

The University of Maine

DigitalCommons@UMaine

Maine Women's Publications - All

Publications

Fall 9-1-1980

Women's Center Newsleteter (Fall 1980)

University of Maine Women's Center Staff

University of Maine Women's Center

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/maine_women_pubs_all



Part of the [Education Commons](#), [History Commons](#), and the [Sociology Commons](#)

Repository Citation

Staff, University of Maine Women's Center, "Women's Center Newsleteter (Fall 1980)" (1980). *Maine Women's Publications - All*. 278.

https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/maine_women_pubs_all/278

This Newsletter is brought to you for free and open access by DigitalCommons@UMaine. It has been accepted for inclusion in Maine Women's Publications - All by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@UMaine. For more information, please contact um.library.technical.services@maine.edu.

umo women's center



**There can be no free men,
Until there are free women!**

**FALL
NEWSLETTER
1980**

Statement of Purpose

The UMO Women's Center exists as a forum for the exchange of ideas and energy pertaining to feminism. Sexism is everpresent on campus. One way we've all dealt with this is to tune it out, but in this manner we are partly and passively responsible for its perpetuation. The avenue we've chosen to follow is to support each other in our roles as feminists and offer that viewpoint to the UMO community through films, speeches, discussions, and publications. For example, we meet bi-monthly to share with each other our experiences and knowledge on topics of feminism and through this exchange we expand our concepts of ourselves and our political consciousness. This newsletter is an example of the diversity, interest, and energy generated by this group in an effort to share that energy and articulate the ideas we've developed. Thus this is the result of our own efforts as a dynamic organization in combination with the growing consciousness and stature of women across the nation.



Amy Hosa

NEWSLETTER STAFF:

Terry Moore

Anne Phibbs

Judi Schwartz

Kathy Pinell

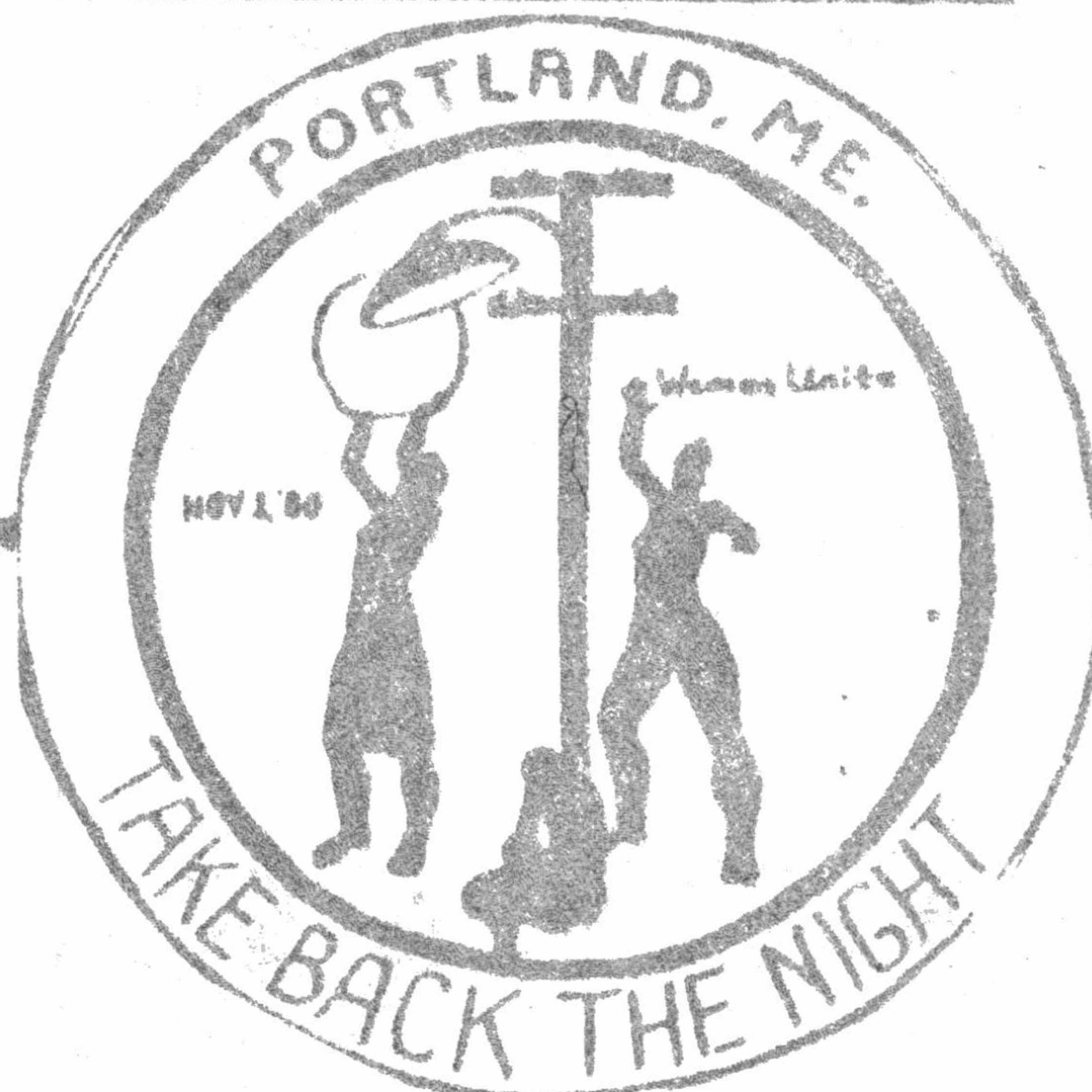
Cindy Bragg

Teresa Bridges

Kathy Flynn

Deborah Bridge

Tamara Lunn



see page 9

COMING EVENTS:

