

# WHERE IS FEMINISM?

Volume 2, Number 1

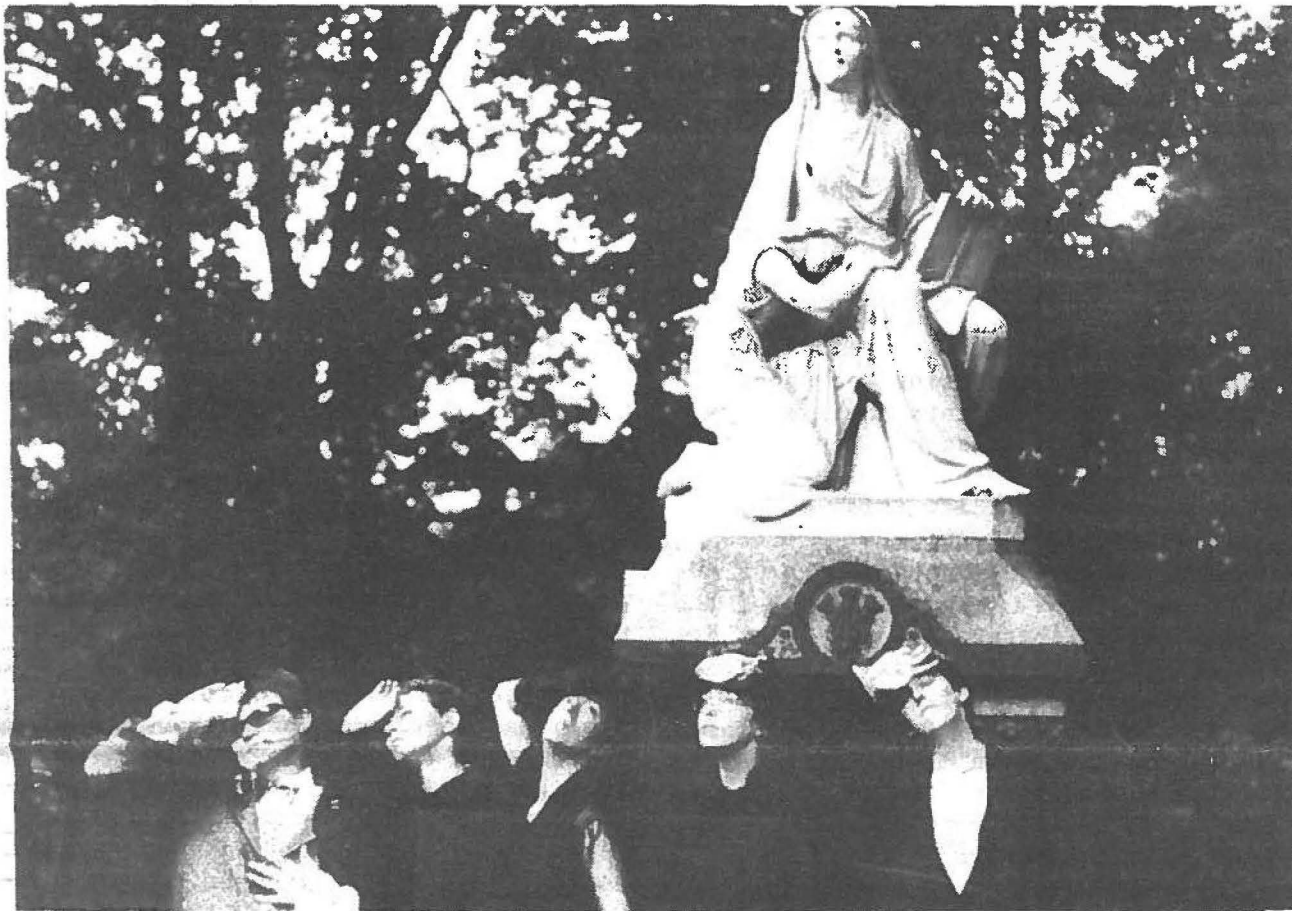
September 17, 1985

## OtherWise

*A Feminist Newspaper at U of T*



Margaret Cooper  
ReMembered  
Page 8



Several members of the OtherWise collective become faint in a Toronto graveyard as reports from the mainstream media allege that feminism is dying out. Is feminism really dead? Exclusive story on page 3.

### *A Women's Centre (Finally) Realised*

by Darya Farha

After a lengthy campaign, the Coalition for a Women's Centre (CWC) is finally realizing its goal. Lois Reimer, Status of Women Officer at the U of T, confirmed that the administration has agreed to provide a space for a women's centre.

The Women's Centre will be on the third floor of the Koffler Student Services Centre, but the space is not expected to be ready until January 1986. Assistant Vice-President of Student Affairs Eric McKee will accommodate the centre in a currently unpartitioned and unfinished area that will be shared with the Varsity, U of T Radio, and Downtown Legal Aid. The design of the space is still incomplete.

The Koffler Centre, located at the corner of College and St. George streets, is the former Toronto Central Reference Library. The building was intended to bring student services together under one roof, and has been extensively renovated to suit its new function. The principal services, such as the Bookroom, Career Centre, and Health and Housing services have already moved in.

Paula Rochman, a spokesperson for the CWC, has estimated that the Women's Centre will require an annual budget of approximately \$15,000. This figure includes payment of one part-time worker, who will become full-time when the money is available. While funding will have to come from a number of sources, SAC is expected to be a major contributor. Despite last year's controversy over the CWC's insistence that the Centre be directed by an all-woman's collective, Rochman is "optimistic" that the SAC board will approve the funding. Ashley Newman, the

Continued on page 8

### *The Attempt to Divest*

by Kate Lazier

In South Africa, Blacks cannot vote or organize politically. 87% of the land is reserved for a white minority that makes up 16% of the population. Blacks, who make up 73% of the population, are forced to live in the remaining 13% of the land. The average income of whites in South Africa is twelve times that of Africans. These are but a few of the injustices that Blacks suffer under the rule of apartheid.

Apartheid is racist, and no one in the University community contests this.

But a debate is raging in the halls of the Governing Council at the U of T about how the University should act in response to this racism.

