

content


Canada's National News Media Magazine

May 1978

Number 85

75 cents

KIT OF THE MAIL



*The world's first
accredited woman
war correspondent
Page 12*

SEXISM IN THE NEWSROOM?

*Eve Drobot asks
five Canadian journalists
Page 3*

...and much more

**SPECIAL ISSUE ON WOMEN
IN THE CANADIAN
NEWS MEDIA**

50 Years Young & Still Number One!

'Don't make the mistake of taking us for granted

'Unless an observer follows what we do from issue to issue and year to year, he or she might get the idea that we have found a formula that clicks with readers and we stick to it.

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Mildred Istona, Editor, *Chatelaine*

chatelaine

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HALF BEGUN, HALF DONE

Five women journalists talk about breaking into journalism and the state of the struggle for sexual equality in the Canadian news media.

By EVE DROBOT

A couple of years ago, I wrote a rather controversial article for *Homemaker's* magazine and, as a result I was invited to be a guest on a television talk show. The show's host, Dr. Morton Shulman, is not exactly famous for his enlightened attitude towards women, and since my article had been highly critical of an anti-feminist group trying to convince women that their place was in the home, I had a premonition that the evening would turn out to be more of a sparring bout than an interview.

Sure enough, as soon as the camera was on, Shulman took up the cudgels on behalf of male chauvinism. He baited me several times and found himself getting nowhere. In a fit of exasperation he began waving his clipboard in my face. "I've got a whole list of questions here to ask you," he said smugly, "but they're not worth a damn because they were written by my staff and my staff is all women. If you ask me, they're all frustrated and, if they had a choice, they would prefer not to work. They would rather stay home and have a husband look after them."

After the show was over, I discovered the women in the control room and on the floor with satisfied smiles on their faces. They apologized for Shulman's behaviour and, with a pat on my back, assured me, "Don't worry. We fixed Morty this time." I didn't understand what they meant—nor why they were smiling—until I came home and a friend who had watched the broadcast told me what had happened. It seems that right after Shulman's outburst, a message flashed across the screen. It read: "BULLSHIT!—The Staff."

There's still an awful lot of male chauvinist bullshit in the media. The public might think, seeing our names in the newspapers, our faces on television and hearing our voices on radio, that the battle has been won. But we know who is sitting behind the desk in the editorial offices, who is in charge of the television control room and who is running the radio news-room. It isn't one of us.

Item: In January, 1978, Toronto's establishment newspaper brought back the title *The Woman's Globe and Mail* for a section of its Thursday edition. The title had

been dropped three years before because of feminists' complaints. *Globe and Mail* editor Richard Doyle defended the return of the title, stating that, in the three years the section was without a name, no one could come up with a better suggestion. In response to protests by the Ontario Council on the Status of Women, Doyle said he couldn't see what the fuss was all about. "What's wrong with 'Woman's'?" he asked, a little too ingenuously. "They're a fact of life."

Item: At an independent television station, the company president is in the habit of extending an invitation to his women employees to share his office couch for a little afternoon recreation, hinting broadly that, if they accept, they will move ahead in the business. Few of the women at the station are still naive enough to fall for the hoariest line in the trade. They've talked about the situation amongst themselves and decided the man has problems of insecurity and that his come-ons are just an effort to exercise power over his (largely female) underlings. But the atmosphere is uncomfortable enough for several women to have quit as a result and, revealingly, the woman who told me this story not only requested that I not identify her, but also that I not name the station or even the town it is in for fear of jeopardizing her own position.

Item: When I interviewed Jackie Webster for this piece, she told me that *The Canadian Press* had done a feature on her several years ago and suggested that I look it up for background information. I called the CP library in Toronto and told the person who answered the phone that what I was looking for was a profile of a woman freelance writer. The following little exchange took place:

Librarian: "Oh. Then it would be a family section type thing."

ED: "Possibly. The byline on the piece was Mark Peterson."

Librarian: "Margaret Petersen?"

ED: "No. Mark."

Librarian: "Mark Petersen? Oh. Then it was a news story."

In the early days the battle was clear cut.

(See HALF BEGUN, page 5)

ABOUT THIS SPECIAL ISSUE

WITHIN THE CANADIAN NEWS MEDIA the struggle for female equality is more advanced than it is within many other fields. Yet the struggle in publishing and broadcasting is far from over.

Delays we encountered in presenting this issue (originally planned for 1975) may have been blessings in disguise, for we take a pulse well after the brave declarations of International Women's Year.

With this special edition, we have tried to probe what women working in the Canadian news media give and what they get. Despite our best intentions and a grant from the Ontario government's IWY fund, we are aware that a definitive picture is not provided here. We deliberately have not dealt with the *portrayal* of women in print and on the airwaves, in news or in advertising.

This special edition, with a press run of 9,300, will have the widest distribution of any in *Content's* 8 1/2 years.

Recipients include paid subscribers, including all members of the Women's Press Club of Toronto; all female members of the Periodical Writers' Association of Canada and the Canadian Public Relations Society; all those designated in *Matthews' List* as women's editors or equivalent on all Canadian dailies; selected staff of all Canadian dailies, community papers, radio and TV stations and news services; selected members of all press galleries; close to 1,100 selected women in leadership positions in government and non-government organizations large and small; selected college and university, corporate, special and institutional and public libraries; all Members of Parliament and all members of the Ontario legislature and a miscellaneous complimentary and exchange list.

Letters of comment, long or short, are sought. Reaction to what we've been able to present here will be an important guide to what, and how much, we should attempt in the future.

The feeling we gained in working on this special issue is one of uncertainty about the future. The media have become more woman-conscious over the past few years. The female contingent is increasingly making its mark. Further progress, however, will be impeded unless some fundamental steps are taken.

All who work in the news media must be prepared to make a conscientious effort toward more equality. Only in that case will the goal of total equality of opportunity be realized. — N.M./B.Z. (30)

Nancy Moritsugu *Barrie Zwicker*

Special Editor, Women's Issue

Editor and Publisher

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RICHARD LABONTÉ IS ON VACATION

content

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Editor and Publisher
Barrie Zwicker

Associate Editor, Content
Ken Popert

Managing Editor, Sources
Ray Bendall

Special Editor, Women's Issue
Nancy Moritsugu

Business/Circulation Manager
Debra Bee

Contributing Editors
Alberta — John Balcers
Quebec — Paule Beaugrand-Champagne
Saskatchewan — Dennis Gruending
West Coast — Nick Russell

Correspondent, Montreal
Dave Pinto

Consulting Editor
Terry O'Connor

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Telephone: (416) 651-7799 (if busy, 651-7733).

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We simply had to document obviously discriminatory payment policies and hiring practices, show them to the powers that be (men), who would then hang their heads in shame and open the gates to let us in. Well, a lot of us went in, through only partially opened gates, but the powers that be are still men and we're still asking, even begging, to be treated seriously, to be considered adults. Men are still telling us what we should be writing about, what we should be reading and what we should be covering for the evening news. We've come a long way in a short time, but there's still a hell of a long way to go.

Here are the stories of five women who work in the media. They range in age from 26 to 56, they work for newspapers, magazines, radio and television. For some crazy reason they all insisted that their careers haven't been typical, that they were "lucky" in avoiding discrimination. Judge for yourself.

JACKIE WEBSTER is one of those indefatigable scribblers who began writing when she was six. But she had to stop writing for eleven years because she was too busy being married.

"My husband was a lawyer who had a very materialistic outlook on life," she explains. "His attitude was: if you can't

eat it, drink it or make love to it, it doesn't exist. So he considered writing a useless endeavor." Rather than let her abundant energy go to waste, however, he encouraged her to go into business. At one point she ran a real estate agency and owned a hair-dressing salon, but what she really wanted to do all along was sell stories to magazines. She managed to write a piece of fiction in what she euphemistically calls her "spare time" and, when the *Atlantic Advocate* bought it in 1963, "I was on cloud nine. I knew that that was all I wanted to do."

The marriage broke down in 1965 and Webster took up writing full time, but she still couldn't do what she really wanted. "My first love is fiction, but I didn't dare concentrate on it. I had three kids to raise, so I went where the money was: into jour-

nalism." She says she bluffed her way into a reporter's job at *The Evening Times-Globe* in Saint John, reasoning that "it would pay the grocery bills and I would be able to freelance on a full stomach." Right away she sensed that, as a woman, she was in a vulnerable position. "As soon as I got a notion that I might be considered a 'lady' writer, I went to see the editor. I told him I wasn't interested in covering IODE teas, I wanted a real beat. So he gave me the waterfront."

The Saint John waterfront was no place for a lady, but the longshoremen, rather than give her a hard time, decided she needed their protection. "They knocked themselves out for me," Webster recalls, "and they opened up to me. As a result, I covered the beat better than any of the 'boys.'" Back at the office, her stories won the respect of co-workers and "the fellows accepted me very well."

In 1970, Webster decided to go freelance full-time. She established herself very quickly, selling to *The Chronicle-Herald*, *Maclean's* and the *Atlantic Advocate*. That netted her about \$15,000 in her first year, which is quite extraordinary. Her success caught the eye of a writer for *The Canadian Press* and he sent a profile of her through the wire service. Shortly after, offers came pouring in from editors all over the country. *The Globe and Mail* asked her to be its stringer in New Brunswick and the old *Star Weekly* wanted her for its Panorama section. "Looking back," she says, "I'm amazed that it all came so quickly. At first, all I wanted to do was support my family —

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Inside Content

With the addition this month of Paule Beaugrand-Champagne to our masthead as contributing editor for Quebec, an important gap in *Content's* network of contributing editors is admirably filled.



Paule, who is on the night desk in the newsroom at Montreal's *La Presse*, began her journalism career in 1963 when she became reporter and news editor for two newspapers published by Action Catholique Canadienne. When the publications closed in 1965, she went to work for a year as a reporter with *La Presse* before going to *Le Travail*, the newspaper of the CNTU, as reporter and news editor. At the same time, she served as PR writer and assistant to the CNTU secretary-general.

After a four-year stint with the Quebec ministry of labour and manpower she returned to journalism in 1974, joining the group of journalists who founded the independentist daily, *Le Jour*. She became the paper's news editor in September 1975 and remained in that position until it ceased publication in August 1976.

She has freelanced for *Maclean's*, *Perspectives*, *L'Actualité* and *Radio-Canada*.

Paule has also been active in professional organization: she was president of the Federation Professionnelle des Journalistes du Quebec from October 1976 to April 1977 and is now an editor of *Le "30"*, the federation's monthly publication.

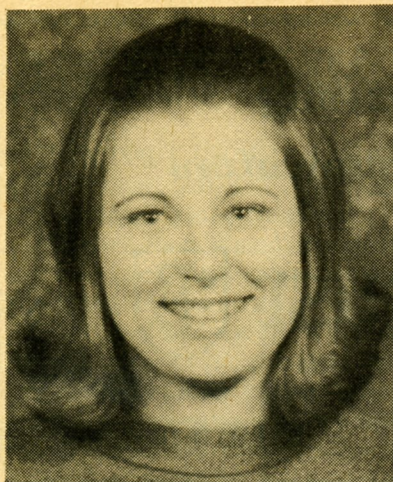
* * *

We are also pleased to announce that *Content* has established an understanding with *Le "30"* to exchange articles. We hope this agreement will improve mutual understanding between journalists in Quebec and outside Quebec. — K. P.

Notice to Subscribers

Because it was following too closely on the heels of the extra effort required to publish this special issue, the *Sources directory of media contacts, Third Edition*, will be dated July rather than June.

And a reminder that *Content*, an 11-times-a-year publication, does not publish a September issue. News and articles edited during August will be published in the special September/October Eighth Anniversary Issue.



DONNA GABELINE: "Just moving a couple of hundred yards down the corridor broke down all sorts of barriers. The 'women' reporters became simply reporters and the content of the Woman's section itself began to change gradually."



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I figured if I didn't write, we didn't eat." Webster feels strongly that women are held back from "just going out and *doing it*" by the fact that they are financially dependent on their husbands. When her marriage came apart, she did not seek alimony and she credits that decision with giving her the drive she needed to begin her career.

She quickly learned that freelancing is more than just writing: she had to become her own agent, bookkeeper and secretary. She now feels that being on staff at a newspaper is a sheltered existence; she didn't learn the value of a byline until she had to



ELAINE WAESE: "I have found that it is the product that counts. A producer is more interested in whether or not you can meet deadlines and come through with results than whether you are male or female. As long as you behave professionally and your product is good, your sex doesn't enter into it."

TRICIA MacDONALD: "I made up my mind on the plane going out that I would have to work incredibly hard. I knew that I would have to prove myself, that I might encounter hostility, being both very young and female, so I was determined not to make any mistakes."



hustle for herself. While she was at *The Evening Times-Globe*, she was certain that she had been paid less than her male colleagues, but, as a freelancer, she discovered that Jackie Webster stories sold well. Once her reputation was firmly established, she knew what the going rates were and knew how much to ask.

Webster sees herself as a feminist "even before there was a word for it." She had never been happy with the cocktail party life of a barrister's wife and shocked genteel Fredericton society by going drinking with male friends. "I refused to accept that, by marrying, I was obliged to cut my-

self off from 50 per cent of the population." It is therefore ironic that her most popular ongoing venture, a column about a man and his cat, which first appeared in the Fredericton *Gleaner* and now runs in the King's County *Record*, earned her the ire of other feminists.

The column is written from the point of view of an Archie Bunker-type who spends all his time complaining to his alley cat, MacWhiskers, often about being done in by women. "I saw him as a typical male," says Webster. "It was meant to be satirical. I hid behind an ignorant man's anonymity to expose sexism, so I was sur-



BETTY LEE: "There are stars, women reporters whose bylines have become familiar to readers in the sports pages and the financial pages, as well as in the news. But the power structure remains the same. As far as the public is concerned, women have made visible progress as reporters, but I think that it was achieved through individual effort, not through a more benign policy of management. Exposure and money are nice, but let's face it: the real power is behind the scenes. Men make newspapers; they decide what both men *and* women are going to read. It would be interesting to find out just what women's media would be like. I'm sure if women sat in the editors' offices or newspaper board room of this country, the public wouldn't necessarily be getting recipes on the front page."

prised to get flak from women's lib for being sexist." But her readers obviously take her fictional persona very seriously: once she wrote about how MacWhiskers got a purebred Siamese pregnant and the Siamese cat's owner insisted that MacWhiskers' master was responsible. Webster ended the piece by asking: "Anybody out there interested in five part-alley cat, part-Siamese kittens?" The switchboard at the *Gleaner* lit up.

