I'm sorry, Mrs Smith, but I still can't see why you need an abortion... (see page one)
Only three hospitals use this new abortion method. Why?

Left: an out-patient abortion at Freestem, an American non-profit making clinic, where 6,000 vacuum abortions have been carried out in a year without a single death. A local anaesthetic can be given to reduce discomfort and a counsellor talks the woman through the operation, which takes two or three minutes. Above: Dr Harvey Karman’s ‘catheter’ – the latest vacuum method, disposable and hand-operated, which can help to undermine the mystique of the medical profession and give back to women control of their own bodies.
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This month the Women's Abortion and Contraception Campaign gives evidence to the Lane Commission set up to examine the workings of the 1967 Abortion Act. Below we publish a brief account of the NHS abortion scandal, followed by three examples of women refused abortion.

Theoretically the abortion situation in this country is one of straightforward confrontation between women and the medical profession. In practice this doesn't happen because the majority of women who seek abortion are at the mercy of medical attitudes and whims as isolated individuals faced with the edifice of the NHS within a society which views abortion as 'wrong'.

If, however, they want an abortion on the NHS they are forced to accept the drawing-out process met out on grounds of punishment for having ever got themselves in the position of needing an abortion in the first place.

Abortion is legally available on the NHS but in practice NHS provision is limited and discriminatory. Only 4% of legal abortions are carried out on the NHS. The rest are done in private clinics most of which charge exploitative rates. Many women prefer to pay these rates rather than suffer the NHS obstacles and delays.

At this point in time the key to NHS provision lies with the 600 more consultant gynaecologists throughout the country - doctors whose role is supposedly one of providing assistance to pregnant women. As yet, gynaecologists have not focused on the women's needs. Very few of them are prepared to consider termination of a pregnancy as a viable alternative choice to childbirth. And those who do not, do not think it will lightly be given.

Then there is the infamous regional variation in the availability of abortions, which is due to the attitudes of individual gynaecologists. Birmingham and Leeds are the worst black spots. In Reading and Oxford the gynaecologists are prominent members of SPUC (Society for the Protection of the Unborn Child). However, even in those hospitals where the attitude is 'liberal' there are delays caused by the apathetic and grinding medical hierarchy which put women through unnecessary suffering.

The grind begins from the moment a woman approaches her GP to have a pregnancy test. The procedures for admission for abortion vary in confirming pregnancy. When there is uncertainty about whether or not the woman is pregnant, she is subjected to tests, in some cases a course of pills which will bring on menstruation if she is not pregnant. This can take one week before the results become known.

If the results are positive, the GP will then give the woman a form for her to take to the hospital for the test and appointment for pregnancy testing. When the woman has delivered the sample to the hospital, it may take up to a week for the hospital to examine it and send back the result.

If the results of the hospital test are negative but the woman is in fact pregnant, either the test was unreliable or the GP sent her before the test was reliably indicated that she was pregnant. In either case, another month's delay will take place before the first hospital will refer her GP to repeat the testing procedure.

When the results are positive, the woman returns to her GP to make a request for an abortion. If the GP agrees to refer her for an abortion, he will give the woman a referral letter and either he, or the woman herself, will then book an appointment at a hospital. Generally this hospital will be the hospital where the abortion will be performed if the woman's request is accepted by the hospital doctor.

The delays involved at this stage - even in liberal hospitals - can be anything up to a month. The reason is that hospitals feel biased towards GPs who are not referred to the doctor's practice. But told me that no doctor up here (Bradford) would say I was suitable for an abortion. He told me I am not a mother or a child. I am an adopted and no child of mine is going to be if I can help it. I knew I could not get enough money to pay for the abortion. I decided I would have to get rid of it myself. My friend got me some pills, and I knew myself around a lot and generally did everything I wasn't supposed to do. I kept on using a knitting needle as my friend did, after being told that she couldn't have an abortion either. Anyway I had a miscarriage.

Seven months ago I found I was pregnant. I am 16 years old and in the sixth form at school. I didn't want a child, not because of what the neighbours would think, but because I didn't think I was capable mentally and physically of bringing up a child. I value my freedom too much. I was afraid of the doctor's power. He told me that no doctor up here (Bradford) would say I was suitable for an abortion. He told me I am not a mother or a child. I am an adopted and no child of mine is going to be if I can help it. I knew I could not get enough money to pay for the abortion. I decided I would have to get rid of it myself. My friend got me some pills, and I knew myself around a lot and generally did everything I wasn't supposed to do. I kept on using a knitting needle as my friend did, after being told that she couldn't have an abortion either. Anyway I had a miscarriage. After this I went back to the doctor and asked him to refer me. I was extremely unsympathetic and moralised a good deal. He said I could say no or use Durex. I said I objected to Durex on medical grounds. I didn't think they were safe, as my friend had two split on her - and my boyfriend didn't like them either. He said my boyfriend couldn't think much of me, he wouldn't do that. I tried to make it clear that I didn't like them and I didn't feel safe they were - he wouldn't listen.

Anyway the doctor said it was against his morals to prescribe contraception for me - especially at my age (he is not a Catholic). He realised I would do it again, but that was my affair. I said I could go to the family planning association but he wasn't the first guy I'd slept with.

Anyway the doctor said it was against his morals to prescribe contraception for me - especially at my age (he is not a Catholic). He realised I would do it again, but that was my affair. I said I could go to the family planning association but he wasn't the first guy I'd slept with.

I went to the FPA. They asked me when I was getting married and said it would cost 3 guineas just for consultation. I couldn't afford this and still can't, so meanwhile I'll just have to cross my fingers. It seems I would have to live to get on the pill. I don't even know if I am responsible. I do not see why his morals should affect me. It is disgusting that I shall have to be dishonest at the FPA. I can get 3 guineas. Dishonesty is against my morals.

I know if we had free contraception and abortion the children would be different. If children. Other girls I know have come across the same difficulties in obtaining contraception and fear to go to their doctor. They are afraid of everything he will say, or that he will say no. And they can't afford 3 guineas and the cost of contraception on top at the FPA.

In 1969 when Helen Keller found she was pregnant she was married to a 13 year old and a baby of five months. Helen was still suffering from depression after the birth of the baby. She was
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Theoretically the abortion situation in this country is straightforward confrontation between women and the medical profession. In practice this doesn't happen because the majority of women are too frightened to speak out or too hidebound by the ethos of medical attitudes and whm's: as isolated individuals faced with the edifices of the NHS within a society which views abortion as a 'sinful' act, they are not in a position to confront. Rather, if they want an abortion on the NHS they are forced to accept a dehumanising drawn-out procedure meted out as a form of punishment for having ever got themselves in the position of needing an abortion in the first place.

Abortion is legally available on the NHS but in practice NHS provision is limited and discriminatory. Only 3% of all legal abortions are carried out on the NHS. The rest are done in private clinics most of which charge exploitative rates. Many women prefer to pay these rates rather than suffer the NHS obstacles to abortion.

At this point in time the key to NHS provision lies with the 600 or more consultant gynaecologists throughout the country - doctors whose role is supposedly one of providing assistance to pregnant women. As yet, gynaecologists have a laissez-faire approach to the women's needs. Very few of them are prepared to consider termination of a pregnancy as a viable alternative choice to childbirth, and even fewer, if anything, would really give light to the idea.

Then there is the infamous regional variation in the way the abortion and contraception services are run, which is due to the attitudes of individual gynaecologists. Birmingham and Leeds are the worst black spots. In Leeds, for instance, Carole Tuckman is a leading light among the medical profession and is a prominent member of SPUC (Society for the Protection of the Unborn Child). However, even in those hospitals where the attitude is 'liberal' there are delays caused by the apathetic and grinding inefficiency of the hospitals which put women through unnecessary suffering.

The grind begins from the moment a woman approaches her GP to have a pregnancy test. The procedures are converted to 'abortion' in confirming pregnancy vary. When there is uncertainty about whether or not the woman is pregnant, it is during early pregnancy, so a woman has a course of pills which will bring on menstruation if she is not pregnant. This course takes one week before the results become known.

If the results are positive, the GP will then write to her GP to request a form for her to take to her GP to confirm the pregnancy for pregnancy testing. When the woman has delivered the sample to the hospital, it may take up to a week for the hospital to examine and confirm the pregnancy. If the results of the hospital test are negative but the woman is in fact pregnant, either the test was unreliable or the GP sent her to the wrong hospital. Reliably indicate that she was pregnant. In either case, another month's delay will take place before the first hospital sends her GP to repeat the testing procedure.

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The delays involved at this stage - even in liberal hospitals - can be anything up to a month. The reason is that hospitals feel ill-at-ease about dealing with women who are continuing the pregnancy through the same appointment booking system. Then once the consultation is over there is a wait. Peruvian women are too even in liberal hospitals there can be a delay of up to a month because the ward and operating theatre are shared with obstetric and other medical patients. If one woman was to experience the maximum amount of delay at each stage she would be expected to spend five months. Yet very few doctors will carry out an abortion this late in pregnancy because of the risks involved.

It could be argued that hospitals are trying to be fair to all obstetric and gynaecological patients and that because of the limited appointment times, theatre time and bed space. But what is probably closer to the truth is that hospitals don't care very much for abortion. The procedures are not prepared to rearrange their schedules for this 'bad' section of their clientele. The resulting delays force women to undergo pregnancy tests when the operation is far more dangerous. The death rate for abortions carried out early in pregnancy before the 12th week is only 9 per 100,000 compared to 17 per 100,000 for abortions done at all stages of pregnancy up to 20 weeks. And on the subject of the death rate, it should be mentioned fact that the death rate associated with childbirth is 19 per 100,000.

The only conclusion to be drawn from this is that certain sectors of the medical profession are wantonly risking the lives of pregnant women. Abortion before the 12th week is a completely safe operation, and at comparatively little cost on an outpatient basis. This is being done on a little in the rural hospitals. Why is it not available within all obstetric and gynaecological departments? It is no exaggeration to say that, until it is, the NHS is killing women - the killer being a mixture of apathy and reactionary conservatism laced with a streak of puritanical righteousness.

Seven months ago I found I was pregnant. I am 16 years old and in the sixth form at school. I didn't want a child, not because of what the neighbors would think, but because I didn't think I was capable mentally and physically of bringing up a child. I value my freedom too much. The doctor at the booked told me it was available in one of the local clinics. He told me that no doctor up here (Bradford) would say I was suitable for an abortion. He said that I only wanted one because I had adopted it. I am adopted and no child of mine is going to be if I can help it. I knew I could not get enough money to pay for the operation. I didn't know what I could do to get rid of it myself. My friend got me some pills, and I knocked myself around a lot and generally did everything I wouldn't normally do. I couldn't because I was using a knitting needle as my friend did, after being told that she couldn't have an abortion either. Anyway I had a miscarriage. After this I went to the doctor and asked her about a contraceptive. He was extremely unsympathetic and moralised a good deal. He said I could say no or use Duralex. I said I objected to Duralex on religious grounds. He told me they were safe, as my friend had two split on her - and my boyfriend didn't like them either. He said my boyfriend couldn't think much anymore. Then I tried to make it clear that I didn't like them and I didn't feel they were safe - but he wouldn't listen. My boyfriend said Duralex would stop me catching YD.

