I never imagined that this study would have relevance more that forty years later. It is clearly a product of its time in the early 1980's. Funded by a grant from the Status of Women Canada, the report was produced before the digital revolution, and so without the aid of a computer, and obviously without access to the internet. With the help of friends and colleagues, I collected hard copies of books and articles documenting the work of as many Canadian theatres as possible. In fairness, there were fewer than today.

What I was after then, though, is what we are still after today: a way to document and communicate the level of representation of women as creators and as characters in our publicly subsidized theatres. And to capture some of the ways in which systemic - in this case, sexist - thinking is actively and vigorously perpetuated while being represented as naturally occurring: "just the way things naturally *are*." This understanding was critical to the goal of dismantling and mitigating the power and continuance of patriarchy in our lives.

The intellectual, political, and environmental violence of the world we live in today reveals the desperation and ferocity of the patriarchy's response to *any* attempt to undermine its hold. This backlash is also, most importantly, a testament to the impact of feminist activism and scholarship, and to the progress that was made; and reminder of the vital importance of continued vigilance and activism.

Rina Fraticelli
2025

Arts
1982

THE STATUS OF WOMEN
IN
THE CANADIAN THEATRE

A Report Prepared for the Status of Women Canada

Rina Fraticelli
June 1982

With the compliments of the
Florence Bird Memorial Library
Status of Women Canada

Avec les compliments de la
Bibliothèque commémorative Florence Bird
Condition féminine Canada

— Jamais Traduit 87 03.06 —

There is one thing I venture to say, though against my Nature because it has a Vanity in it: That had the Plays I have writ come forth under any Man's Name and never known to have been mine, I appeal to all unbayst Judges of Sense if they had not said that Person had made as many good Comedies as any one that Man that has writ in our Age, but a Devil on't the Woman damns the Poet. ...

— Aphra Behn, 1681

There is a strong sense that the time is ripe — not for the "great woman dramatist," a concept itself at odds with the anti-hierarchical women's movement — but for the rich dramatic vision of autonomous women and men created by many women writing for the theatre today.

— Helen Krich Chinoy, 1981

Acknowledgements

In the year of research and investigation upon which this report is based I relied very heavily for assistance, advice and support on a great many people: educators, administrators, artistic directors, publishers, scholars, and artists in every area of the theatre who freely volunteered their time, experiences and resources.

I am particularly indebted to the many, many individual women who responded to my announcements, telling me about their personal experiences in the theatre in this country. Their observations, questions and suggestions created the basis of my work. Many of these women met with me individually and in groups, welcoming me to their cities, theatres and their homes. They spoke frankly of their lives both in and out of the theatre, and together we talked about what the theatre had meant to us and what it might come to mean in the future. Some of these discussions were exhilarating; some painful. All were of great value. Apart from this report, the meetings of theatre women across Canada have given rise to a number of concrete results: an association for women in the theatre is currently being formed in Toronto with the hopes that it will some time form a link in a national network; a women's play reading series is being planned; a new women's theatre group, born of the Montreal meeting, is currently performing its first piece. Throughout the year I have felt that it is possibly in these personal meetings where experiences were exchanged and resources shared that some of the most important work of this project was being accomplished. This work is, of

course, dedicated to all the women whose experience are the foundation of it. My hope is that we have had the first of many encounters.

A number of individuals were especially generous in contributing their own research to this study. I would like to thank Janis Paris, Maureen J. Orton, the Actra Women's Caucus and Susan Feldman of the Guild of Canadian playwrights. I would especially like to recognize the work of Patricia Carroll Brown (included as Appendix III) in examining the proportion of male and female characters in plays by Canadians; and Eleanor Wachtel for her Survey of productions in the Vancouver area.

In the work of producing statistical evidence of women's status in the theatre, I am grateful and indebted to Johanna Householder who has played a major role in the monumental task of generating, organizing and tabulating the new and vital statistical information describing the precise shapes of women's exclusion from the theatre; and to Rhea Tregebov whose contribution to the development of a coherent analysis of this data is central to this report, and who was tireless and vigilant in her role as devil's advocate/copy editor and advisor. I am grateful to Joanne Gormley for providing me with interviews and resource material which helped to describe the situation of the Quebecoises's theatre artists. I would also like to thank Lynne Fernie for her continued support and advice and Joss Maclennan for her fabulous charts.

Introduction

> To achieve the reform of the theatre, to bring it into the condition necessary for it to become a fine art, women must have first left the boards.
>
> — Edward Gordon Craig[1]

> Perhaps the most overwhelming problem facing the development of a truly feminist art is the state of esthetic perception in the culture as a whole.
>
> — Lucy R. Lippard[2]

During the past twenty years we have witnessed the beginning of the development of a truly indigenous Canadian culture, and, in particular, the flowering of Canadian theatre. We have also witnessed in Canadian society as a whole a growing confidence that the sexual barriers, restrictive sexual roles, have disappeared, that women are on an equal footing with men in terms of their participation in the public sphere: in politics as well as art and in business as well as culture. The climate of confidence and increased expectations of the opportunities for women have given rise to such assertions as the following with which theatre historian Anton Wagner concludes his 1979 anthology:

> The removal of some of the barriers of this century has combined since the late '60's with the growth of Canadian professional theatres to create a situation that now provides women dramatists with most of the same opportunities as their male counterparts to analyze almost all aspects of the human condition.[3]

Such a perception is, in fact, dangerous. The reality for Canadian women has, as this report will show, fallen far short of the rhetoric.

What is the status of women in the Canadian theatre? How may such a thing be assessed or measured, according to what standards, or scale or system of values may we decide what is acceptable or desirable and what is not? And how do we determine the most appropriate and effective means to improve the present situation in order to benefit, immediately and particularly, Canadian women, and through the fruits of their expanded opportunities, the cultural wealth of all Canadians?

Obviously the status of women in any discipline is inseparable from their roles, opportunities, and rewards in our society in general. The status of women in theatre, as in any cultural discipline, is more than merely a symptom, however. The exclusion of women from cultural production excludes the expression of their vision, their experience — that is, their version of reality — from the cultural bank of the community. And the consequent absence of women's reality from the cultural vocabulary continues to instruct women about the position and value in this society more forcefully than any other lesson.

This incapacity to (literally) see oneself reflected in the national culture then becomes a central link in the perpetuation of the cycle of women's oppression: women's invisibility in the real world of cultural images confirms and propels her low status in society at large. In a chicken and the egg situation, both must be addressed.

This study is concerned, primarily, with the professions of playwright, director and artistic director. This selection was made on what seemed to me to be purely practical grounds. The limitations of the study made it necessary to define a manageable focus and in selecting these three specializations I am ascribing to them no special status nor arbitrary value. Nor do I intend the part to be read for the whole. The problems of the playwright are not those of the designer; nor are the problems of the director those of the actor. I will argue, however, that there is an important relationship between the limited employment of women in these three areas (and especially as artistic directors) and the continuing problems of women actors.

> In the traditional theatre, the performer is the least powerful in the creative process ... having come in the modern era to be seen as the interpreter of the text or the director's intentions.[4]

It is the artistic director who selects the plays to be produced at his theatre and (unless he himself is directing) who chooses the director who will cast and interpret the works. He (for artistic directors are usually men) therefore dictates not only the employment of playwright and director, but through this choice, the number and scope of roles which will be available to performers. Here — in the triangle of artistic director/playwright/director — is where dramatic culture is determined for Canadian audiences — especially in the mainstream theatre.

> Men ... dominate both as directors and playwrights: although women have been central to the development of the novel they

> have figured only peripherally in theatre writing. Most companies consist of more men than women and, in a profession dogged by high unemployment, the average earnings of actresses are lower than those of actors.[5]

The problems of actors are great, those of women actors are especially formidable. In this report I have been able to refer only to those which are most directly influenced by the narrowly circumscribed choices of roles available to them, and to those resulting from the perception of women in this profession as a whole. And although there is a great need for further research on women in the theatre in general, the most urgent need is unquestionably that for research into the conditions which affect performers.

The study which follows is only a beginning. The lack of previous research in this field is in itself an expression of the low status accorded to women in the Canadian theatre. I am indebted to the fine theoretical work done by Avis Lang Rosenberg and Sharron Corne in the field of the visual arts; to Thelma McCormack for providing through her work and her counsel the tools of a feminist analysis and to Sasha McInnes-Hayman for her generosity in making available her own research and especially in providing the valuable statistics on Canada Council grants to theatre artists that form the basis of Chapter 1.

Women's exclusion from the Canadian theatre — what I have come to call "the invisibility factor" — extends to their absence from available data, documentation, systems of record. I came to realize over the course of this work how very much more activity by women exists than is documented, credited and consequently

available to students, historians or researchers. This syndrome itself has acted as a limitation on my study; only in the continuing work of validating, recognizing and documenting the current work on women as well as rediscovering, retrieving and reinterpreting that which has for too long been consigned to neglect can such inadequacies and injustices be redressed.

I am especially indebted to the work of Helen Krich Chinoy and Linda Walsh Jenkins, in Women in the American Theatre and to that of Michelene Wandor, in Understudies: Theatre and Sexual Politics for providing me with such excellent comparative material on the situation in the United States and in Great Britain. I am also indebted to the work of American critic Lucy R. Lippard for her reexamination of critical values.

I would like to point out in this introduction that I am not unbiased in this work. I am a feminist and a dramaturge, and my desire to investigate this subject grew directly from these twin concerns, and from my desire to encourage more women to create for the theatre.

Rina Fraticelli, June 1981
Toronto.

Footnotes

Introduction

1. Quoted in Helen Krich Chinoy and Linda Walsh Jenkins, Women in the American Theatre. New York: Crown, 1981, p. 4.

2. Lucy R. Lippard, From the Centre: feminist essays on women's art. Dutton: New York, 1976, p. 79.

3. Anton Wagner, Women Pioneers, (Volume II in the series Canada's Lost Plays). Toronto: CTR Publications, 1979, p. 19.

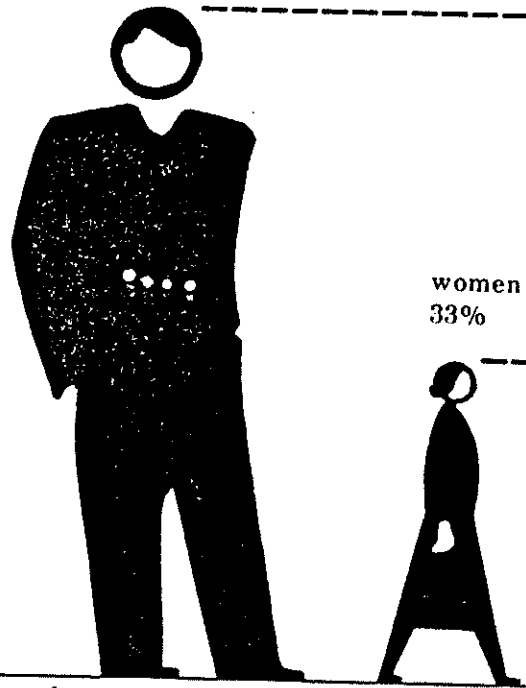
4. Michelen Wandor, Understudies: Theatre and Sexual Politics. Methuen: London, 1981, p. 50.

5. Ibid., p.20.

TABLE 1

Percentage of individual grants awarded by gender

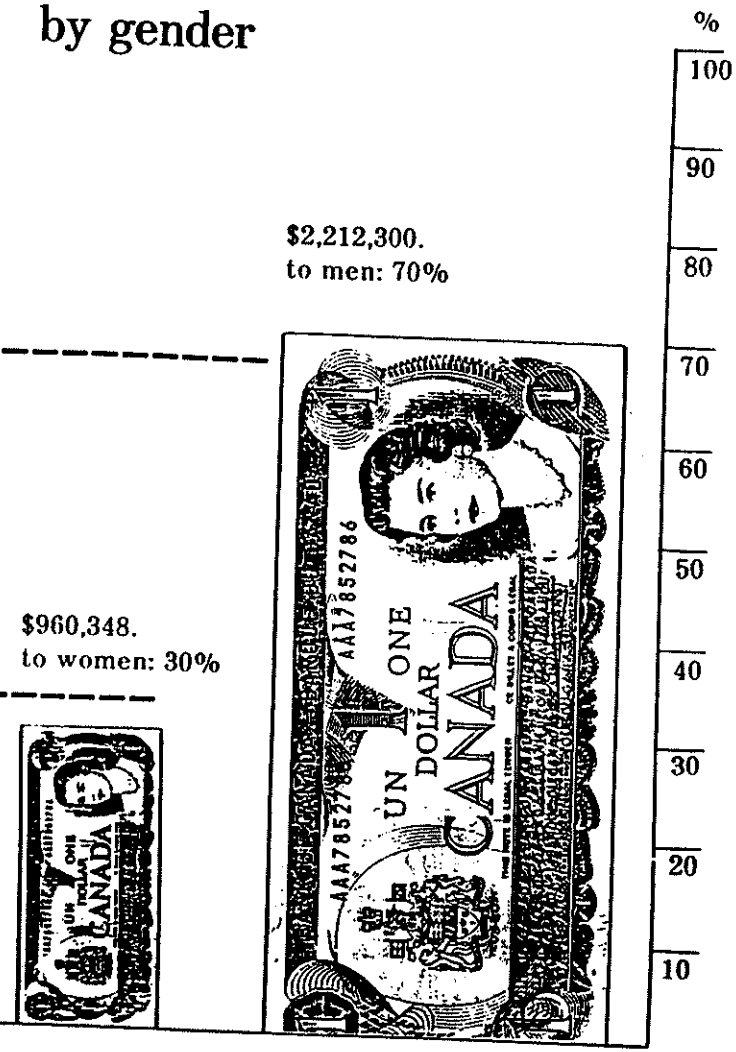
men
67%



women
33%

Total number of grants awarded to individuals in all categories by theatre section of the Canada Council between 1972 & 1981: 996

Percentage of individual grant monies by gender



Total monies disbursed: $3,172,648

> It was Massey whom Louis St. Laurent's government asked to chair the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences in 1949. Massey and his fellow commissioners toured the country, heard 1,200 witnesses, and delivered a report that stated the problem clearly: Canada had an undernourished cultural life.[1]

The Undernourished: Women, Theatre and The Canada Council

In the nine-year period between 1972 and 1980, the Theatre Section of the Canada Council disbursed some $3,172,648 to individual Canadian artists. This support took the form of 996 awards and grants ranging greatly in the dollar value and prestige each carried. They included the relatively small and specific Project Cost Grants and Travel Grants; Short-Term Grants which support artists at work on a project for a period of up to three months; and the prestigious "A" and "B" Grants which allow recognized artists to devote themselves to their work for a full year, without interruption.

As Table 1 illustrates, women were awarded 327, or 33% of these grants. The total value* of the grants to women was $960,348, a figure which represents 30% of the total funds disbursed. Using the 51% of the population which is female as a guideline for parity, these figures indicate a clear disproportion in the Canada Council's disbursement of financial support (and the professional recognition which accompanies it) to men versus women in the Canadian theatre. Isolated in this

*Note that the grant value figures are based on an average, not the actual figures.

way, however, these figures reveal very little beyond this surface disproportion. In order to consider some of the sources and implications of this imbalance, we must examine the distribution of women and men among the applicants for Canada Council funding, as well as compare their distribution among the recipients and applicants of the various awards categories, and their success rates in each. But, most importantly, we must attempt to determine what in fact constitutes a significant disproportion and to understand the basis for such a distinction. Should we assume that because 51% of the Canadian population is female, the equitable and just proportion of women in the theatre should also be 51%? Are talent and vocation uniformly distributed across a population, regardless of gender?