Two years ago a group of people concerned about the U of T's complicity in the racist policies of the apartheid government in South Africa formed the U of T Divestment Committee (UTDC). The UTDC saw pressuring U of T to divest of its holdings in the banks which loan to South Africa and in the companies with investments in South Africa "as a way of raising consciousness about the issues

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## MORE OTHERWISE

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Abroad*

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Feminist Vision*

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## From The Collective

There is no question that we, as women, are treated unfairly within the structure of the university; sexual harassment, course content which effectively erases and denies our past and present, misogynist professors, and cutbacks in the women's studies programme are just a few examples of the struggles we encounter. We are just now opening a women's centre and Trinity College men still get the sheets of their beds changed for them. Although women have made progress - we're here and we do make up significant proportions in fields of study that have traditionally been male - there is much room for improvement. We feel, however that it is important to go beyond addressing and redressing the wrongs done to women in what has always been a solidly patriarchal institution. We need to locate our struggles in a society which is not only sexist, but classist, homophobic and racist as well. We must examine how the perpetuation of a university educated elite can be damaging to our feminist ideals, along with how class privilege gets perpetuated in the selection process of who gets into university anyway. Astronomical tuition fees, OSAP cutbacks, the channelling of certain "types" of people into "appropriate" areas of "higher" education, and the selling of desirable lifestyles which feed directly into maintaining the status quo, all clearly illustrate that possibilities and probabilities are very different things.

How does that affect us as university feminists in a so called privileged position? We have time to study and discuss these questions and some of us, upon graduation, can aspire (maybe) to better paying jobs. In other words, we are privileged. Yet by glorifying "higher" education do we not fall into the trap of denying the validity of different and equally valuable ways of learning? Before we label our state as privileged and another as oppressed,

should we not be aware of condescension that sometimes comes from setting up these opposites.

The challenge that exists for feminists at this time, is to develop a complex body of theory that takes into account the realities of multiple oppressions in our world. It is important to break away from the most common conclusions about the struggles of women, and by seeing female realities in terms not only of gender, but of race, class, geography, and so on. It is not enough that only some women should acquire, like men, the privilege of freedom while our sisters elsewhere remain in bondage.

Feminism in North America has been accused of coming from a white middle class perspective. This danger is very real when issues of race and class are put on the back burner in order to address what some feminists and the mainstream media see as the primary concerns of feminism. Kathleen Barry, for example, an American feminist, author of *Female Sexual Slavery*, and whose overriding concern is the elimination of violence against women, feels that women who bring perspectives of race and class into their analysis may retard the progress of "our" cause since they are diluting the force of feminism as she sees it. This "our" can never include all of us; what it does is set up still more divisions among us. We are left, for example, with the superficially liberated woman who has made it through university and into an executive position, but who still talks down to her (probably) female secretary.

Feminism has to be more than a matter of getting women into the work force. Economic equality without social equality is not enough. Do all of us really want inclusion in an economic and social system that perpetuates inequality by its very nature? Feminism has to be more than wanting to fit equally into the existing order; yet unfortunately this view is the only one that is given substantial mainstream coverage. It involves more than freeing ourselves as individuals from the internal and external chains of patriarchal domination.

becomes the challenge of how to bear on the way we live. While the struggle of women in South Africa stands as a testament to the power of revolution, enough for us, as Canadians, to see the racism of apartheid without having to heal the racism that exists on our own streets. For example

connections can be made between Canadian native reservations and the South African homelands. As women we can use the pain of our own struggle to link ourselves to, and to understand, the experiences of other peoples in search of liberation.

In this way, we see feminism as a social justice movement, one which focusses on women, but one which also acknowledges the links between the -isms: sexism, militarism, racism, classism, heterosexism, capitalism, imperialism. We reject the idea that any one form of oppression is primary. Because sexism exists cross culturally and across class lines does not make it the most important oppression. Depending on our colour, the class we were raised in, and other life experiences, some of us may have come to an awareness of one form of oppression before we came to others. We can learn to challenge ourselves on a personal level by trying not to use our own immediate perspective which excludes the realities of others. In the same way that we have had to look at our previous assumptions in the process of becoming feminist, we can repeat this process using other struggles to expand our thoughts. We feel that we cannot speak about freedom for women without necessarily speaking about freedom for all people - in South Africa, in Chile, in Nicaragua, in Afghanistan, and in our own country. No woman can be truly free when other women, perhaps free from sex oppression, are still oppressed by poverty, for being lesbian or for having skin of a colour different from the majority. The well worn myth, that feminism is really about hating men, shatters when our analyses (and practice) strive to integrate an understanding of all forms of oppression in order to expand and enrich our own vision.

## We Are OtherWise

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## From Our Readers

Dear OtherWise,

It's been great keeping up with feminist life in Toronto, thanks to receiving *OtherWise*. Great stuff! I hope it continues to be as much fun for you to work on, as it has been for me to read.

While in T.O. for International Women's Day, I asked Kate about the use of front-page leaders such as "Philips on The Bookstore Decision" and "Teskey On Male Fantasy". It's a small point but I was surprised that you choose to identify your writers with surnames (sic), i.e. in terms of patriarchal lineage. Kate and I laughed about the tough sound of such introductions, sound that smacks of "hard-nosed (macho) journalism". And we all know the (mis-)representation women have gotten from such reporters. As I say, a small point.

Also, I want to respond to Maureen's article about the Bookstore's position re: lesbian S/M publications. I've

spoken to quite a few sexual abuse therapists, incest survivors, and women battered as children, about S/M. My interest was sparked by the discussions at last summer's Michigan Womyn's Music Festival, at which I felt very "liberal" about the phenomenon. This changed after talking with these feminist counsellors, survivors, and former S/M dykes: all commented on the correlation between sexual abuse or battery as a child with later involvement in sadomasochism. This form of sexual expression seems to be an acting out of the most violent manifestations of our oppression. I'm really glad that it's coming "out of the closet" and women are talking about it. But to celebrate it is to celebrate that unequal power relationship that has hurt us all so deeply. I'm no longer "liberal", and support the Bookstore's decision.

Shawna Demsey,  
 Cantley, Québec



# Thousands witness "miracle" "Dead" Movement Rises From Grave To Rescue Drowning Society

by Ingrid MacDonald

Because OtherWise didn't publish during the summer break, I noticed that the mainstream media, intending to fill the gap in the kind of news of interest to political women, tried their hand at feminist reportage. Now there's no doubt that they're new at this, so I attempted to stay coolly non-judgmental as I read the news that just wasn't quite right.

Take the Toronto Sun for example; a headline in their paper (July 28, 85) reads, "Femlib May Soon Die Of Old Age." To set the record straight right off the top, nobody, but nobody, in this movement calls it "femlib". In the old days it used to be the women's liberation movement, and around the time that disco succeeded folk as a popular art form, it became the feminist movement. Changing the name has its own implications (some would argue that feminism is a less inclusive, more qualified movement, less democratic and less radical). It has never been the combination word, that curious compound noun intended to ridicule the movement, "femlib". And whatever that noun refers to, I had no idea that it was atrophying at such an accelerated pace. While the Sun's columnist should get half points for departing from standard techniques of declaring the movement dead upon arrival, it is not flattery of which she is speaking.

Another variation on the "feminism is dead" motif would be the excruciating title of a Toronto Life selection; "Why Has Feminism Gone Out Of Fashion". It could be, because I am young and I wasn't there for the bra burnings, that I misunderstood: I had never realized that feminism was ever in fashion in the first place!

