

decrease, teenage alcoholism would decrease, and yes, Terry, homosexual tendencies would also decline.

In closing, I would ask Terry to think about the purpose of his initial letter. The message I received was that he realized he was gay, he had come out of the closet, and he was happier for it. How often do we see heterosexuals writing in about their sexual tendencies, with no other message besides this? If a homosexual will write an editorial for the purpose of asserting he's gay, (5-10 thousand people will read this), then what will that person say to 30 impressionable minds behind a closed classroom door?

Stuart Chase

P.S. Terry, if I take a couple of sociology courses, does this make me a sociologist?

Courage?

Courage is not required by those who praise their teachers or criticize a professor who has been punished. As an English Honours student I feel obliged to comment on the debate surrounding the high quality (or lack thereof) of the English Department. Tenure allows professors to express their views without fear of punishment, a freedom that does not extend to students.

A university education should teach a person to question -- not to repeat what they have been told. Papers constructing an argument that a professor disagrees with (that a poem is sexist, for example) will be graded lower than the restating of what is professed.

Peter Bourne and Kitty Bourne seem to view the "correcting" of a student's opinion as acceptable, but the questioning of a professor's opinion as arrogance. If professors were infallible, there would be no disagreement between academics. This is not the case.

To view language as sacred is to relegate it to a dusty museum. Literature is alive with the possibility of multiple interpretations and individuals should be respected more than proper punctuation and sentence structure. The Bournes may choose to worship, unquestioning, at the altar of English Literature, but I want to be challenged, not insulted.

I am poorly served when much of what has occurred in the field over the past thirty years is dismissed as transient. Professors reminisce about "the good old days" when Men could discuss the "great works" without fear of being questioned or having to work with women. More women are enrolled in English now than in any time in the past, but female authors and viewpoints are ghettoized into separate courses or into the Women's Studies Program, safely outside of the departments that resist change.

I care deeply about literature and would not complete my degree here had I not put so

much time and effort into it. Many students over the past few weeks have shared their frustration with me. I regret that more of them have not responded to the unqualified praise of the department and the overblown criticism of Professor Davies that has obfuscated the deep problems that exist.

Bitterly,
A Current Student

**A NEWSPAPER COLUMN
Snowless**

by Dale Geddes

The only thing I really like about Fredericton - other than the fact that you can toss a brick from your roof and hit at least two Tim Horton's Donuts - is the community feel we have. Actually, to be honest, I like Fredericton's attitudes and "community feel" about as much as I like being force-fed road kill, but I think we can use this communal togetherness to effect a plan I have to get rid of this snow.

Let's face it, we'd all rather have a rare Asian virus than three more inches of snow. Plus, it showed upon our ground a month early (in November), and, as it turns out, the only people who do like it are skiers - a rare breed of species whose entire collective fate is to someday go down "Super-Dare-Devil-Hell Slope", hit a tree, and have their spleens shoot out their mouths.

More importantly, if we get rid of the snow, we eliminate a major problem of the many unseen homeless in Fredericton, since removing the snow decreases the chance of anyone without a home freezing to death.

My main point (like I still have one) is to discuss my two part "anti-snow" plan.

The first part is to pass a by-law requiring each citizen to spend 15 minutes a day blowdrying the snow. Hairdressers, and other people really vain about their hair must spend 30 minutes. This should clear up a good deal of the snow.

The second part of the plan is to shovel the rest of the snow into the trunks of our cars, drive it to Arizona, and dump it on their front lawns, all the while shrieking the words to "We Wish You A Merry Christmas". Then we rush back to Fredericton stopping, only, briefly at Ohio, to make fun of them for being, socially, more boring than we are.

I think this plan is terribly effective and efficient as far as snow removal is concerned, but it just occurred to me that the whole point of this exercise - to help the homeless in their time of need - is pointless, since they have now all moved into one of the brand new Tim Horton's Do-nuts, conveniently located throughout the city.

THE WOMAN'S ROOM

In my first column I said that opinions from other feminists would be welcomed; and in keeping with that policy this week's column on DATE/ACQUAINTANCE RAPE has been written by Maria Kubacki and Clarissa Hurley.

Submissions can be dropped off at Carleton Hall 245 in care of Alex Fremont.

DATE/ACQUAINTANCE RAPE

by Maria Kubacki and Clarissa Hurley

Despite extensive consciousness raising by women's groups, many myths about sexual assault continue to be accepted. One of the most persistent is that of the deranged sex fiend lurking in a dark alley, preparing to leap upon his unfortunate prey. The reality, however, is that in 75% of sexual assaults, the victim and the assailant are known to each other: they may be friends, lovers, spouses, relatives or casual acquaintances. The fact is that when force - verbal or physical - is used to obtain sex, it is a crime, even if the people involved know and like each other, and even if they have had sex before.