If Webster is concerned about women's role in the media, she is equally concerned about the lot of the regional writer. When she became *The Globe and Mail's* stringer,

she felt she needed to know every part of New Brunswick to be able to report on the province, so she spent several years moving from town to town in order to familiarize herself thoroughly with her beat. She's still fighting against a tendency of national magazines to send a reporter out of Toronto to the Maritimes for two days and expect him or her to return with the definitive Atlantic story.

Webster therefore spends a great deal of her time encouraging local writers, both male and female, to explore national markets. She often receives mail seeking her advice and points out that most of it is

from other women. "I started out without knowing what I was doing," she says, "and I want to help others avoid some of the mistakes I made. I think it's important for someone who is successful to be willing to act as a role model for others."

DONNA GABELINE didn't enjoy being an editor as much as she enjoyed reporting; after a year and a half as editor of the People section at the *Montreal Gazette*, she went back to the newsdesk.

Gabeline, 29, took the editorship because "I wanted to try something different. Editing required a different set of skills: dealing with complex personalities, balancing budgets, reporting to staff meetings, learning to be diplomatic with management. It was more administrative than anything else and I felt my talent was misplaced. So it was my own decision to step down."

Gabeline came to *The Gazette* after graduation from the University of Missouri's journalism school six years ago. The university runs one of the two dailies in Columbia, Missouri, where the school is located, so students actually learn job skills, not just theory. When Gabeline was hired to copy-edit and do layouts at *The Gazette*, she felt that it was because there were few people around — male or female — who had the mechanical skills necessary.

When she first arrived, there weren't too many female faces in the newsroom. Just like at *The Globe and Mail*, women reporters were cloistered in a separate part of the building and they were assigned the usual fashion and recipe stories for the Woman's section. Escape from their physical separation proved to be a matter of circumstance: it seems that the "boys" in the sports department had a tendency to be a bit too rowdy for the tastes of the other newsroom workers. On the assumption that the Woman's section ladies would act with more decorum, the sports section was banished to the hinterlands and the women took their place in the newsroom.

"Just moving a couple of hundred yards down the corridor broke down all sorts of barriers," says Gabeline. "The 'women' reporters became simply reporters (she herself was one by this time) and the content of the Woman's section itself began to change gradually. We finally got a feminist editor and she suggested changing the name. Because it was International Woman's Year and all, the publisher went along and even ran a contest among the staff for a new title. That's how it came to

(see **HALF BEGUN**, PAGE 26)

WHATCHAMACALLIT

The Woman's Globe and Mail, Life-styles, People, Family, Thursday section. No matter what they call it, in virtually any Canadian city, the contents and *raison d'être* remain the same. Advertisers — supermarkets, department store fashion departments, exclusive women's wear stores — retain a favorite vehicle for reaching a specific audience. Editors and writers have a market for "soft news," health, social welfare, child care, psychology, advice columns and consumer items. And readers know where to find some of the most interesting, thought-provoking, features in the newspaper.

A six-week furor was provoked this year by decision of the management of the staid and august *Globe and Mail*, effective Jan. 12, to rename the section, untitled since 1975, *The Woman's Globe and Mail*.

The change, from untitled Section F (for Female?) to *Woman's Globe and Mail*, was defended by editor Richard J. Doyle, in an interview with *Globe* reporter Margaret Mironowicz. The unnamed section, he said, "tended to lack an identity. . . things have changed in the last couple of years. . . by and large there are a lot of people who believe that being straight forward about it is the best. We don't think there's anything denigrating about this."

At the same time, the move brought schlock and outrage from Ontario Status of Women Council chairperson, cum broadcaster, cum public speaker, cum consumer columnist Lynne Gordon, and reasoned concern, expressing the view that "news cannot logically be segregated by sex" from Hon. Marc Lalonde, minister responsible for the status of women in Canada.

"A tempest in a teapot — an effective diversionary tactic," said a union feminist. "Gordon and Lalonde, in their day-to-day pursuits, bolster an outmoded status quo, and help perpetuate the low priority assigned to women's rights, by making polite and token protests which change nothing. Meanwhile, the gut issues — equal pay for work of equal value, day care, reasonable family property laws, freedom of choice on abortion, and recognition of women as equals in Canadian society — wait. Provincial and federal government pronouncements that *all* women are secondary wage earners go unchallenged.

Courts, dominated by male judges, appointed by male politicians, continue to render masculinist judgements."

In a letter to the editor, Lalonde contended that the inappropriateness and confusion created by the *Globe's* change in editorial policy was reflected in relegation to the women's section of the coverage of the prime minister's announcement of the appointment of Dr. Sylvia Ostry, former deputy minister of consumer and corporate affairs, to chair the Economic Council of Canada.

Lalonde may have been surprised, but no Canadian feminist was. Any one regularly reading Canadian newspapers knows that the only sure-fire way for a woman to get front-page coverage is to let her frustration and impatience at the slowness of change drive her to axe-murder. The federal cabinet, which seeks brownie points for the frequent and con-

AND WHY

By ELEANOR WRIGHT PELRINE

The Globe and Mail *The Thursday Section*

TORONTO, THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 1978

The Woman's Globe and Mail

TORONTO, THURSDAY, JANUARY 12, 1978

The Globe and Mail

TORONTO, THURSDAY, JANUARY 5, 1978

The Woman's Globe and Mail

TORONTO, THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 1971

tinuing appointment of Dr. Ostry to important posts while it fails to promote large numbers of highly qualified women within the public service to high profile, challenging jobs, isn't pure and lily-white.

After a spate of letters to the editor, most protesting reversion to the *Woman's Globe and Mail* title, management, rejoicing in the knowledge that people out there were actually watching and reading, caved in.

On Feb. 23, *The Thursday Section*, adorned with delicately curved, appropriately feminine title script, appeared for the first time. Editorial content, cheek by jowl with the ever present supermarket and fashion ads, continued to be some of the most interesting material in the newspaper.

Margaret Craig, women's editor of *The Globe and Mail* from 1948 to 1962,

was on the spot when the *Woman's Globe* was born in 1958. The initial interest in a special section, she believes, came from the advertising department, which "pays the freight" on any newspaper.

Craig's reaction at the time was a positive one. She and her writers would have more space and more scope to move away from the social reporting and recipes which had previously dominated their pages.

Series on disturbed children, New Canadians (as recent immigrants were called in those days) and health matters began to appear. At the same time, Zena (Mrs. Westcott) Cherry's column started to report the leisure activities of Toronto's beautiful elite.

The same column appears in *The Globe and Mail* today, but there've been some changes made. Women actually are permitted first names of their own. The "Mrs. John, Mrs. Sam and Mrs. Pierpont Smiths" are a dying breed. And, further indicative of more enlightened attitudes, there is often news of fundraising events sponsored by feminist organizations. Said one Toronto volunteer: "I hate the column, but you'd better believe I read it. And if I want to ensure success, for any venture, I try desperately to get a mention."

One problem that few female journalists mention, but all live with, is that doors to professional opportunity remain firmly bolted against them, at the *Globe* and elsewhere.

"I die, everytime I see one of my stories in the women's section," said one. "I consider it the kiss of death, no matter what the department is called."

Margaret Craig recalls that she "was delighted to get the opportunity to be women's editor of *The Globe and Mail*. Our people had the chance to get all-round experience which wasn't generally available to women. They had the freedom to suggest and write interesting pieces, to follow through on a story, and even go out with the photographer to guarantee that they got the photograph they wanted."

Craig thought it "only fair" that there should be a women's section of *The Globe and Mail*, since the sports section was read primarily by men.

Today, *The Globe and Mail* has only a handful of women working "city side," and the important bureau postings — China, Ottawa, Queen's Park — just don't go to women.

Certainly advertisers, a convenient villain, are slow to accept change in stereotyped portrayal of women, but major agencies and national advertisers have begun to do so. Retail accounts — super-

markets, fashion stores, local enterprises — lag behind at having their consciousness raised. Their advertising budgets are smaller, their personnel fewer, and their management usually male-dominated.

Jeanne Grierson, advertising and marketing manager for Creed's, is unconcerned about the changes from section F to *Woman's Globe and Mail*, to Thursday Section, although she suggests "Thursday's child has far to go."

Unless there is a basic change in content and audience, she says, she will continue to regard The Thursday Section as a suitable advertising vehicle for her fashion material, although she admits the appeal of "sexy lingerie in the sports or business sections, since men often buy such items as gifts."

Grierson and other advertising buyers want a name for their vehicle and a basic character to reach their audience.

There appears to be no substantial change in advertising lineage in The Thursday Section, as compared to the *Woman's Globe and Mail*, but the *Globe's* retail advertising manager referred queries on comparative sales to the assistant publisher, who was unavailable.

Ed O'Dacre, responsible for tidying up, verifying and publishing letters to the editor, "couldn't say" how many letters had been received on the subject.

"Call Mr. Doyle," he advised, "Since all such letters really belong to him." Mr. Doyle, alas, was unavailable.

Women, many of them authors of letters to the editor which told *Globe* management what to do with their dark-ages attitudes and short-lived *Woman's Globe and Mail*, were slightly triumphant.

"*The Globe and Mail* has been dragged kicking and screaming, into the 1970s," said one.

Investigative reporter Barbara Yaffe, relentless in her demands that politicians and cabinet ministers be socially accountable, was "relieved and proud that *The Globe and Mail* is as responsive to public opinion as we expect various agencies to be."

She, and other *Globe* staffers, dreamed a little of a features section — "People," perhaps — chock-full of thoughtful articles, beautifully written, by top-notch journalists.

Sounds great, doesn't it, but what will they do with the supermarket ads?

Eleanor Wright Pelrine is a "shit-disturbing feminist and freelance writer." She is the author of Morgentaler — The Doctor Who Couldn't Turn Away and Abortion in Canada.

* * The Women's Press * *

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**Deadline for entries
is July 16, 1978.**

The Chinese Times No (no logo)	The Chatham Daily News NA <i>Family Living</i>	The St. Catharines Standard Yes (no logo submitted)
The Citizen, Prince George Yes The Citizen Home & Family with Bev Christensen	The Chronicle-Journal, Thunder Bay Yes Modern Living The Chronicle-Journal Thursday, March 8, 1978 19	The Times-News, Thunder Bay Yes The Times-News LIFE • FEATURES • SOCIAL • LEISURE Wednesday, March 15, 1978 7
The Columbian, Vancouver Yes lifestyle	The Citizen, Ottawa Yes 4 Lifestyles comics/tv/columnists/entertainment	The Toronto Sun Yes Lifestyle
The Kamloops News Yes Interchange	The Expositor, Brantford Yes (no logo)	The Gazette, Montreal Yes PEOPLE INSIDE CLASSIFIED
The Penticton Herald Yes (no logo submitted)	Le Droit, Ottawa Yes vie familiale et sociale	The Montreal Star Yes LIFESTYLES
The Trail Daily Times Yes Family Living	The Globe and Mail, Toronto Yes The Globe and Mail <i>The Thursday Section</i>	The Sherbrooke Record Yes A NEW DEAL by Pauline Hockenstein-Hansen
The Vancouver Sun Yes You	The Journal-Record, Oakville Yes Community	The Daily Gleaner, Fredericton Yes Lifestyles
Edmonton Journal Yes (no logo submitted)	The Fort Frances Times Yes (no logo)	L'Evangeline, Moncton Yes la vie des autres
The Lethbridge Herald Yes Lifestyle	The London Free Press Yes You & yours	The Evening Times-Globe, Saint John Yes (no logo submitted)
Moose Jaw Times-Herald Yes LIFESTYLES 6—Moose Jaw Times-Herald, Tuesday, March 7, 1978	The Miner & News, Kenora Yes LIFESTYLE AVENIDA MINER AND NEWS, THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 1978	The Moncton Times No (no logo)
The Brandon Sun Yes family living	Ottawa Today NA (no logo submitted)	The Moncton Transcript No (no logo)
Winnipeg Free Press NA WINNIPEG FREE PRESS For People	The Standard-Freeholder, Cornwall Yes Women	The Telegraph-Journal, Saint John Yes (no logo submitted)

We asked 119 Canadian dailies: "Does your publication, once a week or more, assemble in its pages news you believe is of interest to women?" Out of 36 respondents, 30 answered **Yes** (pink band), three answered **No** (grey band), and three did not answer (**NA**, no band).

THE LIFESTYLE OF WOMEN'S PAGES: CALLING THEM PEOPLE, FAMILY, LIVING AND YOU

The results of a *Content* survey indicate that, like *The Globe and Mail*, most Canadian dailies continue to run women's pages. Most, however, seem to have come up with apparently nonsexist titles for those pages without experiencing the cataclysmic intellectual strain claimed by the *Globe*.

Content asked each of Canada's 119 dailies: "Does your publication, once a week or more, assemble in its pages news you believe is of interest to women?" Respondents were asked to answer yes or no and include a sample of any special title or logo used to distinguish news of interest to women.

Thirty-six dailies returned identifiable replies, a response of 30 per cent.

Thirty dailies answered yes. These broke down into two groups: six who gave a simple yes and 24 who said yes but qualified their response with written comments.

- "If, however, there is a hard news story of significance to women, it goes in the news section of the paper. I consider the concept of reserving one section of the paper for 'women's issues' to be a demeaning one." (Peter Raeside, *Lifestyles* editor, *The Montreal Star*).

- "I would like to think that everything we publish is of interest to women, whether it's hard news, features, comics, columns, or sports stories." (Kathy Brooks, *lifestyle* editor, *The Toronto Sun*).

- "I know women who read the sports pages faithfully; other women want to learn what's happening at city council and at school board; there are those who read the entertainment sections and — heaven forbid, but it is true — some even glance at the stock market quotations . . . It disturbs me that many journalists persist in assigning certain roles to the men and others to the women, when in the past 10 years or so there have been so many instances of those lines of division being overstepped." (Joyce Walter, managing editor, *Moose Jaw Times-Herald*).