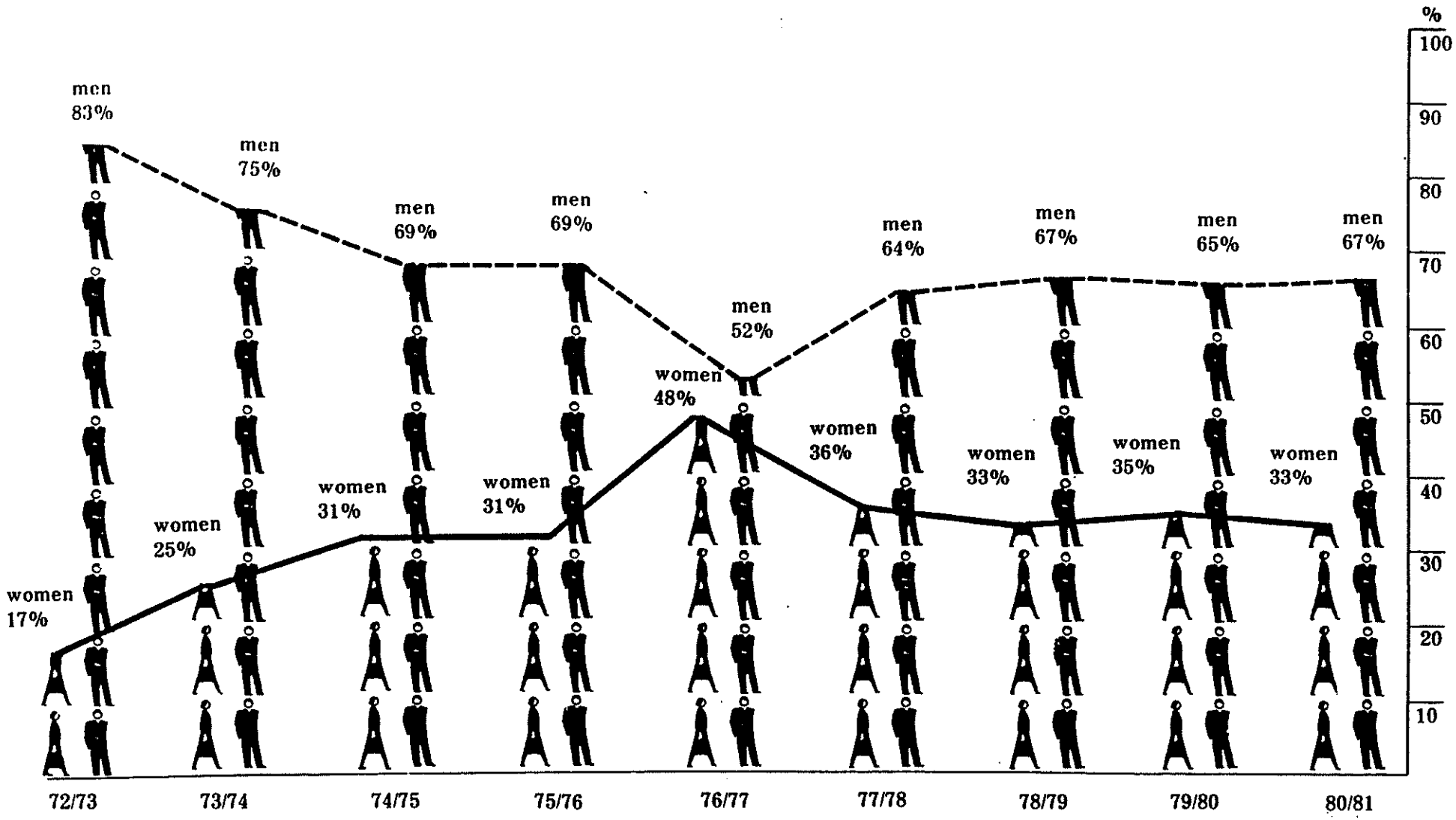
Women are a minority among applicants for Canada Council funding..

Table 2 illustrates the ratio of female to male applicants for all categories of individual grants from the theatre section of the Canada Council between 1972/73 and 1980/81. While we can see a slight increase in the percentage of women who applied through the early part of the period, overall there is a gross disproportion of female to male applicants: of 2,106 applicants, 683[2] or less than one-third were women. (Table 3.)

Obviously such a disproportion goes a long way in explaining why so few women were awarded grants: a primary factor in the relatively low female recipient rate for Canada Council grants was the failure of women to apply. (This

TABLE 2

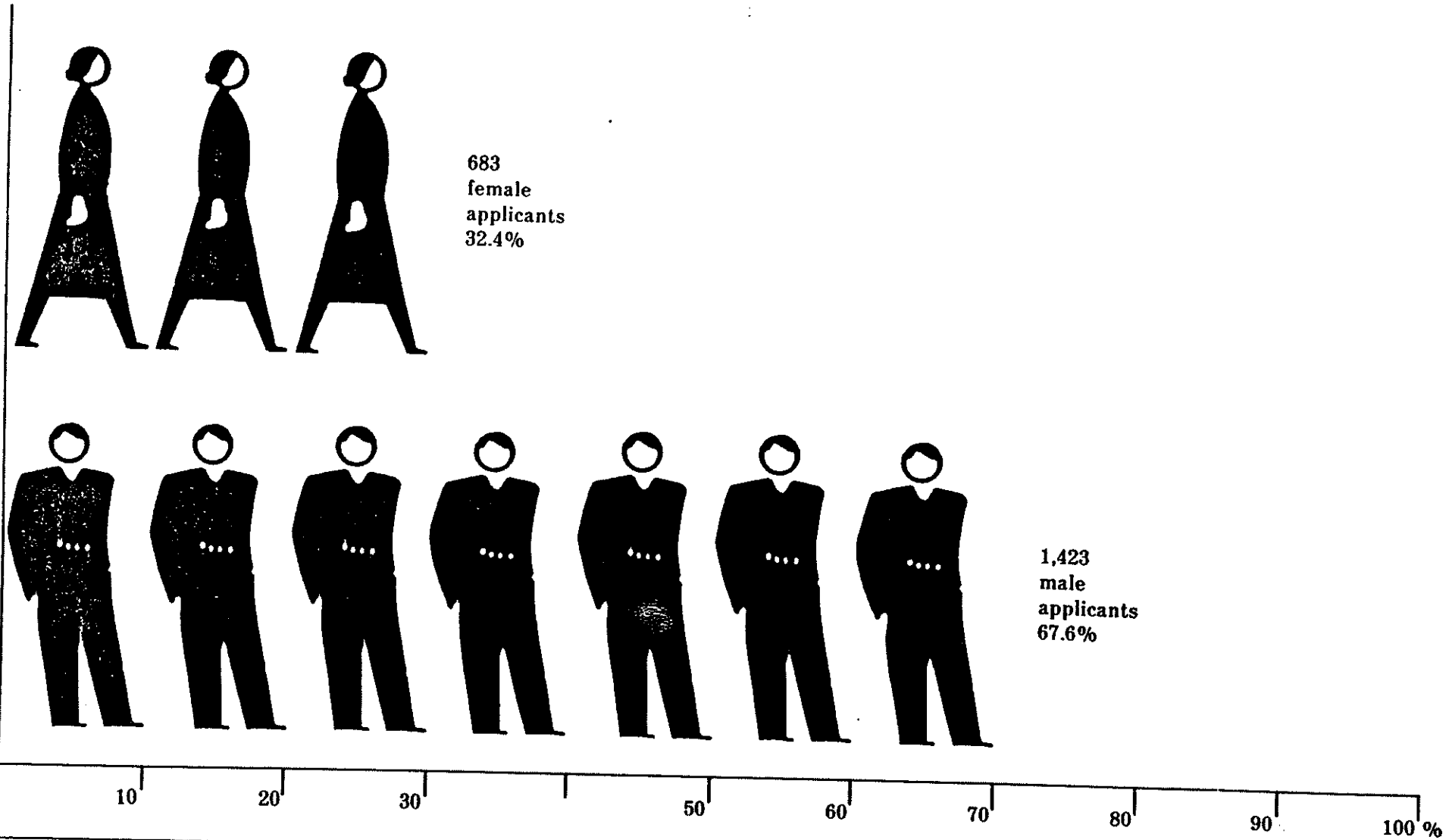
Ratio of female to male applicants
for all grants to individuals from the theatre section between 1972 and 1981



charts by Joss Maclennan

TABLE 3

Applicants to Canada Council by gender
1971/72 to 1980/81



disproportion, it should be noted, holds true for all disciplines served by the Canada Council during this period of time.)

In this light, a 33% recipient rate for women may seem to take on a new, even benign appearance. The conclusion too easily drawn from these two sets of figures is that, with a 30% applicant rate and a 33% recipient rate, women are more than adequately served by the Canada Council. It would then be almost natural to close this question here, correlating the low recipient rate with the comparably low applicant rate and allowing the latter appear to explain the former, thus: women were a minority among recipients of Canada Council theatre grants because women were a minority among applicants for Canada Council theatre grants. In fact, however, the low applicant rate, far from providing a significant explanation, itself constitutes the most serious and complex question we have to address.

What if you gave a party and (almost) nobody came ?

Why should any more than a third of applicants be women ? On what basis can a 30% female application rate be considered unacceptable ? How can we determine "equity" in the context of applicants ? Is it a flat 51%, corresponding to the presence of women in the Canadian population at large ? or should the proportion of applicants who are women reflect the presence of women in a more specialized population ? The question at the heart of this is: who should/

could we expect to apply? or, what is the pool of potential applicants for Canada Council funding? The answer, in a nutshell, is the members of the theatre community.

According to the Canada Council's eligibility criteria, legitmate applicants "must have the equivalent of two years' experience with a professional company or companies. Playwrights must have had at least one play published or produced professionally on stage."[3]

The minimum eligibility requirements also specify that candidates must have completed their basic training and demonstrated "the necessary competence to be considered as professionals within their discipline. (Doubtful cases will be resolved by jury.)"[4] And it is these individuals, selected according to the standards of the professional theatre community, which the Canada Council is empowered to support. We must consider the possibility that women do not constitute 51% of the applicants because they are employed in the theatre to a lesser degree than they are present in the population at large. And that, therefore, a 30% female applicant rate simply reflects the actual presence of women in the professional Canadian theatre.

The employment of women in the professional Canadian theatre

Certainly, a cursory look at the employment of women in the three capacities of playwright, director, and artistic director would tend to support this view. As

Table 4 illustrates, of 1,156 productions staged between 1978 and 1981 across Canada only 10% were written by women and 13% directed by women. And only 11 of the 104 theatres studied were led by women artistic directors. While the employment of women in these capacities will be discussed in much greater detail below, the fact that this group of theatres represents the great majority of professional Canadian theatres makes it clear that if the pool of potential applicants were comprised exclusively of this population, we would have to consider women to be over-represented among both applicants to and recipients of Canada Council funds.

This, of course, is not the case. For what the figures in Table 4 represent is not the small number of Canadian theatre artists (playwrights, directors and artistic directors) who are women but only the small number of women theatre artists who were employed by, and whose work was visible in, the professional (and, in most cases, subsidized) Canadian theatres.

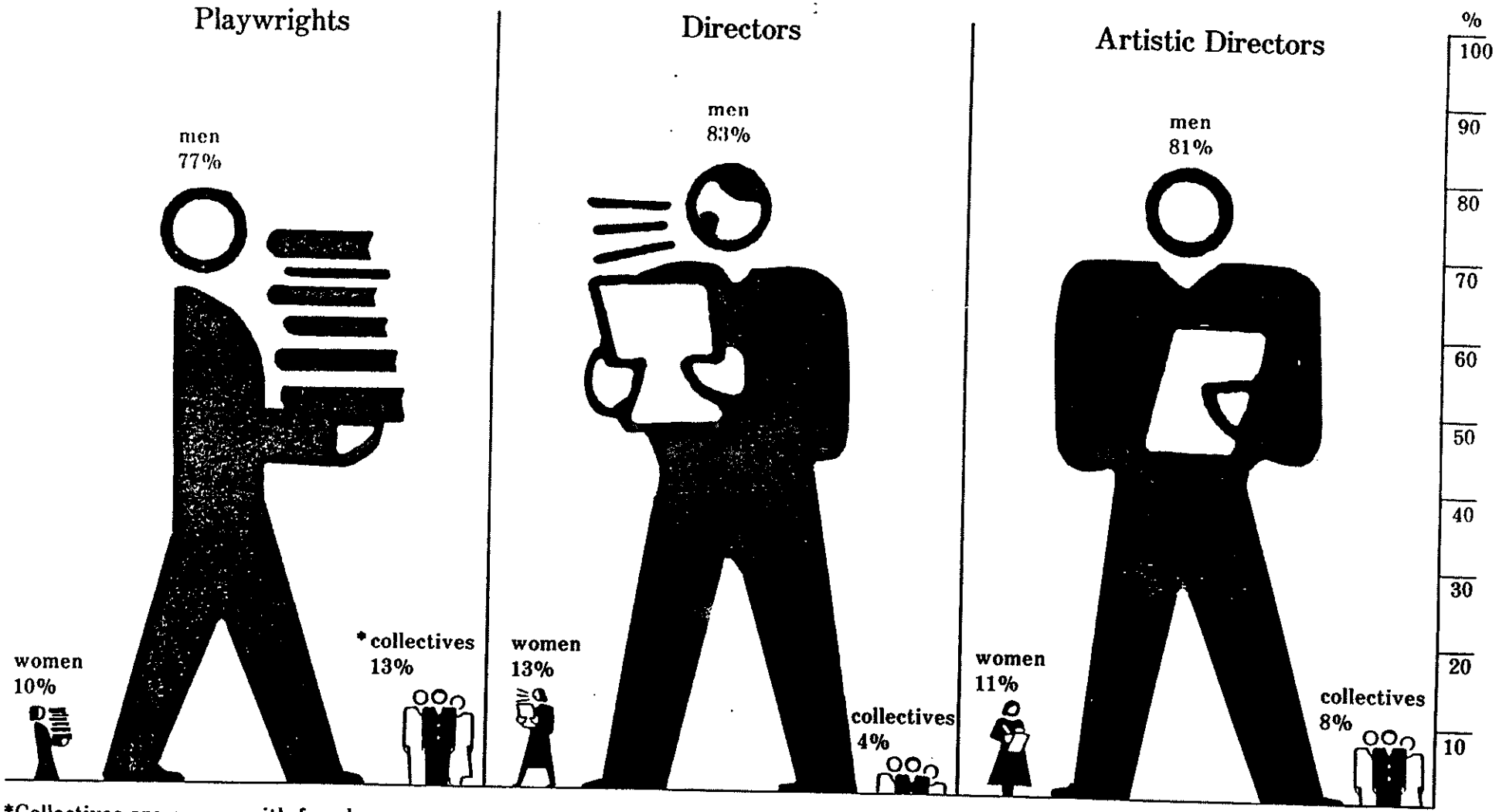
The vast difference in the composition of these two groups of women goes to the heart of the description of women's exclusion from the creation of culture. It has been characterized by art critic Avis Lang Rosenberg as "the gap between aspiration and legitimation,"[5] a phrase she coined in her 1978 study of women in the visual arts to describe the ghettoization of women in the arts.

In a later report, Ms. Rosenberg concluded that while women form the visible majority of volunteer workers, consumers, and students of art, their numbers drop dramatically to a clear minority among those who receive wages,

TABLE 4

National Survey

Of 1156 productions staged at 104 Canadian theatres between 1978 and 1981.



*Collectives are groups with female representation.

charts by Joss Maclennan

professional recognition, and funding as serious practitioners, curators and teachers of art. This separation of roles, she points out, persists despite the popular belief that the status of women in the visual arts has improved in recent years. And it is Rosenberg's conviction that the separation of roles and the disparity in status accorded men and women will continue as long as

> women continue to populate art programmes and art schools at the current majority rate and men continue to (a) hold the vast majority of full-time and/or remunerative teaching positions, (b) have the vast majority of ... shows, (c) receive the vast majority of Canada Council "B" Grants ... (d) constitute the vast majority of jurors and so on.[6]

Aspiration vs. Legitimation in the Theatre

Women form a distinct minority among those employed in the capacities of playwright, director and artistic director in the Canadian theatre community. At Canadian theatre schools the employment picture for women is not much brighter. Between 1979 and 1982, women comprised between 20% and 30% of the faculty at Canadian conservatories and undergraduate theatre departments; in the graduate departments, they were even less visible, and fading each year: 28% in 1979/80, 20% in 1980/81 and 19% in 1981/82.[7]

Similarly, among jurors for all individual theatre awards at the Canada Council women comprised only 24% between 1972 and 1981. And while no exact correlation can be found between the percentage of women jurors and

the female success rate in any given year, the fact that so few women were considered qualified by the Council to judge awards competitions is a sharp reminder to women of their low status in this field.

(There is some reason for cautious optimism in the fact that the percentage of women jurors seems to have improved in recent years. However, even with the relatively significant growth from 0 - 39% (1980/81) women have yet to constitute the majority of any single theatre jury. And given the relationship established, below, between the presence of women in leadership roles in the theatre and the employment of women, it may take a majority presence on juries to determine the relationship between female jurors and female success rates.)

It is clear from all this that among Canadian artists who are endorsed and supported by the Canada Council, represented on Canadian stages and employed at Canadian theatre schools, women are a small minority. But the real injustice of this lies not so much in the marked numerical disproportion between the male and female employment rates in this field, as in the distressing disproportion which exists between those women who would work in the Canadian theatre and those who are permitted to do so.

All Dressed Up and No Place To Go

While there is no single path to the profession of playwright or director, nor any single indicator of vocation or ability, the enrollment and performance of women in professional training programmes gives us one gauge of their career aspiration.