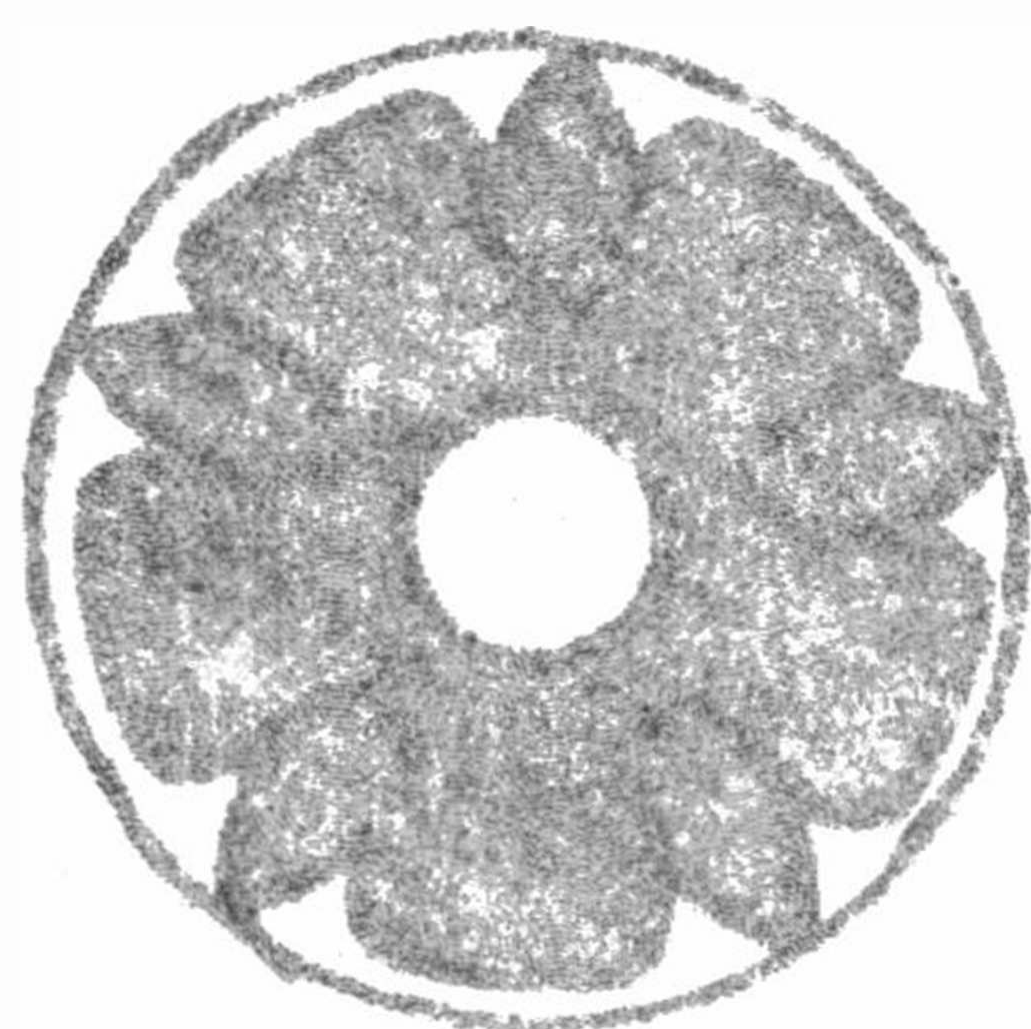
Our weekly business meeting is at 4:00pm on Thursdays at the Peabody Lounge in the union.

Women interested in forming a support group should come speak to members of the Women's Center. Past groups have been for divorced mothers, single mothers, and returning students.