Only three dailies, the *Times* and the *Transcript* (Moncton) and *The Chinese Times* (Vancouver), said they didn't have women's pages. *Transcript* and *Times* women's editor Edith Robb expanded on her negative response:

"Monday to Friday we do concentrate a certain number of pages (around five) to family news . . . news items that aren't really hard news, more feature material about the way we live . . . no special effort to fill them with so-called 'women's news,' whatever that is."

Two dailies didn't answer yes or no, but enclosed logos of particular sections: *Ottawa Today* sent its **Living** section, while the *Winnipeg Free Press* sent **For People**. Barry Mullin of the *Free Press* added: "We believe *all* news is of interest to both men and women."

Among the 30 dailies who said they have women's pages, four have no special name or logo for the section. Of the other 26, just one was flatly frank: the *Cornwall Standard-Freeholder* with **Women**.

Nine others use **Lifestyle** or **Lifestyles** and another two use variations on "life" for a total of 11 employing titles with connotations of consumption.

Also appearing to ring changes on the consumer theme, with a nuance of narcissism, are variations on the second person pronoun: **You** (*The Vancouver Sun*) and **You & Yours** (*The London Free Press*).

Another noticeable clustering occurs around the word "family:" with five respondents using such titles as **Family Living** (*Trail Daily Times*) and **vie familiale et sociale** (*Le Droit*, Ottawa).

The unique among our respondents included **The Thursday Section**, **Community**, **Interchange**, **People**, **la vie des autres** and the feminist-sounding **A New Deal**.

What most impresses about these varied-seeming titles is the persistence of quite conservative assumptions about the interests and activities of female readers. The wife-and-mother view of women is frankly evident in the recurrence of "family." But even the you've-come-a-long-way-baby tone of "lifestyle" bespeaks the premise that women are especially interested in consumption: woman as shopper-homemaker.

The contents of many women's sections reinforce this impression. Whether the title is old hat "family" or swinging "lifestyle," the food-fashions-and-famous-faces formula remains a hardy habit in women's pages of Canadian dailies. — K.P.

(30)

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KIT WATKINS:

the journalist who opened the way for Canadian newspaper women

Eighty years ago this month, Kathleen Blake Watkins secured press pass no. 110 from the U.S. war department and became the world's first accredited woman war correspondent. This was just one of the achievements of this remarkable Canadian journalist. Here ROBIN ROWLAND recreates Kit's finally victorious struggle to cover the Spanish-American war for the *Toronto Mail and Empire*.

In May 3, 1898, was a busy day at the *Associated Press* Bureau in Washington.

It appeared Admiral George Dewey had sunk the Spanish fleet at Manila. The day before there had been a confused, official account out of Madrid speaking of high casualties. That morning the *New York Herald* had printed a brief account of an American victory from a Manila correspondent. There was no official American word and there would be none until May 7.

On May 3, *AP* dispatched a 63-word brief that was just another item of official war news:

Washington, May 3—One hundred and thirty passes giving permission to correspondents of newspapers to accompany the army have so far been issued by Secretary Alger. One of these was to Mrs. K.B. Watkins, representing a Toronto newspaper, & is the only one issued up to the present to a representative of the gentler sex. Many other applications have been filed with the Secretary.

The representative of "the gentler sex" was a Canadian, Kathleen Blake Watkins,* editor of *Woman's Kingdom*, a regular Saturday feature in the *Toronto Mail and*

Empire. Popularly known as "Kit of the Mail," she was in her time the most famous woman journalist in Canada.

As the United States and Spain had edged closer to war in the early months of 1898, the *Mail and Empire* and other Toronto dailies had not yet caught the war fever of the press south of the border. An Ontario provincial election was taking up most of the space and Canada had its own dispute with Washington over the Klondike.

As war became certain, Kit made up her mind to cover it. Her first task was to persuade the *Mail and Empire* to follow in the footsteps of the *Times of London* and break tradition. It was the *Times*, in 1854, that had sent a correspondent, William Howard Russell, to cover the Crimean War instead of depending on official accounts and officers' letters.

Kit wanted the *Mail and Empire* to appoint the first accredited woman war correspondent.*

It was her own initiative and there was no doubt that Kit, if anyone, was qualified.

Kit's byline first appeared beneath the *Woman's Kingdom* head on Oct. 26, 1889. A measure of her success was her

*I am using the term war correspondent as it applies to Russell: someone deliberately sent into a war zone by a news organization.

ability to attract readers, men who had never before read a woman's column or Liberals who wouldn't be caught dead with a *Mail* on a weekday.

Kit had covered Queen Victoria's jubilee in London the previous year, the Chicago world fair in 1893, the San Francisco Midwinter Fair of 1894. Her series on the disappearing London of Dickens, written in 1892, was still a favorite six years later.

She believed a woman could and should do anything she set her mind to — as long as she remained "a lady."

"Kit sympathized with all movements for the advancement of woman's best interests but regarded with distrust all movements to endow her with 'rights' at the probable sacrifice of her distinctive privileges,"

said the *Hamilton Herald* in a memorial editorial.

Thus Kit could take on the United States Army in her determination to cover the war, have herself locked in the three-foot square punishment cell of a British prison hulk or write columns championing the right of women to enter any profession, yet be a lifelong opponent of woman's suffrage and what

All photos of Kit Watkins were reproduced with the kind co-operation of J.B. and Eleanor Gartshore.

*She remarried in late 1898 and was known as Kathleen Coleman.

she called "platform women."

One must have "pluck" to live, Kit believed: "Pluck is not mere blind impulse of audacity. It is a modest, reasonable and indomitable quality founded on activity and common sense...Pluck lays plans and looks ahead and then quietly takes its place in the foremost fighting ranks. It has a staying quality that always wins the race."

Competition was fierce in Toronto in the last decade of the nineteenth century. The Liberal *Globe*, which sent its veteran, John Ewan, to cover the war, was number one. The *Mail and Empire*, Conservative and number two, tried harder. It bought the services of the New York *Herald* and the *Times* and sent Kit to war.

The *Evening News* sent two correspondents, Charles Pirie and J. Stephenson O'Higgins. Records in the U.S. National Archives show no other Canadian reporters accredited during the war.

The lively morning *World* and the *Evening Telegram* used AP and uncredited telegraph copy. The *Evening Star* managed to cover most of the war in one sentence briefs. On April 25, 1898, the day the U.S. Congress passed a declaration of war, Kit telegraphed Mary Lockwood, president of the International Press Union, in Washington:

Any chance of joining Red Cross nursing staff and going to front as correspondent,

mail, anxious to send me will leave for Washington if answer favorable. Can you help me with Miss Barton President of Society. Do your best answer paid here. Kit.

Clara Barton was the 77-year-old head of the Red Cross. Instead, Lockwood took the telegram to a Mr. Russell in the U.S. Department of Justice.

Russell passed the telegram (now in The U.S. Archives) on to Assistant Secretary of State J.B. Moore, who wrote to George Meiklejohn, Assistant Secretary of War, noting the *Mail* should be kept in "an attitude favorable to our cause in the pending conflict with Spain."

Kit left for Washington, leaving behind two stand-up columns, one explaining why she was going. As a girl, she wrote, "I had indeed wild longings to turn vivandiere* and go out to the wars and end by marrying the Commander-in-Chief. That was the next best thing to being a boy and a soldier — things beyond my compassing." Kit had always taken risks, she recalled, once killing her horse and almost killing herself in a foolish jump.

In the two columns, she questioned the morality of newspapers exploiting war with tales of glory and big headlines

*A woman attached to a French regiment who sold provisions and liquor.

that did not hint at the suffering. Her message was anti-war, unusual in the days, before World War I, of "glorious" imperial wars.

On the morning of May 3, Kit was ushered past a crowd of favor-seekers to see Russell A. Alger, the Secretary of War.

"I don't see how you can go," he said. "I hate awfully to have you go down in into that frightful country."

Alger told Kit she couldn't go with the army — it might camp any place and in the heat the men would be going about half-dressed. It was no place for a lady.

Kit explained she hoped to be attached to a missionary or relief column.

"Ah that is better," Alger replied. "I will further you on your way as far as in me lies and I may tell you that if you get into serious difficulties at any time and will wire the department we will try and make it right for you."

Alger signed her pass and gave Kit a letter of introduction. The first accredited woman war correspondent was ready to go; two others would follow.

Two years earlier, in 1896, both the New York *World* and the *Journal* had sent their "stunt-girls" to Havana with orders to sneak into Cabanas prison disguised as Cuban wives and get interviews with Ona Melton of the Jacksonville *Times Union*, who was under sentence of death after being captured



Kit was a versatile writer who produced a weekly personal advice dresses-and-recipes column for the *Mail and Empire*, covered the Spanish-American war, exposed environmental damage in Sudbury, Ont., covered Queen Victoria's jubilee, commented on sex and marriage and wrote poetry.

In later years, when Kit made one of her infrequent appearances at a press club meeting or dropped in at a Toronto or Hamilton newsroom, she was always welcome and surrounded by young men and women.

Despite her fame, she was humble, almost self-deprecating about her abilities. She once remarked that she liked to write, but did not like to talk about it and confessed that speech-making, even before the members of the Canadian Women's Press Club, unnerved her. In assessing her term as first president of the club, she said that she had been too lazy to do anything.

In 1906 she attended the first CWPC convention in Winnipeg; here are the pictures drawn of her by three

club members for their readers:

"I had often pictured 'Kit,' always thought of her as small and piquant, but found her tall and queenly with a mass of red-gold hair, very graceful in her movements, and with the most delicious brogue."

"Then 'Kit' spoke for a delightful half-hour. What does she look like, this brilliant woman, whom Canadians love to honour? Hers is not the slim figure one had unconsciously pictured, but she is a tall, well built woman, with red gold hair and odd, sleepy-looking eyes. She takes you into her confidence from the start and you laugh with her and are in full rapport with all her moods as she tells you of her experiences."

"Kit is a beautiful woman and apart from being so, possesses singular charm of manner that would make the most unattractive woman perfectly charming. Tall and well built, in the full glory of her womanhood. Red gold hair and eyes of golden brown, that are rather inclined to dreaminess in repose. A complexion that was the admiration and envy of every other woman. A youthful edition of Bernhardt in grace and fascinating personality. Such is 'Kit' whom you can now admire as well as love for the sake of her writing. Like the Irish, laughter-loving women (sic) she is, Kit is brim full of wit and humor, but tenderly sympathetic when such is required; generous of praise, and essentially a womanly woman."

with gun-runners.

The New York dailies, however, would not send a woman to war. Arthur Brisbane, editor of William Randolph Hearst's New York *Journal*, wrote in *Cosmopolitan*:

Every beautiful woman declared that of mankind she was best adapted to enter Havana in disguise, interview Blanco,* get his views on the war and return unscathed. Many tears were shed and much deep, indignant breathing was done by those heroic female reporters because no important newspaper would allow women to risk their lives even for the sake of newsgetting.

The other two women correspondents were Americans: Anna Benjamin, accredited May 12, represented *Leslies*, an illustrated weekly newspaper, and the unaccredited Katherine White, wife of a *Chicago Record* correspondent managed to attach herself to the Red Cross.

Kit noted for her readers, "I volunteered for the post I now occupy. . . If anything should happen to me — by which I suppose is meant death, from yellow fever or a stray bullet, *The Mail and Empire* cannot be held in any way responsible for such an accident."

She also wrote about her assignment, "I am not here to detail the serious events of the war (which have not yet commenced), rather I am here to write that light and airy matter which is ignominiously termed, by the trade, guff, but which is not always easy to manufacture."

In one other way, Kit was different from male correspondents — she lacked money. She normally mailed her dispatches back to Toronto, telegraphing just three. Some male correspondents carried funds for expenses in their money belts — in gold.

One New York daily paid the amazing total (for 1898) of \$1,453.51 a week for salaries alone to its war correspondents. The top man for another New York daily made \$200 a week. Kit's salary was \$35 a week.

II

Kit arrived in Tampa, Florida, on May 20 after — she found later — sharing her train with two wanted murderers disguised as nuns. She checked in at the Tampa Bay Hotel, an Arabian nights fantasy of concrete and steel with minarets and towers.

Kit's arrival caused a stir among male correspondents — experienced men like Richard Harding Davis of the New York

*The commander of the Spanish forces.

Kit was born in Galway, Ireland, on May 16, 1864. When she was 16, her parents married her to a man named Willis, who soon died, secretly debt-ridden, leaving Kit penniless at 19.

She moved to London, where she lived in a section of the city known as Bohemia, and worked as a governess for a pound a week. After a quick holiday in Europe, she emigrated to Canada in 1884. She remarried and lived in Winnipeg until 1888.

Kit along with Thady and Patsy (her son and daughter by her second marriage), moved to Toronto and, in the summer of 1889, an organ grinder sparked her memories of Europe. She submitted a brief article to Edmond Sheppard of *Saturday Night*, who asked for more.

Later that year, she was hired by the owner of the *Mail and Empire*, Christopher Bunting, on the strength of four clippings from *Saturday Night*. It was in the pages of the *Mail and Empire* that Kit wrote her way to national and, ultimately, international fame as a journalist.

In 1898, after establishing herself as the first accredited woman war correspondent during the Spanish-American war, she married Dr. Theobald Coleman, a company doctor for the Canadian Copper Company of Copper Cliff. The family lived in Copper Cliff, a northern Ontario mining town, for three years, during which Kit continued to write for the *Mail and Empire*. In Hollywood fashion Mrs. Coleman worked alongside her husband when a smallpox epidemic broke out among the

Herald, Canadian-born James Creelman of the New York *Journal*, C.E. Akers of *The Times* of London, authors like Stephen Crane, hired by *The New York Press* for his public appeal, and young men from local papers across the United States. In the London *Daily Mail*, correspondent Charles Hands described Kit's arrival. A group of correspondents were sitting on the hotel piazza when one came up asking if they'd heard the news. One man inquired whether the Spanish Atlantic fleet had been sighted and the first replied: "I got a lady war correspondent and I guess that takes the pot."

"For her own sake," one man said,



miners. The family later moved to Hamilton, Ont.

In 1904, on a junket to the St. Louis Exposition with other women, Kit became a founder of the Canadian Women's Press Club and its first president.

In 1911, after almost 21 years with the *Mail and Empire*, Kit was ordered by news editor W.J. Wilkinson to write a daily column in addition to her massive *Saturday* effort. For years she had been paid \$35 a week. She had sometimes received inquiries from American papers offering higher salaries, but she preferred to stay in Canada. She asked for a raise, the *Mail* refused, she quit.

