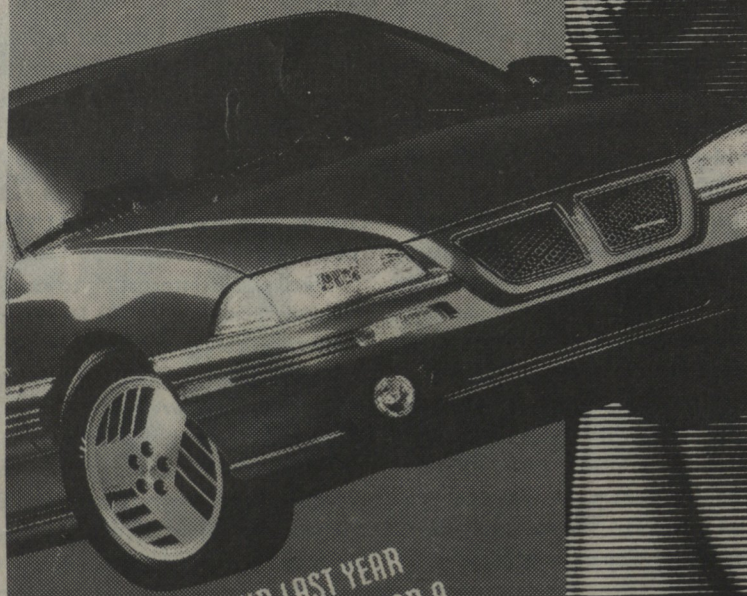


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# Rice's presentation emotionally charged

## Audience moved by images portrayed

BY C.A. SCHNEIDER

THURSDAY NIGHT WAS AN EMOTIONAL evening for all present at Carla Rice's presentation on body image. Duffy amphitheatre played host to one of the most disturbing and touching presentations anyone has seen in a long time. The problem of distorted body image is one that has plagued our society since the birth of the supermodel, and poses a serious threat to many young women today.

The disturbing statistics given in the early part of Rice's presentation showed that ninety per cent of women dislike their bodies, while seventy per cent are preoccupied with their weight. Forty

per cent of women are actively yo-yo dieting, while twenty per cent struggle with anorexia and bulimia. Fifty per cent of girls under the age of nine have begun dieting. Sixty-six per cent of women have experimented with bulimia to control weight.

In our society thinness is regarded as a sign of health, wealth, sexuality and immortality. Little girls are brought up believing that power comes from approximating these superficial societal beliefs. Society's ideals have kept getting further and further out of reach for most women; the "ideal" size has in fact decreased by twenty-four per cent, while the actual average size of women has increased by four per cent. The ideal that is presented to young girls-- Barbie-- is in fact the ideal most women reach for. She is blonde, blue-eyed, incredibly leggy and incredibly thin. In fact, if one were to make Barbie life-sized, she would have measurements of 36", 18" and 33". This

is an impossibility, not an ideal.

In the quest for the ideal, women begin to treat their bodies as objects. When one's body becomes an object, violence becomes an allowable occurrence. Violence can also become erotic as women's pain and suffering is sexualized. Fifty-five to seventy-five per cent of women who suffer from eating disorders

have also experienced, and will experience sexual and physical violence. This violence drives women out of their bodies, leading to self-harming behaviour, disassociation and eating disorders.

Women who quest for the ideal body stop nurturing and loving themselves and begin to struggle against their own

bodies. The problems of this generation of unhappy women have been passed on to the next generation, and if we don't stop the cycle now, we may never end it. Women must stop aspiring to unreasonable ideals and instead aim for reasonable goals. Women must also learn to once again love their bodies and themselves as they are. We in turn must teach our daughters to love their bodies, to know that they are beautiful just as they are.

Carla Rice spoke to all present, and her words touched them all. She raised all the issues that matter to women in this society and those who care about these women. She pointed out that society has changed its ideal many times in history, and that we can force society's ideals to become realistic and healthy. The presentation, sponsored by the UPE Women's Centre, was essential not only to the women of this community but also to those who love these women.

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