Over the last decade, women have consistently formed a majority of students enrolled in performing arts programmes in Canada.[8] And this majority has, in fact, grown substantially over the decade. Statistics Canada figures show that in the 1972/73 academic year, women comprised 58% of the student body in the performing arts; by 1980/81 that figure had increased to 68%.

A similar pattern is visible among the numbers of graduates from these departments. In 1970, 50% of the bachelor's and first professional degrees were issued to women; by 1980 women received 74% of these degrees.

Since these professional training programmes provide a key pool for the theatre constituency, how can we explain the gap between the growing majority presence of women as students and their equally dramatic absence from the profession itself?

Always the Bridesmaid, Never the Bride

> Although women have traditionally been involved in the arts, keeping the majority of local cultural organizations alive through volunteer work, only 21% of the appointments related to the arts within the Secretary of State have gone to women.[9]

Women constitute an acknowledged majority among theatre consumers. According to a 1975 study commissioned from the Ontario Arts Council, women were 60% of the audience members at theatre productions staged in the Metro Toronto and surrounding area.[10] A similar study of the Edmonton region placed

the female audience membership at 58%.[11]

Women also constitute the majority of voluntary workers in the theatre as in other cultural activities:

> Women have always been in the foreground of voluntary activities associated with the development of culture. As fund-raisers, as educators, as programme administrators, as bookkeepers, as ticket sellers, women volunteer their time, their money, their knowledge.
> ...
> This extensive commitment by female volunteers has meant tremendous financial savings on the part of government and cultural institutions.[12]

Both in the professional and in the undervalued sphere of amateur and community theatre, the volunteer labour provided overwhelmingly by women in supportive roles has often made the difference between a group's survival and failure. Similarly, women have played the role of handmaiden of the art in other capacities. Even the most cursory examination of theatre bibliographies demonstrates the strong interest of women in the theatre reflected in their historical, archival and research studies of the art.[13]

On the basis of such evidence, we should expect to see women forming a strong majority of those whose interest and commitment to the theatre leads them to seek both employment in the professional theatre and assistance in this endeavor from the Canada Council. In fact, if their participation in the profession were to directly reflect their participation as its students, volunteers, consumers and handmaidens, we should expect women to comprise not 51% , but between 2/3 and

three quarters of the theatre employment figures. In the light of such an assessment, the disproportion evinced by the 10–13% employment figures for women in the key creative capacities of writer and director are even more disturbing.

> The roots of this discrimination can probably be traced to the fact that making art is considered a primary function, like running a business, or a government, and women are conventionally relegated to the secondary, housekeeping activities, such as writing about, exhibiting, caring for the art made by men.[14]

But we have been dealing thus far with questions of quantity and not quality. Is it possible that, though women in great numbers demonstrate in all these ways a strong interest in the theatre, they do not (at least not in comparable numbers) possess that measure or quality of talent which distinguishes the enthusiastic amateur and competent student from the gifted professional?

While talent and quality in the arts are not easily definable or quantifiable, we can hope to find, in the patterns of women's performance for professional awards from the Canada Council, some practical indications of their ability as determined by professional juries.

For five of the nine years for which records are available, women enjoyed appreciably higher rates of success than men did. The overall success rate for the nine year period was 47% for all applicants; 47% for women and 45% for men.[15]

According to this national standard of artistic merit, as well as in their successful graduation from professional training programmes, at least, women were found to be as professionally worthy as men, and sometimes more so.

Catch-22

It is clear that the theatre section of the Canada Council provides a disproportionate degree of support to men as opposed to women. Moreover, it is also clear that this disproportion has its roots in the underemployment of women in the profession. Women cannot receive more proportionate assistance from the Canada Council because they cannot apply for it. Finally, women cannot, in the numbers that we should expect, apply for recognition and assistance from the Council because no amount of interest, training, and ability on the part of individual women were sufficient to qualify them to apply:

> Applicants must have the equivalent of two years' experience with a professional company or companies.
>
> Playwrights must have had at least one play published or produced professionally.[16]

Footnotes

Part I.

1. Robert Fulford, "The Canada Council at Twenty-Five," Saturday Night. March, 1982, p. 34.

2. It should be noted that the number 683 refers to the total number of applications by women, and not necessarily to the total number of different women who applied. We can safely assume that the actual number of different women represented by these figures was much lower, based on the likelihood of repeated applications over the 9 year period. It would be most valuable for future research to know the recidivist rate on applications.

3. Aid to Artists, The Canada Council, February, 1982, p. 5.

4. Ibid., p. 4.

5. Avis Lang Rosenberg, "Women Artists and the Canadian Art World: A Survey." Criteria, 4(2), Fall, 1978, p. 16.

6. Avis Lang Rosenberg, A Fact Sheet For and About Women in Art, 1980.

7. Typically, women figure far more prominently at the less prestigious, community colleges where salary scales tend to be lower. There the proportion of women teachers rose from 22% in 1979/80 to 33% in 1980/81 and 40% in 1981/82.

8. Performing arts here refers to dance, drama and theatre. Figures for dance may, therefore, weigh those results towards a somewhat heavier representation of women; however separate figures for theatre were unavailable. Nonetheless, the male/female ratio among students in English and Creative Writing programmes, presumabley other sources of playwrights, were comparable.

9. Lyse Champagne. Not How Many But How Few. Ottawa: Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women, 1980. Quoted in Women and Culture brief by CACSW to the Federal Cultural Review Board. March 1981, p. 24.

10. S.H. Book, S. Globerman and the National Research Centre for the Arts. The Audience for the Performing Arts. Toronto: Ontario Arts Council, 1975.

11. Clive A.F. Padfield. "The Performing Arts in Edmonton: a survey of selected audiences." August, 1980. Quoted in Women and Culture, p. 30.

12. Women and Culture, p. 21-22.

13. Another field where women's presence is strongly felt is that of the theatre administrator, that stalwart group who, by their fundraising, budgeting, grant-writing, negotiating, volunteer-finding skills, permit the artistic director to carry out his creative work.

14. Lucy R. Lippard, From the Centre: feminist essays on women's art. New York: Crown, 1976, p. 31.

15. Sharron Corne, in her 1981 study Women Artists in Manitoba found a comparable success rate among women applicants for funding from the Manitoba Arts Council: "The relationship between female grant applicants and recipients argues strongly for the quality of women's artwork." Provincial Council of Women of Manitoba, 1981, p. 15.

16. Canada Council. Aid to Artists. Ottawa: 1982, p. 5.

II.

Theatre Training: The Chicken and the Egg

> Though the men and women did not differ in the quality of their work as rated by the faculty, there were differences in the way they perceived their work and future careers. To the question, "Do you think of yourself as an artist?" most of the women said "no" (67%), but most of the men said "yes" (66%). While 40% of the men thought their work superior, only 17% of the women thought their work superior.[1]

Of 1,156 theatre productions staged in Canada in the last three years (1978-1981), only 10% were written by women and 13% directed by women. There is really no way to soften the blow such figures deliver. And the impact is brought into even sharper focus by recalling that through the 70's the percentage of women among graduates of performing arts training programmes rose to close to 70%. Where, we must inquire, are all the women playwrights and directors whose work we might have expected to see? Where did all those students go upon graduation?

In her study Women in the American Theatre, author and scholar Helen Krich Chinoy brings a new perspective to the litany of traditional explanations for the absence of women from the professional theatre (women are conditioned to be passive; the theatre is an active medium; "women can't write for the theatre. period."; women are overprotected from the experiences of life from which drama

is drawn;" "generic female inability," etc.).[2] In a chapter entitled "Where are the women playwrights?" Chinoy points out that the very phrasing of this question is misleading: this is not, she says, a question the women dramatists themselves would pose:

> The women writers themselves see things differently. They wonder what there is about the theatre as a medium that has kept women from full participation. Theatre, as a highly public expression and a risky investment, they realize, has been outside of what has been defined as women's sphere. Playwriting is a skill that can only really be learned as part of a group working together in a highly technical physical plant, and they know that women have not usually had access to the camaraderie of the professional theatre.[3]

O.K. Who Forgot To Bring The Women?

This shift in emphasis is crucial to understanding the nature of the problem. Specifically, Chinoy's emphasis points up the critical fact that one simply cannot be a playwright without the consent of the theatre community — or at least some part of it. And obviously this applies equally to the field of directing. For neither a playwright nor a director can practise her craft — and consequently become experienced and expert at it — in isolation from the complex of human, physical and technical resources which constitute the basic materials of the art of theatre. This constitutes a practical conundrum: one cannot be employed by a theatre until one is qualified; and one cannot become qualified untill one has had the theatre experience. It's a chicken-and-egg predicament.

Admittedly this is a problem faced by every inexperienced theatre artist, male and female; but in view of the extreme disparity between demonstrated interest of women in theatre and their employment levels, it is obvious that women as a group suffer far more acutely from this problem.

> The worst sources, not only of discrimination, but of the tragic feelings of inferiority so common among women artists, are the art schools and college art departments...most of which have few or no female faculty despite the plethora of unknown male names.[4]

The difficulty of the crucial transition from the role of student to the role of professional should not be underestimated. Apart from the new competitive pressure which stems from the simple fact that there are far fewer professional opportunities than there are aspiring artists, the actual work of advancing one's fledgling career is very different from that of studying. Not only must one continue to develop and apply one's skills, but one is now required to find or create the precious situations in which to do this.

The key to making the transition from student to professional lies in establishing credibility. Until such time as talent is perceived as existing, it does not exist; it is an intangible. Credibility is established through recognition and recognition can come only through the current community.

This transition is frequently accomplished through the assistance of a network of introductions, recommendations, contacts composed of former classmates, teachers, and their professional colleagues: that is, the "old

boys' network."

> One appeal of the theatre to writers has been the relative camaradie it provides; the playwright puts words on paper alone, but the work is brought to fruition in company, with the help of actors and directors. Male exclusion of women from this camaraderie, perhaps more than any other single factor, has been responsible for the lack of a female tradition in playwriting similar to that which exists in both fiction and poetry.[5]

In a profession where so little of one's work (and in the case of the director, none) may be accomplished in isolation, an introdcution to a person in a position of authority with the potential of assisting in one's career is of inestimable value; as is the legitimation which comes from sponsorship from influential former teachers. Needless to say, women in general have been alienated and excluded from this system of validation. There are a number of reasons for this, not the least of which is the previously cited minimal presence of female peers and colleagues who might help bridge the gap between the world of school and that of the professional theatre. This "invisiblity factor", the relative absence of women from the power structure of the profession, has practical ramifications for women beyond the considerable psychological obstacles which result from the impossibility of (literally) seeing themselves in the roles to which they aspire.

> In a country that has long worshipped British and European drama at the expense of its native drama, and that has consistently relegated fine women novelists and poets to the lesser ranks of the literary pantheon, it is not surprising to

> find...women playwrights viewed as a curious aberration. In fact, women have made a significant contribution to (our) theatre. Women writing for the stage in this country today are heirs of a neglected but not negligible tradition.[6]

This negation of the contribution of women is reflected in every aspect of professional training. In spite of the numbers of strong female dramatists in Canada, there is little liklihood that students will read and perform plays written by women. And this is the case in spite of the fact that plays by women tend to offer, not surprisingly, more and varied roles for actresses and thereby provide a simple solution to the continuing "problem"*of too few female roles.[7] Consequently, the possibility of being both a woman and a playwright continues to seem unlikely. Moreover women students must content themselves with waiting, hoping and competing for the very rare rich female roles which might be assigned. In fact they're forced to settle for the more typical fare of female stereotypes: women-according-to-men. Nor are the texts they are assigned to study likely to contain the records of the contribution of women to the history either of the international or the Canadian theatre.

Given this context, it is not surprising that for anyone who chooses to study at either of Canada's two conservatories, there is less than a 15% likelihood that they will be taught by women.[8](And no possibility, at present, that their schools will be directed by women.) If they choose to pursue their theatre training within university programmes, their chances "shoot up" to about 25%. At best, the ratio of women on faculty tends to be the inverse of that of women in the

*See Appendix III.

student body. What's good for the gander, apparently, is good for the gander.

> One isn't just up against one's own feelings as a woman. One is up against a whole external establishment of a man's world created for men, by men where the rules are entirely theirs.[9]

A great many of the professional theatre women I interviewed in conjunction with this study attributed their first professional opportunity or primary source of professional support to other women. A comparison of employment levels in the national survey and in theatres directed by women supports this experience, contradicting the stereotype of women as natural antagonists in professional life. While there are no doubt significant individual examples of the opposite, that is, of particular women finding great encouragement and artistic support from men, the picture as a whole is best presented by the employment figures: where a woman is the artistic director of a theatre, the probability of a woman being hired as playwright or director is two to three times (depending on the position) greater than in the national survey. (See Table 12.) This support of women by women does not necessarily reflect an active or conscious programme of support or solidarity, but simply, in my opinion, a remission or reduction of sexism. One example may help to illustrate the subversive effects of this perceptual handicap within the educational system:

At a small open meeting held in conjunction with this study, two theatre students were present. They were moved by the presence of over a dozen professional theatre women, and they shared with us some of the difficulties they

were experiencing as students. They told us that concern was raging in their department about the "problem" of the enrollment of such a large proportion of women students. The prevailing feeling in the department was that "something had to be done" about the fact that the school was graduating far more women than the industry could employ. At the time of the meeting, the chairman was proposing, in what he apparently considered to be in the best interests of his female students, that female enrollment be limited to a percentage which would reflect the real possibilities for their eventual employment.

We must wonder just how widespread such thinking is in our theatre schools, and whether this is typical of the "mind set" encountered by female theatre students during their professional training. This incident illustrates the unquestionning acceptance of limited employment possibilities for women as being somehow axiomatic. The wrong questions are being asked. Such a view successfully removes any responsibility for altering the state of affairs. Viewed in this way, as some sort of natural law of the theatre, the status of women in the profession can never radically improve.

A recent study on theatre training prepared under the aegis of the Canada Council betrayed a similar degree of gender blindness. The 1977 Report on Theatre Training in Canada had no questions nor comments to offer concerning the training or professional needs of women. Though the research involved a survey of Canadian theatre training programmes and 710 questionnaires to Canadian theatre artists (493 male, 307 female), in none of the 70 pages was there any analysis of the

findings on the basis of gender. You can't find what you don't believe exists. But this is not surprising given the fact that the chair and all committee members were men; predictably enough, the committee's researcher, that traditional low status, work-intensive position, was held by a woman. On the subject of the difficulty of providing adequate training for directors, for example, the authors of the report offered the following neanderthal comment:

> The neophyte director is in an unenviable position. He is expected to assume leadership of the group, but he may be woefully unprepared for this position at the helm. The fact that some have succeeded in this situation proves only that leaders are born not made.[10]

Such a statement provides little encouragement to women who might be more likely to feel confident in their own leadership potential were they provided by their theatre schools with the valuable example of women teachers/leaders/directors.

For in the transition from student to professional, aside from the "boost" of introductions and endorsements, students carry little with them into the fray apart from the bank of practical experience and the armour of confidence and artistic self-worth. But the conditions of credibility that would establish such confidence are essentially non-existent for women. Without role models, either as peers or mentors, women operate on the basis of functioning invalidation of their artistic existence. Thus lack of confidence and even failure are, to a very high degree, built in.

We have learned from the flourishing of Canadian culture in the 60's and 70's that the historical excuse – "there simply isn't any" — masks a different set of cultural values: i.e., "there aren't any Canadians who can write/direct/act/design of the calibre, and in the style, of the British/American standards we have chosen to legitimize." The implied incapacity of theatres/juries/schools to "find" sufficient female representatives can have no more obscure a source.

> Canada has a theatre which is almost free of the need to turn a profit...given that fact, our young artists should be guided towards a sense of values that are both appropriate and fulfilling for a non-commercial situation. We believe the fulfillment of this potential begins with the young artist.
>
> — 1977 Report on Theatre Training in Canada

Footnotes

Part II

1. Sharron Corne, Women Artists in Manitoba. Manitoba: Provincial Council of Women of Manitoba, 1981, p.4.

2. Helen Krich Chinoy and Linda Walsh Jenkins, Women in the American Theatre. New York: Crown, 1981, p. 129.

3. Ibid.

4. Lucy R. Lippard, From the Centre. New York: Dutton, 1976, p. 33.

5. Judith E. Barlow, Plays By American Women: The Early Years. New York: Avon Books, 1981, p. ix.

6. Honor Moore, The New Women's Theatre. New York: Vintage Books, 1977, p. xiv.

7. Twice as many (52%) of the plays written by women featured "balanced casts" (equal number of roles for men and women), or more roles for women, than did plays written by men (26%), according to a recent survey conducted by actor and playwright Patricia Carroll Brown based on plays published by Playwrights Canada. (See Appendix III.)

