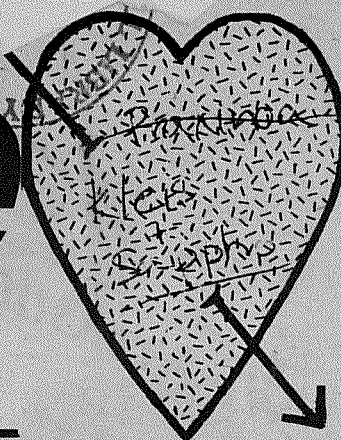


# OtherWise

A Feminist Newspaper at U of T

Volume 3, Number 2, February 3, 1987



Warming up for V.D.,  
see page 4



Elizabeth Czach

## Cause to Worry??

Interviews by Madeline Bassnett  
Linda Blom  
Elizabeth Czach

Today's teenage women are tomorrow's feminists - or so we hope! Many of us have managed to emerge from high school with at least the beginnings of a political awareness. Is this process continuing? We talked to 14 young women between the ages of 16 and 18 to find out. They came from Loretto College in Toronto, Albert Campbell C.I. in Scarborough and various high schools in North York. Most are native Torontonians, but others were born in England, Montreal, Trinidad, and Portugal. All are white and consider themselves middle class.

### Q: WHO ARE YOUR HEROES? (WHO INSPIRES YOU?)

-St. George.  
-My dentist.  
-My brother's surgeon.  
-Spencer Olsson (my boyfriend) and Sylvester Stallone.  
-Fred Flintstone and Barney Rubble. I inspire myself.  
-Madonna.  
-Bess Motta.  
-Winston Churchill, Terry Fox, Martin Luther King, Abraham Lincoln, John F. Kennedy and Gandhi.  
-David Bowie - I like the way he changes all the time. He just did whatever he wanted, he doesn't care what people think of him. There's a lot of artists that inspire my art.  
-I think Bob Marley's pretty cool 'cause he stood up for what he believed in - he didn't care what anyone else thought, he just went for it.

### Q: WHAT DO YOU WANT TO DO IN LIFE?

-Business.  
-Teacher, grade school.  
-Interpreter.  
-Photographer.  
-Dentist.  
-Nursing.  
-Becoming a news broadcaster (attending college).  
-Become the new assistant manager of Music World, Rexdale Mall.  
-Go into a modelling course, be a model or be a make-up artist.  
-A make-up artist.  
-Go to university and work through school to receive a PhD in History and Economics.  
-I would like to go to university for music.  
-I want to go to OCA for photography or maybe commercial art. I'd like to do something where I wasn't living in Toronto for the rest of my life.  
-I want to go into an art related field, not necessarily being the artist but having some input into it. Or else I'd like to travel and do odd jobs. I don't want to be stuck in a normal day job.

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## SAC REFUSES TO FUND WOMEN'S CENTRE

By Elizabeth Czach

Recently, the Women's Centre celebrated its first anniversary. Fortunately SAC hadn't revised its budget yet, so the results couldn't mar the festivities.

The Centre was hoping to get some funding from SAC the second time around. SAC refused to fund the Centre, still having problems with an all female collective. A debate preceded the vote in which many issues that ruffled SAC about the Women's Centre were brought up. Some representatives from St. Mike's argued against the Pro Choice stance of the Centre. This argument is not nearly as controversial today as it would have been ten years ago; some progress may be noted, but the real problem is SAC's inability to understand the need for an all women collective. This need does not represent reverse sex discrimination, but rather an attempt to reverse a history of sex discrimination. In the end, the funding was denied in a vote of 23 to 20.

The problem, however, did not end there. SAC wants to ask the undergraduate students in a referendum in March whether or not they want to support the Women's Centre through money from their incidental fees. For example, each student would pay ten cents, twenty-five cents, or one dollar in their fees that would go to the centre. CIUT, the U of T radio station, received some of its funds from the students through this process. However, a referendum would be suicidal for the Women's Centre because it has neither the stable economic base nor the strong womenpower network required for a successful result, or at

