

Voices for Choice

VOLUME 3, ISSUE 1

SPRING 2009

CANADIANS FOR CHOICE

SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH UPDATES

B.C. Bubble Zone Maintained.

In September 2008 the provincial court of appeal upheld the 1995 decision to maintain a 50 metre bubble zone that anti-abortion protesters must respect.

Jessica Yee receives 2009 YWCA award!

Congratulations to CFC Board Member Jessica Yee on receiving the **Young Woman of Distinction Award** from YWCA Toronto. You are an inspiration in the fight for choice!

CFC EVENTS

Safe Sex in the City 2, December 4, 2008.

A fun event where music and spoken word entertainers dazzled guests and promoted a pro-choice Canada!

Medical Students for Choice (MS4C), April 17-19, 2009.

Research and Outreach Coordinator Denisse Temin presented at the Annual MS4C conference, and talked to students about access to abortion services, including barriers seen through a diversity lens.

Chatelaine Magazine: talking about abortion

While the legal battle for abortion has been won, socio-cultural norms continue to threaten this fundamental right. Chatelaine has recently confronted the issue head on in its April 2009 issue feature article "The New Face of the Abortion Debate".

Catherine Dunphy, author of *Morgentaler: A difficult hero* wrote the feature, which includes interviews with women working both for a woman's right to choose, and those against it. Her analysis provides an understanding of how and why young women are getting engaged in the debate again.

This isn't the first time Chatelaine has discussed a woman's right to choose. With Doris Anderson at the helm from 1957 to 1977, Chatelaine took on many feminist issues (Rooney). In 1959 Anderson wrote an editorial, and published the feature article "Should Canada Change Its Abortion Law" by Joan Finnegan (Korinek, p. 306). As Anderson recalls "I dared tackle a subject that threatened to get me fired and put the magazine out of business." (Childbirth by Choice Trust, foreword, 1998)

The April 2009 article demonstrates Chatelaine's continuing commitment to combining lifestyle

and fashion coverage with social criticism and analysis.

It showcases the work of fantastic members of the pro-choice community including Peggy Cooke, Kathryn Palmateer of Arts4Choice, and Board Member Jessica Yee.



Picture of CFC ED Patricia LaRue and son Roméo as featured in Chatelaine (photo: Trevor Lush)

CFC was honoured to be highlighted in the article as a young "small potent" organization poised and committed to continuing the struggle for reproductive freedom. It highlights ED Patricia LaRue, former Research Coordinator Jessica Shaw and CFC's work on access to abortion services in the country. With a diverse and far-reaching audience of women from across the country, the article can help make sure that the message that the right for safe, legal and accessible abortions must always be strived for, is heard far and wide.

What a pleasure to see Chatelaine continue to tackle the tough issues. (Sources on p.2)

Farewell to Norma Scarborough: 1926-2009

Canadians for Choice was saddened by the news of the passing of one of Canada's foremost reproductive rights activists, Norma Scarborough.

Norma was a founding member and former President of the Canadian Abortion Rights Action League from 1984-1992. She worked tirelessly to ensure women had safe, legal and accessible abortions in Canada.

She was instrumental in organizing for change in Canada's abortion laws, and did this both through coalition, and individual endeavours.

As reported in a CARAL newsletter from 1996, when she was invited to a CARAL meeting she

decided to investigate the situation, and in 1974 called Toronto hospitals posing as a pregnant women seeking to terminate her pregnancy, and found a "complicated maze of protocols, consent and hidden quotas".

This groundbreaking approach to understanding access in Canada lives on in Canadians for Choice's research report "Reality Check: a close look at accessing abortion services in Canadian hospitals" (2007). Using the same methodology, it documents the continuing difficulty a woman may face, including judgmental gatekeepers that pervade much of the hospital system.

Norma, you will be missed, but your legacy lives on.



As experienced in Canada...

In May 2009 Canadians for Choice is launching a series of articles and interviews with community organizations and individuals who have particular experiences relating to accessing sexual and reproductive health services based on different aspects of identity.

Denisse Temin, CFC Research and Outreach Coordinator, interviewed Kate Sheese, a researcher with Justicia for Migrant Workers*. The organization works with seasonal migrant workers. These workers have permits that let them work in the country, and are meant to provide them access to health-care services.

However, Kate discussed how in reality this legal right to health services is often compromised by their vulnerable status as temporary workers. Below is a striking example of one woman whose rights were violated:

“Paty** was a woman I met while working with Justicia, she didn’t have a miscarriage but she had concealed her pregnancy. One day she started bleeding a lot and she had to be taken to the hospital.

Her employer found out from the doctor that she was pregnant. When the doctor told her employer that:

- she was going to need a few days off work because this was a high risk pregnancy;
- she had lost a lot of blood and would need to recuperate;

- and, there would need to be certain modifications of her work

the employer responded ‘oh yes of course that’s fine thank-you, thank-you.’

This information wasn’t given directly given to Paty herself. Instead she was sent home and was on a plane back to Mexico within 24 hours of her hospital visit.”

Access to essential sexual and reproductive health services needs to be provided to *all* individuals in Canada. This series of articles addresses the difficult and specific barriers and discrimination that marginalized individuals may face, and the need for service providers to be aware of, and challenge this discrimination in order to provide the best care possible.

*The full article is available on www.canadiansforchoice.ca

** The names have been altered to protect the confidentiality of the individual.

Information about abortion available 24/7 on the
Canadians for Choice Hotline toll-free at:

1-888-642-2725

Chatelaine Magazine: talking about abortion, p. 1 - Sources:

The Childbirth by Choice Trust (CBC) (ed.) (1998) No Choice: Canadian women tell their stories of illegal abortion, CBC.

Korinek, V.J. (2000) Roughing it in the suburbs: Reading Chatelaine Magazine in the Fifties and Sixties, University of Toronto Press.

Rooney, F. “a stand-up woman Doris Anderson” June 11, 2007, section15.ca

Canadians for Choice

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About Us!

Canadians for Choice is a national, pro-choice charitable organization that is dedicated to ensuring reproductive choice for all Canadians.

We envision a world where all individuals— regardless of age, race, ability, gender, sexual orientation, place of residence or socio-economic and other status— have access to the information, resources and services required to make and exercise informed choices on all aspects of their sexual and reproductive health and rights.



www.canadiansforchoice.ca