8. There is some cause for optimism in the presence of Michelle Rossignol at the head of the French section of the National Theatre School. See Appendix II for excerpts from a recent interview with the Quebec director.

9. From interviews with Canadian theatre women, unpublished, which were held throughout the winter of 1981-82. This statement was made by a director.

10. Malcolm Black, Chairman, The Report on Theatre Training in Canada. Ottawa: The Canada Council, 1977, p. 70.

III.

Employment Patterns in the Canadian Theatre Industry

> The theatre industry, like other cultural industries, operates through a hierarchical structure in which artistic and administrative decisions are largely in the hands of men. The situation exists not as a result of a massive and conscious conspiracy among men to put women down, but as a far more complex consequence (part conscious, part unconscious) of received assumptions about relations between the sexes, based on an ideology which assumes that the biological differences between men and women must necessarily mean that their fields of social activity must be different, and that men's work is more socially important than women's work.[1]

Let us now return to the conditions in the theatre which mitigate against the entry of female theatre graduates. Theatre is a collaborative art. This makes the problems facing a woman director or playwright significantly different from those facing her counterpart in the worlds, say, of sculpture or poetry. In these disciplines a woman can, in the final analysis, carry out her creative work without the support of her professional community. Such total control over the conditions of creation are impossible for the playwright or director. Theoretically, a playwright may be at liberty to write her plays in privacy, but the craft is not one which is likely to be mastered without practical experience. And a completed play does not yet really exist, in the way a novel does, until it is "on its feet", or living on stage. In recognition of this, a playwright can neither become a member of the Guild of Canadian Playwrights, her professional association, nor

have her work published by the Playwrights Canada, until the work has been professionally produced twice.

For the director the situation is even more severe. There is no work alone. Directors are therefore totally dependent for the conditions of their employment upon the support and power of a complex of professionals. This — an extremely tenuous position for anyone — is particularly difficult for women. As Michelene Wandor points out in her study of sexual politics in the theatre: "In the day to day rehearsal a woman director needs to confront the assumption that authority can only be male, and that the way women are expected to behave in the rest of society must be reflected in a woman director's behaviour."[2]

Women as Bad Risks

The high cost of producing theatre is a significant factor in the general conservatism of the industry. Theatre is a high-risk, labour-intensive operation in which only the most commercially successful productions can break even or, even more rarely, generate profit. There would, arguably, be no Canadian theatre to speak of without the programme of encouragement and subsidy created by governments to promote the production of Canadian works by Canadian companies through those years needed for Canadian audiences to develop an appreciation for their new national theatre. And even the Stratford festival, whose box office capacity qualifies it as a virtually tourist attraction, requires over

half a million dollars in subsidy from the Canada Council, in addition to extensive support from other private and public sources.

> During the heyday of the Provincetown (Playhouse), 1916-1922, roughly one-third of the plays produced were by women. Women were also actively involved in play selection and direction, as well as in the business end of the theatre. Interestingly, when in later years a reorganized Provincetown seemed more concerned with commercial success than artistic experimentation, participation by women dropped.[3]

What makes a woman a risk now is that there haven't been women before; the historical absence from the field of theatre thus becomes an intangible factor affecting a board of directors' or artistic director's decision to risk their money, resources, or artistic reputations. Once again it's a chicken-and-egg predicament.

Consequently, we must dismiss as naive the notion that the emancipation of women in the Canadian theatre — or perhaps more accurately, the emancipation of the Canadian theatre with regards to women — could consist in anything as simple and uncomplicated as throwing open the stage doors to the gifted young talent — or throngs of them — who might have been waiting in patient readiness to seize their moment upon the stage. It is no single closed door, but a series of diverse and deeply systemic obstructions which define the exclusion of women from the Canadian theatre.

Where women are (most emphatically) not: The Group of 18

> Although women have made their mark in the theatre, it hasn't been easy for them to do so on Broadway or in the mainstream theatre.[4]

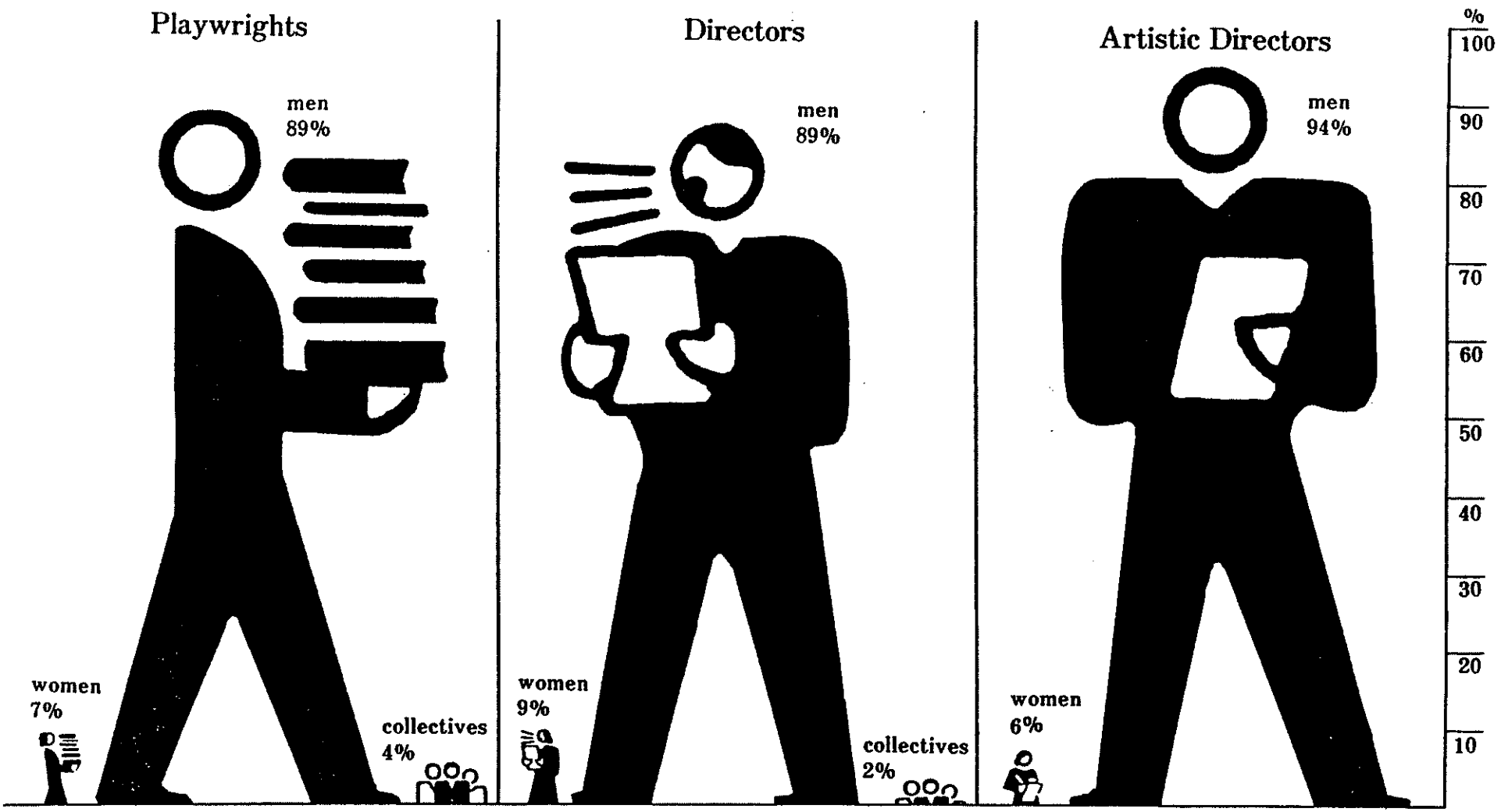
Given the high financial risk involved, it is more than ironic that the worst offenders in terms of the employment of women are to be found among that group of theatres which receives the highest level of Canada Council subsidization. As Table 5 shows, among that group of theatres which receives $150,000 or more annually from the Canada Council, women enjoy even worse prospects for employment as playwrights, directors and artistic directors. Among this priviledged "Group of 18" theatres, Canadian audiences can expect to see plays written by women only 7% of the time, and productions directed by women a mere 9% of the time. During the three years to which these figures refer, only two theatres had women artistic directors.

A few of the theatres in this group, such as Centaur and Rideau Vert, had employment records which approached or improved on the national average (Table 4), but they were exceptional for the group. Some, like the Globe Theatre, The Manitoba Theatre Centre and The Vancouver Playhouse, produced no plays written by women between 1978 and 1981; others, like the Bastion Theatre, The Shaw Festival, Theatre Calgary and Toronto Arts Productions hired not a single woman director. And at Theatre London and Theatre New Brunswick, no woman was employed as playwright, artistic director or director between 1978-1981.

TABLE 5

The Group of 18.

Those theatres receiving $150,000 or more annually from the Canada Council



charts by Joss Maclennan

Obviously, the government's subsidization of this class of theatre does not benefit women; nor, one must conclude, was it intended to. Just who does benefit, however, is not clear. For, as we shall illustrate below, the Group of 18 theatres, in addition to its extremely poor record of employing women playwrights, directors and artistic directors, also enjoys the dubious distinction of producing the lowest proportion of Canadian plays of any of the groupings of Canadian theatres we examined: barely more than half of the national average (see Table 10). And this while drawing approximately 57% of the Canada Council's total subsidy to theatres! (See Table 11.)

Theatre for the Young

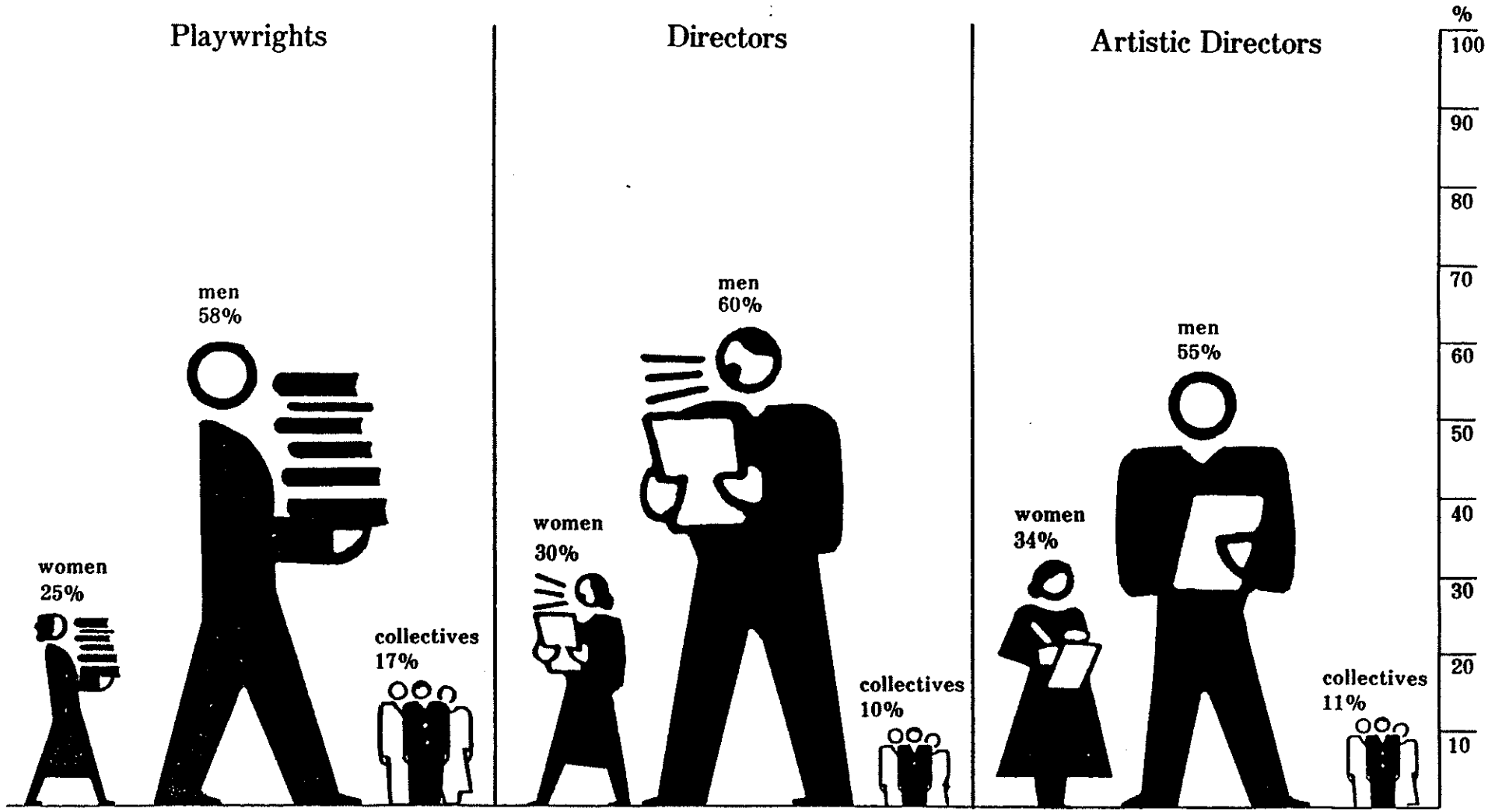
In Canada, theatre for the young has tended to suffer the same sort of neglect and professional condescension which it does in so many countries. Whether it is because of this low status, the commensurate budgets, or whether it stems from the traditional association of women with children, the employment of women at children's theatres is much higher than in the national average. At 41 theatres studied over the same three year period (Table 6), 25% of the productions were written by women and 30% were directed by women. This represents an employment rate which is approximately twice what women experience in the theatre in general, and more than three times their rate of employment at The Group of 18.

There seems to be another factor involved in this relatively high female

TABLE 6

Youth Theatres

of 391 productions at 41 Theatres
between 1978-1981



employment rate, and that is the high proportion of female artistic directors at theatres for the young.[5]

Gentlemen's Choice

> Theatre boards will rarely admit publicly to prejudice against employing women as directors, but the experience of younger women points to strong resistance.[6]

It is normally the artistic director who selects the plays his theatre will produce that season, and the director who will cast and direct them. Sometimes this is done in consultation with a board of directors, or with the theatre's administrator; sometimes not. For financial reasons as well as aesthetic ones, the artistic director himself will (if he is a director) direct a number of the productions himself, saving his theatre the considerable expense of additional freelance salaries. This fact, then, will influence the employment rate of female directors at any theatre. So in the Group of 18 theatres the very low employment rate enjoyed by women directors is related to the low rate of female artistic directors at this category of theatre.

The relationship between free lance employment and artistic directors is more complex than this, though, for in spite of the fact that artistic directors are rarely writers, there is a visible relationship between the gender of the artistic director and the gender of the playwrights whose works are produced.[7]

We can best begin to describe some of the conditions affecting the employment of women by comparing the national survey group, the Group of 18 and the youth theatres, in several respects, over a three year period from 1978 - 1981. (For detailed notes on methodology, please see the appendix at the end of Chapter III.)

