

'Women in university' discussed at recent forum

By KATHY WESTMAN

Do women cause their own problems or are contemporary social arrangements stacked against them? Both opinions were expressed at a recent forum on Women in the University put on by the Humanities Society in the Saint Thomas faculty lounge on February 20.

Women are under-represented and underpaid at Canadian Universities if recent statistics can be trusted. Allegations have been also made that women are stereotyped into conflicting academic and social roles and are being denied career opportunities.

The moderator was Genny Nielson from Harriet Irving Library. She welcomed the guest panelists: Vicki Gray from the Psychology Department, UNB; Kathy Strouch from the Sociology Department, STU; Karen Cooke a fourth year student at STU; and Dr. Mary Ella Milham from the Classics Department, UNB.

Nielson made a few opening remarks quoting statistics from the Status of Women in Canada as well as some University Reports. She stated that the average salary of women is about \$2,000 less than for men.

She quoted a report the University of British Columbia had done on the Status of Women at their university. Women were 18.1 percent of their faculty and earned about \$1,700 less than their male colleagues. The statistics showed that the women were at lower ranks and tended to stay there longer. In a breakdown, 38 percent of the first year class was female; 29 percent of those in Masters degree programs; and 17 percent in Doctoral degree programs.

Vicki Gray was the first panelist to talk. She discussed the pressures that females encounter. Some of these pressures stem from the stereotyped female role - a young girl is encouraged to achieve high marks in grade school, but, when she enters high school, she is given a double standard. It is still good to have high marks but she must also be successful socially and often the latter receives the most emphasis. There is also a pressure against overt aggressive and competitive behavior. She felt there was a decrease in these pressures in early college, but they increased in the last two years.

In Graduate school, both men and women have the same academic standards to uphold, but there are consistent with the man's "masculinity" and are at odds with the woman's "femininity". If a woman is married the question is, "Who takes the job?" or, "Who is the one to move or change jobs?"

In regards to women in faculty, she said that if in a faculty or staff meeting when a woman and man were having an argument over a point the man's behavior would be judged as anger, the woman's as emotional and overly involved.

She stated that "if all concrete things were equal the problem still wouldn't be solved. You have to change what is acceptable for a female to do. What's acceptable for a female to do is anything a female does."

The next speaker was Kathy Strouch. She began by saying that a woman needs university training to get a high status job and that we have to have a university setting that is favourable to women and will encourage them to get a higher education so they don't have to

fight their way through. She said that society should be using person power.

She felt that females at the faculty level made an important contribution. Strouch said that they should serve as role models, that it was important to see women in positions suggesting that they have some knowledge and responsibility. She said it showed female students that there were more options and that a woman can handle a variety of different situations. She felt that it was important that male students get familiar with and learn how to work with women.

Speaking of Sociology she stated that "a study of society that ignored 50 percent of the population is hardly adequate." She felt that sociology treated sex as simply another variable.

She felt that men and women do in fact live in different worlds with different life chances and life styles. She felt that their expectations of the world were different to them. She said that both are expected to uphold different norms and that there were advantages and disadvantages for both. She said that women tended to see the problems they encounter as personal affronts but that this is to a large extent not true. It is because of the interpretation of the female role by society.

The next speaker was Karen Cooke. She said that when she was asked to speak she felt that she hadn't encountered any problems. She felt she had developed a par for the course attitude.

She gave two incidences of discrimination, whether overt or not, she had encountered. At the end of her third year she decided she wanted to specialize in Criminology so she applied to the University of Ottawa. She received a reply stating that her marks were good but that she failed two psychology courses that they required, but if she got some

experience they would consider her. After inquiring she found that the closest place she could get experience was at Kingston, Ontario. But they said they couldn't hire her because one part of her job would be to supervise the shower rooms and that occasionally there would be a few men. It was then suggested that she take an applied course from the University of Ottawa. She would be taking courses in Ottawa doing her practical in Kingston. She said she couldn't see herself commuting between Kingston and Ottawa so she gave up the idea.

She has now decided to go into law and has made an application. She said she was talking to a third year law student who, after looking her up and down, said her chances of being accepted were good. He lead her to believe rightly or wrongly, "that women were accepted for a form of relaxation for the males who are actually going to be the lawyers."

She felt that it was hard to find a unity between her social and academic lives. She said that when she gets a good mark, people think it is because she has been studying for it for the last three months. They feel that she could not have been out playing tennis, for example, the day before. She said that at times she felt that it was not worth all the pressures academically and otherwise.

Milham was the last speaker. She started her talk by saying "Thank God nobody asks us whom we sleep with anymore." She said that she felt she must warn the female students on campus not to get involved romantically with a professor. She said at one time faculty members, if suspected, could be fired. She said that there is the possibility of exploitation on one side or the other.

She felt that graduate students were more vulnerable and that the girls may wish to advance themselves or to lord it over their friends. She said it was particu-

larly dangerous to a graduate student's career.

She said that she has no evidence that such things happen at UNB but she has heard of instances elsewhere where a professor purposely gave a freshette a low mark and then told her the terms of better marks. She said, "There are ways of conveying to men that he'd better not." She said the girl should take it to the head of the department.

She said that in the United States men never saw girls behind closed doors, simply to protect themselves against accusation. This could happen both ways, Milham said. A girl could justly or unjustly accuse a male professor.

She felt that the thing a girl needed most was her dignity. Milham also stated that it was a lack of wisdom on the part of women, not discrimination, that caused most of their problems.

She said, "A great many women slit their own throats by playing sexual (feminine) games" and that wanting a man to treat them as sexual beings on the job damages a woman's career. She said women expect men to behave like persons and that women should do the same.

She gave an example of a woman professor who, when she retired after 25 years with the university, was not raised to full professorship. Milham said this was because of "femininity". She wanted the attention of men as a woman and she played down her knowledge. Milham said she heard the Dean saying, "She wasn't interested in the job." Milham feels she deserved what she got.

She felt that desperation and insecurity are women's failings. She said, "Women faculty members harass their male co-workers in staff meetings and then afterwards expect to be complimented on their new dress."

She said that women feel they can best get ahead by the attention of men (flirting), especially from

their higher-ups. She felt the women that do the best conduct themselves with an air of impersonality with their co-workers.

The panelists were thanked by Genny Nielson and a question period followed with refreshments.

Some statistics on UNB that came out of the question period follow. Taken from the membership of the Association of University of New Brunswick Teachers - here is the breakdown of females at UNB - at the lecturer level there are seven in Nursing, six in Education, and one in Physical Education. At the Assistant Professor level, there Education, one in Anthropology, two in Psychology, one in Sociology, two in Romance Languages, one in General Russian, one in Math, one in Biology, one in Geology, and one in History.

At the Associate Professor level, there are three in Nursing, two in Education, one in English, one in Math, one in Romance Languages, and one in Biology.

At the Professor level, there are four in Nursing, one in Classics, and the head librarian holds the same rank.

This means that about 10 percent of UNB's faculty are women, or out of a total faculty of 500, there are 51 women. It was raised that a large percentage of these were Americans.

SUPPORT !!
A
F
S
Student
Aid
Campaign



Smoke gets in your eyes -and ours

N.B. COUNCIL on SMOKING and HEALTH Fredericton, N.B.

SONY

SONY · THE SOUND OF THE SEVENTIES ·
Whatever the Mode of Music Listening You Prefer -
Records, Cassette, 8-Track Cartridge, AM/FM,
SONY Can Put It All Together!
Visit Our Fully Equipped Stereo Room.

CAM GARD SUPPLY LTD.

Rookwood Ave & Waggoners Lane
Fredericton 455-8891