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Editorial: *Coming Out!*

We are **Coming Out** and it's high time we did. Communications among the women in the Oberlin community have broken down if they ever did exist. We as a group see the need to establish and maintain some organ in which women can present their ideas and feelings and in which events important to all of us can be both publicized and reported. This paper will be a monthly publication put out by all interested women of the Oberlin community.

We are **Coming Out** and coming together. Each of us has been isolated in a variety of ways. Some of us have been isolated as a result of our limited college orientation. We have a lot to gain by addressing ourselves to broader issues. Others of us are isolated as housewives or working women who have limited knowledge of other women's struggles. All of us are isolated

as women who have a lot to share with one another.

We are **Coming Out** of passive acceptance of our sex-roles in all aspects of our lives, economically, socially, legally, psychologically. In consciousness-raising groups and in other ways, many of us have recognized our sex-roles for what they are, but none of us can change our situations alone. Only working together can we hope to deal with our oppression.

Newsletters are published in many college communities, but few are really community newsletters. Only through the participation of all interested women in the Oberlin community can we be really useful as a means of communication for women. In order to keep operating we will need contributions in the form of time and energy, articles, poetry, graphics, announcements, and financial help as we are privately funded.

Come Out!

Sexism and racism: a common oppression

The recent proposals to increase the number of minority group faculty members at Oberlin College and the anticipated recommendations of the Committee on the Status of Women point to an unfortunate conflict. With the continuation of the current freeze on the total number of faculty, minority groups and women may well find themselves squabbling over the "pieces of the pie" (to borrow an over-used analogy) in new faculty appointments.

Hopefully the days when women were willing to altruistically sacrifice the pursuit of their rights in order to invest their energy in the liberation movements of others are

past. In the Civil War era suffragists capitulated to the this-is-the-black-man's-hour argument, and worked for abolition and the black man's right to vote. And women waited another half-century to gain the vote for themselves. In the anti-Vietnam War movement women have found themselves relegated to the subsidiary positions of coffee maker, typist, and errand runner. Women's liberation was submerged in Vietnam's liberation. This sort of sacrifice must not be asked for nor offered any longer.

This is not to say, by any means, that the examples of black liberation and the peace movement are not valid and urgent struggles, but rather that the achievement of their goals does not require the neglect of feminism. The male power structure, like any other oppressive structure, must not be perpetuated within any liberation movement. None of us can be free until we all are. Women certainly should work for other similarly oppressed groups, but they should enjoy reciprocal support.

With increasing consciousness of their own second-class-citizen status, women constitute a political force of growing power. It would seem to be a weak link in their strategy if minority groups failed to recognize the close similarities between racism

and sexism, and failed to unite with the "oppressed majority." In Oberlin the alliance of minority groups to demand the hiring of minority faculty members must be broadened to include women and to support, as well, proposals to make the representation of women on the faculty more equitable. Women, blacks, native Americans, Spanish-surnamed, and Orientals must not lock horns over each rare faculty appointment, diverting energy from the assault on the existing power structure, only to find that they are all losers to a "most qualified" white male applicant.



STAFF: Mary Appling, Christina Bergmark, Linde Cohen, Ellen Dichter, Neil Forbush, Connie Gowen, Tina Krovetz, Robin Miller, Rachel Osborn, Karen Rosenberg, Sue Teply, Hannah Thomas.

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Myths about working women

Reprinted from ON THE LINE/LNS

[Editor's note: Is it true that women are poor job risks because they are always quitting to get married? Does "the little lady" hold down a job just to be able to afford that new hat or a weekly trip to the beauty shop?]

These are only two of the myths about working women which are widespread in the United States. Unfortunately they often affect a woman's chances of finding a job and once employed they keep her away from even the most basic job security and benefits, not to mention a salary equal to her male fellow employees.

But a woman's lowly position in the labor force has not always been as it is today. During World War II, for instance, many women were eagerly given previously "male only jobs" to compensate for all those men who were drafted into the armed forces. But once the war was over and the job market tight with returned veterans, women were suddenly no longer qualified. They were fired and urged back to the home, family, and more "feminine" occupations.

The following are only a few of those myths about working women — and the statistics to prove them false — that On The Line, a St. Louis paper, has prepared.]

MYTH: A woman's place is in the home.

A woman's workplace has become both her home and her job. In many working and poor families, the woman must work outside the home just to make ends meet. In 1969, 30.5 million or 43% of women 16 years and older were working in the U.S.

Women comprised 38% of all workers. Forty percent of married women living with their husbands were workers. And in 5.4 million families, women were the sole support.

MYTH: Women work for pin money, to supplement their husband's income.

Forty percent of working women are single, widowed, separated or divorced and must work to support themselves.

Of the 16 million women who work outside the home, one-sixth have husbands who earn less than \$3000 a year, and one-fifth have husbands who earn between \$3000 and \$5000 a year.

Three-fifths of all families in which wives work have incomes of less than \$7000 a year without the wife's earnings.

MYTH: It doesn't pay to train or promote women because they will marry and leave and the investment will be wasted.

Sixty percent of all women in the labor force are married, 20% are widowed, separated or divorced, and the remaining 20% are single women — mostly young.

Married women with husbands and children have an average worklife expectation (outside the home) at age 35 of 24 years.

MYTH: Women on welfare don't want to work. They just want to live off the taxpayer's money.

Women on welfare who want to work, as well as non-welfare women, have the difficulty of finding adequate, inexpensive day care. One woman we know took home \$90 a week and paid \$32 a week for day care for one child.

Since a welfare mother is rarely paid even the minimum wage, the added cost of child care would just about eat up her paycheck, leaving her right back where she started — dependent on welfare. (Nixon recently signed into effect a new welfare law which requires all those "able-bodied" welfare recipients to work — without provisions for day care facilities.)

MYTH: Women are bad hiring risks; they are often out because of illness.

A 1968 Public Health Survey shows that men, on the average, lost 5.4 days during the survey year because of illness or injury while women lost 5.3 days.



MYTH: Women are not interested in joining unions because they see their primary role as in the home.

There are twenty-five million unorganized women workers in the United States and yet, the larger, male-dominated unions have not sought to bring these women the protection of organization.

Many unorganized women are farm-workers (500,000), domestic workers (1.7 million), and service workers (4.7 million). These occupations have a predominance of black, Puerto Rican, chicana, and oriental women. Racism coupled with the small and sometimes isolated nature of their work makes organizing more difficult, but all the more essential.

Other unorganized women workers, like clerical workers, are persuaded by their bosses that their jobs are "better" than manual jobs in a shop and therefore unions are beneath their status.

However, in most places, clerical workers have less job security and take home a smaller pay envelope than women in the production unit of the same firm.

Two thirds of all women workers are clerical workers, private household workers, waitresses, cooks, and teachers (except college).