He asked me if I intended marrying my boyfriend. I said I loved him, but I was under 16 and he is 19 and thought that I didn't really believe in marriage as an institution anyway. He then said I was being used as an 'innocent victim'. I got rather angry. I told him that he wasn't the first guy I'd slept with.

Anyway the doctor said it was against his morals to prescribe contraception for me, especially at my age (he is not a Catholic). He realised I would do it again, but that was my affair. He said I could go to the Family Planning Association. I was admitted if they would put me on the pill.

I went to the FPA. They asked me when I was getting married and said it would cost 3 guineas just for consultation. I couldn't afford this and still can't, so meanwhile I'll just have to cross my fingers.

It seems I would have to lie to get on the pill. Although it is not really irresponsible. I do not see why his morals should affect me. It is disgusting that I shall have to be dishonest at the FPA. I can get 3 guineas. Dishonesty is against my morals.

I know if we had free contraception and abortion, women would be freer, safer and healthier children. Other girls I know have come across the same difficulties in obtaining contraception and fear to go to their doctors, they fear that he will say, or that he will say no. And they can't afford 3 guineas and the cost of contraception on top at the FPA.

In 1969 when Helen Keller found she was pregnant she was 16, she had a 3 year old and a baby of five months. Helen was still suffering from depression after the birth of the baby. She was
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Their history, the makes that she was pregnant and this because her life had been unhappy for some years. My parents were quite kind throughout this period, but some of my relatives were very disapproving to say the least.

My friends were very sympathetic: one girl found a back-street abortionist who was, unfortunately, unsuccessful. And at work (an underground newspaper) they were very understanding. If they hadn’t been, I should have felt more suicidal than I did. I worked up to two days before the birth.

Sue never had any doubts about wanting an abortion: I had no maternal instinct, no permanent relationship, no money. ‘I had no cash whatsoever. I was working in an interesting and responsible job but was paid only £15 a week.’

The first person she went to see, when she was six weeks pregnant, was her family doctor. She gave ‘emotional instability’ as her reason for wanting an abortion. The doctor referred her to a gynaecologist, saying she had no need to worry – but he was wrong.

The gynaecologist who examined me was extremely curt and said that since I hadn’t learned my lesson after two previous abortions he would not approve it unless the psychiatrist was convinced it would be a good idea. I felt that the gynaecologist thought me a tramp.

In the questionnaire which Sue completed for the Women’s Abortion and Contraception Campaign she described her encounter with the psychiatrist as follows:

Reasons she gave for needing an abortion

Mental history – two attempted suicides, two periods in mental institutions.

Their reactions (advice, referral, etc) Refused.

Their attitude

Censorious.

Then came the visit to the back-street abortionist. It cost £20 – and failed. ‘I didn’t return as the method used was so unpleasant and dangerous.’

That was it. The baby was born and adopted by Sue’s married brother, while she went back to work after three weeks.

The questionnaire, in its iconoclastic style, records one further answer of interest to the medical profession:

Effect of having baby on her mental health

Difficult to judge – have had no complete breakdowns since. But would never again consult state psychiatrist.

Where to go for an abortion if you can’t get one on the NHS

The pregnancy advisory services listed below are not in it for the money. They will try to get you an NHS abortion, if they think you should have one, even if the NHS has already refused you. They charge as little as possible for a private abortion and can sometimes give grants or loans if you’re really hard up.

* Pregnancy Advisory Service, 40 Margaret Street, London W1 (629 9375)  
  Marie Stopes Memorial Clinic (Counselling Services: Dr Jacobe), 108 Whitefield Street, London W1 (388 0662)
  Brook Advisory Centre (For Young People), 231 Tottenham Court Road, London W1 (500 2991)
  Help, 10 South Wharf Road, London W2 (482 5231)
  Birmingham Pregnancy Advisory Service, First floor, Guildhall Buildings, Navigation Street, Birmingham 2 (021-643 1461)  
  Branches of the Birmingham PAO:
  Southern Pregnancy Advisory Service, Whiston, Staveley, Oldham (on the corner of Dyke Road and Old Shaw Road)
  Horseyfield, Gloscay, Manor Road, Wallasey, Cheshire
  Coventry: the Compass Clinic, Bank Street, Rugby, Warwickshire
Helen now could not imagine life without her baby but she says if it were 1969 again and she were to be offered an abortion she would definitely have it.

When Sue Small, who had had two previous abortions, became pregnant for the third time, she was in her own words 'appalled'. I lived in a daze most of the time, praying it was just a nightmare. 'I was physically fit but mentally unstable, partly because I was pregnant and also because my personal life had been unhappy for some years. My parents were quite kind throughout this period, but some of my relatives were very disapproving to say the least.

My friends were very sympathetic: one girl found a back street abortionist who was, unfortunately, unsuccessful. And at work (an underground newspaper) they were very understanding. If they hadn't been, I should have felt more suicidal than I did. I worked up to two days before the birth.' Sue never had any doubts about wanting an abortion: 'I had no maternal instinct, no permanent relationship, no money.'

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Exhausted most of the time - the older child who was rather slow with her talking had a special place at a playgroup about a mile away, which meant that Helen had to spend quite a time each day running backwards and forwards - that is when she actually found the energy to get both children ready first thing in the morning.

Helen's husband, a council worker, was earning about £15 a week. They were living in a first floor flat - living room, kitchen, one bedroom and shared bathroom and toilet. This flat was over-run with mice.

Helen could not believe she was pregnant at first. Her mother, who was just horrified, suggested that she take Beecham's pills in view of the position.

When these didn't work Helen turned to her doctor. She thought that he would understand that she could not have another child. She referred to one of her financial problems and her living conditions, and reminded him of the ages of her two children. He told her she was a strong healthy girl and wrote her a letter for the hospital.

This letter - which Helen steamed open - was booking a bed for the confinement. It mentioned, more as an after-thought, that Helen was talking of an abortion but completely dismissed the idea.

At the hospital, the doctor had a nice one-on-one chat with Helen. He told her that she would always wonder about the baby and that she would never forgive herself if she had an abortion. He assured her that they would look after her and that everything would turn out well. Helen had her one and only meeting with the Medical Social Worker that day. She promised that all Helen's problems would be resolved. With the home nurse having failed, and a NHS abortion referee nowhere else for Helen to turn and so she went ahead and had her third child.

And now - the baby is a little over a year old. She has just been in hospital with a condition that Helen could have nursed herself if it had not been for her home conditions.

She is coping financially now. Her husband has a payrise but it is the extra family allowance that makes the difference.

She still suffers with her nerves, but she feels that she is lucky in that she only has to go and pick up a prescription from the surgery when they are bad.

Their attitude Censorious

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6. Branches of the Birmingham P.S.
7. Southorn Pregnancy Advisory Service, Whiston, Mose (on the corner of Dyke Road and Old Shoreham Road)
8. Heregshire: Glencove, Manor Road, Wallasey, Cheshire
9. Coventry: the Goundon Clinic, Barker Butte Lane, Goundon, Coventry

The above is the text as it appears on the page.
What went on at the Langham Street Clinic?

57 per cent of legal abortions take place in private clinics, most of which charge exploitative rates. And there is often a concealed connexion between these clinics and 'pregnancy advisory services'. The Liverpool Free Press has exposed the link between the Elgin-o-a-time Lynwood Nursing Home and Liverpool's Pregnancy Information and Advisory Centre. A company called Parvis Holdings Ltd financed the clinic and founded the information and advisory centre. Parvis Holdings Ltd is owned by Dr Parvis Paridian, who is also proprietor of the Langham Street Clinic...

This is the clinic — the biggest private abortion centre in Britain — which has recently had its licence to carry out abortions withdrawn by the Department of Health and Social Security. It has been suggested that the Langham Street Clinic was in fact suppressed because it broke the unofficial agreement between the Department and the private clinics that a certain proportion of beds was to be kept for British women — as an over-flush from the National Health Service. For theLangham Street Clinic is accused of having taken too many foreigners.

All private professional treatment whether in the medical field, law or accountancy is costly. The fee is always proportionate to the skill, existence and experience of the professional person concerned. The Langham is, you may say, in a peculiar position: we do not employ a single doctor. The clinic rents out its facilities, its nursing staff, theatre, rooms and drags to a surgeon who wants to make use of the clinic. When a girl comes to us she is referred to a Harlow Street surgeon who is known to be working in our theatre on the day she can make arrangements to come into the clinic.

Half the women that come to us are married and I suppose that we have to be sure of having their operations in a certain degree of comfort, which they know we provide — the Langham has televisions in every room and telephones by the bedside and, being married, are in a position to afford it. A girl who has been let down by a husband is going to find it much more difficult to get the money.

Next year's inquiries must be the last, if we have not already been overwhelmed by the volume of medical practice which could bring additional work to the clinic.

We were running a business after all. A lot depended on the doctor's letter a girl brought with her. If we had established a relationship with the doctor and he wrote a reference saying that he knew this girl and that she came from a very poor family etc., the girl would certainly not have turned us down.

Later in 1969-70, we wrote to Westminster City Council saying that we could perform for them five legal abortions per week, if they could provide the facilities for screening and selecting deserving cases. They wrote back thanking us for our offer but explained that they had not the facilities to screen, and suggesting that we select cases through GPs — as indeed we were already doing. We wrote again that we could not advertise this service in the paper — one, because it was illegal, and two, because we would have been overwhelmed, we were committed in the long term to making a profit.

Was the refusal to renew your licence in any way justifiable, in your opinion?

Most certainly unjustifiable. We have a question about the legality of the clinic just complying with the terms of the act. From March 1968 we have letters written to the Department of Health asking what else we could have been required to do. We are not interested in providing the minimum requirements. As a business we can't compete with the state. We have to try to meet their requirements. We cannot afford the care of a woman and the treatment of the clinic with TV's and telephones, for the use of people who could afford such comfort.

The exact words used by the Secretary of State in his letter were that the Langham was 'satisfied that the clinic has been operating...regarding the use of beds for abortions'. We don't think we have. We don't know what assurances they gave. When we wrote in December asking them to what assurances they referred, we had no reply. For several years the Ministry of Health gave us our licence and the local health department fixed our number of beds at 35. In 1970 we applied for an increase from 35 to 55 beds and this was granted, after a further application to the department who felt we could cope with this increase.

From August 1968 to 6 March this year we have dealt with 26,500 patients. Obviously we don't solicit testimonials and this operation is not something the girls are going to want to keep secret. One section of newspapers printing some loads of Christmas cards are sent to the staff, often signed by one name only. Certainly as far as the medical records are concerned we see no reason why the licence should be refused.

The statistics are all available from the returns our doctors are obliged to make to the department, not the sake of the records. There is no private hospital, probably, in Western Europe, which has done so many operations. We have written to the department urging them to study those records. When we had performed 1,500 operations, the Daily Telegraph newspaper fact together with the information that there had been one death or serious complication. Questions have been asked and satisfactorily answered in Parliament regarding our treatment.