## A Humorous Consideration of Mainstream Prophecies

None the less people in the know in Toronto are hastening the social death of a movement, so young, such a waste, on the grounds that it is no longer suitable lunchtime conversation when dining on Queen Street.

The introduction to four articles, written by respected and well known female journalists, posits a flimsy anecdote of a woman allegedly crunching upon a crouton as she is reminded of feminism. She defeats it with an effete "Oh that", like a cartoon character in a strip by Mimi Pond being reminded that she once dated King Kong, "Oh him" she might say. The fictitious lady, an editor's contrivance intended to capture our interest and invite our gall and to do nothing else, then pronounces a sentence upon feminism declaring it "passe".

The third media nightmare report came from a not so surprising source, one of those global newsprint tabloids, the kind they sell at the grocery store checkout counter. The head was roughly "Hubby Cuts Off Wife's Earlobes Because She's A Libber". The story alleges that a woman, while staying at home raising a young child, became exposed to feminism through television. She then joined a group and atten-

ded marches. The husband, in a fury that she wasn't acting as a proper mother seized her one night and cut off her earlobes, because, he reasoned, a libber doesn't need to wear earrings. He was arrested, but the next day his wife allegedly dropped the charges. She's happy about it too. This source reports that having discovered the error of her ways she now brings new enthusiasm to her career as housekeeper and mother. They also report that she wears kerchiefs to hide her unsightly ears. Such a "news" story must find its place amongst nineteenth century moral tales since both encourage physical punishment as the just retribution for disobedience.

This is not to suggest that I am surprised that mainstream and right wing presses have an interest in disgracing, and therefore discrediting the feminist movement. It is to say however that no matter how ludicrous, malicious and antagonistic the reporting is ---and even in circumstances when the facts are misconstrued --- an impact is still made upon the reader.

To get a sense of the velocity of some attacks, here's a quote from a column by Barbara Amiel. Speaking of the Nairobi conference this past summer she says: "It does no harm, one supposes, for all these looney women to meet in Nairobi and screech at one another and then have little weeps when they sing updated anti-war songs...It came and it went. Goosed up by the Marxist-Leninists, femlib attracted females of all political persuasions except common sense." She also describes Betty Friedan as "horribly ugly."

So there it is in a nut-

shell; weeping, ugliness, foolishness, the threat of communism, irrationality, screeching, in short many fearfully despicable social elements brought together in a most unfeminine way. The way Amiel tells it, it sounds more like a Bacchanalean orgy than a credible international conference.

Linda Briskin, a women's studies professor at a community college, notes that the impact of deceitful media representations is found in the self-images of the women she teaches. "Not surprisingly" says Briskin, "the students I teach have internalized, in a usually thoroughly uncritical way, these images." According to Briskin, it is not the negativity of the feminist image alone that serves to undermine such a movement, but many assumptions that anchor the thinking of mainstream press, not the least of which is the myth of individualism, the belief that "equality of opportunity exists" equally and for all.

The deception inherent in individualism is that it as a theory does not account for systematic inequalities in a society that has unfairly distributed wealth, education and privilege. The cultural mani-

festation of individualism in the media is the "success story". In a success story society lies waiting like a ripe apple to be picked. If a person works hard enough and gets a couple of good breaks, they will inevitably succeed. For women, the appearance of the successful career woman means another instance in which culture is demonstrate as not the oppressor of woman, but her friend. Further to that Briskin notes, "The hidden message is that these success stories add up to women's liberation."

Part of the difficulty in presenting feminism in a socially appetizing way is the movement's own reluctance to participate in the grooming of personalities for general consumption. Media likes to have a handle on a topic usually by way of a figurehead, a president, or a star. Media likes to locate the "cutting edge" of anything. For her part, Anne Collins reports that the cutting edge of feminism now belongs to Mary O'Brien and Carole Gilligan, for their work in evolving a modern version of parenting as "a chosen role" and towards breaking down the extremities of personal options available to women.

Eight years ago, Joanne Kates, then the women's columnist for the Globe, grappled with the problem of the leaderless movement, with a paradoxical comment about the American author of Sexual Politics. "The women's movement may not be hierarchical but when Kate Millett talks, you listen baby, because she is the leader, whether she likes it or not." In the same piece Millett considers the problem, "I don't believe in the idea of leadership in the women's movement...When a movement is as ours, a mass movement with grass roots, anarchistic, it's authentic."

It is that same grass roots authenticity which continues to characterize our movement, that continues as well to make it a riddle for mainstream thought.



Kate Lazier

Tales from the crypt

It would seem that they are not able to detect the operations of a movement which does not put itself forth in expected modes of popular presentation. As well, no charge of the movement's alleged death can be read without suspecting that this is what the self-interested media wishes for the movement.

Yes, Virginia, there is a feminist movement. It is alive and well and supporting the Morgantaler Clinic, the U of T Women's Centre, strikes by women workers, the peace movement and movements of liberation. The feminist movement is still just a baby, kicking and squirming, and lobbying for sexual harassment grievance procedures, equal pay legislation, legal change and affirmative action. And the movement is still loving and caring, and yes, weeping, at battered women's shelters, rape crisis centres and halfway houses. Feminism is not dead: it is alive and well and working.

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# Campus Women Interviewed: Although critical of the feminist stereotype, many women support the issues

## INTRODUCTION:

OtherWise sent their reporters to the streets, to take a sampling of attitudes that the average campus woman has about feminism and the women's movement. Most women agreed with the goals of feminism, but did not wholly support feminists.

They gave us their candid perceptions of what it is to be feminist. Some of them spoke of the regrets they have about feminist strategies. Most of them shared their honest and personal stories describing what it is like to be female in a large university.

Q. Do you describe yourself as a feminist?

A. The reason I don't describe myself as a feminist, although I act in a way that probably could be described by other people as a bit feminist, is that the way organized feminists go about their activities is sometimes so extreme that it causes backlash from other people and therefore defeats its own purpose.

Q. Is there a stereotypic feminist and could you describe her?

A. I don't think I have a stereotype. A lot of boys think feminists are people who don't wash a lot, who just generally hate men. They (men) have this idea that they're hated.

Q. Can you name a Canadian feminist?

A. I don't think so.

Q. Any feminist?

A. Germaine Greer

Q. Has feminism had a direct impact on your life?

A. I think that in a lot of ways I wouldn't be studying at the university and studying what I am unless feminism had been there in the first place. Women were talking about the Take Back The Night March. A lot of conversations got going about why you should have a march like that and this kind

of stuff. And the boys kept saying, "No, it's silly, we know those things, you don't have to march, and besides you people seem to hate men. Everything you say about men is as if you don't want to make any bargains with us, or talk about having any sort of equality; you want to reverse it and it's almost as bad as being a chauvinist."

