

# Trinity College Women's Center

## Newsletter

### Being A Black Female at Trinity

by *Andrea Thomas*

Being a black female at Trinity requires a lot of strength and determination. I define it as such because it takes a lot of inner strength to stay motivated and sure of yourself in a white environment. Every day you walk around, you see white faces; white professors, white administrators, white female students, white male students. To be in the minority is hard.

A sophomore black female I interviewed said she really admires black females who graduate. I understand why she said this. It does not matter how many cultural groups there are on campus or whether there is an Umoja house or not. Something is missing in the environment. Something that appreciates you as a black woman or at least recognizes you. The worst part about it is that there are approximately thirty white females to every one of you. This ratio is significant!

To see predominantly white faces day in and day out is disturbing. I wonder what whites think when they smile at me. I feel that they are curious about me and I get this sense of sympathy which angers me because I do not like to feel like this sad puppy who needs help. But these thoughts are what frustrates me. The anger and

Volume 10, Issue 3 Spring 2000

distance I feel has caused disorder in my past. It is very important to me that races get along. Yet my eye contact with a white person makes me skeptical. I feel like we have the world between us and are far away from understanding each other.

In most of the classes I have taken, I have been the only black person. It doesn't matter as much unless the topic gets controversial. It is an uncomfortable feeling, especially when you are one against fifteen. And I wonder, are my instinctual feelings of defense misconception? Am I building a defense I don't need because the whites in the class aren't attacking me? When I come back to my room at night I feel exhausted. I know that part of this exhaustion comes from school work and my job. But I wonder now if part of this exhaustion is from fighting a racist battle each day.

I keep reminding myself of the great opportunities Trinity has to offer. The reasons I am here and that it all will be worth it in the end. Trinity is an excellent school academically and the resources are terrific. But how much will my time here take out of me by the end? It is a hurtful experience being a black female at Trinity because to me it feels like I am living in someone else's environ-

*(continued on page 4)*

### Letter From The Director

Are you a feminist and just don't know it? If you believe that women deserve the same economic, social and political opportunities as men, in this society and throughout the world, then yes, you are a feminist. And you don't have to be a woman to be a feminist. Many women are scared of the term feminist because the right-wing has successfully partnered the term with negative meanings: man-hater, "dyke", bra-burner, "bitch". Thus, many women who believe in equitable treatment of women, fear being labeled.

*(continued on page 9)*

### Contents:

Page 2

**Sisterhood is Global**

Filipina Mail Order Brides...

Page 3

**Safe Zones**

Page 5

**RIBS Roundup**

Page 7

**Feminist Expo 2000**

Page 8

**Womyn's Space**

Page 9

**National Alert**

Bush vs. Gore

# Sisterhood is Global

## **Filipina Mail Order Brides:**

### **Marriage Partners or Mailed Items**

Filipina women are for sale on the Internet. Popularly known as "mail order brides," many of these young women offer themselves in marriage to unknown men who get to pick them on-line for a fee. These men are not screened for past criminal records, which could include restraining orders or sexual offences; all they need to acquire a wife is money.

Once an American man buys a Filipina, she must stay with him for at least two years before she can file for citizenship, according to The New York Times. Though there are resources for abused women in the States, Filipinas may be reluctant to seek help and sever their ties with their American husbands. "Many of the 20,000 Filipina women leaving their country each year to marry foreigners are afraid to report abuse for fear of deportation."

On May 26, 1996, The New York Times reported the worst case scenario due to this lack of screening: "[Timothy] Blackwell met Susana Remerata of the Philippines through a catalogue called "Asian Encounters" that promised "pretty, single Asian women who want to meet you." Remerata was suing Blackwell for divorce when he shot her and two other women during the divorce proceedings.

Supporters of this business like Gary Clark, assert that men who abuse their brides are exceptions to the rule and do not represent legitimate wife purchasers. On his web page, he asserts that the everyday men who purchase brides are simply dissatisfied with local women and interested in women from different cultures with "traditional values."

Mail order brides are big business. Clark benefits from this business as the author of his mail order guide book called, *Your Bride is in the Mail*. This is not another form of courtship, as Clark asserts. Men buy these women. Because they are purchased an immediate power imbalance is established relegating women to property. The title of his book is an excellent example of the dehumanization of these women. These are not women, they are parcels.