Lorain women come together

by Ruth Sabiers

From November 13 to December 11, the Lorain YWCA has been the scene for a Monday evening discussion series on women's liberation issues. The series, which attracted from 10-15 women each week, was the first co-ordinated attempt by local feminists to acquaint Lorain area women with the women's liberation movement. The meetings were free, membership in the Y was not a pre-requisite, and child-care and transportation were offered.

The series opened with *The Women's Film* and a general discussion led by Zara Wilkenfeld, feminist dean at Oberlin. Later topics included women and their bodies, the law, employment, and education. Discussion facilitators and resource persons included women from Cleveland NOW and WEAL, from Oberlin College, and from the Lorain County community. In addition to Ms. Wilkenfeld, other Oberlin women who led discussions included Libby Olstad, Pauline Clance, and Linda Cohen.

Planning for the series was conducted by 6 Lorain County women who met at the Y throughout the summer, discussed their own understanding of the women's liberation movement, and decided to utilize the Y's facilities as a women's center to introduce other area women to movement issues. Publicity for the series included press releases, fliers, letters to Y members and to presidents of local wo-

men's organizations, and participation by two women in a Lorain-based radio talk-show.

The women who attended the meetings represented a cross-section of the Lorain community: black and white, single and married, working class and professional (more of the latter), women from 19 to 65 working inside and outside their homes. The discussions each week mirrored their wide range of experiences, interests, and political frameworks; and although each participant expressed a very different consciousness of what it means to be a woman, the group demonstrated a high degree of acceptance, warmth and understanding towards each of its members. For many of the participants, this kind of positive interaction with other women was a new and exciting experience.

Future activities of the Lorain women's group will depend upon the expressed interests of the women who have been attending the series. Oberlin women who are interested in sharing activities and ideas with the Lorain women can contact Ruth Sabiers - 774-8455 (evenings) for further information.

New directions

by Martha Severens

A group of about twenty women gathered November 20th to discuss the directions of the Oberlin Women's Group for the coming year. After some discussion of the past history of the group, and also some of the problems, (such as publicity and the proliferation of several groups with similar names) several projects were proposed. Monthly meetings centered around specific topics will be continued. Topics proposed included: Can men survive the Women's Liberation movement? (scheduled for January); the image of women in advertising (March); women trusting women; women's studies; impotence in males; and women's motivation and fear of success. Several speakers were also suggested to supplement the discussion sessions. In addition Karen Buck (774-1221, ext. 2256) will coordinate consciousness raising groups, and Peggy Cobb (775-2923) would like to organize Reading/Discussion groups which would deal with the literature of the women's movement. The general consensus was that there is interest and that more work needs to be done on all levels - information, stimulation and agitation.



photo by Micki Scott

Olga Connolly, Olympic discus thrower

Sport and sexuality

"Human sexuality and Sport" was the theme of a symposium Thursday night, December 7, attended by over 250 people. Brief talks by each of the three panel members - Marian Leigh, a Canadian Olympic swimmer, Bruce Kidd, a runner active in Canadian politics, Abigail Hoffman, a Canadian track star, and Olga Connolly, Olympic discus thrower for Czechoslovakia and the United States since 1956 - were followed by questions from the floor. Predominant themes of the talks and discussion were the contradictions facing woman athletes, given the accepted roles and unaccepted roles of women in our society, the effect of participation in athletics on a woman's family, and sport as a paradigm of the definitions of sexuality in our society.

I like you tara
will come to see
but you don't
because you are my sister

- Jill

CONSCIOUSNESS-RAISING

Attention: Members of Oberlin Women's Group and all other interested women - Due to Oberlin College's characteristic bureaucratic disarray, signup sheets for consciousness-raising groups previously circulated at the Women's Conference and at the Oberlin Women's Group meetings have been misplaced. If you are still interested in joining or forming a group, please contact Karen Buck at 4-5925 (after 6 p.m.). If I'm not home, keep trying.

Abortion: It happened to us

by Jackie and Anne

We are two students at Oberlin College and are among the thousands of women all over the world who have had abortions. Many articles have been written about abortions—moral considerations, facts and figures, medical information—but less has been written about personal experiences and the reactions and emotions connected with having an abortion.

One of the first and most agonizing parts of our experience was just not knowing for sure if we were actually pregnant. Jackie's first pregnancy test was negative, a common occurrence during the first four or five weeks of pregnancy. Anne waited six weeks before going to the doctor at all. It's hard to admit to yourself and to a male doctor that you actually think that you are pregnant. After we knew for sure we both almost felt better. We could then make definite plans, since both of us had no doubts that abortion was the only real alternative open to us.

Emotional support from friends was invaluable during the weeks before the abortion. We were confused and depressed, unsure of ourselves and of whom we could trust. One of us lives in the Women's Collective and found that there was always someone there to listen sympathetically and offer advice and reassurance. Anne had help from friends in Oberlin and from her friend David, who also helped pay for her abortion. We found our friends and Planned Parenthood counselors much more helpful and supportive than Oberlin's male abortion referral person, to whom we both went for counseling. Although he tried to do his best to put us at our ease, we both found talking to a man and a stranger very difficult. Both of us came out of his office nearly crying. (Jackie was told by him on two different occasions that having the child might be an "interesting experience"! We could

understand that he wanted us to be aware of alternatives to abortion, but we had already made up our minds. We feel very strongly that Oberlin should have women who can discuss abortion with pregnant women, and that the existence of female counselors should be widely publicized.

Making an appointment for an abortion is practically like making a regular doctor's appointment, except that it feels a little bit stranger. We both got appointments within a week of calling the clinics. Jackie's appointment was in Buffalo and Anne's in New York City. Anne flew to New York where she met David and spent the weekend with him; Jackie drove to Buffalo with Anne and another close friend and drove back to Oberlin the same night. The New York clinic was quite a bit larger than the Buffalo one, but the two were similar in many ways. Most of the staff at both places were women who had had abortions, and they took an



individual interest in us and our particular problems and worries. We had counseling on the abortion procedure, contraception, and on our feelings about the experience. It was really good to talk to so many other women who were different from ourselves—some married, some single, some young, some older—but who were all brought together by our common experience. Anne had a female doctor perform the abortion, which she found to be less disconcerting than Jackie's experience with a rather brusque male doctor. The abortion itself (we both had vacuum aspiration) takes about five minutes and is done with a local anesthetic. The amount of pain involved varies considerably with different women. We each had a nurse who held our hand and talked to us throughout the procedure. Surprisingly enough, both of us have O negative blood and required injections of Rhogam to avoid problems with Rh reactions in future pregnancies. This injection cost an

extra \$40 in New York, making the whole procedure \$165. Jackie's injection was free but the abortion itself was \$140—\$15 more than in New York.

