

# Abella speaks at UNB Law School

By Fraser Robb

The adversarial climate currently in existence in Canada has created "a me first clamour that threatens to become a me only chorus", said Rosalie Silberman Abella last Thursday night at the law school. Abella was in Fredericton speaking at the Inaugural Dr. Bernie Vigod Memorial lecture.

Abella, currently Head of the Ontario Law Reform Commission, is the child of Holocaust survivors. She has been a member of the Ontario Human Rights Commission and, among other honours, was

B'Nai Brith Woman-of-the-year in 1977.

Sponsored by the Atlantic Human Rights Centre, the commemorative lecture series is aimed at acknowledging Dr. Vigod's contributions to UNB and his concern for human rights issues. Dr. Vigod, taught at UNB for 17 years in the department of history. He was killed in an automobile accident in 1988.

As well as being Associate Dean of UNB's School of Graduate Studies and Research, Vigod was active in the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.



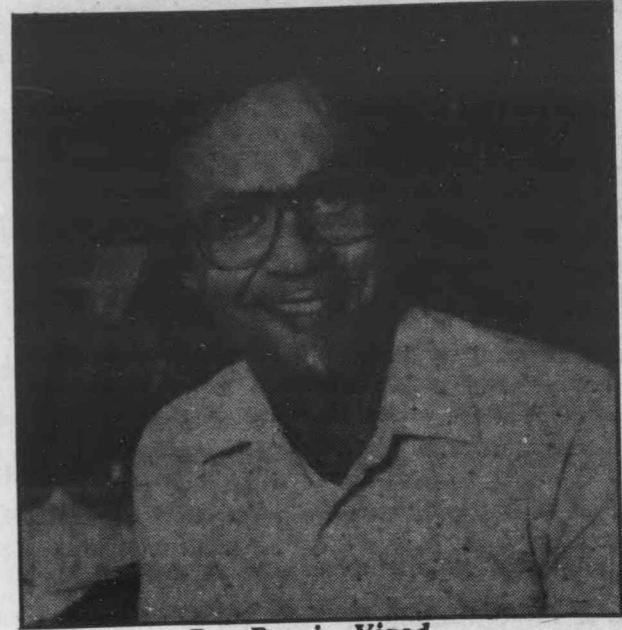
Rosalie Silberman Abella

Speaking of Dr. Vigod to the packed lecture hall, Abella said "the legacy of those lost is felt most to the extent in which they motivated our own lives." Abella, a self-proclaimed devotee of education, believes it is the "foundation for human rights." She stated, "knowledge is a compendium of sensibilities, formed by facts, curiosity, and experience."

Abella also took the opportunity to speak out on the issue of Canadian unity, an issue that Dr. Vigod also tackled. She said, "bilingualism represents no change", as Canada has been bi-cultural from its very beginnings and the recent Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms reflects and enhances that.

"Being pro-French is not anti-English", Abella said. She then applied this language analogy to feminism. She said, "they are not either/or situations" and further stated "it is time to get on with nation building."

Abella devoted equal time to the subject of the Holocaust and the mistreatment Jews received during this time. "The world responded to the Holocaust tentatively", she said. "It



Dr. Bernie Vigod

was an echo of neglect that has reverberated throughout history."

Abella ended her lecture with an emotional story. It was about a young Jewish law student in Poland who chose to stand rather than take up one of the four seats allocated to Jews only. He survived the persecution of the Jews and eventually managed to gain entrance into Canada where he was prohibited from practicing law since his degree was not recognized, Abella said. He supported his wife and four children by holding down a

variety of jobs.

Throughout muffled sobs Abella told the audience that she was one of those children. She closed by stating that the memory of Bernie Vigod, and those like him, made her "proud to be Jewish, proud to be Canadian."

The Atlantic Human Rights Centre, located at St. Thomas University, plans to make the Vigod lecture series into an annual event whereby distinguished speakers will deliver addresses on a wide range of human rights issues.

## Orientation '90

General Meeting #2

Sunday February 4, 1990

7:00 p.m. McLaggan Rm. 105

- application forms
- information
- entertainment!!!

**ATTENDANCE TO THIS MEETING IS MANDATORY  
FOR SELECTION TO THE COMMITTEE!!  
EVERYONE WELCOME**

By Allan C

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