According to the Domestic Violence Information Center: "Although the U.S. Congress passed a 1996 bill that requires agencies to inform women about Congress passed a 1996 bill that requires agencies to inform women about marriage fraud, legal residency and domestic violence or face a \$20,000 fine, many women find themselves with an abusive partner."

Mail order brides are available over the Internet from Russia, Latin America and Asia. Many of these women participate in hopes of a better life in America, but many find they are isolated from their families and subject to the "traditional values" of their new husbands.

Many countries are pursuing legislation to stop bride trafficking. Support the "International Trafficking of Women and Children Victim Protection Act of 1999" (S.600) introduced by Senator Paul Wellstone (D-MN) which would grant women asylum and give them three months to decide whether or not to press charges against their traffickers.

**To protest mail order bride trafficking:**

[http://www.feminist.org/action/1\\_action.html](http://www.feminist.org/action/1_action.html)

**For more information on legislation in the Philippines:**

<http://www.philwomen.net/bills/trafficking-11th.html>

**To see what the other side argues:**

<http://www.wtw.org/mob/>

## Safe Zones

by Sara Getman

In 1973, only 27 years ago, the American Psychiatric Association removed homosexuality from its list of official mental illnesses. In 1974, the American Psychological Association did the same. Currently, only 22 states and the District of Columbia include sexual orientation in their hate crimes statutes, while anti-gay hate crimes are the third highest category of hate crimes reported to the FBI. Thus gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender persons still face discrimination and being openly homosexual is not something that is always necessarily safe, even in America today.

The Trinity College Women's Center has initiated a Safe Zones Program to help combat this problem, starting with Trinity's campus. Safe Zones is a national program carried out in colleges, universities and high schools throughout the country. Here at Trinity, this program has been created and adapted to meet the needs of the college community.

The objective of Safe Zones is to provide a more positive environment for gay lesbian, bisexual and transgender (g/l/b/t) members of the Trinity Community by reducing the fear of discrimination and reprisal of g/l/b/t persons within the Trinity Community. In order to do this, Safe Zones establishes and makes visible those supportive and knowledgeable individuals on campus, where members of the g/l/b/t community can go for support, information, and resources. Safe Zone members provide evidence of their support of the g/l/b/t community by displaying a sticker in their office or on their doors. Those places without stickers are not necessarily unsafe, but those places with stickers are designating that they have completed a training on g/l/b/t sensitivity and are willing and able to provide a service to the community.

The training dispels myths about g/l/b/t persons and aims to make its participants aware of ways in which they can be more visible and take a more active stance in combating homophobia and heterosexism if they so wish. Robin Sheppard, the Assistant Athletic Director, said that the training "helped me with specific concerns that I had regarding my response and support of this under-represented group." Hugh Ogden, of the English Department also completed the training, and said that it was wonderful to meet other people at Trinity who are active and/or concerned

about g/l/b/t issues.

Most Safe Zone members aren't professional counselors, but instead are there to listen and support individuals who need them. They are trained to respect privacy and confidentiality and when necessary, they are able to provide referrals and assist in contacting professionals who can provide further support.

Lacey Prouty, of the Office of Residential Life, completed the training and said that since she has had the sticker displayed, a number of people have commented on it. She enjoys being a visible resource and she thinks that one important aspect of Safe Zones is that by seeing the sticker, people are faced with a consistent reminder, challenging them to acknowledge that "there are people in our community who are different than they are." Additionally, she stated "What people who work here need to realize is that students are frequently looking to make connections, having this sticker provides a welcoming opportunity for students to make a connection." All members of the Trinity Community can utilize Safe Zones.

So far, twenty-eight faculty and administrators have completed the training, and are designated as Safe Zone members. Fourteen more are planning to attend a May training session. Hugh Ogden stated, "Trying to create more Safe Zones and bringing this program to light will help to raise consciousness about g/l/b/t issues." He compared the present g/l/b/t issues at Trinity to a fog, and said, "I'd like to bring some sunshine onto the campus about the way in which each one of us picks our own lifestyles and to respect each others lifestyle choices."

James Hughes, Assistant Director of Institutional Research & Planning stated, "I understand that g/l/b/t students here have experienced harassment, and its

*(continued on page 4)*

**"The first problem for all of us, men and women, is not to learn, but to unlearn."**

**-Gloria Steinem**



*(Safe Zones continued from page 3)*

important to make a statement for tolerance and solidarity with folks with minority sexuality's, or who are just trying to figure things out." The Safe Zones program aims to be a driving first step in accomplishing this mission.