Unfortunately, acquaintance rape is not always treated as seriously by the authorities as the often more physically violent stranger rape. In acquaintance rape, the assailant tends to rely on manipulating the victim's trust and on using verbal threats and his physical strength to intimidate and overpower the victim.

Survivors of acquaintance assault often suffer from a different kind of long-term psychological trauma than do victims of stranger rapes. In cases of stranger rape, fear of the unknown is the usual result, whereas, in acquaintance rapes, a fear of the known develops. Often the victims have to face their attackers after the assault, which exacerbates the suffering and delays the recovery process. Three very distressing factors may affect the survivors of acquaintance rape:

(1) Their trust has been betrayed. Most people place some degree of faith in people they know and would like to know better. When this is violated, they no longer know whom to trust.

(2) The victims are left with a feeling that they cannot rely on their own instincts, nor differentiate between good and bad. They are left to seriously question their own judgement.

(3) There is a degree of self-blame in all cases of sexual assault, but this may be more severe in cases of date rape, where the victims may not be able to display physical proof

of their resistance.

The extent to which coercive sexuality is the norm in our society is illustrated by the way in which the victim and assailant perceive the events of an assault. In many cases, the offender may genuinely believe that no assault has occurred. Because acquaintance rape occurs most often within the context of acceptable social interaction (it occurs most often on the weekend between 10 p.m. and 2 a.m. - the usual dating hours) victims may suffer a great deal of confusion about the event. Although the woman feels violated, she may not understand why. Everywhere she turns, she sees male-centred representations of sexuality, which encourage male aggression and female passivity (the 'me-Tarzan-you-Jane' approach to intimacy)

In Robin Warshaw's *I Never Called It Rape*, rape counsellor Cindi Kammer is quoted as saying: "Knowing how to help a person who's been raped is as important as knowing how to help a choking victim or someone who's drowning. It's basic first aid." Understanding acquaintance rape and knowing how to respond to the survivor is a crucial factor in the healing process. Perhaps the most valuable thing you can do for a friend who has suffered acquaintance rape is to help them correctly identify what has happened so that they may take the first step toward recovery.

According to the *Ms. Report* on which Warshaw's book is based: "Nearly half of all females raped by men they knew told no one about the incident. Furthermore, only 5% reported the rape to police or college authorities. Instead, these women endured the after-effects of rape in silence and attempted to rebuild their lives and psyches on their own."

If a friend tells you that s/he has been sexually assaulted, the following guidelines may help you respond to her/him:

(1) Believe what they tell you. The greatest fear of acquaintance rape survivors is that they will not be believed, or that their experience will be trivialized. Also, remember that attempted rape can be as traumatic as completed rape.

(2) Listen. Let the victim tell the story at her/his own speed.

(3) Comfort the victim and reinforce that the rape was not her/his fault. Avoid questions that seem to blame the victim, such as "Why didn't you scream?" and "Why did you go to his room?"

(4) Suggest that they call a Rape Crisis Centre. Calling a centre does not mean that the victim must report the assault to the police. All calls to Rape Crisis Centres are confidential and a trained peer support counsellor will help the victim talk about the

experience.

(5) Make the victim aware that if s/he wants the option of pressing charges, it is crucial that no evidence be destroyed: i.e. s/he should not bathe, shower, douche or change clothes until s/he has undergone an evidence-collecting examination at the hospital.

(6) Even if the survivor appears unhurt and does not wish to pursue legal action, encourage her/him to seek medical attention to ensure that no sexually transmitted diseases have been contracted or internal injuries sustained. If the victim is a woman, encourage her to get a pregnancy test.

(7) Help to organize their thoughts, but allow them to make their own decisions.

(8) If you are the victim's lover, be understanding if s/he is reluctant to resume sexual relations or intimacy.

(9) Help them get psychological and/or legal counselling.

(10) Learn about rape trauma syndrome. The recovery period may be a slow, difficult and unpredictable process, so be available so that the victim can come to you when support is needed.

(11) Get help for yourself if you feel the need to talk about your reactions to your friend/lover's assault.

If you have been sexually assaulted by someone you know, the following suggestions may help you to deal with the trauma:

(1) Trust your own judgement about what happened.

(2) Tell someone you trust about your experience. Whether or not you tell your friends, relatives or lover, contact your local Rape Crisis Centre.

(3) Get medical help.

(4) Decide whether you want to report the rape to the police or other authorities. Because the legal process is generally lengthy and traumatic, think about this option carefully before you make your decision.

(5) Take time to recover.

(6) Get counselling.

(7) Talk with other survivors.

For more information, contact the Fredericton Rape Crisis Centre at 454-0437 (crisis line) or 454-0460 (business line).