There have been complaints about us, but I can count them on the fingers of one hand. One patient complained about three giggling girls at reception and that someone spoke to her in German. Well, we encourage our girls to be cheerful, but certainly there weren't three — nobody employs three receptionists on a Sunday morning. Another complained that a girl who said she was not encouraged to stay on after her operation. This is nonsense — she would certainly have signed a form disclaiming responsibility for herself from the moment she entered and we had been warned that it was best to stay overnight. The local authorities wrote to tell us that they preferred us to encourage patients to stay in hospital overnight, so we have always done this. But finally it is up to the surgeon to take responsibility for any other patient should go on or remain. One doctor also wrote after the report in the Telegraph so that a patient had come to know we were seeing abortions, but it turned out to have been just a mild infection.

Again it is nonsense to say that the clinic was shut on moral grounds. Half our patients are married with children already, and 90 per cent of the rest have steady boyfriends. One section of the population which we invariably their first question and major concern in whether this operation will affect their chances of having a child later.
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57 per cent of legal abortions take place in private clinics, most of which charge exploitative rates. And there is often a concealed connexion between these clinics and 'pregnancy advisory services'. The Liverpool Free Press has exposed the link between the 1930s-time Liverpool Nursing Homes and Liverpool’s Pregnancy Information and Advisory Centre. A company called Parvis Holdings Ltd financed the clinic and founded the information and advisory centre. Parvis Holdings Ltd is owned by Dr Parvis Paridian, who is also proprietor of the Langham Street Clinic...

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Below we publish an interview with Peter Stanley, the Langham Street Clinic's legal adviser.

Why was the Langham Street Clinic first established?

The clinic was opened shortly before the 1967 Abortion Act as a nursing home or private hospital, and licensed for medical and surgical work by the Westminster City Council, under the Public Health Act of 1936 and the Nursing Homes Acts of 1963. When the Abortion Act was passed we applied for permission to carry out terminations of pregnancies like many other nursing homes that were well-equipped. Having gone to the expense of being well-equipped it cannot be denied that one applied for a licence because this was the field of medical practice which could bring additional work to the clinic.

What made the cost of an abortion at the Langham Street Clinic so high?

All private professional treatment whether in the medical field, law or accountancy is costly. The fee is always proportionate to the skill, eminence and experience of the professional person concerned. The Langham is, you may say, in a peculiar position: we do not employ a single doctor. The clinic rents out its facilities, its nursing staff, theatre, rooms and drags to a surgeon who wants to make use of the clinic. When a girl comes to us she is referred to a Harlay Street surgeon who is known to be working in our theatre on the day she can make arrangements to come into the clinic.

Half the women that come to us are married and I suppose that what we want is to have our operations in a certain degree of comfort, which they know we provide — the Langham has televisions in every room and telephones by the bedside and, being married, are in a position to afford it. A girl who has been let down by a hospital is going to find it much more difficult to get the money.

What would happen if a girl came to the Langham for an operation but had no money?

It depended. In the early days there were not too many applications of this kind, but when girls came in with surgical apparatus they were usually helped. One had to be very careful because if word got around that the clinic was performing free abortions then we would have a problem with our charitable or semi-charitable requests — and we were running a business after all. A lot depended on the doctor’s letter a girl brought with her. If we had established a relationship with the doctor and he wrote a reference saying that he knew this girl and she came from a very poor family etc., the girl would certainly not be turned away.

Later in 1969–70, we wrote to Westminster City Council saying that we could perform for them five operations per week, if they could provide the facilities for screening and selecting deserving cases. They wrote back thanking us for all our help, but that they had not the facilities to screen, and suggesting that we select cases through GPs — as indeed we were already doing. Why, then, did the Department not advertise this service in the papers — one, because it was illegal, and two, because we would have been overwhelmed. We were committed in the long term to making a profit.

Was the refusal to renew your licence in any way justifiable, in your opinion?

Most certainly unjustifiable. We have always adhered to the law and, so far as we knew, have just complied with the terms of the act. From March 1968 we have letters written to the Department of Health asking what else we had to do to meet their requirements. We are not interested in providing the minimum requirements. As a business we calculate the expenses and do exactly that. Also, we had this long-term idea of the clinic with TV’s and telephones, for the use of richer people who could afford such comforts.

The exact words used by the Secretary of State in his letter were that ‘the clinic has been satisified that the clinic has been unreasonable regarding the use of beds for abortions’. We don’t think we have. We don’t know what assurances they were referring to. When we wrote in December asking them what assurances they referred, we had no reply. For several years the Ministry of Health gave us our licence and the local health department fixed our number of beds at 35. In 1970 we applied for an increase from 35 to 55 beds and this was granted, after a surgeon in the department who felt we could cope with this increase.

From August 1968 to 6 March this year we have dealt with 26,500 patients. Obviously we don’t solicit testimonial[s] and this operation is not something the girls are going to want to boast about. If the women load[s] of Christmas cards are sent to the staff, often signed by one name only. Certainly as far as the medical records are concerned we see no reason why the licence should be refused.

The justification are all available from the returns our doctors are obliged to make to the Department of Health and Social Security, and in the case of records. There is no private hospital, probably, in Western Europe, which has done as many operations for fee as we have. We wrote to the Department urging them to study those records. When we had performed 1000 operations, the Daily Telegraph newspaper fact together with the information that there had been no death or serious complication. Questions have been asked and satisfactorily answered in Parliament regarding our treatment.

There have been complaints about us, but I can count on the fingers of one hand the personnel complained about three giggling girls at reception and that someone spoke to her in German. Well, we encourage our doctors to be cheerful, but certainly there weren’t three — nobody employs three receptionists on a Sunday morning. Another complaint was a girl who said she was not encouraged to stay on after her operation. This is nonsense — she would certainly have signed a form disapproving discharge from the hospital, and we have been taught that it was best to stay overnight. The local authorities wrote to tell us that they preferred us to encourage patients to stay in hospital overnight, so we have always done this. But finally it is up to the surgeon to take responsibility to say whether or not his patient should go on or remain. One doctor also wrote after the report in the Telegraph to say that a patient had come to him with a swollen uterus — but it turned out to have been just a mild infection.

Again it is nonsense to say that the clinic was put on moral grounds. Half our patients are married with children already, and 90 per cent of the rest have steady boyfriends. We believe in and promote an inevitably their first question and major concern in whether this operation will affect their chances of having a child later.
How much would equal pay cost Cussons?

Things happen after a badedas bath
(they say it's got something to do with the horse chestnuts)

The green badedas waters which bubble like vintage champagne. The mysterious action of a special extract of horse chestnuts. The fresh smell of deep green continental forests. But it's what happens afterwards that counts. To the new, invigorated, re-born you.

About as much as they spend on TV ads.

As an aphrodisiac Badeadas does not discriminate between the sexes, but in their factorises Cussons do.
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badedas
the most stimulating thing since bathing itself with extract of horse chestnuts

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(What we're going to do with the horse chestnuts)
At the end of last year the Industrial Relations Review and Report published a survey of the progress 46 big companies were making towards equal pay. Among those which bluntly admitted that 'at present none of their women employees receive equal pay' was the Cussons Group, makers of Imperial Leather soap. Badges both oil and various cleaning and cosmetic products geared to the women's market.

Cussons plan to implement equal pay, gradually, by 1975. The reason they give for the delay is a 'general problem that equal pay represents to them - it is money'. If they do, they say, cost them £200,000.

Cussons also reported the largest segregated area of the 46 firms (their process workers are all women) - keeping this segregation is the most effective way of minimising the potential cost of equal pay.

Cussons reported that they did employ women in skilled jobs - yet they were one of only two companies in the survey to admit to giving smaller pensions to women than to men. But the most reactionary and complacent reply Cussons made was to the question: What is your opinion of the general attitude of the company's female employees towards equal pay? 'Not yet showing awareness' they said.

In an attempt to check this provocative claim an INSIDE STORY reporter approached the shop steward of Cussons' Manchester factory and suggested an interview with some women workers. The steward - who was, naturally, a man - was by no means enthusiastic, but he readily agreed. However, he added that it would of course be necessary to obtain the consent of the management before any interview could be arranged.

The personnel director was even less straightforward. There was, he said, only one possible time for an interview and that was during the lunch break - but since the women only had half an hour for lunch he was sorry: there wouldn't be time for an interview.

The overall personnel director of Cussons, Mr John Burnett, made it quite clear that accuracy and evasion were general company policy. 'We do try to follow the general pattern of staged increases towards equal pay,' he said, but he gave no further details. 'I'm not going to say what that is or what we're doing.'

And - in order to relate to the Union of Shop, Distribution and Allied Workers were equally uninformative: they admitted that they knew nothing about the progress of equal pay in the Cussons Group. And they weren't very concerned.

But there are a few facts available which will probably interest the women who work for Cussons. One is that the Group's 'financial problem' of finding £200,000 is not exactly insoluble. For in the six months ending September 1971 Cussons made a profit of £10,000. In the full year 1970-1971 the figure was £510,233.

Suddenly £200,000 - the cost of equal pay for the women Cussons employ - doesn't seem such an impossible sum.

Or take profits after tax - the money available for distribution to shareholders: in the first half of 1971-1972 Cussons made £153,000 (compared with £132,000 in the first half of 1970-1971). So, after tax, the Group is now proving invincible, with a dividend of £300,000 a year.

Spare a thought, too, for the directors of Cussons, one of whom was paid £2,303 in 1970-1971, while their company report revealed that a retiring director was presented with a gold handshake of £6,452. And the handout didn't even total all the old expenses: there was also the odd thousand spent on charity by this firm which is too poor to give women equal pay. Last year Cussons gave away to unspecified charities - more than £3,000.

And, lastly, have a look at Cussons' expenditure on advertising the ad themselves are difficult to avoid. In 1971, the Group spent a total of £3,019,837 on advertising. The money spent on TV ads alone - £231,034 - would have solved Cussons' equal pay 'problem'. If they'd wanted to solve it, that is.

THE EQUAL PAY ACT

Anyone assuming that the Equal Pay Act is going to be the automatic answer to the economic problems of the downtrodden women of this country, is in for a rude awakening. Not only is there widespread opposition to the Act from employers - and trade unions - but the Act itself is full of loopholes inviting misuse and evasion.

The Equal Pay Act of 1970 provides equal pay for women workers by the end of 1975 for doing the same work as a man and for doing jobs which, though different from those of men, have been given an 'equal value' rating by a job evaluation exercise. The Act also bans 'women's rates' in collective industrial agreements.

But take job evaluation for instance. To begin with there are no conditions laid down about the method of evaluation - and there is no legal obligation on an employer even to carry out one of these 'exercises'. As the Industrial Relations Review and Report put it, 'It is well known that job evaluation can either be a tool of managers or of equal pay structure (including equal pay for work of equal value) or, in given circumstances, a device to frustrate the intentions of the Act through deliberate over-weighing of factors where men can be expected to score high (like strength) and under-weighing of women's attributes (like dexterity).

Another dodge is to make sure that men and women do different jobs, so that there are no comparisons and the women's jobs can be kept low. Simply grading all the jobs usually done by women as, say, Grade Six and the jobs done by men as, say, Grade Five to One is an ideal way of getting round the Act's ban on separate wage rates. The list of possible fiddles is endless.

The Equal Pay Act presents the unions with a real opportunity to show up the devious manoeuvrings of employers. But there is little hope of action from that quarter: most union leaders seem reluctant to risk the accusation that they're championing women's rights over those of their male members.