Faculty and Administrators interested in participating in the Safe Zones training should contact Laura Lockwood in the Women's Center at x2408. Additionally, anyone interested in participating in EROS (Encouraging Respect of Our Sexuality), a student organization for g/l/b/t students and straight allies can notify Fatou Maty Diouf at x3219, or Professor Steve Valocchi, at x2346.

**The following are Safe Zone members:**

**Joe Barber** - x4256, *Mather Hall, Lower Level*  
**Janet Bauer** - x5369, *McCook 310*  
**Martha Burke** - x2023, *Health Center*  
**Liz Burns** - x2140, *79 Vernon Street*  
**Chris Card** - x2158, *Hamlin/Cook*  
**Marilyn Cardone** - x5377, *Wheaton 116*  
**Barbara Chapman** - x5295, *LSC205*  
**Patti Connolly** - x2050, *Mather Hall, 1st Floor*  
**Debbie Cook** - x2099, *Mather Hall, 1st Floor*  
**Nihal de Lanerolle** - x2013  
**Megan Fitzsimmons** - x2337, *79 Vernon Street*  
**Julie Graves** - x2171, *Mather Hall, 1st Floor*  
**James Hughes** - x2376, *71 Vernon Street*  
**Brian Kelly** - x2586, *104-106 Vernon Street*  
**Brian Killian** - x2222, *76 Vernon Street*  
**Jane Nadel-Klein** - x2183, *McCook 306*  
**Laura Lockwood** - x2408, *Mather Hall, 3rd Floor*  
**Nancy Maitland** - x2531, *Hamlin/Cook*  
**Hugh Ogden** - x2453, *115 Vernon Street, Room 309*  
**Lacey Prouty** - x4279, *Hamlin/Cook*  
**Val Ramos** - x2383, *Mather Hall, Lower Level*  
**John Rose** - x2014, *Chapel*  
**Ann Reuman** - x2154, *Hamlin/Cook*  
**Paula Russo** - x2284, *104-106 Vernon Street*  
**Robin Sheppard** - x2059, *Ferris Athletic Center*  
**Jon Small** - x2311, *Hamlin/Cook*  
**Jessica Spector** - x2427, *McCook 316*  
**Karla Spurlock-Evans** - x4234, *Hamlin/Cook*  
**Kara Tierney** - x4140, *Ferris Athletic Center*  
**Liz Yorke** - 4080/ 233-7640 (h), *McCook 208*

*(Being A ...continued from page 1)*

ment. And maybe this is not exclusive to only Trinity. Maybe I would have these feelings at another school, but I don't think so because larger schools tend to be more diverse. Trinity has a history of a small, rich, elite, white school. This history makes it even harder for blacks to assimilate.

There are more black females here than there are black guys, hardly any fine men to admire and to date. It is said that the more degrees a black female receives the less likely it is that she will marry. If my choosing would be explicitly from the students at Trinity and my objective was to marry a black man, then my chances of marrying are slim! White females do not face this problem. I feel like I am all alone. I see white kids together are laughing, they have each other. I am not proud of it because it shows a weakness in my character, but their fun is damaging to my psyche. It is hard to get up every day and feel strong when you are in the minority. It beats at you.

Disco Enfuego was advertised as a classic party. Classic to whom? I never went to Disco Enfuego or the 80s party for that matter, they are not classic to me. While I want to be befriended in the white community, it intimidates me in the social arena. I feel uncomfortable just walking into Psi U for a party. I feel that doing so is not the same as a white girl doing so, and I wish that more white kids would come out to black parties. They are in the majority on campus and I want them there. It's so lame when the Vernon Center is only half filled.

From a distance, reading about the speakers and events going on, one would think Trinity's environment is culturally aware and that the races are understanding one another and getting along. But is the student body? I feel that some students do not care about learning about the black experience. But if they do not learn about it how will we ever understand each other? What annoys me is that I feel like I understand what it is like to be white. It is forced upon me being in this environment. But will articles like this help matters or do they bring stronger divisions? In some whites, you can see them trying to understand the black experience, which I appreciate because of their effort, but it is annoying at times.

