

Good Day Care: Getting it, Keeping it, Fighting for it, Kathleen Gallagher Ross, ed., Toronto, Canadian Women's Educational Press, 1978, pp. 223, paperback \$7.95.

Willemina Seywerd



As the title of this book indicates, it is concerned with 'good' day care in Canada, and it is long overdue. Good day care does not occur by itself — reading these articles one understands what good day care is and that it must be fought for.

The book is divided into nine sections dealing with such topics as: what day care means to parents and children; parent, worker, and community control; private-home day care; day-care workers; and resources. The articles cover child-care needs in Metropolitan Toronto, group care in Canada and other countries, alternative forms such as workplace day care or corporate day care, and notes from a day-care worker.

The book favours community-controlled day care, and takes a critical look at many of the existing facilities, which are often far from satisfactory. It wants to make the reader aware of the responsibility of society to provide good day care and a healthy environment for children. The article 'Childrearing as a Social Responsibility' points out that good day care is everyone's concern and argues that those who use it should also control it.

Another article deals with legislation and funding, and states that 'day care services in Canada have been the victim of erratic and generally inadequate policy-making and funding patterns. This has had an undeniable effect on the quantity, quality, and range of services offered.' It goes on to examine the provisions of all the provinces, and concludes that the present situation is far from ideal. The three key elements that need to be emphasized are 'quality, affordability, and accessibility' — a task that may take a long time to accomplish.

The purpose of the book is to serve as a 'practical guide to finding, choosing, and developing good day care'. However, it does much more than that. It raps the conscience of the reader. It shows a dedication and commitment to improved day-care facilities — facilities that are a supportive extension of the family — and it calls for public awareness of day-care issues. It is an important contribution that should not be missed by anyone who has an interest in helping working parents get access to reliable practical day care and in the development of young children in Canada.

The Double Ghetto: Canadian Women and Their Segregated Work, Pat Armstrong and Hugh Armstrong, Toronto, McClelland and Stewart, 1978, pp. 199, paperback \$4.95.

Sybil Shack

The authors of this well-organized and thoroughly documented study of the reasons for the segregation of Canadian women into low-paid, low-status work categories make a strong case for their argument that 'attitudes and ideas are not accidental products of a culture. They are related in part to the organization of society to provide for its basic needs.' In a capitalist, industrial society like ours it is in the interest of established power groups to maintain a pool of low-paid, readily available, reasonably well-educated, but not necessarily highly skilled labour. Women keep that pool filled, as unpaid workers at home and as low-paid, often part-time, workers in the labour force. In both instances they do work the worth of which is unrecognized and which, because of its routine, unchallenging nature, tends to discourage those who do it from developing the will and gaining the experience and skills needed to grasp what few opportunities do exist for moving out of the double ghetto of the book's title.

The Armstrongs examine and put aside biological and ideological factors as major causes of the condition of women. If biology keeps women in low-status work, for example, how was it possible for women during the two world wars to carry on tasks normally performed by men? How is it possible for so many women to hold two full-time jobs, one at home and the other in the labour force? And if ideology is a prime factor in the segregation of women, where do the ideas come from? According to the Armstrongs, 'The research, even that carried out within an idealist framework, clearly indicates that economic and structural factors directly influence and restrict human behaviour and choices.'

Moreover, segregation is self-perpetuating. People are judged by the work they do. Children very early in their lives learn to categorize men and women by their jobs, and by the division of labour between them. It is not surprising that these lessons continue into adult life, and encourage the development and maintenance of gender-specific attitudes and behaviour patterns. The Catch-22, chicken-and-egg nature of women's condition comes through clearly. Status is related to the work one does. Women work largely in low-status, low-paid, service-oriented jobs, closely akin to housework, which is the lowest-ranked of all jobs. So women are regarded as having low status, come to regard themselves and their work as having little value, and tend to accept and remain in unchallenging, low-paid jobs. As their low status contributes to the well-being of the industrial-capitalist society, equality of opportunity and choice become theoretical rather than actual or practical.

In the concluding chapter the Armstrongs explain the growing restlessness of many women and the consequent rise of the women's movement in terms of the contradictions between the essentially unchanged nature during the past thirty years of women's work and status in the labour force, and the changes that have taken place in other aspects of their lives during the same period of time. Married women have gone to work outside the home in increasing numbers and have tasted the pleasures of earning money for their hitherto unrespected, unpaid services. An economy requiring large numbers of cheap but educated workers, a growing family need for more money than the male partner alone could bring in, better health, a longer life-span, fewer children born closer together, a higher level of education have all contributed to the greater employment of women. These changes have also forced upon many women a perception of the injustice inherent in their segregation; and they are

rebellious against it. The Armstrongs contend, however, that little will come of the rebellion unless or until the segregation is eliminated by fundamental alterations in the economic structure.

Whether or not readers agree with the thesis of *The Double Ghetto* they will find it a valuable contribution to the growing volume of writing about Canadian women at work. The writing is clear and straightforward, marred only occasionally by professional jargon, and is sharpened from time to time with a touch of irony. An excellent list of references forms a useful bibliography. Warning: some housewives will resent and be disturbed by generalizations about their work and status.

