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# Toronto Men's Clearinghouse Newsletter

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MAY 1986 - VOLUME 2 - ISSUE 2  
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The Toronto Men's Clearinghouse is taking another step towards its goal of bringing together men who want to improve their relationships with each other and grow in their understanding or and living out their masculinity. With this issue you will find a notice for the Toronto Men's Gathering. Read it, pass it on, come and be together with you brothers in a open, creative, supportive and trusting way. Any efforts you make to make this day together a good one will be greatly appreciated.

Last issue there was a deluge of material contributed, this issues does not enjoy the same. Hence this request and encouragement for you to share your thoughts, concerns, feeling, ideas, question and whatever, with your brothers. Send us you poems, your essays, your reflections, your reactions, your jottings. This issue contains our first letter to the editor, so the ice has been broken , jump in.

## EVENTS

See attached flyer regarding the Toronto Men's Gathering on Sat. June 14th.

## CHANGING MEN: PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT & SOCIAL ACTION

The focus of the third Grindstone men's weekend, June 19-22 is on building a network of straight and gay men committed to challenging sexism and patriarchy in ourselves and society. Through play, music and celebration, we hope to renew our energies and share experiences with other men working for a better world. We will develop our abilities to facilitate change in ourselves and others by improving our group skills and by sharing ideas for consciousness-

raising, mutual support and action. We will also discuss ways of developing on-going links with the anti-sexist men's community. During the 3 days, we will attempt to model the leadership sharing, conflict resolution, trust building, mutual support and commitment to actions that we believe are required for personal and social change. The cost for three days including room and food is \$140 (\$124 low income, \$155 to support others). For more information, Grindstone Co-op, P.O. Box 564, Station P, M5S 2T1, (416) 923-4215.



## FATHER'S DAY RALLY

Father's Day, June 15, 1986, 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. at Nathan Phillips Square, Toronto City Hall. The Rally will be promoting child access enforcement for non-custodial fathers; joint custody; controls on alimony payments (both amounts and duration); protection for men against unfounded/ weak allegations of sexual harassment; a division of assets at divorce which reflects the contribution of each spouse. Political activity will be encouraged at the rally.

(Editors Note: The decision to include the above announcement was not made easily by this editor. My first impulse and considered decision was not to include it, but after an appreciated discussion with fellow members of TMC it was decided to include it and this note. Although I have not had direct involvement with ISOJ, my conversations with those that have and what I have read leave me with many feelings of incompatibility with what they are about and I'm left with many questions. Specifically, how will the "contribution of each spouse" be determined? Will day care, house care, husband care be given monetary valuation? More generally, the male dominated political, financial, and legal system gives men an unbalanced advantage in their pursuit of justice. My direct experience with women and the statistical data leads me to be and after several years of single parenting a daughter, I am far more concerned with the lack of and defaulting on alimony payments, the real, perverse and pervasive sexual harassment both in public and in the

workplace, and more seriously the sexual abuse many women experience. Though I also know that there are some men suffering and angry about their inaccessibility to their children, I rather approach this situation and other problems in our society with more of the analysis and perspective that comes from the feminist movement than I detect in ISOJ.

The above two notices show a difference of analysis and emphasis in the men's movement, a difference more clearly institutionalized in the U.S. With our difference, we are brothers and I hope that with openness, trust, and dialogue we move towards a just and loving society.)

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

"I have read several of your newsletters and generally find them informative and useful. A recent announcement in the March 1986 issue however presents a real problem for me and makes me wonder about your stance on heterosexism and sexism. The announcement which has raised this query for me poses the question "Are you dissatisfied with the women you meet in chance encounters?". This announcement is blatantly sexist! It reduces women to a commodity for the satisfaction of men and reinforces the power that men have over women in our society. It also reinforces a heterosexist bias in our society. Although I can sympathize with single, heterosexual, progressive men and their dilemma in finding the "social someone (woman)", I am furious with the suggested approach supporting the old boy mentality. Your sincerely, Marty"



## EDITOR'S RESPONSE

Having already personally discussed the above letter with the friend who wrote it, I've decided to continue the conversation in print. First a distinction between the decision to include the criticized piece and the writing and submitting of the piece. I leave the answering of the latter to the writer of the latter.

