Down, but not out

Abandoned woman bounces back to Ph.D.

In 1958 Wilma Garcia and her husband were living in Ferndale and raising eight youngsters on his
\$12,000-a-year income-from Consumers Power Co.
But by the next year, the celling had caved in on
her and the young brood. That was when her hushand abandoned the family, leaving her with the
stark realization that "as a woman with just a high
school diploma, there was nothing I could do to
make \$12,000 a year, not even prostitution."
Abandaned but not dejected, Garcia applied for
public assistance and set out to get a college education to improve her earning potenty." She said,
tooking back. "And I learned that the hard way."

GARCIA TODAY now signs professional docu-ments "Dr. Garcia" as a result of the doctorate in literature she carned last year from Wayne State University. She not only received that first degree, an associ-

She not only received that first degree, an associates, with help from government loans and partisme work, but she went on to earn bachelor and master degrees, as well.

Last Friday, Garcia testlfied before the state Senet Appropriations Committee, visiting in Royal Cak, on the state of public assistance recipients and the crisis that faces welfare funding today.

Bestdes Garcia, the panel, headed by state Repaid Hollyte, Delansing, also heard from other women's groups, welfare recipients and operators of overburdened private agencies that are desperately trying to pick up where government is leaving off.

Attorney General will speak at Ridge

Attorney General Frank Kelley will deliver a talk on "Consumer Protection" at the Smith Performing Arts Theater on the Orchard Ridge campus of Oak-land Community College at 9:30 a.m. Tuesday, March 18.

March 18.
The campus is on Orchard Lake Road south of I895 in Farmington Hills.
Michigan's attornog a consumer protection promon promoting cell rights and civil liberties and
working for controlling errine and drug abuse. He
has supported the Michigan Open Meeting and Freedom of Information acts.
His appearance is part of the college's distinguished speaker series.

Gage speaks to club

Oakland Circuit Judge Hilda Gage will be speaker when the Birmingham Republican Women's Club meets at 11:30 a.m. Tuesday, March 1d, in the Birmingham Community House.
Gage recently was elected to the Michigan Judicial Tenure Commission.
Reservations for the 47 Juncheon may be called to Margaret O'Brien at 644-8728.

'As a woman with just a high school diploma, there was nothing I could do to make \$12,000 a year, not even prostitution.'

- Wilma Garcia

"TT'S GETTING worse all the time," she said that afternoon. "The public is under a false perception that things are getting better. A columnist in the Free Press last week said that according to a university study we have a social phenomenon now that people are poor by choice.

"I suppose the people saying this are the same people was 02 years ago said women were more stupid than men because they had smaller brains, or 30 years ago said that blacks were more stupid than whites because of genetic makeup.

"Now we've got the same clowns saying people are poor by choice."

If Garcia seems angry, it's because of frustration.

"This conjures up the image of a mythical ADC mother who wants nothing more than to sit home and churn out bables for profit. Now, I was there, and I never met her. And literally, I met hundreds of ADC mothers."

Still living in Ferndale, but now an instructor at

ADC mothers."

Still living in Ferndale, but now an instructor at Rochester's Oakland University, Garcia is frequenty asked to speak to civic and government groups about her experiences, as well as to education groups about her expertise in literature.

HER DISSERTATION, "Mothers and Others: Myths of the Female in the Works of Melville, Twain and Hemingway," has been published, She is active in writing circles and has served as a director of the Oakland-Macomb Writing Project and her

of the Oakland-Macomb Writing Project and her university's developmental writing program. She has been invited to participate in college-sponsored workshops on career planning and displaced homemakers. She has served as a resource person for a support group of welfare recipients based in Royal Oak. But on this particular day, Garcia turned her wide range of interests to one topic: welfare funding. Speaking from become supportences, she said moving from social dependency to social contribution was so hard, but it now becomes impossible when you see the cuts being made.

WIEN SIER first sought welfare support, her

you see the cuts being made.

WHEN SHE Itrs sought welfare aupport, her children's ages ranged from 4 years to 17 and so they were able to take care of each other, 'ste said. Finding part-time work, first in a neighbor's supply store and then in a shoe store, she was not penalized by the government with reductions in food stamps. But government will be able to the season of the supply store and then in a shoe store, she was not penalized spricter for today's recipients, she said.

Garcia spoke saidly about one young and frustrated Dotroit-rea woman whose story was related to the senate committee. The young woman was attending Oakhand Community College on a college grant, but could not afford transportation costs and therefore walked more than three miles to attend class at the Royal Oak compus.

was learned that she was receiving \$150 to attend school, her food stamp contributions were cut. She later took her own life.

"THESE ARE are the people that are suppose to disappear," Garcia asked.
She also disputes Rengan Administration claims that the private sector can pick up where government funding leaves off.
She cited the case of a program for pregnant teens in Pontiac, where it's estimated 400 girts are referred annually, It operates partly on government assistance and partly on "bake sales and garage sales.

assistance and partly on "bake sales and garage sales.

"They're counseling 20 girls at a time and if they get cut, they'll have to close."

A graduate of Oakland Community College, where she carned an associate's degree, Garcia recently was nominated for an "outstanding community college alumnus" noner awarded by the Michighan Community College Association. Sie is one of it some cost, affinal selection will be made later this month.

Fishing clubs meet

The economic impact of sport fishing will be the topic when the Southeastern Michigan Fishing Clubs meet at 7 p.m. Tuesday, March 18, in the Waterford Community Center, M-59 at Crescent Lake Road. Doug Jester, program services manager of the isheries division of the state Department of Natural Resources, and Ed Mahoney of Michigan State University are scheduled speakers.

Trout management and bass conditions also with each telephone of the Control of t



The Bechstein is the only one on which I can xpress all I fee!" JOSEF HOFMANN Birmingham - 647-1177 - Detroit - 875-7100



Hearing set on busing funds

The State Board of Education will hold a public hearing at 10 am, because you have been seen to be supposed by the state of the state o weenessay, march 19, to use us prosed changes in the way the state offers transportation funding to local school districts.

It will be in the Wayne Intermediate School District "Discussatorium"

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