

## Guest Opinion

### Women and Violence...why?

by MARY BURNETT

Project Mayday will be presenting an open forum on Women and Violence in late May and early June through a series of films. Their main aim will be to promote community awareness, giving women a chance to talk to each other about all forms of violence against women.

When we look at violence against women, we have to look at the root causes: the lack of value society puts on the labour of women, and their second class status in our society which is shown very clearly in the stereotypes of authoritative men and compliant women. Men who stand up and say what they think are assertive. A woman who does this is strident.

Nowhere is the expected compliance of women more clearly evident than in the way women are presented by the advertising media. Advertising is one of the most powerful socialization forces in society; it is inescapable and all pervasive! Yet in advertising, women have only two images: ideal sex

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objects with no lines, wrinkles or even pores - an inhuman flawlessness or moronic housewife pushing cake or detergent at you. Does this make a woman feel two-dimensional? Incomplete? Are these the models a woman wants her daughter to think the ideal picture of a mature woman?

Advertising must be taken seriously. It tells us who we are supposed to be, what we are supposed to want, how we are supposed to live. Nothing in advertising is accidental. The new stereotype of a liberated woman with a briefcase is not reality - the fact is most women work in low paying traditional jobs. This continual debasement of women in ads, particularly the objectification of women's sexuality, affects us all. Advertising images keep us trapped.

The first part of the film series will look at just this issue - women and advertising. The film "Killing Us Softly" will be shown at the Schreiber Recreation Centre on Monday, May 28th at 7:30 p.m. All women are welcome to come out and discuss how this concern affects your own or your daughter's lives.

## Anchor — Country music and faith

I must admit it. Country music is as natural to me as breathing. Having grown up on the Gaspé Coast in Eastern Quebec, country sounds have been a part of me almost since birth. In 72-73 I hosted a Country and Western program on a campus radio station ... an experience that brought me closer to the rustic humanity of country singers. As late as 1975, I sang country lyrics in bars and Legion Halls on the Gaspé.

So ... I'm an incurable country music addict. For some of you who appreciate this unique expression of music, you'll understand what I have to say. Others of you, who hear Buck Owens, Hank Snow and Willie Nelson as critters with nasal congestion, may want to pause to consider why people touch base in life with country music.

Essentially I find country music is gut level stuff. Johnny Cash's "What Is Truth" allows us to feel the agony of a long-haired hippie in a courtroom, condemned by his appearance. John Denver's "Back Home Again" touches nostalgic chords in us, as we all derive a chance to return home, whether it's Schreiber, New Carlisle, Moncton, Brandon or Burnaby. Bill Anderson's "A Wild Weekend (With My Wife)" brings out the romantic inclinations in us. Loretta Lynn's "Coal Miner's Daughter" helps us to appreciate the joys and pain of poverty. Willie Nelson's "On The Road Again" expresses the dynamics of life and relationships ... times when we can be trapped by our own emotions.

So-called popular music has often tended to apply cosmetics to the life experience. Country music, by its rustic essence, conveys reality to us. It's the rare person who cannot relate to some country lyric, for it's the music of people with feelings. The sort of emotions we experience in the power of "The Bed of Roses" by the Statler Brothers.

For this reason, I enjoy country gospel. Country artists always tend to experience Jesus Christ on a personal level. Hank Williams, an American folk hero, became a solitary hillbilly turned star overnight. Hank never

adjusted to his new life and took to heavy drinking. The very titles of his compositions are a parody of his life: "Long Gone", "Lonesome Blues," "I'm So Lonely I Could Cry", "Your Cheating Heart". One of his songs touched on Hank's devotion; it was entitled "I Saw The Light". As an upbeat song, it spoke of the Light of Jesus touching us where we are in our lives. The night Hank passed away, this song was sung by his friends at the Grand Old Opry, as a fitting tribute to a man they loved.

The late Jim Reeves sang "Take my hand, Precious Lord": the lyrics call us to God (much in the tradition of the Psalms) when we're depressed or at a low energy level ...

