



The Awakening

The student journal of the Women's Studies Program

Volume 23, Issue 2

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Girlfriends' Guide to Activism: New monthly UCM discussion series highlights local women

by Jen Williams

"Anarchism is the key to everything," Susan Heitker told the audience at UCM's new monthly speaker series The Girlfriends' Guide to Activism on January 25, 2006. Susan spoke about her experiences as an activist, and how she came to adopt "Anarchism is the key to everything" as her motto after spending 30 days in jail for peacefully protesting the destruction of an Ohio forest in October 2001.

The Girlfriends' Guide to Activism is a new discussion series focused on bringing women together to discuss political activism. The series features local women activists and includes question and answer sessions.

Susan grew up in Cincinnati, Ohio where she was the youngest of five children. She was raised in a conservative republican family; her father was a police officer and her mother was a homemaker. Her love for the outdoors began when she joined her brother's Boy Scout troop because her mother was the den mom. Susan was also active with the Outdoor Venture Club and Green Peace while in high school.

She got involved with Amnesty International after she began classes at Ohio University in 1991. While with Amnesty International she started a campaign for human rights issues, the "Free Burma Coalition." Susan and one other student started Free Burma because they saw the way that big corporations were treating people and they wanted to boycott Pepsi. Susan considers her work with Free Burma the turning point in her political views. Susan admitted that during college she was still idealistic and naive, and her political activism skyrocketed while working with Amnesty International. "I was going to go and I was going to change the world," Susan said looking back at the way that she felt in college.

Susan always thought that if you "have compassion, love everyone, and come from a good place then everything will turn out all right." However, "I soon learned that wasn't the case," she explained. In 1995, while walk-

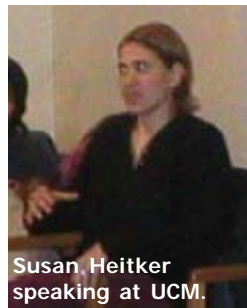
ing past the Athens Courthouse, she saw the Buckeye Forest Group rallying on the steps. Her immediate reaction was, "Oh, I want to get involved!"

After dropping out of college with one quarter left, Susan worked as a Rural Action vista volunteer. She later decided to finish college one class at a time and then took on a job as the Buckeye Forest Council Coordinator of State. She was in charge of monitoring and running the campaigns, which include helping to save the twenty state forests in

Ohio, stopping timber sales, taking pictures of the devastation, sending letters, coordinating volunteers, and finding people that are willing to adopt forests. Susan and two of her co-workers learned of a timber sale in the Zaleski State Forest, which is about 20 minutes from Athens. In response to the sale she said, "something has to be done to stop this," because not only

were they clear cutting trees, but they were endangering the Indiana bat species. The three of them created a blockade on the road to the site. The blockade consisted of two platforms, one in two different trees, and a third platform connected to the other two that hung in the middle. Susan was on the middle platform and said that if the ropes were cut she would fall, and she was "counting on them to value her life" and not cut the ropes.

Susan and her co-workers succeeded in blocking the road for eight days, and on the eighth day the Division of Forestry became fed up and decided to create a new road to the site. This would only result in more trees being cut down so Susan and her co-workers decided it was time to come down. She was immediately arrested as was one of the other co-workers; the third one got away. Waiting for her at the bottom was the FBI, The Bureau of Criminal Investigation, State Highway Patrol officers, rangers from the Department of Natural Resources, local
continued on page 8...



Susan Heitker speaking at UCM.

Editor's Note:

The validity of personal experience in feminist theory

Most people think of creative writing as fiction, but non-fiction writing can also be creative. Scholars in the field of feminist theory have begun to see creative personal essays as a valid contender in the feminist discourse.

Kathleen Jones, professor of Women's Studies at San Diego State University, says writing "doesn't have to be obtuse to be provocative or serious." Jones will visit Ohio University April 24th through 26th, 2006, to give a public lecture and work with students in Professor Kim Little's Women's Studies Capstone course, WS 480. Recently I was able to speak with Jones about her views, her work, and her upcoming visit to Athens. "I'm very much looking forward to it," Jones says of her visit to OU.