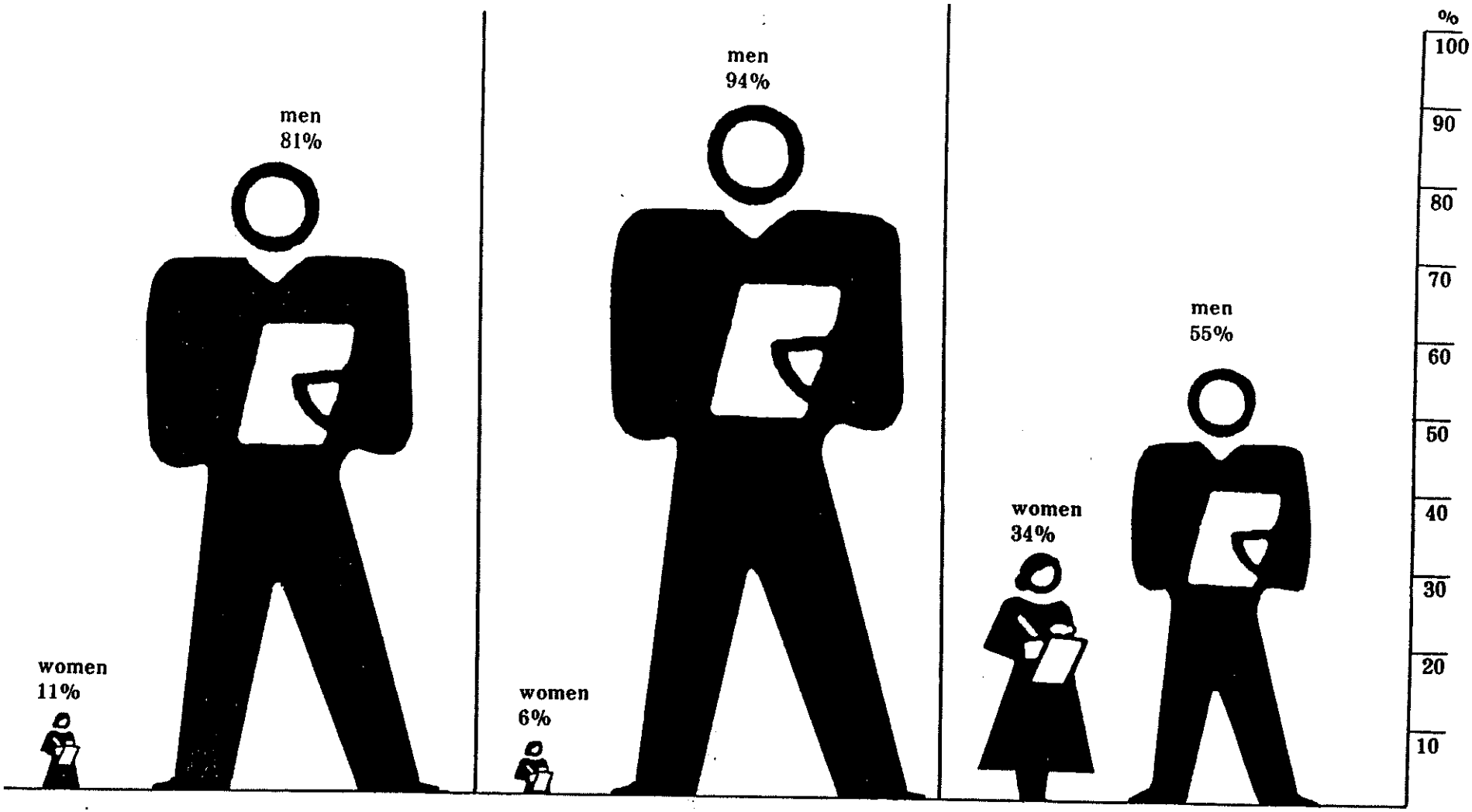
Table 7

Women Artistic Directors

In the national survey of 114 theatres, 11% had female artistic directors. In the group of 18 theatres, only 6% or slightly more than half this percentage had female artistic directors. In the youth theatres, a relatively impressive 34% of the theatres were led by women.

TABLE 7

Artistic Directors
Female/Male Ratio



charts by Joss Maclennan

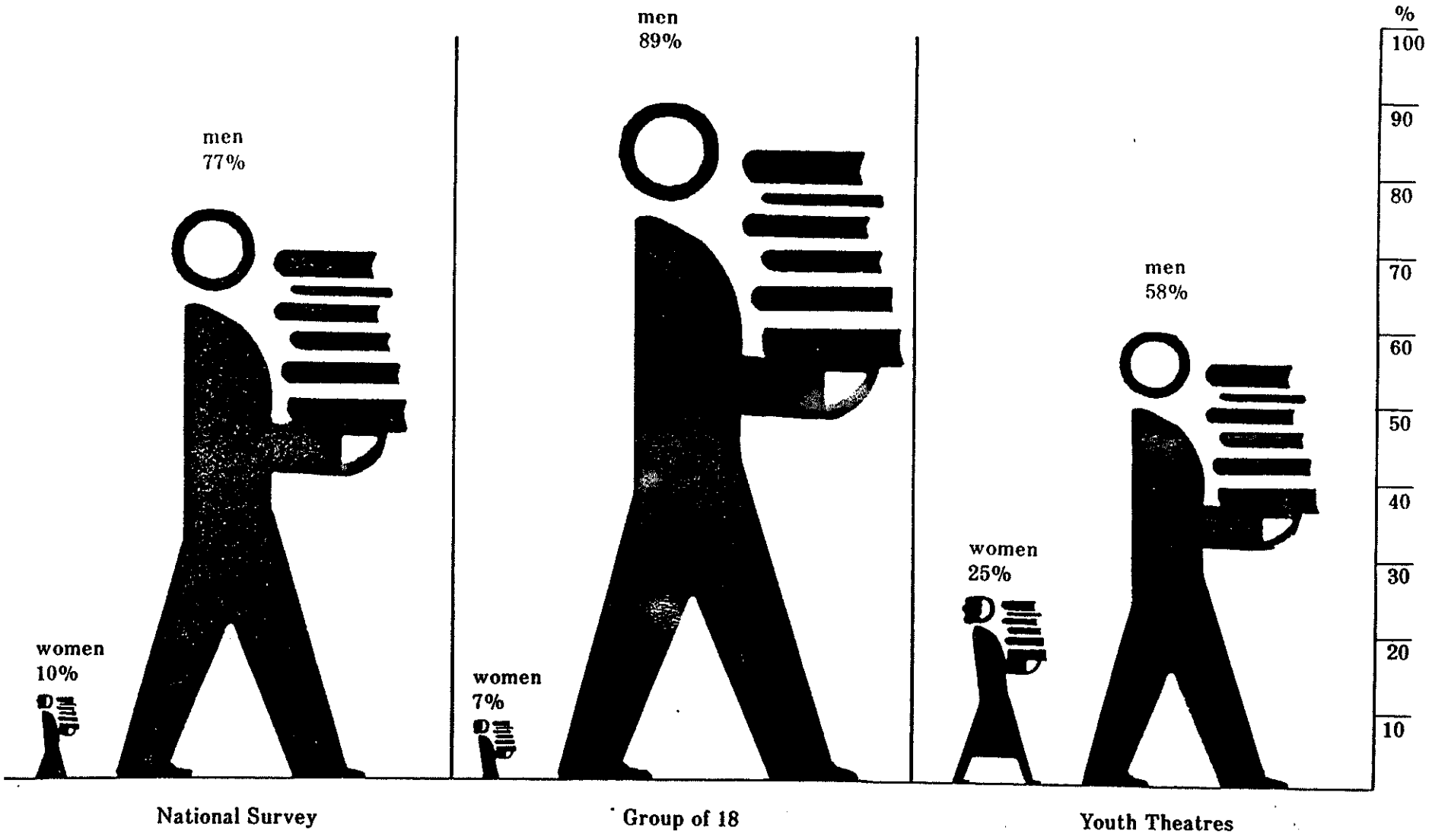
Table 8

Women Playwrights

An average of 10% of the plays produced in Canada between 1978 and 1981 were written by women. Among those plays produced at the Group of 18 theatres, however, only 7% were written by women. At the 41 youth theatres surveyed during this period of time, 25% of the plays were written by women.

TABLE 8

Playwrights
Female/Male Ratio



charts by Joss Maclennan

Table 9

Women Directors

A similar pattern describes the employment of directors at these three groups of theatres. Based on the national survey, Canadian audiences might expect to see theatre productions directed by women an average of 13% of the time. If they attended the Group of 18 theatres exclusively, however, this liklihood dropped to only 9%. On the other hand, if they attended youth or children's theatre they would have a 30% chance of seeing theatre directed by women.

TABLE 9

Directors

Female/Male Ratio

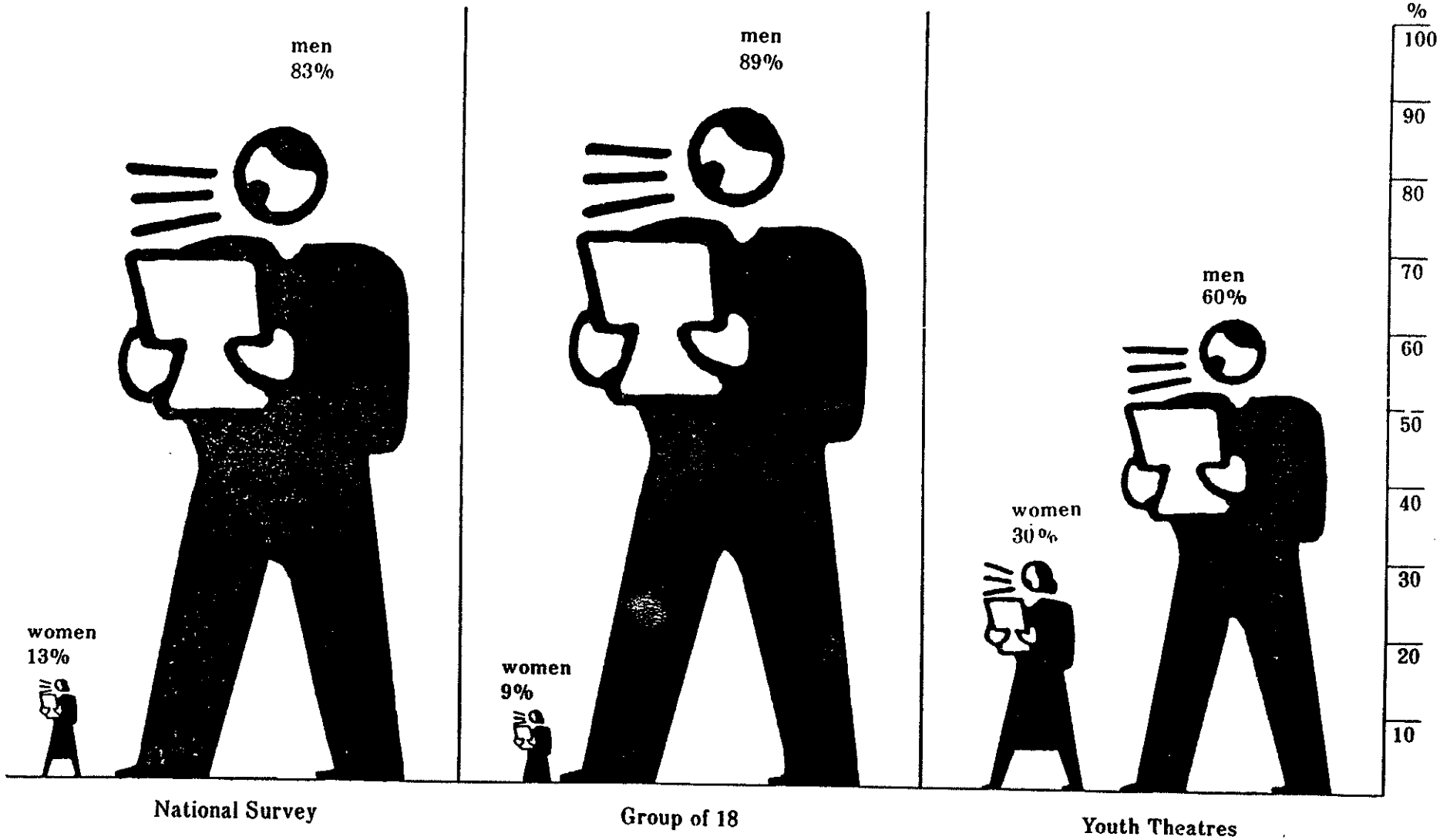


Table 10

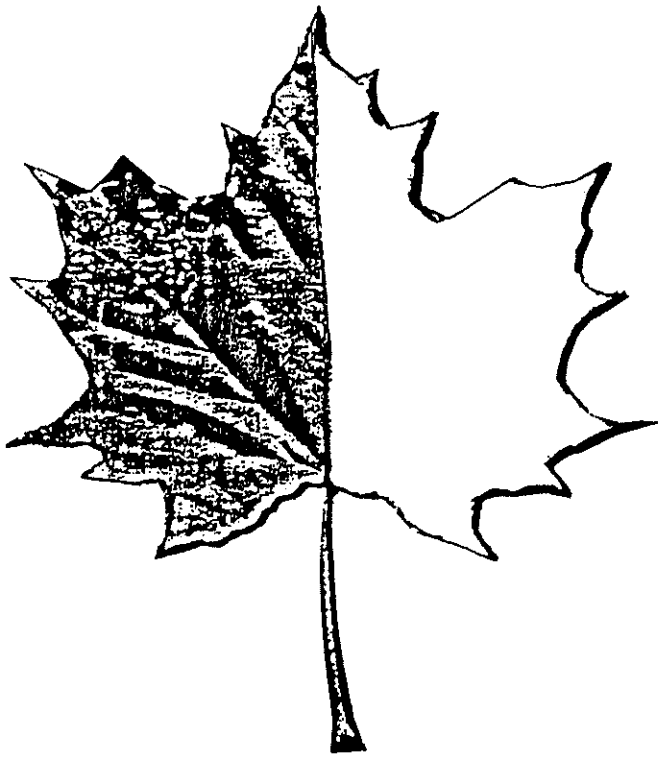
Canadian Content

An average of 50% of the plays produced at the 114 theatres comprising the national survey were written by Canadian playwrights. However, the production of Canadian works, like the employment of women, was not evenly distributed among Canadian theatres. At the Group of 18 theatres, only 26% of the plays produced were by Canadians; that is barely half the national average. On the other hand, an impressive 82% of the plays produced by youth theatres were written by Canadians.

TABLE 10

Canadian Content

National Survey

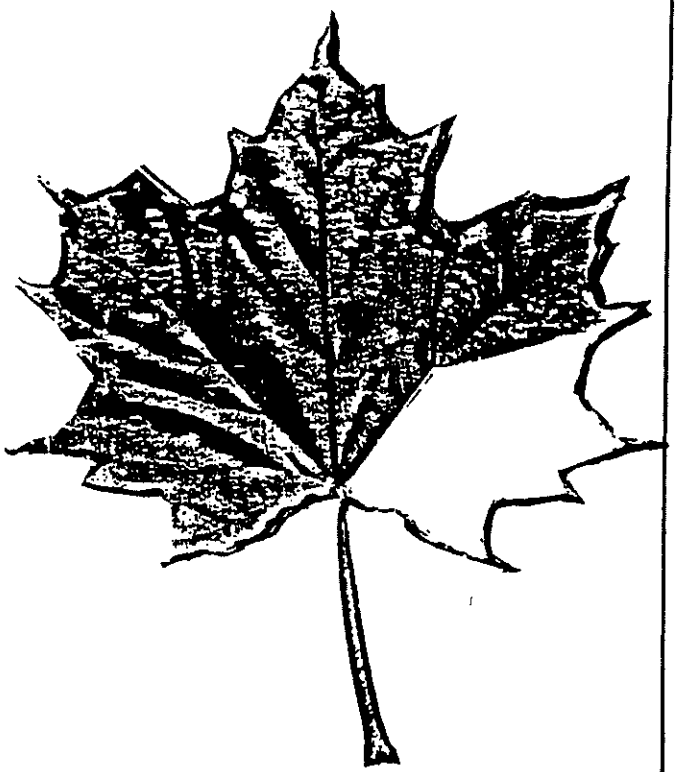


50%

Group of 18

26%

Youth Theatres



82%

charts by Joss Maclennan

Table 11

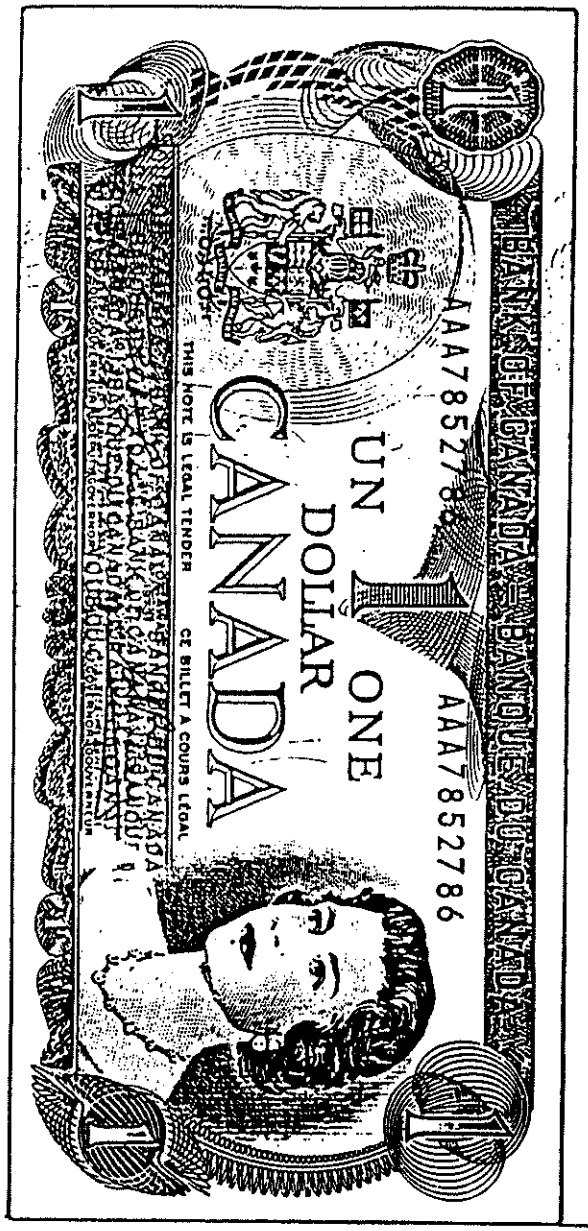
Canada Council Subsidies: The "Most Favoured" and the Rest

In its first year, the Canada Council spent $749,000. In 1981, it spent $43.7 million.[8] During the 1980-81 period it disbursed $8,089,500 of these funds to 120 Canadian theatre companies.[9] The mean subsidy to each theatre company was $26,500. The Group of 18 theatres comprised the top 15% of theatres funded by the Council, sharing among them almost 57% of the total funds ($4,591,000) for a mean subsidy of $235,000 per theatre. Clearly, these theatres enjoy "the most favoured status" in terms of subsidization at the federal level. The remaining 85%, or 102 theatres on the Council's rolls shared the remaining 43% of the funds ($3,498,500). Of the 41 youth theatres whose employment patterns we have been examining (that is, those youth theatres whose seasons are reported in Canada on Stage), only 22 were funded by the Canada Council in this funding year. These theatres received a total of $497,000 (or 6% of the total fund) for a mean subsidy of $17,000.

