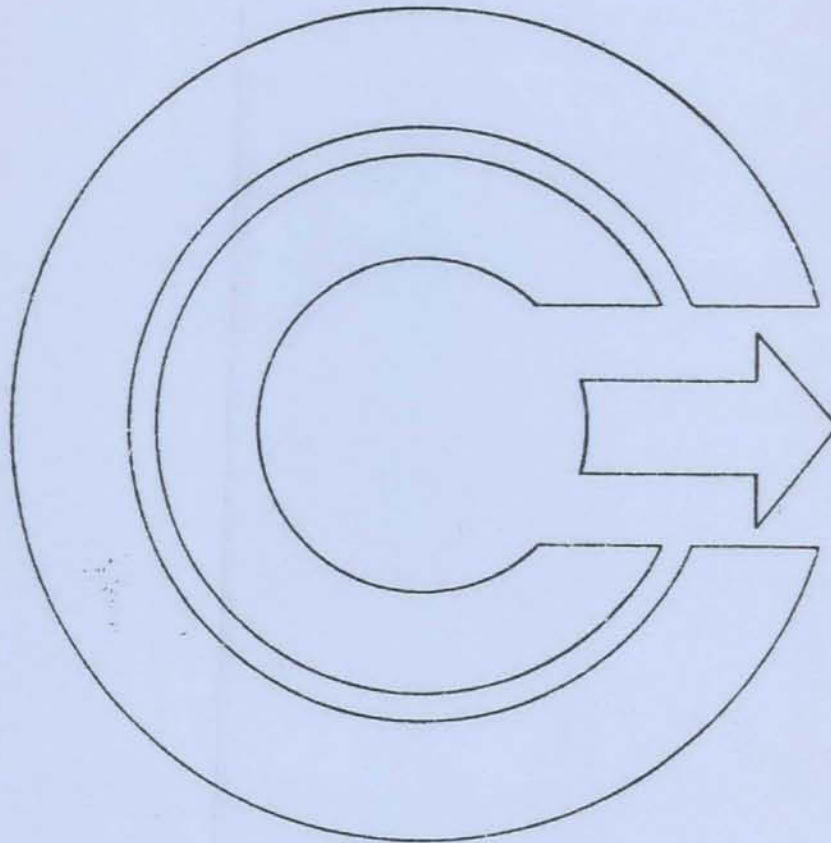


WOMEN IN CONFLICT WITH THE LAW

"THE ATLANTIC CANADIAN PERSPECTIVE"

Reports of Five W.I.C.L. Workshops  
Held in March/April, 1985



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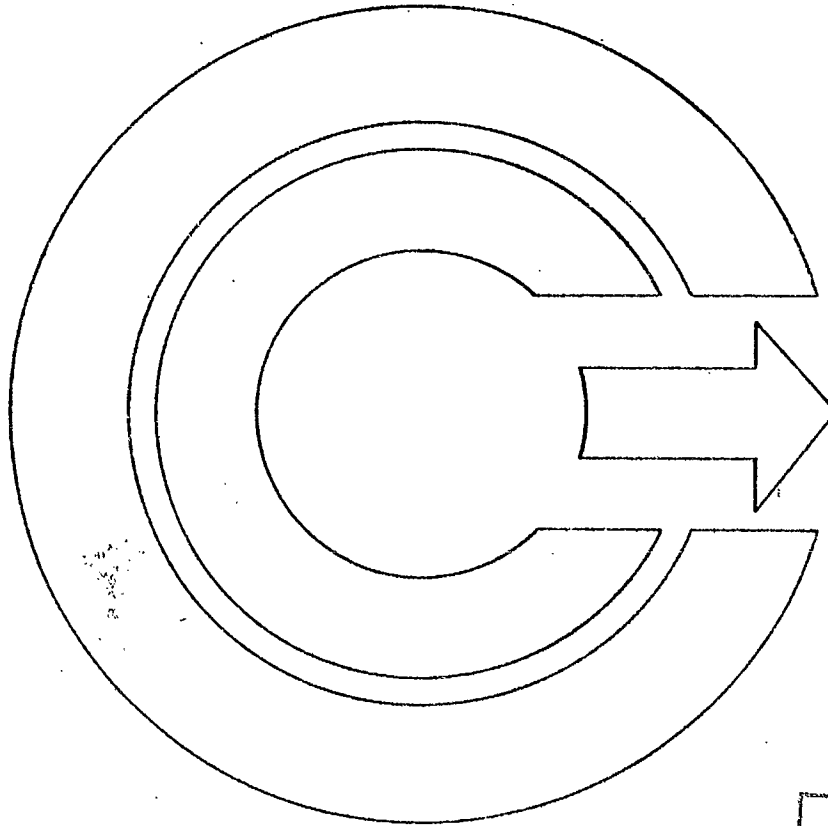
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Points of view or opinions stated in this document are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the Department of the Solicitor General of Canada.

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The reports contained within this booklet serve to give an excellent insight into the situations facing women in conflict with the law, and women considered to be at risk of becoming in conflict with the law. The reports result from weeks of hard work by several very diligent Atlantic Canadians.

Although it is impossible to name specific persons who have contributed to this effort, because each of the five reports was yielded through a collaboration of staff and volunteers, it is possible to identify those agencies that arranged and hosted each workshop, and produced the reports contained herein. The professionalism with which these agencies, and the individuals within each, undertook this activity on our request, is greatly appreciated by the Consultation Centre/Atlantic, here in Moncton.

These agencies are:

- 1) The John Howard Society of Newfoundland, St. John's;
- 2) The John Howard Society of Western Newfoundland, Stephenville;
- 3) The Justice Resource Services Project, Charlottetown;
- 4) The Elizabeth Fry Society of Halifax;
- 5) Family Enrichment and Counselling Service Inc., Moncton.

I would further like to acknowledge the work of Ms. Karen Garland, a student intern in the Consultation Centre/Atlantic, who reviewed each workshop report and developed a general synopsis which is contained herein.

## INTRODUCTION

In the autumn of 1984, the Ministry of the Solicitor General of Canada unveiled a new program initiative, Women In Conflict With The Law.

A series of consultations between the Consultation Centre/ Atlantic and Ms. Sheila Arthurs, National Program Consultant, Women In Conflict With The Law (W.I.C.L.), provided the base from which the Atlantic office began to develop its involvement with this initiative. Coincidental to this consultative process was the receipt of some six funding proposals from various Atlantic communities.

The Women In Conflict With The Law program is an initiative jointly administered by the Consultation Centre and Correctional Services of Canada. Ms. Lorraine Casey, Area Manager for Correctional Services of Canada (C.S.C.) in Truro, Nova Scotia, was appointed to represent C.S.C. in this initiative, while I undertook the responsibility of representing the Consultation Centre in the Atlantic region.

As we became more immersed in this important initiative, it became evident that in order to properly assess existing proposals, and develop new ones, we would have to ascertain the overall situation facing women in conflict. It was decided that the best method to do this was to consult with those individuals and agencies, as well as provincial departments, that were concerned with women's issues, and actively involved in women's justice initiatives.

At first it was thought that we should convene a regional workshop of people from throughout Atlantic Canada. However, we then felt that a series of smaller workshops held in each province would provide a much more comprehensive sharing of concerns and ideas.

Realizing the scope of arrangements that would have to be made in order to achieve this consultative process, it was decided to contract with private sector agencies to carry out these workshops

on our behalf. Five such workshops were held, one in each of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island; and one in Western Newfoundland, and another in Eastern Newfoundland.

The workshops were extremely well attended, and to say the least, all were very successful and yielded an accurate picture of the overall situation facing women in conflict with the law, and those at risk, in the Atlantic region.

Following is a synopsis, or highlights, of the discussions and recommendations that evolved from the five Women In Conflict With The Law workshops held in late March and early April of 1985. Each individual workshop report is also included in the coloured pages section, and readers are advised to peruse both the synopsis, and the individual reports. Contained within each workshop report is a list of the participants; the five lists together will provide an excellent network of individuals and agencies concerned with women in conflict with the law, and women at risk.

Kenne Macdonald,  
Project Consultant  
Consultation Centre/Atlantic

A SYNOPSIS OF FIVE  
WOMEN IN CONFLICT WITH THE LAW WORKSHOPS  
ATLANTIC REGION

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Throughout the last week in March and the first week in April, 1985, a total of five meetings were held in various centres across Atlantic Canada to discuss Women In Conflict With The Law (WICL), and women at risk. The centres were: Moncton, New Brunswick; Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island; Halifax, Nova Scotia; and, Stephenville and St. John's, Newfoundland. The conferences served as consciousness raising events; identifying issues with respect to the target group mentioned previously.

The Workshops were attended by individuals representing community and social agencies. Also, at least one individual representing the Consultation Centre/Atlantic, of the Ministry of the Solicitor General of Canada, was in attendance. In three locations, Sheila Arthurs, National Program Consultant for Women In Conflict With The Law, was present.

The Ministry of the Solicitor General has designated WICL as an emerging initiative over the next three years. As an alternative to the Ministry allocating funds in the areas it believes are priority, each region was to define the needs within their respective jurisdictions. The Workshops served this purpose.

What follows is an overview of the outcomes of each meeting. The information has been amalgamated to provide the reader with a general understanding of the primary concerns with respect to women in conflict with the law, and women at risk in Atlantic Canada.

Upon reading the reports from each workshop, several themes became clear as being concerns across the provinces:

- 1) housing;
- 2) counselling;



- 3) lack of court liaison officers; and
- 4) prevention, and intervention with regard to young female offenders.

The first two items mentioned cover a wide range of issues; a summary of each will be provided. Also, overviews of the others listed is given, as well as the mention of additional concerns brought out in the W.I.C.L. Workshops.

#### HOUSING:

Many facets come under the general heading of housing. Participants of the workshops felt that halfway houses, adult foster homes, safe houses, and subsidized housing for single parent families - especially for welfare recipients - be made available. It is believed that women in conflict with the law and women at risk were given little consideration in these matters.

Several innovative ideas were put forth, of which the concept of adult group homes is one. It was suggested that female offenders be placed in a normal environment (e.g. a family environment) so that they could learn to properly maintain a home. Also they would be provided with positive role models, and therefore, would benefit internally as well.

Each region identified the factor of low income as contributing to the incidence of female offenders and those at risk. It was recommended that subsidized housing be made available so that the burden of high rent, for example, would be alleviated - any degree would be beneficial.

Safe houses, such as transition houses, are in need. Women require a place to go in troubled times. Also, one region recommended that young women requiring accommodation (i.e. women in transit) could stay in homes such as these. Youth hostels close for the night, and therefore, women arriving in town after this hour find themselves with no place to stay. Apparently, it was reported, they find their way to the local police department hoping to find assistance.

Halfway homes are needed in every region. Women, as well as men, need help reintegrating into mainstream society. To assist in

this task, one region suggested that co-ed homes be established. These would imitate a "normal" home and thus provide both men and women with the opportunity to learn the skills necessary to succeed in real settings (i.e. their own homes).

