

Institutes were steered away from anything that might rock the *status quo* of sexual relations or unite women into a force threatening to political authority. In stark contrast to England, where community service quickly became an essential part of Institute work, in Canada there was little stimulus given in this direction.¹⁵ A few branches pursued improvement in community services, especially in relation to the schools, but they were the exception rather than the rule. In assuming that community leadership was a male responsibility, the early W.I. movement committed a major error. It would allow for an increasing concentration on the inessential and the trivial once knowledge about improved nutrition, health care, childraising and homemaking had been disseminated in rural Ontario. These developments, however, should not obscure either the place or importance of the Women's Institutes in the history of continuing education for women.

I would like to thank Gloria Troyer of the University of Guelph Library, Archival and Special Collections, for her assistance during the research for this paper.

¹⁵E.A. Corbett, "A Brief History of Adult Education in Canada," J.R. Kidd (ed.), *Adult Education in Canada* (Toronto: 1950), pp. 5-7; Ron Farris, *The Passionate Educators: Voluntary Associations and the Struggle for Control of Adult Educational Broadcasting in Canada, 1919-52* (Toronto: 1975), pp. 1-20.

¹⁶Foster Vernon, "The Development of Adult Education in Ontario, 1790-1900" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Toronto, 1969), pp. 133, 148-9, 423, 429.

¹⁷Annie Walker, Edith Collings and M. McIntyre Hood, *Fifty Years of Achievement* (Toronto: 1948), pp. 30, 42-50. Among the other traditional accounts of the development of the Women's Institutes are M. Viola Powell, *Forty Years Agrowing: The History of the Ontario Women's Institutes* (Ottawa: 1941); Federated Women's Institute of Ontario, *Women's Institute's Story* (Toronto: 1972).

¹⁸On the traditional roles of women in rural Western society, see the conflicting interpretations presented in Edward P. Shorter, *The Making of the Modern Family* (New York: 1975) and Louise A. Tilly and Joan W. Scott, *Women, Work and Family* (New York: 1978). On Canada, see Rosemary Ball, "'A Perfect Farmer's Wife': Women in 19th Century Rural Ontario,"

"Canada: An Historical Magazine 3, 2 (1975), 2-21.

¹⁹Adelaide Hoodless developed this theme in a variety of speeches presented between 1895 and 1905. Her ideas will be explored more fully in Terry Crowley, "Madonnas Before Magdalenes: Adelaide Hoodless and the Making of the Canadian Gibson Girl," *Canadian Historical Review* (forthcoming). This idea has found more recent expression in Douglas A. Lawr, "Development of Agricultural Education in Ontario 1870-1910" (Ph. D. dissertation, University of Toronto, 1972), p. 19 and Marjorie Cohen, "The Decline of Women in Dairying," *Social History/Histoire Sociale*, 17 (1984), 307-334.

²⁰See the addresses and reports given by Hoodless, Creelman, Maddock and Rose below.

²¹The best accounts of Hoodless are Ruth Howes, *Adelaide Hoodless, Woman With A Vision* (Ottawa: Federated Women's Institutes of Canada, 1965) and Robert Stamp, "Adelaide Hoodless, Champion of Women's Rights," Robert S. Patterson (ed.), et al, (eds.), *Profiles of Canadian Educators* (Canada: 1974), pp. 213-32.

²²Adelaide Hoodless, "The Relation of Domestic Science to the Agricultural Population," Province of Ontario, *Sessional Papers*, 17 (1897), pp. 245-47; "Constitution and By-Laws of the Women's Institute, Saltfleet," Province of Ontario, *Report of the Superintendent of the Farmers' Institutes of the Province of Ontario 1897-8* (Toronto: 1898), pp. XX-XXI; Ontario, *Sessional Papers*, 29 (1898-99), pp. 16-17; M.E. Nash, "Report of the Saltfleet Women's Institute," National Council of women of Canada, *Women Workers of Canada 1899* (Toronto: 1900), p. 217, "Women's Institute of Saltfleet".