TABLE 11A

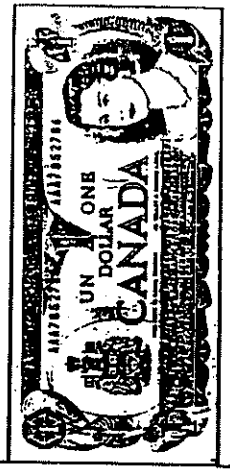
Canada Council Subsidies:

Mean subsidies for 1980-81



Group of 18:
$235,000

All Theatres:
$26,500



22 Youth Theatres:
$17,000

charts by Joss Maclennan

TABLE 11B

Percentage of Funds to Group of 18 and 22 Youth Theatres

Total funds for 120 theatres: $8,089,500

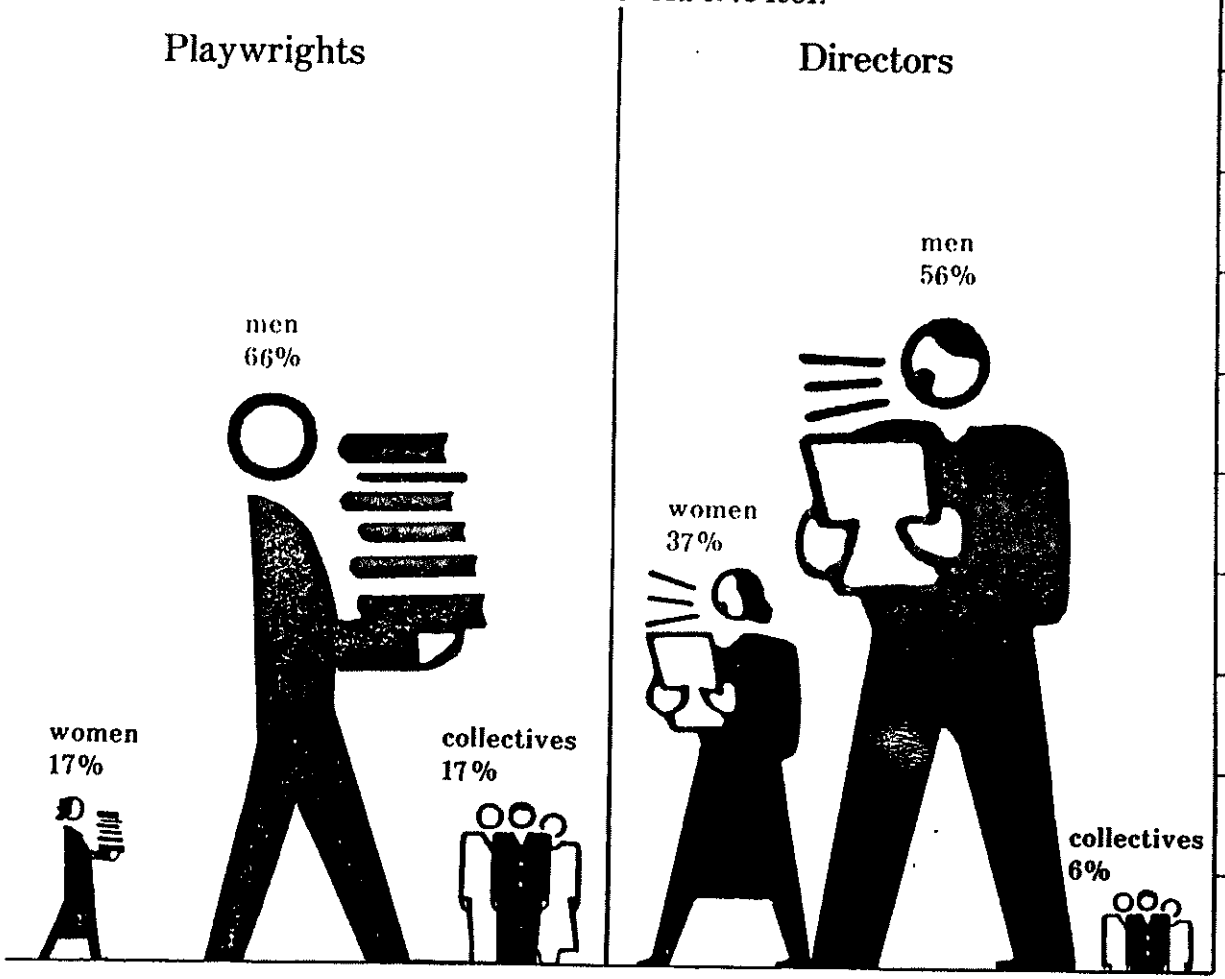
charts by Joss Maclennan

TABLE 12

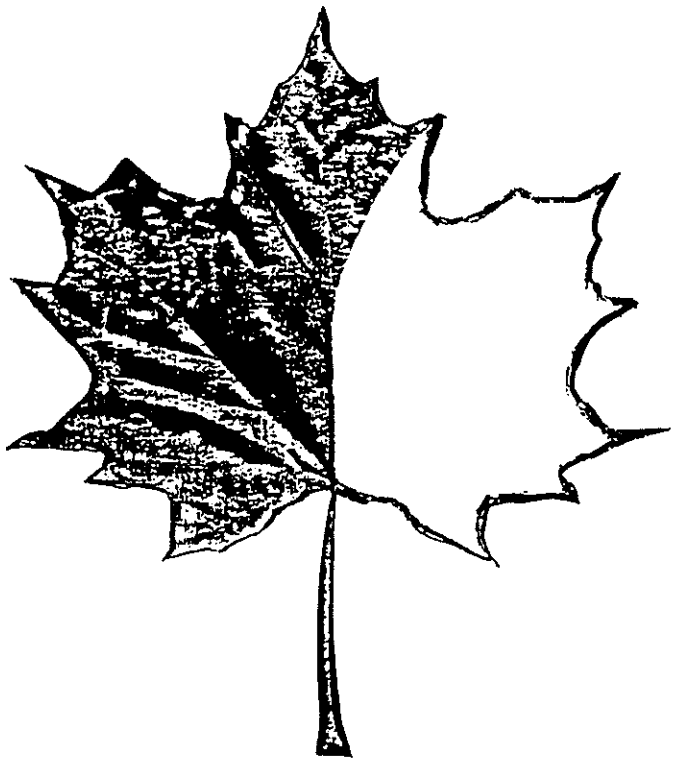
Theatres with Women Artistic Directors

Ratio of Female / Male Employment

Of 140 productions at 15 theatres where women were artistic directors between 1978-1981.



Canadian Content



57 %

Charts by Joss Maclennan

Vive la Compagnie

The stories these charts and figures convey is, to put it mildly, staggering. Women are under-represented in the Canadian theatre in terms of numbers and in terms of power. They are also under-subsidized, both on an individual basis and in terms of their presence at subsidized theatres. The same can be said, contrary to popular belief, of Canadian content in our theatres. In fact, as a handy rule of thumb, women tend to be present in a theatre in inverse proportion to the money to be found there, and in direct relation to the presence of (a) Canadian content, (b) children, and (c) other women. Perhaps, despite their bleak economic prospects, women can take consolation in such fine company.

Employment by Women

There is one other category of theatres whose employment patterns and content selection must be examined to complete our comparative study. The 15 theatres[10] led by women reported in Canada On Stage between 1978-81 are in no way a homogenous group. They range from Yvette Brind'Amour's Theatre du Rideau Vert, one of the Group of 18 theatres, to the Newfoundland Mummers; from collective to traditionally organized theatres; and include play development centres, like Vancouver's New Play Centre. Despite the diversity in esthetics, politics and the extent of their federal subsidization, they present a particularly interesting profile as a group. We are referring here to those theatres in the

National Survey (11%) which are led by women. They are drawn from this category only and readers should note that this therefore excludes from our present discussion all youth theatres.

On the basis of 140 productions staged between 1978 and 1981, these theatres produced works by women playwrights 17% of the time. This is considerably higher than the national average, and almost $2\frac{1}{2}$ times as frequent as the incidence observed at the Group of 18 theatres. However, it is not quite as impressive as the 25% record at Canadian youth theatres.

In their employment of directors, this group of theatres had the highest proportion of women of any of the groups examined; 37% of the plays staged at these theatres were directed by women, a figure which would corroborate the especially close connection established above between the gender of the artistic director and the liklihood of employment for women. Audiences attending theatres led by women artistic directors could expect to see plays written by Canadians 57% of the time. Though not as impressive as the 82% liklihood at youth theatres, this is nonetheless much higher than the national average of 50% and well over twice the proportion of Canadian plays produced at the group of 18 theatres. Given the fact that Canadian plays because they are outside the historical range of "classical theatre", represent something of a financial risk to theatres, it is significant that this diverse group of theatres with a mean subsidy of $37,500 annually[11] demonstrated such a high level of commitment to Canadian content. With the added consideration that the presence of women constitutes an additional economic "risk" in the current climate, the

achievement is doubly impressive.

Economics and the Status Quo

A theatre led by a woman is a rarity in this country. Indeed, they are becoming almost an endangered species. In the 1978 Canada On Stage, 15 women-led theatres* were listed; by the 1980/81 listing, only 13 were included. In the weeks it has taken me to write the pages of this report, two women-led theatres have closed their doors; in each case difficult economic conditions were cited as the central factor in the theatres' closing.[12]

In their submission on behalf of the Guild of Canadian Playwrights to the Federal Policy Cultural Review Committee (Applebaum-Hebert), Susan Feldman, administrative director of the Guild and Ken Gass, playwright and former artistic director wrote:

> ...in the past few years we have seen a levelling off of the production of new plays, which has been coincidental with the general economic recession and government spending cutbacks and freezes. In the past few years we have seen some theatres close, fewer theatres that are willing to produce new works, and certainly fewer theatres willing to produce experimental new work or take what they consider to be risks.
>
> There is clearly a spiral effect at work where the economic situation of a theatre controls the economic situation of the playwright, which in turn controls the artistic quality and nature of plays being produced which in turn leaves the public with less access to the Canadian theatre and damages the cultural life of the country.

* General category.

This conclusion was reinforced and echoed in the findings of the investigation into the condition of freelance writers conducted by Brian Harrison for the Directorate of Communications. The playwrights in the survey, were asked to list the most important factors in the limiting of their success:

> The two factors identified most often both pertained to the dearth of production facilities, outlets or theatres and the fact that theatres produce established plays rather than attempting new works.[13]

Nature/Nurture

In the light of all this data, it is increasingly obvious that the employment of women in the Canadian theatre, like the development of a Canadian tradition in theatre is the result not of any arbitrary law of art or nature, but rather of particular conditions and factors which are, to a great extent, within our control.

The next generation of Canadians will inherit a body of dramatic works and the beginning of a theatrical tradition which was born of a period of fierce national consciousness and fuelled by extensive government support. It was nurtured, by chance, under a more benign economic sun than we currently enjoy.

If Canadian women are to achieve equal opportunities to participate in the creation and protection of their culture, the conditions influencing

cultural activity in Canada will have to come under serious public scrutiny and we will have, as a nation, to commit ourselves to nurturing of women's works with the same degree of commitment evinced a few years ago in the support of Canadian men. We will require the same means: substantial and unequivocal government subsidy. Such a programme of government incentive will require considerably more knowledge about the status of women in the theatre than I have been able to provide in these few pages. What can be concluded is that the sources of the discriminatory practices are conditional and with this certainty we can commence altering those conditions.

If any further evidence is needed to illustrate the fact that the poor status of women in the Canadian theatre is due to no "natural law", one need only compare the record for the employment of women from province to province. Obviously, as the great disparity in employment rates indicates, the status of women is conditional. Even now, with the same weight of history influencing the practices of theatres across our country, the employment picture differs radically from region to region, province to province. (See Tables 13, 14, and 15.)

Why have women been more successful in finding employment in certain provinces, most notably Newfoundland and Quebec, than in others? How have