I find the above letter making a maximum amount of conclusions from a minimum of data. I as the one who in the brief amount of my life give to putting together this newsletter did not and still don't come to the conclusions that the announcement "reduces women to a commodity for the satisfaction of men and reinforces the power that men have over women in our society" or that "It reinforces a heterosexist bias in our society". Granted that our culture strives to reduce women to commodities and has a strong heterosexist bias, attempts for men to share their experiences with women may or may not feed into the sexism in our society. I gave the submitter the benefit of the doubt.

Though I value the dedication and efforts made by the submitter of the letter to the editor and appreciated the passion for a non-sexist world that I detect prompted the criticism, more appreciated by me, and I expect, by the brother who submitted the announcement would be some suggestions for how "single, heterosexual, progressive men" can more creatively deal with "their dilemma in finding that 'social someone (woman)'".

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### FRANK CARDELLE AVAILABLE FOR MEN'S WORKSHOPS:

Men's Movement activist and seminar leader Frank Cardell Ph.D. who lives in Winnipeg is available for workshops and is looking for local sponsorship to bring him into town. Frank has worked for many years with a wide variety of groups and is the author of a book for adolescents and also "Brothers: Men Building Bridges to Themselves and Others". He is offering workshops on Fathers and Sons, Brother-Men and Friendship, and Men and Women as allies. He is looking for an organization or group to pull together an event and promote it locally. He can be contacted at P.O. Box 2039, Winnipeg, Man. R3C 3R3 and you can try 204-237-8514. He is frequently away doing workshops so it is probably best to write him.

### FROM BRUCE HEIMBECKER IN B.C.

I have a proposition that I'd like you to mention and that is that I'm looking for 3-4 minute taped or cassette editorial pieces (any men's issue) to air (on "Air Male" Radio Program, CFUV FM 105.1). Folks can record these short essays on any cassette and send it to:  
Bruce Heimbecker, Air Male Radio Program, P.O. Box 1700, Victoria, B.C., V8W 2Y2.

### ANNUAL FEES ARE DUE

As a low budget operation, anything the Toronto Men's Clearinghouse does is done by volunteers. Your ten dollars goes for the cost of printing, mailing, answering machine and



phone bill. As a way of receiving your renewed annual fees we are asking you to send us another ten dollars when the renewal date on your mailing label has passed. Send it to: Toronto Men's Clearinghouse, Suite 204, 170 St. George St., Toronto, Ont. M5R 2M8.

SEND YOUR ANNOUNCEMENTS, REFLECTIONS, LETTERS, ETC. TO: TORONTO MEN'S CLEARINGHOUSE, SUITE 204, 170 ST. GEORGE ST., TORONTO, ONT. M5R 2MB.

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REFLECTIONS ON A DAY WELL SPENT  
MEN GETTING TOGETHER  
APRIL 5 AT ASBURY & WEST UNITED CHURCH  
by Greg Barsoski

- Hard to choose which workshop to attend, there were so many and all very interesting, 'What is Maleness', 'Men at Work', 'Fathering', ten in all, a good mix. Finally decided on 'Men and Work' and 'Men and Spirituality'.
- A friend was in a great mood today, bubbling over with joy like a glass full of fresh champagne.
- Funny being in a church again. This day doesn't seem churchish. The men are alive, not controlled.
- The first workshop was great. Eight participated, of varying backgrounds and openness. The facilitator generated a lot of heartfelt comments and the energyflow of the conversation was like standing in deep waves, rocked back and forth by the mutual sharing from within.
- Lunch was a groaning board of delight; vegetarian and meat lasagnas, salads, fresh warm bread, more salads, cookies, fresh juices and three helpings of carrot cake and cream cheese.
- The afternoon workshop was the largest and the most interesting, 'Men and Spirituality'! Some of the men were old enough to be my father, yet open enough to be my brother.
- Its hard to describe the warmth and the support of the male heart connected to male heart. There is a difference between nurturing and support.
- Wish I could remember the words of the songs we sang. They felt great. I'll get them next time.



## TORONTO MEN'S CLEARINGHOUSE

Suite 204, 170 St. George St., Toronto, Ont. M5R 2M8

### HOW TO JOIN A T.M.C. MEN'S SUPPORT GROUP

The men who established the Toronto Men's Clearinghouse feel that the men's movement is primarily personal and psychological in nature. Its heart is personal support and personal growth for men-strengthening themselves through sharing understanding, friendship and brotherhood together. Thus one of the Clearinghouse's major functions is to establish and facilitate support groups for men interested in sharing their experiences and friendship with each other. Support groups meet regularly (weekly or bi weekly) in a comfortable environment (e.g. members' homes). Leadership is shared, that is, no one person is designated as leader-so that all have the opportunity and obligation to take responsibility for the convening, content and process of the meetings. Required functions to be shared for a group are convener/contact person, host, moderator and timekeeper.