²³The Ontario Agricultural College did not admit women in the degree course until 1918. When the college opened its Dairying School where practical instruction was given during a course of several months duration, the role of women in this aspect of farm management was acknowledged through women's admission. See Alexander M. Ross, *The College on the Hill: A History of the Ontario Agricultural College, 1874-1974* (Toronto 1974), pp. 42, 56.

²⁴George Creelman, "The Formation of the Women's Institutes," Province of Ontario, *Women's Institutes* (From the Report of the Superintendent of Farmers' Institutes of the Province of Ontario, 1900), (Toronto 1901), pp. 3-4.

²⁵Laura Rose, "Women's Institutes,"

Province of Ontario, *Report of the Superintendent of Farmers' Institutes 1897-8*, pp. 262-4; "An Afternoon at the Women's Institutes," *Farmers' Advocate* (Eastern edition), 1902, p. 60; "The Womanly Sphere of Woman," *Report of the Women's Institutes of the Province of Ontario 1906*, p. 32; Blanche Maddock, "Why Women's Institutes Should be Organized," *Farmers' Advocate*, 1900, p. 380; "Women's Institutes," *Handbook, Women's Institutes* (Toronto: 1903).

²⁶N.C.W.C., *Women Workers of Canada 1903*, pp. 76, 80.

²⁷M.U. Watson, "What the Macdonald Institute is prepared to do for the Women's Institutes," *W.I. Report 1910*, pp. 57-8; *W.I. Report 1913*, p. 5.

²⁸For Britain, see Simeon Goodenough, *Jam and Jerusalem, A Pictorial History of the Women's Institutes* (London and Glasgow: 1977).

Terry Crowley is a member of the History Department at the University of Guelph where he co-initiated the first Women's Studies course in 1976. His research interests include French Canada and Canadian social history.

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on one side, on
the other, a familiar woman
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the camera without
expression.

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no questions,
tried, tired, not faltering.

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42917, nothing more.

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number? Is the shelf-space
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Polly Fleck
Banff, Alberta

never have developed the powerful momentum it did. If the solidarity between the sexes and the solidarity between producers and consumers had been supported by greater solidarity between Jewish and non-Jewish workers, the "King of Canada" would indeed have gotten "the surprise of his life."²⁰

This strike provides a glimmer of what might have been the basis of a much more powerful labour movement. It highlights the critical need to overcome the deep divisions within the working class. This is as crucial now as it was in 1912.

The contemporary potential for the mobilization of feminist groups in support of women workers is also crucial. In the recent strike of Eaton's retail workers, this support proved to be one of the main reasons why Eaton's was finally forced to grant union recognition. In comparison with Alice Chown's day, women's rights organizations today are more readily encompassing the interests of working-class women.

¹ILGWU, *The Ladies' Garment Worker* (New York), April 1912, p.1.

²*Ibid.*, pp.1-2.

³United Garment Workers, *The Weekly Bulletin of the Clothing Trades* (New York), 29 March 1912, p.3.

⁴Canada, Department of Labour, *Labour Gazette*, March 1912, pp. 856 & 897-901; *Toronto Daily News*, 15 Feb. 1912, p.13; *Toronto Star*, 15 Feb. 1912, p.5 & 16 Feb. 1912, p.2; *Industrial Banner* (London, Ontario), March 1912, p.1; Toronto ILGWU's Cloakmakers' Union, *Souvenir Journal*, 1911-1936, A. Kirzner's speech (in Yiddish) and Charles Shatz's speech (in Yiddish); & Toronto ILGWU's Cloakmakers' Union, *Souvenir Journal*, 1911-1961, S. Kraisman's address & Max Siegerman's address.

⁵Toronto District Labour Council Minutes, 15 Feb. 1912, Labour Council of Metropolitan Toronto Collection, vol. 3, Public Archives of Canada, Ottawa. See also, 7 March 1912.

⁶Interview with Joe Salsberg, Toronto, 1984.

⁷*Ibid.*

⁸*The Ladies' Garment Worker*, March 1912, p.14.

