

SPECTRUM

The views found in SPECTRUM are not necessarily those held by the BRUNSWICKAN. Writers interested in writing for SPECTRUM should submit at least three articles of no more than 500 words each. The BRUNSWICKAN retains the right to publish material at its own discretion.

In the Pink

by James Gill

Oh my God! My roommate is a hetro!

What do you do when this happens to you?

We live in what passes for an enlightened society where discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation is frowned upon, so remember, open season on the breeders is off. I encourage you to open your mind and turn your attention to those less fortunate, the run-of-the-mill heterosexual. Heterosexuals are, in my mind, a widely misunderstood group.

If you want a truly enlightening evening, why don't you find a few heterosexual friends, and to the Social Club or the Cosmo with them so that you can see them on the "home turf" (not that we don't have a significant presence at the Cosmo!). Take particular note of the forced frivolity, drifting out for quick one-night stands full of casual loveless sex. The shy, mousey girl will no doubt be transformed before tomorrow into some blonde Hollywood Bombshell fit for bragging about to the boys. (Is Marilyn Monroe so company for the straight block?)

You should make the effort to try and understand what motivates this kind of self-destructive behaviour. I have found the following twenty questions can serve to initiate productive discussion.

1. What do you think is the cause of your heterosexuality?
2. When did you first realize that you might be heterosexual?
3. Have you told your parents? What do they think of it?
4. Are there others like you in your family?

5. Would you say that you had an inadequate mother or father figure?

6. Don't you think that your heterosexuality is just a phase which you will grow out of?

7. Are you afraid of members of your own sex?

8. Isn't it possible that what you need is a good gay lover?

9. What do you actually do in bed?

10. You put *what where*??!

11. But how can people of the opposite sex really please each other when there are such vast emotional and biological differences between them?

12. Although society gives considerable support to the institution of marriage the divorce rate is spirally. Why are there so few stable relationships among heterosexuals?

13. Is it because heterosexuals are so promiscuous?

14. There seem to be very few happy heterosexuals. Have you considered aversion therapy?

15. Why do you feel compelled to seduce others into your sexual activities?

16. Why do you insist on making such a public spectacle of your heterosexuality? Can't you just keep quiet about it?

17. More than 90 percent of child molesters are thought to be heterosexuals. Would you feel comfortable about entrusting your children's education to heterosexual teachers?

18. Why do people like you emphasize the heterosexual qualities of famous people such as film stars? Is it because you need to validate your own condition?

19. Penetrative sex is most common among heterosexual couples. Aren't you worried about the risk of getting AIDS?

20. If everybody were heterosexual like you what would happen to the world's population? Don't you think that it is rather unreasonable and irresponsible of you to insist on sleeping with people of the opposite sex?

Now, I understand that some of these questions may be a tad unfair. It is understood that sexual identity is formed at a very early age, and is unlikely to change significantly thereafter.

Our spirit of understanding and fairness does not mean approval of an active heterosexual lifestyle, and it must be made clear that there are certain aspects of heterosexual culture (how's that for oxymoron?) that quite simply are beyond the pale. You do not have to be nice to anyone wearing polyester double knits, swilling domestic beer from a can, etc. This sort of thing tears at the very fabric of gay culture, which is if nothing else, in impeccably good taste.

It is unfair to tar all heterosexuals with the same brush of bad taste. Many heterosexuals have made lasting and valuable contributions in many fields, especially reproduction, where we have allowed them to have a virtual monopoly. Their disparate dogmatism is best reflected, though, in the fact that most of them still encourage their children to be heterosexual, despite the obvious disadvantages.

LEGAL EASE

Drugs, alcohol, and the Law-Part 3

ALCOHOL AND DRIVING

Most of the laws that deal with drinking and driving are federally regulated and found in the Criminal Code. As well as applying to cars and trucks, these laws apply to any vehicle that is moved by power other than human muscle, such as boats, motorcycles, snowmobiles, all terrain vehicles and airplanes.

OVER 80

The most common offence with regard to alcohol and driving is to be found to be over the legal limit or "over 80". This means that you have more than 80 milligrams of alcohol in 100 milliliters of blood. It does not take a great deal of alcohol to push you over the legal limit. There may not even be any noticeable change in your behaviour, and there need not be any problem with your driving for a charge to be laid. Also, you do not have to be actually driving. You need only be found in "care and control" of the vehicle, which means that you are in a position to set it in motion, for example, if you are found sitting in the driver's seat.

THE ALERT (ALCOHOL LEVEL EVALUATION ROADSIDE TESTER)

This is the roadside screening device which is used to help police decide whether or not a Breathalyzer test should be administered. It has three lights on it which indicate a pass, warning or fail reading. If you get a "warning" reading, the police may suspend your licence for 24 hours and drive you home. If you fail, however, you will be asked to submit to a Breathalyzer at the police station.

LEGAL ADVICE

When you are asked to take a Breathalyzer, you have an automatic right to talk to a lawyer. This is something you should not have to ask for. As well, you should be allowed to talk to your lawyer in complete privacy.

Because the ALERT is only a screening device, and not the actual basis for a criminal charge, you do not have the right to consult with a lawyer before it is taken.

REFUSING TO TAKE A BREATH TEST

This is an offence which is just as serious as failing the test. It applies to both the ALERT and the Breathalyzer. Refusal may be verbal, but can also include actions such as not blowing hard enough to get a proper sample.

CAUSING INJURY OR DEATH

If you injure or kill someone while driving impaired, the consequences can be severe. For injuring someone, the maximum penalty is a 10 year jail term. If you kill someone, the penalty rises to 14 years. As well as being charged with impaired driving, in this situation you could also be charged with "Criminal Negligence Causing Death". This offence carries a

maximum penalty of life imprisonment. This is a very serious offence because it means that you are ignoring the fact that your actions could cause danger to the lives and safety of other people.