TABLE 13

Women Artistic Directors
Employment by Province

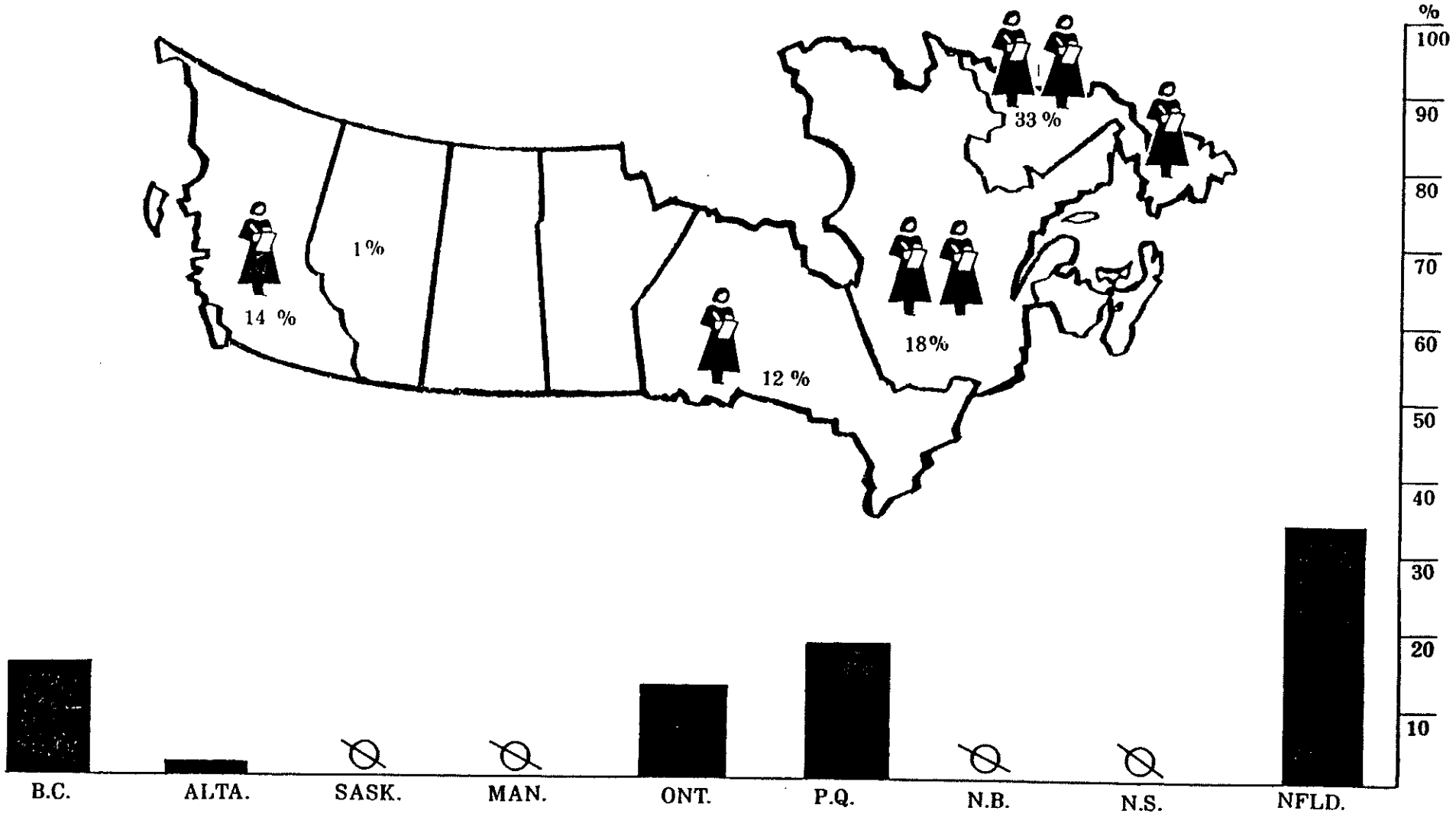
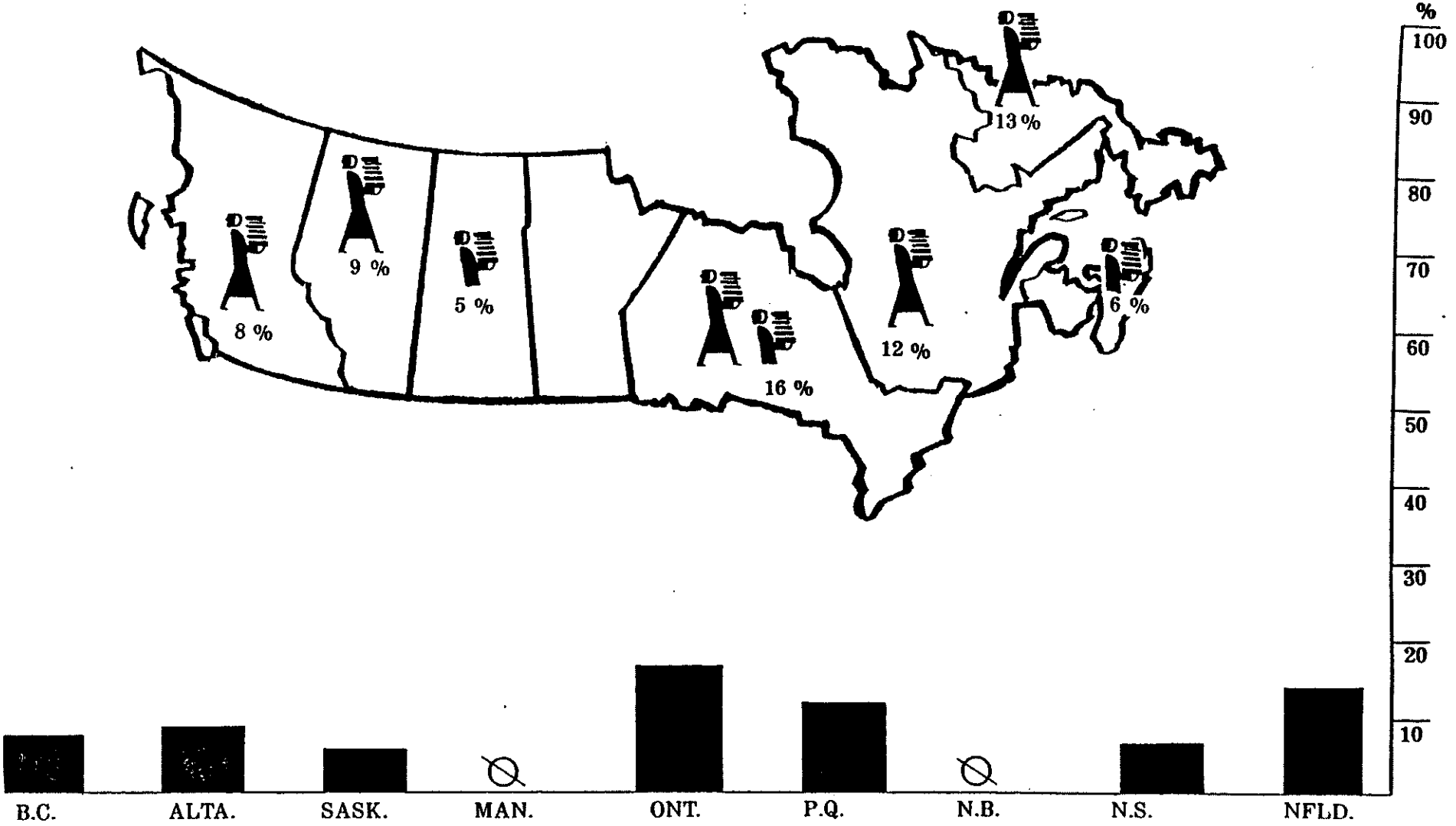


TABLE 14

Women Playwrights

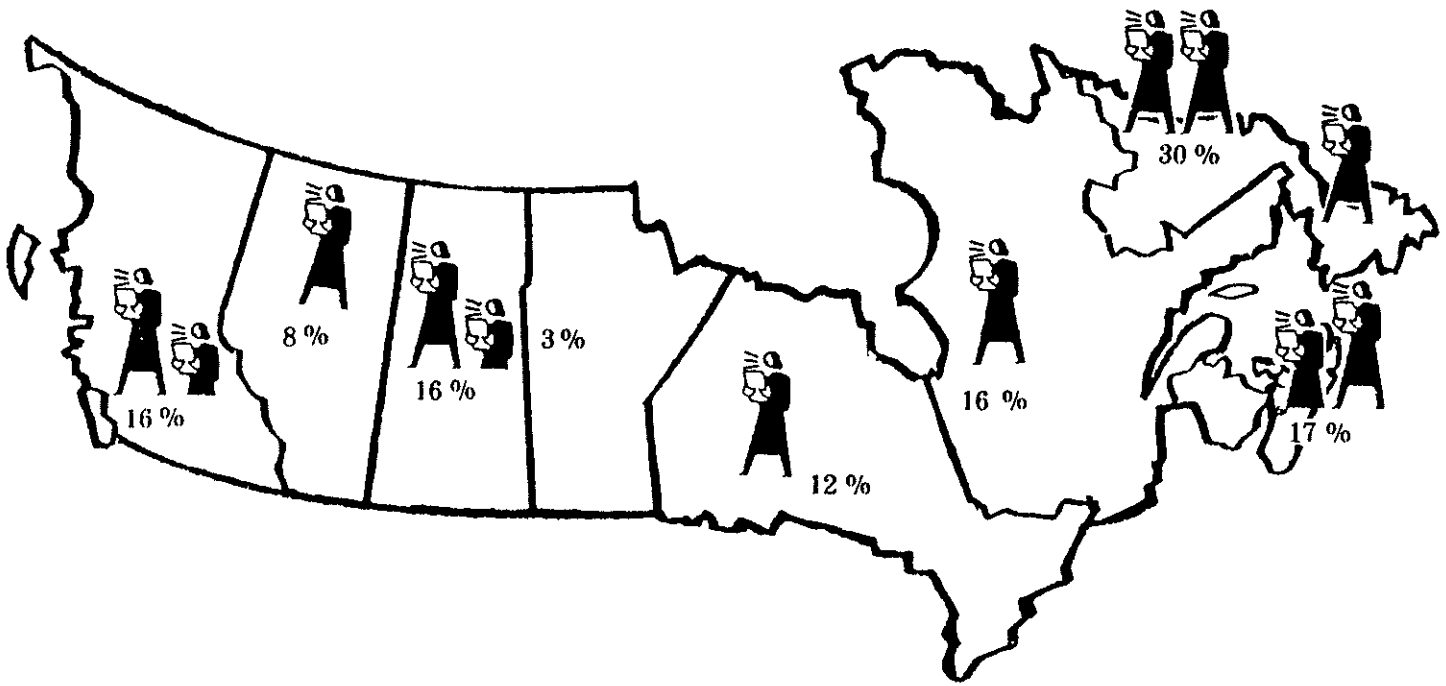
Employment by Province

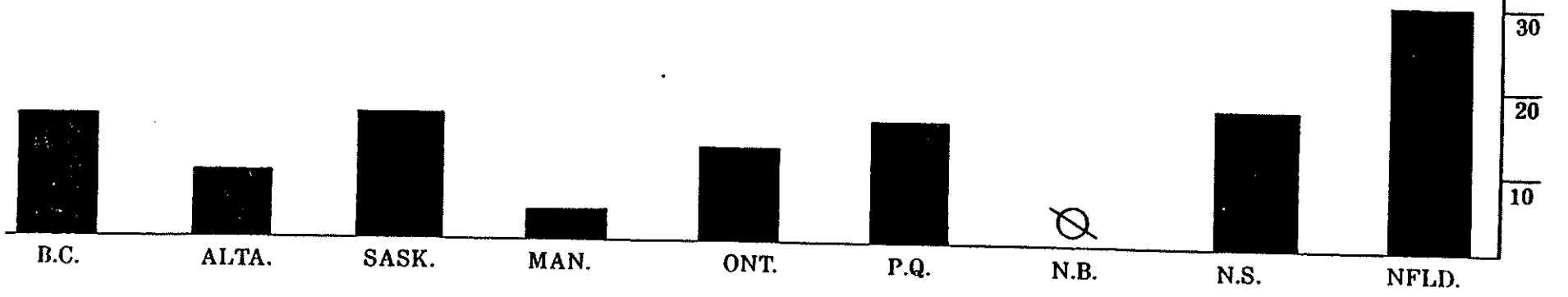


charts by Joss Maclennan

TABLE 15

Women Directors
Employment by Province





we permitted whole provinces to exclude women from participating in professional, subsidized theatrical activity? How long will we continue to reward, with precious, critical and limited government funds, the practice of such discrimination against Canadian women?

The burden of responsibilities for future researchers is to discover more about the conditions and factors influencing the status of women in the Canadian theatre. In these pages I have pointed out only a few of the most obvious. We must be careful to ensure that such investigations do not forestall action. Results are what matter. We can no longer afford to reward theatres which consistently ignore the needs, desires and very existence of half the Canadian population.

Appendix to Chapter III

Notes on Methodology

It is important to point out at this juncture that a single source was used as the basis of the following statistics: Canada On Stage, the Canadian Theatre Review's annual listing of theatre productions across Canada. Though not exhaustive, this source is the most comprehensive and authoritative available, and is one which supplied data easily accessible, for the purposes of verification, to any future researcher. The decision to control the source of my data for Tables 4 - 10 had one notable disadvantage in requiring that I leave out of the calculations and documentation the presence of several professional women-led theatres which — for whatever reasons — were unreported in the listing. Thêatre Experimentale des Femmes and Nightwood Theatre are two examples of companies whose seasons are unreported in the CTR compilation and therefore not represented in the following tables. Penguin Theatre and Tomorrow's Eve are examples of theatres whose work is represented for only part of the time, or which are reported in one category for one season and another (youth) the following season. These omissions have implications beyond merely narrowing the sample of women-led theatres. Specifically, because these theatres produced the work of Canadian women almost exclusively, both the employment rate of women artistic directors, directors and playwrights and the proportion of Canadian content produced at women-led theatres (Table 12) would have risen sharply, approximating the excep-

tional performance in these areas at the Youth Theatre category. It is vital, not only to guarantee greater accuracy and comprehensiveness in subsequent research, but also in building a valid historical record of women's achievements, that a greater attention be paid in future to the task of documenting these achievements.

Definition of Categories

I have separated for examination the population of Canadian theatres along what seemed to be sensible and natural lines. I also used groupings corresponding to those used by CTR wherever possible.

The National Survey: These are all theatres reported in the General Population section of CTR; that is, the exclude Youth Theatres, Summer Theatres and Festival Theatres.

Youth Theatres: Corresponding to the CTR's Youth Theatre listings.

The Group of 18: This is a category established along strictly financial lines. These are the 18 theatres in Canada which received more than $150,000 in subsidy from the theatre section of the Canada Council in the 1980-81 funding period, as reported in the 24th Annual Report of the Canada Council. This group includes theatres from all categories. Their employment records were drawn from CTR.

Employment by Women: These are the theatres represented by the 11% figure of women artistic directors in the National Survey Group. They, therefore, do not include any women-led Youth Theatres, Summer Theatres or Festival Theatres.

Collectives: Here, collectives refers to groups including both men and women. Collectives composed exclusively either of men, or of women, appear as individuals under those headings.

Footnotes

Chapter III

1. Michelene Wandor, Understudies: Theatre and Sexual Politics. Methuen: London, 1981, p.7.

2. Ibid., p. 56.

3. Judith E. Barlow, Plays by American Women: The Early Years. Avon: New York, 1981, p. xix.

4. Helen Krich Chinoy and Linda Walsh, Women in the American Theatre. Crown: New York, p. 2.

5. See Appendix IV for confirmation between the gender of the playwright and the percentage of children's plays written.

6. Michelene Wander, p.55.

7. In an independent survey conducted by theatre critic Eleanor Wachtel of 129 theatre productions which she reviewed in the Vancouver area, 13% were written by women and 23% directed by women. This is significantly higher than the national average and it is reasonable to assume that the strong presence of women as artistic directors in Vancouver theatres bears some responsibility for this record.

8. Robert R. Fulford, "The Canada Council at Twenty-Five," Saturday Night. March, 1982, p. 40.

9. The 24th annual report of the Canada Council.

10. Fifteen theatres were reported for the 1978-79 season; 13 for the period from 1978-1981.

11. This figure is based on the mean subsidy among those theatres led by women which were funded by the Canada Council. I have not averaged this by including the unsubsidized theatres.

12. I am referring to Open Circle Theatre (Toronto) co-founded and led, for the last several years, by Sylvia Tucker; and Westcoast Actors' Society (Vancouver) whose artistic director since October 1978 has been Katharine Shaw.

13. Brian Harrison, Freelance Writers in Canada, Arts and Culturate Branch, Directorate of Communications, Ottawa, 1981.

Conclusions and Recommendations

> All of us have a stake in the future direction of Canadian cultural policy: the quality, the vitality, the very meaning of our lives, and of our children's lives, will be influenced by it one way or another. Therefore, all of us should have a say in what that direction should be. What kinds of cultural opportunities, facilities, and products do you look for that you now lack? What are the problems or drawbacks of those you have? What are the challenges for your community and your country in the coming decades? These are the kinds of questions, among others which to the (Federal Cultural Policy Review) Committee invites your answers. [1]

> Sexism refers to the systematic ways in which men and women are brought up to view each other antagonistically, on the assumption that the male is always superior to the female. It is consequently necessary for women themselves to internalize this ideology and believe themselves to be inferior if they are to accept their given roles. The struggle for feminists was therefore not only to challenge male power, but to encourage women to counteract their own passivity...[2]

In the final analysis, the problems of women in the Canadian theatre are systemic in nature, and the exclusion of women from every individual branch of the Canadian theatre industry strengthens her exclusion from the system as a whole. Outside this system, or more precisely, outside its positions of authority, women are permitted to contribute their labour to the activities which sustain and perpetuate the Canadian theatre; but within the hierarchy of professional, institutionalized, adequately subsidized and culturally legitimized theatre, we are effectively excluded.

Their removal from the positions of responsibility and authority within the cultural hierarchy effectively excludes women from the definition of artist, and as the role of artist is defined as something alien to her identity, the creation of art has come to refer to something which occurs outside the realm of her experience. It is here, in the fierce constraining of the substance and potential of cultural activity that the Invisibility Factor, the absence of women from significant roles in the work of producing a national culture, has its most serious and enduring effect on the Canadian society as a whole.

The Canadian government must recognize the existence of sexism and its detrimental effect on the culture of our society, as well as the impact of sexism within the current vocabulary of cultural images available to Canadians. From this recognition must come a serious and concerted effort — (as extensive and powerful as those to protect bilingualism and biculturalism, and to nurture the development of indigenous traditions in all the arts) to begin the long task of reversing the patterns of systemic discrimination against women in Canadian society.

Such an effort can begin in earnest only with the introduction of affirmative action and equal opportunity programmes empowered to effect significant change at every level of the theatre industry.

Educational Institutions

This report recommends that Canadian theatre conservatories, professional training programmes and university theatre departments:

a) establish equal opportunity committees, composed of women from the student body and the faculty, to address the problems of sexual discrimination and harassment, and of unequal opportunities within and without the programmes. These committees should be empowered to advise and contribute to planning and decisions for all areas of department activity, and especially those affecting curriculum, hiring and liasons with the professional community;

b) establish career development programmes to help their students recognize the symptoms and effects of their disadvantaged status, and to provide appropriate support and counsel to help them overcome these;

c) adopt every appropriate means to bring to an immediate end the current imbalance of women on faculties;

d) review and revise curriculum to reflect the contribution of women to the history of the theatre, and especially to include a greater selection of plays by women dramatists, both Canadian and from the world theatre. Such changes in the curriculum will also provide women students with greater opportunities of roles in student productions and therefore immediately improve their opportunities for practical experience.

Theatres

This report recommends that all Canadian theatres take immediate steps to end the current discrimination against women in the professional Canadian theatre community. To that end, it is recommended that they:

a) include equal female representation on their boards of directors. This report, furthermore, recommends that boards of directors of Canadian theatres actively solicit applications from qualified Canadian women for the position of artistic director of their theatres when these positions next become available;

b) adopt every appropriate means of producing the work of Canadian women dramatists, and of employing women directors, not only in their workshop and studio productions but also — and especially — in their mainstage seasons. Such means could also include programmes of commissioning new works and of sponsoring training programmes and apprenticeships for young theatre artists;

c) develop programmes to meet the day care needs of their permanent and temporary employees as well as their audiences.