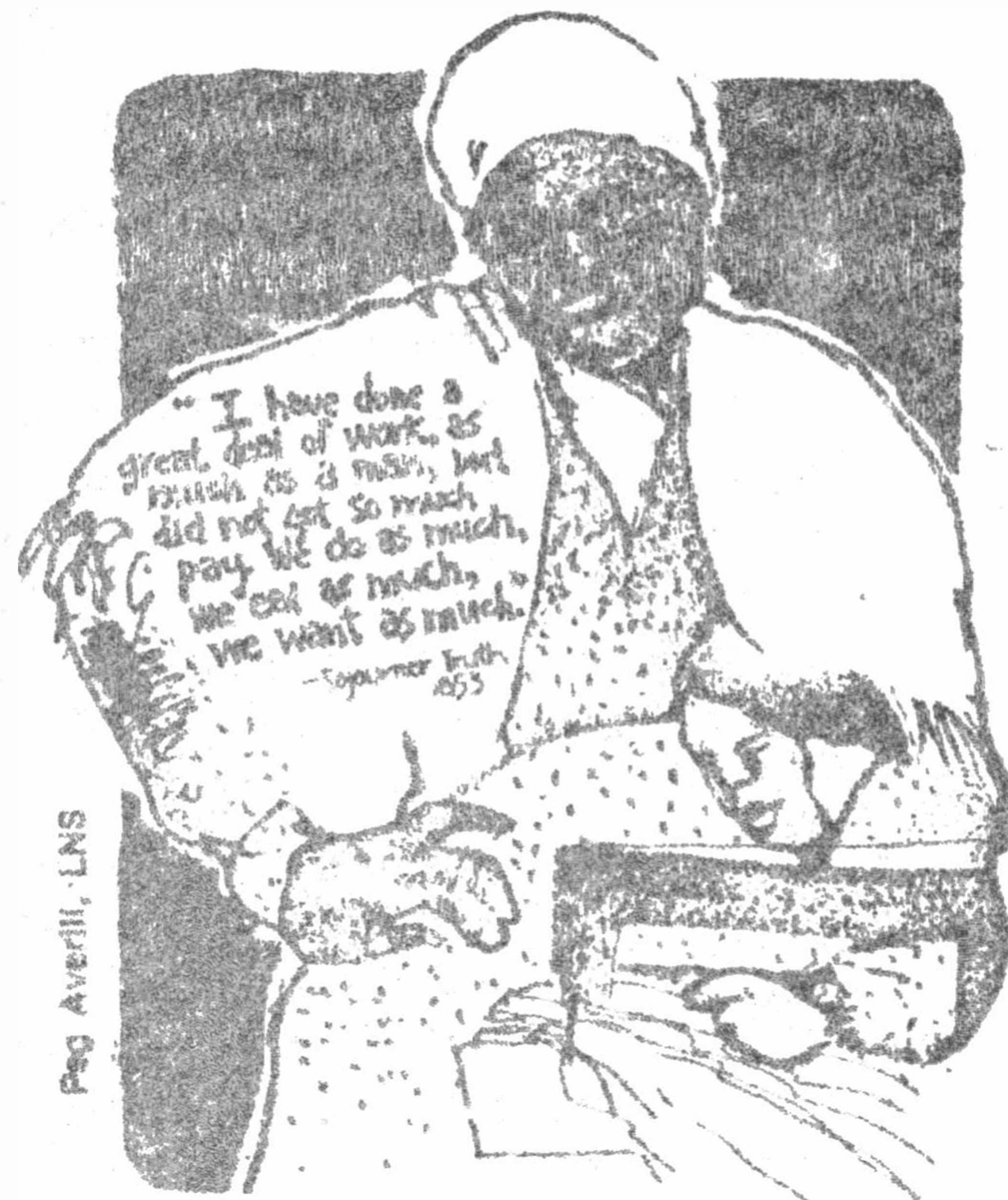
The Population Control Fund is an independent committee that provides loans for UMO women seeking abortions. The fund has become a function of the Women's Center this year. Former coordinator Peg Mills will discuss the program at our November 20th meeting for all interested and a new coordinator will be elected.

The second installment of "Women's Health Issues" will be Monday noon, November 17th. Ms. Andrews will talk about breast cancer in the Cutler Health Center basement Gynecological Center.

Women interested in a cooperative living arrangement, contact us at the Women's Center.



Our office is in the Senior Skull room, in the Union, opposite Student Govt. We have a woman's library and extensive files on women's issues. Both are open for all to use, and the information and resources are often good for papers and research. We are starting to compile bibliographies on each topic in our files. Our library also contains the periodicals we receive.



BOOK SALE IN THE UNION

Books about women's issues will be sold by the Women's Center from Monday, November 10 through Friday, November 14th.

Among the books to be sold are Our Bodies, OurSelves by the Boston Women's Health Collective, and Forbidden Flowers by Nancy Friday.

In addition, information about Spruce Run, an agency for victims of domestic violence, located in Bangor, will be available.

This is a good time for you to share your ideas and to chat with us informally.