Failing the ALERT is not an offence and the results of the test cannot be used in court as evidence. What this device does is give the police grounds to get a Breathalyzer reading from you.

THE BREATHALYZER

You cannot be stopped and asked to submit to a Breathalyzer without reason. However, if the police see that you are not driving well, or you have been stopped for a traffic violation, such as speeding, you may be asked to take the test. Anything that gives police reason to believe that you have been drinking is reason enough. The police do not need a reason to ask you to take the ALERT, but if you fail it, they have good reason to ask you to take the Breathalyzer.

You do not have to be in your car to be asked to take the test, if the police have good reason to believe that you were driving while impaired within the last two hours. For example, the police might see you leave a party and follow you home before demanding a breath sample.

BLOOD SAMPLES

In some cases the police can demand a blood sample if the driver is unable to provide a breath sample. For example, some people have respiratory problems that would prevent their being able to blow hard enough to make the machine work. Or, if someone is unconscious, the police may obtain permission to get a blood sample. This can only be done with a warrant issued by a judge. Blood samples may only be taken under the supervision of a doctor.

CONSEQUENCES

Whatever criminal penalties result from driving while impaired, you are also sure to lose your licence to drive for a period of 3 months to 3 years. If you cause injury or death to someone, the court can suspend your licence for as long as it sees fit. This means that you could lose your privilege to drive for life. As well, you may be hit hard financially as many insurance companies will not cover someone who caused an accident while driving impaired. Even if you are covered, you can be sure that your insurance premiums will rise dramatically if you are caught driving impaired, whether you cause an accident or not.

Note: The information presented in this article was derived from a booklet entitled Drugs, Alcohol and the Law, which was published by the Public Legal Education Association of Saskatchewan (PLEA).

THE WOMAN'S ROOM

International Women's Day

(N.B. The information contained in this article is based on a historical sketch from the New Brunswick Women's Directorate's International Women's Day package.)

Every year, women throughout the world celebrate International Women's Day on March 8th. Steeped in a history of women's fight for equality, it has come to symbolize the efforts of women to create a better world.

The origins of International Women's Day can be traced back to the early twentieth century when women in Europe and North America were fighting for better working conditions, demanding their right to vote, and as the First World War escalated, led for peace. The early twentieth century witnessed numerous strikes involving thousands of women in major centres such as New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, Toronto, and Montreal. A strike of female garment workers in New York on March 8, 1957 and second strike fifty years later by textile workers are often cited as the events which gave rise to the formal observance of International Women's Day.

On March 8, 1908, women's suffrage was discussed at a meeting of the New York City Social Democratic Women's Society, and on February 23, 1909, two thousand people in New York attended the first National Women's Day. Sponsored by the American Socialists, the event focused on women's rights and suffrage. At the International Socialist Women's Meeting in 1910, Louise Zietz and Clara Zetkin suggested the designation of a day for women. By 1911, International Women's Day was celebrated Europe as well as in North America.

International Women's Day, then, is about celebration, but is also about women's struggle for equality, peace, and a better world. Today, almost 80 years after the first celebration of International Women's Day, we continue the struggle. Many people (especially men) remind us that feminism is such a new phenomenon; that change will take time. But Betty Friedan did not invent feminism in the 1960's (nor, for that matter, did Simone de Beauvoir invent it in the 1940's). We all seem to forget that the first wave of modern feminism dates back to the end of the nineteenth century. We could even say that modern feminism began with the publication of Mary Wollstonecraft's *Vindication of the Rights of Women* in 1792. A rudimentary check of history reveals that women have said what women say now as far back as the eleventh century. Feminism is not new; it is as old as human

Yes, we finally obtained the right to vote (in 1918 at the federal level in Canada) and yes, we were declared "persons" under the law in 1929, and yes, the Supreme Court of Canada did declare therapeutic abortion committees unconstitutional in 1988...and yes, we've come a long way as those cigarette ads remind us, but we've still got a long way to go. Women still earn about two thirds of what men earn, just as we did in the Middle Ages (we still perform a majority of the planet's unpaid work). At N.B., women still make up less than 20% of the professoriate. Violence against women is on the rise (in New Brunswick there were 40,000 assaults against women in 1989 - twice the national average), but Michael Wilson's February budget cut financing to women's centres across the country (Wilson suggested that provinces and municipalities should pick up the slack where federal financing has fallen through - yeah, right!). Five emergency shelters for women in New Brunswick have already closed or are about to. And in December, 1989, a man who said that he hated feminists killed fourteen women engineering students at the Université de Montréal's Ecole Polytechnique.

As we enter the 1990's, the feminist movement faces a new challenge. Because the second wave of feminism began on university campuses in the 1960's, it has focused mainly on the concerns of white, middle class, able-bodied, university educated North American women and has largely ignored the issues that concern less privileged women. International Women's Day is a good time for "privileged" women (like myself) to begin to think about (or to continue thinking about) the ways in which we discriminate against and oppress other women, i.e., women of colour, working class women, lesbians, immigrant women, disabled women.

While International Women's Day serves to remind us of our struggles, both past and present, it is also a day when we can take the time to rejoice in our strength and our victories. Unfortunately, this column has come a week late and many of you may have missed some of the events scheduled for the day. However, you can still catch the Fredericton Women's Theatre Collective's production of *Flights* (written, directed and performed by local women) tonight and tomorrow night at 8 p.m. at the Memorial Hall Theatre.