continued on page 8

## MORE OTHERWISE

### LIFE IN CAMEROON

...NASTY, BRUTISH AND SHORT

COLLINS, page 3

### TRADING PLACES, MAKING LINKS

CONFRONTING RACISM AND SEXISM

SUDDS, page 7

### TAKING WOMEN WRITERS SERIOUSLY

AN INTERVIEW WITH PATRICIA BRUCKMANN

TUCKER, page 5



*We Are OtherWise*  
*From The Collective*

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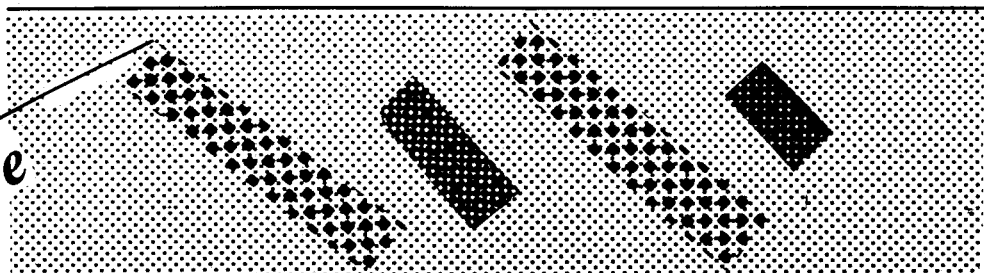
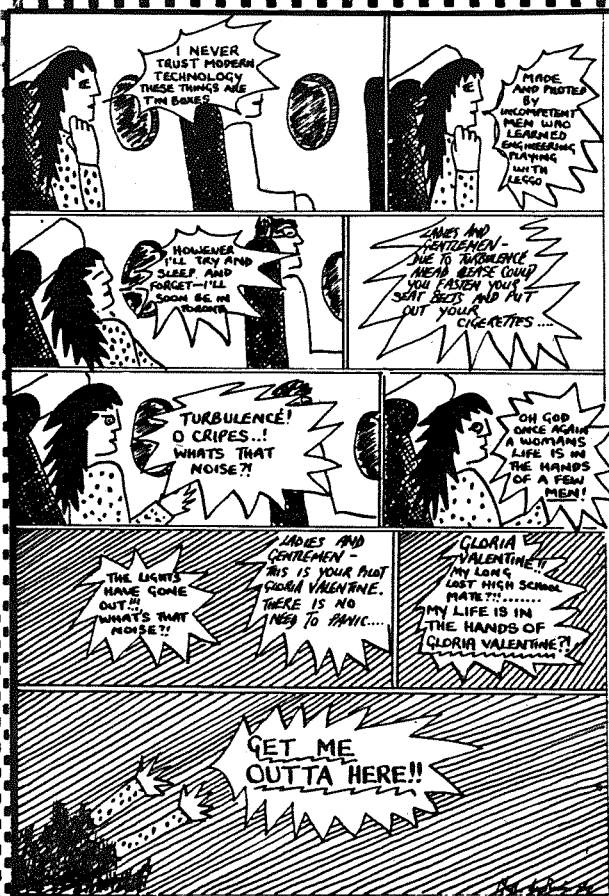
THIS ISSUE

Maureen Gans  
Kate Lazier  
Regan McClure  
Graydon Moffat  
Maureen Phillips

Belated but profuse thanks to Angela Anobile of Felines for her generous donation to *OtherWise*. Thanks also to Gillian Rodgeron for her help last issue.

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Next Writing Deadline: March 9, 1987.

## URBAN BLITZ

What's Suzy wearing? Should you stop shopping for a moment to listen, Suzy's fashion 'statement' could tell you more than you care to know about every aspect of Suzy's hectic personal and political life: who she is, what and whom she wants, what choices are available to her, and why. If you listened long enough, Suzy's 'statement' would become a treatise on economics, power and influence; on gender, race, class and sexuality. What's Suzy to you? Who created Suzy? Who's creating you?

If constructed 'fictional' images did not have a direct influence on political and economic motivation and behaviour, the media moguls (and their sponsors) would have gone broke long ago. Yet, when we protest the damaging effects of media stereotyping, the moguls reply: "It's only make-believe." Carefully selected images are strategically repeated in an effort to increase profits and consolidate power. It is difficult to convince those profiteering from such images that media (and the 'free market') do not exist in an amoral, apolitical vacuum. As long as profit is made, how and why should they be convinced to take responsibility?

Combined with other media, the television set becomes a mind-set. The high visibility given to chosen images confers

upon them the status of familiarity, legitimacy, desirability and possibility. Add to this the calculated discouragement of analysis, criticism and dissent, and the influence of imagery becomes so insidious as to give constructed ideals and stereotypes an aura of righteous realism. When real life and real people don't fit the media mold, it is reality that is considered abnormal, unnatural, strange or ridiculous. The profit motive in media helps to guarantee that those who lack visibility lack credibility.

Recently, the watchdog group Media Watch has pressured the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC), with some success, to take control of the proliferation of damaging stereotypes on Canadian television stations and American affiliates operating in Canada. Besides lobbying, writing to the networks can help. CBS recently estimated that one letter represents 20,000 viewers. The boycott model has proven the power of organized consumers. With enough pressure, our concerns about the influence of damaging stereotypes will be addressed.

What's Suzy wearing? Should we care? We care because Suzy's wardrobe and other choices aren't being made by Suzy alone. OW

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# Bill 7 Scholarship

## A Future for Gay and Lesbian Students

By Elizabeth Czach

It has only been a matter of weeks since Bill 7 was passed and positive results can already be seen. In particular a Bill 7 Scholarship is being established by Regan McClure, a member of the Women's Centre at U of T. McClure is trying to raise \$25,000 to establish a scholarship for gay, lesbian and/or feminist students. The fund has already received \$10,000 from an anonymous donor. The criteria for the scholarship are simple: the recipient must be active in the lesbian, gay or feminist community, and she/he must demonstrate financial need. The money is to be awarded upon acceptance into a university or college. If the candidate is already enrolled in a program she/he must be in good standing. The scholarship should be ready by September 1988.