The environment is framed for white males. Black females do not fit in because they are black and

*(continued on page 9)*

## **RIBS (Redefining Ideal Beauty Standards)**

### **Roundup**

**by Marjorie Smith**

I was at the Party Barn not long ago, before 'The Beast' had taken its toll on my party driven mind, and I decided to just watch the Trin scene unfold before my smoke filled eyes before I myself would partake in another drunk rendition of "Like a Virgin." Looking around at the throngs of sweating dancing bodies, I noticed that many of the people looked significantly different than they had in the Washington Room of years past. Women, in their tight tops and mandatory black pants (okay, I'm not gonna create and say I myself don't partake in this dress-code at times), looked like young girls with their straight bony bodies, too-thin arms, and hipless frames. What was happening here? I searched even further and tried to locate even one woman who would be considered (in the real-non-Trin-world) overweight. Not a one.

Women I knew from Freshmen year, pretty and attractive with their in- shape, voluptuous bodies now looked sickly and disproportionate. Their faces a bit too large for their bodies, their cheeks hollowed in and sallow, these women were almost unrecognizable from the way they had once looked. What had happened over my last four years of Trinity that had made frighteningly thin so in? Why were these disproportionate female body types suddenly attractive? How could something look so unhealthy yet be so popular?

I felt like this issue needed to get out in the open, yet I wasn't sure how to go about starting a discussion on the issue of body image on campus. As we all know, discussion groups and forums are scarcely attended and do not gain much campus wide participation. This is sad, but nevertheless fact, and I am not here to make some diatribe about how you all should go to these well-planned meetings. But, knowing the reality of attendance and still wanting to get my point across to the student body, I decided to take matters into my own hands. I figured the best way was to put posters up around campus that would get a message across in a quick, yet affecting manner.

I decided to put up pictures of beautiful women from the past that had healthier body shapes than the ideal women seen in today's media. I wanted students to

look at these famous female stars and realize that extremely thin has not always been equated with being beautiful.

I chose Betty Grable for my 1940's model representative, Marilyn Monroe for the 50's symbol of sexual allure and beauty, Raquel Welch and Sophia Loren for the 60's contingency, and Pam Grier for the 70's. These women were considered some of the most beautiful and popular women of their time. Pin-up models, sex goddesses, movie stars, and all-around household names, these women were seen as the accepted standard of beauty of their time. But these beauties were not poker thin waifs. In fact, they were considered the ideal for their voluptuousness and curves. These women were some of the most famously beautiful women of their time and yet their bodies were healthy, real and attainable.

I looked at some of the popular women in today's media, those who are often in the public's eye, outside of their roles on the screen. There are numerous women who are at the height of popularity, but I chose three that I think have made the most drastic change in body types since their initial break into the world of movies and television. Helen Hunt, Calista Flockhart, and Courtney Cox were the three chosen for their exceptionally thin bodies that, in the media, are portrayed as ideally beautiful. One only has to look back at these three women's early careers to see that, although they were always thin, these women never had the sickly looking emaciated bodies that they now live with. These famous and popular actresses have no curves or breasts and their figures resemble that of young girls. Why has this body shape become appealing? What has changed so dramatically that today's ideal of beauty is now to hide our most obvious, distinctly feminine attributes: breasts, hips, and child-bearing stomachs?

Another project of RIBS this year was the "Clothesline Project" in front of Mather, a project that has been taking place for years. This is when students are given the opportunity to write on t-shirts about their feelings on the eating culture on campus, about something they, themselves, have struggled with or someone they care about. Almost everyone who walked by our table stopped to write a comment. "My roommate eats crackers in her coffee and considers

*(continued on page 6)*

*(RIBS...continued from page 5)*

that a meal"... "If I don't work out for two hours a day I feel obese"... "I am anorexic and I am alive"... "I feel fat today". Some students stood with marker in hand, grabbing for more t-shirts, thinking of additional things to write. I was more than pleased with our reception-students seemed grateful to have an outlet to write out their concerns. I received so much positive feedback, from women and men alike, for confronting the issue of the body image on campus. I placed the Clothesline inside Mather dining hall, so that the t-shirts would be visible to as many students as possible. Less than 3 days after hanging up the Clothesline, it was gone.