After the abortion we felt like lying down for a while, while cramps subsided and composure returned. Within the hour we were both ready for a big dinner with drinks. (There's a great Chinese restaurant in Buffalo!)

The first reaction after an abortion is immense relief. We were less self-conscious and felt less of a need to hide the fact that we had been pregnant. We were both about a month behind in our work, but at least it was nice to feel like studying again instead of being preoccupied with problems.

Despite the eventual return to our normal lives, we each had an experience that we will never forget and probably neither of us will ever be quite the same as we were before. We both realized needs, feelings, and strengths that we hadn't known we had. We each spent a couple of very unhappy, confused months. But we were among the lucky ones. We knew where to go to get an abortion referral. We had enough money, we had friends, and neither of us had serious moral conflicts about abortion. But there are thousands of women who don't have the information, the money, the support. These are the women who turn to self-induced abortions, to illegal abortions, to suicide, or who resign themselves to unwanted pregnancies. There are too many states with restrictive abortion laws that prevent women from getting safe, relatively inexpensive abortions. Pennsylvania just passed the most reactionary abortion law yet—three doctors must declare that the woman will die before a legal abortion can be performed. Not even cases of rape, incest, or expected deformity are considered exceptions. And there is a stigma attached to abortion that makes us ashamed and secretive about the fact that we have attempted to control our own bodies and lives. It is this stigma that has made us reluctantly try to maintain partial anonymity in this article. This must be changed. As long as safe, effective contraception is unavailable, abortion must be an alternative to unwanted pregnancy—an alternative which hopefully will not be needed often, but which should be available without social stigma.

One consequence of our experience is a desire to help other women who are in similar situations. If any woman would like advice, support, or just a sympathetic ear, we can be contacted through the Women's Collective.

Towards a non- hierarchical society

by Linda Cohen and Gary Gorton

[Editor's note: Murray Bookchin is a well-known American anarchist who came to Oberlin for 3 days several weeks ago. He debated with Ron Suny, a Marxist history professor at Oberlin College, on *Marxism vs. Anarchism*. His emphasis is on creating a non-hierarchical consciousness. This article is the authors' personal reactions to Murray's ideas.]

Murray Bookchin's message to Oberlin, conveyed during his two-and-one-half days here, got us thinking again because he verbalized and explained some of the things we had been trying to explain to ourselves. It was exhilarating. It wasn't so much thinking about whether the "correct line" is Marxism or Anarcho-Communism and all that that debate might imply, but rather, it brought our outlook back to our everyday lives — to a concrete human level. It raised questions about human potential and self-actualization.

Murray spoke to us in non-sexist terms, not only through his conscious choice of words, but through his whole non-hierarchical attitude and his life style. Murray was willing to spend some time here, not just fly in and fly out. When he did leave, earlier than planned, he was sick from lack of sleep and hoarse from talking continuously.

Women and men should think seriously about creating non-hierarchical structures in everyday living. The women's movement is deeply concerned with domination and the hierarchy which is its result. Most women don't use those terms, but viewing things from this perspective is useful (for men and women) because things become clearer. The conscious realization that we think in hierarchical terms whenever we think will allow us to change this pattern of thinking. It is not because we cannot think in non-hierarchical terms that we don't, but rather be-

cause we have been conditioned to think in hierarchical terms. This is presented to us as the natural way to think. It is very much like when we realize that we think in sexist terms; then we can change our consciousness.

This view of Murray's seemed, to us, to provide the missing halves of a series of dualisms. For example, class struggle and hierarchy go together. Class struggle often seems like an abstract concept whereas hierarchy is an everyday problem. Class struggle is not an abstract concept when it becomes apparent that the hierarchical nature of society is responsible for classes. Murray emphasized the hierarchy part of the dualism in order, not to mitigate class struggle, but to bring it back to our own everyday lives.

Similarly, the dualism of exploitation versus domination played a large part in Murray's view. Exploitation, again, is juxtaposed with domination in a way that brings the issue back to our own lives without denying the fact exploitation exists.

Beginning to think about Murray's ideas as additions to what previously may have appeared as abstract concepts begins to lay some of the groundwork necessary for action. Developing a revolutionary consciousness is a dialectical process requiring that neither the consciousness nor the revolution comes first. Revolution is a total process, a daily struggle on every level. Murray's ideas about strategy do not adequately deal with the "tell me what to do" syndrome, but he does clearly say that there is no answer to the question of which comes first, consciousness or revolution.

Radicals who can quote Marx and discuss workers, but who can't relate to things on a local level, or with their own personal problems of sexism, racism, and hierarchy are no better or worse than members of consciousness raising groups who can do no more than discuss things on the level of their personal lives and problems. Murray's point is that revolution is everywhere. The struggle is not an abstract war; it is OUR EVERYDAY LIVES.

ABORTION COUNSELING

Abortion counseling and referral is available with Libby Olstad (774-1221, ext. 3158 or 774-3881), Pat Walton (774-1221, ext. 2245 or 5184), and Dave Byers (774-1221, ext. 7240).

Film review: *Salt of the Earth*



Rosaura Revueltas as *Esperanza Quintero* in the motion picture *Salt of the Earth*. "How shall I begin my story that has no beginning? . . . Our roots go deep in this place. . . deeper than the mine shafts. . ." from *Salt of the Earth*

by John Lippert and Mary Appling

Salt of the Earth is an incredible movie. When the Women's Film Series brought it to Oberlin in early December only 100 people managed to make it to the first three showings, so it was held over for a better publicized, better attended showing a few days later. *Salt of the Earth* is an important political commentary on both union efforts and the women's liberation struggle—a film that shouldn't be missed.

The story is a true one. Filmed in 1951, the movie depicts a successful Mexican-American miners' strike in New Mexico in 1950. More than that, it is the story of the women of the mining town and their initiative and courage in dealing with both company and husbands. When a court injunction forbade the striking miners to continue picketing, the miners' wives, not legally restricted, took over the picket lines, in many cases against the wishes of their husbands. The women

learned that they could take assertive action and be their husbands' equals. The men learned that the routine of child care and laundry makes for a tedious existence.

The film is so significant that it has suffered considerable political harassment. Joe McCarthy condemned it on the floor of Congress while it was being made. Vigilantes attacked the sets. In 1958, the CIA confiscated all but a few copies. It has never been seen in a movie theater and you are probably not going to see it on television either — at least not until the Revolution comes.

The cast consists almost entirely of amateurs playing themselves, those men and women who actually participated in the strike. The film was shot in the union hall, in the homes, and on the dirt roads of the company town where the struggle actually took place.

Women and the military

Reprinted from EVERYWOMAN/LNS

[Editor's note: The following article is excerpted from Army Dependents Speak: Women and the Military, available for 35¢ from Camp McCoy 3 Defense Committee, 306 N. Brooks St., Madison, Wisc. 53715. The pamphlet is the transcription of a radio program in which women were asked to phone in their experiences with the military. The woman who speaks in

these excerpts is named Joyce and worked in a GI coffeehouse in Colorado Springs.]

