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CHAPTER 13/16 NEWSLETTER

ARM



VOLUME 6, ISSUE 1

FALL 2022

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Iain Beaton, President, District 13/16

The unprecedented contract dispute between CUPE and the Ford government seems to be working towards a resolution as I write this. The union's education workers are voting on a tentative agreement, after staring down the government twice. The first time, CUPE went out on strike even after the Ford government passed an imposed contract and used the Notwithstanding clause. Union solidarity, and public opinion polls, led to a surprising backtrack by Ford, and the Bill and its Notwithstanding clause are gone. When talks stalled again, CUPE prepared to hit the bricks November 21, but reached a last-second deal.

If CUPE achieves a deal, it might serve as a template for other education agreements, particularly for OSSTF non-teacher members. But this government is determined to privatize education, which threatens the quality of public educa-

tion and the people who work in its schools.

We need to continue to support CUPE and our OSSTF brothers and sisters in fighting the latest in a series of confrontations with aggressive, vindictive provincial governments.

The Ford government also continues its assault on health care and the elderly. Seniors are being pushed out of hospitals into long-term care facilities that are not their choice and health care across the system is facing privatization - even though the Conservatives were adamant before the election that they had no intention of doing this. Now, their own underfunding and negligence is being used to argue that the public system is failing and that privatizing is the only option.

Please read the articles in the newsletter on the Ontario Health Coalition and our own Chapter 13/16 Home Care Committee.

Take a look at the article on the online vulnerability of our personal information. This has been a concern for a number of years, but the hacking of files held by OSSTF and the Waterloo District Board of Education this year raises the alarm again. Several Chapter 13/16 members have received a letter from OSSTF informing them of the possible theft of personal information in the hack experienced several months ago. If you have not received this letter, see the copy of it elsewhere in this newsletter, and use the contact information to find out if your data has been compromised.

Also: the Durham District School Board just announced (November 28) that they have been hacked.

Despite the reasons for concern, I hope you have a safe, and happy, holiday season.

The ARM Newsletter is a publication of OSSTF ARM Chapter 13/16.



The opinions expressed in the newsletter are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views/policies of OSSTF District 13 or District 16.





November 23, 2022

You may disregard this letter if you have already received a letter from OSSTF in the past month.

Dear _____,

As you may know, on May 30, 2022, the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation (OSSTF/FEESO) learned that we fell victim to a cyber incident involving ransomware that affected our systems. We understand that this incident may have resulted in disrupted systems and operational challenges for individuals within our network. We sincerely apologize for any inconveniences caused and wish to inform you of the situation.

What happened?

On May 30, 2022, we discovered that an unauthorized third party had accessed and encrypted our systems between May 25 and May 30, 2022. We immediately hired a cyber security firm to secure our environment and investigate the incident to determine its scope and the nature of the information involved. Following this review, we also conducted an eDiscovery process to review the personal information that may have been impacted. Such process, which has taken several months, was just recently completed.

Based on the results of our investigation and while we have no evidence of further misuse of the data at this time, we can now confirm that personal information of current and past members was compromised as part of this incident.

What personal information has been compromised?

The personal information compromised concern current and past members, as well as their family members and/or beneficiaries and may include the full name, social insurance number, date of birth, the member ID and/or other personal information provided to OSSTF.

We invite you to contact us at our toll-free number **1-877-672-4644**, available Monday to Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. EST, to obtain more information on the personal information concerning you that may have been impacted by the incident.

What can you do to protect yourself?

As always, it is important to remain vigilant to detect the risk of fraud, identity theft and phishing. To do so, you should: (1) review your account statements regularly, (2) change your online accounts password often and avoid using the same passwords across various services, and (3) be cautious if you receive suspicious emails, text messages, or phone calls that request that you provide personal information or contain links or attachments, even when originating from trusted individuals or companies.

As an added precaution, depending on the type of personal information impacted, credit monitoring and identity theft protection services with Equifax may be available to you at our expense for a period of one year. As such, if applicable, our team will provide you with a code to redeem.

