

# Spectrum

## BLACK TRIANGLE BY BJ

Recently there has been a fair amount of attention placed on the adoption of children by Gay/Lesbian couples. Much of the opposition involved is the lack of male or female "Role Models". Other opposition includes mentally harming children exposed to homosexuality and the morality of homosexuality.

What are male or female role models? In the past role models were distinct. Women stayed home, raised children, and provided for everyone's needs. Men went to work, furnished a home, and provided for everyone's needs. Men went to work, furnished a home and provided financially for

the family. Today these roles exist by choice. Many two parent heterosexual families have both parents in the work force. In some families men are staying home to raise children and "keep house". There is also a rising number of women in traditionally male jobs such as forestry, mining, shipbuilding, armed forces, etc... With these changes there are no "set in stone" roles, roles consists of what each parent fills.

This next brings me to the single parent family. Single men and women have the right to adopt. These people are asked why they would want children before they have a spouse, but are otherwise

not prevented from adopting. With the rise of single parent families due to divorce, childbirth, and death there is an increasing number of children growing up with one "role model". Gay/Lesbian partners have worked around the problem of adoption by proceeding as a single parent. The other partner then shares the responsibilities of childcare.

Concerns that homosexuality of Gay/Lesbian parents will hurt the children are unfounded. Parents do not normally practise sexual habits in front of their children (whether hetero- or homosexual). As for hugs and kisses, it is a normal practise amongst all age and

sex groups and should be encouraged more often; just ask Leo Basqualia (professor at University of California). Studies done on children who have been raised by Gay/lesbian parents did not discover any adverse problems. These children developed normally, as do children in single parent and parents of opposite sex families.

Another opposition to Gay/Lesbian parenting includes the risk of making the children homosexual. The likelihood of homosexual children occurring in a homosexual family is as likely as homosexual children occurring from a heterosexual family. Most of us (Gays and Lesbians) originate from

heterosexual unions.

The morality or immorality of homosexuality is dependant on ones beliefs. Religious, ethnic and racial groups past and present have not considered homosexuals as unnatural or deviant. In the case of Christian doctrine (which is what Canadian/American laws are based on), views on homosexuality varies from one denomination to the next. When an individual or couple approaches the courts concerning the adoption of a child what should be examined is the prospective parents ability to provide, care, and love for the future family. Gays/Lesbians and bisexuals should not have to hide.

## THE RIGHT TO PARENT

## FOREST BREEZE

BY MICHELE MACNEIL

As I was watching T.V. the other day, a particular music video caught my attention. The song, which was written by a group of artists, was promoting the preservation of our environment and thinking "green". During most of the video, they show large masses of people with banners which read "STOP CLEAR-CUTTING" and "SAVE OUR EARTH". Video footage of clearcuts are shown as evidence of the degradation forest companies are doing to the planet.

Every day, in newspapers, on the radio, and on T.V., the media is constantly bombarding us with biased information on forestry topics such as clearcutting. It is true that clearcuts are not very aesthetically pleasing; however, we should not associate the word clearcutting with the destruction of the planet. Clearcutting is simply a method of extracting timber. Timber extraction is a century old practice without which we could not survive.

If there is concern, it should be focused on the specifics involved with clearcutting such as site suitability and the size of the clearcut. Prior to government regulations, the size of clearcuts was unregulated and therefore led to unwise management practices. It is often these old unregulated clearcuts which the public and the media remember and focus on when thinking of clearcutting.

What bothers me the most is that when we talk of degradation and the environment, there is never any mention of the effects of agriculture. I have never seen blockades of people with "SAVE THE POTATO FIELDS" or "SAVE THE SOIL" banners. Agriculture is one of the most unregulated practices and contributes to more than 50% of the amount of erosion and soil degradation that forestry practices could ever account for. Agriculture fields are planted each year and completely extracted at the end

of the season. This leaves the bare soil highly susceptible to erosion.

