

# October College 2002: Focus on Wellness and Illness

This year, the series of mini-courses known as October College will showcase Sarah Lawrence's new interdisciplinary program in Health, Science and Society. What defines a disease? Do films tell us the "truth" about science? What does literature have to tell us about illness? How do adolescents understand their own sexuality—and how do writers represent it? How does—how can—the apparently universal experience of dying change from one culture to another? These are among the questions that will be addressed at October College 2002, a series of non-credit liberal arts courses taught by Sarah Lawrence faculty. The focus this fall is wellness and illness as these are represented, understood, and interpreted in literature, history, anthropology, film and the health sciences.

**Karen Rader** from Science, Technology and Society will join with faculty from

Mathematics, Physics, and Biology to consider "Science Fiction, Science Facts." This course will revolve around four films—from *Forbidden Planet* to *A Beautiful Mind*—and will take up the many questions surrounding film as a vehicle for scientific knowledge. Anthropologist **Robert Desjarlais** will consider dying, death, and bereavement as these are experienced and understood across cultures. Author and psychotherapist **Kathlyn Conway** will lead an exploration of the illness narrative, an increasingly popular literary genre. **Marsha Hurst**, Director of the Health Advocacy Program, will challenge our very definitions of disease in "Making Sense of Symptoms." Psychologist **Linwood Lewis** and fiction writer **Carolyn Ferrell** will, together, explore sex and sexuality in the lives of adolescents and in the literature of adolescence. Bio-ethicist **Alice Herb** will take up—and

take on—the ethical dilemmas that attend the beginning and end of life and, more broadly, the ethics of health care in America.

In addition to these mini-courses, the Center for Continuing Education, in cooperation with various programs on campus, is currently planning a variety of public events—from a practical workshop on advocating for the elderly, to lectures about the impact of hospital architecture on health and about tattooing and body piercing practices among adolescent girls, to a film series focused on expressions of health and illness, and a photographic exhibition about genetics, culture, and difference. Join us in October for some or all of this exciting program. For more information, please contact the CCE at 914-395-2205 or at [cce@sarahlawrence.edu](mailto:cce@sarahlawrence.edu), or the college website at [www.sl.edu](http://www.sl.edu). ■