We wanted to assure you that we take the protection of your personal information very seriously and that we are taking all necessary steps to prevent a similar incident from reoccurring. We have worked with our external cyber security experts to remove the malware and strengthen our security posture. We confirm that we are currently fully operational and available to assist and represent our members.

For any questions or concern, we invite you to contact us by calling at the toll-free number **1-877-672-4644**, available Monday to Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. EST. If you still have any question or concern that remain unanswered, you may contact us by email at security.info@osstf.ca.

Thanks,
Jim Spray, CFO / AGS, Operational Services

PROVINCIAL NEWS

Hands off Worker's Rights

Chapter 13/16 members, including Rita More, attended the OFL *Hands Off Workers' Rights* rally at the Ministry of Labour on November 1, 2022.



Photos courtesy of Rita Moore



HEALTH & WELLNESS

HOME CARE ISSUES: WHY WE SHOULD ALL CARE

By Colleen Ireland

Recent long-term care (LTC) issues, the re-location of senior patients to LTCs not of their choice and the lack of in-home supports make it clear how dismissively seniors are being treated. The onus for care of ailing loved ones becomes the task of unpaid family caregivers, some still employed and some retired. While there are some tax credits and supports for those still employed, very little is available for those of us who are retired. Yes, we provide that care out of love but the role is emotionally and physically exhausting. Unpaid family caregivers save the Ontario government an estimated \$ 28.5 billion per year as noted in “Spotlight on 2021” from the Ontario Caregivers Association. Most seniors wish to age in place with dignity rather than go to LTC facilities. Still, the government insists on building “warehouses” for our seniors without changing the framework of care within those institutions. Personnel numbers are depleted while profits grow. Why not put that money into increased tax credits for the unsung heroes of support - our in-home family caregivers?

None of us will escape aging - it is an equal opportunity stage and some of us will manage to do it relatively well. Along the way, we may need health care supports such as physiotherapy, temporary hospitalization or surgeries. That does not make us weak but it does make us human. Some individuals may be caught between caring for parents and working. Other retired seniors may find themselves suddenly tossed into caregiver mode. How we support one another in our toughest times is a measure of how compassionate and caring our systems might be.

The COVID years serve as a bellwether of things to come. If we fail to hold governments and their agencies accountable for the dismal LTC/Home Care supports currently in place, the situation will never change. We need everyone on board because many of us who are caregivers are simply exhausted. In some cases, families are forced to consider highly expensive private care paid for out of their own pocket. The cost can range from \$39-\$44/ hour. Not everyone can afford that expense. In addition, attempts to force

some families (including this writer's) to sign up for a minimum number of hours each week increases the tension. Unable to afford that cost, we struggle alone. Portions of private health supports can be claimed but the initial expenses are out of reach for many.

Factors such as five year wait-times for LTC, insufficient home supports, and for-profit agencies all put a stranglehold on moving forward to create more compassionate and humane not-for-profit care. There is a trickle down effect which has an impact on care at home. Poor LTC conditions, inability of families to afford supplementary private in-home care, shortage of PSW supports and lack of communications from hospital to home, can create a toxic and stressful environment for families. Retirees need to discuss their future hopes and plans with their family, ensuring that their children are aware of the stark realities of inadequate home supports before the need becomes a reality for them. Inadequate home care supports will create a ripple through a family and friends as everyone is called upon to help. We all need to be ready because the government is not going to bail us out.

News

Home Care Ontario calls on Government to Fast-track funding

By Home Care Ontario|Nov 23, 2022

Home Care Ontario is launching “Bring Care Home”, a campaign calling on government to accelerate its investment into home care and stabilize the home care workforce.

The campaign is anchored by an informative website, choosehomecare.ca that is calling Ontarians to “Bring Care Home”

Read the Press Release: [Home Care Ontario Calls on Government to Fast-track Funding](#)

Aging in Place

By Marilyn Girndt

If you live in Durham Region, you may remember the explosive news story from [CityTV](#) that aired on February 12, 2021 when door handles were removed from some rooms on the fourth floor in assisted-living rooms at White Cliffe Terrace Retirement Residence in Courtice. The door handles were removed “to prevent COVID-19 residents from moving freely around the residence”.¹ Although the Diversicare president, David Bird, issued a statement (not an apology) to residents and families affected, the terror and helplessness felt by these residents cannot be underestimated.