What are your thoughts about women who join the military, and what are GI's attitudes towards women who join the military?

You can't talk about women in the military without talking first about the officers who have life and death control over all enlisted men and women. In Andy Stapp's book *Up Against the Brass* he talks about a "pig party." When officers graduate from Officers candidate School, there is an initiation, like a fraternity initiation, where the officers go into town near where they are stationed and they find what they consider the ugliest girls that they can and invite them to this party. During the party, the head of a pig is presented on a tray to who they consider the ugliest girl there.

This is the attitude officers have toward women, and they are the people with power in the military. They judge us on our looks as though we're objects, not human beings, and they feel they have the right to do this.

How you are treated depends on the rank of your husband — the power of the man you're with. They say "officers and their ladies, non-commissioned officers and their wives, enlisted men and their women." Male supremacy exists in all parts of society, and this includes enlisted men, but the officers purposely play on this when training enlisted men, to make them more hostile towards women.

I think this is done purposely, to keep GI's demoralized, separated from women, and confused so that they will do the army's work, and won't organize with their families and their sisters in the military.

"This is my gun"

Basic training is very humiliating. Men's heads are shaved; they're kept in a constant state of physical exhaustion. After running around doing useless work for maybe 18 hours a day, a drill sergeant might come and stick his face in a man's face and say "who's your wife (or girlfriend) balling tonight?" There are cadence songs men are forced to sing while they're running double time. One is "Ain't no use in going home, a cat named Jody's got your girl and gone."

One of the worst things a man can be called in the army by an officer or an NCO is a "pussy," a "cunt," a "little girl," or an "old woman." A reprimand is "you ain't got hair on your ass," (like a woman). They are told to "speak up like you have a pair [of testicles]."

The army is very concerned that an enlisted man make a distinction between a rifle and a gun. If he calls his rifle a gun, as punishment, he might be made to run around the company area with his rifle held with one hand above his head, and his other hand on his penis, shouting, "This is my rifle, this is my gun, this is for fighting, this is for fun." — As if sex is just another way to exercise a man's power — to a woman this must mean rape.

Servicewomen

Remarks made by NCO's and officers in basic training amount to: women are in the service because they're either lesbians, or they couldn't find a man, so they joined the military and will take anybody.

The brass seems to go out of its way to dehumanize servicewomen in the eyes of enlisted men. Remarks like "if you're really hard up, go get a WAC." One WAC reported in the American Servicemen's Union paper, *The Band*, that she was attacked in her bedroom at 1:30 a.m. by a drunk GI, and when she complained that there was no lock on her door, she was called a "troublemaker" by her officers.

With this in mind, we can talk about women in the military. There are over 50,000 women in the military, and there's no such thing as equal training with men. The women officers are nurses and dietitians. The enlisted women are secretaries, clerical assistants, and do general housework. They are subject to the same laws as enlisted men — for instance, if you fail to salute an officer, you can spend up to six months in the stockade.

Harassment

Usually enlisted women work under male officers. If he wants her to be



"nice" to him, she can't quit her job. Besides extra duty, and other forms of harassment that all GIs are subject to, if a woman doesn't fit into line — if her CO



Ms. Magazine, Nov. 1972

doesn't like her — she might be forced to go through the humiliation of constant pregnancy tests.

In *The Bond*, one WAC reported that her CO, as a form of harassment, had all overweight WACs marched to the dispensary for pregnancy tests. It was called the Porky the Pig Platoon. Never once was it considered that all the mess halls served was starches. This WAC joined so that she could get special training in photography — training she couldn't otherwise afford. She never got it.

We hear an awful lot about men that are fighting and dying in Vietnam. What happens to WACs and other women in the military in Vietnam?

In back of the 3rd Field Hospital in Saigon (a hospital for serious war casualties) there's a house of prostitution, run by male officers. Pressure is put on the nurses to prostitute for them. These are women *officers*, who have it better than enlisted women.

Also there are American Red Cross volunteer women in Vietnam who go there to help care for wounded GIs. Pressure is put on them to prostitute by male officers. And they're called degrading things like "donut dollies" or "pastry pigs" because they hand out donuts to hospitalized servicemen. The USO in Saigon is where an officer can meet Red Cross volunteers who are forced into prostitution.

Vietnamese women

American women in Vietnam are called "round eye pussy" as opposed to Vietnamese women, who are called "gook

pussy" — racist, sexist names.

The logical conclusion of the way the brass reinforces the sexist attitudes enlisted men have toward women is exemplified by what goes on in Vietnam and how the American military treats Vietnamese women. There are over 400,000 women in South Vietnam who are forced to prostitute themselves to GIs to support themselves and their families. This is more than one prostitute per GI.

According to the Detroit Winter Soldier testimonies, rape was referred to as standard operating procedure. There's a film of the Philadelphia Winter Soldier testimony, and there's one instance in that film where a man gives testimony about how Marines treated a group of captured Vietnamese nurses. The nurses were spread-eagled and tied to the ground and raped many times each by the marines. They were tortured and mutilated. Their fingers were chopped off, their breasts were chopped off, and finally flares were put up their vaginas, and their heads were blown off.

I have interviewed Vietnam returnees when I worked in the coffeehouse in Colorado Springs. Men, sick with what they had seen, told me many such incidents. To me, this is the logical conclusion of the brass's attitude towards women. This is sexism, and this is racism.

Issues of the women's movement

by Carol Wilder

Few social phenomena within recent memory have been as eagerly exploited and distorted by the media as has the emerging women's movement in this country. "Women's Liberation" has become a household word, but the movement remains almost universally misunderstood by those outside of it.

Media emphasis upon such mythical events as the alleged Atlantic City "bra-burning" of several years back has trivialized the movement for the sake of good news copy, while at the same time all but totally obscuring the very real and critical issues facing women today.

The women's movement is not in any

FLOWERS AND GLASS

The flowers you hunt always face
in one direction, you are allowed
to swim on if you wish, your heart
moves past the half moon, your hands
go up for a wave, bloodstone: pounds
and pounds of it for every stroke you
execute, air is on its way inland to
streets and buildings, your mother
is there chanting to the glass, she
is a champion, so complex she never
bred true, her legs gave richer milk
than cows ever have, this is good
or bad: if you touch bottom
four minutes or more, bad.
If you root up flowers, cut
through wind and escape the blood,
good: sometimes though
you stay underwater for months at a time.

— Stuart Friebert

serious sense about bra burning or about unisex fashions or about who opens the door for whom. The women's movement is about all of the oppressive conditions of modern society which relentlessly relegate women to the position of a powerless second sex economically, legally, sociologically, psychologically, and sexually.