Kit returned to her Hamilton home. Until 1914, she syndicated Kit's Column, which appeared in the *Hamilton Herald*, *The Toronto Sunday World*, and other papers.

She died of pneumonia May 16, 1915, her 51st birthday.

"this ought to be stopped right now." But Kit was not going to be stopped by them.

"The tall, healthy youngish lady (she had just turned 34 on May 16) with a quiet, self-reliant manner and an alert, intelligent, enterprising look" told Hands, "I know what you think, you think it's ridiculous my being here; you are laughing at my wanting to go. That's the worst of being a woman. But just let me tell you. I'm going through to Cuba and not all the old Generals in the old army are going to stop me. I beat them in Washington and I'll beat them here, whatever they say."

The army trained, the navy hunted for

the Spanish fleet and the correspondents went prematurely grey trying to scoop each other, Kit wrote.

Hands noted Kit got a number of scoops herself. She spoke excellent French and some Spanish, so she interviewed Cuban refugees. She was soon introducing male correspondents to regimental officers and discovering confidential information about expeditions to Cuba. One morning she got up before the rest and attended the first drill of the new cavalry regiments, then returned to write her copy while the others were at breakfast.

Kit filed one story by telegraph during this time, a British Empire angle, reporting the U.S. Army held a banquet in honour of Queen Victoria's birthday.

Not all Kit's stories were light and airy. The American army was unpre-

pared for a major war, supply delivery was chaotic and politics was rampant. The U.S. press was filing stories of an enthusiastic volunteer army.

When Poultney Bigelow of *Harper's Weekly* broke the story on May 28, correspondents on the scene and editors back home called him unpatriotic. Bigelow told how the government was mismanaging the war, how camps were set in unhealthy areas and how troops were forced to wear winter clothing in the tropics. Bigelow would be proven right and there would be a commission of inquiry after the war. But he lost his credentials.

Kit's own story on the army appeared June 7, datelined June 1. "The great volunteer army is not ready — by two months drilling and I doubt if the regular army is yet fully equipped," she

reported. It was an army of schoolboys supported by a too-small force of regulars. They were inept at drill but eager and making brave efforts. Kit wondered how many would be killed.

Her second story, datelined June 2, appeared June 8 and told how politics, not experience, was the criterion for command appointments. Kit reported that officers with years of experience from the Indian wars of the West were passed over for what she called "colonel-lawyers" with pull in Washington.

Meanwhile, she was no closer to accompanying the army to Cuba. The commander-in-chief, General William Shafter, did not like *any* reporters. He "absolutely and peremptorily refused to permit a female correspondent to go down with other journalists," Kit said later.

While waiting for Clara Barton to arrive, Kit went back to work on "guff." She toured the camp of the Rough Riders, then called Teddy's Terrors, and was guided by Dr. James Massie, of the Hospital Corps, who was attached to the regiment and was the son of the governor of Toronto's Don Jail. Visiting the gunboat *USS Helena*, Kit noted it was made with Canadian nickel.

III

On June 7, Washington suddenly ordered all troops embarked. Kit lightly described how the correspondents "jumped into their campaign clothes" and gathered in the hotel. "The little men of the pen looked fiercer and more martial than the whole regular army rolled into one Brigadier General," she wrote. The red-haired Kit wore a long dress and a jacket with two silk flags sewn on front: The Union Jack and the Stars and Stripes. Later, in Cuba, she would wear men's clothes.

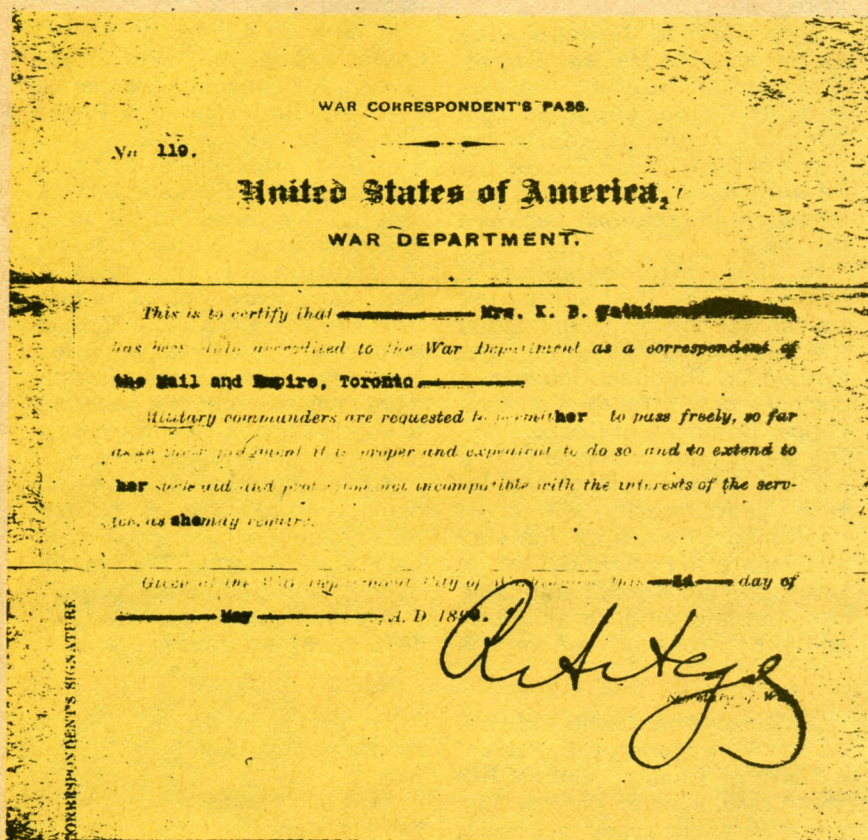
She went to the Tampa docks and watched the confused troops trying to get themselves, their horses and their supplies on board the right ship in the dark.

Then Kit headed for the telegraph office. She had arranged with Walter J. "Wallie" Wilkinson, the *Mail and Empire's* news editor, to send a flash when the invasion began.

Kit did not tell her readers about her attempt to send the flash until August, 1910, and then it was a side item about the arrest of Dr. Crippen, the murderer.

Kit dispatched a wire asking for six copies of a book. It was a code.

"Alas for my scoop! As I marched triumphantly from the telegraph office,



Press pass 110, issued to Kathleen Watkins on May 3, 1898.

Coming in Content:

- Journalism: the trade without a memory.
- The media and the grassroots: a major study.
- The reporter and the psychology of obligation.
- Commentary on the strikes at *La Presse* and *Le Soleil*.
- The media and the energy question.
- CKO revisited.
- Papers and polls: their own and others'.
- Native peoples and the media on the West Coast.
- Two more issues this year of *Carleton Journalism Review*.
- And two issues of *Sources*, the growing directory of media contacts in a variety of organizations large and small.

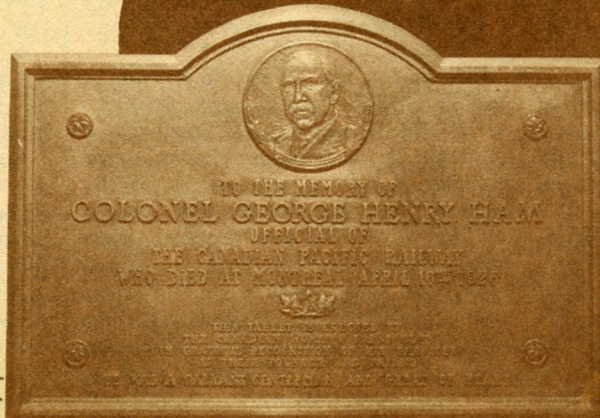
George did it.

In 1904, when George Henry Ham was a public relations officer in Montreal for the Canadian Pacific Railway, he arranged for the company to provide a special private railway car, guides and assistance to Canadian press women for a ten-day trip to the World's Fair in St. Louis. That inaugurated the Canadian Women's Press Club whose first president was Kathleen Blake Watkins.

In 1926, after having served as honorary president of the CWPC for many years, the CWPC erected a tablet to his memory "in grateful recognition of his services as their founder and friend". This plaque can still be seen in Canadian Pacific's Windsor Station in Montreal, located on the wall by the La Gauchetière Street entrance leading to the Public Relations department.

In 1978, the men and women of Canadian Pacific who serve in Public Relations across Canada salute the working women of the Canadian news media and extend to them "Best Wishes et bonne chance" in the years ahead.

Canadian Pacific



NO DOUBT NOW THE WAR IS OVER.

Spanish Government Has Approved the
Acceptance of the United States
Peace Terms.

TO DISCUSS DETAILS HEREAFTER.

Madrid to the New York Herald, London Times, and The Mail and Empire, Madrid, Aug. 7.—After the Queen Regent had consulted with privy counsellors and the Government had decided to accept the answer to the United States drawn up by President Rusk and also approved by the American conditions, the Spanish Government reserves the utmost possible power of discussion.

of Parliament necessary to the definitive signing of the treaty of peace.

PREPARING FOR PEACE.

Washington Aug. 7.—Although no yet without official confirmation of the report from Madrid that the Spanish Government has decided to accept the terms laid down by the United States is essential to the consummation of a treaty of peace, the officials are proceeding under the conviction that the end has come, and are giving attention to the steps to be taken next. In view of the delay in coming to this conclusion, the idea was suggested to prevail that the Spanish Government was about to enter a plea in abatement, and the answer would remain in suspense. In this case the President had disposed to deal directly with the issue, and to let it be understood that when Spain again said for peace the conditions would be more severe than those now laid down. If the Spanish answer should embody an effort to secure any material change in the conditions it will meet with prompt rejection.

Some reference has been made to a dispatch of Berlin newspapers to the effect that the Spanish Government had decided to accept the American terms. It is reported that the Spanish Government had decided to accept the American terms. It is reported that the Spanish Government had decided to accept the American terms.

BELIEVE A SHIP WENT DOWN.

Further Reports of the Supposed
Disaster in the Straits.

A QUANTITY OF WRECKAGE.

Ph. M. the Regent, the Mexican Queen
For Whisky Cases—Canadian
Liners in Danger.

St. John's Nfld., Aug. 7.—Inspector
O'Reilly, of the Revenue Police, ar-
rived here from the Cape yesterday.
He states that he examined the case
Jenkins, who brought the news there
concerning the reported loss of a line
steamer, Jenkins, who lives at Bay
St. John's, 12 miles from St. John's
port, says a steamer from Gal-
lison Island, off the northern extremity
of Newfoundland, at the entrance to
the straits of Belle Isle, arrived there
last night, and reported that on the
night before the light of a steamer
had been seen to strike a rock, follow-
ing which a terrific crash followed,
and that the wreck of the vessel was
seen to be broken up into a number
of pieces. The vessel was the
"Jenkins," and was bound for
St. John's.

REFUSED TO SURRENDER.

Spanish Ambassadors of Puerto Rico Steamer
the Address of President Rusk.

San Juan, Puerto Rico, Aug. 7.—
The Spanish Ambassador, Don
Antonio de Maza, acting
with the request of Major-General
Miles, has received information that
the foreign Consuls at San Juan de
Puerto Rico advised the Spanish authorities
to surrender the island to the American
troops. The ambassador, however, in re-
ply, stated that they had received no
such information. The Spanish Consul
advised the Spanish authorities
to surrender the island to the American
troops. The ambassador, however, in re-
ply, stated that they had received no
such information. The Spanish Consul
advised the Spanish authorities
to surrender the island to the American
troops. The ambassador, however, in re-
ply, stated that they had received no
such information.

"KIT" REACHES CUBA'S SHORES.

Describes the Voyage, Undertaken After
So Many Difficulties Had
Been Surmounted.

HER EXPERIENCES ON A WARSHIP

Special to The Mail and Empire.
She Board the Government Steamer
Ship Niagara, off Guantanamo Bay,
July 15.—Kit is now looking at the hills of
Cuba. After nearly three months of de-
spairing efforts to get here, the great
force which we call will have conquered.
I am looking at the hills of Cuba.
It had begun to seem as though Pres-
ident Rusk would not permit me to set foot
on the island to-day.

"I am looking at the hills of Cuba." The front page that carried Kit's triumphant announcement of her arrival in the Caribbean theatre of the Spanish-American war.

thinking how bright and clever I was to get off the news to my paper the news the whole world was awaiting, a Secret Service officer touched me on the shoulder. 'I arrest you,' he said . . . My head swam, my knees wobbled. As I was led away the observer might suppose me guilty of any crime..."

She was later released without losing her correspondent's pass. A couple of days later, Kit visited the correspondents transport, an as yet empty hospital ship, the *Olivette*. She said goodbye to friends she had made: Hands of the *London Daily Mail*, E.O. Nuttall of the *Daily Telegraph*, John Black Atkins of the *Manchester Guardian*, reporters from the *San Francisco Chronicle* and the *Chicago papers*.

John Ewan, *The Globe's* correspondent and a couple of others offered to help Kit stow away on board the ship. She refused, remaining a lady and confident she would sail with the Red Cross.

Town Topics, a New York Magazine, would later report that Kit ran into difficulty, not only from the army, but from the combined opposition of the New York city newspapers. The newspapermen from the West, more used to independent women, were all in favour of her going but "the combine was too strong" and Kit stayed on shore, the magazine reported.

"I watched the press boat with its cargo of correspondents from all parts of the world drift out of sight, leaving the woman journalist to report to her paper that she was beaten in the race," Kit told the International Press Union the following year. "It was a depressing

moment, one almost lost hope."
Kit had had an unsuccessful interview with Barton on board *The State of Texas*, the Red Cross ship. *Town Topics* described the meeting:

Miss Barton smiled and said she had the best war correspondent in the world—George Kennan—of Siberian fame—and the ship was full and several other things all softened with the smile but it was the all-disappointing 'no.'

Kit telegraphed Alger, got a reply authorizing her to travel on *The State of Texas*. Barton's answer was still no.

IV

Determined to go to Cuba, Kit moved on to Key West, the southernmost telegraph point and dock for the press dispatch boats, where she would stay almost a month.

There was nothing to do but features, first one about a convent school run by a Montreal order which had been converted to a hospital, interviews with the wounded and a quick excursion on a dispatch boat.