#### COUNSELLING:

Counselling services that were recommended ranged from counselling children whose parents were separating or divorcing, to counselling alcohol and drug dependent women. Most participants agreed that these services should be community based. Also emphasized was the notion that these services be focussed upon in the school system. In other words, the role of the guidance counsellor, for example, would expand further into clinical psychology.

Another facet encompassed by counselling is that of job training. Many women who are in conflict with the law, or at risk, are unemployed, or have low paying jobs. Participants of the workshops would like to see these women provided with the opportunity to learn new skills, upgrade old ones, learn how to conduct themselves in a job interview, and so forth. Also, a job placement officer, specifically for these women, is seen as being necessary. One region suggested that a "straight" person (perhaps a volunteer) work with the ex-inmate until she reached some degree of confidence and proficiency. Also, the employer may trust his new employee sooner, and to a greater degree.

It was noted that a greater number of women are becoming drug dependent, and in response to this, detox centres and the appropriate counselling services need to be available to them. Continuing along a similar axis, one region recommended that an investigation be conducted to uncover, if any exists, the inappropriate use of medication with regard to the sedation of female offenders.

Another need identified, focusses on budget counselling. Presently, in some areas of the Atlantic Provinces, no system exists through which any individual can learn money management skills. Other provinces, for example, Ontario, do have such a system. In this province, an individual wishing to learn budgeting techniques

can do so; these services are community based. Many individuals benefit from this system: "straight" people, offenders, students, and other community members.

#### COURT LIAISON OFFICERS:

There were many concerns with regard to court proceedings, brought forth at the W.I.C.L. Workshops. It was expressed that prior to entering the criminal justice system, a woman should be informed concerning the proceedings, and what is expected from her. Also, legal and civil rights should be made clear to her. Court liaison officers would help in alleviating fears she may have, as well as provide support for her. It would appear that this service would be similar to the service available to victims of crime found in various regions in Atlantic Canada.

#### INTERVENTION AND PREVENTION OF YOUNG FEMALE OFFENDERS:

Diversion of female offenders has also been identified as a major concern. This does not only apply to young females; adult diversion, too, is a consideration. Prevention, although different from diversion, but related to it, needs to be investigated more fully. Specifically, preventative programs integrated into school curriculums is an area deserving of further consideration.

#### OTHER:

Native women in conflict with the law, and at risk, have been deemed as an important group to focus upon in two of the regions. Some groups designate native offenders, in general, as being a special population. Accordingly, therefore, certain precautions should be taken. For example, when native women are arrested, the welfare worker for her reserve should be immediately contacted.

Another concern is the lack of networking between agencies in each region. It was recommended that those agencies offering services specifically for women in conflict with the law, and women at risk, as well as those whose services can assist these

women in any capacity, be compiled into a semblance of a directory. Carried further, each agency would know of others that could help the woman in question, and equally important, how to reach them. This "directory" would be made known to the general public, doctors, lawyers, etc. The ideal is that any women in need of assistance can inquire on her own initiative, rather than being referred to them by someone else, for example.

CONCLUSION:

The aforementioned information has been a brief overview of the consultative workshops convened to address the issue of Women In Conflict With The Law. The concerns herein are not exhaustive of those raised at the workshops. It is also important to note that the concerns depicted by this writer do not take precedence over those which are to be found in each report.

W.I.C.L. is a relatively new area, and the enthusiasm displayed in each workshop indicates that it will be an important initiative of private and public sectors alike.

For further information concerning the procedures, participants, and discussions of the individual workshops, I invite you to read on!

Karen Garland,  
Student Intern,  
Consultation Centre/Atlantic

## The John Howard Society of Newfoundland

## REPORT ON THE SEMINAR

## WOMEN IN CONFLICT WITH THE LAW

Held at the Lester Hotel

9:30 a.m., March 26, 1985

## Participants:

Sheila Arthurs	- Department of the Solicitor General
Doug Beattie	- RCMP
Lynn Bloom	- Waterford Hospital
Joan Bradley	- Correctional Service of Canada
Terry Carlson	- John Howard Society
Delores Clements	- Emmanuel House
Jim Corker	- Adult Probation
Geri Cousens	- Waterford Hospital
Ann Donovan	- Women's Centre
Ruby Driscoll	- Pleasantville School
Carol Furlong	- Graduate student, Department of Education
Terry Green	- Alcohol and Drug Dependency Commision
Margie Harris	- Juvenile Diversion
Pam Hiscock	- MUN Extension Service
Rosemary Howser	- Status of Women Council
Sandra Janes	- John Howard Society
Tina Keeping	- Waterford Hospital
Cathy Knox	- Crown Attorney's Office
Beth Lacey	- Women's Centre
June Layden	- Royal Newfoundland Constabulary
Elizabeth Long	- John Howard Society
Debbie Sue Martin	- Waterford Hospital
Ginny McGrath	- Community Services Council
Betty McKenna	- Grace General Hospital
Bob Muggeridge	- Human Rights Association
Philip Perry	- John Howard Society
Jean Press	- Native Friendship Centre
Susan Pye	- Transition House
Mary Sheppard	- Unified Family Court
Donna Simms	- Unified Family Court
Olive Sweetapple	- Salvation Army Correctional Services
Lada Tamarack	- Elizabeth Fry Society
Jim Woods	- Department of the Solicitor General

MORNING SESSION

The seminar opened at 9:40 a.m. with the chairperson for the morning session, Debbie Sue Martin, giving a brief introduction to the workshop. Ms. Martin then introduced Jim Wood, Associate Regional Consultant, Consultation Centre, Atlantic Region. Mr. Wood gave an overview of the role of the Consultation Centre which in the Atlantic region operates out of Moncton, New Brunswick. He noted that the Consultation Centre is the only regionalized or decentralized office of the Secretariate in the Ministry of the Solicitor General. Mr. Wood then proceeded to describe a new initiative of the Consultation Centre - the Women in Conflict with the Law (WICL) program.

Mr. Wood explained that WICL is a three year program established to encourage community organizations to develop demonstration projects pertaining to women in conflict with the law and those women at risk of becoming in conflict with the law. Mr. Wood pointed out the importance of sharing information and perspectives, strengthening inter-relationships that already exist and providing services to women in isolated communities. He distributed a number of information handouts on the Consultation Centre.

Sheila Arthurs, National Program Consultant on Women in Conflict with the Law talked about the national program of WICL which developed largely because of pressure by women's associations, such as the Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies. In fact, she noted that there were seven organizations that helped to develop principles and priorities in which the program would be based, including

such groups as the Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies and the National Action Committee on Native Offenders. This national program which will operate on two million dollars over a three year period hopes to heighten awareness of women in conflict with the law and develop new programs or strengthen or expand community programs already in existence for women who are or who may become in conflict with the law. It also hopes to emphasize program and policy development for the system generally.

Ms. Arthurs stressed that it is not planned to use program money to duplicate the services that the Correctional Service of Canada is already providing. The program is designed to support community-based, community-sponsored projects which will develop programs and services where they don't already exist, utilizing existing community networks. Projects should provide opportunities in areas such as skill development and training, counsellor advocacy programs and needs assessments. However, the national program has a range of specificity so that in one area it may focus on the native offender and in another area focus on a treatment program designed for female offenders with particular problems.

#### WOMEN IN CONFLICT WITH THE LAW - PANEL DISCUSSION

The Young Offender - Ruby Driscoll

Mrs. Driscoll, Administrator of the Pleasantville School for the past eleven years, shared her thoughts and observations about the characteristics of the juvenile female offender with whom she has

worked. Included in Mrs. Driscoll's observations were that many of these young juveniles were not actually offenders. Some had been declared delinquent because they were beyond parental control while others were child abuse cases and neglected youth.

Some of the common characteristics of young, white female youth between the ages of 12 and 17 years are that they come from lower socio-economic homes with alcohol problems and high unemployment. Many had been taken from families because of neglect and had been placed in foster homes. In some cases there had been up to ten placements. Many had been physically or sexually abused. In fact, Mrs. Driscoll noted that some were victims of incest. Most of these female youths had a low level of academic education and were participating in special education programs. While they were not of low intellect, many suffered from learning disabilities. Their poor educational performance and rejection at home often contributed to a poor self-image and to problems and behaviour such as drinking, as a few have been juvenile alcoholics. Shoplifting was the major offence committed by young females.

In the case of young native females, their offences were usually different and included property offences such as vandalism, property damage and break and entry. Mrs. Driscoll noted that there was a time when 25% of the girls at the training facility were native offenders. They experienced problems being in all white school in an alien culture.

Mrs. Driscoll made a number of other observations concerning other groups of female offenders. 1) A larger number of adopted children have been coming into care as young offenders. They often



have a confused identity. 2) The mentally retarded female offender experiences special problems. 3) The young female offender who has committed numerous offences such as break and entry, arson and car theft since an early age and for whom a number of interventions have failed to work, presents a special problem.

Mrs. Driscoll again noted that most young females are not true offenders but have been truants and unmanageable in the home. She said that since April 1984, there have been only five female offenders who have been convicted of offences under the criminal code in comparison to 60 or more males.

#### The Female Offender and the Court System - Cathy Knox

Cathy Knox, currently acting Crown Counsel with the provincial Department of Justice had a random sample conducted of 300 active files in that department and found that of these only 35 relate to female offenders. She reported that in the year 1983/84 there were 89 females incarcerated compared with 2756 males. They ranged in age from 15 to 53 years (23 were between the ages of 20-24; 24 between 25-29 and 12 between 30-34). Almost half (38 of 89) had not achieved beyond the grade eight level, while none had university training.

Ms. Knox noted that there is often a positive form of discrimination employed by the police and judges. This is reflected in police and judicial attitudes toward women, as women are more often diverted from the system and do not receive as heavy sentences from the court as do men.

The women typically come from poor socio-economic backgrounds and have been mainly convicted of shoplifting offences. They usually receive a fine of from \$200 to \$250 and have 30 days or at most, 90

days to pay. However since these women are often in receipt of social assistance, many cannot afford to pay the fines. In fact, 25 of the 89 women incarcerated defaulted on their fines.

The female offender often has a problem with substance abuse and typically is not as willing as her male counterpart to admit that she has a problem. She noted that there is an increasing number of drunk driving offences by women.

Ms. Knox stated that there are few aftercare services for women in Newfoundland and observed that there has been a reluctance by women to avail of the services which do exist and are generally male-oriented.

The Female Offender in the Community - Sandra Janes

Sandra Janes of the John Howard Society, presented information on research she had done on female probationers in 1981. According to her findings there were 950 women placed on either supervised or unsupervised probation in Newfoundland from 1974 to February 1981. Of those women for whom information was available, over half were under 25 years of age, almost half had achieved less than a grade nine education, almost half were single, three quarters were unemployed at the time the offence was committed, and sixty-five percent of the probation orders were imposed for property offences. A regional distribution analysis revealed that nearly half of the women were living on the Avalon Peninsula and that Labrador, despite its low population, accounted for an additional 10 percent of the group.

