

WOMEN'S MEDIA WATCH MEETING

June 27, 1998

CHAIR: Marianne

AGENDA

WELCOME and INTRODUCTIONS

APOLOGIES

1. Plans for pornography workshop

The aim of the workshop is to look at pornography and examine how it makes us feel and our response to it as a group.

We will look at how easily accessible pornography is on the internet, in our communities and in the media and decide what to do about it as a group.

There was consensus that a workshop on pornography was necessary and essential.

Marianne expressed concern that pornography was now legal in South Africa.

Debbie felt that there was too much pornographic content on television, and that her children were exposed to this even at 6pm, a time which one would expect programmes suitable for "family viewing".

Janine felt that we were becoming jaded about pornography and even our children are becoming hardened.

Felicia felt that the workshop on pornography was important because pornography is often blamed for inciting men to rape women. She feels that it has no effect on her as a woman to cause any kind of mischief in society and questions whether it is true that some men rape as a result of exposure to pornography.

Jennifer also agreed that the issue was an important one. She was surprised to find pictures of pornographic content in the diary she purchased ...another indication that pornography is far too easy to obtain, even when one is not necessarily looking for it.

It was agreed that everyone would attempt to bring pornographic paraphernalia to the workshop to discuss the content of the items and its availability. Ideally we should begin our search at home (there appeared to be consensus that the best place to explore would be the bedrooms of all teenage males!) and then move onto the broader community.

Gabrielle raised an important issue concerning the aims of this workshop. Is the intention to protect people or merely to open their eyes so that they will see things differently? We should look at the position pornography puts women in, what it promotes and teach our children to look at it critically. These are issues to be examined by the Planning Committee.

2. Election of Planning Committee for Pornography workshop.

Debbie, Jennifer, Nokwanda, Charmaine and Vero volunteered to plan the workshop. The committee have decided to meet on the 8 July 1998 at 4:30 pm at the offices of Media

Works.

3. Women's Media Watch Staff Position vacancy.

Gabrielle invited all interested parties to apply for the above-mentioned position and a complete job description is available if required. The crucial requirement for this full-time position is commitment to Gender issues.

Working hours, overtime and the requirement of travelling on occasion are issues that need to be added to the advertisement handed out by Gabrielle.

4. Report back on the WACC Gender Policy Conference.

Zoleka gave a reportback on the Gender Policy conference held at Cape Town from 1-5 June 1998.

A complete report is available on what was discussed at the conference and will be supplied by Zoleka at a later stage. The papers from different countries are also available and may be obtained from Zoleka on request.

5. Proposal for a workshop to explore members' experience of Mediawatch and suggestions.

Gabrielle suggested that we should have a workshop on the group's identity- where are we going.

Zoleka seconded the idea and felt that it would give the coordinator a sense of direction in terms of assessing what we've done as a group and where we are heading in the future.

Marianne commented that we also need to look at how meetings are conducted and that we should consider the possibility of doing other activities such as watching videos.

Janine suggested that we cut out relevant or interesting articles from newspapers and bring them to the meetings to discuss.

Zoleka also felt that it was important to have a discussion on the media and that we should raise awareness as to what is happening in the media.

Gabrielle informed the group that a woman Puerto Rican activist was available to run a workshop of this nature for Media Watch and that she was available until mid-August.

The workshop will be held on the 15 August 1998 from 9:30 am -4:30 pm.

Gabrielle asked for volunteers to plan this workshop and arrange a venue. Zoleka volunteered.

6. Next Mediawatch meeting

The next meeting will be held on the 11 July 1998 and will be planned by Felicia. Zoleka the Industrious will do the invitations and Marge will do the phoning.

7. Latecomers

Marianne suggested that we introduce a penalty for latecomers. (For example singing) Stickers will be made available at the next meeting so that latecomers can stick their names on their clothing for identification purposes. This will avoid wasting time and interruptions.

8. Other issues

Ruth invited the group to attend a counselling skills workshop run by Rape Crisis in Khayelitsha. Please contact them at Rape Crisis if you are interested.

Vero announced that a National maintenance association will be set up in South Africa and that she would keep people updated.

Marge related a horrific rape ordeal that occurred in Wellington. A march by candlelight as well as a picket around the court area will take place. Members will be advised of the date.