McClure says that the idea for a scholarship is grounded in the fact that, "...in our

society, lesbian and gay students face economic problems which are not adequately met by the present financial aid system. Parents may refuse to give support. One may encounter discrimination at work. Incidents such as the death of a lover or financial crises are not recognized by health and insurance plans or student aid programs. The passing of Bill 7 was a signal to society to end this discrimination. We feel that furthering education in our community will help create spokespersons who will articulate our needs and increase the numbers of openly gay and lesbian representatives in our society."

At present McClure is trying to raise money for the scholarship. If you would like to donate money or help with fundraising, she can be contacted at the Women's Centre.

### GRAFFITI ON AN ARMY BARRACKS WALL....



I KILLED FORTY MEN AND THEY GAVE ME A MEDAL

I LOVED ONE AND THEY GAVE ME A DISHONOURABLE DISCHARGE....

# Women, Nuns and Children

## The Life of Women in Cameroon

By Trudi Collins

"I've had women tell me 'if my husband didn't beat me I'd think he didn't love me.'" Katherine Rouleau, third year student at U of T, recalling the philosophy of the women of Zhileng, Cameroon, where she spent the past summer. Zhileng, an outback village, houses a colony of lepers and their families brought together to get treatment from the dispensary which is financed by the Cameroon government and staffed both by natives and by one of the Nuns of Sainte Famille de Bordeaux, with whom Rouleau was staying. In spite of this Christian influence the predominant faith in Northern Cameroon is Muslim, the laws of which allow men to have up to four legal wives.

I've had women tell me — if my husband didn't beat me, I'd think he didn't love me.

When asked to delineate the women's perception of their primary role Rouleau stated firmly that they consider themselves mothers foremost and wives second.

"Every woman, from the age of fifteen on, has a child every two years on average. If a woman has not had a child after two years she is very sad, and may even go away on her own. It is not unusual for a man to have 30 - 40 children."

Small wonder then that the life expectancy is a mere 45 years. Continual childbearing in conjunction with the limited food and almost non-existent protein sources would wear out even the most hardy. With the production of children on this industrial scale, the food shortage and the necessity for

the people to work so hard comes as no real surprise. When asked if the nuns make any attempt to stem this large scale procreation, Rouleau pointed out that, being Roman Catholic, they are not in favour of contraception. However it seems unlikely that even if the nuns encouraged contraception it would have any impact on the women, for the reason that the nuns are not considered role models. Rouleau expanded on this point.

"The nuns live in a very luxurious environment in comparison to the village women's surroundings, although their living quarters contain only the barest of necessities. They are not married, have no children, are not reliant on the fruits of their manual work and thus are not respected."

It became clear from Rouleau's remarks that the nuns are not trying to effect any revolution among the village women, but are rather trying to improve the lot they already have. The nuns run discussion groups in home economics and hygiene but because the level of education among the women is low, more so than among the men who travel and learn other languages, the reach of these groups is limited. Indeed it seems the women themselves are not trying to change their lot. Rouleau mentioned several times the fatalistic attitude of the villagers in general, as demonstrated in the following.

"They would go and get drunk and have an accident and tell me 'but sister the chance, (for prevention) it was not there.'"

This fatalism carries over into the villagers' treatment of the

leprous members of their families, the leper being included as usual and not expected to leave the home. Their attitude towards having the disease, as described by Rouleau, seems to be one of relative calm as they fashion tools that can be managed by fingerless hands and seem not unduly bothered by the disfigurement of losing a nose.

The women's acceptance of

They (the nuns) are not married, have no children, are not reliant on the fruits of their manual work and thus are not respected.

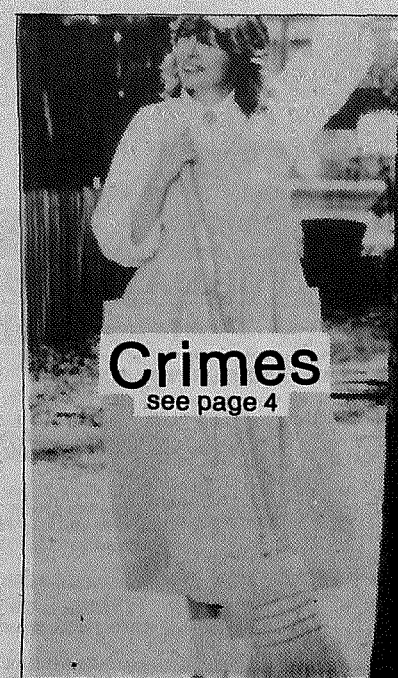
the wife-beating status quo is partially explained by the low levels of education. Rouleau made it clear that while there is starting to be some impetus towards sending female children to university, it is a recent phenomena. However she stated that the drop-out rate from the centres of higher learning is almost 100% mainly due to their positioning in the cities in the south of Cameroon. These rural people neither cope well with, nor enjoy the hustle and bustle of the modern city. As a result there are few Northerners who continue with their studies and return to educate their villages, and most of these would be men. Thus there are no radical role models for these women.

