

The Conference on Women in Universities Invading Hart House to examine academic roles

By MAXINE KOPEL

Liberation: "It's the freedom to do what you really want to do."

That statement, which is the ideal of millions over the world, was made at the opening of the fourth annual Conference of Women in Colleges and Universities, held at the University of Toronto Hart House November 7-9. It was an excellent opportunity for Canadian women to get together and exchange ideas, experiences, and beliefs in the women's movement.

The conference was sponsored by various groups: the Privy Council, Secretary of State, the Ontario Government, and the Students' Administrative Council, the Dean's office, and the Faculty of Arts and Sciences at the U. of T. The participants paid \$13. each for the weekend for registration, a banquet, and a play. Transportation fares were paid for if the applicant stated long enough in advance that she required such financial assistance. (Out of town guests were housed by Toronto participants).

As organizer Ceta Ramkhalawansingh said, "we're organizing the conference in a very limited kind of way... with the budget... we didn't know until yesterday (Thursday) how much money we had."

Toronto was not the first choice for the conference site; it was originally scheduled for Edmonton. This attempt failed; only

one Edmonton student participated in the women's conference last year, and no committee was established to coordinate this year's event. From Edmonton it was moved to Vancouver, where the support staff at Simon Fraser University went on strike, forcing the cancellation of the conference. So, the convention finally settled in Toronto, where an active co-ordinating staff began working.

It's rather uncanny that Hart House was the heart of the activities, since it has been a male-dominated structure for so many years. (One female reports she was kicked out just four years ago while silently studying amongst a mass of males.)

However, in this liberal day, women are seen passing through its doors; perhaps the conference was held there for some subconscious feminist reason.

Saturday's opening address was Education for women, given by Greta Nemiroff from Montreal. Nemiroff stated that the "university makes students feel like diminished people by asking them to forget their feeling." When universities examine themselves, it is usually for economic purposes.

Some universities feel that women's studies are not necessary, according to Homemaker's Magazine. Some people view the educational process as an excellent opportunity for men to better them-



Maxine Kopel photo

Women from universities and colleges across Canada gathered at Hart House last weekend to discuss academic and social issues.

elves, but a waste of time for women. This kind of attitude and molding discourages women from completing a university education. Between 1980 and 1990 enrolment is expected to decrease by 46 per cent and, according to Hemiroff, women's studies will go first.

Nemiroff stated that we should radicalize the feminism of the universities; women should work as a whole, as an entity.

"We don't have to justify ourselves to anyone... be a good feminist and don't worry about explaining why you want to be yourself."

A workshop headed by Toron-

tonian Leslie Lewis on "How to do a status of women report" explained how to set up committees and so on.

Miss Lewis was involved in doing a general report of women across Canada. Another such workshop discussed the process and steps in starting a women's centre.

A report concerning the status of women in Ontario universities was handed to each registrant; there were also talks on women's studies, the future of women in colleges and universities, and elitism in university women, delivered by York professor Johanna Stuckey.

"Women do not have equality of participation with men as students at any level in the Ontario university system," stated a report by L.C. Payton. According to statistics, fewer women than men applied to universities in 1973 and their choices of programmes differed from their male counterparts. Fifty-one per cent of women went into the arts, while only 29 per cent went into science. "Traditional female occupations, including education, household science, nursing, rehabilitative medicine, and social work accounted for the majority of women. (Only 23 per cent applied for business, and only 4 per cent for engineering and applied science.)"

Why is this? The situation may have surfaced from "basic attitudes on the part of society as a whole, from parental beliefs, from counselling in the secondary schools, or from the liaison activities of the universities," says Payton.

It's interesting to note that, relying on information provided by the Statistics Canada University Faculty Salary Analysis System, the average salary for women was fully 25 per cent below the average salary for men (except for lecturers with doctoral degrees). For example, in 1973-74, a full professor (male) holding a doctorate degree received, on the average, \$26,680 a year, while a female professor holding a doctorate degree received \$24,056. The same job, but not the same pay. There were 1,731 male professors compared to only 54 female professors in Ontario that year.

On Sunday, a discussion on the Future of Women in Colleges and Universities was presented, along with an informal wrap-up session.

The weekend was an educational one; it gave women the chance to explain their thoughts and speak their minds about issues that pertain to women everywhere: the right to be regarded and treated as equals in a male-oriented society.

