

# SPECTRUM

The views found in Spectrum are not necessarily those held by the *Brunswickan*. People interested in writing for Spectrum must submit at least three (3) type-written articles of no more than 500 words each to the *Brunswickan*. The *Brunswickan* retains the right to publish material at its discretion.

## METANOIA

By John Valk (Campus Ministry)

# Stewards of the earth

The first ever satellite pictures showing the earth as a ball with a bluish tinge against the black backdrop of space brought home a startling message. The earth is finite. Space is cold, dark and lonely. There are no other known places of refuge in the far reaches of space.

In light of our staggering environmental crisis these facts are rather sobering. The satellite images made it clear that we must treat our delicate eco-system with great sensitivity, or perish. We were also reminded that we have not done well in "subduing the earth and having dominion over it" (Gen. 1:28). Did we think that having dominion meant seeking convenience and luxury and doing what we pleased? Did we think that our ultimate concern was really liberating the soul from the confines of this physical "prison"? Did we fail to appreciate that to be fully human means to be "at one" with God, each other and the earth?

We often think of dominion

in terms of control. But control smacks too much of power, and power tends toward abuse, oppression and corruption. We have forgotten that there is another side to having dominion. That has to do with stewardship.

The Judaeo-Christian Scriptures speak of stewardship in the same breath as dominion. God instructed humans to "dress and keep the garden" (Gen. 2:15). To "keep" something means to preserve it while at the same time using it.

We need the earth to "make" ourselves. We depend upon it for physical survival, but also for much more. Through appropriating physical things -- the earth and things thereof -- we develop as technical, social, cultural and religious beings. That is, we become human.

Let me illustrate. The earth brings forth wheat and grapes. Using technical skills, we make wheat into bread and grapes into wine. In the context of a social gathering we consume bread and wine (in whatever

form that suits our fancy), as part of our cultural tradition. Consuming that same bread and wine, now as sacraments within a worshipping community, is part of a particular (ie. Christian) spiritual tradition. Engaging in these, or other activities, potentially develops us as humans. We were not meant to be "couch-potatoes."

In the West we have placed most emphasis on the development of technical skills. We have neglected the earth which brings forth things we need. Our social skills or concerns leave a lot to be desired. And, growing as spiritual beings or as religious communities wanes because we have little or no time or interest. Furthermore, we are led to believe it is not important. However, it is our religious growth and development in particular that is crucial in regard to earthkeeping.

The Judaeo-Christian scriptures make it very clear in numerous places that God is

the Creator of the heavens and the earth. The earth belongs to God; it is not an "accident" of time and space, nor the private property of certain individuals or groups of individuals.

Humans are, however, rulers of the earth. They are to have "dominion" over land, water, animals, etc. But our dominion is delegated, it is not absolute. Moreover, dominion is to be understood in terms of stewardship. That is, we are to manage in a responsible manner the earth and its resources.

Men have not been the best managers. The present crisis testifies to that. Its time to share managing responsibilities equally with women. After all, it is men and women together as a community, not as individuals, that are made in the image of God. Part of that imaging has to do with a shared managing of the earth and its resources.

There is one more crucial aspect. In the Christian tradition especially there is the divine promise of salvation and

redemption. That salvation and redemption is extended also to the earth and the physical part of our being. The miracles of Jesus point to this. They were not attention seeking gimmicks. The healing of the sick, lame etc. was a foretaste of what was to come. That is fully restored humanity entails a restored body as well as a restored soul. By extension, that means also a restored earth or nature.

People have a great role to play in that redemption and restoration. At minimum, it means that we must be stewardly; preserving what we have been given is paramount. The Bible does not give a blueprint for that, but it does give direction. The Hebrew prophet Micah summarizes it beautifully: "And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly, love mercy and walk humbly with your God" (Micah 6:8). We are to be free and creative, but we must also be responsible in exercising that freedom and creativity.

## GAY FORUM

By Terry Richards

# Coming together

For me GALA (nova Scotia) is a place I've been able to meet other gay people dealing with the same questions that I'm trying to answer. It's fun, informative, and I've made a wonderful sense of community and made many friends".

(From a member of N.S.'s branch of the Gay and Lesbian Alliance).

Dealing with one's sexuality can often be one of the toughest obstacles to overcome. It is even tougher when you feel you are alone with no one to confide in. In hindsight of my life the process of acceptance and ultimately coming out was a thousand times more difficult that it might have been because I

didn't have the support to deal with my anxiety.

For years many cities like Ottawa and Halifax have had peer support groups for gays, lesbians, and bi-sexuals. In March of 1989 Fredericton became another city to have that distinction with the creation of the Gay and Lesbian Alliance (GALA).

GALA provides a comfortable non-judgmental atmosphere where gay people can meet and feel free to exchange ideas and opinions, while at the same time learn more about what it means to be gay, lesbian, or bi-sexual. The discussion group also provides information and an open forum for current social

and political issues of concern to the gay community. Of the many topics we will be dealing with are homophobia, coming out to parents, and self-esteem.

GALA in association with UNB's Counselling Services, also offers peer counselling at the Alumni Memorial Bldg. Visit Counselling Services or call 453-4820 for more information.

One of the objectives of GALA this year is to provide a positive social atmosphere where gay people can meet others like themselves and share happy experiences. In addition to regular meetings we will be having movie nights where films such as "Torch Song Trilogy" and "Longtime

Companion" will be shown. We also hope to have another social event in January to raise money for AIDS New Brunswick.

In response to the distinctive needs of the gay community a number of guest speakers will be called upon to address various issues of concerns to gays, lesbians and bi-sexuals. Members of the NB Human Rights Coalition and Aids NB will be called upon to make presentations.

Your years at university can be difficult enough without the added stresses that dealing with issues of sexuality brings. You do not have to be gay or lesbian to come to a meeting.

If you are not sure about your sexuality, if you or someone you know is close to coming out of the closet, or if you just have questions we can help.

You do not have to give your name, you just have to be interested. We look forward to seeing you. We have regular meetings every two weeks and you can find out the time and locale from the "Brunswickan" or the Student Union Bldg. Attendance is free of charge.

If you do not feel comfortable in coming to a meeting you can get in touch with one of us through Counselling Services, a Don or Proctor, Campus Ministry, or through the SUB Offices.

Engagement  
two very sym  
ant events in  
The union o  
marriage inv  
ges, not the l  
change in leg  
planning a  
important tha  
the requireme  
age and ensur  
sary formaliti  
Are there a  
uences attach  
to breaking a  
ment?

Many peop  
prised to le  
gagement is  
contract to  
person. Und  
stances, a per  
engagement  
pay damage  
party, his  
finance(e).

What ha  
between co  
couples from  
engage-ment

G

Re  
is