

Appendix One: Workshop and Focus Group Summaries

March 2, 2004 - Downtown Eastside Women's Centre

Five to ten women participated in the workshop and shared their ideas for a transit system that would fit their needs. Women with disabilities commented that the service doesn't work for handicapped people, because we cannot get on the trolley buses with a grocery cart, stroller or wheelchair, and because the new disabled pass must be put in the ticket machine, rather than just showing it to the driver. The buses are often late, and women often wait 20-30 minutes for the bus.



Women made many concrete suggestions for positive change in the transit system. In the interests of respecting women's safety, women should be allowed to ride the bus at night, even without bus fare. Women's safety would also be helped by request stops being available any time after dark, regardless of the time. Women at the workshop also believe that communities should be meaningfully consulted and bus riders should decide where the money goes. Women said there should be translation of information at the bus stops, and there should be no racism towards bus riders. Some women at the workshop also put forward the idea of a means tested pass for poor people.

March 9, 2004 - YWCA Women in Focus Job Training

Women in Focus Job Training Program is a pre-employment program for single mothers on welfare. Women shared many experiences of hardship and struggle in the transit system. They shared that the fares are too high, and the transfer times are too short to do grocery shopping. The fare is especially high because children over the age of 5 must pay. One woman has to buy 4 bus passes every month. Another woman told the group that when she was pregnant and did not have bus fare she was not allowed on the bus. Many women shared stories of being harassed, and they agreed that sexual harassment is an important issue.

One woman shared that she avoids the bus altogether and walks instead because the service is so bad and so expensive and there is sexual harassment on the bus. Participants agreed that there are not enough buses, so women get passed by, and women feel unsafe waiting for the bus for long periods of time. The bus is so crowded that women miss their stops because they can't get off the bus in time.

As concrete suggestions for change in the transit system, women put forward that we need more express buses; more late night buses; we need 24 hour buses; wheelchairs and strollers should go first and we should have a safety button at the bus stops.

appendix one

March 11, 2004 - Port Coquitlam Women Centre

While this was a small workshop of five women, the participants had many experiences to share. There is infrequent service in the Port Coquitlam and all suburbs. Buses are not accessible to people in wheelchairs. A woman in a wheelchair shared that she waited for two buses because the ramps were not working and she could not get home. One single mom shared that the bus was so crowded she missed her stop because it is so hard to get off the bus. Another participant told the group that she was kicked off the bus because her baby was crying.

Women said that fares are so high that they must pick and choose food vs. bus fares. One woman commented that it is hard to get to the food bank because the buses are expensive. Women shared that they turn down going to events because they don't have bus fares, and that they do not feel there is any consideration for women's safety in the transit system.

In brainstorming changes to the transit system, women gave many ideas including a lower rate day pass, more bus service and more efficient & reliable service, more kneeling buses; affordable bus fares, longer transfer times and no zones. They also put forward a less complicated fare structure, better lighting at the bus stops, washrooms close to transit, cleaner buses and no diesel buses.

March 14, 2004 - Bus Riders Union Workshop



We hosted the Bus Riders Union workshop at the Lore Krill Housing Coop in Chinatown. After sharing snacks and a round of names, we got down to discussing our experiences and ideas about transit. Women at the workshop shared their experiences of stress and tension as people try to negotiate space on the bus. One woman commented that she leaves home earlier because she worries that the bus will break down. Another woman shared that she missed a postpartum visit because the bus was late.

High fares are also a cause of anxiety and stress. One woman shared that she paid for one zone, then was embarrassed by bus driver for not paying enough to get into the second zone. The next day the same driver passed her by, and she had to walk to another stop to catch the bus. Women commented that TransLink tries to turn riders against one another, as riders chastise others for not paying. Workshop participants put forward that school kids shouldn't have to pay. One woman shared that she had to lie about the age of her child and then explain to her child why she lied: so they could afford to ride the bus.

Women commented that the design of the buses and SkyTrain does not work for them. There are no bars to hold on to on the new SkyTrain, the bus seats are very close together, it is hard to get strollers



onto crowded buses and it is hard for small children to use the back doors of the bus. Some drivers insist that women fold up their strollers and carry their kids onto the bus, which is dangerous. Women discussed how some buses get really packed, and one woman shared that she could not get off at her stop because the bus was too crowded. Women experience harassment from other passengers on the bus. Women commented that they feel harassed by ads with naked women, and we should have more control over public space.

In discussing change in the transit system, women suggested free buses, free fares for school aged children, 24-hour buses, bus only lanes & faster service. Other ideas included: that bus riders should run the system, bigger stroller/wheelchair area on the bus, a family day pass, more express buses, frequent service all day not just at peak hours and more bus shelters. Drivers should have anti-racist training, more respect and conflict awareness.

April 18, 2004 - Bus Riders Union Focus Group

To follow up on the BRU workshop we held a more intensive focus group with some of the women who participated in the workshop as well as some new women. We shared a round of names, then did a shout out period so women could share more of their experiences in the transit system. We then worked in small groups to put together skits on three experiences that women shared over and over again. One group did a skit about racial profiling, criminalization and high fares; one group did a skit about riding a crowded bus with a child in a stroller; one



group did a skit about sexual harassment and long waits for the bus at night. We had fun while delving deeper into our experiences as transit dependent women.

We then broke off into groups again to draw our vision of women centred transit. Women had many ideas for a better transit system and a more just community. The first group included better designed buses, green spaces, no Olympics, safe houses, improved labour code, free buses, no privatization, more bike racks, wider aisles, a level floor on the bus (no steps at the back), clean air buses and social housing. The second group included the elimination of the zone system, 24 hour buses every five minutes, all kneeling buses, safety buzzers, buses connect, kids free, always a seat on the bus, information in many languages, our needs drive the transit system. And finally, the third group included an improved climate of the bus, bus driver not like cops but represent our interests, bus driver would say welcome in different languages, women would run the bus system, and no bus fares.

April 19, 2004 - Kiwassa Neighbourhood House

The WIT team held a workshop with the single mother's group at the Kiwassa Neighbourhood House. After having dinner together, we set up our flipchart paper and discussed our experiences in the transit system. Women shared that they feel at risk of physical danger when the bus moves before they sit down. They shared that they miss their stops because the buses are so crowded, and it is hard carrying

appendix one

things on the bus with a stroller, especially when the bus is crowded. One woman reflected that bus fare used to be a dime, now it is \$2, and soon it might be \$4; on top of this, transfer time is only 1.5 hours, which is nothing when you have kids. Transfer time is not enough time to finish trip. It costs some women a 2-zone fare to get to the single mothers group, which means they have had to cut off other activities. The zone system is arbitrary and unfair. Women commented that concession fares should be cheaper; kids are not earning money and ten dollars for a family trip is too high.

One woman shared that she waited in the cold for 3 hours because the bus didn't stop. She could not get an explanation for this and as a result of waiting so long both her and her child got sick. Other women also shared that full buses skipped their stop making them late for work, getting home and appointments. Poor bus service makes women walk long distances and feel angry. One woman commented that the peak hours are okay for service, after peak hours, service is infrequent, and after 9pm service is horrible. Many women commented that the bus drivers are sometimes rude and racist and TransLink does not call people back about complaints.