**A lot of boys think that feminists are people who don't wash a lot, who just generally hate men.**

## INTERVIEW 2

Q. Do you call yourself a feminist?

A. (Emphatic) Yes. Since fourth grade I have been disgusted with the way women are treated. The little boys got to do all the tough jobs around the classroom and we were not allowed to do so. And then, during tenth grade, I had to do public speaking about the feminist movement since the 1800's in England and how women chained themselves to bars, wouldn't move, fighting for suffrage.

Q. Can you name a Canadian feminist?

A. I knew so many in tenth grade, Nellie something... McClung. Out west, there were quite a few out west.

Q. Did you call yourself a feminist in grade ten? Did that get you a lot of opposition from certain quarters?

A. No, actually I got the best mark in the class for my speech.

Q. Do you work on any feminist issues?

A. I'd like personally to get to work on the artificial placentas so women won't have

to get pregnant, and I'm not just feminist, I'm for equality period. ... if men want children by themselves, the artificial placenta would allow them to have that too.

Q. What sort of feminist issues are you aware of?

A. Violence against women in the streets...pornography, striptease, women being exploited, birth control...There should be more on the men's part and not just the women.



Kate Lazier

## INTERVIEW 3

Q. Do you call yourself a feminist?

A. Half and half, I can't really say. Some things I agree with, sometimes I'm not as fanatic about some things.

Q. You're more sympathetic to some issues than others?

A. I haven't really had much opportunity to think about it, because I haven't been discriminated against. I'm studying mathematics.

Q. Name a feminist issue.

A. Sex discrimination, equal pay, sexual harassment. I was going to say abortion but I wasn't sure if that was a feminist issue or not. I think it's just a choice, an individual's choice. And it's also a man's choice in some cases. I mean it's a man and a woman making choice.

Q. Why precisely is it that you don't call yourself a feminist?

A. At the college I went to, the women's caucus went, I felt, overboard. They were the extreme opposites of male chauvinists. I think there's a happy medium. I think everybody should be treated equally.

## INTERVIEW 4

Q. Do you call yourself a feminist?

A. I haven't had time to think about it.

Q. Do you sympathize with the movement?

A. Women should press for what they want. For equality.

Q. Do you see the feminist movement as furthering the cause of equality, or do you think it is being counter-productive?

A. I've seen articles in the papers about women struggling for their rights. I feel that because of the women's movement a lot has been accomplished. It's done a lot, although I do have some criticisms of it.

I think there's a small group of feminists who have taken the struggle overboard. First they want to be equal but there are some women that I feel just want to take over and dominate, and then all of a sudden it's women are better than men. It's like a competition. And it's hard to be in the position of fighting off stereotypes all the time. People will snicker and stuff at someone who calls herself a feminist, and they'll always come out with this argument, well, feminists think they're more than they should be. I hear that just from other women and girls.

Q. What issues do you identify as feminist?

A. Equal status in jobs, and getting into engineering or something. I don't think we should call them just feminist issues. I feel like things are being labelled. They're really everybody's issues.

## INTERVIEW 5

Q. Do you call yourself a feminist?

A. Not really. It depends on what issue you're talking about.

Q. Do you have an image of a typical feminist?

A. No. I think it's basically a matter of individual opinion. What I think I want another female might not want. Some things I fight for and agree with, and other things I don't.

Q. Your position on abortion?

A. I'm against it, against it totally. It doesn't matter who has it. I think it has to do with my religion and part has to do with me.

I can't say that I agree with contraception. The Catholic religion was the one to pick it up and carry it as a big issue. Then I think about where there's overpopulation. The world is so very much in crisis now. I think they should accept contraception now.

(laughs) We've got to stand up to men; we're equal in the sense of being human beings. We ought to stand up for what we think.

Q. I call myself a feminist...

A. Are you totally a feminist then? Sometimes some of the things they fight for are stupid. Like I remember reading one time that they were fighting for husbands taking maternity leave. Don't you think that's silly?

Q. Have you been discriminated against, being female and black in Canada?

A. No, not so far.

Interviews: Jane Farrow  
Technician: Kate Lazier  
Transcription: Terry Teskey



Kate Lazier



*Humiliation, Sadism, Vomit...*

# Orientation 1985: Was it Fun for you, too?

by Nancy Worsfold

I rode through campus today. Orientation was just beginning. I saw gangs of young people, many who must still be in their teens, standing around in decorated construction hats and matching T-shirts. On the road lay a blow-up lifesize doll. It was the shape of a nude female with a gaping mouth, and on the pavement between its legs lay a dildo. Had there been a symbolic rape? Was there to be a demonstration of sexual technique? I don't know.

Orientation happens at the beginning of every school year, yet it varies widely from campus to campus. The students at the University of Toronto seem to favour the standard events of "rowdy" beer drinking and public humiliation. Perhaps because of last year's government-sponsored campaign against campus alcoholism, the administration asked the colleges and faculties to tone down the emphasis on drink. Some traditional drinking events like the boat cruise will be dry this year. A St. Mike's woman told me that last year "drinking was the dominant thing. At the three day camp, everyone was drunk for the duration".

While there is an increasing awareness of the need for a responsible attitude towards alcohol during orientation, there does not seem to be a corresponding awareness of the sexism inherent in many of the events. The incident involving the blow up doll is an obvious example: what is the message given to women entering the university when an image of her body as man's toy is part of her welcome to U. of T.? There are more subtle examples, such as the "cake race" one Trinity woman described to me. This is a traditional event in more ways than one: the women bake cakes which are given to the men who run the race. The women stand on the side lines "while the men did the real event," which included being

doused by a swill of rotten vegetables and vomit. She did not envy their role.

The list of sexist events could go on and on, and get more and more childish. I asked six orientation co-ordinators whether they had considered sexism or women's needs when they planned orientation. Victoria College's Deborah Valentine said that it wasn't an issue as the Victoria student and college administrations are both headed by women. Erindale's Frank McGrath spoke of discussions of campus safety which would be of particular interest to women. None of the other colleges had a reply, and many said they didn't understand the question.

Orientation is a celebration of sameness. Several of the co-ordinators said that events were not aimed at any particular group. All events are planned for everyone, but what is a foreign student supposed to make of a scavenger hunt? One woman told me that she had been encouraged to shoplift, an easy way to lose a hard won visa. How does a gay student react when an item on a scavenger hunt is a coaster from a gay bar? What's a non-drinking student supposed to do all week? What does a woman think of the inflatable doll on the road?