The Canada Council

The Canada Council has both the responsibility and the means of effecting

significant improvements in the status, employment and professional opportunities available to women in the profession of Canadian theatre. This report recommends that the Canada Council initiate and support the effort to end the discrimination against women in the cultural industries of this country through every appropriate means. To this end, this report recommends specifically that the Canada Council:

a) establish policies for all Council supported theatres, which includes a programme of financial and other incentives to these theatres,to immediately and radically improve the status of women within them and, in particular, to require all such publicly subsidized theatres to demonstrate, as a condition of continued funding, a working commitment to improved employment of women directors, playwrights and artistic directors;

b) establish affirmative action committees composed of women from every area of the theatre industry to make recommendations to the Council towards the development not only of a general policy, but of specific and practical programmes to these ends;

c) continue in its efforts, visible in recent years, to improve the representation of women on juries;

d) immediately recognize child care costs as legitimate professional expenses in grants to individual artists; and to support, with incentives, the efforts of individual theatres to provide child care for their employees and public;

e) to play an active role in improving the status of women in professional training programmes, and especially to sponsor programmes which encourage equal representation of women on faculty;

f) to develop programmes to familiarize women with available funding and to actively encourage women to apply for all levels of Council funding;

g) to recognize the primary need of theatre facilities, spaces and funding for the production of theatre by women and to develop appropriate funding to provide opportunities for the inclusion of more women-led theatres on the rolls of those receiving sustaining funding by the Council;

h) through the periodical and publications section, to establish a programme of incentives to encourage the publication of plays, anthologies and histories for use in theatres, secondary schools and universities and in training programmes;

i) to establish a special fund of considerable value which subsidizes special programmes to assist women in the production of theatre. Such programmes might include:

1) Training and apprenticeship programmes for women directors and playwrights, or for actors wishing to acquire skills in directing; or for writers of non-dramatic literature wishing to learn dramatic writing;

2) An artists' colony where women in the theatre across Canada may meet, learn, exchange and improve skills as well as become more aware of each other's work;

3) Showcase, festival and similar events which will help both the professional community and the public at large to become more aware of and familiar with the achievements of Canadian theatre women;

4) Research, documentation and publication to redress the current imbalance in available and accessible literature on the work of Canadian women theatre artists;

5) Newsletters and organizations to allow women to communicate, organize and share professional skills and resources across Canada, and especially to allow women in isolated regions or in areas with few theatres to draw support and information from other women.

Footnotes

Conclusions and Recommendations

1. The Federal Cultural Policy Review Committee, Speaking of Our Culture. Ottawa 1981, p. 3.

2. Michelen Wandor: Understudies: Theatre and Sexual Politics. Methuen: London, 1981, p. 15.

Appendix I

Les Quebecoises

The following are excerpts from interviews with Quebec theatre women conducted and translated by Joanne Gormley. As well as contributing to the overall context of this report, these interviews provide a sense of the perspective peculiar to the women of the theatre in Quebec. In these excerpts, the Quebecoises reveal some of their feelings about the situation of women in the theatre both in their own province, and in a larger context.

Francine Tougas is a Quebecois actor who recently successfully produced her own one-woman show, Histoire des Phantômes.

In the theatre men have more choice, more scope. Take any archtypal role, even banal ones — a Pinkerton security guard — those kinds of characters, well, a woman can't play them. They don't ring true. And the theatre is filled with those kinds of roles. Women have no code. We are traditionally wives and mothers.

In school one had the chance to play the "great feminine roles", but they're all monsters. What a mythology! We'd spend hours in the library looking for something else ...

I'm very pleased that the Theatre Experimentale des Femmes is doing

another festival (of women's theatre). It's a very interesting idea, a ten-minute spot; it's stimulating. T.E.F. is very important, it's an involved theatre. What we need are more spaces that women control. You can see some things written and directed by women in other theatres, but there's no continuity. We need continuity ...

We have to take the controlling positions, become editors. Women have to enter fields of artistic control ... Women still feel they can't take those positions. We are still suffering psychologically from that ... But we're starting to have confidence.

Also having a child, when she's here with me I don't have the time to reflect and to tune into the creative process. The child upsets your beat, your rhythm. I'm lucky because I really share her with her father. When she's not with me I can work. I'm going to be working six nights a week now, and I'll ask the other actors and producers to contribute to the babysitting (costs). I'm the only one who has a child. I've done that before and I've had a good response. But I wonder what kind of a reaction I'd get at (Theatre du) Rideau Vert?

Louise Laprade is an actor and one of the founding members of Theatre Experimentale des Femmes.

We are really the only all-woman theatre group left in Montreal. Of all the productions in the (T.E.F.'s women's theatre) festival in 1980, there were only two productions mounted by all-women companies. The other shows came out

of mixed groups. These are much more common, but they never last, as Pol (Pelletier, another of TEF's founding members) observed. Feminism in these groups is seen as a theme that interests the men for a while, but that's it. ...

What we're doing now is making strong liasons with other feminist groups outside the theatre, like (the Quebec feminist publication) La Vie En Rose. I don't think that feeling isolated is particular to (women in) the theatre. ... I would really like to have a list of other feminist theatre groups in Canada. ... to travel and see what they're doing and to break out of this isolation — to exchange. There's money for such national exchange, for festivals of this sort. It would be very possible. ...

We're always nervous about where to find material. There are women who send us plays but they're ... usually traditional representational pieces ... you can see where it comes from. They are using the forms they're used to seeing at (traditional theatres).

The festival (hosted by TEF of 10 minute pieces by women) will be fun in a way. Because of its format it demands spontaneity. That should draw out revealing things. Everything being presented (in the festival) is new. There are many women presenting, women we've never heard of before. I'm curious. There are a lot of pieces with a similar theme — trying to define what is feminine. I've never addressed this question myself.

In the last (TEF) festival it was the open discussion and workshops that involved everyone a lot. We (at TEF) are really not the ones getting nourished.

We do the nourishing because there are so few women around in the theatre itself whose consciousness is the same or wider than ours. So we encourage and nourish and then we're empty. We need to travel — throughout Canada and the U.S. I'm so pleased that Roberta Sklar is coming; I desperately need this exchange, to see and meet other women who are doing what I'm doing. To do anything you need money.

Denise Boucher is a Quebecoise playwright, author of the widely acclaimed and controversial Les Fees Ont Soif. She has recently completed two other plays.

To do theatre we have to reclaim our history to be come conscious of our present situation, and we have to learn to write for the theatre. We have to say new things and that demands new forms. That's a cultural shock for men. Who decides what a master work is? A woman's masterwork is not the same as a man's. The tragedy I've written is not the same as the tragedies written by men. The comedy I've written is not being seen as comedy. They say it's depressing ... We don't have the same despair as men.

Men have always written about the impossibility of communicating, whereas women have always attempted to communicate among themselves. "Why are you saying that? What do you mean?" they ask each other, in order to communicate. Relationship is so important. We search out methods to communicate. No one listens, the horror of that, no one hears. The comedy (I've written) is about a 50-year-old snake charmer — a blues for menopause. Menopause is depressing,

absolutely depressing. Now I've written a comedy about it.

I want my work to be shown in large theatres, for a lot of people to see ... if my plays aren't accepted I don't know what I'll do. I should set up a large theatre, a large women's theatre. It would take a million dollars. I don't have a cent. ...To go back and form ... we need to be naive. We have to claim the right to learn. Women don't feel themselves to be legitimate. They feel guilty for taking their place among artists. It's a problem for artists in general, but it's doubly so for women. ...

Support is important for and among women. Because Les Fees was a hit, it opens the doors for other women. It's never a spontaneous assumption that if a woman director has a hit she'll be invited back to direct again. As a playwright, it's always hard to tell if they're refusing you because you're a woman or if your play is no good.

Once a play has a run in Quebec, you have the option of taking it to France or to have it translated. Twenty people wanted to translate Les Fees. It's good marketing to have it translated. But when Holly Dennison directed the play (in English) at Concordia, there was a fire on stage during the run. They were scared. Is this an English audience's reaction? The critics in Toronto said it's a feminism that's passé. Feminism itself is seen as passé. Women and spirituality is not passé; it's only beginning to be looked at....

I find it horrible, growing old. The whole thing is new. We need to talk about it — the poverty of myths for women. The silence is horrible. You feel

alone. I need to talk about it, to take risks; but when you do, you take the chance that no one will hear you — that's worse. No one listens.

Michele Rossignol is a director whose production of Jovette Marchessault's The Saga of the Wet Hens (La Saga des poules mouillées) was recently seen at Toronto's Tarragon Theatre. She is currently heading the French section of the National Theatre School. Her interview is paraphrased and summarized by Joanne Gormley.

We spoke mostly about her recent experience directing La Saga in Toronto. She was extremely disappointed with the experience primarily because she felt the political consciousness to be so much lower in Toronto than in Quebec. Rossignol resented being perceived as a marginal artist, a perception she felt stemmed from the fact that she was a woman and a Quebecoise and which flew in the face of the professional achievements.

Rossignol felt that the theatre climate in Toronto was dominated by critics who seemed to view La Saga as a "folklorique" work, and this seemed to reflect their view of Quebec as somehow obsessed with the Catholic church. In their own "obsession with puritanism" they seemed to have no contemporary context for perceiving modern Quebec.

Ms. Rossignol was stunned by the control Toronto critics seem to have over artists in Toronto. Compared with Quebec where, she felt, artists had much greater control over the context of the dialogue between themselves and critics, she perceived artists in Ontario to be dominated by the power of the critics. In the face of similarly destructive and negative reviews, she said the artistic community in Quebec could and would demand a re-evaluation of the role of

the critics. There is much greater sense of the critics as belonging to the artistic community, and their critiques as springing from this positive commitment to the artistic growth.

Her encounters and exchanges with the artists and producers, however, had been very valuable to her, and though she could not imagine returning to direct in Toronto as long as the current critical tyranny persisted, she would welcome opportunities to involve herself in workshop settings with other theatre artists.

At L'Ecole National du Theâtre, she said, it was now primarily women who were participating in writing workshops, and that the work of women playwrights such as Jovette Marchessault and Denise Boucher were now included in curriculum. Rossignol sees the (current) work of the Ecole Nationale du Theatre as fostering a feminist consciousness.

Jovette Marchessault is a Quebecoise lesbian artist and writer. These brief excerpts are taken from a much longer interview conducted and translated by Rina Fraticelli.

My identity is as a lesbian and a feminist and a writer and a playwright. They would probably say that I'm a dilettante but that's a very pejorative term. I would say instead that I'm a multidisciplinary artist. I like to draw, sculpt and be a playwright and a novelist as well — you name it, I like it.

Women tend to do several things, I've noticed. Take Pol (Pelletier) who co-founded Theatre Experimentale des Femmes, for example, who writes as well as acts and directs. The women of the TEF do a number of things, as a great many

women do. I think that men are so compartmentalized. They tend to be either writers or painters; they rarely do two things. Perhaps it's because we are used to surviving, adapting, and doing a number of different things. Also men have a great deal less to prove.

I think that language barriers are always artificial and that we have to translate and communicate in foreign languages.

We need money. All we need is new theatres with space, more space. A woman interviewed for Chatelaine about TEF and she asked me what they needed, and I said "money." With larger grants, they could do more productions, and have more money for each production. But they need a larger theatre, too, big enough to hold larger audiences. The Canada Council must find the women's theatres that already exist and give grants to start new ones ... If TEF had sufficient funds they could afford to commission scripts from playwrights. A theatre with enough money to publicize its work, to have subscriptions. It begins with the theatres. But they need space, and space costs money.

Appendix II

Women and the Canada Council: What slice/which pie ?

A closer examination of the Canada Council figures reveals more precisely the shape of the disproportion.

Though women received 1/3 of the awards to individuals disbursed by the theatre section, the percentage of female recipients varies significantly from one category to another. "A" Grants, for example, constitute the top category of awards, both in terms of the dollar value they carry and in terms of their prestige. These grants are "...intended to provide free time for personal creative activity for artists who have made a significant contribution over a number of years and are still active in their professions;" and over the nine years of this study the average value of each award was $15,209. Of the 50 awards granted between 1972-1981, only 9 of them, or 18%, went to women.

On the other hand, women were most visible among the recipients of Project Cost Grants. With an average dollar value of $1,874 these grants are modestly designated to "...cover the costs of goods and services necessary to the completion of a specific project." During the same nine-year period, women were awarded 30 (41%) of these grants.

Success Rates

A brief look at the success rate of women applying for "A" grants reveals that the low recipient rate is no indication of low achievement; on the contrary, with an impressive 68% success rate (male success rate was 36%), it is obvious that the low recipient rate stems here, as it did overall for grants, directly from an extremely low rate of application.

The numbers are, in fact, shocking. In nine years, only 14 women applied for "A" grants. And for two of those years (1974/75 and 1980/81) not a single woman applied. (Only once, in fact, in 1976/77, when three women applied, did the annual female applicant rate exceed 2.)*

Let us compare this rate of application with that of women for Project Cost Grants. Here we see a relatively healthy 40% of the applicants were women who enjoyed a success rate of 45% (male success rate was 42%).

Given the extremely high success rate among women who do apply for "A" grants, why are we not seeing women applying for this category of funds in the similar numbers as those applying for project cost grants? The disparity between the applicant rate among women for "A" Grants and Project Cost Grants provide, I think, graphic illustration of the position of women in the Canadian theatre and their alienation from the power structures of Canadian culture. Obviously there is a world of difference between "A" Grants and Project Cost Grants, and the

* Here, as in Chapter 1, numbers refer to applications by women and not necessarily different women. In fact, these 14 applications might represent as few as eight women.

nature and significance of the differences between them extends from the status of the artist (which the former is intended to benefit) to the nature of the creative time each affords. For, strictly speaking, "A" Grants are not grants at all, but rather awards of honor; and the dollar value they carry is intended to provide a recognized and established artist the opportunity to carry on his life and work with some measure of financial security for a period of about a year. It is not task- or project-oriented; rather its orientation is towards the professional well-being of the artist himself.

Project Cost Grants, on the other hand, provide simply what their name implies: limited funds for specific and practical costs upon specified projects. A living allowance for the artist during a period of work on the project is not considered an allowable expense.

Obviously, it is much more difficult to qualify as a candidate for "A" grants, and one might well conclude that fewer applicants for this level of funding indicate nothing more than the minority of individuals within the artistic community who are eligible, by virtue of their years of experience and accomplishments, to be considered as candidates. And yet, in the same nine year time period under discussion, it was discovered that far from being discouraged or dissuaded by stringent critieria, in fact more men applied for "A" grants than applied for Project Cost Grants.

Self-selection among women

This fact, along with the high success rate among women applicants lends

weight to the hypothesis that women self-select to a much greater extent than men do not only for arts awards but also for professional positions. It has been noted that women have a tendency to apply for positions of responsibility only when indisputably qualified, and even over-qualified for the requirement of that position.

Why this might be the case is a far-reaching question, one in fact which touches upon the forms and the effects of the suppression of women past and present. One can suggest possibilities: the women's inexperience with structures of power — cultural or otherwise, their unfamiliarity with the mechanics of the business of art, both at the level of the individual theatre and at the level of arts grants; fear of rejection as a psychological feature of contemporary women, etc., etc.

Finally, it is the responsibility of the Council itself to determine what causes impede or inhibit the majority of its constituents from using its services in the development of their professional careers as theatre artists, and to take whatever steps are necessary to overcome them.

Appendix III

The Playwright and the Performer

In a recent informal survey conducted by playwright and performer Patricia Carroll Brown, there was found to be a strong correlation between the lack of employment for women actors and the production of so few plays by women in Canadian theatres. As the table below illustrates there is almost twice the likli-hood that plays will have either a balanced cast (equal number of roles for women as men) or more roles for women if the playwright is a woman, than if the play-wright is a man.

It would seem obvious, then, that the production of greater numbers of plays by Canadian women is a more appropriate solution to the perennial problem of inadequate opportunities for women actors than the quota system for women students considered at one Canadian theatre school.

Of 496 listed in Playwrights Canada 1981 catalogue, and current supplement:

		with balanced casts or more female characters
All Plays		
by Men	354	94 (30%)
by Women	142	74 (52%)
Children's Plays		
by Men	30	9 (30%)
by Women	58	28 (48%)

Adult Plays	with balanced casts or more female roles
by Men 324	85 (26%)
by Women 84	46 (55%)

Note:

1) 28% of plays published in this listing were written by women.

2) Only 27% of plays written by Canadian men (according to this listing) feature equal numbers of male and female characters or more female characters.

3) Of 88 children's plays, 66% (or 2/3) were written by women.