May 26, 2004 - SFU Women's Centre

After sharing snacks and a round of names, women in the drop in space at the SFU Women's Centre shared their experiences of long waits and harassment. One student shared that she is tired of waiting a long time for the #145, as this cuts into study time. A South Burnaby resident said that there are no buses after 10pm, and even when there are it is faster to walk than wait. Women commented that it causes stress getting to places on time and one woman takes cabs to get to exams because the buses are so unpredictable. Another woman shared that the poor bus connection makes her leave home an hour before her work shift begins, even though her trip is only 10 minutes long. One workshop participant shared that the introduction of the Millennium SkyTrain line actually made her transit trip 10 times longer because her bus was cut. Before the SkyTrain her trip took 10 minutes; today her trip takes more than 1 hour.

Women shared that they experience harassment on the bus and at the stops; some women said they do not take the bus alone at night, which compromises their independence. Women are assaulted at the back of the bus and it should be the role of the driver to respond to these incidents. Women commented that the drivers do the best they can; many are friendly. Some women who are new immigrants have trouble navigating the system, so they do not go to social events because they don't know how to get places; this causes isolation. Women with children shared that it is a nightmare getting kids and strollers on the bus with groceries.

In brainstorming change in the transit system, women argued that city planning should serve the needs of people; including lighting at bus shelters. Women also said that the U-Pass should be available for workers and other students, not just SFU and UBC students.



May 31, 2004 - Van Tech High School



On the morning of May 31st the WIT team held a workshop in a classroom at the Vancouver Technical (Van Tech) High School in East Vancouver. Ten to fifteen young women participated in this workshop. Women discussed many issues, including overcrowded buses, long waits, expensive fares and the criminalization of youth. Many women told us that when they installed the Millennium SkyTrain line their buses to school was cut, which inconvenienced many students. Van Tech students now have to wait longer or walk. Women shared that “our school bags are hard to get on the bus, especially when it is crowded”.

Late buses make teenagers late for their curfews and women feel unsafe waiting so long. Workshop participants said that the issue of transit is huge in high school. One woman shared, “parents didn’t want me to go out, as they didn’t feel it was safe”. Another told the group that she was a half-hour late for a job interview because of the buses and she had to call to say she was late.

Women expressed anger that the fare for youth is \$1.50, even for a two-minute ride. If they do not have their Go Card the Skycops are mean and charge high fines. Many women noted that Skycops abuse their privilege by targeting young people and people of colour. The time for transfer is too short, and it is embarrassing when ticket is expired and they have to ask the driver to let them on. One woman commented, “Who rides the bus? Not BMW people!” and women reported that nobody they know wants to drive a car because of the cost of gas, so they are all bus riders. Women felt that the transit system is racist because it doesn’t provide information in other languages. The automated phone information system does not recognise what you are saying if you have an accent.

After sharing experiences, women got into two groups and created skits that explored some key experiences they has discussed.

June 12, 2004 - Multicultural Family Centre (African Women’s Saturday Program)

The WIT team was invited to the Multicultural Family Centre to hold a workshop with the African Women’s Saturday Program. Women shared many experiences of late buses, long waits, system racism and interpersonal racism. One woman told the group about the need for public transit to run between Langley and Abbotsford. Because there is no bus she had to take a Greyhound. They reported that the zone system is complicated, and better connections between buses are needed. Women commented that riding the bus takes a long time. One woman told the group that she missed the bus and had to wait one hour in the cold and another told us that the trip from Surrey to Coquitlam is a two-hour trip.

Women reported many incidents of racism and harassment from the bus drivers. One woman reported that “because I’m a female, of ethnic minority he [bus driver] is disrespectful, ignores me, looks away

appendix one

as I'm speaking to him, asking about routes". Women commented that the drivers pretend they cannot hear or understand them, so they cannot get travel directions, although some women noted that they have also had good experiences with drivers. Women commented that Canada is a "smiling racist society" where racism is just under the surface.

A woman who rides the Edmonds 112 reported that there is a long wait and long line-ups for that bus. Women shared that in general buses don't show up or are 'not in service' and nobody knows why the service is disrupted. Another woman shared that she waited 1 hour and 10 minutes standing on feet in the rain, and she sometimes cannot get on the bus at all because there are too many people. The buses are overcrowded and there are not enough buses.

Women commented that the buses fares are expensive. The zones are costly and "just about making more money" from bus riders. One participant noted, the buses "should work for rich and poor." Another woman commented that Canada is an "advanced" society with bad transit system. In the words of one workshop participant, "buses suck!"

As proposals for change, women suggested that there should be anti-racist training for bus drivers. Women proposed a student rate for bus fares, and there should be more accountability by bus drivers for their actions. Women commented that buses should serve the public.

June 14, 2004 - YWCA Semlin Gardens Housing Coop

The YWCA Semlin Gardens Housing Coop is a housing society for low-income single mothers. After the WIT team prepared a spaghetti dinner and ate together with the workshop participants, we gathered in the coop common room to share experiences and ideas about transit. Women shared many experiences, including trouble with strollers on the bus, expensive fares, criminal activity on the buses, sexual harassment and racism.

Women shared that it is hard to get the stroller on the bus, and some drivers do not help them to get the stroller on the bus. It is unsafe to leave kids on the sidewalk while dealing with the stroller. Women discussed how they often feel unsafe on the bus, and have seen drug transactions, used needles and men shooting up on the bus. One participant shared that a man once pulled down his pants and started touching himself in front of her and her child; she pulled the security cord and no one came. Another participant said that another bus rider threatened to kill her.

Women commented that drivers are impatient with immigrants especially if they don't know how to get off the bus. One woman shared that she had seen drivers drive by if it's only "orientals" at the stop. Another woman told the group that she had seen an old woman with her grandchildren pulled off the train, and the Skycops were calling immigration. One participant noted, "as a young mother, I get treated much worse than an older mother (not just racism, lots of other judgements happen on the bustoo)". One participant noted that while they had bad experiences with drivers, she "had very nice, kind drivers" as well. Criminalization was another consistent theme in the workshop. One woman noted that she was pulled off the SkyTrain with her infant daughter because she had forgotten her bus pass and the Skycop was very intimidating.

Women also shared that the bus is often overcrowded and they must stand on the bus. One participant

commented that it takes so long to get to work she has to pay for 1 – 2 hours of extra childcare. Another said, “it makes me feel like a loser to take the bus”.

appendix two

Appendix two: Testimonials

1.

Name: Corinne Ellington
Age: 35

Ride the bus everyday. I leave at 7am get here at 9am. Leave here at 3pm and get home at 5pm. One week there was a problem with trolley buses – wanted 45 minutes for the bus for 2 mornings in a row. The buses are so crowded I had to fight to get on the bus. I feel unsafe on the bus. When I can afford it I want to stop riding the bus.

*Organizer: Jen Efting
Date: March 9th, 2004
Location: YWCA WIT workshop*

2.