I would like to say that it was an accident, perhaps an unintentional mistake someone who worked in Mather made, not knowing that the Clothesline was meant to stay up. But it was not, for I had already gotten approval from Mather to keep it hanging for two weeks and the people I spoke to at Mather after the incident told me they came in on the third morning and it was just gone. Someone ripped down the Clothesline, what they did with it, I will never be sure, but stolen it was indeed. A week later, I was walking through a dorm and saw one of the dozens of missing t-shirts hanging outside someone's door. "My girlfriend has been bulimic for over three years and she is slowly but surely dying and I just don't know how to help her." I remember who wrote that t-shirt and it was definitely not the student who lived beyond this door. I will never find out who actually ripped down the Clothesline, or stole all the t-shirts. This is irrelevant. But I'm wondering what is so funny about hanging up someone else's deeply personal feelings about a bulimic girlfriend outside your dorm room. This, I will never understand.

Not long ago, I hung up some eating disorder statistics in the basement of Mather. "75% of American women are dissatisfied with their appearance"... "The 'ideal' woman- portrayed by models, Miss America, Barbie dolls, and screen actresses- is 5'7" and weighs 100 pounds"... "The average American woman is 5'4", weighs 140 pounds, and wears a size 14 dress"... "The body type portrayed in advertising as the ideal is possessed naturally by only 5% of American females"... "The average weight of a model is 23% lower than that of an average woman; 20 years ago, the differential was only 8%"... "20% of college women suffer from bulimia- in the general population,

3% of all women suffer from the same disease." These statistics were compiled from reports completed by the "Council on Size and Weight" and reflect the realities of ideal body standards and eating disorders within our culture.

I hung up these statistics with the intention that students would actually read about the growing problems with body image and see that these are major concerns that affect everyone who lives in our culture. I got a lot of positive feedback from the campus about these posters— many said they finally realized how much of a real problem eating disorders were becoming for so many people. But there were a few occasions when I walked by students who were reading the posters and claiming that the statistics were fake, overexaggerated, and simply not true. This is so sad to me, for why would anyone make up statistics about a problem that is affecting our campus at such a rampant rate? Why do students have such a hard time accepting the reality of this issue? Perhaps they looked at the statistic that the average American woman wears a size 14 dress and couldn't believe that it was true. And, I can't blame them. The average Trinity female student does not seem to be a size 14 or even close to that range. And this is because the Trinity College community does not reflect the realities of real life. And even when I go to other college campuses, I see a significantly more wide variety of body types. I think Trinity is in an epidemic right now where frighteningly thin is in, and anorexia is the only disease that I know of that is not always looked down upon. Not only anorexia, but compulsive exercising. There are women who eat only salad and mustard all day and then work out for two hours. I worry about these women. My freshman year, a girl died while working out on the treadmill. Dropped dead. The Trinity College community needs to start taking a look around and realizing the unhealthy standards of weight going on within our campus. I still plague over the fact that someone on our campus, a campus that struggles with a multitude of women suffering from eating disorders every day, stole the Clothesline. And that people don't believe the statistics written on eating issues and standards of beauty. I hope things will get better after I graduate, when I'm finally in the real world and when I walk down the street, the average woman really is a size 14. And that's okay.



## **Feminist Expo 2000**

*By Beth Miller*

The Feminist Majority Foundation (FMF) and 575 co-sponsors held "The Feminist Expo 2000 for Women's Empowerment" at the Baltimore, Maryland Convention center and I was there. There were many different delegations representing American colleges and universities; Laura Lockwood, Sara Getman and I represented Trinity College, though we lacked the necessary 20 people to be a delegation. Sometimes it feels like we only have about 20 feminists on campus, but I could be wrong. Ellie Smeal, co-founder of the FMF announced "We are not only in the mainstream but in every little creek." She proudly told us that the convention had not accepted any political or corporate funding. The international event was completely independently sponsored, quite a feat in contemporary America.

The large hot pink Expo banner matched the carpets bordering the aisles between rows of thousands of folding chairs; a radical revision of the pastel pink often associated with "sugar and spice and everything nice." There were two projection screens fed by cameras run by female technicians providing a clear view of the speakers for everyone. There were 65 vendors representing everyone from NARAL (National Abortion Rights Action League) to the FBI, who wanted to employ feminists, not keep tabs on us, I think. Women had come to network, celebrate achievements, rally against injustice, acknowledge feminist leaders and attend workshops about feminist issues.

