

Eileen's history  
Brazilian

1929 English court recognizing that women are persons  
Katie Cook  
won gov general's person's award  
1970  
1972  
1972

gov't look at (serious) conditions of  
child care  
women's status in workplace  
employment opportunities  
Personal is political  
lived experience into rights mode

Nelson & District Women's Centre Fact Sheet  
Trudeau says The gov't has no place in the  
bedrooms of the nation but the allo-  
birth control Public, Private

--Royal Commission on the Status of Women

--In Nelson, a Local Initiatives Project surveying needs for adult education discovers a desire for women to have access to up-to-date health information concerning birth control, reproductive choices, sexually transmitted diseases, birthing procedures, etc.

--Vita Storey, a resident of the Nelson area and part of that Local Initiatives Project, travels to Vancouver and returns with \$7600 in federal funding. Thus begins the Nelson Women's Centre, the first centre outside of the Lower Mainland, and one of the oldest continuing centres in B.C.

1973

--In January 1973, the Nelson Women's Centre officially opens its doors, upstairs in the Peterson Building, 490 Ward Street.

--A local bank manager advertises in the NDN for "young men interested in banking as a career." When members of the Women's Centre challenge the gender restrictions in his advertisement, he responds that men are easier to transfer and can more easily carry mail bags and vouchers around the bank.

(At this time, a staff member at the NDN wrote an opinion piece which said: "Women's Lib is little more than a vehicle for members of the fair sex who cannot cope with the pressures of society....In summation it is nothing short of ludicrous for the government of this country to spend taxpayers (sic) money on any project associated with a facade such as women's lib.")

1974

--The Women's Centre becomes the main project of a newly formed non-profit society, the West Kootenay Women's Association.

--The Women's Centre begins lobbying for change in women's health procedures. At the time, the Medical Associates Clinic (where all but one doctor practiced) required women registering at the clinic to provide a "head of household" name, preferably male. Women were typed as Miss or Mrs. Meanwhile, the hospital discouraged anyone not medically involved in the birth of a baby from being in the delivery room. And, no local testing centre existed for the identification of sexually transmitted diseases. (All samples were

Sally  
economic & social

Fraser  
to be transferred  
murder  
wife  
said  
she  
pours  
him



70s  
First Rape Crisis Line

sent down to the coast for testing. It was discovered later that any disease in the samples died en route, making accurate diagnosis impossible. (No wonder there were no STD in Nelson!)

--Marcia Braundy, an active member of the West Kootenay Women's Association, organizes the First Women's Festival at Pass Creek, showcasing women's talents in the arts. "I noticed so many of my friends singing and playing instruments in their kitchens, and I thought they should be up on stage like the men had always been," she says. The Women's Festival continues to this day.

1975

--Rita McNeil makes her first trip out west, to sing at the Western Canadian Women's Festival, in Kaslo.

1977

--The Selkirk Health Unit sets up a special culture clinic in Nelson, for diagnosing sexually transmitted diseases on the spot.

--Increasingly in the following decade, the Centre provides women in the community with their only access to classes on natural childbirth methods, natural birth control, midwifery, and breast-feeding.

1978

--the Women's Centre moves to the old Jam Factory Building. The Centre spawns many community service projects, some of which grow into major or permanent projects independent of the Women's Centre which still exist years later. Having affected much change in the area of women's health, the Centre moves into building awareness on issues surrounding women in poverty and women re-entering the workforce.

--What began as the Women's Centre newsletter, Images, Canada's oldest rural feminist paper, is now published independently as a quarterly discussion of local, national and international women's issues. (Images will cease publication in the early nineties.)

1980s

--WomenWorks, a re-entry employment project for the community, grows out of initiatives taken by the Women's centre. The successful four-year project takes women who had been out of the workforce for many years and provides them with skills for this employment. Over 100 women receive training and support before the project ends.

1985 - Equality section of Charter of Rights Gov't had to bring all laws up to date to reflect  
82-85 Economic Collective - 13 women Strawberry Rasp Peach Plum Blueberry Jams  
Emma's Jambrosia

1980's  
First Battered Women Support Group.

1988

--After many years of providing advocacy services for the community at the Women's Centre, members of the West Kootenay Women's Association begin the Advocacy Centre. A project funded originally by the Law Foundation, the Advocacy Centre continues today to speak to the needs of women and men in the community. It is a lasting and visible example of the community spirit alive in the Women's Centre which has led to so many valuable, compassionate services being offered.

1989

--The Women's Centre organizes "Speak out on Choice." Before a packed audience at the Capitol Theatre, women in the community offer their personal stories, in support of a woman's right to govern her own body in her own way.

1990-92

--The Women's Centre designs and executes "Options Unlimited" a program which provides role models for non-traditional careers for junior secondary school girls in Slokan, Nelson and Salmo. The highly successful program is eventually taken over by "Women in Trades and Technology" which, with its work, still encourages young women to consider careers in non-traditional areas.

1990's Violence against women  
breaking barriers of public/private split  
Is letting public in always going to be to a woman's advantage?  
?

1994-5

--Following many years of moving from the Jam Factory, to the Front St. Emporium, to a suite above Gerick Cycle on Hall Street, the Nelson Women's Centre at last finds a permanent home: 420 Mill Street. Six months of renovations and hours of volunteer time, led by local carpenter Sally MacKenzie, allow the new location to open its doors in January, 1995.

1998

--In May of this year, Selkirk College and the West Kootenay Women's Association will co-sponsor a forum for women who wish to enter the political process, "Confidence, Competence and Community Control" featuring guest speakers from across the political spectrum who can offer advice or act as a model for women.

Aristotle: Women's natures biologically determined  
✓ Incapacitated them for public service as opposed to private  
Patronized justified (id abuse / wife abuse)

From its inception, the Nelson Women's Centre, as the major project of the West Kootenay Women's Association, has identified needs in the community, found funding for projects through federal, provincial or private granting agencies, and steered many projects to eventually act independently of the Centre.

As well, the Centre maintains an extensive and growing library of books and pamphlets on women's issues, from health and spirituality to childrearing and the arts. The Centre itself operates with a tiny staff (3 part-time women) and a small budget, but its impact in the Nelson area has been mighty over the years. In a sense, the work of the West Kootenay Women's Association mirrors the progress of the women's movement in Canada, since the Royal Commission on the Status of Women, 25 years ago.

### Into the future

This year, the West Kootenay Women's Association and the Women's Centre are being led by a Coordinating Collective of 12 volunteer women representing a broad cross-section of the community. Led by co-chairs Tori Kelly, Cathy Pulkinghorn and Rhonda Schmidt, the group illustrates the wide variety of life choices available to women today. These women - working inside or outside of the home, part-time or full-time, as mothers, married or single, heterosexual or lesbian - are excited to work together to bring the Women's Centre into the start of its next 25 years of service to the Nelson area by continuing to initiate projects that serve all women. Members of the Coordinating Collective welcome the input of the community on any women's issues, or on any activities of the Centre.

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Equality isn't about sameness  
The Charter Equality sections have courts say now that discrimination takes difference and turns it into

Is the only way to value a woman valued like a man? disadvantage  
For women

Social Services: badly paid historic disadvantage  
taking for granted We should celebrate difference  
the traditional work of women

Many women have more choices  
Women feel more comfortable w/  
who they are.