"Take my hand, Precious Lord  
 Lead me on, let me stand  
 I am weak, I am tired, I am low,  
 Through the night, through the storm,  
 Lead me on by my hand  
 Take my hand, precious Lord, lead me home."

Likewise, the late Elvis Presley sang gospel music which touched the hearts of many. His version of "Crying in the Chapel" creates a period, which many of us have known...

"Take your troubles to the chapel  
 Get down upon your knees and pray  
 Then your troubles will be lightened  
 And you'll surely find your way."

Elvis Presley, Jim Reeves, Hank Williams, Bill Anderson, Willie Nelson and others don't claim to be "Model Christians." Yet, on a personal level, country singers like these can touch us by their gift of song. Knowing God is an experience of our lives. Country music can help us to get in touch with our emotions, and recognize God's presence among us.

Bill Le Grand  
 St. John's Anglican Church

## Arthur Black

### Here's to the nurses



Ain't Life wonderful? One moment you're strolling down the street whistling, speculating about the Oilers and the Stanley Cup ... then Fate shuffles the deck and deals a new hand.

The next moment you're on a stretcher wearing a drafty little blue cotton smock that ties at the back, looking up at a stranger in a brown suit who's telling you that they're going to perform an abdominal laparotomy.

Using your abdomen. Happened to me a while back. Two days after April Fool's Day, to be precise. I'd limped into the Emergency Ward of St. Joseph's Hospital with what I thought was a particularly vicious strain of 'Flu. A couple of hours and several dozen tests later, they were laparotomizing my abdomen (down on the farm we called it slitting bellies) — to see what the real problem was. Turned out to

be my appendix. Or rather my ex-appendix. Several hours earlier, the little beggar had puffed up like a party balloon and burst, scattering unsavoury glop all over my unsuspecting innards.

The operation was swift, painless and totally forgettable — mainly because they cold-cocked me with a shot of sodium pentathol before they brought out the knives. I don't remember a thing about the Operating Room.

The Recovery. That I remember.

I remember the morphine shots. Normally I break out in a cold sweat at the sight of a hypodermic, but I positively sang for those morphine shots. Matter of fact, if the nurses were two or three minutes late, I rang for them and reminded them through clenched teeth that it was time for my morphine shot. Now! The medics saw an unhealthy pattern

developing and wisely weaned me from morphine onto something less spectacular, not to mention less addictive.

Nothing more depressing than a junkie with an appendix scar.

I remember the hospital food, of course, but I'm not going to make any jokes about hospital food. I don't think we should blame hospitals for what they serve. I have a theory that there's this monstrous government program that turns out chefs with menus under their arms exclusively for hospitals, airlines and school cafeterias. I figure that the Institutions have to take the government cooks or they lose their grants.

There are plenty of unpleasant things about recovering in a hospital. Tubes up your nose. Intravenous needles in the arms. Enemas. The annoyance of lying in one position for so long you

bum goes numb — and not having enough muscle control to shift to another position.

Lots of crummy things to dwell on in the hospital, but I remember one overpoweringly pleasant thing, too.

The nurses.

I must have dealt with 20 to 25 nurses during the three weeks I was in St. Joe's, and none of them — not one! — was ever less than cheerful, helpful, competent and compassionate. And I'm not talking about mere bedside manners here. These nurses had to help a 200-pound cripple into and out of bed. They had to change his dressings, wash him, feed him — and listen to his tiresome litany of aches and pains.

Which would be burden enough if said human millstone was the only patient they had to endure, but there were others. A biker in the next room had left a

good percentage of his body skin on the pavement of the Trans Canada highway after being clipped by a car. A lady three doors down died the second night I was there.

Your average nurse deals with more pain, sadness and simple horror in a single eight-hour shift than the rest of us have to face in a decade. And somehow they do it without going to pieces, without blowing their cool.

... And without a helluva lot of recognition — financial or otherwise.

As an experience, I don't recommend a ruptured appendix to anyone. But mine had a high side to it — I got to meet a whole flock of ladies in white I otherwise would have missed.

Sisters of Mercy, they've been called.  
 God bless them.