

too many women's groups were "glowing in the light of praise from scientific circles," while submissively following the lead of those same scientists. Instead, she said, women should take the lead and define what changes are worthy of energy and focus. As far as Brady is concerned, the focus should be putting an end to chemical and nuclear pollution.

"Even if there were a cure and we continued to do nothing to force the polluting industries to stop spewing the poisons which are causing many of the cancers," she

concludes, "then what we'd be doing is no better than going after a forest fire with a water hose in one hand, and a gasoline hose in the other."

Megan Williams is a Toronto journalist who writes about women's health issues.

TARA A. NOLLET

Radical Surgery

Everything is in perspective
as i lie upon
the operating table,
not sure if i am colder
than the metal bed
beneath my weight.
Even in a soporific state
i am impatient, waiting
for the doctor's knife
to make me whole.
How strangely familiar
the room appears,
but i've always had
a bad case of déjà-vu.
White masks hover
like bandaged angels.
You are amongst them
sabotaging my recovery,
not scrubbing your hands
before touching me.
Blackness presses down
like a giant thumb
and i see clearly.
You probe for a cure
but never understood
my healing process.
I need only blink
to remove you from existence.

Burial

she knows it's coming,
aware of the approaching
change in landscape.
the earth is sinking
beneath her weight.
she believes in order,
not the random behaviour of cells.
her fingers trace lumps;
braille messages under skin.
she dreams of women
wrapped in white gauze dresses,
blood stains where breasts
ought to be.
some carry coffins
the size of shoe boxes.
she cannot communicate with cancer;
relies upon the surgeon's knife
for dialogue.
somehow she must manage
without it, return
her flesh to solid ground.

Tara A. Nollet lives in Ottawa with her cats, Ariel and Chelsea. Her poems have appeared in The Carleton Arts Review, Contemporary Verse 2, Prairie Fire, Bywords and Hysteria.