Name: Stefanie Allen
Age: 24

At the beginning of March I was on the bus and a male youth got on and he didn't want to pay. Bus driver pulled over and wouldn't drive until he paid. The guy starting pacing and yelling in the driver's face, threatened the bus driver saying he was going to take a can of hairspray, spray him in the face and light him on fire. I was with my 2-year old daughter. My daughter learned the "F" word from this conflict. The driver should have called transit policy because he was threatening.

*Organizer: Jen Efting
Date: March 9th, 2004
Location: YWCA WIT workshop*

3.

Name: Laurel Austman
Race: Caucasian
Age: 49

I take the skytrain to and from Joyce and Granville station. On several occasions I have stepped off the train at Joyce to see/hear the security guards dealing with people. I am not impressed with their attitude, tone (very aggressive), body language (very aggressive) and language choice (very very aggressive). I understand the guards have to deal with all sorts of people in the name of safety. But I do not feel safe when I get off the train to hear skytrain guards yelling and swearing. I saw many older immigrants get away from there as fast as they could. Just because someone tells a guard to



fuck off, the guard should not be responding in the same way. It doesn't create an atmosphere of safety.

Date: March 9th, 2004

Location: YWCA WIT Workshop

4.

Name: Elizabeth De Angels

Work at 6am. No buses so I had to walk to work. It would take ½ hour for me to walk to work. When it's dark and cold it's scary. Snow plows don't even work properly. I would also have to walk home after 2am from work at Broadway and Heather for ½ hour around 3am. I'm a single mom walking home alone and I don't want to carry a gun. It's scary and dangerous, especially at 3am. No businesses are open. It would be a \$10 cab ride.

Organizer: Heather Jones

Date: March 9th, 2004

Location: YWCA WIT workshop

5.

Name: Mirriah Killian

Race: Caucasian

Age: 31

I got spat on after taking the #9 bus in the afternoon. I had my kids with me. Not having enough buses makes it inconvenient.

Organizer: Zailda Chan

Date: March 9th, 2004

Location: YWCA WIT workshop

6.

ANONYMOUS

Public forums should be held in various area ie. Coquitlam. New West Vancouver to see what the riders need not what some union leaders outside the province from translink thinks they need to get a greater idea of what the future need really is. Take note of Mondays comments of the millennium line in the Vancouver Sun. Only 2 riders get on at one station. Look to getting a lower price monthly ticket for lower income people not working and making good wages. Give them a break.

Organizer: Diane

Date: March 2nd, 2004

Location: Downtown East Side Women's Centre WIT workshop



appendix two

7.

ANONYMOUS

Race: Caucasian and First Nations

Age: 30

From 8am to 9am the #9 is always crowded so I end up getting to the Downtown Eastside Women's centre later than I want. I don't take the skytrain in the morning because it is crowded – we are treated like sardines. It is unhealthy for me to stand for a long time because I had leg surgery. I have a yearly bus pass and I don't want the bus fares raised because the bus fares come out of my food money. Do not raise the fares. I don't like stinky people on the bus.

Organizer: Jen Efting

Date: March 2nd, 2004

Location: Downtown Eastside Women's Centre WIT workshop

8.

Name: Sharon Oldham

Race: First Nations

Age: 53

It's hard for people in wheelchairs to get on the bus. They get stranded in the rain, get soaked. I've had a cold for 1 ½ weeks because I was wet in the rain. Umbrellas don't work after waiting for fifteen minutes. Sometimes I have to wait for the next bus but it is not accessible. I was attacked in Surrey. Used to work for "Surrey Taxation". On my way to work when it happened. I was shaking out of my chair. I was on the bus, I got off near Surrey Taxation. I was 2 feet away from the bus stop. This happened in 1991. It was in the morning. Also attacked in Coquitlam. I was near a police station in Ridgeway. Husband was with me at the time. I was told I couldn't use a spray gun. I was coming home from the bus stop. It was 2:45pm.

Organizer: Heather

Date: March 11th, 2004

Location: Coquitlam Women's Centre WIT workshop

9.

Name: Haisla Collins

Race: Aboriginal/Celtic

Age: 28

I spend \$189 on bus passes every month. I could use this money on food, bills. Things are already tight. Transit is a major expense.

Organizer: Heather

Date: March 5th, 2004

Location: #8



10.

Name: P R Bailey
Age: 23

Afternoon leave work, takes me 1 1/2 to get home (4:30 – 6pm). I take #3 and #4/#7. #4/7 unreliable. I need to give myself 1 hour to get to work and it's supposed to be a 20-minute ride. Buses aren't complemented to each other in terms of times. Take #3, and miss #4/7. Nerve (esp. in neck) gets triggered by electronics on trolley buses. I've had a migraine. If I'm going to a meeting (work) in the middle of the day, I can't rely on the bus. I have to get a co-worker to take time out to drive me.

Organizer: Heather
Date: March 19, 2004
Location: #8

11.

ANONYMOUS
(on 3-year work visa)

I work as a nurse in a hospital in the emergency room and I'm on call. If I get a call I have to take a taxi. I live on Main and work at St. Paul's. We only have 2 nurses at night so if there's an emergency they call us. It costs \$15 each way. If you claim it they reimburse you, but sometimes you don't want to, it's embarrassing. The hospital also complains about its budget and makes me feel guilty. When I work graveyards I leave really early to make sure I can get a bus.

Organizer: Beth
Date: March 19, 2004
Location: #3

12.

Name: Duyen Ngo
Age: 23
of children: 1

#8 hard for people with small kids because the buses don't lower. If you have 2 or more small kids it's very hard. Between 3:30 – 5:00 pm should have more buses. There aren't any kneeling buses on this route.

Organizer: Heather
Date: March 19, 2004
Location: #8



appendix two

13.

Name: Katherine Scrimshaw
Race: Caucasian
Age: 41
of children: 2

When travelling with small children, I don't have equal access to transit because I can't stand with small children and there often isn't seating available. If you require a stroller it's even more difficult, because some buses aren't kneeling buses.

*Organizer: Kirat
Date: March 19, 2004
Location: #3 Main*

14.

Name: Kulbir Dosanjh
Race: South Asian
Age: 48
of children: 2

I have to pay \$87 a month for a bus pass, it is too much to pay. I have to cross the water to take the seabus. Work in North Van.

We want this bus (#3), cos we need it to get to work and other places. Don't cut this bus...it hurts my heart. I'm getting old, can't walk 5 or more blocks to Cambie.

*Organizer: Kirat
Date: March 19, 2004
Location: #3 Main*

15.

ANONYMOUS

I work late in food service and usually get off at 1am. If I work late I have to call my sister to drive me home.

16.

Name: Kathryn Blue
Race: White
Age: 40
of children: 2

After moving to Vancouver from Vernon for work, I found my biggest expenses pertained to transportation. I drove then, so there was increased insurance and parking fees that I'm not used to.



Rent and food come first, so in my family's best interests I sold my car and now rely on public transit for commuting, shopping, school, visiting friends, etc. All 3 of us take transit, but I now find buying bus passes puts me right back to what my insurance costs were for my car (and that's just for one zone fare!). I really need a better break than the concession rates for my children (x2).