How the miners won - in spite of the NUM

What really happened in the miners' strike? How much credit can the NUM claim for the gains won by the men? An INSIDE STORY industrial correspondent reports.

The Kent Area of the National Union of Mineworkers has 11,000 button badges with the miners' strike left over from the miners' strike. They should have no bother getting rid of them. Trendy Londoners are clamouring for them, with national and local politicians the most valued piece of memorabilia of all.

The message of the successful miners' strike has been trumpeted to the trade union and labour movement. It's the old line, 'United we stand, divided we fall.' Didn't the miners prove that conclusively? Well...

Joe Gurney met Michael McGahey, the Communist President of the Scottish miners, for the Presidency of the NUM in June. Like the good loser he was, McGahey pledged
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Joe Gormley beat Michael McGahey, the Communist President of the Scottish miners, for the Presidency of the NUM in June.

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While Secretary Lawrence Daly was presenting the NUM case to the Wilberforce Court of Inquiry, thousands of miners were marching to the House of Commons to lobby MPs.

Executive recommend Wilberforce figures in pithead ballot

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WE'VE WON!

Free

Miner

Special Ballot Issue Monday 21 February 1972

The last special strike issue of the NUM's paper The Miner claims victory, but who did the fighting - the executive or the men?
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"THE GREATEST DAY in the history of the National Union of Mineworkers," a tired but jubilant President Joe Gormley announced at 10 Downing Street in the early hours of Saturday morning.
his support for the new President and a massive industrial relations Annual Conference in Aberdeen. Now, the miners' conference has a left-wing majority while the Union's National Executive Committee has a right-wing majority. It seems that the conference passes resolutions demanding high wages and, until the last couple of years, the miners got them. Until 1969, the wages resolutions at the Annual Conference never stated figures. They always asked the Executive Committee to get 'a substantial increase' which they never did. The 1969 Conference in Blackpool was the last chaired by Sir Sidney Ford as President. A skilful bureaucrat and backstairs manipulator, Sir Sid didn't fancy being tied to figures in the wage negotiations. But he was.

However, that autumn, 1969, saw the first of the unprofitable strikes in the coalfields. The militant Scottish, Zimbabwe, Kent and South Wales miners came out. And the miners got their biggest increase ever. The Lord - as Alf Roberts, the Coal Board's chairman was known to the miners - didn't like it. But as more than half the British coalfield was at a standstill, he had to lump it.

The thing happened in 1970, that once again the Union's NWG had figures tied into their bills. The miners had won and the Union was left in the tender care of Lawrence Daly, an 'attractive but ruthless' Guardian once described him, and its Vice-Presidents, Sid Schofield, the Secretary of the Yorkshire miners. No militant, 'Whispering Sid' Sid is. But when he took up the Presidency in June, 1971, the Board suddenly moved from high reliever. Wasn't Joe a staunch right-winger? It'd be just like the good old days again when Sid used to lead the miners up the hill and down again with coppers in their pockets for the effort. So the Board were advised by their Industrial Relations Adviser, Gormley, a former member of the Union's National Executive Committee who sold the jerseys to join the Board.

With a new chairman, Derek Ezra, keen to show he was the right man for the job, advice such as this was palatable. With a strong rival, Runcorn's Trades Union Deputy Chairman, equally anxious to show that he was the man for the job, poor Derek was in a difficult situation. After the strike, people were saying that's what happens when you put the commercial touched hands of the factor. Perhaps they were right.

Now backstairs dealing is something of a tradition between the NUM and the Coal Board. The last time Ezra, kept up that tradition. Just before the strike, they met at a Coal Society dinner. Joe, never a man to bite his tongue as Pits Street told it, was at the table and said that he had found out at his daily press conferences during the strike, shot his mouth off by saying that he was having a difference of opinion about what the Board's offer was, new tricks about how fast the miners were making. He was accusing the miners of having the TVU and the NUM's headquarters.

No one knew who the Executive would accept it. Someone had bumbled Ezra, for a start, had blundered. At the meeting with the Executive, Roy Otway, the craftsman's representative, asked Ezra how much the Board's offer of an extra five days holiday worth was in cash. Poor Derek, new to the game, was saying the implications of the question, bluntly, of course, it didn't. It was worth nothing as the holidays would be taken on an individual basis, said Alf Roberts, a man caught in the act. Then they were saying that they were going to have the Board's offer turned down by the miners. The miners didn't like it, the NUM's communications machinery started to turn. The country was divided up, and responsibility for picking out the old man's hat and made him look like that. He would have made up a figure out of the top of his head.

So the NUM Executive stumbles, reluctantly. It makes another strike for which the Union was totally unprepared.

Rather desultory talks had been going on with other unions, mainly Jack Jones's Transport and General Workers and Sid Green's National Union of Railwaymen - whose offices are on the other side of Runcorn - about a pay freeze. The physical help to stop the movement of coal could it come to a strike. Now something more had to be done. The NUM asked the Executive to set up a special meeting of all the unions involved.

On 10 January, the TUC's Finance and General Purposes Committee met to discuss the NUM's request to increase wages and hoped that a resolution would be given to the Labour Party meeting. A press statement was given out, and several industrial correspondents rushed up to the TVU. But Ezra's friend, Morrison, on the Crown and Anchor, was by the time the news had got to the NUM Secretary Lawrence Daly. Daly was dismayed, as was Gormley when he was told. So Gormley got on the blower to the workers' champion, Vic Feather and asked what the hell the TVU were playing at. Vic Jones, in a typically temper, explained that the Finance and General Purposes Committee had felt there was no need for a special meeting as the NUM had already been negotiating with the unions. But anyway, they had decided to instruct their members to cross NUM picket lines. In fact, they were having their balls frozen outside pits which no other unions went near, that was no great concession.

The NUM stumbled again, only this time they stumbled onto the tactic that was to win the strike - a nationwide picket of power stations. The NUM called their communications machinery started to turn. The country was divided up, and responsibility for picking out the old man's hat and made him look like that. He would have made up a figure out of the top of his head.

The London Area was given to the Kent and Midlands Areas for picketing. Dozens of miners arrived at the marble halls of Ruston Road where the NUM has the most most impressive and spacious of all trade union headquarters. Among them was Joe Holmes, the number man in the Kent Area. Still in his 30s, over an inch and a half of his height, Holmes is reckoned to be one of the NUM's long-term bets for national office. He has made his authority felt in 222 Ruston Road. But having hairy-handed miners running about the office wasn't to the liking of some of the staff. And at 222 Ruston Road a room was set aside for a liaison meeting with delegates from other unions to organise the Trafalgar Square rally, he stommed that the office wasn't big enough for the in some of the office. Anyway, who had given him permission to use the Office? A few of the men started to hold a meeting with delegates from other unions to organise the Trafalgar Square rally, he stommed that the office wasn't big enough for him, so the office bourses were told. And anyone, who had given him permission to use 222 Ruston Road also had to be told to know. So went to NUTSOW's smaller offices in Blackfriars Road and organised it from there. So much for the solidarity of the NUM, the miners in the UK. Gormley, really, when you consider that the Union advertised for office staff in the Daily Telegraph.

And so on to Cup Final Day at 10 Downing Street after winning the rigged semi-final with a goal from Derek Ezra.

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his support for the new President and a man who has the miners' heart. The National Conference in Aberdeen. Now, the miners' conference has a left-wing majority while the Union's National Executive Committee has a right-wing majority. Now, why does the conference pass resolutions demanding higher wages and, until the last couple of years, did they get them?

Until 1960, the wages resolutions at the Annual Conference never stated figures. They always asked the Executive Committee to get a substantial increase. But they never did. The 1969 Conference in Blackpool was the last chaired by Sir Sidney Ford as President. A skillful bureaucrat and backstairs manipulator, Sir Sid didn't fancy being tied to figures in the wage negotiations. But he was. And as history has shown all too clearly, the Executive Committee was happy to accept it. Someone had出了 Ezra, for a start, had blundered. At the meeting with the Executive, Roy Otway, the craftsmen's representative, asked Ezra how much the Board's offer of an extra five days' holiday was worth in cash. Poor Derek, new to the game, was taken aback by the implications of the question, blithely nodded his head and it would cost nothing as the holidays would be taken on an individual basis. Now Alf Robson, the miners' bargain, caught on like that. He would have made up a figure out of the top of his head.

So the NUM Executive stumbled, reluctantly, into a strike for which the Union was totally unprepared. Rather dauntless talks had been going on with other unions, mainly Jack Jones's Transport and General Workers and Sid Gormley's National Union of Railwaymen—whose offices are on the other side of the road. But they were told it was too soon for a physical step to stop the movement of coal. Shortly after, the miners took to the streets. It started with a dispute over the wage talks. And as the news spread, Gormley and the NUM said nothing—something of a record for him.

For anyone naive enough to think that the miners were going to yield to the threat, the news on the Friday that the NUM had refused to accept Wilberforce's offer and were asking for even more made their hearts beat faster. Little did they know that that decision was taken only by a 13-12 vote and that the NUM and Gormley in particular had decided that the game was up on the left of the Union. Anything else would have been playing politics, and we don't want nice union leaders doing that, do we? (Of course not.)

As the strike spread, the miners' movement grew in strength. The miners, their families, and the unions stood up for the cause. The miners' strike was a turning point in the history of the miners' movement. It was a victory for the miners and a defeat for the employers. The strike was a testament to the miners' determination and their willingness to fight for their rights.

And so on to Cup Final Day at 10 Downing Street after winning the rigged semi-final with easy. 1-0 for a second time. In the end, the NUM Secretary, Lawrence Daly, solemnly assured the miners that only the President can speak to the Prime Minister. And that the miners are united in their determination to win.

At the Inquiry NUM Secretary Lawrence Daly, solemnly asserting that only the President can speak to the Prime Minister, assured the miners that the miners are united in their determination to win.

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How they teach the teachers

One way to find out what's wrong with the education system in Britain is to look at the teacher training colleges - or 'colleges of education' as they are now called. Below we offer two glimpses of how they work.

I got my degree at the beginning of August 1970 and suddenly realized that I didn't know what I was going to do. The idea of a job was anathema and I hadn't got any courses lined up. I applied to do a 'Certi Ed' and was accepted by a London college through the clearing-house scheme after a very friendly interview.

At the interview, when asked my reasons for wanting to do the course, I replied that I wanted to find out whether I liked teaching and to read and write. I'd done Maths at university and thought I would enjoy a different academic emphasis. The guy who interviewed me accepted these reasons without any qualms and, feeling very gullible about the prospect of doing the course, I went back home.

I found out that the college thought it was very avant garde in its relations with the students - no exams and a communal common-room so that staff and students could mingle as equals. The first day these advantages were mentioned several times and a very strange atmosphere of instant boy-scout friendship was propagated.

I was told that an important consequence of this atmosphere was to discourage criticism and to lower the intellectual tempo. The feeling was that everyone was doing his best. Critical examination of an argument was regarded as a personal attack which reflected on the critic.

We were split up into tutorial groups and on the second day the first tutorials were held. The guy chairing our discussion suggested that as a starter we introduce ourselves by giving our reasons for wanting to be teachers. To my horror everyone gave amazingly superior reasons about how they felt teaching was a worthwhile social task and contributed much more to society than the usual alternatives in industry.