When asked if there is any incidence of lesbianism, Rouleau suggested there was not, though she was quick to qualify this statement.

"They spend so much time together, you can feel the closeness — they travel together for miles, gossiping and working, with the babies on their backs."

In addition she mentioned a heightened emphasis on physical contact between women, it being uncommon to see a lone woman as they tend to move en masse with a strong sense of group identity.

With regard to the advent of change, both technological and social, Rouleau foresees the villagers becoming gradually inundated with the trappings of commercialism and western 'civilisation'. Already, traditional beds woven of branches are being replaced by plastic versions of the same and beds as we know them. Cars and tape recorders have also begun to show themselves. Perhaps with increased education and technological aids the women of Zhileng will acquire the desire to free themselves of what we, with western eyes, would call oppression. Yet at the same time they will no doubt lose some measure of the calm acceptance which marks their tolerance.



Crimes  
see page 4



# Warming Up For Valentine's

By Nicola Crawhall

Special dates warrant special events. The lesbian and gay community is warming up in its usual way with a month-long assortment of dances.

For those of you who want a head start on Valentine's Day, or who just want to dance, Gays and Lesbians at U of T are having a dance on February 7th at the Hangar (attached to Sidney Smith Hall). The dance goes until 3:00 a.m., giving you ample time to find a date for Valentine's Day, if you're looking. Remember to bring proof of age and student I.D.

On the big day, Saturday, February 14th, the Lesbian Dance Committee is holding a Heart Throb Dance at the Concert Hall. Bring your sweetie, whether she be your lover, your friend, your great aunt, or your cat. (On second thought, scratch the cat.)

The following week-end, in association with a Toronto area gays and lesbian social services gathering at Conference 187, there will be a dance at the 519 Community Centre, presented by the Gay Community Dance Committee. It is another GCDC smokeless dance (ie. smokers are welcome, without their cancer sticks, teehee, jab jab!). The last dance was very successful, and much appreciated by some 300 who attended.

## Fun, Frolic, Fucking

Finally, on February 28th, again the GCDC is holding a Classifieds Dance. (for all those people who are depressed from Valentine's Day, and for all the girls and boys looking for a good time). Put your classified on the wall, and meet whoever responds to it the same night! This dance promises to be, if nothing else, eventful, and will be held at

## ... and Fantasy

the Concert Hall.

Four week-ends, four dances. Save your energy and your pennies. Dances can be a refreshing alternative to the clubs. By the way, have a gay Valentine's Day!



# ACHES AND THROBS

## A Review of Crimes of the Heart

By Karen Bernard

You might ask yourself why the American South remains such an endlessly fascinating setting for real-life psychodrama in films, plays, and novels. I suggest it is because, much like David Lynch's suburbia, the region's social structure contains a precarious tension between its calm facade and the violence which has been shoved behind this picturesque exterior. It takes nothing more than an examination of the daily life of Southerners for this violence to step out and declare its omnipresence.

Crimes of the Heart, presenting an excerpt from the lives of three sisters, offers the viewer a none-too-attractive vision of women smothering in this milieu.

Diane Keaton plays the painfully shy and terminally sweet oldest sister, whose grandfather has thrown a wet blanket over her sex life by continually reminding her of her shrunken ovary -- a deficiency which, of course, makes her inadequate to please any man.

The sister who most nearly embodies the Southern Belle myth, played by Jessica Lange, has returned home briefly, leaving her unsuccessful singing career in L.A. She commences to wreak havoc on the small Southern community through her pretty wiles and devil-may-care lifestyle. Lange's character wields a playful kind of power, but her amusement is undercut by the sobering awareness that her time is running out. Blonde hair will eventually turn grey, and the sex kitten mystique will vanish.

Sissy Spacek has the film's starring role as the

As any seasoned film-goer would expect, these three talented actresses reel off virtuoso performances, and manage to look much more like real people than most of the glamorous automatons in Hollywood cinema. But -- in disagreement with Now's eminent film critic -- I believe that the acting is not the only attraction of Crimes of the Heart.

...life crawls at the pace of a slow fever.