Sandra presented a report on the Women's Program operated by the John Howard Society from February 1983 to November 1984. She stated that in her capacity as program manager and women's counsellor,

she was in contact with over 30 female ex-offenders throughout the life of the program and was able to identify special areas of concern for Newfoundland women in conflict with the law. The most prevalent problem was unemployment, and the lack of the necessary life skills to secure and maintain employment in the community. Sandra reported that in an effort to reduce employment barriers to women in conflict with the law, attempts were made by the Society's Employment Counsellor to place women in training programs and refer them to appropriate employment opportunities in the community. Since there were a greater number of women seeking employment than there were existing opportunities, the Women's Program, through the efforts of Elizabeth Long, developed a proposal for an employment/training program for its clients to provide them with meaningful work experience and concomitant life skills training to better prepare them for future employment. Sandra stated that this proposal, while not presently being considered for funding, would be pursued in the future. She also reported on a comprehensive research project presently being administered at the Newfoundland and Labrador Correctional Centre for Women in Stephenville which she developed as part of the Women's program. The results of this research, which should be completed within the next few months, are intended to enhance our understanding of the special needs of women in conflict with the law in Newfoundland, especially as they relate to post-release planning.

Group Discussions

Group I Facilitator - Joan Bradley

- 1.) The group noted that present services available to women are over-taxed i.e. the Women's Centre has overextended itself in trying to provide services where they are presently lacking. More job creation is required. Women need to receive adequate social support services in areas such as basic housing and food, so that they can devote themselves to a job search. There are also gaps in services pertaining to alcohol and drug abuse and a need for more "safe" places for women to address problems of sexual abuse such as rape and incest.
  
- 2.) The development of a good network system of resources is needed, especially resources of groups outside corrections. The need for better co-ordination of services has been noted by this group as one of the biggest current problems - the need to know what other groups exist to provide services to women and the type of services they provide.
  
- 3.) More resources are needed for training, skill development, the protection of women and public education.
  
- 4.) Women need to be better informed as to how they end up in the justice system and how the system operates.

Group II Facilitator - Carol Furlong

This group noted some sociological concerns which they thought needed further explanation. For example, why only lower socio-economic children end up in the system, the effect that labelling has on females and the problem of illiteracy - what is currently an adequate definition and what is being done?

The need for better networking (as heavy workloads often prevent a thorough familiarization with other programs); public education programs and services for children under twelve years of age were also noted.

Group III Facilitator - Jim Corker

The group noted that there are different areas within the justice system which may present problems for women. The trial, sentence and post-sentence stages each may present specific problems. While group homes for female offenders and ex-offenders and refuge environments such as the "Haven of Hope" offer support for juvenile and adult families, other services such as pre-sentencing residences and community-based residential centres are needed. Also it was felt that women need to be educated about their legal obligations and when they are surpassed. The viability of establishing a co-educational C.R.C. was discussed with its advantages such as providing a more normal environment and disadvantages, such as the likelihood of a disproportionate number of males to females.

While there are a number of agencies sensitive to the needs of females in conflict with the law and wish to contribute through their various mandates, it was observed that there is a lack of net-

working/co-ordination. The group discussed how and under what sponsorship the various agencies could be linked to provide the optimum benefit to the female from these existing programs.

The group recommended that a Provincial Regional Steering Committee be established to integrate the efforts of criminal justice and other agencies with special reference to the female offender.

Group 1V Facilitator - Elizabeth Long

A number of community agencies and programs were discussed including Elizabeth House, Haven of Hope, Transition House, Howard House, Emmanuel House and the John Howard Society's employment services for male and female clients.

The need for networking was stressed - community agency interaction and liaison might be increased through such means as the publication of a semi-annual informational newsletter, an annual agency awareness day, something similar to "health day" at the General Hospital and events such as this seminar.

AFTERNOON SESSION

Sandra Janes, chairperson for the afternoon session, introduced the topic of "Women at Risk of Becoming in Conflict with the Law". She provided a broad definition which for the purpose of the seminar included women with psychiatric/emotional problems, victims of domestic violence, the chronically unemployed, women from low socio-economic environments, and substance abusers. She introduced each of the three panelists who would address some of these topics.

WOMEN AT RISK OF COMING INTO CONFLICT WITH THE LAW - PANEL DISCUSSION

Domestic Violence as a Risk Factor - Susan Pye

Susan Pye, a counsellor at Transition House, a facility which has accepted battered women ranging in age from eighteen years to their late sixties first described the characteristics and background of the typical Transition House resident. These include, low self-esteem, coming from a violent home background, harboring feelings of shame and guilt over the incident(s), thus not wanting to reveal to people what is happening, and feelings of isolation even from her family.

Transition House attempts to remove the woman from her violent situation. Besides counselling in areas such as assertiveness training, it offers a referral service to agencies, such as Legal Aid, Unified Family Court and the police system. Such information and referral can be vital. For example, if a woman refuses to testify against her husband if he physically abused her, she can be charged with "contempt of court".

Ms. Pye gave examples of an abuse case whereby the husband used threats of violence to coerce his wife. When violence does occur it can escalate to such an extreme that in isolated cases, the woman finally uses violence herself, sometimes with tragic results.

Another form of abuse discussed by Ms. Pye is incest. In such cases the young female victim often tries to escape through acts of vandalism, drugs or even violence against others. Violence is learned in the home. In fact, the cycle of abuse is learned. Coercion leads to a feeling of powerlessness. The woman doesn't know where to go. She comes from a poor socio-economic background with few resources and feels quite isolated.

#### Employment/Educational Disadvantages - Philip Perry

Philip Perry, employment counsellor with the John Howard Society described women at risk as the most disadvantaged group as they have no support services to call upon, unlike men or women under parole or probation supervision. He said that technically, if a woman has not offended, then it is not within his mandate to help her, although he would attempt to provide services and referral.

Mr. Perry stressed that unemployment/educational disadvantages along with other areas presented at the seminar represent only a limited number of contributory (not causal) factors in placing women at risk of becoming involved in the criminal justice system. They have to be examined in conjunction with each other.

Today's increasing technological society demands that one have skills to compete for jobs and women are still not being given the



motivation or the foundation for the acquisition of these skills, largely due to traditional roles. However, Employment and Immigration Canada sponsors many courses and programs of particular relevance to women. Some of those mentioned are Career Exploration for Women, Training for Tomorrow, Job Readiness Training, Career Access and Affirmative Action.

More initiative and programs are now being developed. Mr. Perry stressed that we should try to ensure that these trends continue both at the government and community levels.

#### Substance Abuse and Women at Risk - Terry Green

Terry Green of the Newfoundland Alcohol and Drug Dependency Commission stated that the problem of alcoholism is increasing much more in women than men. Women have a high incidence of becoming cross-addicted to prescription drugs and alcohol. He noted that society tends to look more harshly at women alcoholics than their male counterparts. This is reflected in the fact that approximately 80% of treatment facilities are for men only, and the facilities have been designed with men in mind. Likewise, for women who have anxiety or related problems, the medical profession often simply prescribes pills.

Mr. Green indicated that chronic alcohol use usually starts at about forty years of age in men and 30 - 35 years in women. However women catch up quickly. In fact women have not only become closet drinkers in the home, but also in the office. Another problem is that the divorce rate for alcoholic women is much higher than that of alcoholic men - men are not as likely to give support to an alcoholic spouse as are women. Besides causing problems to the family unit, female alcoholism can have devastating effects on the unborn child as

in the case of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome.

While attempts to address the problems of female substance abuse have been minimal, thus putting more women at risk, Mr. Green noted that a local chapter of "Narcotics Anonymous" has been formed with 80% of its participants being women.

Sandra Janes thanked the panelists for their presentations and identified the group leaders who would facilitate the small group discussions. She requested that participants consider what additional factors they could identify that could contribute to women's involvement in the criminal justice process. She noted that the information packages contained discussion questions that could be used, if necessary, to facilitate the process.

#### Group Discussions

##### Group I Facilitator - Carol Furlong

This group identified a variety of risk factors ranging from alcohol abuse, psychiatric problems and poverty. The group identified three factors which contributed to a person getting involved with the law: 1) personal i.e. genetics, 2) peer group and 3) societal pressures. It also noted that personal factors may determine how one reacts to a situation. For example, one may seek out an agency, while another person may steal.

Education was mentioned as being important in informing women how others deal with violence and handle pressure. Also more

involvement in the school system, especially in the early years of junior high school where peer pressure is strong is important. Social agencies, the police and others should be going into schools more often. More effective media advertising such as messages about crime, should take place.

Group II Facilitator - Cathy Knox

This group discussed the need for a change in attitudes towards women with an emphasis on public education. It felt that more young people need to be targeted for information on the criminal justice system and a more wholistic approach is needed for young females at risk, such as an educational therapist being attached to schools. Currently most education programs pertaining to the justice system are directed toward high school programs and most people who get into trouble have less than a grade VIII education. Thus, educational efforts have to be directed at younger children. It was suggested that any further seminars should involve the Newfoundland Teachers Association.

It was noted that a visiting Elizabeth Fry Society representative stated that most women who come into conflict with the law have been abused as children. Thus, more efforts should be directed in areas such as child abuse. It was mentioned that the Community Services Council is holding a seminar on Child Sexual Abuse on April 18 and it is hoped that an advocacy group will emerge from this workshop.

The group concluded that traditional arguments concerning small numbers of women as compared to men in the system is not a valid reason for providing inadequate services to women. Quality of ser-

VICES should be emphasized over quantity. The group also agreed that we should do our best not to create additional problems for women through incarceration, but look to community service orders and other alternatives.

The group decided that initiative should be taken to develop a diversion program for females with female shoplifters targeted as a likely possibility. The John Howard Society will pursue this possibility with the provincial Department of Justice and the Consultation Centre of the Ministry of the Solicitor General.

Group III Facilitator - Sheila Arthurs

This group first identified these women at risk of becoming offenders: women in need of financial support and housing, victims of emotional and physical abuse, sexual abuse and incest.

The resources needed for these women were identified as being more subsidized housing, greater financial assistance for basic needs, more support groups, more training, education and employment programs geared to women, more support services for abused women, more legal aid services and more special projects designed to help women.

The group also discussed the special problems being faced by women in rural communities. They noted the lack of access in these communities to support services and the necessity of reaching these communities with information exchange opportunities, such as is offered at this seminar.

After the small discussion, the participants reconvened for a brief plenary session in which representatives from each group reported on its findings. Sandra invited questions and comments from the floor. She thanked the Solicitor General resource people, Jim Wood and Sheila Arthurs, for the information they had provided and expressed appreciation to the panelists for their presentations. She also thanked the group facilitators and seminar participants for attending and providing input to the seminar. She suggested that anyone who would like to receive a copy of the seminar report and/or information on future initiatives for women in conflict, should include his or her name and address on the list provided for that purpose. She also reiterated that Jim Wood had provided literature on developing program proposals for women in conflict which was available to anyone who wished to take a copy. There being no further comments, Sandra then adjourned the seminar.

