before I came, and frequently in the early months, that I should be careful about taking on too much, the reality was that the opportunities for meeting new people and learning more about B.C. was simply too tempting.

The very best part has been the wide range of experiences that I have had through my contacts with various groups. Since I am the first woman to hold the chair from outside B.C., in this respect my experience was probably unique. I certainly did not anticipate being so readily accepted by the community and so easily integrated in its activities. Being in the Woodward Chair enabled me to establish contacts and gain insight in the political and social life of B.C. in a very short period of time.

My work this year has consisted of teaching, research, public lectures, and work with institutions in the community (although, it was heavily weighted toward public lectures). Over the course of the year I gave over sixty public performances of one type or another. These ranged from academic talks in universities, to those more generally accessible to local groups.

Each term I taught one course. In the fall term my course on Canadian Women and Economic Policy was given as both a graduate and an undergraduate course and was cross-listed with the Economics Department. This course ultimately turned out quite well, although initially I was apprehensive, since the Economics Department had listed it as a course on Canadian Economic Policy and the students who enrolled had no idea that the focus was to be on women. The result was that there were more males with rather traditional views in the class than is normally encountered in the Women's Studies Programme. It took some time to persuade the distinct groups of students in the course to listen to each other and during the whole process the class dynamics were frequently electric. The second term course on Women in Canada from 1920 to the Present was a delight to teach and while it did not offer the challenges to me that teaching the first term had, it was especially rewarding. This was because of the high quality of the students in the course and the very interesting work they produced.

My research activities this year have not been as extensive as I had planned, mostly because of time constraints due to excessive public speaking. When I first arrived I began work on the Goods and Services Tax and its implications for women. In early October I presented my brief to the House of Commons Finance Committee Hearings on the GST. During the fall I also completed two projects which I had begun earlier. They will soon be published under the following titles:

"Exports, Unemployment and Regional Inequality: Economic Policy and Trade Theory," in The New Era of Global competition: State Policy and Market Power, ed. by D. Drache and M. Gertler (Montreal: McGill/Queens Press).

"The Canadian Women's Movement and its Efforts to Influence the Canadian Economy," in The Contemporary Women's Movement in North America, ed. by D. Flaherty and C. Backhouse (Chicago: Lyceum Books.)

During the course of the year I continued research on a large documentary history of women in Canada from 1968 to the present. Nathlan Jones was very helpful as my research assistant by collecting documents related to the women's movement in B.C. This is an on-going project which will take several years to complete. When I arrived it had been expected that I would need a research assistant only in my final research term. However, because of the nature of this project, it was important that the work begin earlier. In general, I would recommend that a research assistant be made available to the Woodward Professor as early as possible.

I also did considerable work on women and the unemployment insurance system in Canada. This resulted in a paper entitled "The Unemployment Insurance Struggle for Married Women, 1950-71," which was presented to the Canadian Historical Association Annual Meeting in June. The paper will ultimately be part of a book-length manuscript which will be co-authored by me and Ruth Pierson.

In addition to the many contacts which I had with groups throughout the province through public speaking, I was also involved in the NDP provincial platform committee and a B.C. Industrial Inquiry Commission on the Fisheries. I was surprised to be asked to serve on both of these bodies. The invitation to serve on the Fisheries Commission was probably a result of my work on free trade and familiarity with women's labour issues. The task of the Commission is to examine the effects of the GATT and the Free Trade Agreement on the fisheries in B.C. and to resolve all of the outstanding disputes from the strike last summer. The decision of the Commission will be binding on labour and

management. There are three members of the Commission -- I was nominated by the United Fishermen and Allied Workers Union. A large proportion of the workers who will be affected by the decision of the Commission are women.

In what follows I will list the various public appearances I had this year. But before that, I would like to comment on how helpful the staff of the Women's Studies Programme has been in making my year so successful. Sandy Shreve was marvelously patient with me as I learned my job in the early months. Before I arrived she had arranged the two-month series of lectures and workshops on Women, Work and Unions. The planning and organization of this series was excellent and certainly pointed to her efficiency and wide contacts in the community. I am particularly appreciative of her efforts in challenging budgetary and bureaucratic constraints on my behalf. These were most appreciated in helping me acquire a research assistant earlier than anticipated and in expanding the secretarial help.