Women came together as feminists and were proud of it.

Feminism has a history. Women have fought for social reform, political reform, the right to vote, and the right to bodily autonomy, etc., throughout history. Feminism was not invented in the late 60s and 70s in the U.S.A. by college educated white women. These women, however, had the resources, education, activist experience (fostered in the Civil Rights Movement and student anti-war movement) to make the fight for women's liberation a major social movement. We can thank them for fighting to attach "sex" to Title VII, creating legislation that protected women from harassment and discrimination on the job. We can thank them for Title IX and for the creation of Women's Studies programs nationwide. We can thank them for major ideological shifts about gender. When Gloria Steinem, Dolores Huerta and Betty Friedan took the stage, they were greeted like rock stars.

There is a small group of Trinity women and men with whom I feel comfortable being myself, as a feminist that is. Not that I am not a feminist all the time, I am, especially in places where I feel a feminist perspective is lacking. But sometimes I like to hang out with people who "get it." It is

exhausting to constantly explain why rape is bad, why I should get to make the same amount of money as a man, why I should get to use my body the way I want to, you know, outrageous ideas like that. It is really nice to hang out with people who passionately believe those things too, and since there are so few of us at Trinity, it was exciting to see so many feminists at the Expo.

My first thought when walking through the convention center was, "God Trinity is white!" As a white person, I do not find lots and lots of other white people particularly unusual. That's the norm, right? Even when you are conscious of it, you can still benefit from the comfort of your supposed "normalcy." Well, there were lots of different shades and hues, though a disproportionate amount of people were white. In keeping with their mission to make the Expo accessible to all women, the FMF put the admission fee on a sliding scale. Unfortunately, that does not take into account the women who may have had to work that weekend to make rent, or who may not live nearby and so would have had to pay travel and hotel expenses. Women of color are still disproportionately economically disadvantaged. It was a nice start though.

Ellie Smeal made a fabulous comment that I think truly illustrates a great way to look at flaws in the movement. There has been criticism levied by older feminists that younger feminists are taking their hard won battles for granted. "I'm glad they do," said Smeal. "I'm glad they have the attitude that they own every place they walk into." The young feminists in the crowd hooted, hollered, and clapped. Feminists criticize each other to keep the movement honest and effective. Some feminists are adept at taking criticism and use challenges as an opportunity to remain vigilant about feminist ideology. Malleability and self-study is essential to an effective movement, and despite critics assumptions to the contrary, we do discuss and debate contentious issues within feminist circles.

The delegation that most struck me came from Ghana. They wore handmade costumes with bright patterns and matching head wraps and I couldn't stop staring at them. They radiated pride and confidence. Some of the Ghanaian women had established a program through which other entrepreneurial Ghanaian women received support for starting their own businesses. Some of them force the government to include female farm workers on the agricultural boards that govern and hire them. These women were way out of my league. I write sassy articles at Trinity College.

Listening to the Ghanaian women representatives and noticing how full the writer's workshops were compared to more activist, radical gatherings, I began to wonder if I was

*(continued on page 8)*

*(Feminist Expo continued from page 7)*

a cheater. As a feminist writer, I get to assume the safe space of observer. Though I am a faithful observer, I have seldom entered the fray like feminists working for labor unions or college students who volunteer at battered women's shelters. One of the women writers who spoke said, "Expression and liberty are the same," and "To write is not a choice, it is a necessity." Her comments made me feel a bit better.

The speakers hugged each other after they introduced each other. Women corrected and disagreed with each other and apologized to each other right on stage when they made mistakes. FMF Expo coordinators apologized to the audience for mistakes that were made in the programming. I couldn't image a convention of business people hugging each other instead of shaking hands (unless they were from a European country where that was the social custom). I can't imagine a man correcting a speaker for mispronouncing his name directly and using it as an illustration of how Americans struggle with other languages and that this is a hindrance to global unity. Pretending things are fine when things are not is called "diplomacy," right?

One undiplomatic woman used the male technician who was adjusting her microphone as an illustration of pay inequity. She announced that as she watched him adjust the mic, she knew he was making more money than the women cleaning up after us at our hotels at that moment. Women cheered in acknowledgment of that fact, but I am sure some, like me, felt a pang of embarrassment for the man who was just doing his job. At the end of her speech, the MC, Dolores Huerta (co-founder and vice president of the United Farm Workers), came out applauding. After the crowd quieted, she announced that the female and male technicians in back wanted everyone to know that the reason they earn what they do is because they belong to a union. Everyone cheered again. The exchange articulated two very important facts: men still make more money than women, and that unions protect workers.

