

Women's movement on campus

What students think

Julie Green

Some of you still have a long way to go! The Gateway conducted a survey of students on the women's movement. Of the 106 students responding to the survey, three-quarters were female and one-quarter was male. Students from the faculties of Arts, Library Science, Engineering, Nursing, Education and Commerce were surveyed. The questions and a composite answer follow.

What in your opinion is the primary goal of the women's movement?

The female responses were uniform, all demanding an unqualified equality in a variety of areas. Some individuals felt the movement wanted to eliminate male stereotypes and raise the self-esteem of women. Males on the other hand, they believed the goals of the movement ranged from "attracting men and not having doors closed" to gaining equality for men and re-educating society as a whole about women.

What in your opinion motivates women to become involved with the women's movement today?

Most women cited a quest for equality as the major reason for becoming involved in the movement. Frustration, discrimination, and anger also motivated women to join men's groups. Other students felt motivation was provided by the desire to eliminate stereotyped roles and gain recognition for their "homosexual tendencies" and women to become independent.

Males, however, answered that women joined the movement to "get out of housework" to satisfy feelings of insecurity, to simply want attention. Other students believed women want to fulfill their ambitions, become knowledgeable about the issues that face them and a desire to determine their own life.

What in your opinion does the movement have left to accomplish?

Females had a number of different responses to this issue, though most agreed that the movement had a lot left to accomplish. One woman stated that "a lot of women feel insecure in their 'home' when conditions about stress female individuality, driving them to become dependent on men and be

treated as their equals, as well as gaining recognition from society for their valuable contributions.

Other females call for the elimination of discrimination and would like to see more women in government, administration, and executive positions. Many women are concerned about the 'radical' image that shadows the movement and pervades the consciousness of society. Some women were of the opinion that the movement "has accomplished as much as can be done now" besides which states one woman, women can't be equal to men because "it is biologically impossible."

The males are of the similar opinion that much has to be done and the movement should get down to practical issues and scrap the "radicalism".

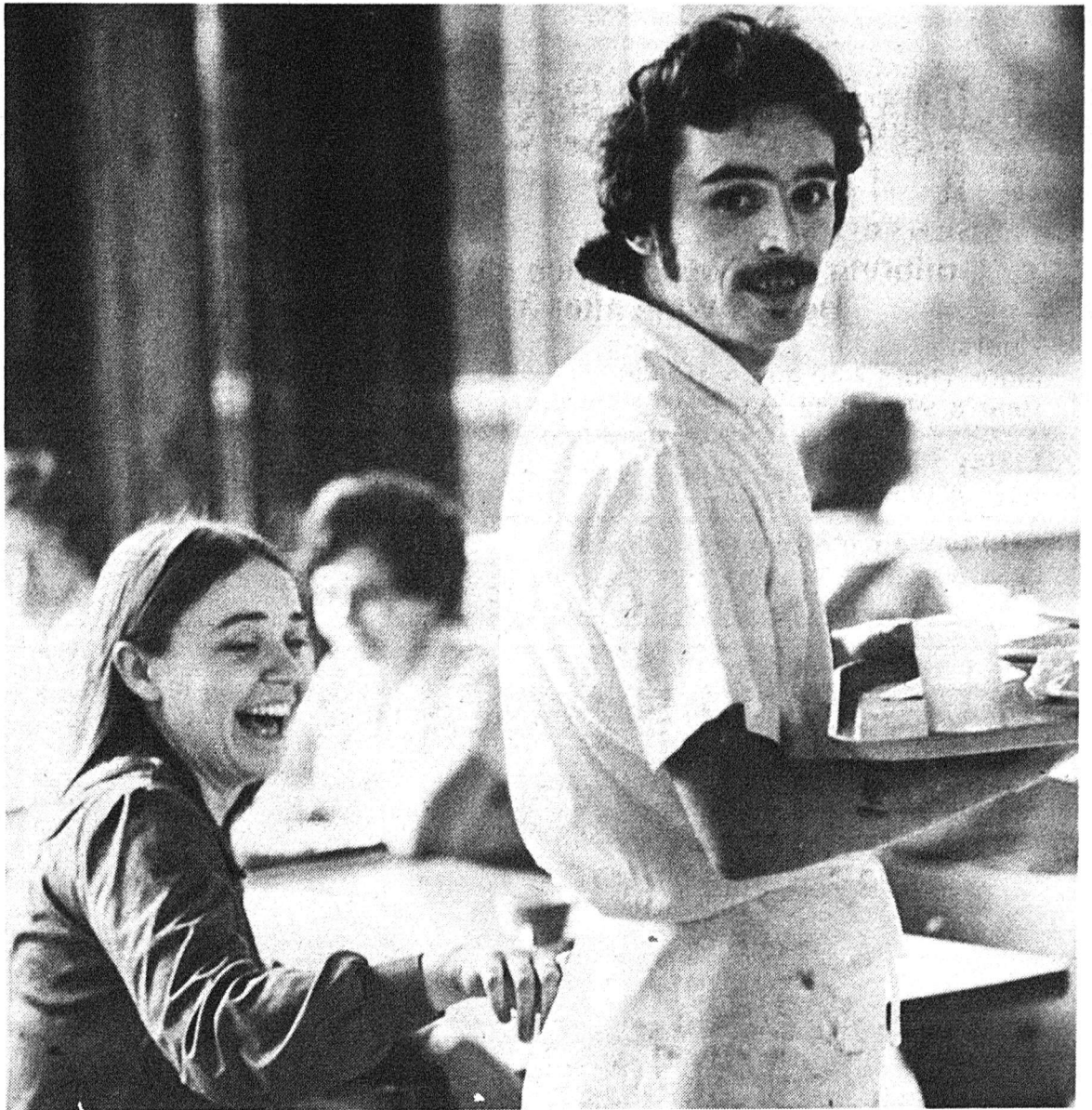
How has the movement affected you personally?