Jones will work with the class for two days. During this time, she and the students in WS 480 will utilize writing exercises and workshops to explore the use of feminist concepts and issues in non-fiction writing.

"Non-traditional [creative nonfiction] work is still scholarly," Jones explains, "[but] the approach is more accessible." She says that although we are often "bound by conventions" with our writing, bound by the idea that we must write in a traditional scholarly manner, there are other ways of writing.

The debate between traditional academic writing and personal essay writing has always been around, Jones says.

"I think the work of people like Gloria Anzaldúa in 'This Bridge Called My Back' has helped with the debate about the integration of [personal essay] in social history and social sciences," Jones explains. "Experience is a source for us to mine."

"Personal essay and memory have become a validation of the ordinary person's struggle," Jones says. "They get people to think 'Let's look at the lives of ordinary people,'" which leads these ordinary people to be able to say "our lives have meaning."

This issue of *The Awakening* focuses on personal narratives. On page four, Allie Nordman uses the personal essay format to explore what it means to be a feminist. She discusses experiences from her own life in order to

explore who is able to truly understand feminism, and who can only sympathize with feminism.

On page seven, a young woman writes about her struggle with an eating disorder as a way of discussing societal pressures on women.

On page eight, Alissa Griffith utilizes the personal essay format to explain why some women write off feminism before learning anything about it, which was what she did until she took Introduction to Women's Studies (WS 100) at OU.

The last personal essay in this issue takes a look at gender roles in Mexico, by Christine Fram, who is currently completing an internship there.

In addition to personal essays, this issue emphasizes progressive activism, whether it's in the community with Susan Heitker and the Girlfriends' Guide to Activism (page one), in the classroom with instructor Catherine Grow (page three), or literally out in the streets with local political organizer Jordan Rogoff (pages ten and eleven). The spring calendar on page five lists several opportunities to engage in progressive politics in the next few months, including Take Back the Night Week, which runs from May 1, 2006, through May 6, 2006. And as always, the Women's Studies Program's website has up-to-date information about upcoming events relating to gender studies.

I hope the writing in this issue inspires you to get involved, explore your own ideas and write your own personal essays. Contact the Women's Studies Program next fall for information about how to submit your work for the next issue of *The Awakening*. (There will not be a spring issue this year.) All submissions are carefully considered.

Check the spring calendar on page five for more detailed information on Jones' lecture. For further information about Jones and her work, visit her website: www.kathleenjones.com.

Thanks,
Sarah Kennedy, editor

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Students, faculty say goodbye to Catherine Grow

by Christa Gould

A quiet existence in rural Connecticut awaits Women's Studies instructor Catherine Grow as she prepares to retire this spring.

Grow will spend her retirement with her husband, Michael, an associate professor in the history department at Ohio University, in Windham County—the “quiet county”—in Connecticut's northeast corner.

Grow said she is looking forward to restoring their 200-year-old Cape-style home, known in the area as “the mill house.” The couple discovered Michael's ancestors' burial sites and family farmstead 10 years ago and bought their home, located south of the farmstead, six years later.

Grow, who received her master's in English from Ohio University in 1988, also plans on writing fiction during her retirement, she said. “We came here to write, research, think and breathe,” Grow said. “What could be better than to write fiction in rural Connecticut?”

This winter, Grow is in Connecticut; however, she will return to Athens this spring quarter and teach two sections of Women's Studies 200 before settling into retirement, she said.

Since she started teaching women's studies in fall 1997, she has taught Women's Studies 100, Introduction to Women's Studies, and Women's Studies 200, Issues in Feminism.

Teaching in the Women's Studies Program has “been a very good fit,” Grow said. “Women's Studies really fed into my fiction writing.”

