

The Salemite

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Women's Images Change

by Patricia Earnhardt

"Emily (Wilson) comes up with some great ideas and some goofy ideas. This one was one of her greatest," said Dr. Dudley Shearburn, chairperson of the Salem lectures committee, during her introduction of Molly Haskell.

Ms. Haskell was invited by a sub-committee of the lectures committee to be this year's scholar-in-residence. Ms. Wilson and four students made up the committee. After the committee had decided on a film series they asked Ms. Haskell to speak on the images of women in film. Ms. Haskell then chose Meryl Streep as the focus of the series and her three day visit at Salem. The series included *Kramer vs. Kramer*, *Sophie's Choice*, *Silkwood*, *Heartburn* and was concluded with *Out of Africa* while Ms. Haskell was in residence. Each film was viewed by students and then discussed with various faculty and administration.

"Streep is never Streep: she is a unique and unusual star," said Ms. Haskell, explaining her reasons for choosing Streep as the focus of the film series. In her book, Ms. Haskell describes Streep as a "symbol of Artistic Integrity." She is an actress who changes to be the character at hand, not an actress playing as that character.

Ms. Haskell gives proof to how far a graduate of a woman's institution can go. A 1961 graduate from Sweet Briar College, Ms. Haskell published the first edition of *From Reverence to Rape: The Treatment of Women in the Movies* in 1974. The second edition was published in 1987. She is a leading New York film critic and has been a reviewer for *Vogue*, *Village Voice*, *Viva*, and *New York* magazines. Her reviews are also printed in *Ms*, *The New York Times*, *Esquire*, *Psychology Today*, and other magazines.

The nature of movie watching has changed. Movie makers made women to be perfect in order to meet the needs of the ideal world. Movies are not as make believe as people often like to think. According to Ms. Haskell, movies

usually reflect the values of each generation. There is, in addition though, the cover of film making, which adds in more Hollywood glamour.

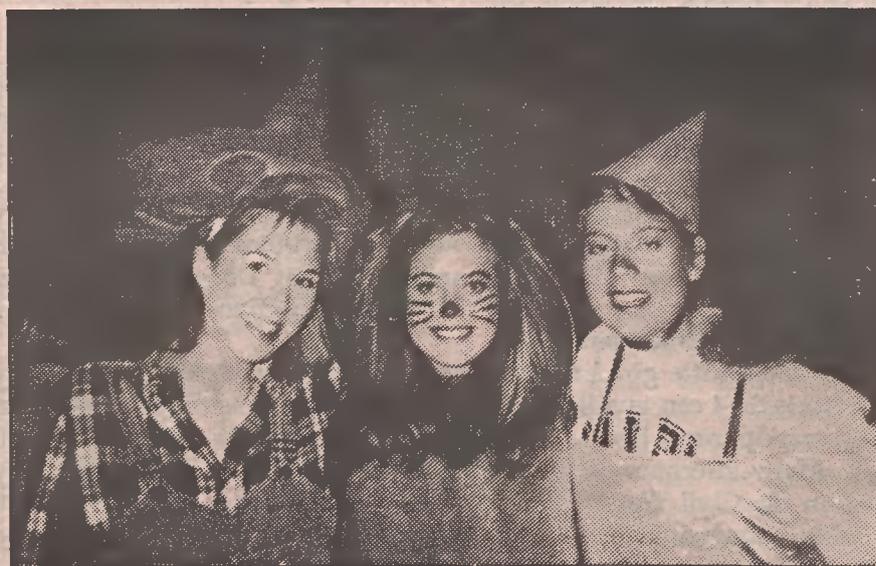
Ms. Haskell classifies the most recent generations into three categories: the 60's which was "a disaster," the nuclear generation and the greedy Me generation. With each generation there are changes in attitudes and roles women have, both in the "real world" and in the movies.

The view of women in movies and on television concerns Ms. Haskell because women in society are getting tired of fighting against the movie stereo-types that show women making it to the top and not being able to cope or not making it at all.

Ms. Haskell cited in her lecture the TV series "L.A. Law" where strong, forceful female characters dress in men's clothes in the office. Then they go home and change into women's clothes in order to compensate for being a success.

She also feel that the feminist perspective has been the most interesting part of movie history. The movie and television industries are slowly opening up to women and the feminist movement. Female stars like Meryl Streep, Glenn Close, Debra Winger, Jane Fonda, Cher and Sigourney Weaver are just a few of the strong, independent women featured in movies today. These are the women fighting the feminist battle at the box office. Ms. Haskell noted, though, that society still fears women in such strong roles as Sigourney Weaver in *Gorillas in the Mist* and *Alien*. Most of the leading female roles still end up falling back on the co-starring male roles for support. Unfortunately, this standard demonstrates a societal weakness in women and a need for the strength and help of men. And, in the case of billings the male star usually goes first; for example the billing of *Out of Africa* cited Robert Redford and then Meryl Streep.

Ms. Haskell spoke several times during her residency. The first was her lecture on *The Image of Women in Film: The Unique Meryl Streep* where three area critics composed a panel which interacted with Ms.



Scarecrow, Lion, and Tinman clearly expressed "There's No Place Like Sale," to the Senior Class of 1990 at the Sophomore / Senior Banquet, Thursday March 1.

photo contributed by Susan Combs

Board Initiates Review Policy

by Virginia Crable

On March 5, a memo was sent to the students, faculty and administration at Salem College. The statement is a result of the full Board of Trustees' meeting on February 15. The resolution of the Executive Board was adopted by unanimous consent. The resolution at this time reads:

"The Board of Trustees will institute a policy of periodic review of senior administrators at Salem Academy and College and will continue to encourage the exchange of views among Trustees, faculty, staff, students, and alumnae."

In talking with Mary Bryant Newell, the Chairman of the Board of Trustees, she said that the resolution has not yet been put into process and that the trusteeship committee will be studying the framework and the mechanics of the resolution before they meet again at the end of March. "The resolution will be governed on what is already in operation. The committee will either delete or expand upon what is already instituted," says Ms. Newell and also comments that, "there are no concrete details at this time."

Reverend Rick Sides of Home Moravian Church and the Vice Chairman of the Board of Trustees agrees that "the institution of the resolution will be healthy and positive for the entire community. I am excited because an institution such as Salem will be able to foster healthy communication and feedback that affects everyone."

As of now, the Board has simply approved the motion, but has made no progress as of now to administer the resolution.

Haskell and the audience. Her second appearance was for high tea and conversation with students, administration, faculty and staff. The finale of her visit was the viewing and critiquing of *Out of Africa*. Ms. Haskell also spoke to the Women's Studies Faculty and in Dr. Reiner's Psychology of Art class.

For those who missed hearing Ms. Haskell there are still many chances to enjoy her work. *From Reverence to Rape* can be checked out in the Gramley library and her new book *Love and Other Infectious Diseases* will be in stores in April. If this is anything like her first book, it is sure to be both intriguing and educational.