Economic oppression

The economic oppression of women is an easy place to begin looking at issues of the women's movement: the evidence is irrefutable.

According to the U.S. Department of Labor, more than 31 million women are working today. And while it is expedient to view employed women as "secondary income sources," over one-half of all women workers are working because of economic necessity.

Almost two-thirds of all American adults below the poverty level are women — 11.2 million women to 6.9 million men — according to labor department statistics. Nearly one-third of all children in poverty are living in women headed families.

Of the U.S. women working today, more than two-thirds are employed as clerical, service and sales workers or as domestic servants — all comparatively low-paying jobs. On the other hand, about 70% of all male workers are working in better-paying positions as professional and technical workers, managers, foremen, factory workers and craftsmen.

In 1955, the average female worker earned \$64 for every \$100 earned by the average male worker, and by 1968 this had slipped to \$58 for every \$100. The median income of all female workers in 1968 was \$4,457, while the median male income was \$7,764. This is explainable in part because women usually hold lower-paying jobs than do men, but such rationalization does not apply to women workers averaging 40% lower pay benefits than men holding the same occupational positions with the same experience.

In 1968, again according to the Department of Labor, the typical female college graduate earned \$6,694, while the typical male with an eighth grade education earned \$6,580 — little more than \$100 difference. The typical male college graduate was far ahead of both groups, earning \$11,795.

Such are the stark statistics which drone on and on describing the economic oppression of working women, not even to mention the unpaid, untenured labor of the housewife working her 96 hour week.

The economic oppression of women

Women's Film Series

SOMETHING DIFFERENT---

A full-length feature film by one of Europe's leading directors contrasting the lives of two women: an aging Olympic gymnast who sacrificed everything for her athletic career and a bored Prague housewife who seeks escape through an extra-marital affair.

WOO WHO? MAY WILSON---

A film about May Wilson, age sixty, former wife-mother-housekeeper-cook and a grandmother who, when she found out that her husband's future plans no longer included her, moved to N.Y.C. and began the painful process of working out a new life in which the art that had been a hobby became central.

Dates to be announced

stems in part from the blatant fact that women have traditionally been discouraged, if not excluded, from occupations where pay or prestige are high.

Even on the college campuses — those bastions of pseudo-liberalism — faculties have been traditionally male-dominated and the picture has worsened in recent decades. Women make up only 19% of college faculties — down from 30% in 1930 — and even then they are concentrated at the lower pay and rank levels, often regardless of their credentials.

A recent study at Kent State University, prepared by the women's "Committee W" of the American Association of University Professors, revealed women faculty members averaging considerably lower salaries than their male counterparts at all ranks. (At the level of full professor, the highest paid woman is paid an incredible \$9500 less than the highest paid man.)

Even more to the point, Oberlin College — "the first coeducational college in the U.S." is down from a 30% female faculty in the mid-1920's to 19% in 1972, even though 47% of the student body is female.

Employment statistics for women in medicine, law, engineering, and the sciences are even more discouraging for the woman who aspires to something other than the traditional female service occupations. Employment discrimination of nearly all types is now illegal under various legislative and executive orders enacted during the past decade, but discernible change in employment patterns remains a hope of the future.

Legal oppression

From the beginnings of western civilization, women have been legally defined as second-rate, at best.

Way back in Athens the venerable Aristotle maintained in his *Politics* that "the male is by nature superior and the female is inferior, and the one rules and the other is ruled."

Even the Bible tells women that "thy desire shall be to thy husband and he shall rule over thee," and the Roman law concept of *pater familias* established the husband as legal master of both wife and children.

During much of the nineteenth century, all of a married woman's property and earnings belonged to her husband, and women could not even execute valid contracts or wills by themselves. (California women still need court approval if they want to go into business for themselves.)

In the 1800's it was legal in most states for a husband to beat his wife, although one kindly judge ruled that the beating stick should be "no thicker than the width of a thumb."

Such laws were enacted because under English common law — upon which American law is largely based — the husband and wife were regarded as one person, that person being the husband, and the legal existence of a woman was suspended when she married.

Today in Ohio and most other states such blatant legal oppression no longer exists, but there are still many subtle vestiges of it which remain on the books.

Ohio statute 3103.12, for example, informs us that "the husband is the head of the family. He may choose any reasonable place or mode of living and the wife must conform thereto." Patriarchy lives in the law, even if it is suffering its last death throes in many modern families.

Ohio also still has on the books many statutes of so-called "protective labor

legislation," which prevent women from, among other things, jobs which require "frequent or repeated lifting of weights over 25 pounds," jobs which require more than a 48 hour work week, as well as jobs as truck drivers, bell hops, pin setters, or meter readers.

Discriminatory statutes such as these are slowly being struck down in individual court decisions, but it will take ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment to invalidate them altogether.

The amendment, which reads simply that "equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex", finally passed through the House and Senate last year after nearly 50 years of lobbying and defeat.

The amendment must be ratified by two thirds of the states to become law.

Foremost among other Ohio laws which deny women their rights is the Ohio abortion law, which permits a legal abortion only to save the life of the mother. Abortion reform is a critical feminist issue which draws support from a wide segment of the general population, but all Ohio efforts to date have met with dismal failure.

One other Ohio law deserves note here because of the attitude towards women which it reveals: statute 2905.301 reads, to the disbelief of many, that no person 18 years of age or over shall utter obscene or licentious language in the presence or hearing of a female or a child under 12 years of age.

The point of interest here is the implied equation; namely, that the female of the species is as delicate and defenseless as the average prepuberty child.

Reform of such outrageous laws is now slowly coming, but such a change can produce only a small step toward improving the status of the American woman.

President Nixon's task force on Women's Rights and Responsibilities reported in 1970 that "so widespread and pervasive are discriminatory practices against women that they have come to be regarded, more often than not, as normal".

Attitudes of long standing can not be simply legislated away, but a change in the laws is at least a symbolic beginning.

(Part Two of this article in the next issue of this paper will consider the social, psychological, and sexual oppression of women.)



With friends like these, who needs enemies

[These are major excerpts of the minutes of the phys ed faculty meeting of November 10. Present: Michaels, Hoch, Houston, Shultz, Horn, Gurtis, Grice, Martin, Culhane, Calmer, Nylander, Millman, Mann, Smith, Rudolph, Scott (in the chair).

[In order to more fully appreciate the politics of this meeting it should be noted that Houston, Culhane, Calmer, Mann, and Rudolph are women. About some of these it should be said, "With friends like these who needs enemies?"]

The meeting began with a lengthy discussion of the women's athletic budget. Culhane objected strongly to the Oct. 15 motion of the Oberlin College Student Senate which "strongly urges the Department of Physical Education to review its criterion for the allocation of departmental funds to athletic activities with the objective of dealing more realistically with the athletic needs of the women of Oberlin College."