To suggest that orientation is for everyone is to show the cultural arrogance of the orientation co-ordinators. They assume that all incoming students feel comfortable in any environment in which the co-ordinators feel comfortable. Just as sameness of cultural background is assumed, so is sameness of resources. "I didn't want to go to the final banquet; the whole thing was upsetting and boring. Apart from that, I had no money left and they charged for everything." Everyone might be invited to a pub crawl, but how many can pay for drinks at eight different bars in one night?

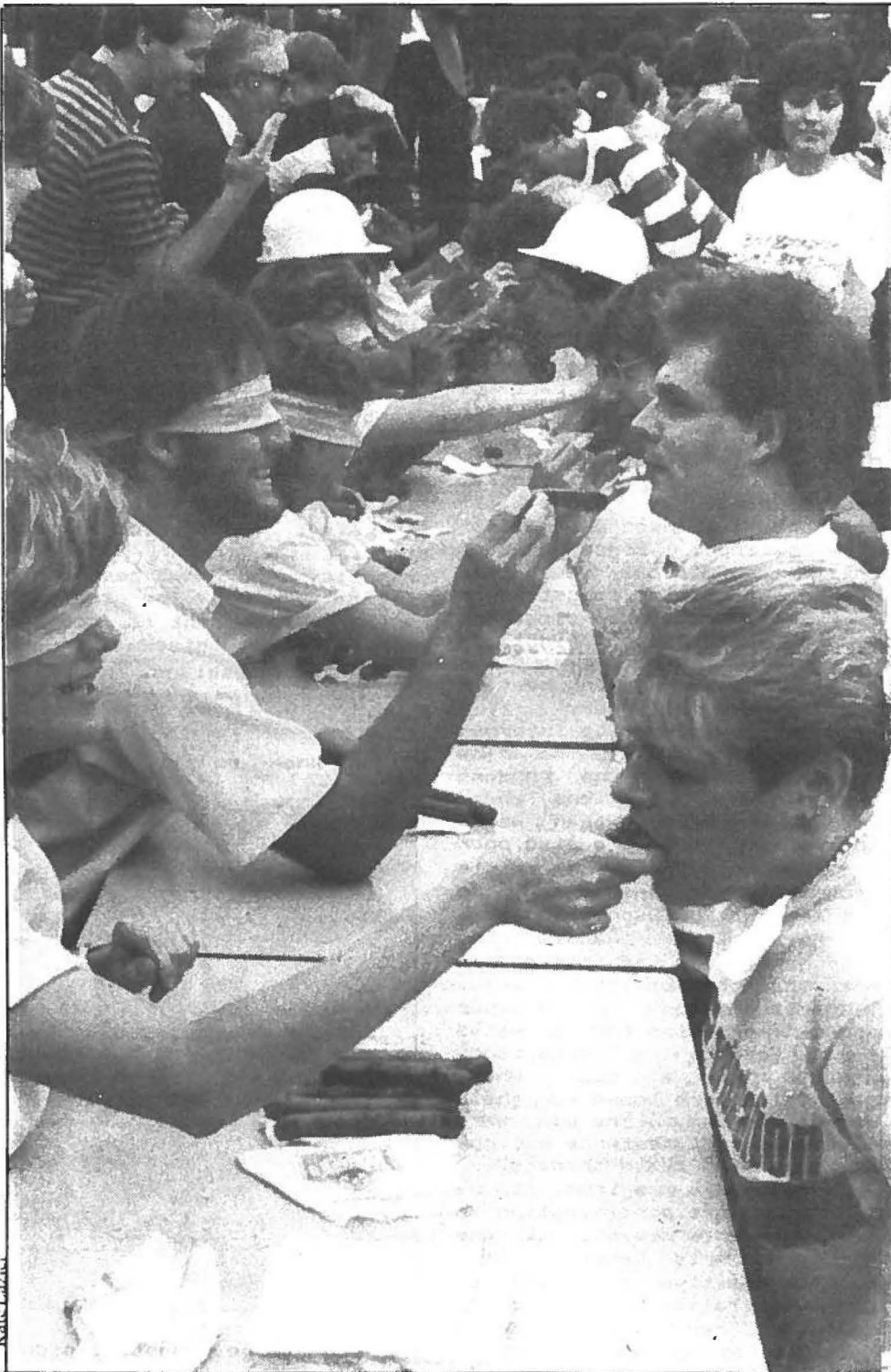
It is not only the rich men entering the university who enjoy orientation: many women love the whole thing. And many men consider it all foolish. So, we are left with the mystery of orientation: What does public humiliation have to

do with entering university?

The University of Toronto can be an intimidating, lonely place, and there is an enormous need for new students to be welcomed and introduced to the university. The university staff who run the various student services feel their services are underused and underpublicized during student orientations, so they are organizing their own orientation week in October. Linda Offman of the International Students' Centre is co-ordinating the week which will include introductions to the Athletic

Centre, Hart House, the libraries, health services, career counselling, the housing service and so on. SAC is participating by organizing a club day (which *OtherWise* has yet to be invited to!).

The University of Toronto is an alienating place, so an orientation is obviously needed. Unfortunately, it seems to me that orientation in its current form is inadequate for many students. Could it be that inducements to rowdy parties are part of the problem, not part of the solution?



Pre-Hab Meds and Engineers bite the big one in a Hot Dog Stuffing contest. One person is blindfolded, the other has her/his hands tied.



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Par avion

26

# How I Spent My Summer Vacation...

by Tourissima Smith

July 22,

Dear X,  
me, six performers, and twenty-two suitcases are finally en route to the land of tea, scones, and the Queen Mother ...

July 23,

Dear X,  
I am finally in London and I hope I have more fun being here than I had getting here. I lucked into sitting with a family which included newborn twins and a father who was so thrilled with flying he had to videotape everything --- the tarmac at the airport, the take off, the stewardess' safety demonstration ... his kids fighting, me trying to sleep. At least the commotion on the flight prepared me for the constant commotion of London. Don't let me get hit by a taxi hurtling down the wrong side of the road.

July 24,

Dear Diary,  
It rains, stops raining, starts raining, then rains some more. We stay in a part of London called Streatham which is an hour from anywhere. We work in Battersea which is only a half hour from anywhere. Except that at night all distances in London are multiplied by four. Since we work until ten o'clock you would need a helicopter to get downtown before the pubs close at eleven. So far London nightlife for us is looking for food at midnight and drinking beer in our hostel until four.

Actually it's quite interesting staying south of "The River". There are two Londons and this is the one where people live rather than where tourists visit. It's also poor and restless---where the riots took place in years past, where the majority of London's Blacks and Asians live. Racism runs deep here, and the tension is not hidden politely away. There is a story in the paper about four Asian men arrested for leading a retaliatory assault on a pub whose clientele were known for their violent racism. The men were given a light sentence but now are receiving death threats.