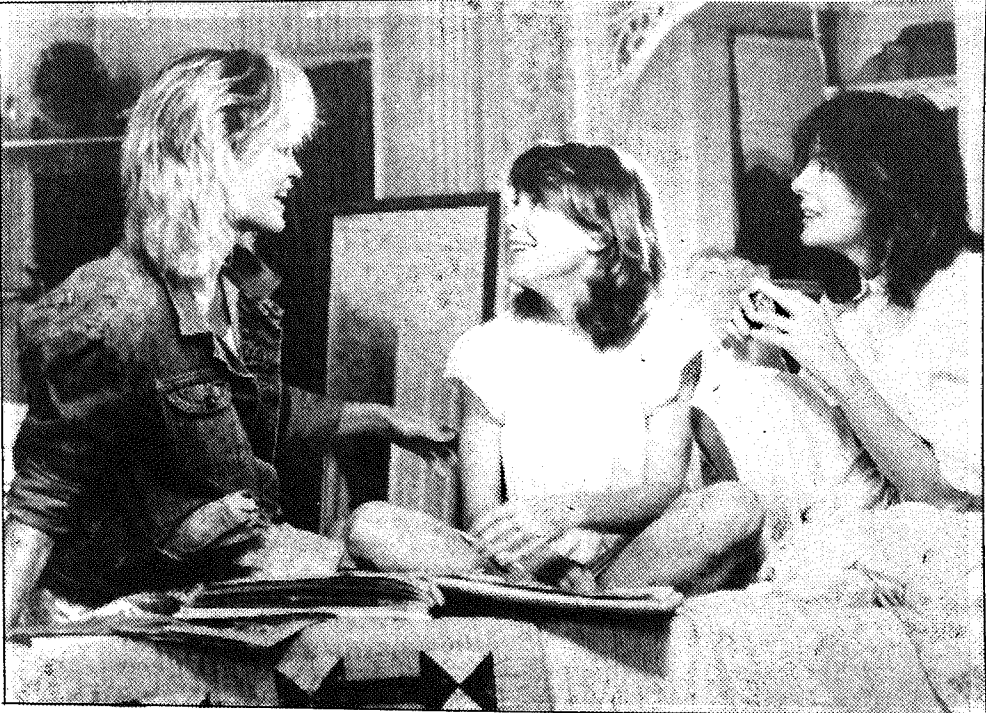
The visual texture and the mise-en-scene are strong features: hazy cinematography captures some of the sickly mood engendered by the Southern climate, where life crawls at the pace of a slow fever. Camera angles add a prankish dimension to the action, supplementing the black humour of the plot.

The story itself, based on the screenplay by Beth Hensley, is the foundation of the film, and the source of its subtle power. Though sometimes it seems to say that the only way out of the matrix of racism, poverty, and oppression which comprises the South is a tall glass of lemonade, Crimes of the Heart also hints at a more effective escape route. A compassionate and tenuous alliance of the three sisters lets them taste the kind of happiness which is placed out of reach by many of the elements of their limited lives. The message is bittersweet, but refreshing in that it is a detour from facile nihilism.

I won't speculate on which awards this film may rake in, but it merits at least a thoughtful audience. The social tangles which it projects onto the silver screen are too frighteningly commonplace to be overlooked.

### I didn't like his stinkin' looks.

woman who shot her husband because, she flippantly retorts, "I didn't like his stinkin' looks." This brash excuse soon gives way to her real motive, which is much more logical.



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and Glad Day (with a \$.50 surcharge), 598A Yonge Street.



# THE POISONED PEN?

## Women Invade the English Department

By Karen Tucker

The English Department at the University of Toronto is comprised of a majority of male professors, teaching predominantly male-authored texts to classes comprised mainly of female students. Admittedly there are a few female authors who manage to get on the reading list of most courses, (eg. Austen, Eliot, and Woolf), but they are invariably outnumbered by their male counterparts. At the undergraduate level there is only one course which deals specifically with women writers (ENG 275Y), and one of the two sections offered is being taught by a man. The obvious question that arises is, what effect does this sort of environment have on female students?

This is a question that concerns Patricia Bruckmann, an English professor at Trinity College. I interviewed Ms Bruckmann in order to find out more about a new course she will be offering next year, and also to hear her views on the English Department's treatment of women authors. I asked her what she thought about the English Department giving a course in women writers to a male professor. Although Ms Bruckmann stresses that there is no reason to suppose a male could not teach this course as well as a female, she did wonder why the Department should have overlooked the excellent female professors at the University. In fact, her concern with the way women authors are dealt with led her to submit an application for a graduate course dealing with women writers of the 17th and 18th century. This is somewhat unusual as most courses tend to

deal with women writers of the 19th century -- this being an era in which the novel predominates, and women, we are told, are most comfortable with this literary form. Professor Bruckmann's course does include female novelists, but it also covers a wide range of female poets and playwrights.

Her course is unusual for another reason. For while there will undoubtedly be some names that we will recognize (Aphra Behn, Anne Radcliff, Mary Wollstonecraft, Jane Austen), there will probably be many more women on her reading list of whom we have not yet heard (Eliza Heywood, Emily Montague, Margaret Cavendish, and Anne Finch are but a few). Ms Bruckmann believes there is a vast terrain of largely ignored but extremely well-written material that should be explored.

Surprisingly, Professor Bruckmann did not encounter much opposition from the Department when she proposed this course. Although the initial response to her request was one of silence, she eventually received a phone call from a (male) member of the Department saying he thought the course was a good idea. Ms Bruckmann does not believe the Department would have accepted a course like this twenty years ago, and says that she has noticed a tremendous change in attitudes toward women writers over the years. She did point out, however, that the Department probably considers her to be a 'safe' candidate for this type of course. Although Professor Bruckmann considers herself a feminist, she is the first to admit that she does not represent an extreme ideology. She is, in her own words, "a

traditionalist", and as such, is not seen as a threat to the Department.