Also, our livelihood, my income, is dependent on my ability to reach various job sites. As a security guard, I can get called to work at any time to go almost anywhere in the Lower Mainland. When my scheduler (for my hours) calls, the very first thing I have to know, before I can accept work is, "can a bus get me there?"

Organizer: Beth

17.

Name: Graciela Viloso

I'm going to get a night shift job as an RCA and I need bus to get me home.

Relies on husband for a ride home at 1am because she does not wish to sleep in the hospital. Her husband must work the next day. Gas is expensive.

Organizer: Cam

Date: September 26, 2003

Location: #8

18.

Name: Ruth Pinder

Race: Caucasian

Age: 29

I used to work at the Bingo hall and get off at 1:30am. When I get off I'd have to take the cab. It'd cost me around \$18.00 – when you're making minimum wage – take a cab 5x a week. I couldn't take the bus cuz there weren't bus running. It also goes against drinking and driving. It's a waste of our money.

Organizer: Zailda

Date: March 19, 2004

Location: #19

19.

Name: May Zhang

Age: 30

I've waited for the bus #8 for 45 min – 1 hr. I couldn't pick up my daughter because the bus was late. This was around 5pm. I had to call my husband, who had to leave work early to get my daughter (5 yrs old), who was waiting for a long time.



appendix two

Organizer: Zailda
Date: March 19, 2004
Location: #19

20.

Name: Kate M. Johnson
Race: First Nations
Age: 50

I wait for ½ hr for the #25 – at night the run very slowly, and the #16. When we go to the doctor at hastings we have to wait 20-25 min – I thought they'd be frequent but they're not and they're crowded. I'm late for my appointments – even if I leave early.

Organizer: Zailda
Date: March 19, 2004
Location: #19

21.

Name: Daniela Noll
Age: 22

There are no late night buses from Downtown to Burnaby, especially on the weekends. Many people go out and have no possibility to get home. It especially affects women.

Organizer: Peter Marcus
Date: October 10, 2003
Location: Main St

22.

Name: Dana Virlan

I take the #17. I was late for an interview so I didn't get to do the interview. I was late for an exam. I wait a long time for the #17, so I leave an extra 20 min or 30 min before I need to be on time. Ofcourse it affects my day because I can't do. I got a job that started at 6am and I needed to get a bus at 4am, but there was no bus. I share a car with my husband.

Organizer: Beth
Date: January 28, 2004
Location: Pender, night leaflet



23.

Name: Leanne L.

I work at the casino at the end of the #8 bus line as a waitress. I work till 4am and even the night service has ended. I take a \$20 cab ride home, a quarter of my tips. I can't take certain shifts because I can't afford it.

Organizer: Beth

Date: February 13, 2004

Location: #8

24.

Name: Brig Anderson

Race: Caucasian

Age: senior

I hate waiting around in the dark for the bus, it's creepy. I wait at Pender and Abott, and there aren't a lot of buses at night. I wait 15-20 minutes. I'm the only one of my acquaintances who go out. I refuse that limitation, being inside 12 hours a day. Other cities have buses that you can flag down for seniors. For seniors and disabled people it should be a must. Why should you walk 3-6 blocks and then have them pass you by. The buses are always crowded in the West End, and it's stressful. I find it stressful when everyone is talking on their cell phones at the top of their voices. The buses are late on weekends. On Robson because all the rich kids have their cars out. And then 2 buses come together. I think they should spend less money on security and more on buses. What do they think we're all criminals? They did a test and 0.01% don't have tickets. Where's the evidence? P.S. Can we have accurate statistics i.e. do cheaters cost TransLink 10m per year, according to your bulletin? We read that less than one percent of skytrain riders cheat – certainly I rarely see anyone stopped. How about published evidence of the above?

I have a seniors bus pass and I think it's outrageous that they put my year of birth in such big numbers for everyone to see. In my generation, you don't ask a woman her age. They try to make me put my card in the box. I take it out and tell them I can't see and they have to put it in for me. Usually they apologise.

Organizer: Beth and Diane

Date: February 7, 2004

Location: World community film festival

25.

Name: Peggy Nolie

Race: First Nations

Age: 60

Walk 45 minutes to get home late at night (1:30am) after volunteering for Bingo. Sometimes they run late, so forced to walk home.



appendix two

Hard to get on and off buses with walker or shopping cart.

Organizer: Kirat

Date: February 13, 2004

Location: #8 downtown

26.

Name: Alexia Lakakos

Race: Greek

Age: 21

I take the bus a lot. If I don't buy a bus pass, I'm paying almost 10\$/day, hard for someone making minimum wage. I work in Gastown, there is no bus when I get off work at night around 4:30 am or 2:30 am. I have to walk 45 minutes to get home. Sometimes I don't have the 63\$ at the beginning of the month (for a bus pass)-its too much.

BRU organizer: Kirat

Date: April 9th 2004

Location: #3

27.

Name: Elizabeth P.

Race/Ethnicity: Asian

Age: 50

I live in the West End. In the morning I take the # 6. It's such a headache in the morning. Just yesterday the bus was full, it just passed me by. I was late for work. I'm a community health worker; I rely on the bus to get from client to client. It negatively impacts my clients (if I am late). They are elderly and they worry, they get upset.

BRU organizer: Heather

Date: April 9th 2004

Location: #3

28.

Name: Doris Jahn

Age: 70's

Main street and Cambie street should have B-lines, Kingsway also. I live in the West End. I visit my friend on 49th Ave. It takes me over 1 hour to get there!

BRU organizer: Heather

Date: April 9th 2004

Location: #19



29.

Name: Sherry Borgen

Race: Aboriginal

Age: 33

of children: 3 (ages: 17, 12 & 9 months)

I believe that drivers should be held accountable for their actions, this would reduce drivers from treating women and ethnic groups (whomever it is they dislike) in violation of our right to safe public transit.

Also, I've experienced financial difficulty As a result of being fired for non-payment of fare. I believe that there should be compassion shown for those who can prove that they do not the funds to pay.

Organizer: Kirat

Date: April 19th 2004

Location: Kiwassa WIT workshop

30.

Name: Sandy

Race: Chinese

Age: 30's

of children: 2

I have two kids and I want to get off the bus, if there's somebody slow in front I can't make it off in time. The driver should wait if he sees a mom with kids, so she has time to get off.

Organizer: Beth

Date: April 19th 2004

Location: Kiwassa WIT workshop

31.

Name: Persy Wang

Race: Chinese

Age: 33

of children: 1

Bus fares only have a 1 1/2 hour limit, so that limits me from doing outdoor activities with my baby. I would really appreciate it if there are lower fares for mom & baby or dad & baby (anyone with a baby).

In my experience, only 1/4 of the buses have the paddle for the stroller. I have to fold the stroller, take the baby off, bring it up and then put the baby back on.

Organizer: Kirat



appendix two

Date: April 19th 2004

Location: Kiwassa WIT workshop

32.