She objected particularly to the part of the Senate motion stating that last year's allocation of athletic funds to men as compared to women for the current year was \$67,000 vs. only \$1,000. She said that last year when she was coach of the women's basketball team, the team got additional funding from the equipment budget: in particular, the team got tops and shoes, but not uniforms ("because they didn't want them") from the equipment budget. Scott replied that this was really a minor matter, since if you add the amount of money spent on having male coaches on the staff, and the amount spent on the much smaller number of women coaches, to the respective athletic

budgets, the discrepancy would in fact be much, much greater than \$67,000-\$1,000.

Scott asked Culhane if the women's basketball team hadn't wanted any more games. Culhane replied that they got as many games as she could schedule. Calmer supported this.

"That's just too bad"

Scott asked if this meant that the women's athletic program had been satisfactorily and adequately dealt with in the budget. Culhane replied "yes." Calmer strongly supported this on the grounds that women students "got just what they asked for: if they didn't organize themselves, that's just too bad"

Grice added, "I am tired of looking at these figures (\$67,000 vs. \$1,000) that make those of us who were here last year look like a bunch of hypocrites. We have people around the campus that think we are really terrible." Calmer added that, as a women's coach, "I have never been denied anything I asked for." Shultz suggested that instead of "having to fish around for money," the various women's teams should have a budget just like the men's teams. Then we could all see exactly how much or how little was being spent on the women's program.

Recruiting

Scott pointed out that a lot of money is being spent on recruiting male athletes, but nothing on recruiting female ones. "With this kind of thing going on," he said "how can you possibly say there isn't enough interest in women's athletics?" Grice said it would be "illegal" to recruit women athletes. Shultz disagreed, saying it would be perfectly all right to encourage "scholastically qualified" women athletes to come to Oberlin.

Scott announced that he had received a reply to his request that the College set aside additional funds for women's athletics. Provost Carlson had replied that if the physical education department in the past had been guilty of a pattern of sexist discrimination in its athletic allotments, then it was up to the department to correct the situation out of existing funding. No additional college funds will be available for this purpose.

Calmer insisted that the additional money needed for women's sports should not come from other existing phys ed programs, especially the service programs. Rudolph asked, "Then where is the women's money to come from?" Calmer replied: "The coaches must have a meeting and decide. Change can not just come zap, just like that." She added that she strongly

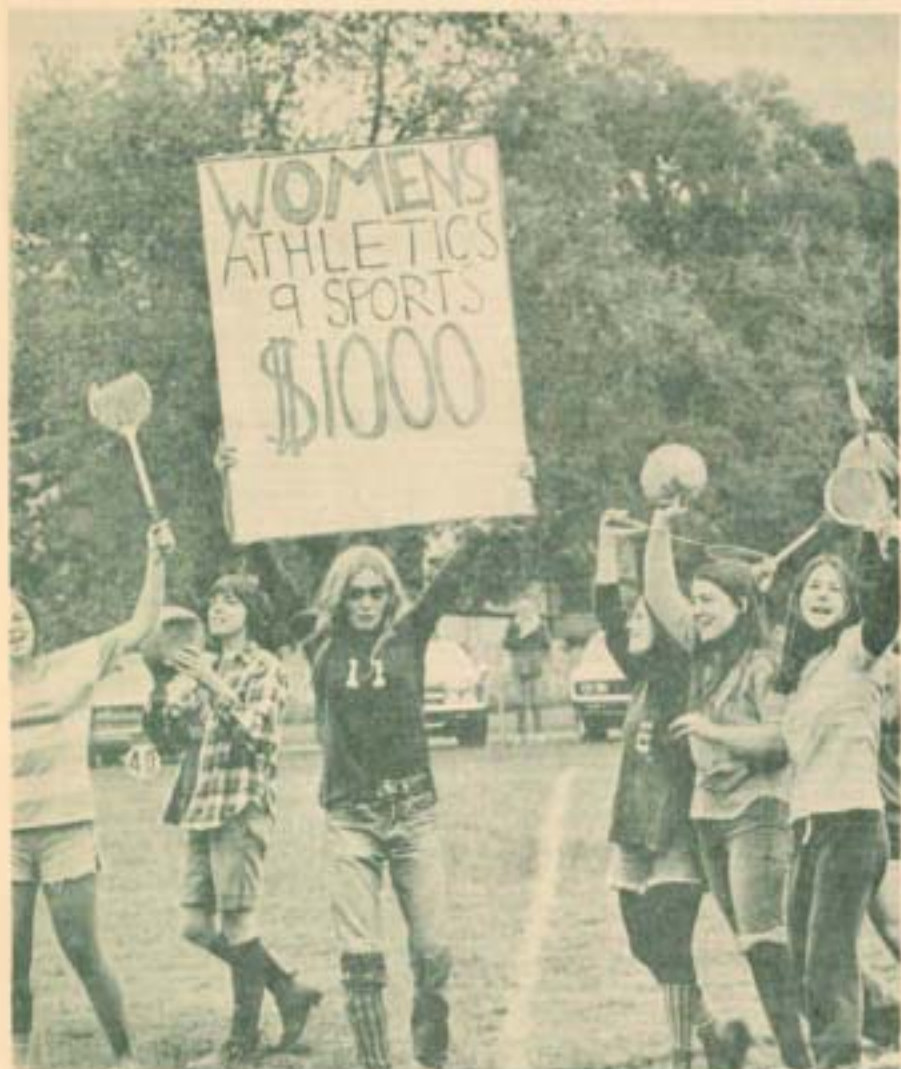


photo by Micki Scott

opposed the Student Senate motion: "They have no right to tell us what to do... If the students (i.e. women athletes) weren't creative in their thinking, that's their fault."

Not you, of course

Houston added that the women faculty in the department must decide among themselves to what extent they wish to participate in coaching intercollegiate athletics and conferences about this: "We need a philosophy (of women's athletics) before we need money." Calmer added, "We aren't just sitting on our duffs doing nothing. We are aware of what's happening in women's athletics." Mann noted that, "There are a lot of women phys ed faculty in this state who are against women's athletics." (She added that, of course, she didn't mean the women in this department.)

Grice said there is "no serious problem" in funding women's sports here, and, "The football budget should be cut to find the

funds." Scott questioned whether Grice would be feeling this way if he were returning as head football coach next Fall. Grice replied that he'd always known that it was inevitable that the football budget should be cut, and that funding for the women's sports must come from the various men's budgets. He thought that many, if not all, of the existing men's sports programs might have to have budget cuts.

Policy - then student participation

Calmer strongly opposed the view that, "The only way women are going to get their cut of the pie is to have absolute parity." She added that the coaching faculty must first decide on a policy in regard to women's sports before inviting students into the discussion: "I see no reason for airing our dirty laundry in front of students."

