

## CONTINUING EDUCATION — WHY NOT?

We, the Alumnae Society of McGill University, found the Spring issue of the *McGill Journal of Education* ("Women in Education") most interesting as far as it went, but we were disappointed to see no discussion of the educational concerns of the increasing numbers of adult women university students. These students, who have been away from formal education for some time, have been the focus of our attention for the past ten years. Through our projects<sup>1</sup> we have been made aware of the following issues, which we would suggest as a suitable framework for a follow-up special edition of the *Journal* on "Continuing Education":

Lifelong learning — whose responsibility?

What are the trends in Continuing Education with respect to student enrolment, educational methodology, student services, etc.?

How can the University best facilitate Continuing Education?

How does one assess and give university credit for life experience?

What are the problems and educational needs specific to mature students?

What are the problems and educational needs specific to mature women students?

Should post-secondary education be a specialized professional field?

The McGill Alumnae Society, through its Continuing Education Committee, has been acting as liaison between McGill and the Community. We have written several reports<sup>2</sup> based on our projects, our research into Continuing Education activities elsewhere, and our participation on University and Community committees. We see education as a lifelong process and in our view the University, as a social institution, exists to meet the post secondary educational needs of people in their roles as individuals and as members of society<sup>3</sup>. Discussion of the questions we have raised should help clarify future University priorities. We would like to hear much more from the educational community.

*Leiba Aronoff, President*

*Lisette Marshall, Vice President*

## Feedback

1. See, *McGill Journal of Education*, Vol. X, No. 1, (Spring 1975), p. 68.
2. Conference Report, *Issues and Opportunities for Women — the Role of Continuing Education*, February 18 & 19, 1971; Report on the Seminar: *The Continuing Education of Women* Organized by the Canadian Association for Adult Education, Toronto, March, 1973; *The Next Step — A Workshop on Continuing Education for Women* Organized by the Canadian Association for Adult Education, Saskatoon, October 1973.
3. A Brief on "Part Time Education at McGill University," submitted to the Advisory Council of the Senate Committee on Continuing Education by the McGill Alumnae Society, February 1971.



Dear Editor:

First off — congratulations on the excellent work done! The "Women and Education" issue of the McGill Journal of Education came to me as a surprise, a delight and a much-needed encouragement. As a member of the McGill Women's Union and the Women's Studies Steering Committee, I found this an invaluable collection of articles in the support that it provides for our efforts.

Reading the first few articles I felt my anger rise anew at the statement of so much discrimination, past and present, against women who have tried to excel in academic life. When I realize in my own life how much it has cost me to transcend these barriers, I know that we have to continue challenging sexism at all school levels until women are finally allowed and encouraged to develop freely.

The articles describing women's attempts and successes at breaking into male bastions of education were a great source of strength. And my mood grew even brighter when I read of established Women's Studies Programs where women could finally study a reality truly our own.

I found it a very effective blend of material: it was relevant to the McGill-Concordia University scene, as well as pointing backward and forward in time to the many problems women face in their search for learning.

The poems probably touched me most of all — such poignant and subtle insights into feminine experience. They alluded eloquently to the depth of emotion that I think is always an underlying part of women's struggles.

I can only commend you on your efforts and hope to see this important subject revisited time and time again in future journals.

*Andrea Vabalís*