

To the Editor:

It was a partly sunny Friday, February 21, 1992, when I opened my copy of the X-PRESS and found Dawn Ambler's letter regarding the Backlash, wherein she repeatedly claims to be telling "the plain and simple truth". Instead, Ms. Ambler who has in the past gained my approval for her mature, reasoned letters in the past has now provoked my disgust with this emotional, bombastic, and contradiction-laden epistle. To begin with, the comments I deem to be misrepresentations: Ms. Ambler claims that, "plain and simple", the X-Press is promoting "homophobia and racism" and "the systematic bashing of womyn" by printing The Backlash. The reference to homophobia and racism is completely unfounded, as these issues have never entered the debate here. I will the author the benefit of the doubt, and assume she was planning a commentary on some other issue at the same time, parts of which found their way into her published letter. The woman-bashing accusation, however, has reared its ugly head in many other letters to the editor, and I feel it's about time that it was put to rest. Criticism is not bashing, and pointing out that some programmes run the risk of being implemented without thorough consideration because of the protective umbrella of the women's movement is neither unfair or chauvinistic. The women's movement holds many honourable and sensible ideas and it has done a great deal of good in society, but that doesn't mean that every issue that is labelled a women's issue necessarily has a sensible basis. To the same effect, we all want to help the environment, but we also know enough not to believe that "green" battery acid is an environmentally friendly product. Some people would argue that women should be able to freely implement programmes in their interest now that they have moved out of the secondary place in society they once inhabited, and that widespread debate will only lead to men saying "Okay, that's a good girl, you've had your little say, now sit down and be quiet"; in other words, trying to subjugate women again. But however much we may deplore the position in society which women were held in previous generations, the redress of this cannot be the main impetus behind modern policy-making. To put it in another light: however much we deplore the tragic events of the Nazi Holocaust and regret the injustices the Jewish peoples have suffered over the centuries, does that really mean we should then condone the Israeli action of entering a neighbouring country and strafing refugee camps as a necessary exercise of sovereignty? I think not! The point of all of this commentary is to illustrate that just because a programme or principle is being touted

in favour of women or minority groups does not necessarily mean that it is right. The label "minority" is no more a guarantee of righteousness than is the label "green". Remember, the white supremacists also consider themselves a minority group! Ms. Ambler says "If you can't say something nice, then don't say anything at all." Well, I'm sorry, Ms. Ambler, but debate is not where we should be "nice." It is important that common civility be maintained to prevent an exchange of opinions from degenerating into a childish name-calling match, but being "nice" means not differing from established opinion, in order to avoid hurting feelings. I would hope that the audience to which this debate is directed is mature enough to analyze the facts and opinions being presented without running home to their mothers if someone opposes their stance on an issue.

Ms. Ambler also states that Messrs. Hanus and Murphy are hitting "where hitting is not part of the rules." I would most fervently hope that this comment was not intended to mean that the editors should not be speaking out on these issues. Are these "rules" part of the "nice" little game of maintaining the new status quo? Dear me! How very much that would sound like the arguments directed against the early suffragettes-Don't rock the boat! Be nice! Be ladylike! It might be rather complicated to ask Joe and Peter to stop writing these articles and go quietly back home and have babies instead, but maybe they should forgo their right to a university education (yes, it really isn't proper for unchaperoned young men to be out filling their heads with all this higher education nonsense) and go home and earn a nice, polite
(Continues next page)

WED. MARCH 11

SARAH
MCLACHLAN

CONFEDERATION CENTRE
BPM • RESERVED TICKETS AT BOX OFFICE
OR CALL 566-1267 TO CHARGE

PRODUCED BY 