Meanwhile, the irony for us is that we are participating in a Black Arts Weekend at the Battersea Arts Centre. It's such a positive demonstration of the vitality of the black community here that one could get the wrong impression of this town.

July 27,

Dear X,  
I got up, went to the loo, popped out, drove in the lorry to the tube, went down the lift, went to the flat, made a nice pot of tea. Now I'm fagged and need some mollycoddling. Cheerio, luv.

July 30,

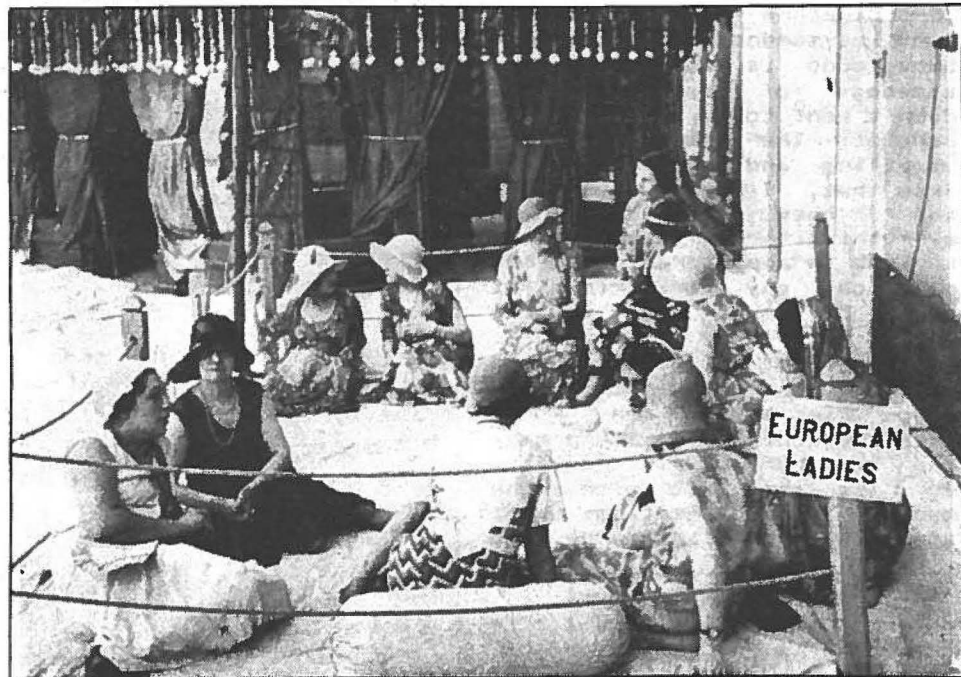
Journal:  
First night off from tour. It was raining. I headed out on my own. I knew what I had to do, but was none too sure how to do it. The girls back home were counting on me. I walked through the dark narrow streets as a stranger in a strange town. I found the place and knew this was what I was looking for. It was smokey inside and the air was filled with the sound of dames talkin'

to dames. I ordered a cold one and before I could say Gaia's Guide I was surrounded by friendly natives. All I can say --I'm kinda hazy on the details --is that girls are good to girls wherever you go. And that's okay by me.

August 4,

Dear OtherWise,  
One couldn't visit London without making a trip to the new London Lesbian and Gay Centre, could one? And it sure is worth writing home about. The small faded sign which marks it is no indication of what lies inside. It's quite incredible --- four floors including a cafe/pub, an information area, meeting rooms, a disco with a performance space and a small bookshop ... everything except a bowling alley. And even on a Tuesday afternoon at six o'clock the pub was doing a good business with a fairly even mixture of men and women.

Talking to some women in the pub I found out that behind the centre's snappy decor, trouble lurks. Besides continuing funding uncertainty, the centre stands to fall victim to an inhouse debate. The controversy is centred upon who should have access to the centre, and who should not. It raises the problem of who comprises the centre's community and how best they will be served. The groups on which the argument is focussed are skinheads, bisexuals, and SM gays and lesbians.



Now, to be honest, I didn't find out who was objecting to bisexuals frequenting the centre and holding meetings there. I guess some folk don't want their centre "diluted". As for the skinheads and SM practitioners, both are raising the ire of some feminists who feel their presence prevents the centre from being a safe space for women, especially women of colour and mothers. On the one hand, skinheads---generally with buzzcut hair, blue jeans, army boots,---have been accused of much of the racist, racist violence in Britain, so it isn't surprising that many women find them threatening. On the other hand, the look is also an important feature of young, male working class identity. Many gay men, therefore, feel it is classist to enforce dress codes, or to assume the style of a person's clothes automatically reveals their

politics. Now, in Toronto, many women are engaged in debates about SM and its ramifications. In Britain only the accents are different but the arguments are the same. Unfortunately, the lines of division seem deeper, disrupting International Women's Day celebrations as well as the operation of the LLGC. Also, because the centre is for gay men as well as lesbians the issue is further complicated. The women who object to SM groups meeting at the centre feel they are denied a fair chance at expressing their views because men outnumber women as members of the centre. To protest, some women have organised a boycott of the centre. Now, this may not upset the SM lesbians who are complaining of censorship are finding support at the centre from the gay male community; but the concern is that given the funding struggles which lie ahead internal dissension could threaten the centre's future.

NEWS FLASH: Because lesbians fall into a low risk group for AIDS, the LONDON LESBIAN PHONE LINE has called for lesbians to donate blood. Go team!

August 8,

Ach, my colonial lassies,  
Edinburgh is a right bonnie town. There's wee mountains everywhere ya go, and a castle too. And those Scots lezzies You take the high road ...  
XO

Dear Diary,

For most of the year Edinburgh is ... well it's dull. Lots of nice scenery and ancient history cluttering up the place. The things to do are: climb hills, eat shortbread, and buy tartan. And you have to go to "The Castle". If you're into Macbeth, Martyrs, and the Plague you can have a field day. My personal favourite was Queen



GREETINGS FROM  
BONNIE SCOTLAND

Margaret, who lived in the eleventh century, and was "so simple and attractive she was able to tame the Scots". Now she is the patron saint of wives who, as the tourist booklet says, "have in these days, much need of a patroness".

Dear X,

August 14,

Edinburgh in August is not typical Edinburgh. Playing host to the largest arts festival in the world it goes a little crazy. Imagine the film festival being expanded tenfold and held in the middle of the CNE. Every day for three weeks during the Edinburgh Fringe Festival there are at least a hundred plays to choose from running from ten in the morning to after midnight. If you can't find anything to please you, there's the Edinburgh Film Festival, a Jazz Festival, Visual Arts, and the Edinburgh Tatoo---quite possibly the world's largest gathering of men in skirts.