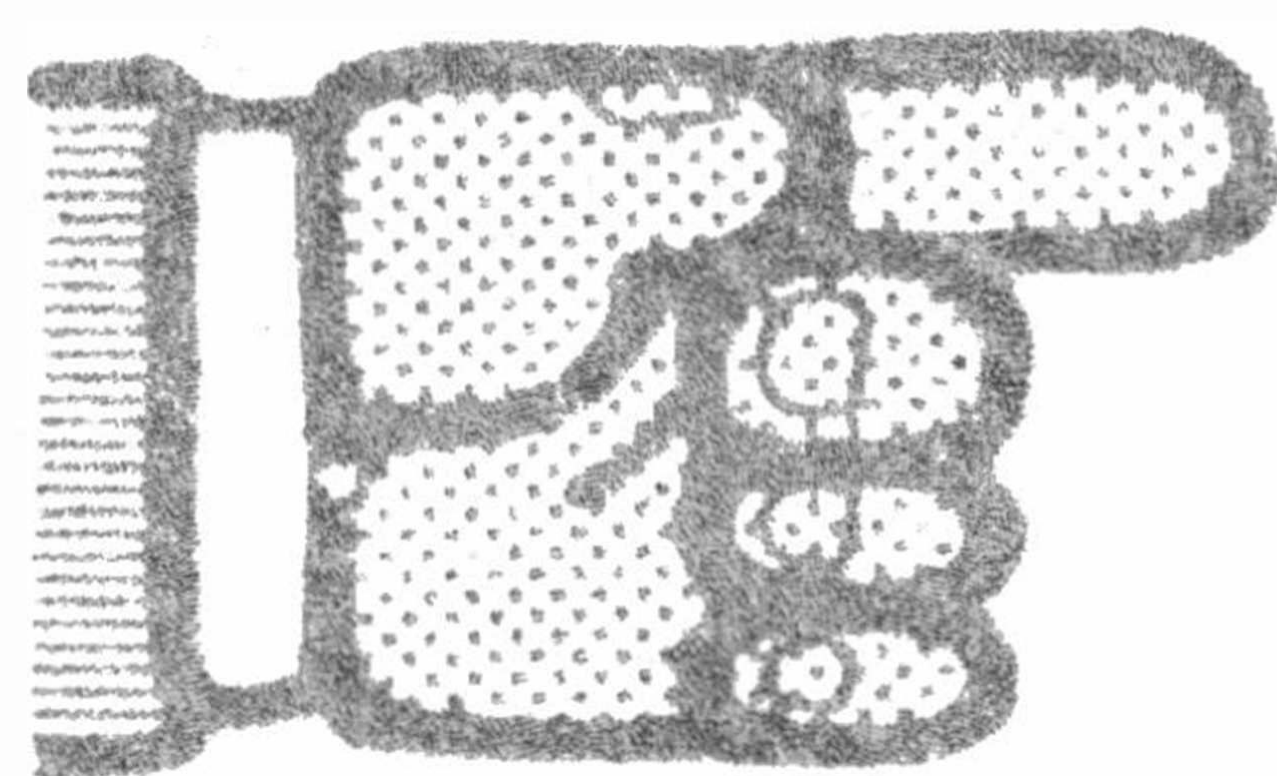
REDISCOVERY

Ever since I can remember I've been told to "be a young lady," or act like "a woman should." My idea of acting like a woman was to be an all-nurturing, loving and dependent human being. I was expected to give this nurturing to my family, friends and to my future husband and children. (It was assumed, of course, I would get married.) Loving was something which came "naturally" to all women. Society expects us (women) to love all. It is not considered "lady-like" to show expressions of abhorrence. Women have programmed to believe they must depend on men. This dependency is supposed to make us feel like the nurturing, loving, and dependent creatures we "should" be.

My views on womanhood have changed drastically in the past few months. I no longer believe in the old stereotyped taboo which has been placed on women. To be a wo-

man is to be a fully alive, independent human being. My independence doesn't mean I don't need anyone but I am now able to make a free choice whether to be dependent on someone or not.

I no longer feel I "have" to marry and have children because I refuse to let society stick me into this mold. In a world where life could end at any given second or where future generations could die or be mutated because of radiation or chemicals, a woman must think twice about her role in society. I ask myself, "were women put on this earth for the sole purpose of reproduction?" Of course not. We were put on this planet to be productive, self-reliant people. If you are tired of the role society has placed on women come join us in the women's center and help to make all women aware of today's issues on women's rights and happenings.



SPEAK OUT

Karen De Crow, former President of N.O.W., spoke at UMO on May 1st, 1980. Hers was the last Distinguished Lecture Series lecture of the year. The same evening, author Margaret Atwood spoke and gave readings of some of her works.

De Crow was the only female that the Distinguished Lecture Series brought to campus last year, and unbelievably, there was a conflict with another distinguished woman lecturer.

The UMO Women's Center would like to insure that there will be quality women speaking at UMO in the future. We are working on compiling a list of distinguished women to give to the DLS committee as possibilities for future speakers. We need help with this. Please give us suggestions of speakers you would like to see at UMO.

The DLS committee would like the works or accomplishments of each proposed speaker, along with a brief biography, and where to contact the speaker, if possible. If you just have names, we will look for the other information. We will submit all proposals together as soon as we receive them, so let us hear from you! Thanks!