In mid-July Kit got a berth on another Red Cross ship, the *Lampasas*, delayed a week while its pumps were repaired. Kit telegraphed the *Mail and Empire* on the evening of July 14, announcing her departure. The front page news that Kit had left for Cuba came beneath a story announcing Santiago, on the south coast, had surrendered.

Both Ann Benjamin and Katherine White were already in Cuba. White was on board *The State of Texas*. Benjamin, who also had been stuck in Key West,

had talked herself on board a collier and arrived at Guantanamo on July 15.

The voyage of *Lampasas* lasted one night. The ship ran into a violent storm, became disabled and limped back to Key West.

Kit tried her Washington contacts. Mary Lockwood stormed into the office of Navy Secretary John Davis Long, who authorized transportation for Kit with the Red Cross doctors and nurses on board the armed transport *USS Niagara*, which left Key West on the morning of July 21.

Mail and Empire readers must have wondered what happened after Kit sailed. Her next story did not appear until Aug. 8.

The story of her arrival on the *Niagara* was datelined July 28, the day Kit left Cuba.

"I am looking at the hills of Cuba. After nearly three months of despairing efforts to get here, the great force we call will have conquered. I am looking at the hills of Cuba," was Kit's triumphant lead.

Her stories from Cuba were features, a description of her voyage, reports on the conditions of refugees and wounded in Santiago.

Her visit to San Juan hill featured an interview with Private D. H. McCowyn, of Paris, Ont., a member of the regular Sixth Cavalry who followed the Rough Riders up the hill.

Another report told of the hostility between American troops and the Cubans, as the latter were forbidden to loot Santiago and looted American dead instead. Cuban revolutionaries voiced

suspicion of American businessmen already following the troops.

She described the Spanish fleet beached along the coast. She visited the flagship *Almirante Oquendo*, crept from beam to blasted beam and looked down the shell holes into corners where bodies remained.

V

Kit's biggest story of the war appeared Sept. 10, but told of a two-and-a-half week ordeal that started on July 28. On that day, she left Cuba, along with three male correspondents. One was Dennis Donahue of the *Detroit Evening News*. Kit wrote that the ship looked all right as they approached past tons of rotting food and decayed medical stores lying on the docks.

There were 40 sick soldiers on board the chartered *Comal*, 27 in serious condition. The water in the tanks was weeks old; there was little food, except old hard tack and fatty pork. The ship had not been cleaned in years and was infected with cockroaches. *The New York Times* later quoted an army medical officer as saying the conditions were the fault of civilian captains who cared little for the passengers.

The interior of the ship, crammed with men suffering from diarrhea, dysentery and fever, soon began to stink, Kit wrote, and everyone moved on deck.

No doctor was assigned to the ship; a medical student named Mozart Lessor was a passenger, but he had few supplies. Kit and Donahue gave Lessor their small field first aid kits. Kit's had two dozen quinine capsules of five grains each. Lessor opened the capsules

to divide the powder among the sick.

A Chicago *Chronicle* reporter named O'Shaugnessy had a bottle of lime juice. Each person on board got a few drops of the juice added to a cup of water.

The *Comal* arrived at the Egmont Key quarantine station south of Tampa at noon on Sunday, July 31. A boat was sent ashore but did not get to the dock. A Florida state militia sentry fired at it; no one could land. When Donahue finally got his story out, it appeared in the *News* on Aug. 11. The *News* Washington bureau reported Florida was standing by its state's rights and had quarantined all ships returning from Cuba.

It was not until Tuesday, Aug. 2, that a doctor came on board. He conferred briefly with the captain and Lessor, then left without helping.

It wasn't until Friday that a few supplies — rice and flour, a little quinine, but no water — were sent to the *Comal*.

The sick were left, hopeless, Kit wrote, with no ice or fresh fruit. The only water was caught from torrential rain squalls. Men staying on deck were soaked to the skin. Insects that flew from shore and ants that came aboard with the stores made life worse.

After seven days at Egmont Key, 350 men from the "horror ships" were transferred to the *Seguranca*, the army headquarters ship hastily converted to a hospital ship. Kit went along.

Men were so weak they dropped as soon as they found an empty space on the deck. Kit was detailed to search for men who had not been fed and there were many. She helped nurse the sick during the voyage to New York.

The *Seguranca* docked at Governors

Island, New York, on Friday night, Aug. 12. Passengers were let off on Sunday and Kit somehow got to an uptown hotel, where she collapsed on the floor beside her bed to cry and fell asleep. The contrast between the quiet hotel room and what she'd been through was too much, Kit wrote.

Five months later, in February, 1899, she addressed the International Press Union in Washington.

"If ever a time comes when swords are beaten into ploughshares and spears into pruning hooks, it will be, for one reason, because the wielder of pens were not less earnest and may we say, not less heroic, than the wielders of deadlier weapons," she told women reporters from across the United States.

She believed that evolution would eventually eliminate war and that the press, with its new immediate reporting of war, would have a key role in that evolution.

Being a woman war correspondent "is by no means either a pleasant or glorious occupation," Kit said. "A woman's place in war time is that of a nurse rather than a correspondent." Women would do more good by combatting conditions as nurses than by writing for the press.

If war came again, Kit concluded, "the pioneer woman war correspondent will stay at home."

And she did. Kit commented on the horrors of war and the stupidity of stereotypes during the Boer War, the siege of the foreign legations at Peking and the Russo-Japanese war. Her big stories, until she left the *Mail and Empire* in 1911, concerned crime.

She died on May 16, 1915, her fifty-first birthday.

KIT: '...AN ADORNMENT TO ANY PAPER.'

Monday, May 17, 1915: the British government had announced it would use poison gas in retaliation for German gas attacks at Ypres; the Portugese navy had mutinied; the press was still following up the sinking of the *Lusitania* on May 7 and newspaper woman Kathleen Blake "Kit" Coleman, 51, had died of pneumonia two days after catching a cold.

The newspapers, paying tribute to one of their best, concentrated on her contributions to Canadian journalism. The fact that Kit was the first accredited woman war correspondent was just one event in a long and successful career.

In *The Evening Telegram*, "Cornelia" wrote:

Newspaper work was no sinecure for a woman in the days when Kit entered journalism. Women entered it on sufferance and had to do practically as much as two men to prove that they were half as good as one man. And that Kit triumphed in the face of obstacles such as will never be told, meant much, not only to herself but to all women who ever will come after her.

Helen Ball, writing in the *Toronto News* said, "it was she who opened the way for all other Canadian newspaper women."

In a collection of his columns published in 1934, J.V. McAree, then of the *Mail and Empire*, later with *The Globe and Mail*, wrote that Kit was one of a half dozen Canadian writers conspicuous in their ability and service to the craft.

McAree wrote, "There was nothing old-fashioned or dated about her. . . She would have been an adornment to any newspaper page today."

Mabel Burkholder, in a tribute published by the Hamilton Women's Press Club in 1934 wrote, "Kit was handicapped by being too big for her position, too progressive for her times."

Kit's independence showed on her first day with the *Mail and Empire* in the fall 1889. She started an advice column as an adjunct to the *Woman's Kingdom* and defied the desk to keep the letters anonymous.

The *Woman's Kingdom* soon covered an entire page and two columns on a second. In the spring of 1890, when Kit

had been with the *Mail and Empire* but a few months, she declared:

My idea in starting it was to make the Woman's Kingdom more interesting to Canadian girls and I thought you might prefer home discussion on various subjects to the usual American chitchat.

I propose chatter over many questions interesting to women — marriage, women's Rights and Wrongs, temperance, favorite authors and anything my readers suggest provided the subject be largely interesting to the general public.

The "Dolls-Post-Bag," as Kit affectionately called her letters column, started with advice to the lovelorn and self-help and soon branched out into subjects as diverse as labor relations, politics, religion, history, travel and advice to writers.

McAree was right in 1934 and, 40 years later, Kit's work could still appear in any daily. For 21 years, through the reigns of Queen Victoria and King Edward VII, she wrote on penal reform, prostitution in Toronto, abortion, the press, divorce, sex (disguised as columns on Platonic Love), environmental pollution and conservation, racism, Western imperialism, technological change, inflation and how to fight it, the right of women to take any job (which she supported) and woman's suffrage (which she opposed).

In the days before photographs were common, her features painted pictures that took her readers to the scene of her story.

But Kit was more than a feature writer. "Not a woman writer on the American continent could beat 'Kit' on a story worthwhile," the Hamilton *Herald* said.

Kit's greatest single story came when she scooped the continent with an in-jail interview with Cassie Chadwick, the Canadian con woman who had posed as the illegitimate daughter of Andrew Carnegie.

Chadwick had swindled bankers and respectable businessmen out of millions. Reporters mobbed her at the Cleveland train station and waited outside the heavily guarded jail.

No one was allowed to see Mrs. Chadwick, but Kit was permitted a tour of the women's quarters of the jail while Cassie slept. Kit "forgot" her gloves as she was leaving, went back and chanced on the forger as she awoke.

"Are you ill?" Kit asked. The woman's touch worked, they talked and Kit's story appeared on page one of the *Mail and Empire* on December 19 and 20, 1904.

Kit confounded her Toronto rivals and the city police the following summer with her front-page interview with Josie Carr, "the child murderer."

Carr, 13, kidnapped a baby boy in its

carriage outside Eaton's downtown Toronto store and drowned him in a culvert near Greenwood Ave.

It was three years before the Juvenile Delinquents Act was proclaimed and the press treatment was sensational. The public blamed the murder on the bad influence of entertainment — Carr admitted she had gone to the play "Kidnapped in New York" four times.

The police released all the details of the crime but still tried to protect the girl from reporters. When Kit told of Josie Carr "through woman's eyes" on the front page, the police tried to find out how she got the story. Later it was discovered that Kit had put the story together from an astute questioning of the matron at police headquarters.

If her ability to scoop made Kit admired by her professional colleagues, it was her observation of humanity that made Kit popular among the public. Helen Ball wrote in the *News*:

Whatever Kit wrote about she did it with a personal touch which made mere reporting a stale and stupid thing beside her work, and her versatility was such that she had you weeping one moment over the death of her favorite dog and thrilling again at her tales of doings which were of Empire wide significance.

One story of "empire wide significance" was Kit's most controversial. It came at the time of the Boxer rebellion and the siege of the foreign legations in Peking. As the world cried "yellow peril," Kit took on the China lobby of her day:

We 'white people' — foreign devils, as the Easterns call us — are far too apt to preen ourselves on our higher civilization, our 'progress,' our divine mission to convert 'the heathen.' We take little pains to enquire into the creeds, the manners, the habits of other countries or rather peoples. Thinking ourselves the cream of the earth, we are apt to look down upon, if not altogether ignore, the other dwellers on this strange globe

she wrote on June 23, 1900.

A week later she questioned whether missionaries should be sent to China and generated hate mail that came in for weeks.

She first gained Canadian fame with a five-part series on the disappearing London of Dickens, "Tramps With the Genius of London," which appeared in 1892.

A year later, her coverage of the Chicago World's Fair, sent throughout the United States and the British Empire in the *Weekly Mail and Empire*, brought Kit to international attention.

In 1897, she covered Queen Victoria's Jubilee. Her stories appeared alongside

those of British reporters in the London *Daily Mail* and both *Mails* sent Kit to cover the Royal Tour of Ireland.

The highlight of her career, Kit would later write, was when Sir Wilfrid and Lady Laurier invited her to accompany them in the Royal Coach to Buckingham Palace for inspection of Canadian troops.

She proved herself better than most of the continent's women journalists with her background coverage of the trial of Harry Thaw in New York in 1907. Thaw shot and killed the architect of Madison Square Garden, Sanford White, for the seduction of his wife, Evelyn Nesbitt Thaw.

It was one of the two most sensational murder trials of the decade and one of the first with opposing batteries of psychiatrists, then called alienists. The American papers sent women to write about Evelyn and make America's hearts throb.

One reporter covering the trial dubbed those women writers "sob-sisters" and the name stuck. Kit was no sob-sister; she wrote what she saw, covered the sob-sisters as well as the trial and described Evelyn as she really was — a tough survivor.

On May 21, 1915, the *Edmonton Journal* paid tribute to Kit in an editorial. It concluded:

It is one of the tragedies of newspaper work that a great deal that deserves to live appears in the daily press, makes a strong impression for a day or a week and then is forgotten. It is to be hoped that the means will be found to rescue from this oblivion much that 'Kit' wrote. It isn't right that one who for more than a generation brightened and stimulated so many lives and who provided such faithful pictures of so many different phases of the Canadian life of her time should pass out of public memory. (30)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Major reference works used were: Brown, Charles H., *The Correspondents' War*, Charles Scribners Sons, New York, 1967; Burkholder, Mabel, "Kit" *An Appreciation*, Hamilton Women's Press Club, 1934; Charlesworth, Hector, *Candid Chronicles*, MacMillan, Toronto, 1925; and McAree, J.V. *The Fourth Column*, MacMillan, Toronto, 1934.

Robin Rowland, who works for CBC radio news in Toronto, is writing a book about Kit.



"It isn't right that one who for more than a generation brightened and stimulated so many lives and who provided such a faithful picture of so many different phases of the Canadian life of her time should pass out of public memory."

PEN AND BUCKSKIN: WOMEN JOURNALISTS IN THE WEST WHO KNEW WHEAT & JUSTICE

By DEBORAH GORHAM

*She told how to cut and fit a dress
And how to stew many a savoury mess
But she never had done it herself I guess
(Which none of her readers knew)
She wrote about children
Of course she had none
She wrote and was paid to fill space*

—Quoted by Isobel C. Armstrong, Women's page editor, the *Regina Leader*, Dec. 18, 1911.

By the turn of the century, women's pages had become a feature of many Canadian newspapers. Newspaper owners and editors realized that women made up a significant proportion of their readership and that special women's pages would attract not only women readers, but also advertising revenue from businesses selling products like washing machines, remedies for "female complaints," and ladies underwear.

Isobel Armstrong ran a typical women's page. For the most part, women's page editors, like the majority of women readers, accepted prevailing Edwardian views about women's nature and women's proper sphere. They ran features about housekeeping, child-rearing, fashion and entertaining and, when they wished to appear serious, they reported on the activities of women in charitable organizations. They wrote and were paid to fill space, as Armstrong observed, and, although they were working women at a time when it was unusual for a middle-class woman to be employed, they usually did not see themselves as pioneers for women's rights nor did they challenge dominant ideas about women.