Name: Lilia Abelo

I have to start work at 10:30 but I have to leave early because the bus is late. But even though I leave early, I am still often late. I was at the bus by 9:30, two buses passed me by and I got on the bus at 10:10. I was on the bus and I wanted to get off at Howe street. I rang the bell and the driver ignored me. The driver said the bus didn't stop there anymore. I said drop me here because I have to walk 15 minutes to get to work at the hotel. I have to walk, I am not going to get a taxi. I am scared to walk downtown. I said: " why are doing this, because I'm Asian?"

Organizer: Jen

Date: April 19th 2004

Location: Kiwassa WIT workshop

33.

Name: Cindy Guo

Children: 1 (age: 11 months)

I go to private school in Burnaby, but I live in Vancouver. I have to pay two zones and I don't get a sticker for the zones because it's a private school. We are all students but only the public school students get the sticker. Why do we have pay extra?

When I'm going downtown I can take the # 108 or #16. If the buses come farther apart, I don't have to wait as long. I have a baby, and I don't take the bus because it's so hard to get the stroller on the trolley buses. I have to wait for my husband to take me. The buses like the # 135 (low rider buses) have wider doors and its easier to get on.

Organizer: Beth

Date: April 19th 2004

Location: Kiwassa WIT workshop

34.

ANONYMOUS

Age: 25

Children: 0

I work until 12:30 to 3:30 and I have to take a taxi home. I have a bus stop two blocks from my house, but no bus. I spend at least \$30-40/week on taxis, almost \$200/month. I've had a U-Pass so I haven't had to worry about fares. The thing I hate about spending money on taxis is that I'm heavily in debt and I feel like that money goes nowhere. If I could spend \$100, or more, a month on my debt, I'd be in a much better situation.



Organizer: Beth
Date: April 16th 2004
Location: # 3

35.

ANONYMOUS
Age: 22

I was attacked at 2nd and Wallas because bus service only went to Broadway and Alma. It was around 2:30 am in 2000. I had to walk home from the bus stop. This guy followed me off the bus, put his arm around me, grabbed me and tried to push me on the ground. I tackled him and I got away. If there were more buses running late at night, working class women would be safer. Guys do this- they use the transit system to follow women off buses.

BRU organizer: Heather
Date: April 16th 2004
Location: #3

36.

Name: Mandip
Race: South Asian
Age: 30's

I went to catch the bus at 5:30 am to go to work. The bus didn't come and the next bus didn't come until 5:50 am. I had to go home and ask my husband for a ride to work because I would have been late. If there were more service, every five minutes, I wouldn't have had that problem.

BRU organizer: Beth
Date: April 16th 2004
Location: #8

37.

ANONYMOUS
Race: South Asian
Age: 30's

We need more service on Saturdays and Sundays and in the morning time also. Most people work on Saturdays and Sundays, we pay taxes too. I wait for a long time, then I'm late for work. That causes big problems.

BRU organizer: Beth
Date: April 16th 2004
Location: #8



appendix two

38.

ANONYMOUS

Race: Aboriginal

It's mainly a safety issue. The bus drivers who are old, white men take off before people have had a chance to get off the bus. I've had drivers pass me by, an instance of racism. They pick up white women. I had a driver, after I showed him my fare, the driver stopped the bus and came to the back of the bus to argue with me three times. He was a white, old man. There's an Aboriginal education centre at 5th and Main, the bus driver said: "are you going to that Indian school?" He was a white, older man. I've been kicked off the bus for defending myself.

BRU organizer: Heather

Date: April 23rd 2004

Location: #3

39.

ANONYMOUS

Race: Asian

I catch the 99 UBC. It's always crowded, especially at peak hours. I get on at Main so the UBC 'specials' don't stop there. White, male bus drivers are rude to Chinese bus riders and elderly people. The drivers don't wait for people to sit down before driving.

BRU organizer: Heather

Date: April 28th 2004

Location: #3

40.

Name: Susan Jang

Age: 38

I do shift work and I sometimes take the bus after 9:30 am. The buses are not frequent at this time and I have to wait. Most people taking the bus do shift work. We should eliminate the zone structure. There is less service between 9:30 am and 3 pm. Buses during this time are off schedule. Three times out of five the #19 is behind schedule. Buses are always packed, wall-to-wall, at 9 p.m. There aren't that many buses. Saturdays and Sundays they have to add more buses on the #19. Schedules: you can wait anywhere from 10-30 minutes. They cut service along the #19 when the Millennium line came in. Service used to be every 3-5 minutes.

BRU organizer: Heather

Date: May 7th 2004

Location: #8



41.

ANONYMOUS

Race: Native

Age: 37

Children: 2

I have a family of 4. It costs 7\$ one way to use transit. Its expensive as it is to go out as a family (e.g visit to Stanley Park). It's a barrier to go shopping as well. So with the fare increase it will cost even more to go to the mall and back home. For a low-income family it's really expensive.

BRU organizer: Yang

Date: May 7th 2004

Location: #3

42.

Name: Carri Jump

Race: white

Age: 31

I was living on East 8th when they were doing the Grandview clear-cut They were doing cement work for months. I was choking on dust every day. Construction was 24 hrs. Neighbourhood did petitions. City and TransLink didn't care that people were choking on dust, didn't want to put up the extra cost. They wouldn't put up a net to keep the dust out. We didn't get compensation for anything (like a free bus pass etc.).

Transit systems all over the world are better than Vancouver. I would rather take bus in Mexico.

Buses don't come at night. Get off after a night shift, you're tired, and you have to wait for ½ hour or an hour. It's not safe for women.

This is the problem with privatization-excuse not to care about the public.

Also the #98 arrives one minute after the # 601 leaves (goes to Richmond Loop) so you miss the connection. You have to leave an hour early to be on time for work. End up waiting for 20 mins for # 601.

BRU organizer: Heather

Date: May 14th 2004

Location: #8

43.

Name: Karen Stanley

This happened a long time ago but it is still so outrageous that I will tell you now. It was probably around 1980, around when I was finishing high school. Riding home on the Kingsway bus, I was looking out the window on the left side, sitting about ½ way to the back of the bus. Up near Nanaimo, I didn't notice that the bus had emptied out as I was thinking. But you that feeling when



appendix two

someone is looking at you? I turned my head to the right and saw a man looking at me intently. Something was strange and another moment later it clicked in he was doing something in the front of his body. He was jerking off on the bus! I freaked out and ran up to the driver. I think I was screaming something like “stop the bus...get this guy off the bus...this guy is jerking off on the bus!” I was afraid. The driver was going fast, he looked at his watch and said: “I’m behind schedule.” He would not stop. The guy rang the bell and got off the bus. Okay, that felt like a relief. But the driver told me that I had to get off. It was only one stop away from the guy who’d exposed himself to me. The bus made short turn and I was standing waiting for another bus just past Kingsway, near Earls, and I saw the same guy walking up the hill towards the same bus stop I was at. Now I was afraid and alone, kind of. It was daytime though, thankfully. And the guy turned and walked away from Kingsway while I was in the phone booth calling a friend who wasn’t home anyway. After a while I calmed down and a bus came and I got home safely even though I was traumatised, and so shocked that the bus driver didn’t care enough to stop. What intense job pressure he must be under. Obviously this is still a disturbing memory

The Kingsway story is just one incident. What about the hundreds of times women standing at a bus stop have to endure johns sussing them out or other harassment. That was what happened to me many times too. For me one of the main problems has been the amount of time spent waiting for the buses. What if I billed TransLink for the amount of time I spend waiting? My time is valuable too. Sometimes I wait many times longer than the ride takes.