Toxic Shock Discussed

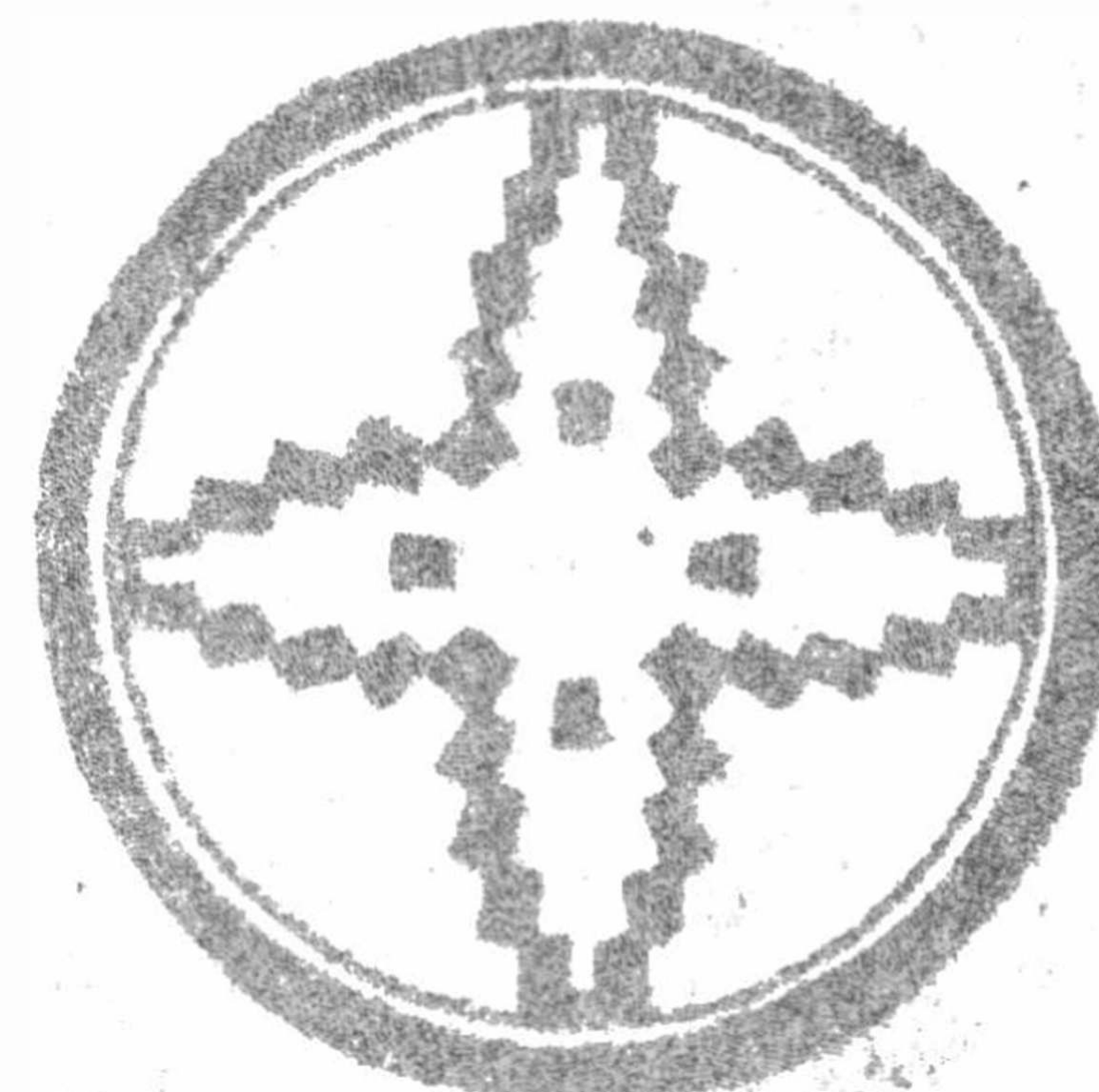
With the growing concern recently by women over toxic shock syndrome, we, the UMO Women's Center, felt the need to respond to these questions and concerns of the female population of UMO. On Thursday, October 16, we presented a program entitled, "Controversial Issues in Women's Health," with Sharon Barker of Bangor Family Planning speaking.

As far as toxic shock syndrome was concerned, Barker said there is still little known about the connection between the disease and tampon use. It is known that TSS involves a bacteria which, upon entering the bloodstream, can cause death. The problem lies in the fact that it is still not known how the toxic shock bacteria enters the bloodstream. Because the most recent victims have been menstruating women using tampons, it has been suggested that leaving tampons in place too long might touch off toxic shock bacterial growth. There are also questions concerning the use of super absorbent tampons and TSS.

Whatever the cause, Barker gave some symptoms to look for and advice on tampon use. The symptoms include: vomiting, fever, rash, diarrhea, and a lowered blood pressure. Most cases occur during the third day of menstruation. Barker's advice was to stay clear of super-absorbent and deodorant tampons, to change them more often, and to use sanitary napkins at night.

When asked about the use of natural sponges instead of tampons, the speaker said they were definitely a viable alternative, but, like every other product pertaining to women's health, weren't well researched. Natural sponges are relatively inexpensive (between \$1 and \$3), and are just now being taken seriously by more and more women. They can be purchased at most health food stores, including the one on Mill Street in Orono, and at Family Planning on Harlow Street in Bangor.

importance of being careful with what we use in/on our bodies. As for toxic shock syndrome, she felt it was important to be aware of the dangers of tampon use, but that ultimately it was up to the individual woman how she would incorporate the warnings and advice into her lifestyle.



Did you know...

