

BLOOD & THUNDER

Letters to the Editor reflect the views of our readers and not necessarily those of the Brunswickan. Letters may be sent to Rm. 35, Student Union Building. Deadline: 5 p.m. Tuesdays. Maximum length: 300 words.

What are you prepared to give up?

Yes, "we have been living a fallacy here, a delusion that is resulting in serious consequences" (The Wimmins Room, February 14, 1992). But we are kind of caught in a bind here. Without technology we would still be living in grass huts, clubbing our food and grunting at each other, while picking fleas off our children. So you want to get back to nature? Fair enough, and a noble sentiment, but what are you prepared to give up? Your fridge with its CFC's? Your car? Your VCR? Your tub cleaner? Your leather jacket, made by underpaid immigrants, bought over the border? Your pre-packaged couscous? So what is it going to be? Thai food and Spike Lee movies or running after buffalo at thirty below? We admit it, we are not too keen on giving up our comfy conditions for the ozone layer. We are sorry - it's true. We don't want to give up or fridge, even though we know future generations will fry. We don't want to give up Maria's car, her VCR, or our natural and artificially fibred (sic) clothing. We want you guys to live at one with nature, and if you can do it, we'll try it too. So throw out everything bad in your home, starting with your mousse and deodorant, and meet us at the campfire (whoops, no fire, it pumps carbon dioxide into the atmosphere). Okay, beat you to the organically grown tomato patch - remember there is no salad dressing with that.

But seriously, it isn't that we are total sociopaths, with no concern for the environment past giving up aerosol hairspray. It is just that so much has been said about what we are doing wrong, and nothing about how we can fix the environment without having to go back to hunting and gathering. Whining about the environment has become a major industry using countless trees, reels of film, and a hell of a lot of cash that could have been doing something environmentally constructive. Let's focus on what's practical. Educate the public on what can be done now without totally destroying the quality of life we all want - recycling, car-pooling, protesting the James Bay project, demanding that stricter environmental laws be placed and enforced both in Canada and globally, etc.

Maria Kubacki and Sara Earley

PS - Check it out: we signed our names.

Still haven't moved out of the cave

I was flabbergasted to read a letter by Bill MacGillivray outlining a list of things he hated about the article *A joke from god*. I found the article to be extremely honest by acknowledging the impulsive prejudices the writer had (and which we all have) and to be ironic by showing how wrong these prejudices can be. Of course, being candid and honest left the writer vulnerable to abuse. It was not an article of hate about all things male 'but an article showing that we are moving closer towards an age when man will genuinely feel and share the joys and pain woman experience. As a bloke I feel proud of that. Childbirth is not just physically demanding but also emotionally draining, not to mention the inevitable changes it will bring. Love and understanding beget love and understanding. I still have a long way to go but at least after reading Bill's letter I know that there are people who still haven't left the starting blocks or moved out of the cave.

Anthony Norman

Time to listen

In response to Brian MacDonald's recent piece in *Opinion (Stand Up, Guys, February 14)*: Sit down, Brian. Your understanding of Flame's *Joke From God* (Wimmin's Room, February 7) is very different from the impression I got from the same reading.

What Flame offered me was a lesson in not jumping to conclusions, allowing anger to feed assumptions, and failing to hear what's being said. I heard her say that occasionally, in the midst of her (for me) justifiable anger, she is surprised and perhaps encouraged that we men, despite our sharp edges, are not a total loss. The message seemed to be one of hope in the midst of apparent hopelessness. I appreciated the message and was moved by Flame's account. As one man who is soul-searching around the important issues raised in "The Wimmin's Room," I thank Flame for reminding us that even anger and conflict can be tempered with irony and humour.

Brian, maybe you didn't get the joke. Maybe it's time to "Lighten up". Watch out for those quick assumptions. You suggest we men should "make ourselves heard." I figure we've already talked too much, dominating the conversation. Now's the time to do a better job of listening, and then perhaps as authentic dialogue can begin.

You mention Robert Bly. If

you subscribe to Bly's point of view, you might find his conversation with Deborah Tannen informative; check it out in the latest issue of *New Age Journal*. And please, read with your heart.

And as for Flame, may she continue to burn brightly in the darkness.

Robert Stranach

What kind of man are you?

This letter pertains to the accusations that Jon Sears has so blatantly described in the article *Women's Kingdom* published in *The Brunswickan* (February 14, 1992, p. 6). It seems like you would not like to see women be trained to defend themselves but rather see them suffer through the agony of being raped or assaulted and the post depression or anger that usually follows. What kind of man are you? Have you no respect for women? It is the ninety's, wake up. Are you some kind of sadistic male who likes to see women suffer?