In Durham Region, 73% of seniors are homeowners and want to remain in their communities and in their own homes if possible - not in large, multi-story retirement homes or long-term care homes built by private corporations. Many, however, cannot downsize in their own community because “the range of housing options in Durham is extremely limited. Unless seniors can secure accommodation in Durham that meets their needs, they may look elsewhere.”² “More diversity is needed to accommodate the housing needs of seniors and older adults. A broader range of housing forms is needed - from single detached dwellings and apartment buildings to secondary suites, garden suites and multi-generational housing. Home-based supports and assistance with accessibility modifications must also be considered, as well as new emerging forms of tenure and financial tools, for example, co-ownership, life-lease housing and cooperatives.”³

How can seniors, many with health and other disability issues, stay in their own homes in their own communities when a) there is no suitable housing for seniors who need some extra care and b) home and community care is in such a mess in Ontario? There are many stories circulating about how inaccessible and unpredictable community and continuing care is in Ontario and how it is slowly being privatized³ by the Ontario government. Consider this scenario: *An elderly woman lives alone by choice, even though her arthritis makes it very difficult for her to open cans of food or sweep the kitchen floor. The Home Support worker who came by twice a week for two hours is suddenly cancelled due to regional cut-backs. The old woman isn't eating as well, and her kitchen floor gets messy. One day she slips on a spill and breaks her hip. In the hospital, her physician notices she is malnourished. She stays in hospital for months, healing slowly and waiting for a bed in a long-term care facility.*⁴ As Joyce Balaz says “the most important aspect of aging in place is that of maintaining autonomy over one's life. Having choice and control!”⁵ What can you do? Visit, join, and support the organizations and groups listed below or in the footnotes for this article. Become informed, be an advocate.

<https://www.seniorsactionontario.com/>

<https://www.ontariohealthcoalition.ca/>

<https://www.homecareontario.ca/>

¹ <https://toronto.citynews.ca/2021/02/12/courtice-retirement-home-door-handles-removed/>

² <https://www.durham.ca/en/doing-business/resources/Documents/HousingDevelopment/At-Home-in-Durham/Final-Accessible-Task-Force-Report.pdf>

³ <https://www.ontariohealthcoalition.ca/index.php/fact-sheet-home-care-privatization/>

⁴ Vogel, Donna, Michael Rachlis, Nancy Pollak. Without Foundation How Medicare is Undermined by Gaps and Privatization in Community and Continuing Care. November 9, 2000. CCPA Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives

⁵ *Essays on Aging in Place: A Guide for Developing Good Policy and Practice, Especially for People Who Have an Intellectual or Developmental Disability* is a new e book released by Seniors for Social Action Ontario (SSAO) and Community Living Ontario (CLO).

A Critical Time for Public Health Care

Ontario Health Coalition Assembly - October 2022

By Rita Moore

The Ontario Health Care Coalition is a non-partisan organization that works hard to preserve and improve public health care in Ontario.

There was a sense of urgency at this year's Ontario Health Coalition (OHC) Assembly. They see clearly that the current government is not sending up 'trial balloons', but is making deep cuts through changes in laws and regulations. The details of these changes are difficult to track. The [OHC website](#) is a good place to check for current news and updates.

We were reminded to be aware of different funding models. Currently, there is public delivery and funding, as well as private for-profit, and private not-for-profit delivery of funding. It matters. More than one speaker also reminded us that Ontario is the province that spends the least per capita on public health care.