I was the last to introduce myself and, not wanting to lie, I said that it was because I couldn't think of anything else to do. It was a mistake: the chairman was so embarrassed by my explanation that he made a joke of it - at which everyone nervously laughed. I protested that it was the truth but the subject was very quickly changed.

In like manner I succeeded in offending the rest of the staff who came to regard me as the rude radical who was always interrupting. I tried many times to get a discussion going about what the purpose of education was in a society like ours, because several features of the educational system disturbed me, but these attempts were always thwarted. Educational philosophy began and ended with the idea of comprehensive schools. If kids didn't reject the idea as they were supposed to it was because of bad teaching, not because of a fault in the system - thus all attempts to challenge this were blocked.

One of my tutors, Bob, was an outdoor type - he always wore an anorak, sturdy trousers and stout shoes as though at a moment's notice he would be ready to rise and join a mountain-rescue team. He had a shock of tousled hair that was always falling over his forehead and which he was always smoothing back with the hand that wasn't holding his Sherlock Holmes pipe. After I'd made a series of attempts to find out what he meant in his lectures he came to abhor and ignore me.

One day we had a visiting lecturer who related his experience in a multi-racial school in Islington. The most striking thing she said was that nothing we did at the college was of any relevance to teaching situation. The next morning at Bob's tutorial I repeated what she'd said. Bob paused for a moment, took his pipe out of his mouth, smoothen back the shock of hair with his other hand and said - not just to me but to the rest of the tutorial group - 'It's people like you who proliferate that sort of opinion who have put this country in the position that it's in today.' I was profoundly upset but I never tried to talk to Bob again.

I became more and more depressed and frustrated as the terms wore on. Thus dampened, my efforts at communication became more and more infrequent. The course seemed pointless and directionless.
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One way to find out what's wrong with the education system in Britain is to look at the teacher training colleges - or 'colleges of education' as they are now called. Below we offer two glimpses of how they work.

I got my degree at the beginning of August 1970, and suddenly realized that I didn't know what I was going to do: the idea of a job was anathema and I hadn't got any courses lined up. I applied to do a 'Cert Ed' and was accepted by a London college through the clearings house scheme after a very friendly interview.

At the interview, when asked my reasons for wanting to do the course, I replied that I wanted to find out whether I liked teaching and to read and write. I'd done Maths at university and thought I would enjoy a different academic emphasis. The guy who interviewed me accepted these reasons without any qualms and, feeling very sanguine about the prospect of doing the course, I went back home.

I found out that the college thought it was very avant garde in its relations with the students - no exams and a communal common room so that staff and students could mingle as equals. The first day these advantages were sanctioned several times and a very strange atmosphere of instant boy-scout friendship was propagated.

I was told that an important consequence of this atmosphere was to discourage criticism and to lower the intellectual tempo. The feeling was that everyone was doing his best. A critical examination of an argument was regarded as a personal attack which reflected on the critic.

We were split up into tutorial groups and on the second day the first tutorials were held. The guy chairing our discussion suggested that as a starter we introduce ourselves by giving our reasons for wanting to be teachers. To my horror everyone gave amazingly superior reasons about how they felt teaching was a worthwhile social task and contributed much more to society than the usual alternatives in industry.

I was the last to introduce myself and, stammering not to lie, I said that it was because I couldn't think of anything else to do. It was a mistake: the chairman was so embarrassed by my explanation that he made a joke of it - at which everyone nervously laughed. I protested that it was the truth but the subject was very quickly changed.

In like manner I succeeded in offending the rest of the staff who came to regard me as the rude radical who was always interrupting. I tried many times to get a discussion going about what the purpose of education was in a society like ours, because several features of the educational system disturbed me, but these attempts were always thwarted. Educational philosophy began and ended with the ideal of comprehensive schooling. If kids didn't reject this ideal as they were supposed to it was because of bad teaching, not because of a fault in the system - thus all attempts to challenge this were blocked.

One of my tutors, Bob, was an outdoor type - he always wore an anorak, stumpy trousers and stout shoes as though at a moment's notice he would be ready to ride and join a mountain-rescue team. He had a shock of tousled hair that was always falling over his forehead and which he was always smoothing back with the hand that wasn't holding his Sherlock Holmes pipe. After I'd made a series of attempts to find out what he meant in his lectures he came to abhor and ignore me.

One day we had a visiting lecturer who related his experiences in a multi-racial school in Islington. The most striking thing she said was that nothing we did at the college was of any relevance to the teaching situation. The next morning at Bob's tutorial I repeated what she'd said. Bob paused for a moment, took his pipe out of his mouth, smoothed back the shock of hair with his other hand and said - not just to me but to the rest of the tutorial group - 'It's people like you who propagate that sort of opinion who have put this country in the position that it's in today.' I was profoundly upset but I never tried to talk to Bob again.

I became more and more depressed and frustrated as the terms wore on. Thus dampened, my efforts at communication became more and more infrequent. The course seemed pointless and directionless.
After a particularly abortive ‘field trip’ to Wales I decided that I must leave. The days at the college left me feeling empty, there was no work to do and I was more bored than I had ever been in my life. I went to see the Head of my Department and told him that I wanted to leave. He asked me why and I told him that I was constantly bored. He said he found this difficult to believe and asked me to come over later in the week. I saw him three days later and he was very different. He had found out a lot about you - you’re a left-wing radical who believes that schools implant middle-class values on working-class kids. You’re a troublemaker - and I’ve found some very disturbing reports about you.

EM: What are you talking about? Who says I’m a troublemaker?

EH: You don’t want to leave because you’re bored, you’re just a troublemaker. Well let me tell you that the direction you’re going in is just a one-way trip to the headteacher’s office. You once before and he ended up going around with prostitutes and living in the gutter.

EM: What are you talking about?

EH: It’s a good thing you’re going just in every day until the end of term and try to keep out of trouble will you?

My desolation and demoralisation were complete; I couldn’t be bothered to argue with him any more. It was time to attend a general science group at which for no reason at all I had the choice of dissecting a pig’s trotter or peddling a bike mounted on a platform to see how much energy I expended. I chose the pig’s trotter and finished it by the time the lecture was due to start. I couldn’t be bothered to write, no explanation to give to anyone: it was just an isolated act. I left when the break arrived, unable to face the thought of coming back the next week for the bike-pedaling, and never went back.

My courses take four years and is for married women with children. Ages range from 24 to 50 plus. Most of the women have had little or no higher education; many children were brought up as single children, while, married and either came after their second or third child reached school age or waited until their youngest was in secondary school. It called a college of education but it’s really a training school for primary teachers - and the emphasis is on training. Few concessions are made to the fact that most adult individuals have their own lives and do not have to sign a daily register so that the college and the Department of Education can check our attendance. For the first two years we had no lectures or class we attended; this meant signing in two or three times a day. The college holidays used to be timetabled to fit in with local school holidays so that we could look after our own kids. After a directive from the Department of Education, we were told to take our students - that was all changed last term. Now we have two days only. There used to be a children’s room in which students could organise classes/amusements for their kids if they had to bring them in on holidays. That was given - also without consultation with students - to the local nursery to use as a centre for a display room, last year.

The lectures are compulsory and often boring and irrelevant to actual teaching or intellectual activity. They consist of history, sociology and the history of education as part of the education course. The staff have no idea of the local area, he is not a local. When I asked if we could have the notes duplicated, as happens in philosophy and psychology, and spend the time discussing the notes or stuff we’ve read, or what had happened in the house, they said it was definitely no. In the lecturer’s opinion students only learn work if it is written down in longhand first. When the case came to put forward ideas for the special exercise and I suggested child rearing in urban areas it was dew to hurry and was asked if I knew commune existed and then I told him I would go to field work there which would mean living in the place for a while and what would I do then? I tried to give him an answer. The student was quite happy to take my kids along as well. Finally I was told that this wasn’t a social studies course the course was social biology not sociology. So now I’m doing main course Art.

Perhaps the staff’s reluctance to accept change or ideas is because they feel inadequately prepared to act as tutors in a free learning situation. Even though the emphasis in the main subject on academic work, students often feel that their tutors aren’t sufficiently aware of the standard of their work to act as a guide. Five students at the end of their third year were asked to leave because the college didn’t think they’d pass finals as they were found to have enough work in their main courses. Three refused and insisted on coming back for the final year and two have taken a year off to catch up. The students have ’trotted’ nine months, the third year that they were so behind in the work although the college claim they were.

Teaching Practice is another part of the course. I remember this year we were us unpaid teachers - and some of us have previously taught as unqualified teachers. It was expected by both college and schools to be completely uncritical of conditions and standards. To make things worse, we were told that the student’s tutor and asked if she would pass on a message to the student. This was: please tell the student not sit in the comfortable chairs there but sit in the hard one by the sink. The student was a little upset by this but realised she had no choice. The following practice and the worst thing possible was to antagonise the head.

Later, on a pre-practice visit, she mentioned the chain episode to the head and said that she hoped she wasn’t causing too much disturbance but what she was advised to do was look as if she didn’t need the meal. She was asked to take sandwiches into the staff room. The head said she had already discussed this with her staff and they felt that the privacy was at risk and her job was to make sure they were content in their work. It would be best for the student - aged 35 - to spend the afternoon in the medical room - she could sit in a chair there and rest her lunch on the bed. The college’s attitude to this was: it’s a headteacher’s visit she will learn how staff rooms operate.

A third year student who had already taught as an unqualifie teacher for 4 years in a Junior High was doing a practice in a nursery class attached to an Infant School. The nursery teacher is seen as a trainer, a rep of her own department. The student arrived very keen to work with the children. She had spent her Easter holidays preparing interesting things for them all to do. But the nursery teacher was very reluctant to let the student teach at all, though she was allowed down with the kids’ names and faces and do odd jobs.

When the student made tactful suggestions that the teacher look at her file - which all students are asked to do - and see the work she had prepared, the teacher wrote over it ‘grossly overprepared’. The student of course was very dissatisfied with this. And then the teacher changed the college to find another place. The college decided that was out of the question the student had better finish off her practice and make everything as unobtrusively and as unobtrusively as possible.
After a particularly abortive 'field trip' to Wales I decided that I must leave. The days at the college left me feeling empty, there was no work to do and I was more bored than I had ever been in my life.

I went to see the Head of my Department and told him that I wanted to leave. He asked me why and I told him that I was constantly bored. He said he found this difficult to believe and asked me to consider the matter in two or three days. When I saw him three days later he was very different.

He: I've found out a bit about you - you're a left-wing radical who believes that schools implant middle-class values on working-class kids. You're a trouble-maker, and I've had some very disturbing reports about you.

You: What are you talking about? What says I'm a trouble-maker?

He: You don't want to leave because you're bored, you're just a trouble-maker. Well let me tell you that the direction you're going in is just a one-way trip to the Teachers' Centre.

You: I've been there once before and he ended up going around with prostitutes and living in the gutter.

He: What are you talking about?

You: It's a good thing you're going, just come in every day until the end of the term and try to keep out of trouble will you?

My desolation and demoralisation were complete; I couldn't be bothered to argue with him any more. I decided to go. It was to attend a general science group at which for no reason at all I had the choice of dissecting a pig's trotter or peddling a bike mounted on a platform to see how much energy I expended. I chose the pig's trotter and finished it by the time the afternoon tea was over. The Head then went on to write, no explanation to give anyone: it was just an isolated act. I left when the break arrived, unable to face the continuous peddling of the bike-peddling, and never went back.