This exchange made me realize why some people call feminists "bitches," and why they don't know what that word means. Feminists who "bitch" are holding people accountable for things they don't want to be accountable for. We also point out injustices people

don't know how to deal with. (Other people probably don't like feminists or women in general for a myriad other reasons.) "Bitching" often makes others uncomfortable because they just don't know what to do about complex issues and really wish we would just shut up about them. Personal discomfort, however, does not automatically make someone else a bitch. This exchange was an important illustration of how feminists have different concerns and how public exchange, uncomfortable or pleasant, is essential to feminist discourse.

There were college women with red, blue, and purple hair, gay men, lesbians, transgendered people, and bisexuals, blue collar and white collar people, children, old people, people from India, Africa, South America, China, Europe, the Philippines, etc. There were women in their 50s and 60s finding friends in the crowd 30 years after the 2nd wave of feminism reached its zenith. I watched Betty Freidan step onto the block provided for her to reach the mic (women applauded when the man brought it out) and reflected on the praise and criticism feminists levied against *The Feminine Mystique* when it was published. *The Feminine Mystique* presented the partial, educated, white upper/middle class picture of patriarchy ignoring different feminist class and race issues. Nonetheless she is a mother of the movement whose work is important for the perspective it gave and the perspective it ignored that was later remedied by others.

I felt represented at the expo, not as "woman" but as just another woman trying to make a difference in my own life, and when I can, for others. It was nice to see women from other places with different concerns and the same general ideology. There were lots of women who laugh just as loudly as I do and as frequently. They were funny, smart, prideful, outraged women, like me. (You really have to be all those things to really make it as a feminist. The humor thing is HUGE.) It was nice to meet lots of people who did not think it was strange to claim a feminist identity. It was empowering and humbling to see powerful Ghanaian women holding us accountable for pronouncing their names correctly. History claimed a face when Betty Freidan spoke. I felt safe and valuable, even if I am just a feminist writer, and I had a little fantasy that it could be that way for feminists here at Trinity in the very near future.



*(Being A... continued from page 4)*

because they are female. I feel that I give off this untouchable air about me. Is it my personality or my color? The sophomore I interviewed agreed with me somewhat. When asked how the experience of a black female differs from that of a black male, her answer was that the social environment is more accepting of them. She feels that Trinity is still ideal for white males. Black males fit in much easier than black females because they are males. A black freshman I interviewed felt somewhat different than I do. She talked about how in her dorms the races mix. Her outlook on Trinity is more positive. The sophomore I interviewed felt there is a "big time difference" when comparing black females with white females. She went on to say that although we share the disadvantages of our sex, white females clearly outnumber black females. They have each other and do not have as many barriers. Although she feels that the ideal Trinity students is a white male, white females can relate because they share the same skin color and it seems that skin color creates more similarities than gender.

Despite the unsupportive environment of being in the minority, neither sharing the skin color nor the sex of the white male, the sophomore I interviewed felt there is a perk in her identity here at the College. She feels that Trinity allows her to learn about how she is viewed, particularly by whites. She gets a unique glimpse of how she is perceived. Along with this perk come the detrimental factor to self-esteem. Being surrounded by mostly white males

and females, a black female can lose herself. There is no positive reinforcement. After four years at Trinity College a black female, in particular, is "a strong woman" for surviving in such a socially uncondusive environment.

As far as Trinity College Black Women's Organization (TCBWO), this sophomore did not want to get involved with the organization or Imani for that matter. She felt it would be stereotyping herself in her freshman year before she got a chance to let people, black and white, know who she was as a person, not just as a black female. But when it boils down to it, she feels that she is viewed as a black female first before anything else.

In looking back on her time here at Trinity, a black female senior has noticed a change within herself. In comparison to her freshman year, she notices the social structure more now, she is "mentally more aware." Does it still eat at her like it does me sometimes? I wonder. But I do not want to ask her this because such a question is so personal, even though we may both share the same experience. To bring these feelings out into the open, to put it in words, makes it more of a harsh reality and gives it a life.