⁹Toronto District Labour Council Minutes, 7 March 1912; *The Weekly Bulletin of the Clothing Trades*, 22 March 1912, p.3, 29 March 1912, p.1 & 12 April 1912, p.1; *Industrial Banner*, March 1912, p.1; *Labour Gazette*, March 1912, pp.856 & 897-901; *Souvenir Journal*, 1911-1936, A. Kirzner's speech (in

Yiddish); *The Ladies' Garment Worker*, March 1912, p.14 & April 1912, pp.2 & 18; & *Toronto Daily News*, 15 Feb. 1912, p.13.

¹⁰*Hamilton Labour News*, cited in *The Weekly Bulletin of the Clothing Trades*, 3 May 1912, p.2 & *The Ladies' Garment Worker*, June 1912, p.25.

¹¹*Souvenir Journal*, 1911-1936, A. Kirzner's speech (in Yiddish) & *Industrial Banner*, April 1912, p.4. On the ways in which immigrant Jewish women frequently made strategic use of their power as consumers, see Ruth A. Frager, "Uncloaking Vested Interests: Class, Ethnicity and Gender in the Jewish Labour Movement of Toronto, 1900-1939," Ph.D. Thesis, York University, 1986.

¹²*The Ladies' Garment Worker*, April 1912, pp.2-3.

¹³*Ibid.*, p.3.

¹⁴Alice A. Chown, *The Stairway* (Boston, 1921), pp.151-152.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, p.153.

¹⁶On the prevalence of anti-Semitism in Toronto in this period, see Frager,

"Uncloaking Vested Interests."

¹⁷*The Ladies' Garment Worker*, April 1912, p.2.

¹⁸The reference to "Mr. Humpty Dumpty Eaton" is from *The Ladies' Garment Worker*, April 1912, p.4. On the tension between Jews and non-Jews in Toronto's garment industry, see Frager, "Uncloaking Vested Interests."

¹⁹*Souvenir Journal*, 1911-1936, A. Kirzner's speech (in Yiddish). (The translation from the Yiddish is my own.)

²⁰The quotation is from *The Ladies' Garment Worker*, April 1912, p.2.

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A WOMAN'S CIRCLE

Sometimes when I walk into a room where
he is I feel I
am standing trial for something
unspecified I omitted to do.

No, that's a big step: I
used to set
all my inadequacies against all
he expects of me.
I used to set the dinner table
early if dinner were going to be late
to avoid the silent treatment but he would
look at his watch, sigh and rap
his fingers on the padded chair arm,
anyway. Now
he suspects there's someone else. There is. It's me, I
got up off my knees and began to walk.

But sometimes when I walk into a room where
he is I feel I
am standing trial for something
unspecified I omitted
to do . . .

Polly Fleck
Banff, Alberta

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Diane Lamoureux, *Fragments et collages*. Montréal: 1985. Editions du Remue-ménage.

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CIRCE

Circe wasn't so great a sorceress.
She made pigs out of a few sailors; she
was smart enough to see
them for what they
were
and wise enough to say so, and not just that
boys will be boys, or, you know what sailors
are.
She got those sailors
right on.

PIGS.

Circe was a poet: she
could only call 'right 'names and was
otherwise powerless . . . is there another
power?
Stories like that come down as sorcery
because
it seems inadvisable to advertise that
a woman could be so
clever without its being censured
as
unnatural, therefore, witchcraft.
Circe could not have made out Odysseus'
men as leopards or lambs,
or even as
loving and compassionate
men. That would have been real magic.

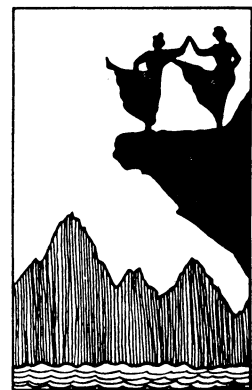
We all know what the sailors
would have made
out of her and her sirens if
she hadn't named them
first.

Let the verdict be
self-defence.
Remember
Circe.

Polly Fleck
Banff, Alberta

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