Shults made a motion, seconded by

Gurtis, that: "The women coaches should present their budgets for each sport to this body (i.e. the departmental meeting)." He added that there should be a women's athletic budget just like the men's budget and the women should not have to go fishing around helter-skelter for money.

Houston disagreed strongly with Shults' motion, saying instead that "Philosophy must come before budgets." What was needed was a general philosophical discussion, she said. Shults then asked Houston if she wanted equality of opportunity for women. She replied that that wasn't the main thing: "There are other things to discuss. We need a philosophy." At Houston's suggestion, Shults' motion was tabled until the next meeting.

Sexism, roles, consciousness

by Libby Oldstad

"Sexism, Roles, and Consciousness" will be a four-hour seminar offered second semester through Oberlin College's Human Development Program. Examining sexism on individual, collective, and institutional levels, the seminar will attempt to perceive how sexism affects consciousness in Oberlin.

The course will be offered in two sections of 12 participants each. Hopefully, each section will include women and men and both students and members of the larger Oberlin community. There are still vacancies for men students and men and women community members. (If interested, call 774-1221 ext. 7273.)

The format for the course will include discussions focusing on readings and research projects as well as personal struggles with sexism. Each participant will be responsible for creating a research project, on his or her own or in cooperation with others in the seminar, investigating one experienced or observed aspect of sexist behaviors or policies either on the campus or in the town. Conclusions of these projects will be shared with the seminar. More extensive use may also be possible.

The coordinators of the seminar (Zara Wilkenfeld, Keith Olstad, Laneer Clance and Libby Oldstad) consider the course a beginning in meeting the need to explicitly examine sexism at both the affective and effective levels. With the planned creation of men's and women's study programs there will be an ever greater opportunity for study in this area.

She's been sitting on tops of chairs
having me tell my dreams

The bridge, where it was going, who was there
I left, you had thrown my book down
all the way to the bottom of the trees
In a house full of rooms opening into rooms
dark glass dividing piles of laundry

Each of us has a space in your mind, but dark
because you don't know
She's fantasizing losing parts of her body,
her dreams fragmenting she says, now practicing
her falls.

— Karen Rosenberg

in attempts to find answers to important contemporary problems. This emphasis on the unity of theory and responsible action is precisely the direction in which more responsible liberal institutions are moving today. The program will enable Oberlin to expand curricular offerings that respond to its commitments to bring cultural diversity into the mainstream of the institution. A rather negative rationale also exists for the program — if Oberlin does not deal actively with the reality of oppression that racism presents to us, then by its inaction it is condoning the results.

We believe that education and social change are closely linked, and we therefore believe that programs dealing specifically with social change should be included in the curriculum. It is only when persons are involved in "action and reflection on their world in order to transform it" (Friere, Pedagogy of the Oppressed) that they are carrying out their true human vocation. We believe that racism is the most pervasive social reality affecting the lives of people the world over; we therefore think it essential that higher education in America consciously address itself to the problem.

As we perceive it, racism is a collection of actions of individuals, groups or institutions which, regardless of their intent, cause human beings to be treated unjustly on the basis of their color. These kinds of actions surround us. Also, we believe that hopes to comprehend racism within ourselves and our institutions can only be actualized through efforts to combat it. Accordingly, the program focuses jointly on racism and social change. Within such a model, it is hoped that

four distinct goals would be achieved. The first is to provide an in-depth study of racism in order to understand its past and present manifestations in their attitudinal, institutional, and cultural forms. The second is to develop and actively pursue meaningful models for change within the communities and institutions of which participants are a part. The third goal is to help participants explore their own attitudes towards racism and racial situations with which they come in contact. The final goal is to comprehend and then utilize education as an instrument of social change.

The success of the program depends very much on the manner in which the classes are structured, because this structure profoundly affects the commitment the members of the group have to the class. And so integral parts of the program are the following innovations: to redefine the student-teacher relationship as a two-way interaction that places the major responsibility of deciding and acting upon priorities on the students themselves; the affirmation at the outset of the value of learning from other students in the group; and most important, the integration of study and action.

The five specific courses include:

- 1) Racism in America — An Introduction to the Study of Racism (designed basically for white students)
 - To explore the historical, psychological, and sociological implications of whiteness in American society.
 - To explore institutional dimensions of racism.
 - To help whites understand Black power.
 - To explore how whites can be anti-racist in a racist society.
- 2) Racism in America II
 - To provide in-depth study of systemic manifestations of racism.
 - To learn skills in analysis of institutional racism.
 - To explore alternatives, e.g. pluralism, cultural democracy, etc.
- 3) Philosophies of Social Change
 - To study and understand various philosophic approaches to social change.
 - To understand how specific actions are built from basic philosophies.
 - To enable participants to develop personal philosophies of social change.
- 4) Methods of Social Change
 - To enable participants to develop models of change which are relevant to communities to which partici-

Racism and social change program

by John Lippert

What is the Racism and Social Change Program?

Those of you who were at the 4:30 proposal meeting which was part of the Self-Determination Day events will probably still be asking that question. At the meeting someone from the Racism Workshop talked for a moment about the need for white folk to confront racism as a white problem, as an institution that oppresses white as well as black. The speaker at the meeting then said that the Racism Workshop had been working on an independent program designed to accomplish this goal. But time didn't permit a detailed description of the program. It's time to clear up some resulting confusion.

The Racism and Social Change Program is most succinctly described in the introduction which accompanies the proposal.

We propose that a program in Racism and Social Change be adopted at Oberlin College. We believe that a program such as this belongs at Oberlin because it significantly enhances opportunities to unite theory and actions

- pants must return
- To study contemporary literature to find current approaches to planned change
- 5) Practicum in Institutional Change
- To develop skills needed to diagnose situations needing change.
 - To develop and implement programs for change.
 - To consciously engage in Friere's "creative action and reflection on the world in order to change it."
- It is probable that these courses are years away from Oberlin's curriculum. But it is important to note that they will come, because Oberlin's curriculum must change. It is also important that creative energies be directed into making the program in Racism and Social Change more sophisticated and more visible to those in



Vocations for Social Change

whose hands final decisions on implementation lie.

There is one immediate note, however — the Racism Workshop is in the process of implementing for second semester an ad hoc course to discuss racism from a specifically dynamic perspective. The course proposal that has been submitted to EPPC resembles the "Racism in America" course outlined above; but again, major priority decisions cannot be made until the group is assembled in February. The course is being implemented in response to very clear interest on the part of many students in studying this question in this manner.

If you are interested in participating in the course next semester, if you want the more extensive course outline and bibliography that are available, if you want to contribute to the development of the Racism and Social Change Program, if you want anything, anything at all, contact:

The Racism Workshop
c/o YWCA
Wilder Hall
Oberlin, Ohio

The women's collective: a larger perspective

by Mary Appling
& Lynn Keith-Swenson

A women's collective at Oberlin College, just an idea last spring, became a reality at Thurston House this fall. However, the task of defining goals and organizing the energies and interests of the house is clearly a continuing process, a process in which not only collective members, but non-residents as well must be involved.