When I first arrived Sharon Oliver was working part-time and assumed all of the secretarial duties for the programme in addition to helping with the Women, Work, and Unions series. She simply did not have time to do my work too. I complained bitterly! But how wonderful to be taken seriously. My job was very, very much easier when Sharon became full-time. I would strongly recommend that the secretary's position remain a full-time one.

Both secretaries have been efficient and very willing to be helpful in any way possible. Sharon Oliver did a masterful job in tactfully rejecting requests for me to speak when it became apparent that I could not take on everything. I appreciated this difficult task very much, especially since once someone reached me, it seemed impossible for me to say no. Gayle Stephens took over the job later in the year, but learned the tasks so quickly that there was virtually no noticeable transition period. She has been fabulous in her ability to get letters out quickly and in finding ways of doing new things. But right now, I am particularly grateful for her help in getting me organized to return to Toronto. This was certainly beyond the call of duty. For me the most delightful part of my job has been the cheerfulness of the office and the enthusiasm which the staff seemed to have for the things I was doing. This was important reinforcement when my schedule got a little too hectic.

While most of my activities centred on Vancouver, I did manage to have a number of speaking engagements elsewhere in the province. These included trips to Prince George, Vernon, Kelowna, Penticton, Victoria, Courtney, and the Yukon. All of the trips were successful ones, in that the audiences were good and the talks received considerable publicity in the local media. But the trip to the Yukon was

truly special. There I met with women's groups, government officials, and the president of the local college. A student I had had in the second-term course is working for the Yukon government and she organized meetings with various government officials, including the entire staff of the Department of Economic Development. My schedule while I was there was so extraordinary that I will include it as a part of my report -- just to show how hard I worked when on tour!

My only regret as Woodward Chair is that I did not manage to have more time to focus on establishing contacts with the economics community at SFU -- or elsewhere in B.C., for that matter. If I had been able to make more of an effort, I am sure that I could have made my presence more known in the Economics Department at SFU.

Speaking Events for Woodward Professor, Dr. Marjorie Cohen
Fall Term 1989, Spring Term 1990 and Summer Term 1990

Scheduled Talks

Sept 1, 1990	40 min. CKNW radio interview with Bill Good
Sept 25	CBC French T.V. interview--effects of free trade on B.C.
Sept 29	One hour debate with Michael Levy on CKNW radio
Oct 2	CBC national radio--sales tax and women CBC Newfoundland--sales tax and women
Oct 2	Presentation to House of Commons Finance Committee on brief on the effect of the proposed GST on women
Oct 4	CKVW--Dave Barrett T.V. show--40 minutes on status of women in Canada
Oct 10	CBC T.V.--Interview on sales tax
Oct 13	"Feminism and Families"--Alberta Status of Women Annual Meeting, Lethbridge
Oct 14	"Sales Tax and Women"--ASWAC, Lethbridge
Oct 16	CKOV (Kelowna) Barry Clark Show--20 minutes on the sales tax
Oct 20	"Women, the GST, and the Deficit: The Horror of it All". Congress of Canadian Women event, La Quena, Commercial Drive, Vancouver, B.C.
Oct 24	"Women, Work and the Canadian Economy" lecture in Women, Work and Unions series
Oct 27	Delta Cable T.V.--Goods and Services tax (40 min.)
Nov 1	Rogers Cable T.V.--sales tax and women (1/2 hour)
Nov 1	Seminar in David Laycock's course on Democratic Ideas and Social Movements, SFU

Nov 7 Panelist on Effect of Free Trade for Women,
Work and Union series

Nov 10 "Ontario/Quebec Economic Relations" Glendon
College Conference on Ontario/Quebec Economic
Relations, Toronto

Nov 16 "The Deficit, the Budget and Economic Policy:
Method or Madness?" Lecture at SFU Harbour
Centre

Nov 20 B.C. Federation of Labour Annual Convention.
Featured speaker on economic policy and workers

Nov 22 "The Invisible Hand: Is it Around Our throats?
(Women and Economics)" Woodward lecture

Nov 29 Lecture on Economic Policy and Women at
Malaspina College, Nanaimo (sponsored by
Women's Faculty Association)

Dec 8 B.C. Teachers' Federation Bargaining
Convention--lecture on economic outlook facing
workers in B.C.