Previously, she taught composition part-time in the English department at Ohio University's Athens and Chillicothe campuses.

“I love the students and I love the material,” Grow said. The most rewarding aspect of teaching has been the students' “aha” moments, she said. She joked that she “ruins students' lives” because students become aware of the issues discussed in class in their everyday lives.

“I really love the energy and rewards that can come from students who are coming to a first-time awareness of the twists and turns of the many issues we discuss briefly in the course,” Grow said about the WS 100 course.

Ohio University sophomore and English major Draga Jenny Malesevic took WS 100 with Grow last spring quarter. “She comes to class very prepared,” said Malesevic. “She knows the material like the back of her hand but she constantly presents it like it's fresh.”

Blake Regan, a senior applied mathematics major, said he took Grow's 100-level class last year because his girlfriend challenged him. Regan said he went in with a negative attitude but learned more about gender and how it affects both women and men.

In addition to teaching WS 100 and WS 200 on campus, Grow taught the WS 100 course offered through the Independent Studies and Distance Learning Program at OU from 2000 to 2003, she said.

“It was strictly by correspondence and some [students] would write pages of responses to questions that really spoke to them,” Grow said. This winter, she is working with a student through the Distance Learning program who is doing a WS 200 Independent Study project Grow designed for her.

Grow has also seen the Women's Studies Program expand. The enrollment of Women's Studies courses “has really exploded,” Grow said. Introduction to Women's Studies has sparked many students' interests in women's issues, Grow said, and they have continued taking Women's Studies courses.

Lynette Peck, Associate Director of the Women's Studies Program, has worked with Grow since she started teaching women's studies in 1997.

“Probably the most telling marker is the huge number of students she has brought into the Women's Studies Certificate Program,” Peck said. “I'll go out on a limb and say that she's brought in more than any other instructor.”

Jamie Fox, who took WS 100 with Grow in fall 2000, went on to earn her graduate certificate in Women's Studies with her master's in 2003.

“Catherine has a wonderful gift to make people feel welcome and important,” Fox said. “Catherine was always available in and out of the classroom to help with class materials, offer a listening ear, and even a shoulder to cry on.”

Susan Burgess, a professor of Women's Studies and political science, said “[Grow is] very enthusiastic and supportive....She's made some great connections with students. She'll really be missed.”

Grow has been a part of the WS Program's core faculty and regards her colleagues with fondness. “We share offices and the core group that I work with intimately has really been terrific.”

“It's going to be emotional,” Grow said, as she contemplated her upcoming final quarter at Ohio University. “I've had a really good time here at OU, studying and teaching. Women's Studies has just been fabulous,” she said.

“For Catherine, teaching Women's Studies has been a mission. She's a tremendously dedicated teacher,” Peck said. “She is already hugely missed.”

--Christa is a sophomore from Berea, Ohio. She is majoring in Journalism and minoring in Spanish and Music.



He Tells You He's a Feminist, But...

by Allie Nordman

He tells you he's a feminist and you believe him, and you love him for it. But you think about it and you can't bring yourself to trust him. He says the wage gap is "dumb" and he points out when women are objectified, but you're not convinced he really knows.

He can sympathize, but you don't think he can really empathize. He doesn't know what it's like to be you. You can't tell him. He doesn't know how it feels to grow up with "feminist" being one of those words like "socialist" or "lesbian." Those words that are reserved for other people, not people like you—nice, middle-class, suburban white girls.

He doesn't know how it feels to grow up in a family that tells you not to worry, that someday you'll meet a man who will make you want to get married, and give them grandchildren. He doesn't know what it's like to turn on the TV or flip through magazines and see beautiful women with small figures and glowing, impeccable faces, and think, "That's how I'm supposed to be. That's how to make my family proud, to fit in."