My course takes four years and is for married women with children. Ages range from 24 to 50 plus. Most of the women have had little or no higher education; in fact they have been home during their children's school years while, married and either came after their second or third child reached school age or waited until their youngest was in secondary school.

It is called a college of education but it's really a training school for primary teachers - and the emphasis is on training. Few concessions are made to the fact that very adult individuals may be going there, and we have to sign a daily register so that the college and the Department of Education can check our attendance. For the first two terms I was a tutor, which meant going from one lecture or class we attended; this meant signing in for two or three times a day.

The college holidays were used to be timed to fit in with local school holidays so that we could look after our own kids. After a directive from the Department of Education and I've only had students - that was all changed last term. Now we have two days only. There used to be a children's room in which students could organise classes/committees for their kids if they had to bring them in on holidays. That was given - also without consultation with students - to the local health visitor's centre as a display room, last year.

The lectures are compulsory and often boring and irrelevant to actual teaching or intellectual ability. The subject is psychology, sociology and the history of education as part of the education course. The staff have tried to devise a way for personal contact but they often seem unable to conduct a dialogue about their own or other people's ideas; they treat criticism as a challenge or a criticism of themselves. Then if politically radical ideas are brought up they are ignored or the individual is dismissed by both staff and students. The only useful time, which could be used for learning information, which will help provide a teaching approach, is during the break. It's ironic that all emphasis on academic work in college is formal and heavy-handied. The education lecturers stress constantly the importance of teachers developing their own 'style' and the use of creative and project work which encourages kids to be highly motivated and involved in areas which they're interested in. We've been shown the sixth year that third year they were so behind in the work although the college claim they were.

Teaching Practice is another part of the course. I've heard that it was an unpaid teacher - and some of us have previously taught as unqualified teachers for anything up to 4 years - we are expected by both college and schools to be completely uncritical of conditions and standards. After the school year the role of the student's tutor and asked if she would pass a message to the student. This was: please try to get the student not sit in the comfortable chair when the teacher is hard one by the sink. The student was a little upset by this but realises she had to say something when the students was. A final practice and the worst thing was to organise the head.

Later, on a pre-practice visit, I mentioned the chair episode to the head and said that she hoped she wasn't causing too much disturbance but what she was advised to do about lunch she didn't eat, school meals are provided and there is only to take sandwiches into the staff room. The head said she had already discussed this with her staff and they felt that the privacy was at risk and her job was to make sure they were content in their work. It would be best for the student - aged 35 place and they had lunch in the medical room - she could sit in a chair there and rest her lunch on the desk. The college's attitude to this was it's a way of the students will learn how staff rooms operate.

A third year student who already had teaching experience as an unqualified teacher for 4 years in a Junior School I was doing a practice in a nursery class attached to an Infant School. The nursery teacher is seen as a hot-shot by the new class and her own department. The student arrived very keen to work with the children. She had spent her Easter holidays preparing interesting things for them all to do. But the nursery teacher was very reluctant to let the student teach at all, though she was allowed to play with the kids' hands and faces and do odd jobs. When the student made tactful suggestions that the teacher look at her file - which all she wanted to do to see if the work she had prepared, the teacher wrote over it 'grossly overprepared'. The student's course of work was very de-structured with no time for planning the lesson to find another place. The college decided that was the outside the question: the student had better finish off her practice and the worst thing was to do so.
Workin’ for the (underground) man

Mareah Bow, who worked on Oz and Ink, describes what it was like and explains why she now feels a new women’s paper is necessary.

The worst year of my life was the year after I left school. That was 10 years ago. I spent one night during that year lying screaming on my bed. ‘Why was I a woman?’ terrified by the awful inevitability of my future — and I can remember vividly the uncomprehending look on my father’s face when he tried to tell me I would grow out of this pain, it was only teenage neurosis. Nevertheless my ‘neurosis’ got worse — to the point where I would have succeeded in killing myself 5 years later if my mother hadn’t come home unexpectedly and rushed me to the doctor. So I gathered myself together and thought ‘Oh God, here we go again’ and went back to my £8 a week job in the glamorous offices of Australian Vogue.

The point of this embarrassing history is that it is not just my story but one you hear all the time from other women.

In my last year at school I didn’t apply for a university scholarship because my parents could only afford to support me for one more year, after which I would have to give them money to add to the family income. They could not see any point in the wasting of time and going to university was never a matter of course for my two younger brothers. So I spent that following year waking up in the middle of the night each morning learning to be a secretary — trying to reconcile myself to the fact that it was necessary to waste a whole hour in a day practising excuses which would enable my future boss to avoid unwanted telephone calls, sitting in a class room in the Sydney Tech — appropriately enough one of the modern buildings that seem to decay as soon as they are put up — and wondering if smelly suits would be any help in blocking out the fumes from the brewery up the road which used to make me sick.

Although I felt no direction towards a particular career, I decided to go to university anyway; I could earn enough to pay part-time fees and still give money to my parents. Which I did for the next 3 years.

But an odd suspicion developed that university was a con. I discovered an interest (at long last) in anthropology but couldn’t work out a way of studying it since it was only open to day students. A degree and an academic career meant nothing to me. I wanted to continue learning. I felt resentful and shattered when my tutors would suggest staying behind to discuss work and it turned out they didn’t want to discuss anything but a fuck. The favourite trick was offering to show you the passage up the Clock Tower so you could look over the quadrangle.

In the meantime, Oz magazine, inspired by the amazing personality of Richard Neville, entered the picture. Or rather I entered it, taking over from him the task of defying the doors of the ancient lift at 16 Hunter Street to sit down punctually at 9 o’clock every morning behind the one desk in the chaotic office. Actually the offices was shared with a mysterious property business.

Immediately I ramped up against a problem which I didn’t have the nerve to say anything about: he’d been getting £20 a week and I got £14 a week, and he had not been getting the extra £6 a week for extra work — especially since I, having been moulded into the nice, reliable, efficient secretary, was going to dutifully all those boring jobs like subscriptions and accounts and explaining why manuscripts had been lost etc which had previously been evaded with ease. However, this was Sydney, Australia, 1964: things have changed a lot since then.

Anyway, I had a great time there getting cow gum on my fingers pasting up, discovering a fascination for printing machines, court cases, trundling up to the library to find out what Prime Minister Menzies had written in his school magazine — Oz was a very different magazine in those days — interviews with gangsters, hiding from the police in station lavatories clutching buckets of flour and water when sticking up Oz posters. Oz was certainly more fun than university and I can’t really remember whether work, or the fact that I left home to live with Michael Ramsden a few weeks before the third year exams, meant that I turned up for one of them and not the rest — probably both.

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Marsha Rowe, who worked on Oz and Ink, describes what it was like - and explains why she now feels a new women's paper is necessary.

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incidentally naive didn’t help. I remember being shown a newspaper clipping ‘Lord Hail’s death’ – the共产党 was being digged for roots etc and not understanding the joke. But one progresses and when one day Richard threw tea at the mirror because I, not yet knowing the terminology, thought he was trying to boil water, and then when he gleefully rushed to the kitchen and brought me out my sanitary napkins which I thought I had hidden to stop it up, saying he’d been ‘lying to find a use for these, well, then I ignored.

Where do I go from here – how personal do you get – two years later Michael announced to both Og editors that he didn’t want me to work at Og. When I asked Michael why he had hired me because I was stillett shoes on the day of the interview. Og was being considered more about bitty competition between women than I learned about production and lay-out and since trenchness was not really my scene I got myself employed as a cashier behind the bar on a Greek ship headed for London. At one point during the voyage I lost my temper violently when asked after accusing me of sleeping in the cabin with a member of the ship’s band and threatening not to pay me unless he believed my denial – after all, I was a woman.

One hippy trial later I was back at Og which had become a much more functionalised in following Gander’s style and enthusiasm which had pervaded the Australian office and with specific jobs designated to different people. The most familiar one was mine – we were completely informing about Og’s 28 – that was just like old times. By now the way of life – a community of people who had all met once, were so the same night that I had with a few people in Sydney had mushroomed: the underground had been acknowledged by the world and was already on the wane, though I didn’t realise it. I went in exchange with Friends to bring out Freck News at the Isle of Wight Festival 1970, it seemed over the candle grease on the wobbly benches – freaks aged from 14 to 34 running in with the news and helping turn the pages – and I think that the fact that the excitement was still there and that alternative news was important.

So I stayed on writing letters at Og, making the staff feel that their one’s solo, realising that I was neurotic because I wasn’t achieving anything, and feeling quite incapable of ever doing anything constructive. This, the fact that I was threatening word impossible. I stayed on waiting for Ink to surface – that was to be different for me and everyone else. It was certainly different but not in the way anybody intended.

This had a lot to do with the way it stemmed from a shared collective voice that explored Women’s liberation – that we were in the first place. I can pause now on one particular meeting which set the pattern and outlined the future structure of Ink. We were all together at the beginning of the planning stage. The entire staff of Friends, Andrew Fisher, Michael Neville, Felix Dennis, other people were present but the boss who was unknown to anyone, except I suppose Michael and Andrew, was contemplating and outlining to me essentially one’s own ideas and what was an inescapable point of the meeting was to discuss the possibility of combining future Ink people to bring out the new alternative newspaper, which was to bridge the gap between the underground and mainstream press.

The room was crowded, smoky, lounging reminiscent colour. I remember one of forty, a young Thorny, an Australian underground film maker, was talking from his place on the bed about the importance of communal activity within the paper. He was virtually ignored. Company set-ups took up most of the discussion time.

When everyone had left, the Og colleagues significantly decided to go it alone. Richard asked me why I hadn’t said anything and I didn’t answer him. I left on the train. It was impossible for me tosay a word in front of that enormous number of people, and he went off to dinner with Ed and Andrew to discuss the whole thing.

Ed Victor decided to leave the publishing world and join the Ink team, money was required and he hired a printing company. The meetings and office work were not in motion, and the idea of an editorial collective flirted with. This was only a flirtation.

After Ink began, the weekly meetings which were held to discuss the issues were always informal, and moved towards production problems. The arguments that spluttered and raged every day about the particular sense of the type setup, seemed more from personality clashes than ideological conflict. The production problems were terrific and, as with the question of the type setup, the whole organisation was going to work, not enough discussion took place beforehand to resolve most of the obvious problems. And looking back, I guess the editor in the first week didn’t help.

I enjoyed working incredibly hard for weeks. On the first issue I went two nights running without sleep and I don’t think I had one day off and hardly a night until a month had passed.

Frankly, it was the same time, a disillusioning month. The madness in the method of the hierarchical, arbitrary structure that had been set up was becoming discernible and I felt frustrated by it – though as usual wondered if I was cheating myself. I had talked to about 10 journalists on local papers whom I was to consider for the paper. It was a real challenge, hander the stories over to someone else who would decide whether or not to print them. Who’s to think that?

After the first week I didn’t feel right about asking for the news behind the news of the death of Stephen McFarley, for example, and that was leading to discussions or deciding whether to use it. Most of my time was devoted to doing in the machine and, invariably unhappy, I decided to concentrate on production. More weeks went by and more issues were printed and more people were hired and fired – people were manipulated left, right and centre.