However, it is important to remember that, while Isobel Armstrong typified the majority, a significant minority of Canadian women journalists in the early years of this century did not conform to this type. Members of this small but influential group contributed to the cause of women's suffrage all across the country. In some parts of Canada, women journalists were the dominant group among women's rights activists. In Manitoba, Canadian Women's Press Club members Nellie McClung, E. Cora Hind and the Beynon sisters were essential to the suffrage cause. With the exception of Hind, who successfully invaded the "masculine" field of agricultural reporting, those women who



E. Cora Hind

wrote regularly for newspapers were largely restricted to the women's page. It is significant that in many cases they turned this restriction into an asset and used their columns to further the women's cause. In their writing, they agitated for the vote and inveighed against such injustices as those provisions of the Homestead Act restricting women's rights to participate in the opening up of the West on equal terms with men. The most radical among them exposed their readers to a wide range of ideas about the women's movement, discussing such thinkers as Olive Schreiner, C.P. Gilman and August Bebel, all of whom attacked the foundations of bourgeois family life.

On the prairies, there were several feminist journalists who acted as women's page editors. The most interesting of the prairie women's pages appeared in the *Grain Grower's Guide*. The *Guide*, founded in 1908, served as a newspaper for the three prairie farmers' organizations: the Grain Growers of

Manitoba, the Grain Growers of Saskatchewan and the United Farmers of Alberta. Because these progressive farmers' organizations and *Guide* editor George Chipman were sympathetic to the cause of women's rights, the *Guide* became a forthright exponent of the cause.

Under the editorship of the journalist who signed herself "Isobel," and, after 1912, under Frances Marion Beynon, the *Guide* women's page offered its readers a quaint variety—a recipe for lemon pie might appear next to a story about the activities of militant suffragettes in England. This mixture does not strike the reader as incongruous; rather, it conveys a refreshing sense that the prairie farm women who read the women's page in the *Guide* and who wrote numerous letters to the editor saw themselves as people of dignity who performed useful work for which they received insufficient recognition.

In agitating for an improved position for their women readers, the *Guide's* women's page editors stressed that women played an essential part in the life of the new West. As homemakers, women were the foundation of the nation: "the home is the foundation of the state and in the home under the mother's care are today being reared the men and women who will decide the future of this nation" (Oct. 11, 1911). The *Guide* insisted that, as farm wives, women were not dependents, but were rather "partners in the home-firm," and that, in recognition of their essential labour, they had a right to share in the firm's decision-making, and a right to share in its income. In the same vein, the *Guide* took up the question of the injustice of those provisions of the Homestead Act which declared that, while single men could homestead, women could homestead in their own right only if they were widows with dependent children.

Who were these women journalists of the West? One was E. Cora Hind, whose contribution to journalism was made, not as a writer on the woman question, but as agricultural reporter for the *Manitoba Free Press*. Born in Ontario in 1861, Hind moved to Winnipeg in the early 1880s. She decided in her early twenties that she wanted to be a journalist, but had to wait twenty years to be

hired as a full-time reporter by the *Free Press*. Meanwhile, she demonstrated her enterprise by becoming the first typist west of the Great Lakes and by establishing her own successful stenographic service.

When she did finally land her job with the *Manitoba Free Press*, it was as an analyst of the wheat crop that she became famous: in riding breeches and buckskin coat, she toured the prairies, gathering information for her annual prediction about the size of the harvest. But she was also intensely interested in the cause of women's rights. She was an active member of the Women's Christian Temperance Union for many years and was a leading figure in Manitoba's suffrage movement.

An interesting pair of Western women journalists of the early twentieth century were the Beynon sisters. Frances Marion was editor of the women's page of the *Grain Grower's Guide* for several years. Her sister, Lillian Beynon Thomas, edited the women's page of the *Manitoba Free Press*, using the name "Lillian Laurie." The Beynon family had come from Ontario to homestead in Manitoba. The family moved from the farm to Winnipeg while Lillian and Frances were girls. As young women, both sisters wanted to make a career of writing. They moved in a circle in Winnipeg that was made up of young people interested in social reform. One of these was Vernon Thomas, who became Lillian's husband. Thomas was a close associate of J.S. Woodsworth and, through Thomas, both Frances and Lillian had links to the radical wing of the Social Gospel movement. Both sisters were active in the Winnipeg branch of the Canadian Women's Press Club and in the Political Equality League, the organization that led the fight for women's suffrage in Manitoba in 1912.

Frances had the more radical views on the woman question. She was very much influenced by the South African, Olive Schreiner, and by the American, Charlotte Perkins Gilman, both of whom believed that a fundamental alteration in the structure of the family and of women's work would have to be made if women were to achieve equality.

There were feminists working as journalists in Eastern Canada too. In Toronto and Montreal, and even in small cities like Port Arthur (now Thunder Bay), Ont., women journalists were using their women's pages to disseminate information about the women's movement. The most influential journalist in Toronto was Flora MacDonald Denison, the president of the

Canadian Suffrage Association from 1911 to 1914.

Unlike the better known Nellie McClung and Emily Murphy, Denison had little sympathy for the temperance movement and even less for organized Christianity. She was willing to explore far-reaching changes to the structure of the family and she was one of the few Canadians to give vigorous support to the methods of the militant English suffragettes. As a working woman with experience in the clothing industry, she had a deeper understanding of the real position of women in the work force than did most Canadians.

Born in Picton, Ont. in 1867, she was from early childhood a natural rebel, determined to build an independent life for herself.

In Toronto in the '90s, she worked as a dressmaker and later set up her own successful high fashion dress business. But she also wanted to write and, as early as the 1890s, she was contributing pieces to *Saturday Night*. The most important part of her career as a journalist began in 1906, when she became a contributor to the *Toronto Sunday World*. The *World* was a "people's" newspaper with a large circulation. The paper's reporting style was informal and breezy and in its layout it used innovative techniques that the more respectable dailies avoided, but it had a genuine commitment to social reform. Denison became an irregular contributor to the *World* in 1906, writing columns on the women's movement. In September, 1909, the newspaper's editor agreed to make her column into a regular weekly feature. Unlike the ordinary women's page, Denison's column in the *World* was devoted explicitly to the women's movement. In it, not only did she publish detailed reports of local, provincial and national activities of the women's movement, but she also exposed her readers to wide-ranging discussions of issues related to the ideology of feminism.

The work of these pioneer women journalists of early twentieth-century Canada has a significance for women journalists today. Women journalists of the 1970s are much more numerous than their forerunners of seventy years ago, but women still encounter discrimination and still are confronted with editors who believe that women's place is on the women's page. The best women's pages today, like the best ones of the past, are run by women editors with a commitment to the women's movement. Women's pages can be dreary if their writers accept the narrow

view of womanhood that our society still fosters. But when they are used as forums from which to attack those structures in our society that limit women, they may be the best place for the woman journalist to fight those prejudices that keep her tied to the women's page.

Recommended for further reading on:

• E. Cora Hind: Kenneth Haig, *Brave Harvest*, Toronto, 1945.

• Francis Marion Beynon: Ramsay Cook, "Francis Marion Beynon and the crisis of Christian reformism," in Carl Berger and Ramsay Cook, *The West and the Nation: Essays in Honour of W.L. Morton*, Toronto, 1976.

Deborah Gorham teaches history at St. Patrick's College, Carleton University. Her study of the early Canadian feminist, Flora MacDonald Denison, will appear in *Women and Reform in Canada* (edited by Linda Kealey), to be published by The Canadian Women's Educational Press in the fall of 1978.

(30)


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1977 NATIONAL NEWSPAPER

The Toronto Star's Brenda Zosky joins a select group as a female winner of a National Newspaper Award. Just seven awards among 223 presented over 29 NNA years have gone to females. They were Judith Robinson, *The Telegram*, Toronto (spot news reporting, 1953), Betty Lee, *The Globe and Mail* (feature writing, 1966), Claire Dutrisac, *La Presse*, Montreal (spot news reporting, 1968 and feature writing, 1971), Sheila Arnopoulos, *Montreal Star* (feature writing, 1968), Carol Hogg, *The Herald*, Calgary (feature writing, 1974) and Lysianne Gagnon, *La Presse* (enterprise reporting, 1975).

Feature writing:

Brenda Zosky, *The Toronto Star*

Ms. Zosky, legal writer for *The Star*, was the unanimous choice of the judges for a story on Deborah Ellis, a disturbed mother found responsible for the deaths of two of her children. One of the judges described it as "the most thoroughly researched story I have read in some time." Toronto-born Zosky won after less than four years as a working reporter. She joined *The Star* in the summer of 1974 before completing her course in journalism at Ryerson Polytechnical Institute. She is a political science graduate of The University of Toronto.



Zosky

Sports writing:

Brodie Snyder and Dick Bacon,

The Gazette, Montreal

A deeply researched series on salaries in the Canadian Football League won for Snyder, 48 and Bacon, 50. One judge commented: "The thorough research must have been a sports editor's dream come true." Snyder resigned from *The Gazette* in February after 25 years to do freelance sports writing and broadcasting. He had served as city editor, news editor, managing editor and sports editor and was in charge of coverage of Expo '67, the turmoil in Quebec in October, 1970, and the 1976 Olympic Games. Bacon, born in New Jersey, came to Montreal in 1953 to work for *British United Press*, which later became *United Press International*. He was a script writer and sports announcer for the *CBC* and sports editor of the *Montreal Sunday Express* and *Daily Express* before becoming *The Gazette's* top football writer in 1973.



Snyder



Bacon

Spot news photography:

Douglas Ball, *The Canadian Press*.

Ball caught Prime Minister Trudeau dancing a pirouette at a Buckingham Palace reception for Commonwealth heads of state (see picture, accompanying). Ball, 32, won the NNA for feature photography in 1974.

Born in London, Ont., Ball worked for *UPI* and *CP* in Ottawa before going on a world tour in 1969, during which he worked briefly for the *Melbourne Herald-Sun* in Australia. Rejoining *CP* in 1971, he worked in Montreal until he became staff photographer in Quebec City last September.



Ball

Feature photography:

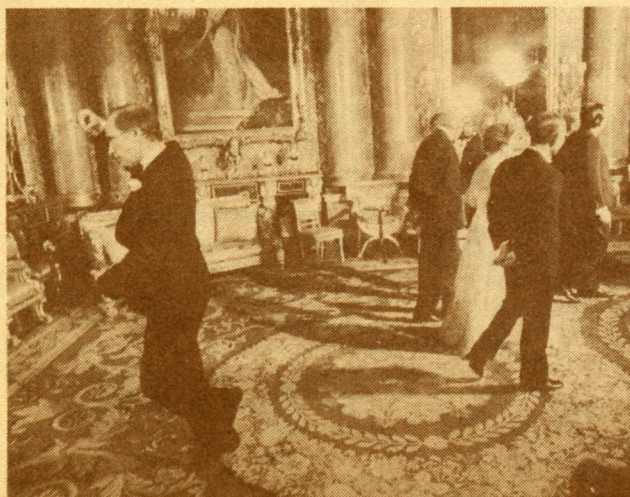
Boris Spremo, *The Toronto Star*

Spremo's fourth NNA was earned for a shot capturing the unmistakable silhouette of former Prime Minister John Diefenbaker in a deckchair outlined against the water at a Barbados beach.

A 43-year-old native of Yugoslavia who came to Canada in 1957, Spremo won in 1962 and 1963 while with *The Globe and Mail* and in '68 for *The Star*. He is the first photographer to win four National Newspaper Awards.



Spremo



AWARDS WINNERS...

**Spot news reporting
and enterprise reporting:**

Gerald Utting, *The Toronto Star*

Utting, the first winner of two awards in 17 years, was acclaimed for his series of three articles describing the ordeal of 2 1/2 weeks in a Ugandan prison and a subsequent interview with President Idi Amin. Pierre Berton, also with *The Star* at the time, won awards for feature writing and staff corresponding in 1960.



Utting

New Zealand-born Utting, 45, has covered a variety of international conflicts in his 18 years with *The Star*, beginning with the Soviet occupation of Czechoslovakia in 1961. Other assignments included the expulsion of Asians from Uganda in 1972, the 1973 Middle East war, the Turkish invasion of Cyprus in 1974 and the 1975 civil war in Lebanon.

Commenting on Utting's series, written under deadline pressure, one judge wrote: "When an experienced professional reporter weighs the risks involved and goes after the story with danger to himself being secondary, and then produces top quality material with emphasis on the 'what' rather than on the 'me,' the readers are well served."

Critical writing:

William French, *The Globe and Mail*, Toronto
Literary editor of *The Globe* since 1960, 51-year-old French joined the paper as a general reporter after graduating from the University of Western Ontario journalism school in 1948. A Nieman Fellow at Harvard University in 1954, he joined the *Globe's* editorial board on his return and received an NNA citation for merit in editorial writing in 1958. French won the critical writing award for the overall high quality of a selection of five book reviews and an opinion column dealing with Ottawa's decision to ban *Penthouse* and with the whole system of censorship by customs officials. In 1965 French won a President's Medal conferred by the University of Western Ontario for best general magazine article of the year. French's piece, in the now-defunct *Globe Magazine*, dealt with the young revolutionary writers of Quebec.



French

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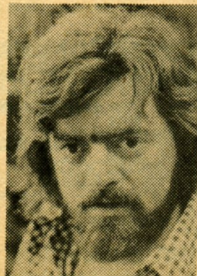
For the first time in the 29-year history of the National Newspaper Awards, four have gone to a single newspaper, *The Toronto Star*. Gerald Utting, with two, and Brenda Zosky and Boris Spremo with one each, earned the record for Canada's largest daily. The awards are administered by a committee of the Toronto Press Club and made possible by a self-sustaining fund to which a number of newspapers and groups have contributed. Certificates and \$500 cash prizes were to be presented to winners at an April 8 dinner in Toronto with Quebec Premier René Levesque guest speaker.

Cartooning:

**Terry Mosher (Aislin),
The Gazette, Montreal**

The *nom de plume* Aislin is the name of Mosher's 12-year-old daughter. Mosher was born in Toronto in 1943 and has been a political cartoonist for more than eight years for the *Montreal*

Star and then *The Gazette*, which he joined in 1973. His winning cartoon of Premier René Levesque (at right) was described by the judges as "urbane in concept, humorous in detail and strongly communicative."



