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## [Letter from the General Committee to the Community, May 7, 1991]

General Committee, Sarah Lawrence College

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# SARAH LAWRENCE COLLEGE

May 7, 1991

Dear Members of the Sarah Lawrence Community:

During the past few weeks, our community has been involved in intense and difficult discussions of racism, prejudice, and discrimination. These issues are important ones, both in the larger world and at Sarah Lawrence, and it is urgent that the dialogue about them continue. However, some of the discussions have been characterized by personal attacks, many of them based on second-, third-, and fourth-hand information. Students and faculty have expressed grave concern over what they see as, at best, an excess of zeal, and at worst, vilification of individuals bordering on slander.

If one of us can be the target of rumor and gossip, then all of us are vulnerable. As the discussions continue in the coming weeks and months, we ask that everyone remember the importance of freedom of speech, both inside and outside the classroom, and the need for responsible and accurate communication. In the long run, allegations based on rumor serve no one's purpose. They undermine the intellectual goals of the College. They destroy one of our greatest assets - a shared collegiality within which we can differ. And they make it more difficult to fight against the real problems that diminish all of our lives.

Sincerely,

General Committee

