

bitch," prostitute and lesbian.

The boys also snapped the girls' bras, stuffed paper down their blouses and rubbed their hands up and down girls' back, according to Eve's lawyers. One boy grabbed a girl's breasts, while another cut a girl's hair, they said.

"I started to think maybe I am ugly and maybe I am a bitch," Eve said in a recent interview in the Schoharie Country farmhouse where she and her younger sister were born. "By the time I left, I was just like a wreck. I had really bad posture. I was depressed all the time."

Eve's case—one of the growing number of sexual harassment lawsuits involving schoolchildren—could be the first federal peer harassment lawsuit to go to trial seeking punitive damages, said Eve's attorney, City University of New York law professor Merrick Rossein.

A case tried under California law ended earlier this fall with a girl awarded \$500,000 in damages. Eve's lawsuit does not specify a dollar amount.

"There is a difference between flirting and hurting, said lawyer Brooks Burdette of New York City, who also is representing Eve. "What happened in our case was systematic. It was a lot more than childhood horseplay."

Eve claims her former school district 100 km southwest of Albany failed to protect her from sexual harassment, violating Title IX of the Education Amendment of 1972 prohibiting sex discrimination

in schools. AP

Source: Philippine Daily Inquirer, 5 November 1996

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### 38 PERCENT OF RAPE VICTIMS IN SOUTH AFRICA ARE CHILDREN

ORANGE FARM, South Africa—In this struggling community 25 miles of Johannesburg, children have become prey.

A 15-year old tells a local physician she is not sure of her parentage. She wonders if the man who says he is her father is telling the truth, "because every day he would come and climb on top of me and beat me," said Dumiso Zulu, the doctor, recounting the girl's words.

A mother refuses to consider that the likely suspect responsible for the anal sores found on her 21-month-old baby is the child's father. "No, it can't be," she told Verina

Sithole, a nurse, who laments: "You just become disturbed for the day if you see such a case."

A 12-year old girl runs home crying one day after a seemingly nice neighborhood man invites her to visit him. It was chillingly familiar scenario, reminiscent of the three months of abuse she endured two years ago when a local clergyman lured her with kindness and spare change, then repeatedly raped her and secured her silence with threats to kill her mother.

Child rape—and rape in general—has emerged as the new South Africa's ugly secret, perhaps the most alarming aspect of a nationwide ex-

plosion of crime.

Nationwide, reported cases of child rape have increased dramatically in recent years, from 7,559 in 1994 to 10,037 in 1995, to 13,859 in 1996, according to national police statistics.

Overall, South Africa may have the highest rate of reported rape in the world, police say. Based on total rape figures for the first eight months of 1996, South Africa's rate of 141 reported rapes per 100,000 females is almost double the US rate for 1995 of 72 rapes per 100,000 females, according to law enforcement statistics from both countries. Child rapes account for about 38 percent of South Africa's total rape caseload.

Source: Today, 19 February 1997

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### SOUTH AFRICA-DEVELOPMENT: REKINDLING THE CULTURE OF UBUNTU

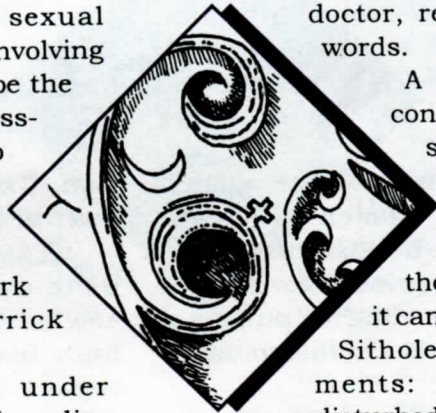
by Gumisai Mutume

KGOTSONG, South Africa—A group of five women sing in the blazing October sun as they toss building materials to each other.

They also mix the cement, fetch the water and assist the man laying the bricks. The house belongs to one of the five. When they complete it they will start on another until all are built.

Generally, people no longer build houses in this manner. But here in Kgotsong, a former Blacks-only township located some 200 kilometres out of Johannesburg, the spirit of Ubuntu is being rekindled and played out.

Ubuntu involves sharing. It





is a subtle concept not easily translated that means each one's humanity is expressed through his or her relationship with others. Its spirit is captured in a Xhosa saying which goes: "Umntu ngumntu ngabantu"—"People are people through other people."

Ubuntu formed the basis of pre-colonial African social organisation which created a spirit of mutual obligation and respect among people. It is this spirit that kept people cheerful in times of adversity. In South Africa, it helped members of the Black majority to survive the ravages of apartheid.

But colonialism and Western culture have severely tested the concept. Increasingly, with the growth of capitalism, desperation, pressure on scarce resources and the creation of mega-cities like Johannesburg, the spirit of Ubuntu has been disappearing.

"According to Western culture, it is one man for himself and God for us all," says Limakhatso Namo. "People do not care about others. But here it is different. A neighbour's problem is everyone else's problem."

Namo is the administrative director of the People's Dialogue, a non-governmental organisation at the forefront of the Homeless People's Federation (HPF). The HPF is a national community-based organisation of people—including the women in Kgotsong—who build homes for themselves through the money they raise and contribute to a central fund.

Namo says this way of building houses is called 'Letsema' in SiSotho, one of the country's 11 official languages.

Traditionally, it also extended to other spheres of activity.

In the old days, members of a community would come together either to plough, harvest or undertake some other chore for one another. Songs would be composed to suit the occasion and lighten the task at hand. Beer would also be brewed and served. Once they finished it, the people would move on to help another household.

Throughout South Africa, nine million of whose 41 million inhabitants live in shacks and informal settlements, such initiatives are being promoted, the underlying idea being self-reliance.

"We do not only come together to build houses, we also come together to talk about our problems and share ideas," said Rachael Masumpa, convener of the scheme in Kgotsong. "We say we are family. If one of us suffers, then we all suffer."

The degree of trust built up among the women is such that they obtain loans from the central fund on the basis of their relationship, without collateral.

There are 100 members in Masumpa's section of the 72,000-strong settlement. Working in small groups, they have so far put up 28 houses through a saving scheme they collectively contribute to.

"If one of us is being

beaten by her husband, we come together and counsel her, talk to her about how best to deal with the situation," says Ellen Moreanyane, the owner of the house the women are currently working on.

She says it is a vital support mechanism in a cultural environment that has brought people of diverse backgrounds together in search of jobs in the urban areas.

*Source: Inter Press Service Asia Pacific, 22 October 1996*



## ALL DOLLED UP INNOCENCE IN EVENING GOWNS

by Karen De Witt, NY Times News Service

WASHINGTON—Many Americans have been riveted by the televised images of JonBenet Ramsey, the kindergarten beauty queen who was murdered in her family's home in a wealthy neighborhood of Boulder, Colorado, the day after Christmas. A six-year-old, JonBenet was already a veteran of the children's pageant circuit, having won a half-dozen beauty crowns. Many of her photographs show her posed coquettishly in showgirl costume and lipstick, her hair a highlighted blonde.

With her death, the country has had a glimpse into this world, in which there is a pageant almost every day. Even infants can win a crown.

Child beauty pageants appear to be another example of an America wanting to have it both ways: a paean to the beautiful innocence that childhood should be, but dolled up with the aura of