## Concluding Comments and Specific Recommendations

Feedback from participants indicates that the seminar achieved its goals of : a) heightening awareness of the characteristics, problems and needs of women in conflict with the law and those at risk of coming into conflict with the law, b) promoting good information exchange and c) initiating the development and expansion of programs and services for female offenders.

A high level of interest was shown in the panel presentation and in the discussion groups. In fact, it was observed that the discussion groups could have continued for much longer periods of time as there was good participation and information exchange.

There was a wide variety of general recommendations emanating from these discussion groups, especially pertaining to the need for more resources. In particular, three specific and practical recommendations are worth noting.

1. That a Steering Committee be established to integrate the efforts of criminal justice and other interested agencies with special reference to the female offender. (This seems to address the need for co-ordination and networking that was prominently mentioned throughout the day).

2. That agencies dealing with female offenders and "women at risk" make greater efforts toward educating youth at the junior high school level and the general public, about high risk factors which could lead to women coming into conflict with the law.

Also, women in both urban and rural areas should be informed about

how to cope with identifiable problems such as physical and sexual abuse, the resources available to them and the services offered.

3. That initiative be taken to pursue the development of a diversion program for women with female shoplifters targeted as a likely possibility. (The John Howard Society agreed to follow-up on this possibility with the provincial Department of Justice and the Consultation Centre of the Ministry of the Solicitor General).

APPENDIXSpeakersMorning Session

Sheila Arthurs has worked within the criminal justice system for the past eighteen years. She had been with the Ministry of the Solicitor General for the past eight years where she has worked on a variety of programs relating to issues in criminal justice. She is presently the National Program consultant of Women in Conflict with the Law.

Jim Wood a graduate of Trent University in Peterborough, Ontario, is a sociologist by background and training. He has worked for the Correctional Service of Canada in various minimum security institutions for a number of years and for the past 3½ years has been the Associate Regional Consultant with the Consultant Centre, Atlantic Region, with the Ministry of the Solicitor General. His particular area of interest lies in criminal justice community development programs.

Ruby Driscoll has for the past eleven years been the Administrator of the Pleasantville School, a juvenile correctional centre for youth who require secure custody. Prior to her association with the Pleasantville School she was a school teacher and has worked with young people throughout all of her professional life. She has extensive experience in working with young people in conflict with the law, and has some observations she would like to share regarding young native and female offenders.



Cathy Knox is a graduate of Memorial University where she obtained a Bachelor of Social Work degree in 1977. She also graduated from Dalhousie Law School in May 1984 and is currently acting Crown Counsel with the provincial Department of Justice. Her varied work experience includes employment with the Department of Social Services, Adult Corrections and the Correctional Service of Canada.

Sandra Janes received a Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology from Memorial University in 1975. She has since worked for several years in community development in Halifax and St. John's. She has been employed by the John Howard Society since 1981 and co-ordinated the Female Ex-offender Program of the Society from February 1983 to November 1984.

#### Afternoon Session

Susan Pye graduated from Memorial University in 1984 with a Bachelor of Social Work degree. As a student she completed a field placement at the Waterford Hospital and has also worked as a student police office with the RCMP. She is a member of the Policy Committee of Transition House and has also been involved in the Citizen's Coalition Against Pornography. She is a strong proponent of Women's rights and has been a counsellor at Transition House for the past year.

Philip Perry graduated in 1978 from Memorial University with a Master of Arts degree in Sociology. His work experience includes employment as a Social Worker in Englee with the Department of Social Services as well as a parole officer. He began work in 1980 with the John Howard Society as a Counsellor at Howard House and has been the Society's Employment Counsellor for the past three years.

Terry Green is the Regional Administrator St. John's of the Alcohol and Drug Dependency Commission. In this capacity, Terry is involved in public education, staff training and counselling of individuals with alcohol or drug addictions. He estimates that up to sixty percent of his working time is devoted to educating the public to issues relating to substance abuse.

REPORT  
ON  
WOMEN IN CONFLICT WITH THE LAW  
-----  
WORKSHOP  
HELD  
MARCH 28, 1985  
AT  
ARTS & CULTURE CENTRE  
STEPHENVILLE, NEWFOUNDLAND

Submitted By:

Sherry Janes  
Workshop Co-ordinator

A workshop addressing women in conflict with and at risk of being in conflict with the law was held at Stephenville, Newfoundland on March 28, 1985. It was sponsored by the Elizabeth Fry Steering Committee and the John Howard Society, and supported by the Consultation Centre of Solicitor General's office.

Various people throughout the Western region of Newfoundland and Labrador were invited to participate in the workshop. Unfortunately, a representative from Labrador could not attend. Out of the province guests were Sheila Arthurs, national program consultant for women in conflict with the law; and James Wood, from the Atlantic Consultation Centre in Moncton, New Brunswick.

The media assisted in providing coverage of the workshop to increase public awareness around the topics addressed. Articles were written in two of the local newspapers and Jim Wood participated in a radio interview to articulate the purpose of the workshop as well as funding programs for these women.

Delores Sutherland, Chairperson of the Elizabeth Fry Steering Committee, welcomed the participants and provided a brief introduction to the workshop. Then the audience was addressed by Sheila Arthurs and Jim Wood to discuss areas of concern and programs for women in conflict and at risk of being in conflict with the law.

The remainder of the day was divided into four panel discussions addressing the topics of institutionalization, release and aftercare, young female offenders and arrest procedures and women at risk. Each panel was followed by small group discussions to facilitate the provision of specific recommendations to the government on this matter.

Panel members were very informative and the audience appeared to be genuinely interested in the information they shared with them. We were extremely fortunate to have two women who had previously been in conflict with the law sit on the institutionalization, and release and aftercare panels. They related their own personal experiences and provided the audience with a tremendous amount of insight into the frustrations they felt as a result of lack of services being available to help them in the process of rehabilitation. Their speeches were given serious consideration throughout the day.

Nancy Elliott-Pike, a classification officer at both the Men's and Women's Correctional Centres, provided some statistics on the number of female offenders who were incarcerated last year. It was interesting to discover that there were 89 admissions, 69 of whom were serving sentences of two months or less.

Sixty-four of these women were under the age of 29, with the mean age being 22. Fifty-eight had a grade nine education or less and 28 were living in the west coast area. Approximately 72% had very limited personal contact with family because of the geographical distance between them.

Other panel members informed the audience of which services are necessary in this area from their own perspective. There was agreement on the need for some of these services among the other members as well, and these tended to resurface throughout the day. The following are the recommendations that resulted from both the panel and small group discussions:

1. An organized public awareness program should be available to enable people to identify women at risk so that steps of intervention may be taken to prevent these women from coming in conflict with the law.
2. Several services could be provided to assist women at risk. These include a homemaker service, employment counselling to help women seek employment, budget counselling, a crisis hotline, women's centres or, where this is not feasible, women's support groups as well as alcohol and drug addiction counsellor to help women overcome their dependency on drugs and alcohol.
3. For young women who have come in conflict with the law, there should be a full-time counsellor available in group homes to provide young offenders with ongoing counselling. This individual could also coordinate and create more recreational activities for them and work towards providing a more structured environment within the home.
4. An information kit or handbook should be made available to an offender when formally charged to alleviate many fears and concerns she has about her situation.
5. A liaison worker would be an asset to the offender as she could assist and support her during and after trial. This worker could also be responsible for obtaining a contact person in the offender's community to provide some follow-up for her.
6. A public relations officer could be hired to coordinate services available to offenders and also to bridge the gaps between the institution and the community. This could foster better relations between the general public and offenders, and probably increase volunteer involvement with these women.

7. A full-time Academic/Life skills instructor is needed as many women have a low academic level and without further education, their prospects for employment are extremely low. Many of the women also lack social and living skills which make it difficult for them to cope with their problems after release.
8. Because of the high incidence of drug and alcohol use related to offences committed, there is a desperate need for a detoxification centre in this area. Often, women who are institutionalized think they can cope with refraining from drinking, but cannot deal with this once they are released. They return to drinking and/or drugs use, thus increasing the probability of their committing further offences.
9. Many female offenders have little or no work experience. A program should be introduced whereby women can obtain working experience (with some monetary incentive) to increase the likelihood of obtaining employment after release, thus increasing their independence.
10. Finally, major concern for women is finding a decent place to stay upon release. Halfway homes could assist women in making the transition from institutionalization to independent living. Another avenue which could be used here is that of adult foster homes. Individuals could be licenced to provide the female with a structured setting offering her support and assistance as well as providing her with a role model.

At the end of the day, some of the participants expressed interest in having a follow-up workshop in approximately six months. The Elizabeth Fry Steering Committee will be giving this some consideration. The Committee will also be seeking some commitment from those who attended the workshop in an effort to provide better services for women in conflict with or at risk of being in conflict with the law.

WOMEN IN CONFLICT WITH THE LAW

W O R K S H O P

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Sponsored By: John Howard Society  
&  
Elizabeth Fry Steering  
Committee

Supported By: Consultation Centre  
Solicitor General

DATE: March 28, 1985

PLACE: Arts & Culture Centre  
Stephenville

AGENDA

- 9:00 a.m. - Introduction to Workshop
- 9:15 a.m. - Sheila Arthurs and James Wood  
Solicitor General's Office
- 10:00 a.m. - Panel - Institutionalization  
Members:  
Nancy Elliott-Pike - Classification  
Officer, West Coast Correctional  
Centre For Men  
Mary Aylward - Correctional Officer  
Rita Peters - Community Resource  
Person  
Leslie Delaney - Community College
- 10:30 a.m. - Small Group Discussion to propose  
recommendations
- 11:00 a.m. - Panel - Release and Aftercare  
Members:  
Mary Ennis - Assistant Superintendent  
West Coast Correctional Centre For  
Women  
Carrie Power - Parole Officer  
Eileen O'Reilly - Community Resource  
Person  
Peter Bown - John Howard Society
- 11:30 a.m. - Small Group Discussion
- 12:00 p.m. - Lunch
- 1:15 p.m. - Panel - Female Young Offenders  
Members:  
Delores Sutherland - Social Worker  
George Sheppard - Regional Office  
Social Services  
Bill Kelloway - United Church Group  
Home  
Silas Bird - Labrador Legal Service



AGENDA (CON'T)

- 2:15 p.m. - Small Group Discussion
- 2.45 p.m. - Panel - Women at Risk, Arrest and Court Procedures  
Members:  
Trudi McCabe, Constable, RCMP  
Beverley Marks, Lawyer  
Teddie Gunsen - Status of Women  
Karen Martineau - Transition House
- 3:15 p.m. - Small Group Discussion
- 3.45 p.m. - Reports from Group Leaders
- 5:00 p.m. - Wine and Cheese Social

Facilitating questions for  
small group discussion

MORNING SESSION

1. What additional programs, services could be developed to help "fill the gaps" in existing resources for women in conflict with the law?
2. How can community agencies better utilize existing resources for women in conflict?
3. How can individual initiatives (to develop resources for women in conflict) be integrated to mobilize community involvement in your area?
4. Can you identify additional areas of concern for the woman in conflict with the law, that have not been addressed by this seminar?

