

# Globe Focus

THE WOMAN WHO SHOCKED RADIO, F3  
JAPAN'S NEWFOUND MUSCLE, F4  
THE LOST ART OF HANDWRITING, F6



NADIA MOLINARI/THE GLOBE AND MAIL

No bowing, no scraping here. Today's youth seem to know it all — and they're fearless to boot. Have baby boomers created a generation of superior beings or lambs headed to the slaughter? **LEAH McLAREN** investigates

## Fine young cannibals

**F**orty-three is not exactly ancient. But for one high-ranking Toronto publishing executive, dealing with a new crop of upstart young editorial assistants at his company's New York office was enough to make him feel like an old goat.

"Basically, they had the world by the balls, and they acted like it," he says of the rich and good-looking Ivy League graduates who streamed through his office. "They would shoot their mouths off in meetings and demand way more than they should. They felt they didn't need to work as hard as anyone else in order to get what they wanted."

"It was actually pretty astonishing for someone my age or older. It's

not like I lived through the Depression or anything, but I would never have behaved the way these kids behaved."

Ladies and gentlemen, please put your hands together for Generation Fearless — bold enough to want your job and brazen enough to go after it. Today's twentysomethings have turned out to be the cockiest in recent history.

Young people are entering the work force with an unprecedented sense of entitlement, in large part because they have grown up treated as equals. Many members of the "echo boom" — the children of the baby boom — belong to what U.S. writer and social observer Robert Bly has labelled the "sibling socie-

ty," a world in which parents try to eradicate the generation gap by casting off their adult roles in favour of chumming around with their kids.

The result: a generation used to listened to with rapt attention at the family dinner table and very much at ease with its elders.

"There was certainly a sense of equality," Lia Jordano, 22, says of her childhood. "When I reached a certain age, my parents encouraged me to take on responsibility, and I was eager to do it. They weren't asking me every day whether I got things done."

"From the age of about 15, I was going out to bars every night until about 2 a.m. I had my reasons, and I

would explain them to my parents. As long as I could prove it was just, then it was fine."

In contrast to some of their peers, Ms. Jordano and her partner, Emma Ruby Sachs, also 22, illustrate some of this brave new generation's finer qualities.

Articulate high achievers with affluent liberal parents, both come from progressive, open families who support their live-in relationship. They speak in clear, confident tones and are completely at ease sipping dirty martinis in a swank private club as they discuss belonging to perhaps the most confident generation of all time.

See CONFIDENT on page F8

**Emma Ruby Sachs, above left, and partner Lia Jordano: 'From the age of 5, I was expected to show up at every dinner party and participate in the conversation and have opinions, and I did,' Ms. Ruby Sachs says. 'I loved it. My opinions were respected. I was completely socially integrated with the adult group.'**