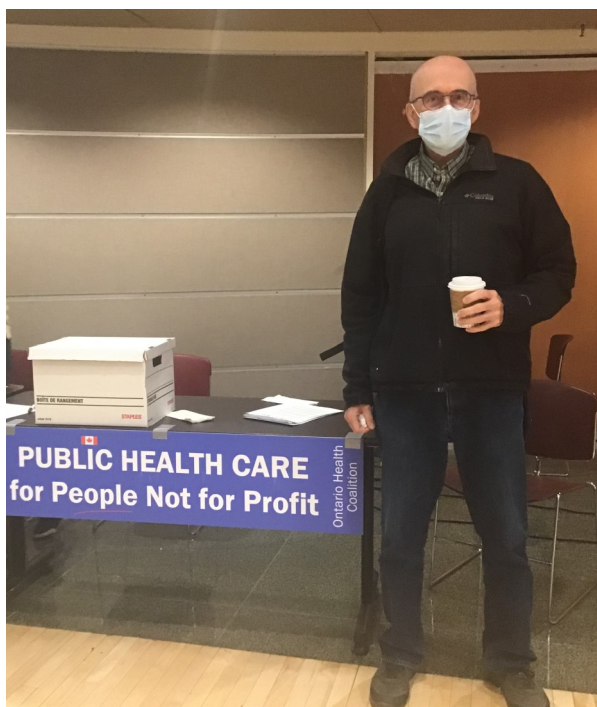
We are, of course, in a pandemic and must learn from what has happened here in Ontario, in Canada and internationally. The pandemic should be informing us about what works and what does not. We know that private for-profit models of long term care were disastrous. We all know now what privatization of long term care under the Harris government led to for our vulnerable seniors during this pandemic. There were five times the deaths in for-profit home care than in public home care. Our current government's response has been to reward for-profit providers with 30-year contracts for more beds. Reading the reports done by the military of conditions in our Long Term Care homes during the pandemic is enough to bring you to tears - I found them on the TVO website. At my first OHC Assembly in 2019, I had heard PSWs describing these conditions, so there were few surprises when I read the reports. Their

attempts to make governments aware were just ignored or not seen as a priority in a for-profit world.

Internationally, a model mentioned by a researcher from British Columbia is the Scottish model that, some years ago, doubled down on keeping their health care public as opposed to England, which allowed privatization in many sectors of health care.

The Ford government is expanding the privatization in Home Care. Bill 175 will privatize the remaining public parts of home care. It will remove the Bill of Rights for home care clients. It contains no provisions for access to care, quality of care or staffing shortages.

More recent changes to regulations have taken away a patient's and family's rights to have a say regarding where a patient goes after discharge from the hospital or be charged \$400 per day to stay in the hospital.



Iain Beaton at the Ontario Health Coalition Assembly

The OHC presented an ambitious Action Plan for the coming year. Some of the areas they will work on include:

- protecting public hospitals,
- protecting EMS from privatization,
- educating Ontarians about the reality of allowing private clinics, which tend to migrate to higher income, urban areas, bringing attention to the staffing shortages of all health professionals, and
- mobilizing individuals and communities to keep public health care accessible to all.

A Critical Time for Public Health Care continued from previous page

It can feel overwhelming when faced with the current world situation. But this is a chance to 'act locally. Defending public services like health care and education benefits everyone, even if they don't know it. It mitigates the harm done by the concentration of wealth in too few hands. It defends access and quality care for the many instead of the few. It defends local input into crucial institutions. One participant asked for retired seniors to participate, as so many currently working are burning out (many of us can relate).

No individual can change it all, but we can in some way raise our voices to keep some level of fairness in a system that should be for all and not for the few. Investing in a province we want is not the same as over-spending. Innovation needs to come from the deep commitment to fairness and accessibility for all people or it does little good in the long run. Health care for everyone on an equal footing has been a cornerstone of modern Canada. Let's work to keep it for future generations.

Durham Town Hall Follow-Up & Recording

Thank you very much to all who came to the Durham Virtual Town Hall meeting on the hospital crisis. We discussed how to make the fight visible, to show real resistance to the Ford government's refusal to take urgent action on the hospital crisis while at the same time privatizing our hospitals.

If you were not able to make it to the Town Hall, the recording is available on YouTube by clicking here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UgM5rYgCgtw>

We agreed we need a fightback now, as things really are in an unprecedented crisis. The DurhamHealth Coalition is going to be attending the Toronto protest to demand urgent action to protect our public health care and stop health care privatization. If you would like to come please email: koach_14@yahoo.com, we may have a bus going as well, so please let us know if you are able to come/need a ride!