He doesn't have to be you in junior high, or today, to see your hair is the wrong color, not smooth like it should be, your nose is too big, there's that bump in the middle, your lips are too small and not the right color. He never walked the halls of his high school knowing that everyone was judging him. He doesn't know what it's like to think, "They would like me if I were prettier." In health class, they told him, right alongside you, that some girls want to be pretty and they do bad things like become anorexic or bulimic. He learned in one or two sentences that these diseases affected boys too, boys on the wrestling team who needed to be in a lower weight class.

But he never learned the values of starvation, sitting at lunch, eyeing friends' brown bags, seeing who could be the best today, who could consume the least. You all thought if you could just not eat lunch, skip dinner, and smoke an extra cigarette, maybe then someone would fall in love with you.

He's never been in a dark room with someone who runs their hands down your arm and tells you you're pretty and it feels good when you kiss them and you can't stop now, come on, please don't stop. So you don't. He doesn't know how it feels when they're done with you, and you realize what your purpose was.

You know you agreed, but you're supposed to feel used and coerced. It was wrong and slutty and you should feel bad about it. You really wanted to do it, but you say you were "so drunk," so you don't look like a bad girl. You don't tell anyone, but he does, so you ask your best friends why it happened, and they say they feel bad for you, but really they're just glad it wasn't them.

He doesn't know how you are supposed to be concerned when you leave a party to walk home alone, and even though you don't quite know why, you know you're supposed to be afraid. He doesn't know how "not to get

raped." You know how "not to get raped," but you don't think anyone has ever told him how not to rape a girl. He doesn't know that when something happens to you, it's your fault. If only you had just played it a little safer.

He can't relate to what it feels like to hear your first Bikini Kill song, to really listen and realize the lyrics are what you've felt your whole life, and there's a name for it. But it's so much bigger than you, there's so much more than you know, or think you ever can know, and so much more you want to know.

He doesn't know how it feels to have someone ask him, "So, you're getting into feminism now, are you?" Like it's a hobby, and next week you might give it up to build a model car or get started on a cross-stitch sampler. He doesn't know how it feels to defend your stance on an issue society thinks was resolved twenty years ago. He doesn't know how tiring it is to repeat over and over again that you don't just want equal pay for equal work. You want your niece to feel proud of her body. You want to get called on in class. You want to feel like he's talking to you because you're intelligent and funny and worth his time, not because you're just all right for a girl. You don't want to have to either smile and laugh about it and be nice or put up with being called a "bitch" or a "dyke."

You're exhausted by it all sometimes and it just feels like too much to keep up with. Because you're sick of being the voice of the movement to your friends and family and classmates, because it's so much bigger than you, there's so much more than you know, or think you ever can know, and so much more you want to know.

He doesn't know how it feels to hear other girls utter that awful phrase, "I'm not a feminist, but..." and cringe, but know that somewhere feminist ideals have sunk in with these girls—it's working. He doesn't know how it feels to realize it's working when you look in the mirror and think that maybe you don't look like that girl, but tonight you look damn good. When a stranger in one of your classes points out that there was not one feminist movement, as the syllabus states, but rather an ever-present pro-woman force all throughout history.

It's working when he tells you he's a feminist too, that that ad totally objectifies women, and he thinks what you're doing and saying and thinking is completely awesome. You see it's working, and you love him, and you want to trust him, but you still want him to know what it's like.

--Allie is a third-year student delving into Sociology and Women's Studies. Her friends describe her as "an inspiration for dismantling the patriarchy." You have probably seen Allie around town carrying her favorite book, Pomosexuals: Challenging Assumptions about Gender and Sexuality, a collection of essays edited by Carol Queen and Lawrence Schimel.