Stuckey cites York phallic favouritism

By BRENDA WEEKS

"When I first got into university work, I was extremely proud and I was surprised as a woman to have gotten the job," said Johanna Stuckey, professor of Humanities at York at last weekend's national conference of university women.

In her address on "Elitism in University Women", Stuckey admitted that there was a time when she treated her students as children, when she was condescending to her secretary and when she insisted on being called by her title and her last name.

Stuckey spent some time discussing the Status of Women report which she and her committee presented to the York senate last year. She said that, while the national average percentage of women faculty mem-

bers at universities is nine per cent, the figure at York is 20 per cent.

"And yet we at York are treated no better," she said. "The cost of a penis at York is about \$500 a year."

Stuckey also pointed out a \$4,000 salary differential between male and female full-time professors at York. Women get a lower pension when they retire; support staff women are tied to a grade system (which provides no on-the-job training); and they have few role models to follow.

"Let's face it," said Stuckey. "Women are in the dead-end jobs with a point system that values only the lowly 'female' skills such as typing and shorthand."

"And then there are the out-and-out prejudices which maintain that women are weaker because of

the three M's—menstruation, maternity and menopause. The female cleaning staff at York earns 65 cents an hour less than its male counterpart due to this sex-role stereotyping."

In her concluding address, Stuckey said, "All women have to be considered human being and treated accordingly. We must work towards setting up women's studies programmes; we must gather strength and help one another. Women have to be encouraged all the way down the line, but nothing will get done until women get into positions of power."

Press 'saboteur' breaks ranks

By BRENDA WEEKS

The fourth annual National Conference of Women in Colleges and Universities, held at Hart House last weekend, ended in a fiasco.

As the final resolutions were being brought to the floor, the conference was infiltrated by what many of the women referred to as a saboteur.

Ann Semaan, a delegate from Western, informed conference organizer Kay Armatage that she intended to write a story for The Globe and Mail about the extravagance of the conference.

HEATED CONFRONTATION

After a half hour of what Armatage called "heated confrontation" with Semaan, the conference's finance commissioner, Ceta Ramkhalawansingh, burst into the debate room practically in tears.

"We have just been accused by a delegate from Western," she announced over the microphone, "that this convention has squandered tax-payers' money for the purpose of bringing women together 'just to talk'."

A SMALLER ROOM

The regional representatives

reconvened in a smaller room where they attempted to justify conference expenditures to Semaan.

In response to Semaan's charge that "out of a budget of over \$17,000, only ten hours of the conference time were devoted to meetings", Penny Bar Eccles, a delegate from Vanier College in Quebec said that "the entertainment we had was important and relevant to the convention. Since this is a women's convention, we had performances from women well worth seeing."

The convention included a one-hour chamber music recital by various women music students from the U. of T. and a two-hour vocal concert by folk-singer Nancy Simmons on Saturday night.

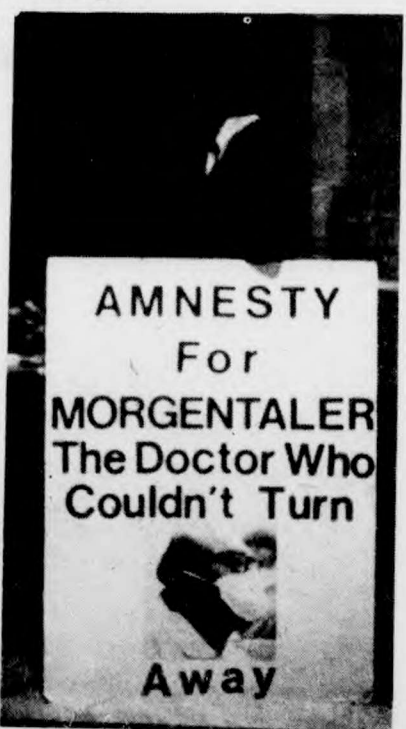
MORE QUESTIONS

Semaan also questioned the budget and the accomplishments of the convention, which were defended by Eccles, Armatage and Ramkhalawansingh.

The conference ended as delegates left to catch trains and planes back to their home cities.

Semaan's article, printed in Monday's Globe and Mail, is probably

the only coverage the weekend conference will receive in the commercial media. Armatage said that press releases were sent to all the local papers but that only The Globe and Mail provided coverage.



Maxine Kopel photo

Photo is self-explanatory.