Aislin

Editorial writing:

David Ablett, *The Vancouver Sun*

Ablett, who has been responsible for *The Sun's* editorial pages since 1975, is a 35-year-old graduate in economics and political science from the University of British Columbia. He has been *The Sun's* correspondent in Washington and Ottawa.



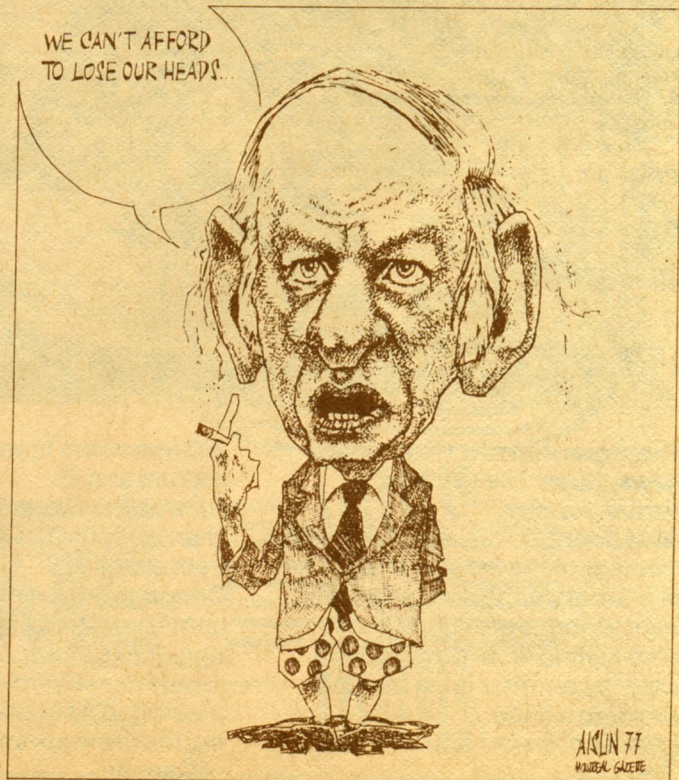
Ablett

He submitted editorials dealing with proposed changes in B.C.'s labor code, the role of the RCMP, Canadian unity, oil prices and textile tariffs. The judges said his win was based on style, clarity, persuasiveness and the originality of the opinions.

Citations for merit:

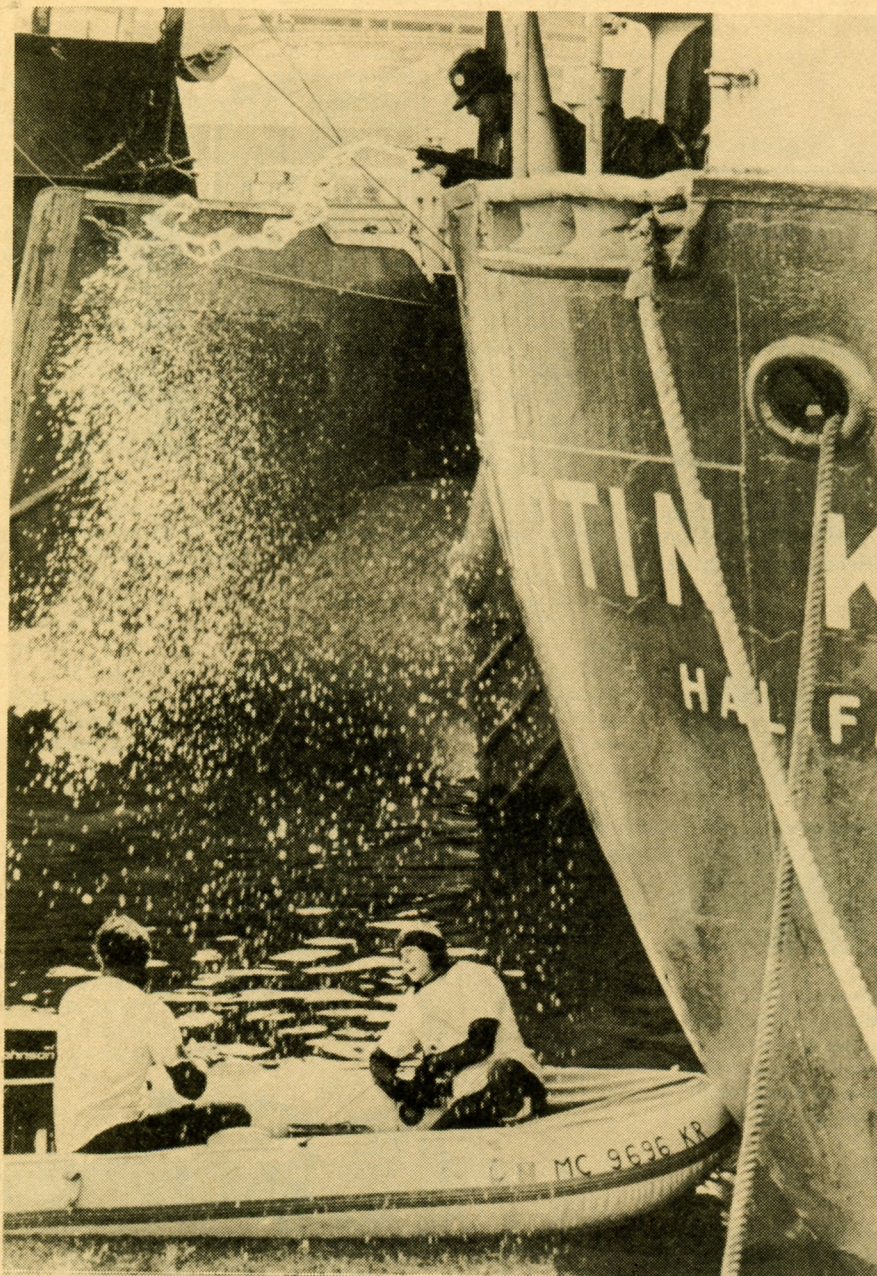
**John Braddock, *The Vancouver Province*, in
feature writing and Lawrence Martin, *The
Globe and Mail*, Toronto, for enterprise reporting.**

(30)



AISLIN 77
MONTREAL GAZETTE

CP Picture of the Month



Photographer: Joe Robichaud.

Newspaper: *The Chronicle-Herald*, Halifax.

Situation: After an argument with a member of the crew of this sealer, two Greenpeace protesters who were trying to prevent the ship from sailing were doused with water by another crew member wielding a hose.

Technical Data: Nikon F with 80-

200-mm zoom lens at 1/500th second and f8.

Award: *The Canadian Press* "News Picture of the Month," February 1978.

Congratulations: This space is contributed regularly in recognition of excellence in photo-journalism by the Canadian Life Insurance Association, representing the life insurance companies of Canada.

HALFBEGUN (cont. from page 7)

be called the People section."

The People section at the *Montreal Gazette* is still a compendium of recipes, fashion stories and gossip, but Gabeline sees nothing wrong with that as long as there isn't an assumption that *only* women are interested in those subjects. While she was editor of the section, Gabeline found out that a surprising number of male readers were just as eager to save money on grocery bills and to read Ann Landers. Men's Fashions coverage has increased in the last few years because, as Gabeline points out: "Everyone has to eat and wear clothes regardless of Canadian unity or who won the Stanley Cup." She feels that most people get their headlines from radio and television nowadays, so a newspaper plays a different role in their lives than it did fifteen or twenty years ago. As a result, she finds that newspapers are moving to in-depth stories, feature writing and a more "magazine-style" coverage of events.

While the Woman's versus People controversy has been amicably resolved at *The Gazette*, women in the ranks still have some battles to fight. "When I was editor," explains Gabeline, "I felt that my salary, as a female department head, was lower than that of some male reporters with similar work backgrounds. But every time I asked management to see the fee schedule, I was told it was being revised and therefore not available. I couldn't prove anything without it and the fee schedule went on 'being revised' until I had decided to step down and the salary question stopped being a problem." There would occasionally be cracks by visiting big shots (i.e., men from the publisher's office) about women 'taking over' the newsroom and Gabeline felt distinctly that, when new management came in (all male), they were a bit uneasy with female department heads. "I don't think I was passed over for assignments because I was a woman," says Gabeline. "I just went in and grabbed them. But there were a couple of positions I would have liked to try my hand at and they were never offered to me or to any other woman." A tangible brush with sexism occurred when she wanted to do an out of town story: "During International Women's Year, I wanted to cover the UN conference in Mexico City. I had to really fight for it; I wrote memos offering to defray costs by staying with friends. I offered to file stories for *Southam* so that they would pick up part of the tab. Finally I got fed up and pointed out to the editor that when the sports department wants to send a reporter to follow a hockey team around or go on a golf tour, there is never any problem. The bar bills they run up *alone* would be

enough to pay for my trip! He finally let me go." When she became editor, she encountered the same attitude whenever she wanted to send one of her staff anywhere; People stories weren't important enough to go after, unlike sports events.

The Gazette is still coming to terms with its female employees and Gabeline senses that management is full of good will. Some of the crazier side effects of a desegregated workplace have calmed down. "A couple of years ago," she laughs, "before the novelty of mixed sexes wore off, the newsroom was steaming with affairs." The more important issues, such as promotion, are also being dealt with: there are now two women working on the Op-Ed pages and just recently Joan Fraser, formerly with *The Financial Times*, was appointed *The Gazette's* first female editorial page director.

Donna Gabeline is relaxed about her job; she knows she is fully qualified and capable. (In 1974 she won the Michener Award for Public Service Journalism for a series on urban development; her book on the same subject won the Heritage Canada Award.) She would like to see women move even further ahead than they have already, but she thinks it is time for everyone — male or female — who wants to work in the media to concentrate on

proving skills and to prepare themselves to cope in a highly competitive field. "I dread the day," she says, choosing her words cautiously, "when a woman who is incompetent and unqualified applies for a job at *The Gazette* and, when she is turned down, screams discrimination. It would ruin it for us all."

ELAINE WAESE, 32, a freelance documentary-writer who is currently under contract as a producer for *CBC Radio's* Ideas, says "In writing for radio and television, I have found that it is the product that counts. A producer is more interested in whether or not you can meet deadlines and come through with results than whether you are male or female. As long as you behave professionally and your product is good, your sex doesn't enter into it."

In the five years Waese has worked in broadcast media — writing and producing documentaries for *CBC* radio and television and story-editing for a small Toronto TV station — she has experienced no discrimination in payment or promotion, but she feels this is due more

to the fact she belongs to a union (ACT-RA) which sets fees and standards than to lack of sexism in the industry itself. There is sexism in the industry, she says, but it takes a more subtle and therefore more insidious form than easily challenged policies of payment and promotion. This sexism is a reflection of women's status in society at large and workplaces in the media are merely a rather intensified microcosm of anti-female attitudes. Women are still treated as sexual objects, on the street as well as in television newsrooms, says Waese, and that won't change in one place if it doesn't change in the other.

But the greatest problem facing women, Waese feels, is not what jobs they do, but how the jobs themselves are perceived. She points to evidence that in the USSR, for example, medicine was regarded as a high status profession until, encouraged by government policies, women began infiltrating it in large numbers with the result that, in an exasperating *Catch 22*, instead of the women's status being elevated, that of the profession itself was lowered.

In Canadian media, according to Waese, you can see this happening by comparing the situations at *CBC Radio* and *CBC Television*. As long as radio was

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See the special section on the arts and literature in Canada guest edited by Margret Andersen appearing in the July 1978 issue.

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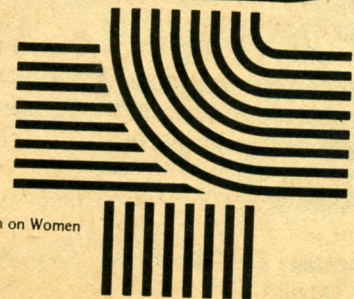
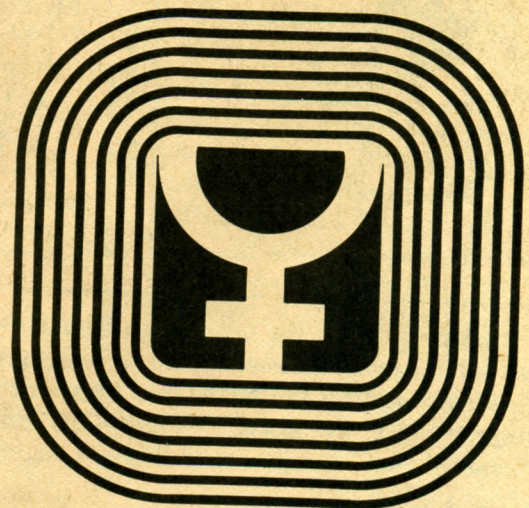
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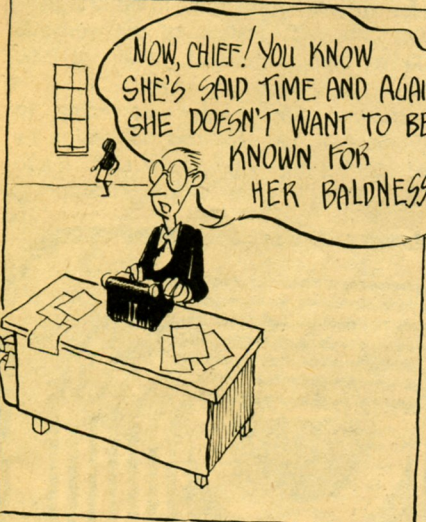


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the dominant means of electronic communication in this country, the most important positions at *CBC Radio* were held by men. Today Waese cites Margaret Lyons, head of AM programming, Geraldine Sherman, executive producer of Ideas, and Diana Filer, head of variety programming, as ostensible proof of women's advancement. But while not wishing to detract from the accomplishments of these highly competent women, she feels television has in fact superseded radio as the prestige medium and at *CBC Television*, "the more powerful organization in terms of budgets, status and with a capacity for reaching a larger audience, the most responsible jobs, the decision-making jobs are held by — surprise! — men."

The Geraldine Shermans, the Margaret Lyoneses and the Diana Filers at *CBC Radio* have made life easier for women such as Waese and she stresses that they have been important role models, as well as being supportive, but she worries that jobs in radio will come to be thought of as "women's" jobs. The struggle is far from over, she feels, but now is the time to go beyond the effort to get individual women into power and to take a longer view of how women can use that power.

