

# UPEI Women's Centre--not just for women only

BY CHRISTIE POIRIER

**SEX!!! OKAY. NOW THAT I HAVE YOUR** attention, you might as well keep reading. I know what it's like for the majority of students, skipping through the paper looking for the comics and, of course, the Dear John Column: Advice From a Slightly Different Perspective. Well, consider this to be an article "from a slightly different perspective" and please give this hardly-an-English-major student a chance. You might find it informative and maybe even a little amusing.

In this article, I'd like to address exactly what the Women's Centre is, who it's for, and what it's all about. I'll begin by discussing my own first impressions of the place, impressions that I believe others may have held on their first visit to the Centre.

After three unsuccessful attempts to gather the courage to actually enter the building (mostly at night when no one could see me), I saw a flyer advertising a meeting for interested volunteers. I considered the option and decided that the idea of my face among a group of other un-named faces would probably be more "risk free" than my previous "shadow of the night" attempts. When I say "risk free," I think most women who were at that meeting would know

what I mean. It was the kind of thing where you could be anonymous, like a bug on the wall, find out what the place is really about, then join in - or skip out, never come back, and tell your friends what a freak show it was. Well, look at me now. I'm writing a promotional article for the place. I guess it really wasn't all that bad.

Before promoting the Centre, I would like to clear up any rumours or unruly attempts to label the Centre and its members. Comments such as the following come to mind: "Those feminists are a bunch of man-hating lesbians." Okay, first off, I suppose it is natural to assume that all women who work in the Women's Centre are feminists, but that is not always the case. Not every woman there is a feminist, although I must admit I greatly respect the way in which the ones I've met deliver their ideas and beliefs. Every feminist in existence does not rally through the town screaming like a maniac. I dare say most feel that equality is not something to compete for, but rather is attained through cooperation.

As for the "lesbian" part of the comment, I think many of the husbands and boyfriends of the volunteers here would have something to say about this. And if they are all lesbians, I

have yet to understand what the basket of free condoms is there for. Sexual preference has never been an issue at the Centre, or a deciding factor in who works at the Women's Centre. Finally, I would like to address the "man-hating" issue. Who wouldn't hate men? Ha! Ha! Just kidding! It's a ridiculous statement even to address. It simply isn't true. All men are as welcome at the Women's Centre as women are. Their comments and opinions are equally considered.

Now as a student I hear what goes on in the social scene; it's a small island. I would like any woman with any difficulties at all to feel free to come to the Women's Centre, just to get comfortable with it. It's surprising how much help and support is so readily available there. If you're having a problem (perhaps too sensitive to discuss with a boyfriend, roommate, parent, doctor, etc.), the Women's Centre can help, or at least guide you to proper help (a comfortable discrete medical centre, counsellor, or whatever). If you need someone to listen to you, some diet counselling or suggestions, if you're pregnant and need some information, if you have been sexually assaulted, or whatever, drop by the Women's Centre and they will steer you in the right direction.

They have Midol too!!

As for men, their questions are equally welcome. I'm sure there is no question that has not yet been asked. Your girlfriend is pregnant? Ever wonder what the heck is going on in her body that makes her so bitchy once a month, and why it always ends up being you fault somehow? Have a daughter you need to talk to about hard-to-deal-with issues? Worried about a sister who doesn't seem to eat enough?

The Women's Centre can help with many problems and questions from both sexes. Their resources and information deal mostly with women but it is available to anyone who needs it. But don't feel like you need a problem or question to come in; it's also a place where you can just be, veg, crash between classes. Simple really. I wouldn't recommend my early efforts to sneak in. It really wasn't necessary, although it still seems to be an amusing topic of conversation around here.

The Centre, located in the old planetarium building, is open Monday - Friday, 8:30-4:30 and 6:00-10:00. The furniture is comfortable and the coffee is free (it definitely rates a couple more "cookies" than the Pit). So come on in. You won't regret it.