The tricky part of the festival is that with a thousand plays to choose from it's easy to end up seeing a lot of bad theatre. Luckily, this year, for the first time there is a women's theatre venue. So, I go from play to pub to play to work to bar to play to play and then to sleep. Today the best I saw was by a London group called Hard Corps. The show was "Les Autres" and was about the lesbian set in Paris in the twenties---Natalie Barney and "that lot". The show was fun---campy in a fresh way. Oooh, to be rich, gay, and in Paris ...

Sept. 13,

Dear X,

I'm back in Toronto, home of the tall, non-retractable free-standing thing. The deadline for our newspaper is approaching...I have a craving for mushy peas.

XO





# Movement To Movement

by Paula Rochman

On November 22nd-24th, the Ontario Public Interest Research Group will be holding a Conference entitled "Challenging Our Images: The Politics of Pornography and Prostitution". This conference will provide an opportunity for participants and resource people to discuss a wide variety of topics pertaining to these contentious and hotly debated issues.

The idea for the conference came from the women who organized International Women's Day (IWD) in Toronto this year. Two of the issues which the Coalition felt had been inadequately addressed in this year's IWD activities were pornography and prostitution. This was made particularly clear when the Coalition was challenged by women from the sex trade who felt that as women, their concerns regarding the work they engage in had been misrepresented, not only by the Coalition but by the women's movement in general.

With the support of the Coalition, OPIRG took the initiative and organized the conference. As a graduate student group at U of T whose purpose is to facilitate public interest research, OPIRG's position is that there are many debates around pornography and prostitution. Thus, an open feminist forum on these issues will provide a valuable opportunity for concerned people from the

women's, legal, church, gay and lesbian, and sex trade communities to come together to share their concerns and ideas. The wide variety and volume of submissions from these different communities to the Federal Fraser Committee on Pornography and Prostitution clearly shows that there is an interest in a better understanding of these two issues. Further more, there is concern over what direction the government might take in developing relevant legislation.

OPIRG itself has no official policy or stand on these two issues but hopes that students and the general community will find this a useful event.

Some of the questions the conference will be addressing through films, speakers, workshops, videos, and live performances will include: What are the factors and institutions which have created an environment where pornography and prostitution exist in their current forms? Why are these issues so explosive and contentious to talk about? Can and should we work at bridging the gap between feminists and women in the sex trade? Does discussing pornography and prostitution together, as was done by the Fraser Committee, cloud these issues or are they intricately linked? What short term and long term political and educational strategies should we be working on?

In addition to pursuing the

March 8th Coalition's idea that an open forum on pornography and prostitution is needed, the conference will provide a timely opportunity to discuss the recommendations of the Fraser Report. This fall, the federal government is expected to introduce legislation pertaining to these recommendations and it should be clear by late November what direction this legislation is going to take.

For more information about the conference or to share your ideas about it, please contact the OPIRG office at 978-3032.

## Sister Vision

by Carrie Brown

Q: Who is breaking new ground?  
A: Sister Vision

The first black women and women of colour press in Canada is currently soliciting work by lesbians of colour for an upcoming anthology. The anthology will be asking what it means to be a lesbian of colour in Canada and how the issues of race, gender, sexuality and class have been and are being resolved. As an anthology, Sister Vision is encouraging submissions in a variety of forms: from diaries and interviews to photographs and science fiction. Never thought of yourself as a writer? Don't despair! Sister Vision is willing to work with you to help sort out those subjects and predicates. Put those typewriters, drawing pens, and cameras to work and you could help make history. Contact Sister Vision

at 532-9868 or write: Sister Vision, Black Women & Women of Colour Press, P.O. Box 217, Station E, Toronto, M6H 4E2. Deadline for submissions is November 15, 1985.



On September 7, workers at Outdoor Wear on Richmond St. West walked off the job. The 34 strikers, 30 of whom are women, have been without a contract since May, and are asking for a 5 per cent raise. They are paid by the piece and earn roughly five dollars an hour, sewing the uniforms of the T.T.C., Metro Police, the RCMP and other government services.

Divestment continued from page 1

the issues in South Africa" says Jacquie Castel of the UTDC. They also saw that U of T divestment would have a concrete impact on companies working in South Africa and on the racist structure which they support.

To this end the UTDC prepared a 30 page brief outlining the case for divestment and gathered 1400 signatures on a petition of support. In November, 1984 they submitted these documents to the Governing Council in accordance with the University's regulations on initiating an investment policy review. At that point, a committee in the Governing Council was struck to examine the issue and to prepare a recommendation to the president. Last May, the committee emerged against divestment but recommended that the federal government be urged to complete its Code of Conduct for Canadian Companies operating in South Africa and that the reporting requirements of the code be made mandatory. President Connell has introduced a resolution to this effect and has supported the committee's anti-divestment position. Claire Johnson, a student representative on the Governing Council, has moved that U of T divest. This fall the Governing Council will address both motions.

The University has a policy of not investing into companies which it sees to be committing "social injury". Not surprisingly then, the operation in South Africa

constitutes "social injury" to the African, Coloured and Indian peoples of that nation. "Social Injury" is defined by a Governing Council policy statement on investment, (a definition taken from Yale university which has deemed investment in South Africa to be socially injurious and has divested), as "the injurious impact which activities of a company it does not follow that "by merely operating in South Africa, foreign-owned companies are inflicting "social injury" on their employees". It further argues against divestment by noting that foreign investment does benefit "a segment of the black population" and that by maintaining business and social contacts the oppressive policies of apartheid will be changed through "peaceful persuasion and example".

However, it is clear that companies operating in South Africa benefit from and therefore implicitly endorse apartheid's racist policies. The South African economy is structured to provide cheap black labour to the white-owned economy. Apartheid maintains this economic structure by oppressing Blacks. It is also clear that Blacks in South Africa want foreign companies to divest. As Castel of UTDC notes: "the trade unions, Bishop Tutu, the African National Congress, and the United Democratic Front, among others, have all called for divestment". Finally, the suggestion that companies

are found to have on consumers, employees, or other persons, particularly including activities which violate, or frustrate the enforcement of rules of domestic and international law intended to protect individuals against deprivation of health, safety, or basic freedoms." The committee report states that investing will have a liberalizing effect is extremely dubious. Very revealing is the statistic that between 1970 and 1982 US investment in South Africa tripled while wage gaps between blacks and whites doubled. Castel puts it simply: "the companies are not there to help Blacks, they are there to make money".

President Connell and the Committee also question the role of the University in "political" affairs. Connell distinguishes between "moral judgement" and "political action". While he says that the University cannot avoid moral judgements in its affairs, it should refrain from political action. What actually differentiates the two is not discernible. Castel points out that "by not divesting, that's a political stance in itself". Additionally, as Brian Burchell, SAC's University Government Commissioner, notes, "the President says that he doesn't want to engage in politics, but then he recommends going to the Canadian government - isn't that political?"