What doesn't kill you makes you stronger. If I can get through the black female experience at Trinity College then I will be a stronger person because of it. It is getting through that exhausts me. And will I lose a part of my inner happiness in the process? Yes. It angers me that my white peers don't have to make this type of sacrifice. But that's just the way it is when you are in the minority.

### ***Letter From The Director (continued from page 1)***

There is also a class and race issue: second wave feminists (feminists of the late 60's and early 70's) summarily excluded women of color and blue-collar women. Did you know they also often excluded lesbians? So there arose another lexicon for the term feminist: womanist and humanist. These words all stress the same message- that of supporting the dignity and welfare of all women and fighting for participation and opportunity proportionate to our numbers.

The Women's Center is a welcoming place for all women or men, regardless of how you identify yourself. It is a place of community- a place to address issues of social injustice and to have fun while doing it. I hope you stop by next semester if you haven't already, or come to one of our programs.

Have a wonderful summer!

**"One of the things about equality is not just that you be treated equally to a man, but that you treat yourself equally to the way you treat a man."**

**-Marlo Thomas**

THERE WAS A TIME WHEN YOU WERE  
NOT A SLAVE,  
REMEMBER THAT YOU WALKED ALONE,  
FULL OF LAUGHTER  
YOU BATHED BARE-BELLIED,  
YOU MAY HAVE LOST ALL RECOLLECTION  
OF IT,  
REMEMBER...  
YOU SAY THERE ARE NOT WORDS TO  
DESCRIBE IT,  
YOU SAY IT DOES NOT EXIST  
BUT REMEMBER  
MAKE AN EFFORT  
TO REMEMBER  
OR, FAILING THAT,  
INVENT

-MONICA WITTIG  
LES GUERILLERES

IF WOMEN CONTROLLED MEDICINE



The Manogram

## A Hell of a Woman by Janelle Maison

*Lilith was the first woman, made at the same time, from the same stuff as Adam. So, when Adam refused her equality and forced her to lie under him, Lilith spoke the forbidden name of God and flew from Eden. In mythology she became the Succubus, shown as a winged woman with taloned feet. The stories differ, and I have selected from among them. Sanvi, Snasanvi, Semangelaf, are the angels sent by God to bring Lilith back to Adam.*



You gotta give it to Lilith, she was a hell of a woman.  
Said she'd rather fuck demons on the beach than lie  
under the belly of that whiner Adam  
& flew from paradise.

Told God's angels to shove it  
when they came to get her back, said  
Listen to me now, while you still can.  
The original sin was rape and God has chosen  
Adam. From here we begin,  
This wound unhealed between man and woman  
draws out the world...

Go back now. I'm through talking.  
Tell God for me this fight goes on as long as it must.  
Let him make Eve, thinking to undo this treachery.  
Let him make laws declaring the mud's mistake.  
In every generation there is a woman, who belongs  
to me.



# National Alert

*As you are probably aware, the two presumptive nominees for the Republican and Democratic party are Governor George W. Bush and Vice-President Al Gore respectively. The Women's Center feels it is important to present their views on women's issues so that you can make an informed decision when you vote in the Fall.*

*Ralph Nader, who announced he was running for President, under the Green Party is not represented here, because information about his views on women's issues were not available.*

*The Women's Center doesn't endorse political candidates, but is simply providing information.*

- Gore says that he will defend a woman's right to choose, and that abortions should be safe, legal, and rare.
- He believes in more family planning, and less parental consent.
- Bush says that he is opposed to abortion and would support a constitutional amendment making the procedure illegal, except in cases of rape, incest and when the woman's life is jeopardy.
- He supports the Parental Notification Law for minor girls.
- Gore believes that the U.S. needs more opportunities for women-owned businesses.
- He supports the fight against domestic violence.
- Bush would encourage fewer abortions via adoption and abstinence and would support federal studies & grants for abstinence programs.
- He would emphasize sexual abstinence for teens and support teaching kids right (abstinence) and wrong (drugs & gangs).
- Gore says, "Women deserve equal pay for equal work."
- He supports same-sex partnerships; but not the 'marriage' title.
- Bush opposes the extension of hate crime laws to protect gays and he opposes homosexual adoption.
- He says, "No gays in Boy Scouts."
- Gore would "recognize gays & lesbians in the circle of human dignity."
- He believes in eliminating 'don't ask, don't tell', and letting gays serve in the army.