What do you mean when you said "violence classes are being offered free of charge, exclusively for women?" It is a self defense course for women to protect them against some of the egotistical males who think they are "God's gift to women" that force sex or take advantage of women either under the influence of alcohol or sober. I suggest to Mr. Sears, and anybody else who agrees with him, take a look at yourselves and think of what you said, and I would be very shocked if you ever have a female for an acquaintance (sic) again. Enjoy your new celibate life!

Robert Walton

Words not worth the paper

This letter is in response to a letter in last week's *Brunswickan*, entitled *A Woman's Kingdom*. First off I must congratulate you Mr. Sears on your courage to not only say what's on your mind but to actually publish it. Unfortunately Mr. Sears the words and ideas that you published are not even worth the paper they are printed on. Let me ask you this: do you have any female friends who ever asked you to walk them home at night because they are afraid to walk home alone? Let me tell you this: they are not afraid of getting lost, they are afraid of some man (or woman) assaulting them and not being able to do anything but scream. Wouldn't you at least like to offer these women the knowledge of self-defence? In your article you stated that "If we

push them too far, they will take action: in no uncertain terms." These women are not vindictive and violent, they are scared, and I for one feel they should be given the right to learn how to defend themselves, and the only people who have anything to worry about would be the attacker. I sincerely hope that the women on this campus do, as you put it, take action and learn to defend themselves.

Larry Whitman

Absolutely off-base

I realize that whatever is written in response to *A Woman's Kingdom* in last week's *Brunswickan* is subject to the same gross misinterpretation that FACTS (Female anti-assault Comprehensive Training System) has suffered at the hands of some blatantly unrealistic and uninformed male. However, I cannot let this matter rest.

I'm curious to know what one would base their implications that FACTS is a threat to society that will lead to violence on? It is painfully obvious that there are still those who cannot make a distinction between "violence" and "self-defense."

FACTS is a very beneficial course that not only teaches defense but educates women about rapists. As far as the charge of violence goes, that assumption is absolutely off base. This course stresses not to carry weapons simply because they could be turned against the woman. Violent? I think not. This is a self-defense course that I would recommend any woman to take. It's unfortunate that anyone should have such misconceptions about something they know nothing about. I hate to break anyone's glass house, but it seems to me that misconceptions about a group is the real underlying cause for most of the problems in society.

Sandra Boel

Paranoid and inflammatory

This letter is written as a rebuttal to the charges made by Jon Sears (*The Brunswickan*, 14 February 1992, p. 6). The self-defence classes offered to women are intended only to protect them from the all too frequent assaults which occur on campus. These classes are intended for self-defence in order to prevent the woman from being raped, not to create a group of assault troops which will hunt down men.

When Ms. Smith stated that women can be trained in these measures from the age of 12, she was attempting to show that the

course does not require a large amount of physical size or strength, and that the course can be completed by anyone. There is no conspiracy of women here. The only people who need fear this course are those who would attack women. Unless you are one of these people, Mr. Sears, then you have nothing to fear. I suggest that in the future you be somewhat less paranoid and considerably less inflammatory in your comments. The paranoid Nazi belief in a Jewish conspiracy led them to attempt to exterminate the entire Jewish race. I detect in your letter similar paranoid beliefs in a conspiracy of women. Will you take the same line as the Nazis? Your propaganda is dangerous and stupid, and should not have been written.

Abuse and assaults of women must stop. If even one woman can avoid being assaulted thanks to this course, then it will have served its purpose. I will reiterate: the only people who need be scared are those who would attack women. Make your future comments constructive, rather than inflammatory.

Wayne Mabey

You need the FACTS

In response to your letter to the editor which stated that someone should *Get Nervous* when violence courses are offered to women free of charge, in this case the FACTS courses which I founded and developed in 1974. I feel I must explain to you that FACTS does not preach violence by women against men! If I wanted to teach violence, nobody in Canada is better qualified than I am! (I have studied the martial arts since 1947, I boxed both amateur & professional for over 30 years, I was the PKA provincial kickboxing champion for 8 years, I taught the very first SWAT team at the Atlantic Police Academy where I was an Instructor! I worked as a one-man police force for a town of 3000 people, no back-up, no help! I entered several "toughman" contests in Canada & the USA, I fought Murrey Southerland, who beat Jean Yves Theriault, and went the distance with both Micheal Spinks & Thomas Hearn in professional boxing, and I hold the highest legitimate blackbelt rank in both Shito-Ryu Karate and Japanese Jujitsu in Canada, and I have just been nominated for the lifelong achievement award from the International Martial arts Hall of Fame, in other words; when it comes to teaching anyone to inflict pain and suffering on another human being, I am highly qualified).