

MARLENE KADAR

Ode to a Node

I have met you before but you weren't as boisterous or portly and so I had almost forgotten your silhouette.

Now you plague me, a silly little node supposedly full of benign lymphatic fluids, a Frankenstein peg in my neck with one to match on the other side.

I can't erase you nor can I hate what you have become since our first encounter.

Your contours have always been obvious to me, and yet sometimes loving friends claim not to see you, you, a swollen lymph node wriggling along a vagus nerve like a worm.

Lymph nodes never featured in *Vogue*, or even in *Chatelaine* so I wonder

how you got such beautiful genetic credence, so much power over me, so much stability when I am the one who made you.

Marlene Kadar is a Toronto writer, and Professor in Humanities and Gender, Sexuality and Women's Studies at York University.

LAURA SWEENEY

BINDER WOMEN

Saturday morning following the Romney-Obama Presidential Debate

As you leave the grocery store, putting on your "I Voted" sticker, three women mumble, as some women do, that *they* aren't going to vote. Their excuses irk you. You remember your friend Diane, the retired lobbyist, who once asked, "What's in a sticker?" She served the George McGovern campaign. Voracious about her views on the reds and the blues - she's no binder woman. And you remember the women in your writing class: Robyn the doctor, Susan the art teacher, Ruth Ellen the speech pathologist, Doris the biologist, Amanda the freshman - women who know the difference between electing a boss or a president means not being pushed back into the 50's. They're no binder women either. And when you think about so many women missing, without names, invisible faces on the sidelines, in harnesses halters bridles leashes, *binders*, however you call them, you turn and, attempting to educate, say, "You stand on the shoulders of those who've gone before...remember, and proceed."

Laura Sweeney facilitates Writers for Life in central Iowa. She represented the Iowa Arts Council at the First International Teaching Artist's Conference in Oslo, Norway. Her recent and forthcoming publications include poems in Evening Street Review, Negative Capability Press, Main Street Rag, Folia, Wordrunner eChapbook, Yellow Chair Review, Balloons Lit. Journal, East Jasmine Review, and Nuclear Impact Anthology: Broken Atoms in Our Hands.