- ...that in 1978, 56% of the papers presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association were authored solely by men, while 26% were authored solely by women. In 1970, over 80% of the papers were solely by men, with less than 10% by women. ("Participation of Men and Women in AERA," EDUCATIONAL RESEARCHER, May 1979).
- ...that Bella Abzug, Yvonne Braithwaite Burke, and Patsy Mink announced formation of a new organization called WOMEN USA. The group will be a vehicle for reaching grass roots women and for mobilizing women on economic, social, and political issues. It will be based at the Women's Lobby, 201 Massachusetts Ave. NE, Washington, DC 20002.
- ...that 32 women make up 2.6% of the membership of the National Academy of Science.
- ...that Black Feminist Speakers, comprised of scholars and activists, offer presentations on topics related to black women (culture, mental health, writers and artists, etc.). Contact Beverly Smith, 149 Windsor, Apt. 3, Cambridge, MA 02139.
- ...that a survey by the National Personnel Associates showed that the greatest increases in hiring female management were in personnel, sales, accounting, data processing, and engineering (reported in EXECUTIVE FEMALE DIGEST, May 1979).
- ...that one popular series of juvenile books about women athletes includes 47 white women and only two black women. ("Women in Sports in Children's Books: Wealthy, White and Winning," INTERRACIAL BOOKS FOR CHILDREN BULLETIN, 10:4, 1979, p. 3-10. CIBC, 1841 Broadway, New York, NY 10023).

The Facts

About DES

DES (diethylstilbestrol) is a drug (a synthetic female hormone) which was given to several million women during pregnancy to prevent miscarriage. It was also given in many cases where the woman had a history of diabetes, high blood pressure, or slight bleeding. The drug was given primarily between 1941 and 1971.

The danger is to the child the woman is carrying when DES is given. Many DES daughters have been found to have changes in their vagina or cervix, and a higher incidence of vaginal cancer. Misdiagnosis is a problem since structural changes in a DES daughter can result in a bad PAP test. This misdiagnosis as cancer has led to unnecessary surgery.

Men don't have routine medical examinations like women do, so DES sons are difficult to find. These men are usually discovered when seeking help for fertility problems. DES men have lower sperm counts, abnormal sperm formation, and less motile sperm.

Why is DES still an issue?

Legal Issues

DES is an important legal issue. DES related cases are the largest category of cases ever brought against drug companies. These companies have spent millions on defense. In cases involving cancer, settlements have involved hundreds of thousands of dollars. Also, a great deal of needless surgery has been done due to a lack of experience with DES exposure. These are just a few of the legal issues related to DES.

Maine

DES should be of special concern to Maine women. DES use was more prevalent in certain regions of the United States. Its use was heavy in the Boston area, especially during the 50's. Maine doctors often trained in Boston where DES use was promoted by medical schools. Estimates of DES exposed Maine women are 4,000-15,000, yet many doctors now feel that more realistic figures would be 15,000-20,000.

This problem is of such importance in Maine, that the Maine legislature has passed a bill on DES. The bill states that: a registry be developed in the state so DES women can register and receive updates on DES research, a public awareness and education effort be made to locate and inform women of problems related to DES exposure, and no insurance company can reject a woman because of DES exposure.

The Morning After Pill

This pill is DES; it is still given. It doesn't always work, and if pregnancy continues in spite of taking this pill, a DES son or daughter will be born if the pregnancy is carried to full term. The morning after pill should not be used! If it is, then all the risks should be explained before it is administered.