"Lost and Found"

by Megan Stepleton



Spring Calendar

MARCH

Girlfriends' Guide to Activism:
featuring **Judith Grant**
March 29, 2006, 6:00 p.m., UCM

Elizabeth Film Screening and Discussion
March 30, 2006, 7:30 p.m. Bentley Hall, Room TBA

APRIL

Open Doors Dance Party
April 8, 2006, 10 p.m. - 2 a.m., Casa

Gays & Gods Series: Our Spiritual Journeys

April 11, 2006, 7:30 p.m. - 9:00 p.m., 1804 Lounge, Baker Center

Pride Week

April 19-28, 2006
www.ohio.edu/lgbt/

Open Doors Dance Party
April 22, 2006, 10 p.m., Casa

The Allushuski Lecture: with speaker Kathy Jones
April 25, 2006, 4 p.m., 1804 Lounge, Baker Center

Athens International Film + Video Festival

April 28 - May 4, 2006

Take Back The Night Week
May 1 - May 6, 2006

MAY

OUT @ the Movies Presents:
But I'm A Cheerleader
May 2, 2006, 8:00 p.m., Scripps 111

Spring Literary Festival
May 10 - 12, 2006
www.english.ohiou.edu/litfest/

Open Doors Dance Party
May 13, 2006, 10 p.m. - 2 a.m., Casa

JUNE

Open Doors Dance Party
June 10, 2006, 10 p.m., Casa

Check the Womens Studies website for an updated calendar



A review of the Canadian duo's new album

by Danielle Sills

Canada is well-known for its hockey, maple syrup, and... great music? It seems that more and more successful bands are forming in Canada, including Tegan and Sara, a set of twins from Calgary. The two just cranked out *So Jealous*, an unforgettable fourth album.

Packed with one catchy track after the next, *So Jealous* is sure to have you tapping your feet and resisting the urge to jump out of your seat to dance. Combining their clean and simple drum beats and bass guitar with tight harmonies produces hooking, but edgy, pop songs that will be in your head all day.

Currently on the road with Cake, Tegan and Sara have explained to fans that they live miles apart to avoid the constant bickering that ensues between the two. But their conflicting personalities work well in their music, turning out songs that combine Sara's sensitive and emotional personality with Tegan's idealism.

The majority of the tracks on this album deal with love, friendship, and distance. "Walking with a Ghost," the most popular single off the album, simply expresses a wish for the "ghost" that is bothering them to get out of their heads. Repetitive lyrics? There are plenty of them. But does that devalue the song? It just makes it easier to belt out the tune in the shower.

The lead track on the album concerns the fear of not being accepted, common to adolescence. They croon, "I feel like I wouldn't like me if I met me/ I feel like you wouldn't like me if you met me," in "You Wouldn't Like Me."

In another song about young love, "I Know, I Know, I Know," Tegan and Sara again use repetition to give emphasis to their strong emotions on the subject. Cute lyrics like "this love isn't good/unless it's me and you" and "stick your hands inside of my pockets/keep them warm while I'm still here" are enough to put a smile on anyone's face.

So, as Tegan and Sara would say, listen listen listen to this album. The down-to-earth lyrics and melodic beats will satisfy anybody who is craving some captivating pop tunes.

--Danielle is a freshman Broadcast Journalism major and she is considering a minor in Spanish. She works as a radio newscaster at WOUB, and as a DJ at ACRN due to her obsession with music.

Catch Danielle's WOUB newscast bright and early at 8:30 every Thursday morning on 1340 AM.

Frailty

by A. M.

Uncovering my own likes, dislikes, and style has been one of my greatest challenges. Who am I really? Do I like this because it's *me* who likes it or because everyone else likes it? Just when I think I know who I am, I change my mind. Maybe because I'm afraid of what people will think of me. Whatever the case may be, acceptance from peers and acceptance into our cultural standards of "beauty" is difficult for everyone, girls especially. I was just one of the few who took this need for acceptance to the extreme.

When I was born, the doctor told my mother, "Whoa! You've got a big one!" Yes, that's me, the "big one." 9 pounds, 6 ounces, to be exact. Life as the "big one" didn't get any easier from there. Nightly snacks were apples only—Daddy's orders. My babysitters were concerned with my weight too. They thought it would be difficult for me to make friends at school if I were heavy. They took me for long walks until I cried from exhaustion. Their hard work must have paid off because by kindergarten, I was labeled the dreaded "average."