Please share it widely with everyone you know and help to make it a huge show of strength. Thank you!

**THE FORD GOV'T HAS DONE ALMOST NOTHING
TO FIX THE CRISIS IN OUR HOSPITALS.**

**FORCE FORD TO ACT URGENTLY TO SUPPORT OUR PUBLIC
HOSPITALS NOW
AND STOP PRIVATIZING THEIR SERVICES!**

WHERE: 585 University Avenue - In Front of the Peter Munk Cardiac
Centre
(This is beside Toronto General Hospital)

WHEN: Monday, December 12th, 2022 @ 12 pm.

You can also bring signs and messages to Doug Ford to **finally** take urgent action to restore and rebuild our public hospital services, STOP privatizing them.

Durham Town Hall Follow-up continued from Page 7

If you are not able to make it to the protest but still want to get involved, please become one of our million Medicare Defenders. This is not a membership list and you can click no on the registration and we will not contact you or use your information for anything. This is to tell Doug Ford in no uncertain terms that he does not have a mandate from Ontarians to privatize our public health care. We need to get as many people as possible to scare the Ford Government away from their plans to privatize and do nothing to help the crisis in our hospitals.

You can become a Medicare Defender here: <https://www.ontariohealthcoalition.ca/>

You can also help by:

Handing out Leaflets or putting them up in your community, place of worship or work:

<https://www.ontariohealthcoalition.ca/wp-content/uploads/Public-Medicare-Defender-Leaflet.pdf>

If you have been charged for medical services please fill in this survey:

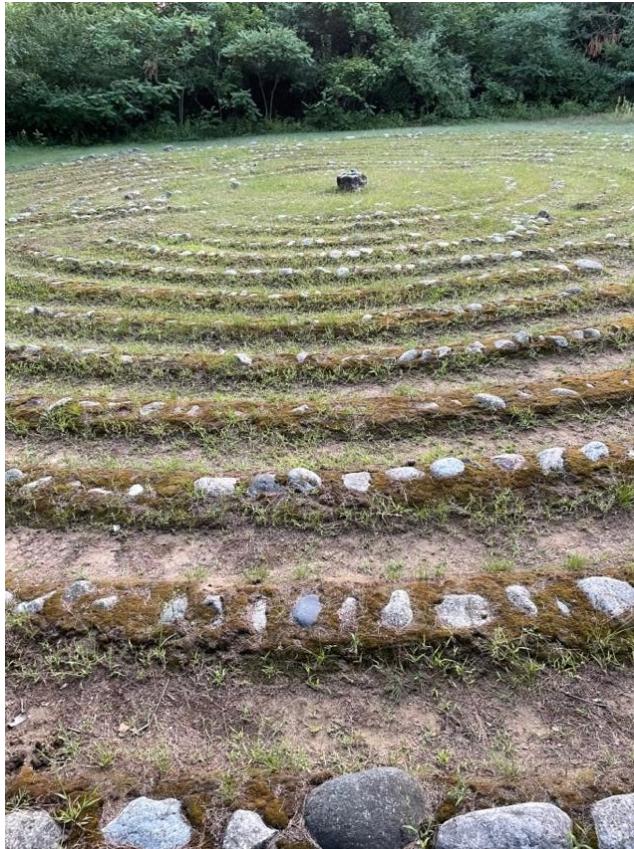
<https://www.ontariohealthcoalition.ca/wp-content/uploads/final-survey-re-private-clinics-extra-billing.pdf>



Walking Meditation

By Cristal Diemer-Ewles

If you are looking for something restorative to do for yourself or with a small group of like-minded friends, you may want to consider walking meditation. Like seated meditation, it is an opportunity to quiet your mind and focus your attention on your body and your breath. The process is simple enough as you are basically trying to walk with intention. Focus on each step and how it feels to connect to the earth. Slowly and deliberately transfer your weight from foot to foot. As you walk, allow yourself to breathe in slowly and deeply then release your breath slowly and fully. Focus on your steps and your breath. Let your arms hang comfortably at your side. Keep your gaze lowered to about 3 feet in front of your feet. As you move, notice nature around yourself - perhaps there is a breeze, the sun touching your face, the sounds around you. Your other thoughts will come as it takes practice and time to train your racing brain to focus on your movement and your breath. Just notice the thoughts and let them pass, don't engage with them. Return your focus to your steps and your breath. Be fully present in your movement.