## DANCE

30 Bancroft Avenue  
9pm, September 28

a benefit for women and words,  
at the Graduate Students Union

New members meeting for OtherWise

Whether you want to devote all your free time  
to feminist publishing, or just want to  
say hello - everyone is welcome

Thursday September 19th 1985

Hart House, South Sitting Room, 3rd Floor

5:30 to 7:00 pm.



by Helena van Nooten

My grandmother, Margaret born in Hedingly, Yorkshire, in the year 1893. She received education to the end of primary school. In her early twenties she joined a convent as a novice. She was sent home after a few years, the nuns having decided that she was not strong enough to live the life of a nun.

She vomited frequently since her intestine had been sewn almost closed during an appendix operation. This fact was not known until after the birth of her first child. Up until then, her vomiting was attributed to "nerves" - something to be ashamed of. My grandmother learned to hide her illness, and to cope with it by eating only small amounts of food at a time.

She returned to her parents' home, where she lived until she was married. She taught on a volunteer basis, and was very active in local amateur drama. She was seen in one performance by members of a professional acting troupe, who afterwards approached her father about taking her on as an apprentice to the troupe. Her father refused, and my grandmother only heard about the incident much later. She was also very fond of music, and taught herself how to play the piano.

It was at a musical evening at her house that she met my grandfather, Henry Somerville. He was a friend of one of her brothers. He asked her to marry him when he discovered that she was thirty and not twenty-one as he had imagined.

Their first child, Mary, died two weeks after birth, and my grandmother herself was seriously ill. It was at this point during repair surgery after the birth of Mary, that her closed intestine was discovered and opened. She was told that she would not have any more children. But despite the negative predictions, she went on to have five more children, two sons and three daughters.

In 1933, when my grandfather, a journalist, was given a job in Canada, the family moved to Scarborough. At that time, it was little more than farmland, and would have been very isolated. My grandmother had five small children to care for (the two youngest were born in Canada). She lived without a telephone or many of the other conveniences we take for granted. When one of her sons was struck and injured by a car, my grandmother had to carry him by public transportation all the way downtown to the hospital.

She was quite ill all the while, this time with stomach ulcers. Again, her illness was attributed to nerves by her

## Remembering

doctor. She vomited so frequently that she had a special bowl called "Jason" which was kept behind her chair, and her children used to joke as she ate that they "hoped it would taste good coming up." Eventually, her stomach ruptured, and then some years later, ruptured again. The second time, it was removed and replaced with a silver stomach.

Near the end of world War II, the family moved to downtown Toronto. My grandfather died in 1943, and my grandmother lived on a small pension from his newspaper until she started to receive her old age pension. Despite the fact that she had never even written a cheque before her husband's death, but had run her household on the money he gave her once a week, she handled her affairs very competently after his death.



Margaret Cooper in a dramatic performance.

When my grandmother was seventy her legs were broken in eight places when a landrover rolled down a hill and pinned her against a tree. She was in casts for six months, since her legs were incorrectly set and had to be broken again. Keeping up a tradition of proving doctors wrong, she walked with only a cane after it was said that she

would never leave her wheelchair.

The large house which she lived in was increasingly difficult for her to keep up, so she moved into an apartment in Jameston. She lived there until, after a long illness during which she was lovingly cared for by her youngest daughter, she died at the age of ninety-one.

What was startling and unusual about what seems a very ordinary life of caring for a husband and children was the effect that my grandmother had on everyone she met. She had charm and wit and a genuine interest in everyone she came into contact with. She was able to make people feel at ease, and the love and caring she extended supported many people through difficult times in their lives. When she came to Canada, she did not know anyone. When she died over seven hundred people attended her funeral.

For large periods of her life, my grandmother suffered from some sickness or another. Yet none of her various illnesses seems to have dampened her joy in life. My aunt remembers that when she was very small, her mother used to dance with her to music from the radio. My mother remembers the pleasure her mother took from the penny candies she occasionally bought and shared out with her children.

My clearest memories of my grandmother are of when her memory was failing. Instead of making her bitter or unhappy, her disability seemed to increase her enjoyment of life. Everything was new and exciting to her. When I visited, she discovered with delight, every fifteen minutes or so, that she had a grand daughter.

What I remember especially is the dignity and courage she display as bit by bit she became unable to care for herself. She was profoundly religious and in great part her remarkable courage and endurance stemmed from her faith in God.

Her concern for others never diminished in her illnesses. Even when she was too weak to move from her bed, she would always ask anxiously whether you were hungry, have entertaining conversations with you, and even tell stories of when she was young.

Once, when I was sitting next to her bed she told me of a time when she was a small child, and had woken up early and gone for a walk. She had seen through a fence dandelions in a meadow. The happiness she felt at that moment lit up her face when she told the story. Now when I remember my grandmother, I always think of her as walking in the morning sunlight, through a field of dandelions.

Women's centre continued from page 1

SAC Women's Commissioner, is also optimistic. Newman stated that she expects the funding recommendation to be accepted with no significant difficulty.

The SAC Finance Committee has included in the 1985-6 budget a recommendation that the Women's Centre be given \$4000. The budget as a whole will be voted on at the Sept. 11 SAC board meeting. Since only those items chosen by board members to be discussed will be reviewed at the meeting, it is possible that the Women's Centre issue will not be re-opened for debate.

The CWC has received the political support of over forty campus groups, and is now approaching some of those groups in the hope of securing their financial support also. The groups being approached include the college councils, the Graduate Students' Union as well as faculty organizations. A group of 20 male faculty members has already pledged

\$1000 to the Centre. This initiative was led by Prof. David Rayside, whose intention was to organize the men in a symbolic gesture of support.

The need for some sort of women's centre at the U of T has been recognized for decades. It was the CWC, however, that was responsible for revitalizing the issue and bringing it to the forefront of the campus political scene.

Formed in February of 1984, the CWC has had a long and frustrating struggle. Speaking of the university administration Rochman says, "Every time we addressed one problem they came up with another." The administration objected to the direction of the proposed women's centre by a non-hierarchical collective which they claimed would not be "accountable to anyone." It then said it could not offer support if men would not be allowed to participate as members of the

collective.

The administration also told the CWC that it lacked the "credibility" of sponsorship by an established U of T organization. While acknowledging the CWC as a student effort, the Women's Studies Programme agreed in November 1985 to be the sponsor. Rochman stated that the CWC had not sought sponsorship earlier because they had been told that it was not needed.

The administration maintained that it did not have the space for a women's centre. Rochman agrees that the opening of the Koffler Centre made it more difficult to make that claim. With Lois Reimer acting as liaison to the administration, the CWC managed to overcome the other obstacles it was confronted with. Rochman also attributes the CWC's success to sustained pressure on Simcoe Hall and campus-wide support for a women's centre.