AFTERNOON SESSION

1. How can community agencies identify the woman at risk of becoming in conflict with the criminal justice system?
2. After the woman at risk has been identified, what resources can community agencies utilize to divert her involvement in the criminal justice system?
3. What additional risk factors can you identify that would contribute to a woman's involvement in the criminal justice process?
4. Do you believe there is a need for future initiatives on behalf of women at risk, to prevent their involvement in the criminal justice system?



Star photo

...he of the panel discussions during a workshop on women in conflict with the law, held at the Stephenville Arts and Culture Centre Thursday, involved these speakers, from left, Peter Bown of the John Howard Society, Mary Ennis, Newfoundland and Labrador Correctional Centre for Women, Carrie Power, a parole officer, and Eileen O'Reilly, a community resource person. The panel explored release and aftercare for women who have been in conflict with the law. About 45 people participated in the day-long workshop.

### 45 at workshop

STEPHENVILLE (Staff) — About 45 professionals and volunteers participated in a day-long workshop at the Arts and Culture Centre here Thursday to discuss the topic Women in Conflict with the Law.

The workshop was sponsored by the John Howard Society here and the Elizabeth Fry Steering Committee. Funding was provided by the federal solicitor's general department through the Atlantic Consultative Centre in Moncton, N.B.

Keynote speeches were given by Sheila Arthurs, national program consultant for the financing program, called Women in Conflict with the Law, and James Wood, from the Atlantic Consultative Centre in Moncton. A number of local resource people served as members of panels during the day.

One panel discussed the topic of institutionalization and responded to questions and comments from the audience. Panel members were Nancy Elliott-Pike, classification officer at the West Coast Correctional Centre for men; Mary Aylward, a correctional officer; Rita Peters, a community resource person; and Leslie Delaney, a community college instructor.

A panel on release and aftercare was composed of Mary Ennis, assistant superintendent of the Newfoundland and Labrador Correctional Centre for women; Carrie Power, a parole officer; Eileen O'Reilly, a community resource person, and Peter Bown, employee of the John Howard Society in western Newfoundland.

SAY—"I SAW IT"

WOMEN IN CONFLICT WITH THE LAW

WORKSHOP

THOSE IN ATTENDANCE:

INDIVIDUAL	ADDRESS	ORGANIZATION
Trudy McCabe	Stephenville, NF	RCMP - Stephenville Detachment
Sherry Janes	15 Townview Corner Brook, NF	Workshop Co-ordinator
Peter R. Bown	15 Neptune Drive Stephenville, NF	John Howard Society
Delores Sutherland	416 Georgia Drive Stephenville, NF	Elizabeth Fry Steering Committee
Larry Bentley	Piccadilly, NF	Elizabeth Fry Steering Committee
Sheldon Brown	P. O. Box 592 Stephenville, NF	Adult Probation Office
Sandy Flynn	Piccadilly, NF	Youth Care Worker
Bill Haynes	Stephenville, NF	Adult Probation Office
Larry Connors	Corner Brook, NF	Adult Probation Office
Priscilla Butcher	Mount Bernard Ave. Corner Brook, NF	City of Corner Brook City Council
Bill Kelloway	United Church Group Corner Brook, NF	Group Home
Sheila Arthurs	Ottawa	Ministry of the Solicitor General
Ella Hiscock	Stephenville, NF	Dept. of Social Services
Dougal Noel	Stephenville, NF	West Coast Correctional Centre for Men.
Jim Wood	Moncton, N.B.	Consultation Centre/Atlant

WOMEN IN CONFLICT WITH THE LAW

WORKSHOP

THOSE IN ATTENDANCE:

INDIVIDUAL	ADDRESS	ORGANIZATION
George Sheppard	112 Elizabeth Street. Corner Brook	Dept. of Social Services
Sister Carmelita - MacNeil	Piccadilly, NF	Pastoral Worker
Sister Agnes Sesk	West Street Stephenville, NF	Presentation Renewal Centre Elizabeth Fry Steering Com
Gerry Gaultois	Stephenville, NF	John Howard Society Out- reach Counsellor
Mary Ennis	Stephenville, NF	Newfoundland & Labrador Correctional Center for Women
Carrie Power	P. O. Box 986 Corner Brook, NF	Correctional Service of Canada - Parole Officer
Nancy Elliott- Pike	P. O. Box 65 Stephenville, NF	West Coast Correctional Centre
Peter Barnes	P. O. Box 249 Stephenville Crossing Newfoundland	Anglican Church
Vivian Critch	434-2 Montana Drive Stephenville, NF	Newfoundland & Labrador Correctional Centre for Women
Bruce Innes	45 Hillview Avenue Stephenville, NF	West Coast Regional Adviso Board on Corrections
Teddi Gunsen	Corner Brook	Women's Centre
Pat Bennett	Corner Brook	Status of Women
Karen Martineau	Corner Brook	Transition House
Rita Peters	Lourdes, Port au Port Newfoundland	Community Resource, Person

WOMEN IN CONFLICT WITH THE LAW

WORKSHOP

THOSE IN ATTENDANCE:

INDIVIDUAL	ADDRESS	ORGANIZATION
Helen White	9 Woodland Street S'ville, NF	Elizabeth Fry Streering Committee
Mary Aylward	14 St. Stephen's St. S'ville, NF	Correctional Centre
Eileen O'Reilly	360 Massachussetts Dr. S'ville, NF	Community Resource Person
Mary Duffenais	39-A Kippens Kippens, NF	Legal Student
Doreen Pittman	9 Townview Road S'ville, NF	Status of Women Council
Linda Blanchard	33 O'Brien's Drive S'ville, NF	Single Parent Support Group
Bernice Brown	Stephenville Crossing	Clerk/Stenographer Provincial Court
Florence Mullett	Corner Brook	VC Group Home
Gwen Lomond	39 Pleasant Avenue S'ville, NF	Elizabeth Fry Streering Committee
Gail Hansen	547 B New Mexico S'ville, NF	Status of Women Council
Sister Marie- Murphy	76 West Street Stpehville, NF	Elizabeth Fry Steering Committee
Anne Power	Point au Maul Port au Port, NF	Elizabeth Fry Steering Committee
Charles Feltham	118 Elizabeth St. Corner Brook	Dept. of Social Services
Frank Wheeler	122A Elizabeth St.	Dept . of Justice

WOMEN IN CONFLICT WITH THE LAW

WORKSHOP

THOSE IN ATTENDANCE:

INDIVIDUAL	ADDRESS	ORGANIZATION
Leslie Delaney	Stephenville, NF	Elizabeth Fry Steering Committee
Bernice Brown	Stephenville, NF	Provincial Court

WOMEN IN CONFLICT WITH THE LAW

WORKSHOP

THOSE INVITED BUT UNABLE TO ATTEND:

INDIVIDUAL	ADDRESS	ORGANIZATION
Mr. Richard Marrie	Stephenville, NF	West Coast Correctional Centre for Men
Mrs. Ricki Hodder	Stephenville, NF	Bay St. George Community College
Phyllis Clark	Port au Basque Newfoundland	Dept. of Social Services
Beverley Elderidge	Corner Brook, NF	Dept. of Social Services
Betty Mercer	Corner Brook, NF	Dept. of Social Services
Milton Burden	Corner Brook, NF	Dept. of Social Services
Judge Whiffen	Port aux Basque	Provincial Court
Judge Smith	Stephenville, NF	Provincial Court
Judge Legrow	Stephenville, NF	Provincial Court
Paul Green	Stephenville Crossing	Dept. of Social Services
Marie Brennan	Stephenville, NF	West Coast Regional Advisory Board on Corrections
Carol Estoppey	Stephenville, NF	West Coast Advisory Board on Corrections
Michael Mercer	Stephenville, NF	West Coast Advisory Board on Corrections
Peter Godfrey	Stephenville, NF	Dept. of Social Services
Wendy St. Germaine	Corner Brook, NF	RCMP - Corner Brook Detachment
Beverley Marks	Stephenville, NF	Lawyer



WOMEN IN CONFLICT WITH THE LAW  
WORKSHOP

THOSE INVITED BUT UNABLE TO ATTEND:

INDIVIDUAL	ADDRESS	ORGANIZATION
Sister Mary Ryan	Piccadilly, NF	Pastorial Care
Karen Decker	P. O. Box 553 Stephenville, NF	Single Parent Support Group
Judge Luther	Corner Brook, NF	Provincial Court
Paul Gallant	Stephenville, NF	West Coast Advisory Board on Corrections
Silas Bird	Happy Valley Labrador, NF	Labrador Legal Services

A workshop entitled 'Women in Conflict With the Law,' which was sponsored by the John Howard Society and the Elizabeth Fry Steering Committee and funded by the Consultation Centre of the Solicitor General, was held at the Arts and Culture Centre in Stephenville last Thursday.

The workshop, which was attended by approximately 45 resource people who were mostly from the Corner Brook and Stephenville area, was held to introduce the Women in Conflict With the Law program to the western area of Newfoundland. Sheila Arthurs of the Solicitor General's Office in Ottawa and James Wood of the Solicitor General's Office in Moncton attended the workshop to introduce the Women in Conflict With the Law program. Mr. Wood stated that while they provided information to the resource people they also received input from the many people attending who are involved in the criminal judicial system.

Mr. Wood went on to say that the workshop was a part of a number held throughout Atlantic Canada — St. John's, Stephenville, Halifax, Moncton and Charlottetown. He indicated that the aim of the program is to develop, strengthen, and expand community programs and services for women who are, or may be, in conflict with the law and to foster information exchange and heighten community awareness of the needs of women in

conflict with the law. He also noted that this program will fund community-based programs and services for women who are, or may be, in conflict with the law, through contracts and contribution agreements. The program covers the fiscal years 1984-85, 1985-86 and 1986-87.

Women in Conflict With the Law is a three year program intended for community organizations to develop and generate research and demonstration projects. Priority will be given to programs for native women and women in isolated communities. It was noted that the program is not intended for projects which focus on crime prevention or services to victims or young offenders. The Ministry has other funding programs for these areas.

Principles and priorities to guide the Women in Conflict With the Law Program have been developed by the Ministry with a Consultative Committee which includes representatives from the Canada Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies, Native Women's Association of Canada, National Action Committee on the Status of Women and the Permanent National Advisory Committee on the Federal Female Offender.

For more information and/or submission of proposals please write or phone James Wood at: Consultation Centre, Suite 205, 1075 Main Street, P.O. Box 549, Moncton, New Brunswick, E1C 1H2. Phone (506) 388-6368.

disobedience as a form of protest; victims of incest, wife-battering or child abuse; young single mothers; those who have committed previous offenses, but have not been charged until being involved in a more serious offense; those who have been charged, but have received unequal or inadequate treatment by the justice system.

