

or religion. Or it's based on ideas that men share some timeless qualities of masculinity that are out of bounds to women. That idea is as true for the army as it is for the guys getting into all the Robert Bly stuff. No, we don't have good alternative models for breaking down men's isolation without men getting into breaking other people's necks. That's why we have to start with the whole feminist agenda. For example, developing equality in the home is not only critical for women, but critical for men. It's important for the next generation that, in those homes where a father is present, boys learn they can turn to men for care and affection. It's critical for the next generation of men to have developed skills of relationship, of caring, of bonding based on love and connection and not based on common enemies or differences.

*Eimear:* So we need strong responses by men at a social and public level against violence in all its forms, from sexist jokes to incest, men's consciousness raising through groups and individual work, education in schools that not only points out the effects of all forms of violence but does so through a process that is non-dominating, non-punitive, collaborative. And, very important, the participation of men in the reality of caring for children on a daily basis, a role for which they will have to establish some trust.

*Michael:* All by tomorrow. It does seem awesome, but I see it happening. For every judge who lets off a rapist, I see another man struggling against sexism in his own life. Just think of this conversation, it wouldn't have occurred to any of us a few years ago. It's the result of men learning from the struggles of women and also of men realizing we are not only part of the problem but part of the solution.

<sup>1</sup> See Michael Kaufman, "The Construction of Masculinity and the Triad of Men's Violence," in *Beyond Patriarchy: Essays by Men on Pleasure, Power and Change* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1987).

<sup>2</sup> See Michael Kaufman, "Towards a Framework for Research on Men and Masculinity," *Men's Studies Review*, Vol. 7, No. 3 (Summer 1990).

<sup>3</sup> Robin Morgan, *The Demon Lover: On the Sexuality of Terrorism* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1989).

## Soldier

1.  
She did not see me  
pretend to smack her ass  
in jest.

As usual  
I pulled my hand back  
in the nick of time.

But, did our young son see?

2.  
The young soldier  
in the never-ending boot camp  
kicks cats  
that don't let him pet them  
The young soldier  
in the never-ending boot camp  
calls girls sluts  
and their mothers  
— whom he does not know —  
whores

It's fuckin this  
and fuckin that  
as means of expression  
will not blossom  
other than through his fists  
his skin still soft with youth

His indoctrination  
has ravaged  
any tears  
any quiet in his heart

He is now equipped  
as a general in training  
giving orders  
enjoying the officer's mess  
the privilege to walk alone in the night  
without fear  
no rape or violation  
to jade the innocence  
no bestial lust  
to ravage purity  
no obscene pornographer in three piece  
suit  
licentious, vile  
how evil is cloaked in the mundane  
"All is fair in love and war."  
speak the masked offenders  
Commanders of the war  
their artillery —  
degradation and rape  
or  
collusion in degradation and rape  
There, that implicates us all.

3.  
There is no time for declarations of  
reprehensibility.

4.  
Some nights I have nightmares

I hope I do not train my son as a soldier

## Gentlemen:

Gentlemen:  
I sit  
at the back of the bus  
alone.  
Women  
look for seats  
eyeing every single man  
as though he is the one.  
My eyes try to catch theirs  
screaming, I am not  
we are not....

Every eye I catch can only think the  
wrong thought  
They are not just looking for the killer  
but searching out oppressors  
if only with their eyes.  
Now  
with a killer on the loose  
the point is driven home  
It is not simply one maniac  
it is...

Gentlemen, you think me a fool?

Gentlemen,  
If in the past couple of weeks  
a few men were found  
dead  
their genitals splattered over their  
neighbours' lawns  
would you be flattered when a friendly  
woman said your hairy  
chest is so cute?  
Or would you check the hatpin in your  
pocket?

*Michael Glassbourg*

*These two poems were read as part of the Healing Images men's panel discussion on men's violence towards women. The poems were interwoven with the presentations of four other panel participants, and a variety of Michael Glassbourg's other writings.*