

Who needs Sting anyway?

By SUZAN BUTYN

Imagine sitting in a pub, toasting freedom with your friends and suddenly being hauled away and arrested. This is the message York Amnesty International (YAI) wants to send out to students: appreciate your human rights.

YAI's benefit concert, "Sting Couldn't Make It (But Who Cares Anyway?)" will help finance on-campus Human Rights education. The benefit features four Canadian independent bands — Baby Judas, The Sofa Kings, Itsa Skitsa, and The Plastercine Replicas. The event will take place Friday, October 21 at Founders Dining Hall at 8 p.m. Tickets are \$6 in advance and \$8 at the door.

YAI hopes 350 people will attend the show. All proceeds will be used to promote this year's "Human Rights Now" theme. Door profits will be made possible since the CYSF, Founders College, Red She Said Productions, and CHRY are covering operational expenses. Also, the four bands are donating their time.

The York Chapter will stress the theme through educational tools, including seminars, forums, and films. "It is crucial," YAI Director Victoria Bowman emphasizes, "that students understand the privilege of being able to think freely."

Fundamental to the organization is the belief that the "importance of public opinion cannot be underestimated" in the international arena.



York's very own Human Rights Now concert will be held on October 21 in Founders Dining Hall, 8 p.m.

Amnesty International works to free prisoners of conscience who do not use or advocate violence. Bowman stresses, "If a prisoner of conscience has committed violence, it doesn't mean we don't support them, but it means we can't work for their immediate release because they can now be charged with criminal acts. It is equally important that Amnesty International not be accused of supporting terrorists."

The organization's beauty, Bowman says, is in its simplicity.

"The effectiveness of Amnesty International is in its narrow mandate — the publicity of Human Rights abuses, the same rights that were guaranteed in the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights, chartered on December 10, 1948."

York Amnesty International has 150 registered volunteers. If you would like to become involved, contact Victoria Bowman, 120 Founders College, at 739-1892.

Authors speak out at fest

By LORRAYNE C. ANTHONY

"Women, words and the world," an interview with four distinguished female authors, took place last weekend as part of the International Festival of Authors.

Margaret Atwood, Jan Morris, Nayantara Sahgal, and Marta Tikkanen were interviewed by Canadian journalist Susan Crean, who focused the discussion on life as a female writer.

When asked how they felt about being part of a panel made up of women, Marta Tikkanen replied, "Irritated." Could you imagine an interview entitled, "Men, Words and the World?"

Nayantara Sahgal, born in India and educated in the United States, writes about Indian people and politics from a novelist and journalistic perspective. She explained that because Indian social structures are rigid, women are thought of as their husband's property.

Sahgal said that writers do not know the real India. They are of the educated upper class, so they have no concept of the people and their suffering.

Marta Tikkanen, born and edu-

cated in Finland, hinted at the danger that surrounded the publication of her novel, *Manrape* in 1975. "If the book had not been published in Sweden, where the feminist movement was stronger than in Finland, I would not be here on this stage."

Manrape tells the story of a woman who is raped, and then takes revenge by raping her attacker. Prepared to pay for her crime, she confesses to the police, who ridicule her because, in their opinion, a man cannot be raped.

Tikkanen believes that the first phase of feminist writing is over. In the past, women were concerned with "what" the issues were — they tried to get their messages to transcend gender. Now, according to Tikkanen, women are interested in expressing themselves with new words. "We are going out into the wilderness, where there are no paths for us to follow," she said.

Crean tried to coax the ever-popular Atwood into discussing her new novel, *Cat's Eye*, but Atwood was more interested in Canadian female writers, saying that there are no overt barriers that they encounter.

She reminisced about her last teaching position, at York, where she and her class discussed adjectives used to describe writers. Male writers who had political opinions are "men with political opinions," while female writers were labelled "opinionated." Women who wrote well "transcended their sex," and women who did not write well "wrote like housewives."

Morris, one of the most talked-about travel writers, provided a lighter side to the interview. Morris, who had a sex change operation, said that in England, being a respected writer is a matter of class, not sex. "As long as you are educated and of the upper class, it doesn't matter what sex you are . . . probably because they are so under-sexed themselves." She added that there are actually advantages to being a female journalist. "Nobody thinks a woman is threatening, so men are nice to you."

"Yes, they may be nice to you, but they still rape you," Tikkanen interrupted.

The International Festival of Authors runs to October 22. For more information about the festival phone 973-3000.

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