

# Inside Capilano College

By MARGARET KIRK

During my two years on Capilano College Council, I found a vast difference between the media created image of the Women's Movement and the very real, dedicated people involved in the Women's Studies Program at Capilano College.

In the past, the media has portrayed the Women's Movement as a militant, aggressive group of unhappy, discontented females. This created a negative response from the public; in particular, many of the very women the Movement was attempting to reach.

At a recent College Conference, I recall my own experience with a militant feminist from Ontario preaching violence as a solution to women's concerns. This "fellow female" attacked me in rather colourful language for suggesting that the image of Women's Lib should be improved if women were to expect change in the public attitude. When I also suggested that the problem with the Women's Movement's image was that "she" was that "image," she turned on her heel and left the room.

Understandably cautious, I accepted an invitation from the Women's Studies Group at Capilano College to attend a seminar on the "Problems of Women in Education." I was pleasantly surprised! There were no clenched fists upraised, no shrill voices advocating violence — instead,

valid concerns raised in a reasonable, good humoured manner. This was my introduction to the Women's Studies Group at Cap College.

The Women's Studies Program was established in the fall of 1973 at Lynnmour Campus in the form of a non-credit lecture series. An advisory body; the Women's Steering Committee, was composed of representatives from the college faculty, staff, student body and four women from the N. Shore community. Obviously, the need was there — women have responded and the program is expanding rapidly. This year's courses, (despite some earlier setbacks) are varied, ranging from "Men and Women in Transition" to a workshop in basic car maintenance.

Ideally, the program is designed to 'reach out' to women of all ages, at all economic levels and differing personal circumstances. I do not see this happening. The majority of women attracted by these program offerings, to date, in my opinion, are the middle and upper middle class residents of the N. Shore who already have some grounding in Post-Secondary Education. Women in real need are not visible at present.

Acknowledging my concern, a member of the Women's Steering Committee assured me that when budget restrictions are eased, a Resource Office will be established which will help considerably to identify and serve these women in need, single parents, widows and women on welfare.

Is male chauvinism alive and well at Capilano College?

It all depends on who you talk to. Everyone agrees, it does exist in a more subtle form. The question is, to what degree?

One group supports Dr. Frances Burstein, Coordinator of the English Department and a Faculty member of the Women's Steering Committee who had this to say: "By and large, although there have been some individuals not keen on the development of Women's Studies, the faculty at Cap College has been very supportive of the Women's Studies Program.

On the other hand, some female faculty members, staff and students report a number of cases of "paternalism" on the part of the Administration and Faculty. Perhaps, in all fairness, some of them are simply unaware of the "other half's" desire for equal opportunities, responsibilities and freedom of choices.

Both groups are in complete agreement on one point — new Women's Studies Programs have never been encouraged or initiated by the Administration of Capilano College who are, of course, all male!

Capilano College has come a long way in recognizing the equality of women, but, it would seem, still has a "few lessons" to learn. Administrators should not see new Women's Studies courses as a pacifier, but as serving a real need from within the community.

The Principal, Peter Spratt, advised Council at the March 16th meeting, of the possibili-

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