When women are sentenced to correctional institutions, they suffer because they are few in number. The types and quality of programmes for women have not progressed over the years; there are fewer training opportunities than for male inmates and the available programmes are generally sex-role stereotyped, e.g. hairdressing. Because women generally receive shorter sentences, staff find it difficult to develop worthwhile programmes for them. There will often be too few female inmates even for recreational activities or to avoid isolation and loneliness.

Socio-economic factors are often at the root of women's conflicts with the law. Many women are supporting themselves and their children on low incomes and are unable to make ends meet. Restraint measures leading to fewer employees doing more work without more pay add to the stress many women face in trying to do two jobs, raise a family and work at paid employment.

Types of offenses which women are thought to be more commonly involved in include: shoplifting, internal theft, fraud, and prostitution, often for economic reasons; impaired

driving, assaults, public disturbances, often related to an alcohol or drug addiction; drug offenses such as trafficking; manslaughter, particularly as the result of abuse; and, more frequently in recent years, common crimes such as break and enter.

Priority needs identified included: after-care for discharged inmates, particularly housing, life-skills training, and job opportunities; a court worker who would assist first offenders appearing at court without lawyers; preventive programmes for youth; and rehabilitation programmes designed for native women; and support groups for families of offenders.

Several ideas were discussed regarding housing:

- 1) a feasibility study to establish the need for a co-ed CRC (Community Rehabilitation Centre) on P.E.I. to provide interim housing for ex-inmates from both federal and provincial institutions;
- 2) the need for halfway houses on P.E.I. for addicted women, women released from the psychiatric ward, and ex-inmates;
- 3) the situation of young transient women who arrive at the police station late at night (after the hostel closes) during the summer months.

Life-skills training could be built into programmes at federal and provincial correctional institutions, at halfway houses if any existed, or as a preventive approach with young single mothers, welfare recipients, or disadvantaged youth. Life-skills training helps individuals to handle practical

matters, solve their own problems, and work towards attainable goals.

One of the participants, Sr. Catherine Ledwell, is now working as a life-skills coach with single mothers and welfare recipients and the John Howard Society has recently sponsored life-skills training for some of its clientele (male).

Lack of job opportunities for ex-inmates was identified as a problem which may lead to further offenses. It was suggested that correctional services buy seats in work adjustment and training courses so that ex-offenders and women "at risk" of becoming offenders could become a target group for these opportunities.

Support was expressed for the idea of a court worker presently being explored by the Salvation Army. By taking an interest in first offenders and assisting them with practical problems at the time of their first court appearance, such a court worker might help to prevent further offenses from occurring.

Programmes for youth were seen as important from a preventive standpoint. Several approaches were suggested, i.e. support groups for children following their parents' separation or divorce; group counselling in schools by Community Mental Health workers; an inter-agency approach involving the various organizations which work with young people; life skills training as part of the school curriculum;

and "peer programmes" for disadvantaged young people who are not interested in established, organized groups and who need a comfortable setting.

Native women (status and non-status) in conflict with the law were identified as having especially severe problems, e.g. attitudes they face, lack of housing and emotional support, and addiction-related problems. A rehabilitation programme specifically designed for native women was seen as a need.

Families of offenders have special needs that have long been ignored by the criminal justice system. The John Howard Society is working towards starting a family support group.

The above needs result from gaps in the criminal justice system on P.E.I. Examples of programmes across the country, such as the co-ed CRC in Sydney, Cape Breton or the life-skills training programme at the Drumheller provincial correctional institution in Alberta; could help by serving as models for programme development. It is crucial that the gaps not be filled in isolation: an overview of the criminal justice system on P.E.I.; an inter-agency, inter-disciplinary approach; and input from women who have been in conflict with the law are necessary for effective approaches to the identified needs.

During a short informal workshop evaluation, participants expressed disappointment that Probation Services was not represented, but on the positive side commented that the work-

shop was very interesting, participation was excellent, new contacts were made, and the session ended one minute early!

WOMEN IN CONFLICT WITH THE LAW WORKSHOP  
Sheraton Prince Edward Island Convention Centre  
April 2, 1985 1:00 - 4:00 p.m.

AGENDA

- 1:00 p.m. Welcome, Introductions, and Agenda Review
- 1:30 p.m. Overview of WICL: Kenne MacDonald, Consultation Centre/Atlantic Questions
- 2:00 p.m. Coffee Break
- 2:15 p.m. Exchange of ideas among participants:  
Identifying Issues and Needs  
Priorizing Issues and Needs  
Recommendations
- 4:00 p.m. Evaluation and Closing



LIST OF PARTICIPANTS, AGENCIES REPRESENTED,  
MAILING ADDRESSES, AND PHONE NUMBERS

Claire Arsenault Secretary of State, Provincial Office 97 Queen Street Charlottetown, P.E.I. C1A 4A9	566-7188
Heather Irving Advisory Council on the Status of Women 180 Richmond Street Charlottetown, P.E.I. C1A 1J2	894-8973
Yvette Blanchard-Conahan Dept. of Social Services P.O. Box 1500 Montague, P.E.I.	838-2992
Sgt. Pete McGarry RCMP "L" Division University Avenue Charlottetown, P.E.I. C1A 7N1	566-7100
Sgt. Roy Biggar Charlottetown Municipal Police P.O. Box 98, Charlottetown, P.E.I. C1A 7K2	892-9200
Olive Crane & Susan Baglole John Howard Society P.O. Box 1211 Charlottetown, P.E.I. C1A 7M8	566-5425
Suzanne DeJong Women's Employment Co-ordinator CEIC P.O. Box 8000 Charlottetown, P.E.I. C1A 8K1	566-7677
Alice Crook Canadian Abortion Rights Action League 1 Quiet Water Drive Charlottetown, P.E.I. C1A 7B5	566-8445
Daphne Dumont Canadian Bar Association & National Association of Women and the Law (P.E.I. Caucus) 134 Richmond Street, Charlottetown, P.E.I. C1A 1H9	894-5003

Florence Coffin Protestant Family Service Bureau 216 Queen Street Charlottetown, P.E.I. C1A 4B7	892-2441
Sr. Catherine Ledwell Life Skills Coach Catholic Family Service Bureau c/o Basilica Recreation Centre 200 Richmond Street Charlottetown, P.E.I. C1A 1J2	892-8933
Helen Flynn, Nurse Sleepy Hollow Correctional Centre P.O. Box 2710 Charlottetown, P.E.I.	892-7451
John Scully Native Council of P.E.I. 33 Allen Street Charlottetown, P.E.I. C1A 2V6	892-5314
Joyce Arsenault, Security Officer, Zellers 380 Maple Avenue Summerside, P.E.I. C1N 2H4	436-7217
Fr. Jacques Smith, Chaplain Sleepy Hollow Correctional Centre 50 Woodlawn Drive Sherwood, P.E.I. C1A 6K9	892-5842
Teresa Benac Women's Addictions Committee 150 Milton Avenue Summerside, P.E.I. C1N 1T9	436-9855
Linda Gaudet Department of Justice P.O. Box 2000 Charlottetown, P.E.I. C1A 7N8	892-5411

Invited, but unable to attend:

Phil Arbing, Supervisor Probation and Family Court Services Department of Justice P.O. Box 2000 Charlottetown, P.E.I. c1A 7N8	892-5411
Linda Brown Correctional Services of Canada 97 Queen Street Charlottetown, P.E.I. C1A 4A9	566-7177
Sherry Page Transition House Association 81 Prince Street Charlottetown, P.E.I. C1A 4R3	892-3790
Major Samuel Gullage, Family Services Salvation Army 158 Fitzroy Street Charlottetown, P.E.I. C1A 1S1	892-2281
A.B. White National Association of Women and the Law, P.E.I. Caucus Charlottetown R.R.#7 P.E.I. C1A 7J9	566-2401
Julie Dodd Justice Resource Service Department of Justice P.O. Box 2000 Charlottetown, P.E.I. C1A 7N8	892-5441
Amy Dymant Rape and Sexual Assault Crisis Centre 81 Prince Street Charlottetown, P.E.I. C1A 4R3	

ELIZABETH FRY SOCIETY OF HALIFAX

COLLOQUIUM

WOMEN IN CONFLICT WITH THE LAW

Karen O'Connell  
April, 1985

AGENCIES NOT IN ATTENDANCE

Halifax/Dartmouth Police

R.C.M.P.

Carlton Centre

Single Parent Centre

Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women

Youth Alternative Society, Bridgewater

Dalhousie Legal Aid

Nova Scotia Legal Aid

Health & Welfare of Canada

Social Service Departments

## INTRODUCTION

My task as a contractee of the Solicitor General's Department of Canada was to organize a colloquium on Women in Conflict with the Law. Its special focus was to identify the structure and objective of the Women In Conflict with the Law (WICL) fund, and its applicability to the priorities existing in Nova Scotia. To achieve this, it was necessary to have provincial representation from agencies that deal with the target groups identified by the WICL fund. To ensure the success of the Conference, a panel of speakers with a broad base of representation was selected. Representation of the target population was limited to a tape presentation. Local women who have been in conflict with the law have reservations about appearing in a public forum in the province in which they live. The Elizabeth Fry Society of Halifax was unable to obtain funding to finance the participation of a former female offender from Nova Scotia who is presently residing in another province. -----

## OBJECTIVES OF THE WICL FUND

The focus of the WICL fund is to assist two major target groups, namely, the female offender, and women in high risk situations. The objectives of the program are as follows:

- a) Crime prevention and crime reduction.
- b) Diversion of women at risk prior to involvement with the law.
- c) Improvement of the quality of life for these women by the creation of new services or the strengthening of ones in existence.

Proposal guidelines include program development projects, public education programs, and research and development programs.

## PROCESS

The colloquium was introduced by Mary-Liz Greene, Chairperson, Elizabeth Fry Society of Halifax. Subsequent to this Kenne Macdonald, Consultation Centre, presented an overview of the WICL fund. This was followed by a panel presentation in the morning. In the afternoon, participants were divided into four working groups to develop recommendations to meet the needs of women in conflict with the law and those at risk. The small groups reconvened for the latter part of the afternoon to exchange their recommendations.

(Please refer to Appendix A)

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The procedures for the project proposals be streamlined and simplified in order to allow programs to become operative in a designated time period.

Recommendations from this conference should be forwarded to the Attorney General's Department, the Solicitor General's Department, Metropolitan Authorities, the Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women.

### HOUSING

#### Concerns

Subsidized permanent housing is required for women in general, with particular emphasis on single parents on welfare, and women at risk. i.e. battered, transient.

Recommendations

- i) A coordinated agency research project be designed to identify the need for appropriate housing of female inmates upon release.
- ii) A housing Placement Officer be employed to assist women in finding adequate housing in the Halifax metro area. The worker would liaise with the Municipal Housing Authority, Social Services and the Residential Tenancies Board.
- iii) A halfway house be established for sentenced women who would otherwise be incarcerated for non-violent crimes or non payment of fines. This home could be utilized for women on conditional releases or remand.
- iv) A drop-in/resource centre be developed for women, with particular emphasis on women in conflict with the law and those at risk. One suggestion for staffing was that each participating agency donate one staff person for one day per month in conjunction with selected volunteers. Included in this facility would be a subsidized day care centre and baby sitting service to be staffed by volunteers and university student placements.