Some of them have taken months to recover. The Toomag on trial last year I resigned from Ink in protest against the following story. I had met a 17-year-old Irish girl who had just completed her secondary school and therefore needed another type setting to see. She was in London and work on Ink. As soon as we went home we left Dublin store her belongings and returned. Ink a few days later. I had also taken a week off and returned to find that she had been thoughtlessly fired because a chance in the system had required it – the type- setting was to be farmed out. I was unhappy.

The internal workings of the alternative newspaper were far from alternative. That hadn’t changed, but I did not stay to participate.

The next two months were similarly spent working and day and night – this time for the Og and the Freetime. I was away at 2 am in the morning, which was the inevitable time for planning the news of the day in court, but, as usual, gottin’ for The Cause. I now know Geoff Robertson who really engineered the Og defence. I then worked with his editing and typing up the transcripts and discussions. Nothing, but everything, on the trial, and the Og play. My attempts at helping construct the book were fruitless.

To put it poetically, I am now taking control of my own destiny. Only through the Women’s Liberation Movement have I regained some of the confidence I had 10 years ago and a return of a vitality I’d forgotten. Gradually I’ve understood who I’ve been so neurotic. Now I’ve stopped you because I’ve come to believe in an excitement and strength which I believe I can only maintain by working with women. I don’t believe that this will always be the case but right now, and perhaps for a long time, I need this solidarity.

This in what women’s liberation is about. Our culture is based on the exploitation of women, the trivialisation of the women’s position in society as well as questioning the validity of the culture. I am working with Rosie Boycott and others to launch Spare Rib, an alternative newspaper which is urgent need to reach other women who the peace and who are beginning to be desperate and cut-off so they can realise they share a common experience and are not alone. For the first time, everyone’s eyes to the disaster involved in society’s accepted conventions and attitudes towards women. There should be an accessible audience and the group can deal with the practical problems of a housewife, which will not isolate women and ignore their problems.
Incredibly na"ive didn't help. I remember being shown a newspaper clipping 'Lord North's death' didn't mean anything to me - he didn't appear to dig for roots etc and not understanding the joke. But one progresses and when one day Richard threw tea at the mirror because, I don't yet know what was going on but my parents had put out the electric kettle, hadn't made it with boiling water and then when he gleefully rushed to the newspaper desk and pulled out my sanitary napkins which I thought was only hidden to stop it up, saying he'd been lying to find a use for these, well, I thought

Where do I go from here - how personal do you get - two years later Michael announced to both Og editors that he didn't want me to work at Og. Michael and Michael decided he was jealous - there was much screaming, Michael kicking down doors, beating me up, smashing his belongings in a rage.

I left Og.

A few odd jobs later I joined Vogue. On the way I'd crammed - I had been a woman in a newspaper that I was trying to get copies of - the boss had hired me because I was a stiletto shoe on the day of the interview. Vogue was different. I had read more about bitchy competition between women than I learned about production and layout-and since tenderness was not really my scene I got myself employed as a chaperon behind the bar on a Greek ship headed for London. At one point during the voyage I lost my temper violently when a guest who was after accusing me of sleeping in the cabin with a member of the ship's band and threatening not to pay me refused to believe my denial - after all, I was a woman.

One hippy hotel I was back at Og which had become much more functionalised in terms of the politics and enthusiasm which had pervaded the Australian office and with specific jobs designated to different people. The most familiar example was Ed, the brilliant yet essentially uninterested about Og 26 - that was just like old times. By now the way of life - a community of sorts and I had had a few people in Sydney had mushroomed; the underground had been acknowledged by the world and was already on the wane, although I didn't really care, since I had formed with Friends to bring out Frank News at the Tale of Night Festival 1970. It seemed over the candle grease on the wobbly

bench - freaks aged from 14 to 34 rushing in with the news and helping turn the one-year-old Og into something which was still there and that alternative news was important.

So I stayed on writing letters at Og, not minding the long one's side or setting up at home, realising that I was neurotic because I wasn't achieving anything, and feeling quite incapable of doing anything. This time I was forced by threatening word impossible. I stayed on waiting for Ink to surface - that was to be different for me and everyone else. It was certainly different but not in the way anybody intended.

This had a lot to do with the way it seemed that the first task of the Og editors was the intentions for the one's first month at the beginning of the planning stage. The entire staff of Friends, Andrew Fisher, Richard Neville, Felix Dennis, other people who were important, who were unknown to anyone, except I suppose Richard and Andrew, was contemplating newsgathering editor on Ink, was engaged into a conversation of one of the meetings was to discuss the possibility of Friends combining with future Ink people to bring out the new alternative newspaper, which was to bridge the gap between the underground and straight press.

The room was crowded, smoky, longing reconciliation could be achieved, but in fact there was none. Then, an Australian underground film maker, was talking from his place on the bed about the importance of communal activity within the paper. He was virtually ignored.

Company set-ups took up most of the discussion time.

One hotel, everyone had left, the Og colleagues significantly decided to go it alone. Richard asked me why I hadn't said anything and I didn't answer him, which I think was a mistake. It was impossible for me to say a word in front of that enormous number of people, and he went off to dinner with Ed and Andrew to discuss it over a drink.

Ed Victor decided to leave the publishing world and join the Ink team, money was not the issue. The print office meetings and office work were not set in motion, and the idea of an editorial collective flirted with. This was only a flirtation.

After Ink began, the weekly meetings which were held to discuss the issues were always interrupted by various developments in production problems. The arguments that spluttered and raged every day about the people and the papers' style and ommitted from personality clashes than ideological conflict. The production problems were terrific and, as with the quality, the design, the Og organisation was going to work, not enough discussion took place beforehand to resolve the most obvious problems. And I was not present, nor was the editor in the first week didn't.

I enjoyed working incredibly hard for the first time. I went two nights running without sleep and I don't think I had one day off and hardly a night until a month had passed.

Frustration is the same time, a disillusioning month. The madness in the method of the hierarchical, arbitrary structure that had been set up was becoming discernible and I felt frustrated by it - though I was only appeared once I was cheating myself. I had talked to about 30 journalists on local papers whom I was to control, and I felt at the beginning of the process of handing the stories over to someone else who would decide whether or not to print them. That's the thing that.

After the first week I didn't feel right about asking for the news behind the news of the death of Stephen McGarry, for example. I was taking it for granted, in discussing it or deciding whether to use it. Most of my time was devoted to being oil in the machinery and, inwardly unhappy, I decided to concentrate on production. More weeks went by and more issues were printed and people were hired and fired - people were manipulated left, right and centre in the office out efficiently. Some of them have taken months to recover.

I resigned from Og trial last year I resigned from Ink in protest against the following story. I had met a 17-year-old Irish girl who had just completed her secondary school education who immediately needed another typesetter she agreed to stay in London and work on Ink. As soon as we arrived, both London and Dublin store her belongings and returned Ink a few days later. I had also taken a week off and returned to find that she had been thoughtlessly fired because a change in the system had required it - the typesetting was to be farmed out. I was shocked and disappointed.

The internal workings of the alternative newspaper were far from alternative. That hadn't changed, but I did not stay to participate.

The next two months were similarly spent working day and night - this time for the Og. I was correspondently occupied away at 2 am in the morning, which was the inevitable time for planning the next day's act in court, but, as usual, Jocin' for the people, I left with The Cause. The now being Geoff Robertson who really engineered the Og defense. I then worked with his editing and typing up the transcripts. I was at the trial, on the Og play. My efforts at helping construct the book were fruitless.

To put it pompously, I am now taking control of my own destiny. Only through the Women's Liberation Movement have I regained some of the confidence I had 10 years ago and a return of a vitality I'd forgotten. Gradually I've understood why I've been so neurotic. Now I've stopped you to look at the conditions of the women's liberation movement, and that I can only maintain by working with women. I don't believe that this will always be the case but right now, and perhaps for a long time, I need this solidarity.

This is what women's liberation is about. Our movement is international. All women are now politically organised and ineffective and I think of a collective voice that explores women's liberation, protests specifically against exploitation, prints news on women's actions and on events that concern women's position in society as well as questioning and denying the culture that has caused us. I am working with Rosie Boycott and others to launch Savas Aff, an alternative newspaper. I am sure of an urgent need to reach other women who are the most desperate - cut-off and that they can realise they share a common experience and that together we can heal any woman's eyes to the disaster involved. I work with sociology's accepted conventions and attitudes towards women. There should be an accessible alternative culture, an alternative reality with the practical problems of a housewife, which will not isolate women and ignore their problems.
300,000 people in London alone didn’t complete this form

A year after the census INSIDE STORY looks at what went wrong.

Down at Titchfield in Hampshire the Office of Population Censuses and Surveys is steaming under pressure to speed up the production of tables from the 1971 census. There have been a number of staff resignations and demotions. A civil servant in the London section of the Office — at Somerset House — said recently that some people had been sacked on the grounds that they were "Maoists".

The census computer is being tested under heavy pressure from overseas. Essential work still required on processing and sorting the basic information contained in the 18 million forms completed at the time of the census a year ago is being slowed down — by the flood of applications from commercial firms, including those in Common Market countries.

Information provided for these private applications is not available to the general public. In fact the only official reports based on the census yet released for public information are the interim statement on population figures, issued last August, and a number of regional county tables now available at the...
300,000 people in London alone didn’t complete this form.
Stationery Office.

There is no official estimate of the number of people who were not enumerated in London. The London Office of the Registrar-General, Mr. Michael Reed, announced that the census operation had not been as successful as anticipated. The census was carried out in two parts: a first count was taken on 30 June, and a second count on 1 July.

The first count was less successful than anticipated, with many households refusing to cooperate. The second count was also less successful, with some households refusing to be enumerated.

The census was the result of a long and complex process, involving the enumeration of millions of households across the country. The census was conducted by the Office of National Statistics, which is responsible for collecting and publishing statistics on a wide range of topics.

There were also some concerns about the accuracy of the census data, with some experts suggesting that the figures may not be as accurate as they could be.

The census is an important tool for understanding the population of the country, and its results are used to inform policy decisions and planning efforts. The Office of National Statistics is committed to ensuring that the census is as accurate and reliable as possible, and is working to address any concerns about the accuracy of the data.

And two days later the Registrar-General, Mr. Michael Reed, cancelled a 'hot tea' meeting with the House of Commons. The census was a success and the figures were accurate. The census was carried out in two parts: a first count was taken on 30 June, and a second count on 1 July.

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This is the end of the document.
Stationery Office.

There is no official estimate of when the full breakdown of population will be ready, though it is rumoured that this will not be until after the next census in 1971.

Meanwhile security precautions at the Census Office in Titchfield have been reinforced at the expense of the generally expanded staff. The office has grown from a few wooden huts, with only a handful of people, to a vast complex of buildings centred on the large modern conference and exhibition halls which house the main computer. All entrances are patrolled by uniformed security guards and dogs.

The census operation itself got a lot of publicity at the time - as did the public refusal of a number of people to complete their forms. But journalists have been revealed to be templates of the same old story.

A spokesman for the Registrar-General's office reported to the House of Commons that the total number of uncompleted forms was only 5,000 - about the same as that predicted by the Registrar-General's claim that the census was a great success.