Date collected: April 24th 2004

Location: BRU Night Owl Buses Victory Celebration

44.

Name: Wendy Pederson

I am a low-income mom living in the DTES. In order to go out of the neighbourhood to buy groceries, I have to pay \$5 each way (\$2 for me and \$1.50 for each child). This is ridiculous...I could almost get a taxi and carry my groceries up from my front door for this rate. I think it’s shameful that children have to pay \$1.50 for each ride. That \$10 could buy me 8 litres of milk.

A friend of mine works at the Carnegie Centre and she said that 5 years ago, people used to drop off used transfers at the front desk to share with other low-income people. Now, she says, people can’t afford to take the bus and there are no more transfers there because the people who used to drop them off were sympathetic low-income people.

Keep up the good work

Date Received: October 31 2003

Sent by e-mail



45.

Name: Lisa
Race: Asian

Fares are too expensive. The #8 is unreliable, sometimes wait for 1/2 hour when I'm going to work in the morning around 5:30 am. We should have cheaper fares for women!
The bus is 15 mins late every morning. I am sometimes late for work. I don't have to work until 6:30 am but I have to catch the bus at 5:30 am. It would take me only 1/2 hour by car. The bus is more expensive than China, bus fare there is just \$1. The monthly pass in China is \$30. In Canada bus fare takes up a larger percent of salary. We also get a larger salary in China than in Canada.

BRU organizer: Heather
Date: March
Location: #8

46.

Name: Elizabeth Knight
Race: White
Age: 38
of Children: 1

I live at Fraser and 31st, I worked in Yaletown and my child attends school in the West End. In order to be on time for school every day at 8:30, my child has to leave the house at 7am and make at least one transfer. He is spending almost 3 hours a day in transit to make a round trip of less than 30 km. Often he spends 20 minutes merely waiting for the bus.
In order to work in Yaletown, I had to transfer multiple times. My one-way commute was over an hour door to door and frequently meant standing room only.
When I began cycling along 33rd to Cambie Street and taking the #15 bus, my travel time dropped to about 30 minutes.
My child and I barely saw each other during the time we relied on public transit. Translink's service has severely diminished the quality of our lives. I did not find it sustainable.

BRU organizer: Heather
Date collected: May 18th 2004
Location: #8

47.

Name: MacKayla
Race: Latina
Age: 20's
of children: 1 (8 month baby)

When I take the bus, the bus driver just closes the door in my face when I'm trying to get on. The driver moves too fast when I'm on the bus. The doors are too small, too narrow and it's hard to get



appendix two

the stroller out. A lot of bus drivers are good, nice.

Contact for future events: yes!!

BRU organizer: Heather

Date collected: May 18th 2004

Location: #8

48.

Name: Sabrina Wang

Race: Asian

Age: early 20's

of children: #4

Late at night, coming back from UBC, I have to take the 41 and transfer at Dunbar. It's creepy at night

BRU organizer: Heather

Date collected: May 18th 2004

Location: #8

49.

ANONYMOUS

Race: White

Age: 40's

The # 318 in Ladner stops running at 6:30 pm. It's imperative, it's the only way to get out there. After 6:30 pm, that's it. I needed this bus to visit my family. The cut service about a year ago (on this route), in the winter they really cut back.

BRU organizer: Heather

Date collected: May 18th 2004

Location: #8

50.

Name: Shabnam

Race: Iranian

Age: 24

Had a meeting at Harbour Centre related to my area of study. After we decided to go for dinner. After dinner buses passed were "not in service" and then only going to Kooteney loop (# 135). Then the bus riders were drunk. Me coming from an Islamic country, I am not sure if the men are coming on to me. After that I try to be home early at 11:30

Don't have family here so social activities are really important. Only thing I can get into in this



country and to improve English, the only way is to talk to people. Really important for success at school

BRU organizer: Martha

Date collected: May 27th 2004

Location: SFU Women's Centre, WIT Group

51.

Name: Shamina Vaikam

Race: South Asian

Age: 30's

The #129 Metrotown/Edmonds, I normally take this bus from Gilmore sky train station. I have to walk for a couple of minutes to the bus stop, its very possible to miss the bus. The bus only comes every ½ hour. The bus is not coordinated with the sky train. You have to wait in the dark and the rain. As a woman, I feel very insecure. It's a very desolated place, not much traffic.

I get off two stops after Gilmore. A lot of bushes where I get on and off the bus. There is not enough lighting, which is very scary. I stopped going to the community centre because transit is inconvenient and infrequent and in quiet neighbourhoods, this is scary.

BRU organizer: Heather

Date collected: May 27th 2004

Location: SFU Women's Centre, WIT Group

52.

ANONYMOUS

Race: Chinese

Age: 20s

I was working in Richmond and it took me 25 minutes by car and an hour and a half by bus, mostly because of the connections: I started riding my bike so that I could leave when I wanted, instead of waiting half an hour in the dark on the side of number 6 road.

BRU organizer: Beth

Date: July 2 2004

Location: #3

53.

Name: Ola

Race: Nigerian

Age: adult

of children: 3 boys



appendix two

When we first came to Canada, we had to take our children out everywhere. My baby is very big - about 15kg - he's very heavy. The stroller can't go on the bus. So I had to stay home, and my husband and I had no choice but to buy a car. It's very expensive, especially with the insurance and the gas. If the bus was working well, we wouldn't need to spend so much money on a car. It's hard to take 3 children on a bus. It's very clumsy. The drivers are usually impatient for us to get on/off the bus. To stand at the bus station with kids, for 30 minutes, they can get frantic.

BRU Organizer: Kirat

Date: June 12, 2004

Location: Eastburn WIT workshop

54.

Name: Kesiena Akpofure

Race: African

Age: 21

We waited for 35 minutes. Line-up was very long. By the time we got there he said he was sick. So we had to wait for another 35 minutes. But by then the line up was even longer so not everyone could get on.

The buses don't come often at New West Skytrain. And the bus schedules don't posted. I don't want to wait downstairs because the drivers treat me like a prostitute and if I go upstairs, I'll miss my bus.

BRU Organizer: Zailda

Date: June 12, 2004

Location: Eastburn

55.

Name: Veronique Mullungie

I was right there in front of the bus, and it went right by like it didn't see us. Then on the same trip I missed another bus coming out of the SkyTrain. Another time I didn't have the add fare and he swore at me. A bus driver refused to drop me after peak hours with my children when I needed to get off between stops. The drivers ask me to take my sleeping daughter out of the stroller.

BRU Organizer: Beth

Location: Eastburn

56.

ANONYMOUS

Race: Cantonese

Age: senior

(Translated from Cantonese to English.)



