

Spring 2002

## I Join the Women of Churchill College

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### Recommended Citation

Chapman, Robin S. (2002) "I Join the Women of Churchill College," *CutBank*: Vol. 1 : Iss. 57 , Article 19.  
Available at: <https://scholarworks.umt.edu/cutbank/vol1/iss57/19>

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## I JOIN THE WOMEN OF CHURCHILL COLLEGE

Beside me, the barebreasted girl with braids,  
a warrior's stance, gazes stonily across the hall;  
her older sister, firm-bellied blue-marbled nude,  
waits at the Fellows' back door, beside  
the statts of office. On the wall, a woman  
sleepwalks through her charcoal portrait.  
In the Senior Commons Room, another nude,  
small, curls up in langorous bronzed sleep  
by the stationery and blotting pad.  
At dinner, the girl in the tartan skirt  
bangs the dishes and snaps her oversize  
rubber gloves, impatient to do the washing up  
while I'm still eating my visitor's pudding.  
The Fellows linger, talking The Critique  
of Pure Reason, quantum tunneling.  
Outside the Hall, opposite Churchill's bust  
glowering in black depression, the last  
of the beautiful nudes, life-size, sits and weeps,  
her face in her hands.