COURTS

Concerns

- i) Cutbacks in various legal aid organizations will affect the legal services available to Women in Conflict with the Law.
- ii) The media should not be allowed to publish names of accused women who are convicted on summary offenses.
- iii) There is a noticed increase in women appearing before the courts in both urban and rural areas.



### Recommendations

- i) Provincial research project be implemented to study the trends of female offenders in areas where crime rates have increased. i.e., rural segregated areas, low income housing areas.
- ii) A court advocacy worker be employed to assist native women and/or women in rural areas who come into conflict with the law.
- iii) Police forces on Cape Breton Island should contact the Welfare Officer on native reserves when a native woman is arrested.
- iv) A Woman's Alternative Society or diversion program be instituted to deal specifically with shoplifting offenses and other minor summary conviction offenses.
- ~~v) A bail supervision program be established.~~
- vi) A fine option program be implemented, based on the model of Western Canada which includes a pre/post institutional program that prevents or lessens a period of incarceration due to non-payment of fines.
- vii) The judiciary be educated to ensure that Community Service Orders are better utilized.

### **WOMEN INCARCERATED**

#### Concerns

- i) Lock-up facilities at the Halifax/Dartmouth police stations are not appropriate to house accused women.
- ii) Women held in custody overnight or for the weekend in police lock-ups should be transferred to the local correctional centre.

- iii) Women at the Halifax County Correctional Centre should:
  - a) be able to wear their own clothing;
  - b) have equal access to recreational facilities housed on the male side of the prison, i.e., gymnasium, library, chapel.

#### Recommendations

- i) The practice of medicating incarcerated females be researched to determine whether or not unnecessary medication is being given to control behavior in female inmates at the Halifax County Correctional Centre.
- ii) Volunteer coordinated inpatient programs be implemented to assist female offenders with alcohol and/or drug addictions for both incarcerated women and women at risk.
- iii) A needs assessment ~~be conducted at the Halifax County Correctional~~ Centre to evaluate areas of interest to female inmates prior to program development.
- iv) Temporary Absences be available to women at the Halifax County Correctional Centre if programs available inside the prison do not reflect the needs of a particular inmate. i.e., educational, recreational, social.
- v) A volunteer 'matching' program (one to one), be initiated for women incarcerated at the Halifax County Correctional Centre. The volunteer would act as a liaison with community agencies on behalf of the inmate.
- vi) A realistic and practical training course be offered at the Halifax County Correctional Centre to women for specific employment positions. These courses would increase women's motivation to learn the basic academic skills required of these positions.

- vii) Family visitation fund be established to enable federal/provincial inmates to return home on day parole, or while on a temporary leave of absence. This fund would also be available to assist family visits to either the Halifax County Correctional Centre or the Prison for Women.

## PUBLIC EDUCATION

### Recommendations

- i) Preventative educational programs be designed for victims of child abuse and sexual assault.
- ii) Public legal education programs be promoted in junior and senior high schools throughout the province to educate students on their legal rights, and the realistic consequences of criminal ~~involvement.~~

## EMPLOYMENT

### Concern

- i) A woman's economic situation often brings her into conflict with the law.

### Recommendations

- i) Priority be given to women offenders that need to be placed in training programs, and that more seats be made available to women.
- ii) Affirmative action mandates be used more widely in the work force, and that equal pay for work of equal value be practiced.

## YOUNG OFFENDERS AND THOSE AT RISK

### Recommendations

- i) Co-ed educational programs at Shelburne be implemented and maintained.
- ii) Young offenders with drug and alcohol problems be followed up subsequent to release and referred to appropriate agency.
- iii) Age appropriate programs for juveniles with alcohol and drug related problems be developed.

### CONCLUSION

The colloquium has given the Elizabeth Fry Society of Halifax and other women's organizations directions as to future program development in the province.

An indication of the success of the Colloquium was the request voiced by participants for the Elizabeth Fry Society of Halifax to organize future workshops similar to this one.

Approximately eighty percent of those invited were in attendance. This reflects the general consensus that there is an extreme need to develop additional services for women in Nova Scotia.

(Please refer to Appendix B)

## APPENDIX A

The following arrangements were made prior to the conference.

- 1) Reservations at hotel, including conference room, meals, meeting rooms, etc.
- 2) Selection of panel speakers and chairperson.
- 3) Meetings with panel speakers.
- 4) Taped presentation of Woman In Conflict with the Law.
- 5) Provided agenda for meeting.  
(enclosed please find a copy of the invitation, agenda and materials submitted during conference, and press release.)

C O L L O Q U I U M

WOMEN IN CONFLICT WITH THE LAW.

WELCOME

AGENDA

09:00-09:15 Registration

09:15-09:40 Introduction - Mary-Liz Greene  
Chairperson, Elizabeth Fry Society(Halifax)

09:40-10:00 Overview of the WICL fund  
Kenne A. Macdonald  
Project Consultant, Consultation Centre/  
Atlantic

10:00-10:10 Coffee break

PANEL PRESENTATION

10:10-10:50 Ms. Pamela Flight  
Institutional/Community Liaison Officer  
Nova Scotia Correctional Services

Ms. Cathleen Jennex  
Director, Coverdale Foundation

10:50-11:15 Ms. Diane Lewis  
Second National Vice President  
Elizabeth Fry Society of Canada  
(Representing UNISON Society, Cape Breton)

11:15-11:30 Tape Presentation: Woman in conflict with  
the law

11:30-12:00 Discussion

12:00-01:00 Buffet lunch

01:00-02:30 Small group discussion

02:30-02:45 Coffee break

02:45-04:00 Presentation of recommendations to  
large group

The issue of limited correctional facilities for Nova Scotia's female prisoners was at the forefront of a Women in Conflict with the Law conference held Friday in Dartmouth. Page 22

# Lack of facilities is a problem for women convicts

By Michael Doyle  
Dartmouth Bureau

The issue of limited correctional facilities for Nova Scotia's female prisoners was at the forefront of a Women in Conflict with the Law conference held Friday in Dartmouth.

Mary Liz Greene, chairperson of the Halifax Elizabeth Fry Society, which sponsored the day-long discussion, said women offenders in Nova Scotia are most often involved with non-violent crimes, but they serve time in maximum security institutions.

Terms of less than two years are served at the Halifax County Correction Centre: a secure facility housing all types of offenders. Terms over two years are served at Kingston's maximum security penitentiary.

A number of speakers at the conference said the situation exists because there are fewer women than men incarcerated, therefore less variety in the type of institution.

Ms. Greene said they've been told when women's numbers are as high as men's, multiple facilities would be warranted but she said she'd rather not follow the male model.

"Women generally do harder time than men. It's more devastating, more disruptive," she said.

Eighty per cent of women charged are for non-violent crimes. Ms. Greene said if they were men they would be placed in minimum security facilities, but for women these don't exist.

And many women upon release find themselves in a Catch-22 situation trying to get back their children, she said.

These women are often single mothers whose children have been placed in foster homes. They can't get social assistance because they don't have custody of the children and they can't get the children without providing a place to keep them.

The conference dealt with proposals to establish a half-way house to

meet the needs of sentenced female inmates as well as the development of a diversion program for women accused of shoplifting, the most common offense.

The Elizabeth Fry Society would also like to see women in metro held in one-lock-up supervised by female staff. In Halifax women are often supervised by men because there aren't enough female staff and in Dartmouth, cells have camera surveillance.

Ms. Greene said poor supervision can be a danger to the women because of the high rate of attempted suicide. After one woman repeatedly tried to hang herself with her brassiere, women are no longer allowed to wear them in the lock-up.

Diane Lewis, a member of the national executive of the Elizabeth Fry Society said medication of women in institutions often creates a drug dependency.

"Many women have said they were encouraged to take drugs. It's easier for staff to deal with a sedated inmate."

"Even if a quarter of what I'm told is true, there's a lot of drugs in institutions," she said.

"And you can't do counselling with a person that's over-medicated."

Added to any other problems facing a woman leaving a penal institution is the problem many experience with withdrawal symptoms.

Sister Virginia Turner, director of Adsum House, said there is a need for improved communication among the institutions, the inmates and possible transition facilities so proper medication is continued.

She said the drug dependency creates a problem because it's hard to excite someone about getting housing and employment when they're "spaced-out."

The second most common charge bringing women before the courts is impaired driving.

APPENDIX B

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REPORT

"WOMEN IN CONFLICT WITH THE LAW"

Workshop held on  
Friday, March 29, 1985 at  
Keddy's Motor Inn, Shediac Road, Moncton, New Brunswick

Sponsored by:

Family Enrichment & Counselling Service  
Moncton, New Brunswick.

On behalf of:

The Consultation Centre, Atlantic  
Solicitor General of Canada

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## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Family Enrichment & Counselling Service Inc. of Moncton, New Brunswick, with the participation of the Consultation Centre (Solicitor General of Canada) in Moncton sponsored a workshop on March 29, 1985, entitled "Women in Conflict With the Law".

The purpose of the workshop was to discuss problems, needs and priorities, and to make recommendations with regards to women in New Brunswick who are or who may be in conflict with the law. Similar types of workshops were also being held at about the same time in each of the other Atlantic provinces. The Solicitor General's office was seeking input from various community organizations and government departments concerned with the problem following a new three-year funding program which the ministry initiated in 1984.

Efforts were made to contact a wide variety of organizations and government departments in the province. Written invitations were then issued, to those individuals or organizations indicating a desire to attend the workshop. As a result, there were thirty-five persons in attendance; although most of these persons were from the Moncton and surrounding area, many represented provincial or federal organizations.

It is hoped that the following report on the issues raised during this workshop reflect a true picture of the situation which exists throughout the entire province of New Brunswick.

Finally, we would like to thank all those who have taken time to attend this workshop and have contributed their experience, knowledge, and expertise to the study of women who are, or who may be in conflict with the law.

THE WORKSHOP

The agenda for the day consisted of a welcoming speaker, a panel presentation, small group discussions, and a plenary session.

Welcoming Speaker - Hon. Mabel DeWare  
N. B. Minister of Community Colleges

In her address to the group, Mrs. DeWare praised the efforts of the federal government for undertaking this particular funding program, as well as Family Enrichment & Counselling Service - Moncton, for sponsoring this workshop.

She indicated that education is an important component in considering the rehabilitation of women who are in conflict with the law. Assisting women in developing skills for the workplace is an important part of the rehabilitative process. In her present position and also past experience as New Brunswick Minister of Labour, she is concerned about the fairly high number of women who seek to enter the job market lacking basic life skills. Also, the illiteracy rate in New Brunswick is quite high.

Mrs. DeWare indicated her ministry's concern for particular problems facing native people in New Brunswick. It is important that they have a sense of belonging in the community and that more emphasis be placed on services needed.

In concluding, Mrs. DeWare expressed hope that within these three years (of the life of the funding program), we will work towards some resolutions to the problems facing women in New Brunswick.