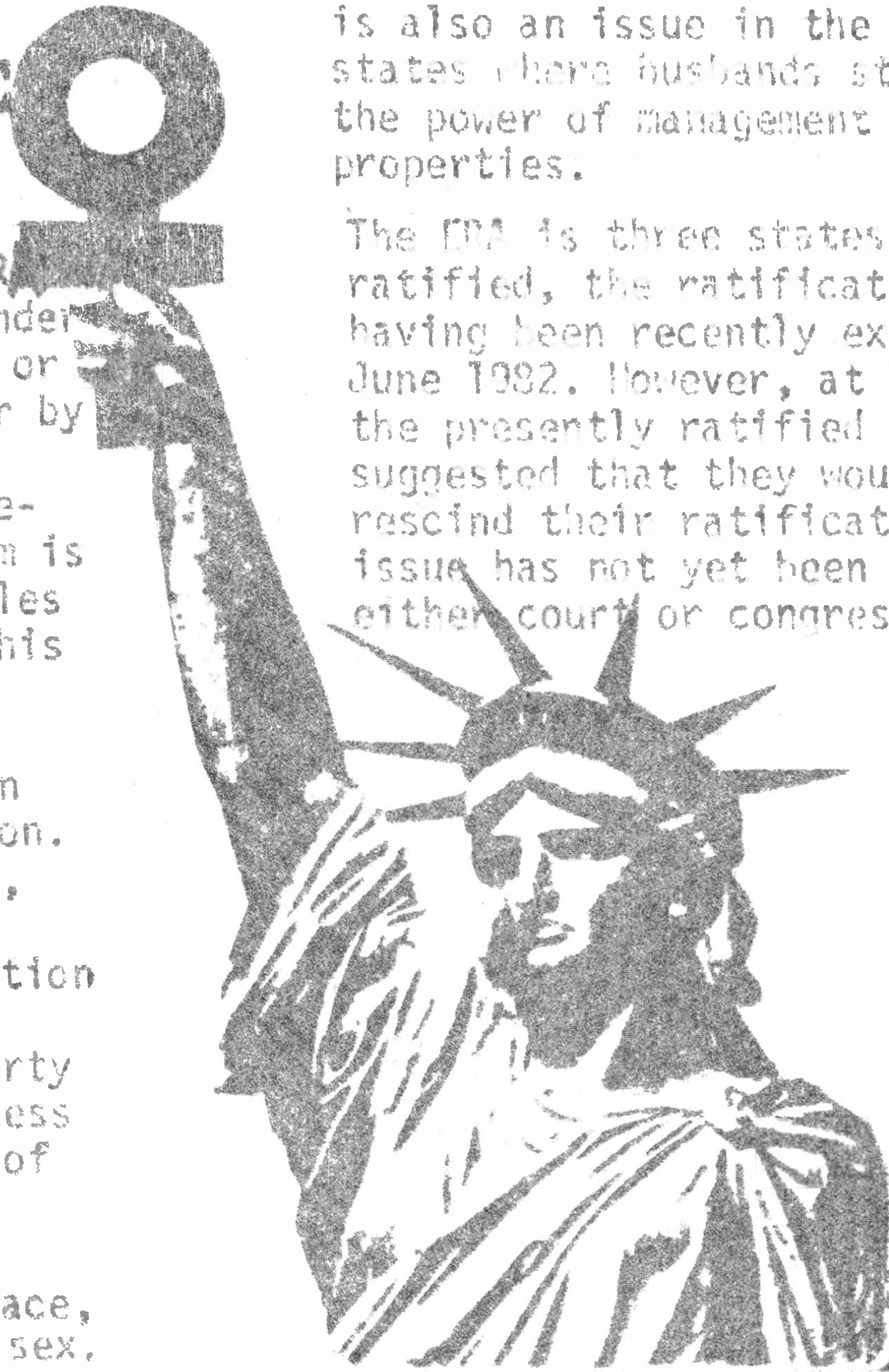
ERA UPDATE

The Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) states, "Equality of rights under the law shall not be abridged or denied by the United States or by any state on account of sex." This amendment is necessary because our present legal system is dichotomized with separate rules for men and women. To erase this legal dichotomy would require repeal on the state level of innumerable "sexist" laws or an overriding federal intervention. Existing federal legislation, for example, the 14th Amendment, guarantees equal protection under the law as well as the non-deprivation of life, liberty and property without due process of law. In addition, title 7 of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination and segregation on the basis of race, religion, natural origin, or sex. However, these pieces of legislation are interpreted by a system which supports a legal dichotomy, seeking the fairest set of laws for men and women. ERA supporters feel that any dichotomy is disadvantageous to women, unfairly limiting the options of women.

The most striking area of legal sexism is in family law, that is marriage and divorce laws and the legal distribution of marital property. A few existing inequities in marriage law are marriagable age (in 23 states women may marry younger than men) and the legal domicile of married women and their legitimate children. In many states a married woman's legal domicile is that claimed by her husband, thus limiting her in voter registration, jury duty, resident tuition, etc. In addition refusal to follow her husband to a new domicile is grounds for

divorce in some states. The distribution of marital property is also an issue in the four states where husbands still have the power of management over all properties.

The ERA is three states shy of being ratified, the ratification date having been recently extended to June 1982. However, at least five of the presently ratified states have suggested that they would like to rescind their ratification. This issue has not yet been resolved by either court or congress.



A quote from Karen De Crow, who spoke at UNO May 1st, 1980.

"Every woman in college today should have the expectation that she's going to support herself. If she marries, she should do so for companionship, love, to have a child,....not to be supported."

From UN report (1979) on women:

Women & girls:

- 1/2 of world's population
- 1/3 of world's work force.
- earn 1/10 of world's income
- own less than 1/100 of world's property

The Creative Corner

now autumn has come

-and I know-

autumn with cold rainy winds

soothing leaves from the trees

washing thoughts from the mind

hurrying days through the weeks

leaving only the aching intensity of a memory

-and I know-

there will be no forgetting.

all through the long summer days

-days vaguely empty-

refusing to admit the crystalline emptiness as you

walking sun soaked among rushing rocks

dancing warmly with trees in the wind

hearing your unspoken cries in the night

feeling your absence in the clear unson

-in my pain

I dreamed of forgetting.

but there will be no forgetting

and when yellow burning trees

tell of sunshine on every cloudy day

I whisper golden love songs

as you move within your womb

do you hear my friend

-do you hear?

do you remember?

Donna Ayer

animal

They taught her to button buttons.

And warned her not to run naked in the sun.

They clothed her in grace and proper manners,

Covering her naked self with arithmetic and morals.

They tamed her hands to accept knife and fork,

Her spine to accept upright posture.

But beneath her shadow and mascara,

Hungry animal eyes glitter

In silent answer to the wolf's call.

J Schwartz

THE CREATIVE CORNER IS FOR PEOPLE, MEN TOO, WHO WISH TO EXPRESS THEMSELVES
AND THEIR EXPERIENCES. SEND IT IN!

WOMEN AGAINST VIOLENCE 9

The Take Back the Night March was SUPER! I rode down to USM with a friend and three other women I had never met before, yet it was as though I had known them all my life. I found this same feeling of understanding from many other women who also attended the activities. It was as though the women were all my sisters, there to support me and I them, in addressing the issues of violence in our lives. It was a secure feeling knowing that I was not the only woman who felt anger and hatred toward the violence committed against us.