Waese has encountered few on-the-job hassles with male co-workers because they assume she wouldn't be where she is if she didn't know what she was doing. Radio demands a certain level of technical competence and she has had little trouble proving her skills. But she still has to contend with chauvinism when she ventures out of the studio or editing room to conduct interviews. "I interview a lot of men," she says, "because, for the kinds of subjects I handle, I have to talk to people in power and the people in power are men. I've been forced to take a very tough stand. Usually, the first three minutes of contact are crucial. As soon as I walk into a guy's office I'm aware that he's assessing me, trying to decide if I'm just playing girl reporter and can easily be condescended to, or if I'm a professional who is capable of eliciting information from him. A firm handshake, eye contact and well-phrased, informed questions let him know I mean business and I have few problems after that. It becomes intuitive. I think the biggest mistake women make is to fail to get the message across that you're the man's equal and demand to be treated as such."

Waese feels that women have an advantage when interviewing. Her male colleagues, she says, "think they have to prove themselves all-knowing and behave abrasively with their interviewee. Women have been socialized to listen and people

tend to trust us more, to feel more comfortable about opening up to someone who is sympathetic." Putting a documentary together requires teamwork, and again, Waese feels, women are better suited than men because they have been taught to give and take more.

She believes there is room for many more women in radio and television. "I'm afraid the energy of the women's movement is flagging and unless we get a crop of new, younger women who will keep the discussion open, there is danger of a backlash."

TRICIA MACDONALD became an instant celebrity in Regina when she first appeared as a reporter on the local television news three and a half years ago. "I guess I was a real novelty," she says, but her singularity didn't last long. The CBC affiliate for which she worked hired a second woman reporter a month after her and, now, says MacDonald: "There isn't a single radio station in town that doesn't have at least one woman's voice on the news."

The 26-year-old reporter began her career in Toronto five years ago with no intention of becoming a trail blazer. She had been studying at Ryerson Polytechnical Institute, when a summer internship at the CBC turned into a full-time job offer. She decided that getting a foot in the door of the industry was more important than a degree. She was hired as a copy clerk with the understanding that she would be allowed to go on camera as soon as possible. She got her first chance three weeks later and, she admits, she made up in eagerness what she lacked in experience. The first few months were rough, not because she wasn't accepted by her co-workers, but because she was still technically a copy clerk, not a reporter. "I was being assigned as important stories as anyone else," MacDonald remembers, "but I was also running around picking up everybody else's copy and film. I had to divide my energies: to not become so involved in a story that I couldn't drop it and go for coffee for the staff when I was asked to." Did she feel her treatment stemmed from the fact she was a woman? "I considered that a possibility," she admits, "but I decided it was more because I was a lowly copy clerk. Until two years before I got there, all the copy-clerking had been done by men and I don't think they had it any easier." Her salary was a princely \$3-4,000 a year ("I was paid \$3 extra every

time I was on camera"), but she drove herself almost beyond endurance because she felt it was all leading somewhere. Her instincts proved right when, on a Friday, her boss asked her if she'd like to become a full-time reporter. Her salary would be tripled, she would spend all her time working on stories instead of running errands and, although initially she would simply be replacing a reporter who was on leave, the first opening that came up would be hers. There was only one hitch: the job was in Regina and she had to be there Monday morning. "I made up my mind on the plane going out that I would have to work incredibly hard. I knew that I would have to prove myself, that I might encounter hostility, being both very young and female, so I was determined not to make any mistakes."

It was a time, according to MacDonald, when being female was almost an advantage; women had been so conspicuous by their absence in the media that newsroom managers were bending over backwards to find one who was qualified. In Toronto, many of her male colleagues had "to slug away for ten years at a local paper just to get into the CBC, so they thought I had it too easy." But in Regina she was a novelty and the men went out of their way to make her feel welcome. "It was a different kind of newsroom," she explains. "They were real family types and at 5 o'clock everyone went home to the wife and kids. They

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were just more secure about their jobs and their life, so the atmosphere was less competitive." Still, she was so anxious not to give anyone grounds for criticism that "I worked twice as hard to prove I was as good."

The public accepted her readily. After her first appearance, letters flowed into the station saying that a woman's presence on the screen was a refreshing change. But when she ventured out into the field, she had a bit of trouble asserting her authority. Once, she and a cameraman were sent out to interview a woman who had organized a group opposing highway construction. MacDonald was obviously in charge, ordering the cameraman to wait while she set up the interview, telling him what shots she wanted etc. Yet, when the woman called the station to ask when the piece was to be on, she couldn't remember the reporter's name. "He was about six feet, and fair," she told the station manager, describing *the cameraman*. "After that incident," laughs MacDonald, "I practised lowering my voice to sound more authoritative and I considered buying a more sophisticated wardrobe."

MacDonald feels the men in Toronto were right: she has had it easy. She came along at a moment when things were

opening up for women and she was in the right place at the right time. At one point this year, there were four women and only two men working as reporters in the Regina newsroom and, MacDonald says, "it could conceivably have been all women." But the assignment editor is a man, the news director is a man, in fact, "everyone above me is a man. No one hesitates to hire a woman, but you feel that they want to preserve a balance. There have been comments like 'Gee, there are an awful lot of women in here,' whereas you can be sure no one made the opposite remark when it was all men."

MacDonald feels good about her job and doesn't express any ambitions about moving into a position of power. One thing is sure: if a promotion means packing up and leaving town the way it did last time, she would probably turn it down. She is married now and has an infant son. The eagerness to grab any opportunity that comes along is something she has set aside.

BETTY LEE, who set an important precedent as the first woman police reporter at *The Globe and Mail* 25 years ago, began her writing career, ironically, using male pseudonyms.

As "Captain Hans Olson," she wrote

transparently fictional tales of the sea, and as "Peter Morris," she manufactured blood-and-guts detective stories, both for £7 a week on the staff of *Man Magazine* in her native Australia. Her experience at a Sydney newspaper, where the "lady" reporters were obliged to wear hats all day long, convinced her that she didn't have much of a future, either personally or professionally, in macho Australian society.

She emigrated to England, where the fields did prove a little greener in terms of the type of work she could do — she was hired as press officer for Wembley stadium — but she found herself unable to do her job because of attitudes not much more advanced than in Sydney. One of her duties, for example, was to entertain the reporters who were covering the sporting events at the stadium, but because she was a woman, she was not permitted to enter the bar in which the reporters congregated and was obliged to send little messages in via a waiter, asking reporters to meet her at the door so she could ascertain if they were enjoying themselves.

It all got to be too much for Lee, so she dashed off letters to all the newspapers in Toronto and, when *The Globe and Mail* tentatively suggested she "look them up" if she was ever in town, that was enough of an incentive to pack her bags and leave for Canada.

The fact that she was hired onto the news staff right away caused her to assume that at last she had found the promised land of sexual equality. She didn't learn until later that there was such a thing as a "woman's section". "I was horrified when I found out." Lee herself was paid the same salary as her male colleagues, because she wrote news. But she discovered that the other women earned considerably less, because what they were writing about was deemed less important. Not only that, but the women were actually physically segregated in a space of their own at the end of a corridor, whereas the sports, business and entertainment sections were part of the newsroom.

Why then was Lee offered a "non-woman's" job? "I was preceded by another Australian, a man, who had created a reputation as a really tough newsman and I suppose there was a bit of a legend that Aussies make good reporters." Moreover, she admits sadly, she felt

"Those of us who hold power are always certain that we wield it responsibly and in the best interests of those who do not share it. But those who lack power look upon us with suspicion, distrust and resentment. They doubt our wisdom, question our abilities, and suspect our motives."*

*Public Responsibility and Private Enterprise, by Paul Paré.
An address to the "Options — Conference on the future of the Canadian Federation", University of Toronto, October 1977.
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obliged to dissociate herself from the other women in the office and she felt great pride when one editor commented that she had "balls."

It was one test after another, Lee recalls. On one of her first assignments, she was sent down to the city morgue to cover an inquest. The coroner greeted her with surprise and, in an obvious move to knock her down a peg, invited her to have a beer. When she accepted, he led her into the storage room and pulled open a drawer. There she saw bottles of beer arranged between the legs of a corpse. "Chose your brand," the coroner said and she did so without flinching, thus earning the right to be treated as "one of the boys."

Women who work at the *Globe* today don't have similar experiences, according to Lee, but that is not to say that the newsroom has become a shining example of tolerance. "There are stars," says Lee, naming women reporters whose bylines have become familiar to readers in the sports pages and the financial pages, as well as in the news. "But the power structure remains the same. As far as the public is concerned, women have made visible progress as reporters, but I think that it was achieved through individual effort, not through a more benign policy of management." She feels that those women who did succeed in breaking down barriers were those who carved out a niche for themselves, armed themselves with a specialty or aggressively cornered a beat. "Christie Blatchford (until recently the *Globe's* sports columnist) was a real breakthrough," says Lee, "but she made it because she was Christie, not because the higher-ups decided it would be nice to have a woman do that job. Likewise, Lydia Dotto made a name for herself as a science reporter. Women such as Joan Hollobon (who writes on medicine) and Ellen Roseman (who writes on consumer affairs) found ways of broadening the appeal of their subjects and escaping the "women's section" ghetto. Ellen, for

example, turned consumerism from a shopping basket thing into a subject of general interest. I think it all depends on a woman's personality and how much initiative she decides to take."

Lee was also the first woman at the *Globe* who was allowed to do rewrites and the second woman to become an editorial writer in the paper's history. There is one woman on the editorial board these days but, revealingly enough, her office doesn't have a carpet in it, whereas that of her male counterpart does. Women at the *Globe* today aren't crying discrimination, says Lee, because they realize that they have advanced since the bad old days. "Exposure and money are nice," she admits, "but let's face it: the real power is behind the scenes. Men make newspapers; they decide what both men and women are going to read. It would be interesting to find out just what woman's media would be like. I'm sure if women sat in the editor's offices or newspaper board rooms of this country, the public wouldn't necessarily be getting recipes on the front page."

Lee, now 56, quit *The Globe and Mail* two years ago to freelance. She has written five books (three under the auspices of the *Globe*), been a columnist for *The Canadian* magazine and this year becomes the financial/consumer editor at *Chate-laine*. "The situation for women on the staff of newspapers is certainly better than it was twenty years ago," she says, "but there is still room for pioneers."

Eve Drobot is a woman who writes for living and... is living. (30)

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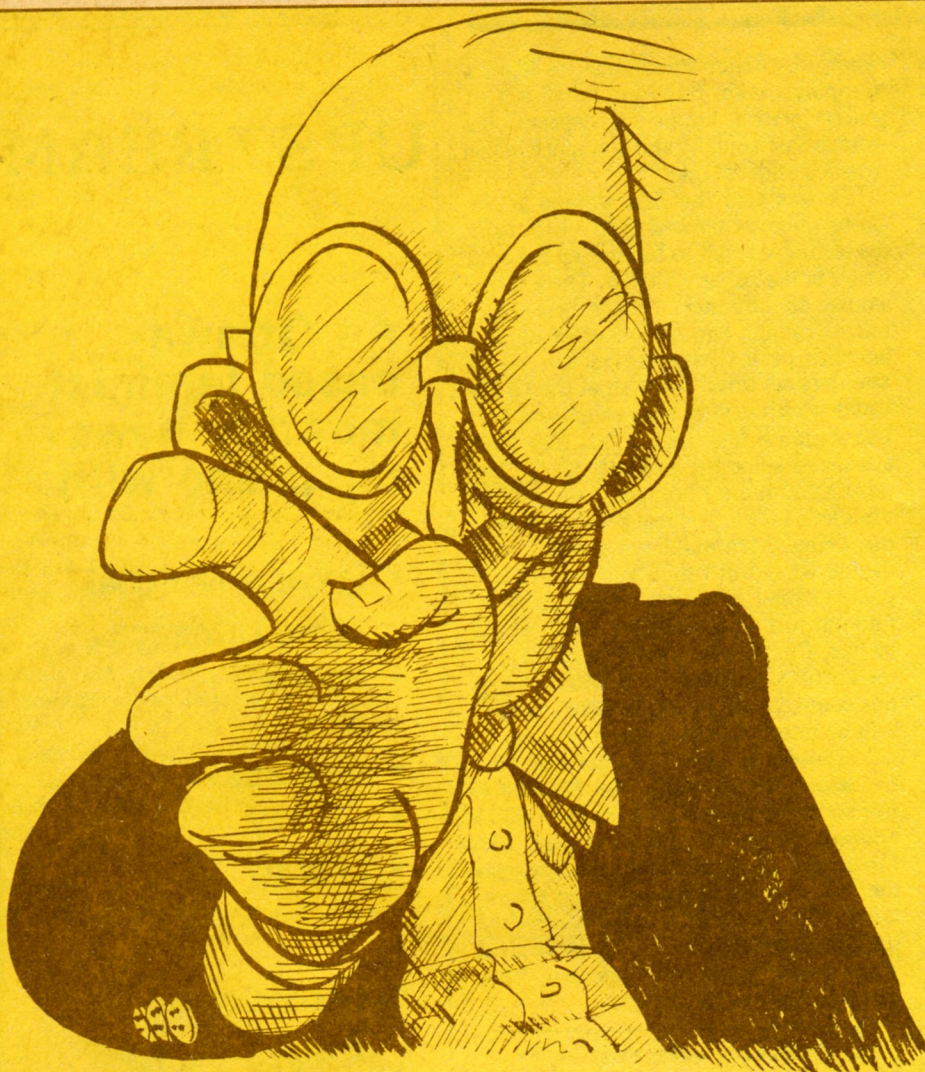
Notice Board

Apr. 29 & 30: 10th convention of the Federation Professionnelle des Journalistes du Quebec, Montreal.

May 5-7: Joint conference of the Outdoor Writers of Canada and the New York State Outdoor Writers Association, Prudhomme's Hotel and Convention Centre, Vineland, Ont.

May 11 & 12: Central Canada Region seminar of Broadcast News editors and Radio-Television News Directors Association, Pinewood Park Motor Inn, North Bay, Ont.

May 25 & 26: Atlantic Region seminar of Broadcast News editors and Radio-Television News Directors Association, Keddy Motor Inn, Saint John, N.B.



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