Panel presentation

The panel members were: Dan Stote, Solicitor General's office, Moncton, Sheila Arthurs, National Program Consultant,

Solicitor General's Office, Ottawa, Thérèse LeBlanc, Correction Service Canada, Moncton, and Rosella Melanson, New Brunswick Advisory Council on the Status of Women. The following are the main points put forward by members of the panel.

In describing this workshop as a consultative session, Mr. Stote pointed out that the Consultation Centre was seeking input from the members present in determining issues and presenting recommendations concerning women in New Brunswick who are, or may be in conflict with the law.

He then raised several questions for the group to consider:

- what happens to women who don't connect with the justice system... do they eventually get help for their problems... or do they go on to more serious offences and then enter into the system;
- why are men incarcerated whereas women are not;
- how can we offer equal opportunity to women as we do to men in terms of counselling and other community services;
- could we improve the criminal justice system if we approached men in the same way as we do women, i.e., seek measures other than jail sentences.

In ending, Mr. Stote noted that solutions will not necessarily be found within the criminal justice system, but rather within the community.

Sheila Arthurs gave a national perspective to the program of "Women in Conflict With the Law". Due to increasing pressures from such women's groups as Canada Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies and other voluntary/private sector groups, the Solicitor General's office became increasingly aware of the problems facing women. They also became more aware of the role the private sector could play in addressing this issue. A Consultative committee (see Appendix) was pulled together in order to work out guidelines for this program.

Services to women originally began with duplication of male services for female offenders. But over the next three years, it is hoped that female trends will be researched and developed through community inputs such as this workshop. The ministry hopes to encourage programs already under way, and to integrate future programs into activities already in operation.

Ms. Arthurs also emphasized community-based and sponsored activities for native women and for women living in isolated areas.

In closing, she put forward a challenge to the participants to determine which kinds of programs are important in this area of concern.

Thérèse LeBlanc, parole officer with Corrections Services Canada, then presented information on characteristics of the female federal offender in this province, noting that the actual number is very small. These women are usually very young (53% are under 25 years of age), have a low level of education (more than half have less than grade 8), are economically poor (75% unemployed), and comprise a high percentage of native women (77%).

Crimes committed fall into four categories, in order of frequency:

- 1 - non-violent crimes (95%)
- 2 - street crimes - prostitution, drugs
- 3 - accessory - usually murder or manslaughter with boyfriend
- 4 - violent crimes

In using one example as a case illustration, she pointed out the needs of female offenders are the same as men but, there is a problem with holding facilities and with programs which are very limited, mainly because of the small number of women involved. The location of the sole federal penitentiary for women in Kingston, Ontario, presents a problem for women

in this province who want to maintain a link with their families and with their communities. Alternatives to institutions which have been pursued so far are contracts for beds in Halifax, Nova Scotia, with Adison House, a transition house, and contracts with private homes within our own province.

Finally, Mrs. LeBlanc indicated that, as for many male offenders, there is a need for female offenders to obtain life skills training, educational upgrading and job readiness as well as alcohol and drug treatment programs. Some programs for men, such as "Straight Start", do benefit women. Also, offenders who are single mothers have a need for improving parental skills.

Rosella Melanson noted that the Council has ~~not studied~~ this problem in much detail. However, she pointed out that the small number of women in New Brunswick involved in criminal activity should be seen as an opportunity to bring about change, without too much cost.

Most women's crimes are crimes of "need", and the economic status of women is far below what it should be. Indeed, Ms. Melanson stressed a need for change in knowledge, attitudes, and behaviours in society before women can actually be prepared for and have equal opportunity for a satisfactory job, decent salary, and advancement.

At the moment, this is far from being the case in our province. Some of the points which she brought out are:

- although women today occupy 40% of the labour force, they are still not accepted as part of the public labour force;
- in the private world, women still carry the major part of housework;
- the wage gap still remains between men and women; women are often overlooked for promotion;
- in 1981, 28% of women had no income of any kind, and only 25% earned enough to support themselves; they



are usually engaged in low-paying jobs (clerical, health, sales, and service sector);

- in cases of separation and divorce, maintenance payments are ordered through the courts but not reinforced; of the 46% of female heads of households, 60% have incomes below \$10,000., and 22% have incomes below \$5,000.; there is a need for a national collection agency for maintenance payments.

In closing, she indicated that perhaps women internalize their problems more than men do, as evidenced by the many female patients in psychiatric institutions and the larger number of women as compared to men seeking help from mental health professionals. To become a criminal would be "breaking out of the mold".

FINDINGS OF THE WORKSHOP

CHARACTERISTICS OF TARGET GROUP

- Women at risk, and women in conflict with the law in New Brunswick are usually young (majority in 15 - 25 years age group), with almost always poverty and family breakdown in their backgrounds.
- They have a low level of education and lack skills to fit into the job market. Illiteracy is a significant problem in New Brunswick.
- Incest and/or abuse are high probabilities in their backgrounds.
- The percentage of female offenders and women at risk is higher in native populated areas.
- Some female offenders are mentally and emotionally disturbed.
- The single parent female offender has problems that are particular to her situation.
- Crimes most often perpetrated by women in this area are shoplifting and fraud/forgery. Others include stealing, property offences, and organized crime.
- Alcohol and drug problems are most likely involved in child abuse cases.
- Young offenders at risk of continuing criminal activities require our most concerted efforts.

IDENTIFYING PROBLEMS, NEEDS

- Facilities:
- Need for adequate facilities within the province, as offender should serve time in home area if possible.
  - Need for half-way houses for women only.
  - "Safe" homes are needed (particularly for less serious offences) where women are housed in homes with trained adults who would model constructive living skills by example, in a stable, family-like environment.

- Need for training and on-going support mechanisms for foster "parents"/guardians.

Sentencing:

- For women who are not sentenced, problem that they do not get directed towards the proper help.
- Need for collaboration between agencies to give alternative services to incarceration.

Support Services:

- Need for counselling services, mental health services, support groups within community.
- Need for alcohol and drug treatment centre for women - few available spaces at present within province.
- Women are infrequently referred to driving while impaired courses.
- Women do not benefit as often as men do from Employee Assistance Programs for alcohol treatment.
- Need for rehabilitation, also possibly support group, of families of offenders, should the case plan be a return to this home.
- Problem of adequate day care facilities within the province.
- Lack of available housing which is suitable and economical.
- Problem of day care for children in relation to "sentencing" women to non-remunerative work (volunteer work).
- Need for basic life skills programs (to include budgeting, parenting skills, self-awareness, self-assertiveness)
- Some areas of the province have less community resources available to them.

Employment:

- Need for job readiness, job placement, job follow-up (could include upgrading, literacy training).
- Great need to have more training opportunities, with on-the-job training programs.
- Because of present economic conditions, there is a lack of hope in future of workplace, especially for undereducated women who have much more difficulty in finding jobs.
- Need for equal pay for work of equal value.

Other:

- Teen-age peer pressure.
- Language problem in some areas of the province.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It was recommended that:

1. there be a local facility for women, as well as group homes or foster homes ("safe" homes - where there is modelling of constructive living skills), and half-way houses for women only;
2. there be support groups for the family while the offender is serving time;
3. a type of community network development be set up to co-ordinate services and support from the community, but with structure, such as a Resource Centre, which would do referrals, assessments, plug into needed individual resources;
4. life skills programs be expanded;
5. community work be used as an effective sentence;
6. police, legal aid personnel, judges, and crown prosecutors be made aware of community resources and options for women so that women may be directed to the proper help;
7. the use of "shadows" be encouraged on the job site where a straight person stays with the ex-inmate until the latter achieves proficiency and builds the trust level of the employer;
8. a screening process be set up in the school system allowing for early preventative measures;
9. teen-aged mothers be encouraged to complete at least their secondary education;
10. encouragement be given to social clubs/organizations to "adopt" a project to help women in conflict with the law;
11. community based programs of support to women be encouraged;
12. quality child care be provided for parents/mothers (especially) who work;
13. there be public education concerning women's problems;

14. there be consciousness - raising in non-traditional fields of work for women;
15. research be done on the one-parent family... "Is it more vulnerable to becoming involved in crime and why";
16. leisure activities be developed further within the communities;
17. the community law clinic be further expanded and supported;

Low self-esteem was identified as the major factor of criminal activity be it originating in lack of family support, economics, education, employment, or use of alcohol and drugs. It was suggested that we improve the content of educational curriculum in our schools, to include (compulsory)

- family living courses
- self-esteem builders
- parenting information

Also, the role of working in relation to our self-esteem should be de-emphasized. We need to start valuing equally the role of non-paying (monetarily) activities.

Lastly, it was suggested that a brief of today's recommendations be presented in the near future to a commission which is being set up to review sentencing procedures within our judiciary system.

CONCLUSION

The response to this workshop indicates a keen interest in women's problems on the part of many departments and organizations within our communities. As this report is to be circulated to the participants of the workshop, perhaps it will also serve to stimulate discussion of the problem at a local level, and help to bring about some positive changes in our province.

Submitted by:

Mona Godin  
Workshop Co-ordinator

A G E N D A

Workshop: "Women In Conflict With The Law"

DATE: Friday, March 29, 1985

PLACE: Keddy's Motor Inn, Shediac Road, Moncton, N.B.

9:00 Registration, opening

9:15 Welcome - Hon. Mabel DeWare, Minister Continuing Education

9:30 Panel - Overview of funding program "Women in Conflict With the Law" - Dan Stote, Consultation Centre, Moncton (Fed. Solicitor General's Office)

- Women in New Brunswick who are, or who may be in conflict with the law: What are the issues?

- Thérèse LeBlanc, Correction Services Canada  
Rosella Melanson, Advisory Council on Status of Women

10:15 Question Period

10:45 COFFEE

11:00 Small group discussions: Determining who are these women; Which group is more important?

12:00 LUNCH

1:00 Small group discussions: "Identifying problems, needs of these women. Future recommendations".

2:15 COFFEE

2:30 Plenary session

3:15 Summary; Wrap-up.

Note - Small groups will be divided according to language.  
Il y aura des sous-groupes en anglais et en français.

- Lunch will be provided, as well as coffee in morning and afternoon.



## Guideline for Group Discussions

11:00 a.m.

"Determining who are these women; which group is more important?"

1. Whom are we concerned about that they are or may be in conflict with the law? Age groups, ethnic background, socio-economic background, are any of these women past victims of incest or abuse, etc.
2. Type of offence or problem presented
3. Which group is more important- those who are at risk or those who are in conflict with the law? Possible ramifications if attention is not paid to the problem.

1:00 p.m.

"Identifying problems, needs of these women. Future recommendations."

1. Women who are sentenced.  
What types of problems and needs do we see in terms of
  - sentencing
  - institutions, facilities for incarceration
  - location of facilities
  - preparation for release
  - follow-up and rehabilitation
2. Women who may be in conflict with the law  
What types of problems and needs do we see in terms of
  - family support
  - economic situation
  - education
  - employment
  - use of alcohol and drugs
  - other

Priorize.

3. Recommendations

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