Some women surveyed said they have been able to re-evaluate themselves and their ideas, and from the movement they have gained the confidence to speak out against the injustices they encounter. One female commented "before it, I thought I was the only one who felt like a volcano," and another said it (the movement) supported views I had as a child and should have been started long ago." Others enjoy the companionship of women with similar concerns to their own, and the recognition gained for their capabilities.

A few women said that the movement has left them unaffected and one said "I try to ignore it because it has turned to sheer aggressive feminism." Many women prove by their responses to earlier questions that their attitudes have been affected though they are unable to see how society has changed since the women's movement began.

Men said they have found more competition in the labor force and in getting accepted to quota faculties and they now find themselves more sensitive to women's problems. Most men, however, claim to be untouched basically by the movement though one male says he always gets into trouble with women" and another notes "I haven't got to pick up the tab all the time when I take a girl out."

On the whole the views expressed were moderate. However, several comments did reflect a better grasp of the problem.



#1 What in your opinion is the primary goal of the women's movement?

#2 What in your opinion motivates women to become associated with the women's movement today?

#3 What in your opinion has the movement got left to achieve?

#4 How has the movement affected you personally?

The original purpose of these questions was to determine what role the women's movement plays in the university today. It was also originally intended for men as a stimulant for discussion. The short answers largely came from first and second year students, and their thoughts were generally vague.

However five male students age 21-23 took the time to make longer, more thoughtful replies. By no means are their opinions on the subject considered definitive; they are summarized here merely as a reflection of aging campus males.

Question #1: "movement is concerned with erasing 18th century attitudes and replacing them with an awareness of women as people...not the opposite or inferior sex."

"Women...are to be equals of men. This implies equality or treatment and of opportunity." "Movement is directed at institutions practices, and attitudes which refuse...women (their) own role."

Question #2: "It is now being recognized that women have legitimate complaints...(this) makes it possible for some women who wouldn't want to be associated with radical elements to associate themselves with some of the other demands."

"A great percentage appear to be frustrated...and are in the movement out of spite...actually retarding the process."

Question #3 "movement has a lot left to accomplish (because) it has forsaken its original goals of education...now directs its energy to "symptoms"...such as business inequalities."

"Significant fraction of pop-

ulation not only men either does not believe in equality of men and women...wage inequality still with us.

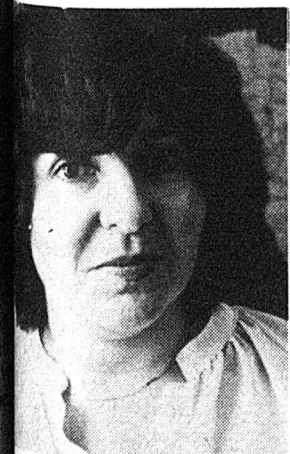
"...people are still governed (to a lesser extent though) by traditional role models...wives still regarded by some as accessories that come with a man. After these are solved there will be other problems...eg people who confuse equality and identity"

"still hasn't answered perplexing question...who's going to stay home with the kids?"

Question #4: "Having grown up with the movement, I am a product of it. In the area of sexual relations no one is quite certain what his/her role is...Social patterns are lagging behind changes in thought...its confusing. Personally I am not interested in women who are satisfied with traditional roles."

"I don't feel "affected"...but perhaps this is a result of liberalized attitudes of a university campus or maybe the effects have been too subtle to be noticed."

Interview with Ruth Groberman



Ruth Groberman

Ruth Groberman works for the Office of Student Affairs and is interested in women's issues on campus.

Question #1

Groberman: There are three goals of the movement, actually. The first is to increase the consciousness level of women among themselves. They must be aware of the things they can achieve and the restrictions they can overcome. The second goal of the movement is to raise the consciousness of society to women's issues. Only if society in general is aware of issues that

face women can effective change be implemented. The third goal is for women to overcome the injustices and discrimination they face in areas ranging from careers to mortgages.

Question #2

Groberman: I think women turn to other women for support. In a group, a woman will find others with similar concerns to her own and her to she will find companionship and encouragement. By talking to other women you also learn a lot about yourself. The group has a more powerful voice than the individual stan-

ding alone, when trying to bring about a change.

Question #3

Groberman: A lot. The movement has had several negative results because it has been misperceived. The militant actions of some movement members that pose. In fact, the militant actions tend to overshadow the more practical concerns of the movement. It has to regain credibility among non-militant women. Changes are too often talked about and never implemented. The awareness and sensitivity of women to the

real issues that confront them must be raised.

Question #4

Groberman: I feel a sense of sisterhood having met with other women whose concerns I share. The feelings and opinions we aired were surprisingly similar. I also take more pride in women's achievements now that I have begun to understand their struggle for recognition.

On campus, I would like to see a women's group formed along with a center to provide information and to cater the needs of women.