I take the bus to North Vancouver. I have to pay \$1.50 and an extra \$0.50 for zone change. And if I pass my 1.5 hours I need to pay it again. So I'll have to pay \$6 a day for going out. The time used to be 3 hours but I have to wait for longer and pay more. Before \$100 could get you a lot but now \$50 doesn't get you anything anymore. I know you're doing this [organizing] for our people.

BRU Organizer: Zailda

Date: June 11, 2004

Location: #3

57.

ANONYMOUS

Race: White

Age: senior

Take #3 regularly. These buses are so dirty. My kids hate to take the bus so they don't take it. This bus is so crowded. I feel unsafe with "certain" people.

BRU Organizer: Zailda

Date: June 11, 2004

Location: #3

58.

ANONYMOUS

Race: Filipino

of kids: 3

When the fares go up, I have 2 young daughters, and that will be 20cents extra every time. I cannot leave my kids at home; I have to take them with me every time I go to get groceries, etc. It's also not good for my kids if I tell my daughters that they can't go anywhere because I can't afford to pay the bus fare.

BRU Organizer: Kirat

Date: June 11, 2004

Location: #8

59.

Name: Shabana Chagani

Race: East Indian

Age: 24

of children: 1

My son is diabetic and I was taking him to children's hospital. During the bus ride his condition got serious and I asked the driver to stop and call an ambulance. He would not call an ambulance and kept telling my son to shut up because he was breathing really loud. He did let us off the bus and he



appendix two

had not called an ambulance, he said “it is not my responsibility”.

BRU Organizer: Jen

Date: June 14, 2004

Location: YWCA Semlin workshop

60.

Name: Lori

Race: White

Age: 29

I had a specialist appointment, I was coming from E. 47th and Main and going to Langley. It took 2.5 hours to get there. I had an 11am appointment and I left at 9, so I was 1/2 hour late so I missed 1/2 my appointment so I was really pissed off. I had to pay \$4 each way for service that got me 1/2 my appointment and the transfer almost ran out on the way there before I caught my last bus.

BRU Organizer: Jen

Date: June

Location: OTB

61.

Name: Yanira Perez

Race: Latin

Age: 29

I work at a call centre downtown, get off work at 4am, has to wait 1hour and 20 minutes for first bus in the morning. Expensive to buy a bus pass and then can't use it when I need a bus.

BRU Organizer: Aiyanas

Date: June 25, 2004

Location: Fraser

62.

Name: Alma

Race: Mexico

Age: 32

I am a foreign student from Mexico. The fares are hard for us to afford. I had to move from Vancouver to Burnaby because the 2-zone fare was too expensive.

BRU Organizer: Jen

Date: June 25, 2004

Location: #3



63.

Name: Konica Bhattacharjee
Race: Indian/South Asian (Bangladeshi)
Age: 17

Me and my dad went to a party in Surrey. After the party, we didn't have a car and had to take the bus. We thought the bus stop would be close by - it was about 2 blocks away. We didn't know what bus went by - we thought we'd just take whatever bus came to get out of the suburb. We waited for an hour - then I noticed a sign on top of the bus stop saying that the bus only ran till 5pm. Then we had no choice and we had to hitchhike home. Everything was closed - it was late and it's the suburbs. So we had to find someone; they were really reluctant, but in the end they helped us. You feel threatened, cos you don't wanna go into someone's car. But you're stuck and you have to get home.

BRU Organizer: Kirat
Date: May 31, 2004
Location: VanTech WIT workshop

64.

Name: Cassandra Wong
Race: Chinese
Age: 17

The buses were running late so I was late for my interview. It was really stressful and I felt really nervous about the interview because I felt bad. I waited for 45 minutes and I was 1/2 hour late. Took 15 minutes to get there once bus came. It was a weekend so buses come less.

65.

Name: Leila Barcia
Race: Filipino
Age: 17

I was going out with 4 friends. 3 out of 4 of us didn't have Go cards. One because we didn't receive it. They gave us tickets (fines). No one was there because the office (head office) was closed. We went there to cancel our tickets. It was awkward. The person who didn't get their Go card was upset. The issue with Go cards is basically at Skytrains - with Skycops.

BRU Organizer: Zailda
Date: May 31st, 2004
Location: VanTech



appendix two

66.

ANONYMOUS

Race: South Asian

Age: 30s/40s

The #8 is always breaking down, late. In the afternoon, have to wait 1/2 hour, 45 minutes. The three come at once. At Granville and Pender, takes a short-cut and miss other bus stops. Leave people waiting. There should be more buses!

BRU Organizer: Heather

Date: June 25, 2004

Location: #8

67.

ANONYMOUS

Race: Filipino

Age: 48

I start work at 4am on weekends, but because there are no buses on the road that early I take the cab, which costs \$5 a ride. Although I work close to home, it's unsafe to walk so early because it's still dark. Buses should run earlier.

BRU organizer: Yuly

Date: 23 July 2004

Location: #3 Main

68.

ANONYMOUS

The buses don't run late. I had to walk in the cold rain until the buses started running again. Dangerous for women as they are killed at night. Last bus drove by me.

Organizer: Kirat

Date: March 12, 2004

Location: #8 Downtown

69.

Name: Sanjeeda Nasreen

Race: South Asian

Age: 27

I don't get buses especially on Saturday and Sunday mornings at around 6:30am. Most of the time on those days I have to take the taxi and spend extra money while I'm carrying my bus pass.



Organizer: Kirat
Date: March 12, 2004
Location: #8 Fraser

70.

ANONYMOUS

I need more frequent service for the #49, 41st Ave. Weekend early morning service. My husband has to drop me off at Oak and King Edward out of my way takes a long time. There's not service before 7am but I have to be at work by 7am at UBC.

Organizer: Heather
March 12th, 2004
Location #3 Main

71.

Name: Brett Hughes
Race: Caucasian
Age: 17
Gender: Transgender

I experience physical and verbal violence on the bus every day, twice a day. I'm sick of dealing with it. People throw things at me. I waited for 45 minutes for the Arbutus bus (#16)-worst bus. The #14 takes forever and isn't an alternative.

Coming home late at night, after 11 p.m., I was mugged at Broadway & Arbutus. I waited for the bus there for 1/2 hour. If the bus had come on time, the mugging wouldn't have happened. My girlfriend won't take the bus out of fear. The SkyTrain cops are useless, they don't do anything to address intimidation I face.

Organizer: Heather
Date: February 27th, 2004
Location: #8

72.

ANONYMOUS

One night I had to walk 3 hours from the PNE to my dad's house on the Musqueam reserve. I wasn't afraid, because my cousin was with me, but it was a long walk.

Organizer: Martha
Date: March 12th, 2004
Location: #3



appendix three

Appendix Three: Recommended Reading

The Women in Transit team collectively discussed the following readings during our literature review sessions over the course of the project. These readings shaped our understandings of our experiences as working class women living in the GVRD. We recommend them to others who are interested in learning more about the issues brought up in *Women in Transit: Organizing for Social Justice in Our Communities*.