On Census Day the Times quoted him as saying: 'In the areas that I have visited only about one person out of 10,000-15,000 seems likely to refuse to fill in the form.' And on 16 December a government spokesman asserted in the House of Commons that the total number of uncompleted forms was only 3,000 - about the same as that predicted by the Registrar-General.

On the other hand, the Times reported that 352 summonses had been issued and that 500 census forms had been returned to the register office due to "ground conditions or in other mitigating circumstances". Which leaves 2,000 unprosecuted lawbreakers.

All the available evidence suggests that the actual number of people who did not complete a census form was far higher than 3,000 - at least a hundred times higher in fact. The National Council for Civil Liberties says unofficially that including people who deliberately gave false information on the form - the number of non-completers could have been as high as a million.

As the census operation got under way it was clear that the authorities had miscalculated the extent of ordinary people's hostility. As early as 22 April - before Census Day - 60 enumerators in Southwark and Lambeth were given overtime for more money because 'they did not expect to be abused on doorsteps or have doors slammed in their faces.'}

And two days later the Registrar-General, Mr Richard Redhead, cancelled a 'meet-the-people' event planned to mark the damage of a failure of a similar outing in Liverpool. Redhead had been jostled by an angry crowd and later was obliged to apologize to the city council. A Liverpool man 'battered' - a remark heard by millions of television viewers.

But a variety of census supervisors wrote to the Registrar-General saying that staff were working twice as hard and twice as long as they had been led to expect. 'And if a house and open household which can never be adequately compensated, we just cannot get enough in the day to finish what we have to do. Some of the enumerators would be seriously considering the job tomorrow if they could, and will certainly not volunteer for it again.'

Unrest among the enumerators was reported in Westminster, May uncompliant with the census schedules which densely populated areas some had been forced to return seven or eight times to 'difficult' households. The Registrar-General's press office had to confirm that 'enumerators had been shocked at the amount of work'.

But the authorities stuck to their story that, in spite of all the difficulties, the census was going according to plan: people were in the end co-operating. Then a Midlands census supervisor gave a hint of what was actually happening, he was quick to scupper down.

The supervisor, Mr William Kelly, whose area was Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire, told the Telegraph on 4 May that, if his reckoning were correct, there would be a "catastrophic rise this year" in the number of people not filling in their forms.

He was right - and the official spokesman who contradicted his wrong. But Mr Kelly won a remarkable victory and those concerned will be prosecuted. And there Mr Kelly was wrong.

In two areas resistance to the census was particularly marked: in the North and, many Catholics refused to co-operate with the Census as a protest against Stormont. A group of Catholics living in a Catholic area on Census Day that they were not completing their forms; their protest was immediately given 'unqualified support' by a further 18. The same day a group of about 200 Catholics had sent the same from 400 forms to the Northern Ireland Registrar-General.

And in London it was also difficult for the authorities to maintain their claim that the census was going well. It was in London that the census supervisors carried out their public burnings of the census forms - they have since recorded that none of the 32 who took part in this protest have been prosecuted.

One enumerator, who worked in the district of North London, told the INSIDE STORY that he had no way of knowing how many households there were in the houses he went to. 'Sometimes I would be told by one occupant that there were four house-holds, another occupant would tell me five and one by another that there were only three. It was often impossible to know how many people there were in a particular house. I'm sure the landlady would have concealed the number of tenants - because they were avoiding tax.'

And if you were being paid 15p an hour - which was one calculation of the enumerator's rate in an urban area - there wasn't much incentive to keep a 24-hour vigil outside every house to make sure nobody slipped through the net. So hundreds of thousands of people did just that.

For when the interim statement on population figures was finally produced last August it was clear that there had been a serious error. As well as its new revisions - the official statistics office was analysing what had happened, but without drawing the simple and obvious conclusion: that the census operation was a massive disaster for the Tory government and the state.

The Census Office, said the Times, 'estimates that due to the non-return of thousands of schedules which were left at apparently unoccupied addresses which were in fact occupied, some 50,000 to 100,000 people were possibly not counted. If 25,000 or 30,000 occupied households were omitted from enumerators' lists in the first place...'

'Nothing in the census results is so surprising as to explain the low figures produced for Greater London as a whole - 7,379,014 - almost to the level the GLO originally forecast being reached as 14.5'.

The Greater London total of 264,000 lower than the General Register Office official estimate for mid-1970... The General Register Office officials estimate for mid-1970... the clerks of most London boroughs that the Greater London count, taken as a whole, seems to account for a fairly large slice of the estimated under-enumeration nationally.

The shifting population and special problem of old houses, the capital is recognised as the most difficult area for any operation of this kind... So the census authorities have been forced to make an estimate but merely taken into account and this estimate will itself be revised in a year's time.'

'this area can say exactly how many people slipped through the census net - though, if the figure for London alone was more than 500,000, surely the people, who worked for mid-1970, the total for the whole country may have been half a million - a million: who knows?'

The failure of the census in London is shown by the simple fact that the authorities do not believe the figures they have laboriously collected. And it is hardly surprising that the government has decided not to prosecute all those Londoners who broke the law on 26 April 1970 by leaving out the capital's football grounds to put them in.
The workers who earn too little to be in a union

Freelance journalism pays some people very well - and others very badly. Many people will be surprised to learn that the worst-paid are not even able to join the National Union of Journalists.

Although there are prescribed rates for news stories supplied to the papers by freelances, there are none for features - apart from an NUJ recommendation that members be paid according to the publication's advertising rate. But this means very little; it certainly does not give a nature writer any right to payment on this scale.

The position of some women freelances working for provincial and local papers is spectacularly worse even than this; not only are they forced to accept very low rates of pay, but often they join the NUJ in an attempt to improve them.

Take for instance the case of Mrs Jean O'Keefe, once a full-time journalist and NUJ member, who is now earning £3 a week on the Middleborough Evening Gazette for a minimum of 11 column inches. She is one of a number of women freelancers and all their professional and trade union rights by committing the sin of marrying, having children and then wishing to return to work. Now she finds that she cannot rejoin the NUJ since it is impossible for her to fulfill the membership requirements of its freelance section.

Jean O'Keefe wrote a series of feature articles for the Middleborough Evening Gazette and had them all accepted. For her regular weekly feature she was paid £1. Recently she was offered a weekly column of her own at the same slave rate. In spite of this, she accepted - only to hear from the editor a few days later that the idea had been dropped, apparently at the instigation of the NUJ Clerk of the Chapel. The pay agreed was one which the union must protect its members from non-union freelance women such as this and he proposed that the column should be given over to one of the regular staff of the paper. He failed to mention, however, that none of these staff members wished to undertake such a task.

Discussing this incident, Jean O'Keefe has had none of her articles accepted. The latest news is that the editor is trying to reach some sort of compromise - although £3 will represent her weekly loss.

Another woman in similar circumstances is currently writing the material for a woman's page - a whole page - for a mere 3 guineas a week. She has recently had a rise - from 2 guineas.

What in fact are the NUJ membership requirements for freelances? The NUJ rule book states that membership is restricted to 'full time freelance journalists, that is persons whose major occupation is journalism who are mainly dependent on their own journalistic work, and whose income from such work exceed 60 per cent of the minimum salary scale in that area'.

Effectively, this rule excludes membership of the NUJ precisely those freelance journalists who are worst off - those who contribute to papers which pay low rates (this of course includes the whole underground press).

Invited to comment on this situation, the NUJ official said: 'It's all very well, but we are in a trade union not in the social security business; we protect our members' rights. It's hard luck on this girl (Jean O'Keefe) but these people are diluting the credibility standards of journalism. If I gave in to them, I wouldn't be able to demand good rates in Fleet Street any more.'

So you have the paradox that a trade union which is quite unable to secure reasonable rates of pay for many of its own members says to the lowest-paid workers in journalism: 'We won't let you in because you will lower our standards.'

For freelance journalists the NUJ is not so much a trade union, more an exclusive private club.

Mr George Viner, who is the NUJ's education and research officer, was recently asked why there are so few women photographers at the top - or anywhere else - in press photography? His reply, recorded on tape for posterity, was: 'I would not suggest that it was a very good idea for women to all work as freelance photographers on national newspapers or national picture agencies. So much for education and research.

Recently the Sunday Times colour magazine celebrated 10 years of lavish living with a gigantic pinn-up in the Grosvenor House Hotel - at a reported cost of £5,000. The 600 poachers present were, it would seem, mainly men - and mainly adored at that.

After the cabaret Private Eye's Lord Gnome - that's to say Peter Cook, got up on the stage and declared: 'Not having wives, mistresses, lovers or whatever was fucking stupid.' After which there was silence.

Note: it is the Sunday Times which publishes regular articles by Germaine Greer and a smug little weekly feature on sex discrimination called 'Women's Hole'.

In March Time Out seemed to take a masochistic delight in publishing critical readers' letters. One, from Marshall Colanetti, was a masterpiece of brevity and wit: 'When Women's Lib demonstrated so graphically at Miss World, it was full coverage and all the girls jumped on Time Out. But the week after they broke your own conference on the suppression and manipulation of news, it's dead silence and it's an unusual.'

The conference, by the way, cost over £1,000 - including more than £400 worth of damage and 'the'. And the latest newspaper which was to have been given out on the day is now unlikely to appear.

In Manchester there are 23 day nurseries for 1,073 children. Since there are 58,000 under-fives in the city, the provision of nurseries falls even of the government's aim of catering for "priority cases".

Yet what criterion of need were men to associate with the war effort? From 1941 onwards, the authorities spared no effort to make this possible. 30 prefabricated buildings were put up in less than four years.

The peak year for the number of nursery places in Manchester was ... 1945. The city's 30 day nurseries took 1,508 children. (Manchester Free Press)

"...as a self-employed woman, you want to take out insurance to cover loss of earnings caused by accident or sickness, you will find yourself paying a premium 50 per cent higher than that paid by a man for exactly the same benefit."

Stephanie Colanetti, a freelance photographer, has been insured since 1965 with the Friends Provident and Century Group. Since she has never been and sickness policy was arranged through a special Institute of Incorporated Photographers scheme, she gets a discount of £4. But her premium is still considerably higher.

'A friend of mine investigated the whole field to try and get me a better deal last year,' she says, 'and the outcome of it was that every company in this type of cover-loaded females by 50 per cent, which means that we pay a 50 per cent higher premium than a man for exactly the same benefit."

For Stephanie Colanetti's policy is very specific on this last point: 'Disability by sickness or accident if caused by pregnancy is not covered for children.'

**Visionhire** - the television rental company with 31 branches on Merseyside - has joined the ranks of firms discriminating against women. If a woman wants to rent a set, she has to have a male householder to stand as guarantor - even if she is herself a householder. (Liverpool Free Press)
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Take for instance the case of Mrs Jean O'Keefe, once a full-time journalist and NUJ member, who is now earning £1 a week on the Middleborough Evening Gazette for a minimum of 11 column inches. She is one of her number of workers who have sold all their professional and trade union rights by committing the sin of marrying, having children and then wishing to return to work. Now she finds that she cannot rejoin the NUJ since it is impossible for her to fulfill the membership requirements of its freelance sections.

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Too much sex makes you blind and sorts of nasty things.