

NATIONAL ACTION COMMITTEE ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN  
 NATIONAL COMITÉ D'ACTION SUR LE STATUT DE LA FEMME  
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# NAC

## HOUSING COMMITTEE

The National Action Committee on the Status of Women (NAC) Housing Committee invites all women interested in housing issues to participate in the Canadian Women's Network.

Activities of the NAC Housing Committee include:

- compiling a survey to provide access to resources on women and housing initiatives across Canada;
- developing a NAC Housing Policy paper based on comments, information and perspectives received from across Canada;
- examining the feasibility of a national women and housing conference;
- maintaining liaison with U.S. and global women and housing organizations;
- publishing a newsletter of national contributions.

The newsletter services are not only sources of information, but tools to build supportive networks. Contributions from your regions would be appreciated. We are particularly interested in publishing grassroots women's strategies and initiatives for affordable, secure housing.

If you would like to participate in the NAC Housing Committee activities, please write to:

**NAC Housing Committee**  
**344 Bloor West, Suite 505**  
**Toronto, Ontario**  
**M5S 1W9**

HEATHER SPEARS

## Every Woman's Guide to Hysterectomy

Little pieces of the uterine wall  
 are meandering all over the body  
 I am guilty of at least five  
 mutually exclusive illnesses  
 all situated down below  
 none studied  
 in Health at Lord Byng High  
 where year after year we coloured in  
 the Digestive Tract from oesophagus to, well, anus  
 and the other, called by my aunts  
 curse in a firm rejection of euphemism  
 was the subject of just one animated film  
 its pastel voice, embarrassingly, male.  
 And even now on graphic TV  
 fluids absorbed by delicate pads are blue  
 not red, as they are blue  
 (more understandably) in diaper ads  
 recalling *potteblå*, a dye  
 made from kids' piss in the old days.

Little pieces of the uterine wall, it seems,  
 wander and fix in bladder, belly, lung  
 bleeding there every month, on cue,  
 crazed little hormones simmering.  
 Fistulæ like tiny fingers  
 feel out of one organ, fasten in another,  
 ominous pressures build, great fibrous balls  
 like twine grow eyeless in the dark  
 "as large as a twenty-week fetus"  
 the whole lot hangs  
 in a drooping hammock of tired flesh  
 the plug's loose / prolapse  
 threatens like a sock turned inside out  
 I may not be able  
 to contain myself  
 much longer, I will become  
 this aspect, with a mind of its own, even  
 facial expressions, yawns,  
 grins, and other mouthy blatherings.  
 Meanwhile the ovaries  
 plugged in at each side like earphones  
 pick up the distant tick of death.

Oh my body, how awful,  
 You bore children faultlessly  
 and from these territories  
 loved, love and are made happy.  
 How can I read  
 this book in which everything possible goes wrong  
 nothing stays where it ought  
 inside the tidy lines of diagrams,  
 bits of the uterine wall  
 wander away, and a cell  
 I never heard of casually ignites.