Sexism and Science, Evelyn Reed, New York, Pathfinder Press, 1978, pp. 178, paperback \$4.45.

Meg Luxton

The struggle for women's liberation occurs on many fronts. One of our tasks is to arm ourselves so that we can move out decisively to win gains for women. One very important arena for such struggle is in those sciences that study human beings—biology, sociology, anthropology, and primatology. These sciences have provided many of the arguments that are used against women. It is time for women to use the tools of these sciences to show the inadequacies of existing knowledge and theory and to develop new, more accurate sciences.

Evelyn Reed's latest book, *Sexism and Science*, does just that. In eight related articles she summarizes the basic arguments from biology, sociology, anthropology, and primatology. She attacks one predominant current in these sciences—that which argues, from a sexist position, that women have always been subordinate to men and that men, and not women, were the instrumental agents in human evolution. Instead, she argues, using the tools of those very sciences, women have always been crucial in all human societies and women, as well as men, were instrumental in human evolution.

Women who are not experts in these fields are frequently intimidated by the arguments that maintain that women's subordinate position is rooted in innate, genetically-based biological characteristics. Reed's book helps us to affirm that these so-called 'objective' scientific observations are in fact disguised political theories. She provides us with a model of how to take on these arguments, show their inadequacies, and put forward the convincing case that women's oppression is not biologically based. It is instead socially determined, a part of the social relations that emerged with class society.

We are regularly confronted with these pseudo-scientific arguments, designed to prevent women from demanding equality. As a result, I urge people to read this book. It will help you translate your instinctive anger into a scientific tool.

but can you type? Canadian Universities and the Status of Women, Jill McCalla Vickers and June Adam, Toronto, Clarke Irwin with the Canadian Association of University Teachers, 1977, pp. 146, paperback \$5.95.

Marsha Mitchell

Higher education is a major route into jobs in Canada's power

structure—and women's place in higher education is dismal. This is the message of *but can you type?* Co-authored by Jill McCalla Vickers and June Adam, this is the first of a series of monographs planned by the Canadian Association of University Teachers, intended to investigate issues facing Canadian universities and their relationship to Canadian society. The preface, by general editor Dr Naomi E.S. Griffiths, states the goal of the series as presenting 'scholarly yet popular accounts of the various problems facing Canadian universities, accounts that the Canadian taxpayers would find interesting to read and informative enough to allow them to come to their own conclusions about the issue in question'.

There is no doubt that this first monograph fulfills that goal. It covers the situation for female undergraduates, for female graduate students or those entering professional fields, and for female faculty—relating all of these situations to women's status in the Canadian power structure. The statistics, gathered by June Adam, are both thorough and well presented in easily read charts. By grouping these charts in topical sections at the end of chapters 2, 3, and 4, the authors do make it easy for readers to compare the data and reach their own conclusions. The text itself, contributed by Vickers, is an interesting, though highly personal, interpretation of the statistics, refreshingly free of jargon.

The statistics, by themselves, present a very bleak picture of every aspect of women's participation in Canadian universities. They establish beyond a doubt that women are under-represented as undergraduates, as graduates, and as faculty. Further, they point out that even though female enrolment in universities has been gradually increasing, enrolment in the predominantly 'male' disciplines of science, engineering, and professional schools is still scandalously low. For example, in 1969-70 the percentage of students who were women and enrolled in arts was 44, while the percentage in pure science was only 22, in engineering 1, and in law 17. The statistics go on to show that women are, rather naturally, similarly under-represented in these 'male' professional jobs. In universities themselves female faculty are paid less, are clustered in the lower academic ranks, and hold few of the power positions on senates and boards of governors. Altogether we are left with no choice but to realize that in academia at least we've still got a long way to go.

While the statistics are clear enough, the interpretation is less so. In fact, so little do the authors themselves agree that June Adam felt compelled to add her own 2½-page 'Interpretive Note' is extremely valuable to balancing the overall presentation in the book. Vickers's interpretation is one of such unrelieved gloom, as well, one surmises, as personal frustration, as to suggest that she absolutely refuses either to have her cake or to eat it. For example, she makes the point several times that 'Unless and until women force themselves into the "prestige" professional disciplines and into the male or senior professions—the routes through which most Canadians gain entry into our elites—the increased participation of women in higher education will have little or no impact on the problem of the status of Canadian women.' However, when confronted with the statistical fact that women have indeed forced their way into the 'male' discipline of pharmacy, she refuses to accept this as evidence of success: 'The decline of the independent pharmacy, however, and the fact that almost all of the women receiving degrees in this field work as salaried employees in hospital pharmacies or large chain drugstores may well indicate that the higher presence of women in the field is more the result of men moving out than of women successfully forcing their way in.'

There is as well one major inconsistency in her interpretation. She points out that these senior professions are almost exclusively the realm from which politicians are drawn, and that this may shed light on women's virtual invisibility in the political arena. Despite this, despite the fact that women are some-