

Now women can say things they never could say to doc

"Now just slip your pants off, lie down and put this sheet over your tummy — the doctor will be with you in a minute..."

This is the first line in a scene in which every woman at some point in her life plays the supporting role. Some of the props include stirrups to rest her feet on, a metal

speculum with which to see her "insides", and an examination table on which she lies, flat on her back with her legs wide open.

This seems like a strange position to talk to a strange man in, but it is one which millions of women take for granted when going to see the doctor about a "problem";

anything ranging from pregnancy, an abnormal discharge, pains in the abdomen, to that medical necessity, the "papsmeat".

Anyone who has been a patient knows the feelings of tension, isolation and total lack of power over your own body one experiences when a doctor silently inserts foreign objects or fingers into an orifice, probes around and then proceeds to write out a prescription telling you to "take these pills and come back next week".

There may be questions you wanted to ask or maybe you just wanted more information on what was happening to your body, but you think that he is really very busy and he said not to worry, right? And besides, you are coming back next week. You can ask then.

This "scene" is very real. Women of child-bearing years are the major consumers of health care. They possess genitals which cannot be seen without a mirror, breasts which are sometimes surgically removed without just cause, "insides" which are as unknown to them as they are to most men and reproductive organs that need medical attention from their first "its three days late" terror, on into womanhood.

In North America, women consume fifty per cent more prescription drugs than men, much of this in the form of birth control pills and hormone treatments.

However, since 93% of our doctors are male, the person most

likely to be dealing with women's health problem is someone who has never known menstrual cramps, labour pains or fear of an unwanted pregnancy. The fact that the doctor is male often makes it doubly hard for women to communicate openly with him about their health concerns.

Many women are now beginning to take a long hard look at their health care, and in the process, at each other, at their problems and at some of the solutions. One major aspect of this experience is the growing number of women's "self-help groups", which we at Harbinger will now be sponsoring.

What's a self-help group?

It is women coming together to talk to each other about themselves, their experiences, and

getting to know their own bodies. It is learning how to self-examine themselves, and to detect problems before they arise, such as vaginal disorders, pregnancy, unusual lumps or sores. It is learning just what to ask for from doctors, and what to expect, so that those many unasked and unanswered questions get said. It is an experience which Harbinger feels is needed for women at York, and one which a lot of women have expressed a lot of excitement and support for.

If you are interested in participating in one of these groups, please contact the Harbinger office at 667-3509. We hope to be setting up groups early this fall. Or drop into our office, room 214 Vanier Residence and we'll give you your own speculum.

Foreign students service meets new campus need

By MAXINE KOPEL

What do you do if you're a stranger in a strange campus and don't know your Ross Building from your CN tower?

Well, you could try the York International Student Centre (YISC), and they may show you north from south in your native language.

Established in the fall of 1974 to assist the increasing number of foreign students on the university campus, the YISC has attempted to provide the York community with many services that were either not available or inaccessible to foreign students on campus.

Located in 214 Bethune, YISC works in conjunction with Manpower and Immigration officials in order to assist foreign students with problems in the areas of immigration, housing, language and assimilation into strange surroundings.

Aside from offering the students counselling and information, the Centre acts as both referral agency and education centre. Not only does the Centre inform students of upcoming social and cultural events — it co-ordinates and initiates them, and in the past year, it has dealt with deportation crisis and personal, emotional, and academic problems.

Some of the information readily available through the Centre's offices is facts on regulations, travel, work, study, teaching opportunities in various countries, foreign universities, scholarship programmes on both sides of the Canadian-U.S. border, and more.

Many students are not aware that the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) has scholarships of up to \$11,000 for research carried out in the third world, as well as exchanges to such countries as Japan, Britain, France and Spain.

This year the Centre is planning to initiate a film night series, arrange for guest speakers and put on social and cultural events, in addition to providing the many ethnic clubs on campus with information on sources of funds for events the clubs cannot finance by themselves.

Although many events have been planned, the Centre is still open to suggestions from anyone on any events or activities that the Centre could sponsor or help sponsor.

The Centre is but one year old, and already a subsidiary group has sprung up to help in the work. Calling itself the International Student Organization, it held its first meeting in mid-September and has already enlisted some 30 members. ISO offers a variety of services and events in conjunction with YISC.

Even though ISO is still in its infancy, a schedule of events are already underway.

The Organization is planning a camping trip to Algonquin Park for October 4th and 5th, and a multicultural exhibition (funded by the government) is planned for January.

Women taught self-defence

A women's self-defense course will be starting at Stong College. This is the first time it is being offered at York.

Most women live with some fear of being out alone at night, hitchhiking, or being caught in a dangerous situation. Many of us believe that there is not much we can do about it. The course is designed to show you what you can do if attacked. Basic Karate and Kung-Fu kicks and punches will be taught as well as proper techniques on how to repel specific attacks such as rape and knife attacks, even purse-snatching.

No woman should have to live in fear of being attacked.

If you are interested in the course, lists will be posted at the Women's Centre (257 Atkinson), the CYSF office (Ross Building), and the office of the Flyer (327 Stong).

Please register before 5:00 p.m. Fri., Sept. 26. The course will be held in room 106, Stong, starting Tuesday, Oct. 7 from 7:00 - 9:30 p.m. It will run for 8 wks. If more information is needed call Judy Abrams at 533-7726.



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New vaccine for trippers

SAN FRANCISCO [ZNP-CUP] — The medical world has developed a vaccine against LSD trips.

Medical World News reports that the 'anti-acid' vaccine is the work of microbiologist Edward Voss at the University of Illinois.


The vaccine has been tried successfully on laboratory rabbits

and mice to bring a quick end to their 'trips'.

Doctor Voss suggests that it can be administered to humans who are experiencing unpleasant trips.

The Village Voice says "The government will probably start vaccinating high school kids so that they'll never be able to get a high".

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