The stone labyrinth at the Manresa Jesuit Spiritual Renewal Center in Pickering.

Walking meditation can be a great way for those new to meditation to start a meditation practice as you don't have to sit still.

I had the opportunity to practice walking meditation using the stone labyrinth at the Manresa Jesuit Spiritual Renewal Center in Pickering (2325 Liverpool Road). The Center has 21 acres that includes open fields, gardens and forest areas. The labyrinth is located through the main gates and to the west of the parking lot. It is a wonderful place to practice walking meditation. Slowly walking the path through the stones can be a peaceful, calming and spiritual practice.

As I worked my way through the labyrinth, I felt the path was symbolic of life. With my gaze only a few feet ahead of my step I could not see where the path went, it only revealed its turns as I went along. I had to trust in each step and only each step to take me where I needed to go. I found the experience so impactful. The great thing is that anyone can use the labyrinth any day and time. On weekends you may encounter others using the labyrinth who are at the retreat. Please be quiet as they are likely on a silent retreat. Of course, the labyrinth will be snow covered in the winter!

The Center offers many different retreats. If you are interested in what they may offer check out their [website](#) and give it a try!

You can practice for as long as you feel comfortable. Perhaps to begin walking meditation it may be for 10 minutes or maybe longer. You may want to work towards mindful walking for 30 minutes. You can practice anywhere - in your backyard, in your house, a park or by a creek. Whatever works for you. Personally, I prefer a wooded setting.

OTIP

Shop safely online this holiday season

Online shopping has become a big part of many Canadians' lives. As an online shopper, you get to avoid check-out lines, scout for the best prices and shop whenever you want – all from the comfort of your home.

But the convenience of online shopping comes with the growing risk of scams that impact consumers well after their credit card bill is due. More than 35 percent of all scams reported by Canadians in 2021 were online purchase scams¹.

Here are 9 online shopping safety tips to help prevent scams and protect yourself and your family this holiday season:

Don't shop on public Wi-Fi.

Using public Wi-Fi is just one of the ways that your personal information can be compromised. While it's best to connect to a trusted Wi-Fi network, like your home network, if you need to shop while you're out and about, turn off your Wi-Fi and use your 5G or LTE network.

Restrict access to your Wi-Fi.

The easiest thing you can do to secure your home network is to change the default name and password. Ensure you use a longer phrase unique to that device, and don't use any obvious or personal information. Most routers also offer an optional encryption feature that you can enable to prevent others from eavesdropping on your network without logging into it.

Buy from reputable retailers.

Avoid fraud and online scams by buying from sellers you know by reputation or experience. If you're unfamiliar with the seller, do your research by reading customer reviews and finding them through the [Better Business Bureau](#). Trust your instinct – if a deal seems too good to be true, it probably is.

Check that the website is secure.

Before you check out your online purchase, make sure that the website you're on is secure. You should see a padlock icon in the address bar and the URL should begin with "https" rather than "http" – the "s" in "https" stands for secure and this means that all data is encrypted as it passes from your browser to the website's server.

Resist a faster checkout.

Most checkouts will ask you to sign up for an account to streamline the process. It may be tempting to do this, but when you create an account, the retailer can store your personal and purchase information on their server. While it's not common, if the retailer experiences a data breach, your saved information could be at risk. Opt to check out as a guest whenever possible.

Use unique passwords.

If signing up for an account is necessary to check out, do not use the same password as other accounts. Once an online scammer figures out one password, it's easy for them to try it on all your accounts to access your information. A good password is ten (10) or more characters and will have an uppercase letter, a lowercase letter, a number and a symbol. Implementing two(2)-step verification is also one of the best ways to help protect you against fraud and scams.

