

lesbians or gay men in the film; such people form an entirely invisible off-screen menace — can't be ascribed to the film-makers' desire to make a commercially successful product. Recent Hollywood films that have done well despite, or because of, the presence of homosexual characters include *Personal Best*, *Death Trap*, *Making Love*, *Victor/Victoria*, and *10*.

The world of *Tootsie* is filled (quite realistically) with lying, philtering, groping, verbally and physically abusive straight men. Small wonder that the presumably heterosexual male film-makers want to repress any awareness of the possibility that women might opt out of relating sexually to such undesirables.

At the end of *Tootsie*, Michael claims he's learned a lot from his weeks as Dorothy. According to

him, now he knows how to be friends with a woman. But he was friends with Sandy for six years before he went to bed with her so that she wouldn't think he wanted to try on her dress. And he was standing Sandy up just when he was supposedly learning to make friends with women. It doesn't seem as if he's learned much.

In some shows, doctors or lawyers are called in as consultants to make sure the medical or legal facts are right. *Tootsie*'s writers, producers, director, and star are all men. Their topic has to do with women. I submit that the show could have done a lot of good if a variety of women had been consulted. Since the film deals with feminist issues and touches on lesbianism, feminist and lesbian women might have made helpful suggestions.

It's quite likely Dorothy/Michael wouldn't have found himself women's one and only saviour. "She" might have had to choose between redoing some scenes as scripted and being fired for being a trouble-maker. His abuse of Sandy wouldn't have been presented as funny. Just think, Julie might even have responded positively to Dorothy's kiss, only to be faced with the difficulty of adjusting to Dorothy's being Michael.

Then Michael might really have learned a lot.

Elsa Schieder, who lives in Montreal, is very interested in discrepancies between what books and films are saying and what they're widely perceived to be saying.

it'S NOT TIME FOR THE BIRTH YET

it's not time for the birth yet
and you already want out —
insisting that the growing should stop —
while your belly keeps swelling with sea.

with time she will come out,
eyes stinging with salt,
body quivering
from the force of the waves.

and i, who thought i was alone,
now find myself carrying —
my nostrils full
of the deep-sea smell.

i often bragged of not wanting
to go through labour pains like my mother,
and now look at me,
screaming myself into birth.

well, that'll teach you
to want to leave the shore.

Clara Valverde
Montreal, Quebec

Love has knocked again on my door

Love has knocked again on my door
has asked nothing
and taken everything I had to offer

love has come in the cold winter season
unexpected fire, burning down the shelter
it took so long for me to raise.

This time it has your eyes,
this time it speaks your words,
this time it has no hopes to offer me,
this time I find no reason not to let you in.

Annamaria Guiffrida
Toronto, Ontario

Sisters

Can it be that the winds have changed?
Are we to be brought together once more
body and soul, eternally?
The love that was sown at our birth
has flowered once again.
Will it once more be crushed
Or will it bloom
Fed on the tears of our lifelong affinity?

Michelle Alfano
Toronto, Ontario