Dec 9 Children Employees and Services Union--talk on
the sales tax

Dec 14 U.B.C. Academic Women's Association holiday
luncheon. Talk on what it means to be in
Women's Studies

* Each Thursday, 5 minute spot on CKO (until Nov 9)

* Editorial for *The Province* on Women and the Sales Tax

* Commentary for Social Policy Issues Bulletin on Tax Revolts

Jan 9, 1990 Delta Cable T.V.--one hour interview and phone-
in show on deficit and interest rates

Jan 18 U.B.C. History Department lecture series--
"Historical Mysteries: Women in Canadian
Economic Development"

Jan 19 CBC Newsworld--comments on John Crosbie's press
conference on the effects of free trade

Jan 24	CHEK TV Victoria--interview on women's work and economic policy
Jan 24	University of Victoria Women's Studies Program "Economic Directions and Women: Sober Reflections on Hysterical Governments"
Jan 27	Mature Women's Network, Vancouver--talk on economic policy and mature women
Feb 7	Vancouver Status of Women--lecture on global economic change and implications for women
Feb 9	SFU Physics Dept. Graduate Seminar--women's experience in male professions
Feb 19	NDP Caucus--talk on women and the economy, Courtney
Feb 20	Interviews on Budget: Vancouver Sun CBC Newsworld CKNW Health Services Asso. Newsletter
Feb 22	U.B.C. Women's Resource Centre
Feb 24	Co-op Radio interview on budget
March 8	Edmonton--Theology School--thinking about the future
March 9	Edmonton--Women Studies Program
March 12	CBC Kelowna--GST--radio interview
March 12	CFRO radio interview--women and the GST
March 14	National Council of Jewish Women, Vancouver
March 14	CKOV Kelowna Radio Interview GST
March 15	Okanagan College--GST & how it will affect women
March 15	Kelowna College
March 17	Pro-Canada Network Benefit--speak on GST
March 28	North Shore NDP-GST
March 29	The University Women's Club of Vancouver
April 11	CLC--Prince George--GST

April 19	B.C. Nurses Union--talk
April 21 & 22	Bowen Island Retreat for Women's Studies
April 25	Municipal Electrical Utilities of Ontario Annual Meeting--GST (in Toronto 23rd-27th)
April 28	B.C. and Yukon Women's Centres Annual General Meeting, Penticton
May 2	UBC/SFU Mid-week group--women's movement in Canada
May 5 & 6	New Westminster--CP Labour School
May 27	Canadian Historical Association--paper on the history of women and unemployment insurance
May 28	Learners: Women's Studies Chairs
May 28	Respondent for Canadian Sociology & Anthropology panel on public policy and women
June 1	Pacific Labour History Conference, Victoria-- talk on free trade
June 4 - 8	Yukon
July 6	Bill Good show (1 hour) CKNW - Reflections on Canadian and B.C. Economy

Agenda for Marjorie Cohen
Whitehorse, Yukon
June 6, 7, 8, 1990

Wednesday, June 6,	10:15 a.m.	Arrival in Whitehorse - I will meet you at the airport and take you to your hotel (Yukon Inn).
	12:00 - 1:00 p.m.	Lunch with representatives from twelve Yukon women's groups - (Charlie's Restaurant).
	Free afternoon	touring (Jon Leah/Kathi) See Sarah Locke at CBC re interview.
	6:00 p.m.	Yukon Status of Women Council - barbecue on Hot Springs Road.
Thursday, June 7,	7:45 a.m.	CBC interview (confirmed)
	10:00 - 11:00 a.m.	Meet with Charles McCaffrey, President of Yukon College in his office re women's studies.
	11:30 a.m.	Meet with Minister Responsible for the Status of Women Margaret Joe in her office, Government of Yukon building.
	12:00 - 1:00 p.m.	Lunch with Cabinet Ministers, DM's, ADM's, Director of Policy, Hellaby Hall.
	1:15 - 2:00 p.m.	Meet with Doug McArthur, Deputy Minister, Executive Council Office.
	2:00 - 3:00 p.m.	Meet with Department of Economic Development
	3:00 - 6:30 p.m.	Free time.
	6:30 p.m.	(cocktails) Public dinner at the Yukon Inn banquet room.
	7:00 p.m.	Dinner - Yukon Inn
	8:30 p.m.	Keynote speaker.
Friday, June 8,		Day of touring (to Carcross and possibly Skagway).
	5:45 p.m.	Return to Vancouver.