One problem often encountered in the exploration of unknown literary terrain is the tendency to treat what may be disparate texts as forming a tradition or even the tradition. I asked Ms Bruckmann how she would respond to someone like Michele Barrett who questions the whole idea of creating a female tradition. Barrett sees the desire to create an alternative female tradition as merely an acceptance of patriarchal values, values that as women and feminists we should be questioning. Ms Bruckmann said she has no firm position on this issue at the moment, and stresses that this course will be a learning experience for her as well. This is why Professor Bruckmann welcomes suggestions from her students. She does not believe in formal lectures, but opts instead for discussion and exchange of ideas. Because of this, her course will be able to change direction in order to suit the needs and desires of her students.

Ms Bruckmann is well aware that a course focused on women writers raises questions that can be avoided when teaching a more conventional English course. For instance: Are there feminist modes of reading a text? Is there a 'female voice', and if there is, how does it manifest itself? Can we take a 'purely academic' approach to literature by women writers, or is it more important to address ideological concerns (or, can the two things be separated)? Should we even be treating female-authored texts differently than male-authored

texts? Obviously a course like the one Ms. Bruckmann is proposing will not be able to solve these problems, but it has the potential to tackle some extremely interesting and difficult questions.

The last question I asked Ms Bruckmann was whether or not she felt that as a woman and an academic, she has an edge over male professors when dealing with women's literature. Professor Bruckmann said that being a woman was no guarantee of being better suited for a course like this, but she does feel that, as a woman, she has a duty to explore literature by women. This course is her way of showing that she takes women's writing seriously.

Professor Bruckmann's course will commence in September 1987 and will be open to graduate students only.

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## OtherQuotes

There is no creature whose inward being is so strong that it is not greatly determined by what lies outside it.  
George Eliot, 1872

No mockery in the world ever sounds to me as hollow as that of being told to cultivate happiness...Happiness is not a potato, to be planted in mould and filled with manure.  
Charlotte Bronte  
1816-1853

Deliberately, women are given a deplorable education...While man frees himself from constraining civil and religious bonds, he is only too glad to have woman hold tightly to the Christian principle of suffering and keeping her silence.  
George Sand, 1837

You've got to have something to eat and a little love in your life before you can hold still for any damn body's sermon on how to behave.  
Billie Holiday  
1915-1959  
American singer

Women have served all these centuries as looking-glasses possessing the magic and delicious power of reflecting the figure of man at twice its natural size.  
Virginia Woolf  
1882-1941

She must not swing her arm as though they were dangling ropes, she must not switch herself this way and that; she must not shout and she must not, while wearing her bridal veil, smoke a cigarette.

Emily Post  
1873-1960  
American hostess, writer

# RAPE: WOMEN STILL CASTING DOWN THEIR EYES

By Regan McClure

Rape is an emotive word. Compared to the wincing reactions it produces, 'sexual assault' sounds like a euphemism. For women especially, it evokes a special kind of fear. The equivalent fear for men, I suppose, would be castration. For everyone it conjures up many myths about the rapist, the victim, and the crime.

One common myth is that rape is an impulsive act. In fact, 71% of all rapes are planned. In another 11% of cases, the rapist takes advantage of a woman because he realizes she is vulnerable. He is usually a casual acquaintance of the victim. Most rapists have normal psychological profiles, except for the fact that they are unusually aggressive.

The more visible world of reported rapes does not accurately reflect what usually happens. Most rapes arise out of social situations, usually dating. This is due in part to the structure of traditional dating patterns in our society, patterns which set the stage for coercion and lack of communication. This scenario is most applicable when the woman does not want to have sex but the man does.

If rape can be defined as the use of coercion, including social pressure and deception to obtain sex, the traditional dating game is a dangerous one to play. Because sex is often considered offensive, shameful and generally unmentionable, it is rude to talk about it unless it is imminent. Sex becomes a guessing game, a game of testing out the other person's desires and limitations. The man's role is assertive, while the woman's role is responsive: accepting or refusing the advances.

For a woman, dating can be full of conflicting desires. Traditionally, women are raised to think of sex in terms of consequences. They are responsible for possibly negative social repercussions. The man is not expected to have any restraints outside of what the woman imposes. The woman is often expected to 'manage' the situation, controlling the encounter while she decides which course to take.

The equivalent for men would be castration.

The danger of the dating situation arises out of the ambiguity it creates. The less that is actually said, the more room there is for the participants to change their minds or save their egos. But if all communication is

Sex becomes a guessing game.

obscured by double meanings, think of how much room is left for misunderstanding. What exactly is meant if you are asked in for a coffee? What does it mean if you ask for sugar with that?

Men are socialized to be more aggressive than women, and this is extended to include the sexual arena. Although most women have not experienced rape, all have experienced harassment. Men who stand much too close to women they are talking to, men who touch too much, men who call out to women on the street, men who rape women; all are invading the personal space of women. The aggressiveness of the act and the damage it causes differ only in degree. Women's responses differ in degree too. On the street women will cast down their eyes and walk past, fearing that any response will only draw further unwanted attention. They feel embarrassed and afraid that

drawing such attention says something about themselves. Women also feel this way when they are raped. Embarrassed and humiliated, these women feel they should keep silent, for women are traditionally taught to assume responsibility for the whole of a sexual encounter and its consequences, including a man's behaviour.