### HOW IT WORKS

If you would like to become involved in a men's support group, the first step is to call Warren Robinson at 961-3059. As this is an office number you will most often get the answering machine. Please leave your name and number(s) and say that you are interested in joining a Toronto Men's Clearinghouse support group. Mention any special interests you may have as these will influence the choice of the group you are placed with e.g. separation and divorce support, employment issues, relationship concerns etc. When approximately 10 names have been collected, Warren passes these along to one of our Clearinghouse volunteer facilitators. The facilitator then takes responsibility for contacting the men and finding a mutually agreeable time and place for the first meeting of the group. What usually happens is the facilitator asks one of the men on the list to help in the phonecalling involved and asks one of the prospective participants to offer his living room as the place of the first meeting. You will receive a call about this and when a mutually agreed time and place have been arranged, the facilitator will meet with your group and contract to meet again with you for 3-4 more weekly sessions. After this the group is expected to become self facilitating and to carry on on its own, arranging among themselves the times and places of their next regular meetings.

The facilitator's function is to convene the group and then teach and model the support group process of sharing and discussion, encouraging the group to rapidly take over their own internal and self perpetuating functions. After the facilitator has completed the initial startup process he continues to serve as a liason person to the main coordinating group of the Clearinghouse for ongoing networking.

### HOW TO CONNECT WITH A NEW SUPPORT GROUP

If you have been unable to meet with the first group you were contacted about, your name will be returned to the "pot" and you will get another call when the next group is being formed by the next facilitator- so you will have another opportunity to get connected. If you got started with a support group but dropped out for any reason i.e. you couldn't keep their schedule,

or the group didn't suit your needs or interests, or eventually just broke up, you can reconnect with a new support group by calling Warren Robinson again (961-3059) and starting the process anew.

#### FEEES, FACILITATORS, NETWORKING

The Toronto Men's Clearinghouse is a voluntary organisation and there are no fees for any of the facilitators services to the support groups. What we do ask however is that each man in a support group becomes a subscriber to the T.M.C. Newsletter and contributes the annual fee of \$10.00 to the cost of supporting the service for the benefit of new men to come. Also , as the groups expand we will need more volunteer facilitators. If you are a man with experience in running or participating in men's support or consciousness raising groups and would like to volunteer to be a facilitator for new T.M.C. support groups, please call Warren Robinson and let us know of your interest and experience.

It is our vision that an increasing number of men in Toronto will become interested in the men's movement and in the benefits of sharing contact and support with new brothers. As the groups expand we foresee a great opportunity for networking and coming together in larger gatherings for further enriching our lives. We encourage all men who contact us to consider joining a T.M.C. men's support group.



TORONTO MEN'S CLEARINGHOUSE

Many men want to improve the quality of their lives through mutual understanding, personal growth, and emotional support activities with other men. To facilitate the development of this in Toronto, a group of men have established the Toronto Men's Clearinghouse to provide central collection and dissemination of information about meetings, events, resources and personal contacts for men in Toronto, and to sponsor ongoing and special events for men.

Enclosed you will find this month's Bulletin. If you would like to be on our mailing list to receive our updated issues and special mailings for a 12 month period, please return the form below with \$10.00 to cover the cost of maintaining the service for yourself and for new men to come. Please make cheques payable to Dr. Warren Robinson - TMC.

If you have any information you would like to offer to the men of Toronto through a listing in our upcoming Bulletin, please send a brief description and contact information to the address below. Also, if you want to indicate your interests, concerns, involvements, etc., please do so on the back of this form and we will take them into consideration.

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TORONTO MEN'S CLEARINGHOUSE

Today's Date \_\_\_\_\_

Please put me on the Toronto Men's Clearinghouse mailing list for the next 12 months. I enclose \$10.00 to cover the cost of maintaining the service (cheque payable to Dr. Warren Robinson - TMC).

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Postal code)

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ (Office) \_\_\_\_\_ (Res.)

Return to: TORONTO MEN'S CLEARINGHOUSE  
Suite 204  
170 St. George Street  
Toronto, Ontario, M5R 2M8

Tel: (416) 233-0025