Anderson, Joan. "Gender Inclusive Nation: The Gendering and Racializing of the Canadian Health Care System" in V. Strong-Boag, S. Grace, Eisenberg, A. & J. Anderson (Eds) *Painting the Maple: Essays on Race, Gender and the Construction of Canada*. Vancouver: UBC Press, 1998.

Anderson, Kay. Vancouver's Chinatown: Racial Discourse in Canada 1875-1980. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1991.

Chomsky, Noam. "Interview" in the Prosperous Few and the Restless Many. California: Odonian Press, 1993.

Doyal, Leslie. "Gender Equity in Health: Debates and Dilemmas". Social Science and Medicine 51 (2000): 931- 939

Dua, Enakshi & Angela Robertson (Eds). Scratching the Surface: Canadian anti-racist Feminist Thought. Toronto: Women's Press, 1999.

Giri, Nilima Mandal. "South Asian Women Physicians' Working Experiences in Canada", in Canadian Women's Studies: Women and Work 18 (1998): 61-64.

Griffin, Harold. Radical Roots: The Shaping of British Columbia. Vancouver: The Commonwealth Fund, 1999.

Group on Economic Affairs Conference. Women in the City: Housing, Services and Urban Environment. Paris: Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, 1995.

James, Selma. Sex, Race and Working Class Power. Bristol: Falling Wall Press, 1975.

Lyons, Gracie. Constructive Criticism: A Handbook. California: Issues in Radical Therapy Collective, 1976.

Mann, Eric. Building the Anti-Racist, Anti-Imperialist United Front: Theory and Practice from the L.A. Strategy Centre and Bus Riders Union. Labor/Community Strategy Center. No Date. <http://www.thestrategycenter.org/AhoraNow/souls.html>



appendix three

Meadows, L, Thurston W.E. & Melton, C. "Immigrant Women's Health". *Social Sciences and Medicine* 52 (2001): 1451- 1548.

Novac, Sylvia. "Immigrant Enclaves and Residential Segregation: Voices of Racialized Refugee and Immigrant Women". *Canadian Women's Studies* (Fall 1999).

Oxman-Martinez, J. Abdool S.N. & Loiselle-Leonard. "Immigration, Women and Health in Canada." *Canadian Journal of Public Health* 91 (2001): 394-395.

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Program Demand Group. *Towards a Program of Resistance*. Los Angeles: AhoraNow, 2002.

Veltmeyer, Henry. *The Canadian Class Structure*. Toronto, Ontario: Garamond Press, 1986.

Wedsdale, Neil. *Policing the Poor: From Slave Plantation to Public Housing*. Boston: Northeastern UP, 2001.

Willard, Tania. "Red Flags, Red Skin". *Our Times Magazine*. April 2002- November 2003.



appendix four

Appendix Four: WIT Team Biographies

Zailda Chan

Born in Venezuela, Zailda moved to Canada with her family at the age of 13. She began her political organizing through the Latin America Solidarity Action Group (LA4Activists) at the Simon Fraser Public Interest Research Group, where she was also a long-time board member. She has also worked with Building Bridges, helping to train human rights observers in Zapatista communities in Mexico.



Zailda & Kinat in the BRU office

She plans to continue learning from Third World movements, in particular Latin American movements by going back to Venezuela and take part in the changes happening there. She would like to take what she learns and return to Vancouver to continue building the movement in the North. Zailda draws her political inspiration from the power and potential of people to challenge and change ourselves, our thinking and world.

Jennifer Efting

Jennifer has been organizing with the Bus Riders Union for four years. In addition to organizing with the BRU, Jennifer currently works with the Vancouver Area Network of Drug Users (VANDU). She has also worked in the student movement with the Simon Fraser Student Society and the anti-imperialist women's movement with Grassroots Women. Her experience as a non-union worker in the service industry solidified her dedication to achieving genuine liberation for working class people, particularly women and people of colour.

Jennifer plans on continuing her work with the Bus Riders Union, and hopes to work with other BRU organizers to develop a Social Justice Strategy Centre to facilitate grassroots leadership development and international solidarity. Her commitment to political organizing is inspired by the ability of people's movements to continue struggling in the face of repression, violence & ongoing exploitation.

Beth Grayer

Born and raised in Vancouver, Beth has been organizing with the Bus Riders Union for four years. She has worked in the anti-imperialist women's movement and done international solidarity work with Latin America and the Philippines.

Through the WIT project, Beth is inspired by the model of sharing and analysing our experiences and

organizing resistance that places working class women's needs and vision at the centre of the our movement. Beth plans to continue to build a local and international grassroots movement for social change and work with other organizers in the BRU to build a Strategy Center for Social Justice as a part of the struggle to build a vibrant international anti-imperialist movement.

Heather Jones

Heather is a committed anti-war social justice activist with experience working with StopWar.ca (the Vancouver-based anti-war coalition) and the International Solidarity Movement (ISM) Vancouver. She is also a literacy tutor for elementary and high school students as part of her commitment to social justice. In addition to her work with WIT Heather is currently working to organize a convergence, initiated by the Secwepemc people, to prevent the expansion of Sun Peaks ski resort (Delta Hotel) on Secwepemc territory.



Beth & Heather in the BRU Office

In the future, Heather hopes to travel to Occupied Palestine as an “international” to support the popular resistance, and come back to Canada to apply lessons learned in Palestine to the local context. She is inspired by working with a community of passionate organizers who are deeply committed to building the revolution for social justice. She has hope that we can create a world where communities determine their own destinies and where common humanity guarantees that we can all drink clean water, eat healthy foods and have a roof over our heads and have enough time to learn to play the banjo.

Kirat Kaur

Born in Singapore, Kirat has worked with a myriad of different women's organizations and other social justice organizations that address issues such as environmental justice, rape crisis support, women's health and support to struggle in South Asia. As well as her work with the Bus Riders Union and the WIT team, she also sits on the board of the South Asian Network for Secularism and Democracy (SANSAD) and is a founding member of the South Asian Youth Alliance. Her participation in WIT and the broad social justice struggle compel her to constantly examine the intersecting forces of race, gender and class that impact our lives. She draws inspiration from women's struggles all people's struggles for liberation.



Heather, Kirat & Zaila



appendix four

Martha Roberts

Martha is a veteran of Vancouver community organizing, having over ten years of involvement in international solidarity, anti-poverty and women's struggles. She worked for seven years at La Quena supporting liberation and revolutionary movements in Latin America. As a single mom she developed her community organizing skills in anti-poverty and women's health activism. She is now the mother of two children (age 3 and 8) and is a student Midwife with the UBC Midwifery Program.

Martha continues to struggle for women's liberation and genuine women's health. Through the development of a radical alliance of health care providers and a 'People's Health Centre' for the advancement of people's health, Martha envisions health work as critical to the broader movement for social justice. The worldwide militant and passionate grassroots leadership of women inspires Martha to further collective theory and practice of concrete campaigns to advance women's rights as a vital contribution to the international movement against imperialism.



the whole WIT crew!

From left: Martha, Heather, Beth, Kirat, Diane, Jen, Zaida