So when men and women relate to each other sexually, they typically follow social conventions. But the traditions of our society make sex so unmentionable that nothing can be said about it. This leaves the feelings, desires, and intentions of the people involved closed to discussion. Dating, with its restrained communication, stereotypical roles and unsure interactions, is the situation in which most rapes occur. Unless people change their style of interaction, the problems created by this situation will keep recurring. Some things are changing. Sex and sexuality are more acceptable topics. People can be more open about what they want and what they don't want, eliminating the emotional separation of the sexes. Communication must be opened up between the sexes, especially when dealing with sexuality. It is impossible to respect a person's wishes if you can only guess at them. After all, if we see each other as 'pricks' and 'chicks', how can we learn to treat each other as human beings?

## DSM III Part II Premenstrual Syndrome — Cause of Insanity

By Maureen Gans

Last month the American Psychiatric Association (APA) voted to include two controversial 'disorders' in their Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM III). The categories of self-defeating personality (read: masochistic personality) and perilluteal phase dysphoric disorder (premenstrual syndrome or PMS) will be included in the revised edition's appendix, despite numerous protests from both the United States and Canada, including official letters of protest from the National Action Committee on the Status of Women.

The APA's only response to these protests was to include the warning that the labels are controversial and should only be used, after much deliberation, for clinical research. As Freud's ideas about women and masochism demonstrate, the concept of the self-defeating personality has been around the mental health field for a long time. Unfortunately for women in therapy, therapists who already believe that women are masochistic will probably not heed the warning. Research that would have dealt with depression or low self-esteem before the label was accepted will now result in a proliferation of papers about 'self-defeating personality'.

The PMS label will also have repercussions. Lawyers have already used PMS as a defense for their clients' aggressive behaviour, but this has not yet been accepted by the courts. Very little is known about this physiological disorder. There is not yet an adequate definition of it, but there should be a lot of media attention focused on this category.

The APA's move shows how much power these therapists (mostly men) think they have. In spite of the protests and careful scrutiny of their reaction to controversy, they stubbornly held on to their sexist beliefs. It is rumoured that the American Psychological Association, who also did not want self-defeating personality disorder to be included in the manual, is considering the creation of their own manual. Let's hope they do it. It would improve everyone's chances of success in therapy, and it would show the psychiatrists where the real power lies: in therapy clients who won't accept diagnoses of 'self-defeat'.

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M. LYDBROOKE.

## SPARKES: A Feminist Gallery

By Chris Gladly

Heading out to the local galleries this Saturday? If so, be sure to stop off at Sparkes Gallery, 693a Queen St. West. After Gallery 940 (Queen St. East) was forced to shut down last March, Sparkes remains the only feminist gallery in Ontario.

Funded by the Ontario Arts Council along with other arts grants, Sparkes members confirm that the gallery is in a financially secure situation and does not fear closing like Gallery 940.

Upcoming events include 'Graven Images' (Contemporary Idolatry) featuring the paintings, sculpture and music of artist Catherine TAMMARO. It opens in mid February for three weeks. It is followed by 'Contemporary Women's Photography', a show of recent works by Toronto artists and an exhibition to celebrate Gay and Lesbian Pride Day.

Gallery hours are Wednesday to Sunday from 1 to 5 pm. For more information telephone 862-0470.



# Breaking the Barriers: Women Confronting Sexism and Racism

By Joanne Astley Sudds

The conference 'Women of Colour Confronting Racism and Sexism' on November 15th, was organized by The African and Caribbean Students Association (ACSA) and The Women's Centre at U of T, with contributions from SAC. Its aim was to address the experiences of women of colour who are forced to deal with racist and sexist attitudes in education, employment and the community. By sharing their experiences at this day of workshops, women of colour could hope to explore new and effective strategies for tackling inequality.

The morning workshops 'Reflections of Our Lives' (for women of colour only) and 'Making Links, Trading Places' (an open workshop), provoked such intense discussion that they ran well into the lunch break. It was already evident that the careful planning of the November 15th Committee had paid off. Rhonda Hackett, an ACSA representative, told me of the Committee's decision to have a closed workshop for women of colour only, after much debate amongst the members. The women feared alienating white women, but at the same time, felt it was more important for women of colour

to express their feelings in an environment of common experience first, before discussing their unique difficulties with other women. Lead by Carol Allen, a university student and member of the Anti-Racism Work Group, and Dionne Brand, poet, author and organizer in the black community, the women expressed their awareness of how much work has to be done in the community to challenge racism and sexism. They also voiced a strong need for continuance of these kinds of meetings. As a result, a Women's Caucus at ACSA is in the planning stages. As of yet no decision has been made as to whether the intended caucus will be open or closed. Women who are keen to become involved with this exciting new development are invited to

**We told of our experiences with sexism so that we could feel united in sisterhood.**

contact Rhonda Hackett or Carol Allen at the ACSA office, 595-5237.