The soil, which is composed of various layers of horizons, contains the nutrients and minerals which are necessary to sustain survival and growth of vegetation. Forest soils have the added nutrients of decaying organic matter such as dead trees, branches, and leaves. In most clearcutting operations, trees are delimed on site and therefore can contribute to the nutrient pool for future trees. In many situations, the regeneration after clearcutting is so great, that we decide to manage the stand for that species rather than planting. Balsam fir for example can commonly regenerate to 50 000 stems per hectare or greater. This number can be compared to plantations which are ideally 2000 stems per hectare. Therefore it is false to say that clearcutting equals the degradation of an area. In fact, it merely promotes a different stage in the life

cycle of a stand in terms of regeneration and establishment.

Agricultural soils, once extracted, cannot regenerate. The rate of soil erosion in northern New Brunswick is so high in some areas, that potato fields are being planted in a ploughed layer over the bedrock layer. This is due to the fact that all the middle layers have been eroded and washed away. The soil is being drained of every nutrient possible and extensively fertilized to compensate for the losses. Lastly, herbicides are used excessively every year while in forestry practices they might use herbicides 2-3 times in an 80 year period.

The point I am trying to make with all this, is that the practice of forestry is in many ways very much like the practice of agriculture. They have the same basic goal of planting and managing a species in order to extract it for our use when it becomes mature. Forest management practices have

greatly changed in the past decade and are continuing to change. Wildlife habitat, recreation, and aesthetics are playing greater roles in forest management prescriptions. I fear however that the public may be getting false information when it come to practices such as clearcutting. If we want to enhance and protect our environment, we need to get a broader picture of things and learn to listen to the media with caution. Forestry practices are not the only ones which have an effect on the environment; however they always seem to be the ones in the spotlight. This is because the media makes us believe that if something is not aesthetically pleasing, it has to be bad. We must understand that clearcutting is simply a tool which, if practiced with care, can be very useful and more helpful than we might think. The bottom line is KEEP AN OPEN MIND and GET INFORMED.

## STOP PICKING ON CLEARCUTTING

## WIMMIN'S ROOM BY MCBAIN

The all-too-brief article by Denyelle Theriault in *The Brunswickan* did not give one hint as to what went on at the forum held by the Wimmings Collective. This is a result of the reporter only staying twenty minutes while the forum went on close to three hours. The point of getting women to talk about their fears on campus was to break the ice and get the conversation going.

At the forum, (no, not the one on wednesday night) the topic of safety on campus was discussed. We all pinpointed areas on campus where we felt unsafe: the parking lots, dark hall ways or the Social

Club at closing time. However the point was raised that most women are attacked by someone they know either in their own home or at the attacker's place, either a dorm room or an apartment.

So what are women to do now? I have taken the self-defence courses, I have the handy rape whistle, the mace, my keys... But will any of this training be useful in a situation in a dorm or at a house party? I am tired of arming myself to go to night classes when the real problem lies in places that do not seem threatening. Do I have to arm myself to go to bars or even for a walk?

No, I refuse to. I am exhausted from the stress and worry of always looking over my shoulder. It is not just me, this is a common experience for many women on campus and in the cities. It is time for men to start doing something since it is predominantly men who are attacking women. Beefing up safe-walk and adding a few light bulbs are only short term quick fix-its. These band aids are not stopping the bleeding.

One initiative would be to get people talking. The open night at the dorms was a start, but holding one once in a blue moon is not effective. Simply talking will not

solve the problem. Concrete solutions must be implemented. These solutions should be a result of consensus between men and women on this campus. I realize I am talking for a fundamental change of values but get off your ass and do something to help. For example, the December 6 ribbon campaign is about to start...

P.S. Please do not complain about the collective holding a women's only meeting. Both women and men need to get together to talk about the misogyny on campus, to eliminate it an open dialogue is necessary. But please give us our space to deal with the

events on campus. If you are so anxious to hear about what goes on at these meetings leave a message in our mailbox at the help centre or simply ask.

The opinions expressed above are not necessarily those of *The Brunswickan*, its editorial board or its publishers. *Spectrum* submissions should be no longer than 300 words in length, and a minimum of three columns must be submitted in advance.

## THE FORUM AND ITS PURPOSE