Outward orientation

That the collective should be concerned with creating a sense of community among its participants is a well-recognized premise. However, after considerable discussion, it has become clear that a supportive environment within the house is not an end in itself, but a means to the end of allowing the collective as a unit to be active in the Feminist movement in the larger community of both town and college.

With acceptance of a greater social and political role for the collective, has come the realization that Thurston House, the fewer than twenty women who live there, must not be seen as The Women's Movement at Oberlin. "The" collective is really only "a" collective, a small part of the movement which encompasses many other women in Oberlin, in surrounding areas and across the country. The Oberlin Review shouldn't be calling *only* Thurston House to inquire "what has happened in the women's movement today?" Collective members should not be routinely doled out responsibilities that a larger community of women should share.

Non-resident involvement

Members of the collective are certainly willing and eager to take part in many feminist actions and to have Thurston

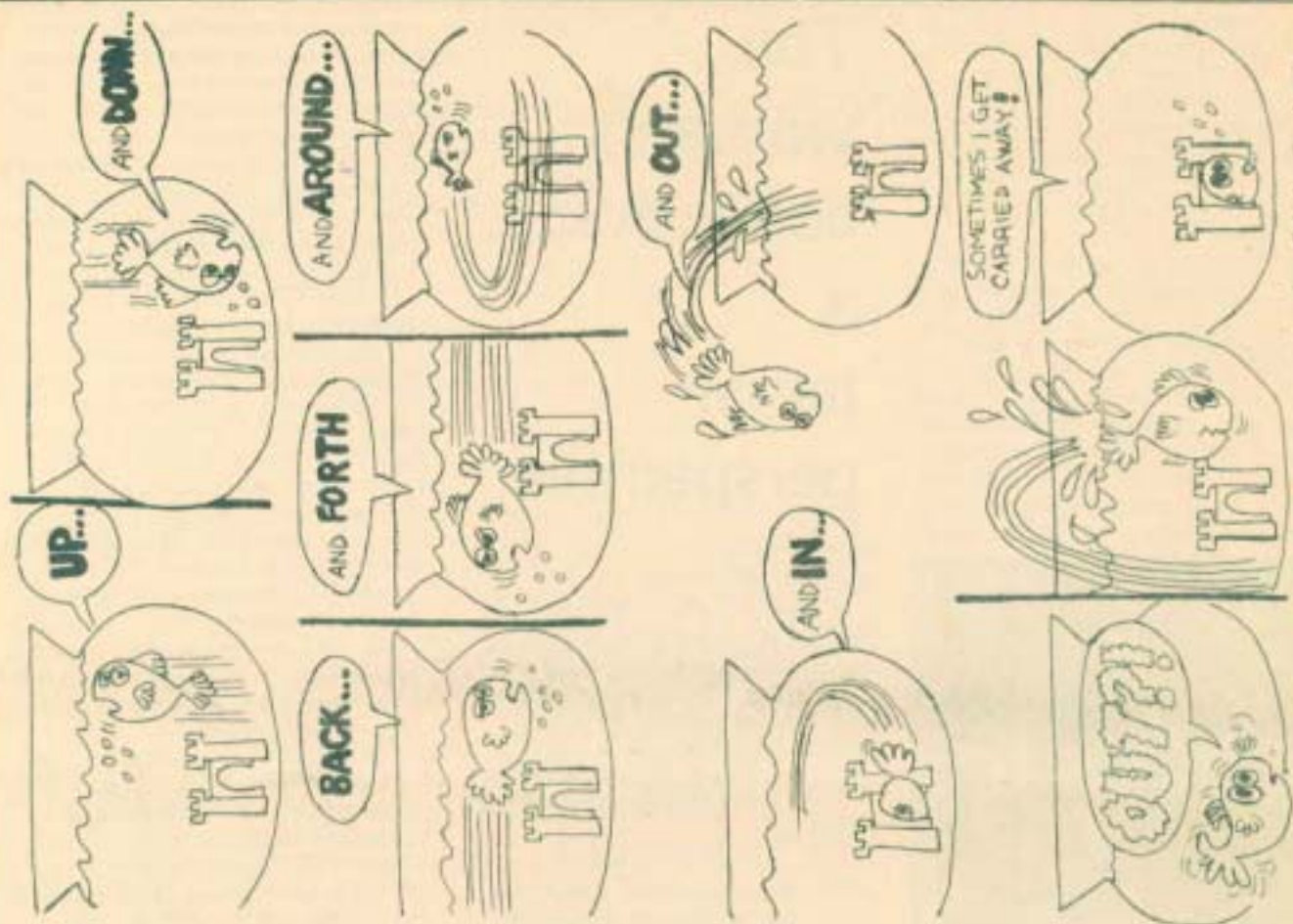
House used as a meeting place, a phone center, library and stable entity between weekend conferences and monthly newspapers which bring women together temporarily for specific short-term projects. But, it should be emphasized and emphasized again that non-residents can and must come to Thurston to join in already initiated tasks and especially to find support for new undertakings. The women's movement and a women's collective is not a tight, exclusive organization.

Interested women should consider contributing to future issues of this newsletter (photographs, articles or essays, poems, graphics, or labor); organizing a library of women's literature with Women's Center money; working for abortion law repeal, day care programs, welfare rights; helping with the women's film series; establishing regular communications between the various groups of women on campus and in other cities and towns. In many of these areas, interest groups have not yet been formed. It will be necessary for women to take responsible, independent leadership roles and not simply follow in someone else's plan.

The idea is not to notice a need in the community for some feminist action, call up the collective to report it and hang up. We do not want to be an excuse for anyone else's inaction, but an encouragement to each woman to act on her beliefs.

I walk out
because talking
is impossible — what am I
a wall,
am I the yes
the agreeable, silent nothing
at the side
when needed
for asserting self
why do you relate around me
and not to me.
So I seem incapable
of comprehending more —
Why do you distort
fact when
confronted,
it is only natural
to lie to me
what am I —
woman

— Phyllis Waltman



cartoon from Columbus Gay Activist

COMING OUT needs your contributions!

We are an entirely volunteer staff with no more leisure time or skills than you have.

Your graphics, articles, poetry, letters to the editors, and help in the production and distribution of the paper each month are essential.

The deadline for contributions to the next issue is January 15, 1973. Please mail them to Box A-22, Oberlin College Mailroom, Oberlin, Ohio 44074, or deliver them to 156 S. Professor, Oberlin.

We have no rich benefactors, so your financial assistance is certainly welcome and necessary, too. Anytime.