## Off to the Third World

### Crossroads International provides excellent travelling and learning opportunities

BY GERARD PETERS

IN SEPTEMBER 1992 I EMBARKED ON A South American adventure. I had been selected for an overseas placement in Guyana with Canadian Crossroads International. Crossroads is an organization that sends Canadians to developing countries to experience different cultures. The purpose is

to promote tolerance and understanding through first hand exposure to other cultures, languages, attitudes and so on. It is also an exciting way to see another part of the world, one that is probably not on the average tourist's destination itinerary. Most placements last four months, this is an adequate length of time to absorb your placement country's culture

and to contribute to their community aspects of Canadian culture. In addition to the time I spent in Guyana I was able to island hop through the West Indies to sightsee and to get a feel for the Caribbean lifestyle.

This experience has given me a different perspective on many things, including life in general. My time was not always pleasant but

it was always positive. I learned that other people have a totally different attitude about "needs" and priorities. In this regard, since my return I have allowed this new perspective to alter the types of things that I may have otherwise considered worrisome. In Guyana, I was able to experience the Amerindian, East Indian, and Caribbean cultures. I was able to see the incredible gap that exists between rich countries and poor in developing countries. I was also able to experience being robbed at machete point in a drug infested slum. I sure didn't go down to that part of town again. In spite of some minimal inconvenience my experience was extremely rewarding and worthwhile.

International development week is coming up and I encourage everyone to take part in the events. Thursday, February 17, at 7:30 pm there will be a meeting in Robertson Library room 111 for anyone interested in being a crossroader, or in third world development in general. Featured will be the movie *Middle Sun* and Phil Brown, former crossroader and past student council president of U.P.E.I. Additional information can be sought free from Leo Cheverie (Reference Intelligentsia Inc.). As well there will be a pub in March in support of our 1994 crossroaders Sean MacIntyre and Gina Parker.

**T**HE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS OFFERS A course in belly-dancing. Called "Body conditioning through the art of Oriental Belly-dancing. It is a credit course. Something to keep in mind if your bachelor's degree doesn't pan out!

In Kwoma society, of New Guinea, if a little boys is caught with an erection, his penis is struck with a stick.

The first co-ed university in North America was Oberlin College in Ohio which opened in 1833 with 44 students (29 men and 15 women). It was also the first school to advocate the abolition of slavery and to accept black men and women on equal terms with white students.

Out of respect for Lady Godiva, all the townspeople closed their windows and doors when she rode through the town naked except ... guess who ... Peeping Tom!

Beloit College in Wisconsin adopted a plan on October 11, 1971 for tuition levels

## Tidbits of Trivia

to be set according to family income. At the time then, tuition fees varied between \$500 - \$1,650.

The first North American student to work their way through college was Zecharian Brigden, 14 years old, who graduated from Harvard in 1657. He earned money by ringing the tower bell.

Before a Cuna girl in New Guinea could be married, a rite of passage was performed which involved burying the girl up to her neck and burying the hair on her head, one strand at a time.

An English game called "bugger your toe" involves inserting a big toe into the anus of another player.

Vincent Van Gogh cut off his ear and

offered it to a prostitute.

Off the coast of Ireland on a small island is a rural group of people that are so sexually repressed, only a baby is allowed to be bathed in the nude.

Men are usually morning people.

In ancient Sparta, young males and females played games and danced together naked.

A morning erection often accompanies the rapid eye movement (REM) or dream stage of sleep.

In Syria, the ditoris of a newborn girl is rubbed with pepper until nothing remains.

The largest brewery on one single site is that of the Coors Brewing Co. at Golden, Colorado, USA, where 2.29 billion litres 9503 million gallons were produced in 1993. This represents 19.5 million barrels of beer. Imagine singing, 19.5 million barrels of beer on the wall - 19.5 barrells of beer - you take one down, pass it around - 19 499 999 bottles of beer on the wall. (CUP)