The open workshop 'Making Links, Trading Places' was led by Stacey Michener of the Toronto Rape Crisis Centre and Michelle Paulse, both members of the Anti-Racism Work Group.

We told each other of our experiences with sexism so that we could feel united in sisterhood. But what about racism? As white women, we are prevented from fully understanding the circumstances of racism and are only able to appreciate the experiences from an objective point of view. The workshop heightened an awareness of how white women unconsciously oppress women of colour.

**Committee decided to have a closed workshop for women of colour only.**

'Racism and Sexism in Education' and 'Racism and Sexism in Employment' followed in the afternoon. These workshops were open to all the women and men who attended the conference. Karen Braithwaite, professor, Transitional Year Programme at U of T, spoke of education as a perpetrator of inequality and called for protest against a system that prepares students for a powerful elite with only token, middle-class women in it. After Suniti Namjoshi's eloquent fable and Nomvuyo's address on coloured youth in our education system, there was

much discussion about how to overcome the vital problems of biased curricula and the

**White women unconsciously oppress women of colour.**

predominance of white teaching staff and principals who continue to ignore the cultural lives of minority women and men.

Himani Bannerji, Eva Lloyd and Sindu Parkhu lead the workshop that gave women of colour the opportunity to voice their grievances about the work force. Women confronted the issues of hidden and overt racism and sexism and spoke out against exploitation, under-employment and unemployment.

The day closed with a discussion between all the participants of the conference and the workshop leaders. There was a general consensus that further women of colour workshops are vitally needed to promote organization and unification amongst the women. Women of colour, we hope, will have the opportunity to continue to find strategies for defying the victimization of their race and their sex.

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# Teen Fems in Toronto

continued from page 1

## Q1 WHAT IS YOUR VERSION OF FEMINISM?

-Women are equally as smart and intelligent as men. Men have to stop dominating and controlling women. Women are equal!!!

-Women being able to do whatever, whenever and wherever they want.

-Women's lib, equal rights.

-Women's lib, women working out of the home, making careers, and being equal to men.

-Equal rights for all women in society, e.g. jobs. Attaining the same 'status' as men.

-Women can do it better.

-Women are exactly the same; one disadvantage, but who cares?

-Guys should do what girls do and vice versa.

-Women should stop being put down.

-Stop being harrassed at work.

-Basically what the person might act like, they don't want help from men. They want to make it on their own. They would never become dependent on a man.

-Independent, stubborn, maybe even butchy - the more aggressive type, more able to do things by themselves and not needing other people there.

-Aggressive. I would generally say that my first impressions of the feminists wouldn't be a stereotype, I would just think of them as more independent.

## Q1 WOULD YOU CONSIDER YOURSELF A FEMINIST?

-Four said "Yes". Two said "Yes, a little."

-No, because when somebody says to me they're a feminist I think of the stereotype, the extreme, I see myself as the in between, I see myself as for equality. I think equality has sort of its own category - there's equality and then there's feminism. I think in feminists it's just the exact opposite of chauvinists - they're trying to put themselves above men.

-I'm not sure. I wouldn't consider myself a feminist 'cause - I'm not quite sure. I believe there should be equality. I don't know why I wouldn't consider myself a feminist, the word just doesn't come to mind. I would see it more as someone going out and fighting for it in society, which I'm not doing, though I would do it if my personal rights were threatened.

-I wouldn't label myself as a feminist. I believe what they believe in - that we should be equal. I think of a feminist as someone who goes out and talks about it. If I was being treated unfairly, I would do something about it, but not if it didn't affect me.



Elizabeth Czach

## The Centre SAC Won't Fund

continued from page 1

least not yet. A referendum involves an endless amount of time and energy spent educating the student body and making it aware of the issue. A centre which is only a year old doesn't have the organizational power to attempt this. Yet the Women's Center may be forced to have the referendum if SAC decided to include it, even without its consent.

The referendum could set a dangerous precedent and could also mislead the student body into believing it knows how SAC is spending its money. For example, very few students were aware that SAC spent almost \$26,000 on the U of T datebook.

The Women's Center is in a no win situation: forced to choose between a lack of SAC funding and a referendum that could undermine its objectives. To prevent this dangerous referendum, inform your SAC representative that you are against it.

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## Other Quotes

There is no female mind. The brain is not an organ of sex. As well speak of a female liver.

Charlotte Perkins Gilman, 1898

Nothing, I am sure, calls forth the faculties so much as the being obliged to struggle with the world.

Mary Wollstonecraft, 1787

Cautious, careful people, always casting about to preserve their reputation and social standing, never can bring about a reform. Those who are really in earnest must be willing to be anything or nothing in the world's estimation.

Susan B. Anthony, 1860

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### announcement

The Women's Centre is continuing its Women Writers Series with poets Rosemary Sullivan and Ahbri Zhina. Sullivan, author of *The Space a Name Makes*, and Zhina, author of *Speshal Rikwes*, will be reading at Hart House East Common Room. Call 978-8201 for information.