

Psychiatrist reveals

Women don't want equality

By AGNES KRUCHIO

Women don't really want equality. So said Dr. Elizabeth Brodie, a psychiatrist and associate professor in the Faculty of Environmental Studies, in a recent interview in her St. Clair Ave. office.

"The first thing that comes to mind with equality is equal responsibility," she said. "It is still too deeply ingrained in many women that they would depend on someone else; when one is not self-supporting, and is dependent on someone else for support, one remains in a child-like dependency for a lifetime."

WOMEN DOMINATE

Dr. Brodie was asked if men weren't the dominating sex.

"In human relations, exactly the opposite seems to be the case. In relationships of close attachment, women dominate more than men do; emotionally, men are more attached and dependent than women," she said.

"I don't really believe that men are the dominant sex, although on the whole this is a difficult question. In many situations men have a dominant role due to the circumstances we have set up. But women are just as responsible for this since they avoid getting into situations where they would have to be equal. Hard work never killed anyone," Brodie said.

Beginning her medical training in her native Hungary when she was twenty-seven and mother of a two-year old son, Brodie was also working part-time to help support her family. After escaping in the 1956 revolution, during her last year of training, she wrote her final exams in Vienna — in German. Not surprisingly, out of twenty candidates she was the only one to do so. Once in Canada, Brodie specialized in psychiatry at the

University of Toronto, and, after four years' training, obtained her degree in 1963. For a time she was the medical director of the day hospital at the Addiction Research Foundation, and now has an extensive private practice.

ALIMONY CRITICIZED

At a recent forum in the St. Lawrence Centre, she attracted attention by coming down strongly on the present alimony laws and the legal system that turns husband and wife into deadly enemies.

Currently she is working with professor Tom Philbrook, also of Environmental Studies, on studies for a book they will be co-authoring.

"Women have swallowed the myth that there is to be some sort of a choice between being a self-supporting person and being 'feminine.' Dependency is much more comfortable — but it is a terrible trap that not many women realize. Lack of self-support deprives women of the ability of allowing themselves to be emotionally involved, to become attached; it is simply too risky to depend both for livelihood and affection on one person. Therefore they remain emotionally aloof, which is the cause of the frightful prevalence of sexual problems in women," Brodie says.

"A woman who is self-supporting is more secure in the knowledge that at least she could survive should the relationship break up due to divorce or death," she added. "She can therefore give of herself more freely". Brodie said she did not see any conflict between being a mother and being a self-supporting person.

"A father can still be a good father, and also be self-supporting at the same time. It is no different for a mother. The quality of child rearing does not depend on the number of hours she spends with her child, as

these can be spent with very negative attitudes," she said.

"The conflict between the two roles arises when women don't like any of these options. The more persons are interested in what they do, the more they are able to do."

Brodie believes the men in this society are so "well-trained," they are already helping with duties around the house. "They would probably be much more willing to help if they knew that not only the household duties were to be shared, but also the support of the whole family," she said.

Marriage, she believes, helps to perpetuate the whole vicious circle. It imposes obligations and duties instead of spontaneous participation and choice of lifestyle. "We are trying to maintain the institute of marriage unchanged, while practically all aspects of surrounding living have changed or are in the process of changing," Brodie said. "To have a female companion, to have a child, a man has to take on lifelong obligations, according to our present legal system and social mores."

How, then, are people to have children if not in the security of the traditional marriage?

"There is an hypothesis built into that question that people have to have children. There is not status attached to being able to bring a child into the world. In my experience as a psychiatrist, I see only a frightfully small percentage of couples who are doing a good job as parents." Brodie said that only people who really want children for the children's sake and not for the parents' selfish reasons, only couples who get along well and realize the responsibility of the task they face, should consider raising children.

When questioned about the women's liberation movements, she said it was not on the right track, because "The movement is too preoccupied with minor details which are the consequences rather than the causes of the problem, such as inequalities in payment," she said. "It does not stress enough the unavoidable necessity of approaching life with the same responsible attitude that men have to."

"Moreover, instead of creating a more relaxed atmosphere conducive to more open affection between men and women, the movement incites fear and hatred," she said.

"I personally never felt that I was held back because I was a woman. Because there are so few women in responsible positions, if anything, being a woman would be an advantage," she added.

"I thoroughly enjoy being a person who also happens to be a woman, but I never expected special treatment because I was one," she said.

How does Brodie feel about chivalrous gestures like a man helping her with her coat? She laughed and said she thoroughly enjoyed it, but that she "liked to do the same thing to men." Their reaction? "Very favourable," she said. "They are grateful for any courtesy at all from a woman."

Brodie's home and her personal, close relationships are also extremely important to her.

Does she ever feel that all of this is too much for one person to cope with? "Of course not. I have a deep interest in all these things, and it's rather a pleasure to deal with my responsibilities to my satisfaction."

She was asked about woman's oldest fear — aging. "Aging is a natural process, but I do not believe that age and being old are equivalent. My life has always been exceedingly active and interesting, and I intend to keep it that way as long as I live," she said.

"Women could really help their situation by starting to grow up, and not giving in to the archaic fears of inadequacy and the faulty belief that society is against them... Instead, women should concentrate on their responsibilities in life, which will bring along equal rights also."



Peter Hsu photo

Psychiatrist Elizabeth Brodie

Jewett may be pres.

BURNABY B.C. (CUP) — Pauline Jewett appears to be headed for the presidency of Simon Fraser University despite opposition to her appointment. Jewett presently a professor and chairperson of the department of political science at Carleton, a former NDP member of parliament and an unsuccessful candidate for the York presidency, has the support of 85.2 per cent of the students who voted in a March referendum.

She was the unanimous choice of the SFU Board of Governors presidential search committee. In addition, she is being backed by the student council, the Graduate student union, the Communication students union, and the Political Science and Anthropology students union.

The eleven member board of governors, which consists of appointees from both the former Social Credit

government and the present NDP, is deadlocked with five in favour and five opposed to Jewett. The eleventh member, retiring president, Ken Strand refuses to break the deadlock. The issue had been referred back to the search committee with a request for additional names.

Hookah raffle being held to pay Ince's legal fees

The Jim Ince (see Entertainment) Defence Fund will hold a Hookah Raffle from March 26 to April 2 in central square to help pay for legal fees. Tickets for the raffle may be purchased at display table for 25¢ each or 5 tickets for \$1.00

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