Use a credit card.

Many credit cards will fully reimburse you for any direct financial losses from unauthorized activity on your accounts. It's faster and easier to receive reimbursement for fraudulent charges on a credit card rather than a debit card because they have less personal information attached to them.

Monitor your credit card statements.

It's good practice to check your credit card statements for unauthorized activity frequently. Contact your credit card issuer immediately if you notice any unusual transactions.

Review your insurance coverage.

Among other things, restoring your identity can cost a lot of time and money. While an insurance policy can't prevent fraud and identity theft from occurring, it can help you restore your identity to its pre-theft status and cover some of the financial loss incurred. Take some time this holiday season to review your insurance policies to know what you're covered for.

If you'd like to inquire about fraud and identity theft coverage, contact your OTIP broker today at [1-888-494-0090](tel:1-888-494-0090) to discuss your insurance options.

BOOK REVIEW

By Colleen Ireland

“OFF WITH HER HEAD: THREE THOUSAND YEARS OF DEMONIZING WOMEN IN POWER”

by Eleanor Herman

From Hatshepsut to Pliny the Elder to MAGA believers, efforts exerted to defame and diminish the work done by women, has been relentless. In her recent book, *Off With Her Head: Three Thousand Years of Demonizing Women in Power*, Eleanor Herman explains, debunks and clarifies the myths which swirl around women in their search for meaningful political power. Herman approaches the topic with primary sources, detailed analysis, and delivers it all with a sense of humour, irony and sometimes outright sarcasm. In her final chapters, the author offers ways to change the narrative but it takes all of us joined by the media and mixed generations to stop the hateful diatribes launched against women who attempt to break through barriers in politics.

Herman sites examples of female bashing from all countries including Canada. Kim Campbell and Rachel Notley both appear more than once with references to various political issues which would be overlooked if only they had been male. Germany’s Angela Merkel, Australia’s Julia Gillard, Scotland’s Nicola Sturgeon, Namibian First Lady Monica Geingos, England’s Margaret Thatcher, New Zealand’s Jacinda Arden and of course Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and Hillary Clinton are criticized and thwarted by those who believe the conspiracy theories, lies and outright plots to prevent them from having a voice. The author breaks down the criticism of women in power through various themes- hair, clothing, weight and of course the double -whammy of being a minority and female.

Print media and social media hold a measure of responsibility for the lifespan of the myths and conspiracy theories about women in the present day. For centuries, women, as described by Herman, have been blamed for any number of plagues and pestilences which have scourged the earth. In more recent times, they have been accused of being part of pedophile rings and even murder. Whether women stood in for a male heir as Regent or had the audacity to be elected, they were and are subject to outright fabrication and public humiliation in an effort to diminish their work. Herman gives numerous examples of behaviours for which women were excoriated and men were excused. The media needs to stop buying into this frenzy of misinformation.

Herman summarizes that we need to engage more men in our fight, we need to get more women into politics (as daunting as that may be) and we need to speak up and challenge the naysayers. [Watch](#) Democratic Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez’s rebuttal of Rep. Ted Yoho after he called her a “F.... Bitch” if you need a lesson on how to frame that rebuttal.

This is a thorough and well-researched book, with an extensive bibliography, that covers the topic from ancient to present times and I could not put it down.

UPCOMING EVENTS



ARTICLE AUTHORS FOR THIS ISSUE:

Iain Beaton, ARM Chapter 13/16 President,
(President's Message)

Cristal Diemer-Ewles, Chapter 13/16 Member,,
(Walking Meditation)

Marilyn Girndt, ARM Chapter 13/16 Member,
(Aging in Place)

Colleen Ireland ARM Chapter 13/16 Member,
(Home Care Issues: Why We Should All Care, Book
Review)

Rita Moore, ARM Chapter 13/16 Member, (A Criti-
cal Time for Public Health Care)

SUBMIT YOUR RETIREMENT PHOTOS

If you have a photo you would like to showcase in the
next issue of ARM, please contact
chapter13and16@gmail.com.

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Fall/Winter/Spring

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