There were workshops planned from one o'clock to five that addressed different issues. Some of them were on self-defense, porno, men against violence against women, anger and song and chants. The porno literally shocked me into realizing how much women are exploited, such as some of the pictures and articles taken from "Hussler" and "Slang" magazine. Examples such as "Good Sex With Retarded Girls" or "At Last a Simple Cure for Frigidity" that showed a man with a jack hammer drilling it into a woman's vagina. These things helped me to realize that there are not only millions of people who support this garbage, but that I as a woman and an individual have a responsibility to try and end this sort of degrading and immoral injustice. There were differing view points on some of the issues presented but it was apparent that by the end of the workshop everyone was feeling nauseated, angry, and shocked.

Another workshop that was on a lighter and more positive hue was the song and chants workshop. The flow of feelings through the music was on a comforting and relaxing tone, especially with songs such as "Dear Friend," to the tune of "Hey-Ho Nobody Home," and the chant "A River of Birds of Migration." Some of the chants learned were later used during the march, such as, "Women Unite-Take Back the Night," and "However We're Dressed and Wherever We Go, Yes Means Yes and No Means No." Mellow songs such as "Can We Be Like Drops of Water" and "When Women Sing," were sung after the march which added to the support, unity and friendship that was felt among the group.

The last workshop that I attended was on anger. Elizebeth Cinnamon, who is a therapist in Portland, conducted the workshop. She stated that women are an oppressed class, because in this culture we are not supposed to be angry. So we avoid recognising it in ourselves. That is one major reason we get depressed and have headaches. As Elizebeth pointed out, sometimes we cry when we are angry. Her reasoning was that anger is considered a threat to our beings and if we carry it in us then we are afraid of being abandoned.

She went on to say that we should no longer suppress our anger, but should let it out. She commented that we should not vent it out on ourselves, but rather redirect it through our bodies. Some of the ways she mentioned, and that we tried as a group were screaming that ended with us almost curled up in a ball, slamming our heels to the floor, and doing a type of pelvic push that would be useful if someone were on one's back. When you use your body in this way it releases the tension that the suppressed anger has created. After we

had done this she asked us to turn to the person next to us and ask them how they vent their anger. This was a good question in that it; one: proved her point that we as women do suppress a lot of anger, and two: it was beneficial for all of us to talk about our own anger.

After we had let off some surface anger, we sat down and she told us we should look back and see what things make us angry. She said not to worry whether or not we should be angry because we have that right. She also said that we should try to understand it, deal with it, and find someone or a group who is going to support us in feeling the way we do. She thought that that's what we need more of--support. She feels that this helps to make things clearer to us and when we take the risks of people validating us then the pain becomes less because we obtain acceptance and power.

She commented that when we do manage to obtain power we 1) do not know that to do with it, and 2) are afraid to use it because we think that we may misuse it like some men have. She also felt that we should use "Our Power" as a force for creativity and that we should also own it and not blame others for our having it.

I liked this workshop because I not only learned a lot of positive things that I never really thought about before, but also felt that the people I was sharing my feelings with were understanding and caring.

Succeeding the workshops there was a pot-luck supper and a rally. There were around 250 people who attended the rally and march. At the rally we lined up in rows of five with signs in our hands and chants on our lips and began our march. It was such a super feeling, all of us marching and chanting for the same cause. We marched down the streets of Portland with security "women" beside us and spectators who were surprised and happy, and a few (men) who were appalled.

After the march all of us formed a huge circle and sang "Can We Be Like Drops of Water" until we were all close together but still holding hands. Then we sang and danced to "When Women Sing" and on the last of the songs we started to twirl and everyone dispersed in laughter.

Many of the women who attended the march went back to USM and listened to Andria Dworkin speak. She spoke with much anger towards men for creating the fear and violence that controls the streets that many women have to walk. I felt that many in the audience could relate to what she was expressing, and were very attentive to her.

Betsy Whitman, the coordinator of the march, said a few words and had a standing ovation. After Betsy a woman who had been raped got up and spoke. The program ended with "Can We Be Like Drops of Water."

DO YOU HAVE A SPECIAL LITTLE PERSON FOR WHOM YOU
NEED A GIFT? YOU MAY WANT TO WRITE TO THE
FOLLOWING ADDRESSES TO GET THE LATEST LISTINGS OF
ANTISEXIST, ANTIRACIST CHILDREN'S BOOKS. WHETHER
YOU HAVE YOUNGER SISTERS OR BROTHERS, NIECES OR
NEPHEWS, CHILDREN OR YOUR OWN OR FRIENDS WHO
HAPPEN TO BE SMALL IN SIZE THEY WILL FIND A WIDE
VARIETY OF CHOICES UPON WHICH TO BUILD IMAGES
OF THEMSELVES IN THESE NEW BOOKS.

LOLLIPOP POWER INC.
P.O. BOX 1171
CHAPEL HILL, N.C. 27514

JOYFUL WORLD
468 BELVEDERE ST.
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94117

NEW SEED PRESS
P.O. BOX 3016
STANFORD, CONN. 94305

FEMINIST PRESS
BOX 334
OLD WESTBURY, N.Y. 11568

CHANGE FOR CHILDREN
c/o 879 DOUGLAS ST.
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94114