Standing in the middle of my living room at 7 years old, I heard my best friend, Brittany, explain to our class of imaginary gymnastics students, "All right kids, today we're going to teach you how to do cartwheels." As Brittany's tiny, slender body modeled the perfect cartwheel for our imaginary class, I burst into tears and ran up the stairs to my room.

Brittany followed me and put her arm around me. She asked what was wrong, and I explained that I was fat and gymnastics coaches were never fat. Ariel from *The Little Mermaid* was skinny too. So was Snow White. So was Cinderella. So were all my other Disney role models. I pointed to my stomach and said I was never eating again because I wanted to be pretty and skinny like her. She agreed I was bigger than she was, but said it didn't matter. Brittany consoled me in a matter of moments as it is not difficult to distract a 7-year-old. But I can still remember feeling that something was not right with me. I was different and not in a good way. As a first-grader, I was already showing signs of an eating disorder.

When I got to high school, I decided I wanted to stop being "average." I wanted to stand out, to be envied, to be perfect. So, I studied until the usual B's on my report cards were A's. I ran every day after school and made the varsity cross country team my freshman year. I was always looking to become more *perfect*. I began to diet. It seemed innocent enough. After all, the thinner you are the better runner you are. It was a healthy and simple approach that snowballed into a sick obsession I never saw coming. Every week I unconsciously subtracted something else from my diet. I was so busy with school, work, friends, and cross country that I didn't realize how thin I was becoming. It didn't finally hit me until I tried on my prom dress that I had bought three months earlier and saw the white satin material fall limply from my bony frame. I was happy—how naive I was.

One afternoon, I came home from school and sat down at the kitchen table. I could see my thighs spread-

ing out on the chair, and thought, "Look at all that cellulite." I wanted to dull the pain inside, so I grabbed some food and positioned myself over the sink. I chewed some Oreos and spat them out, making sure not to swallow a crumb or it might end up on my already oversized thighs. My stomach growled. I promised myself a few pieces of cereal and that was it the rest of the night. A few pieces of cereal turned into a handful, which turned into a couple of Oreos, then the whole box, a bag of chips and half a jar of peanut butter. I couldn't stop until I thought I was going to explode.

Then I panicked. I HAD to get rid of this food. It was NOT staying in my body. I sat down by the toilet and stuck my finger down my throat. I coughed, but couldn't gag. I looked for household objects to shove down my throat. Nothing would make the food I ate come back up. I fell to the bathroom floor grabbing the skin and "fat" on my 105 pound body, screaming, "You are so fucking fat, you disgust me! Look at yourself!" But when I heard my mom come home, I quickly wiped the tears from my eyes. I brushed myself off and transformed again into the perfect teenager I showed the world.

At this point, I started to lack the energy to endure the grueling cross country practices—something I used to look forward to. When I was running I would think, "Keep going, don't stop, you're okay, you'll be all right, you're not going to die today." My coach said, "Your form is remarkable. Keep up whatever you are doing!" If only my coach had known that "whatever I was doing" was killing me. When I ran the regional meet, I was at my lowest weight—98 pounds. I knew I was heading down a deadly spiral.

Once I got to college, I started to see a psychiatrist. Gradually I got back to a normal weight without really noticing. The dreaded "freshman 15" put me just a step closer to normal and saved my life. Since then I've had my fair share of self-conscious days when I think everyone is staring and pointing at me and whispering, "Look at the fat girl!" But these days are few and far between now. I've changed. A little voice that used to whisper, "you're fat and ugly" now whispers, "who the fuck cares?"

It's not that I've been completely cured of this societal evil that consumed me and many other teenage girls. The other day I went into the second floor Ellis bathroom and saw a flock of girls blocking the sinks as they applied their make-up. From the stall I could hear them complaining about how "fat" they were becoming. They were skinny as rails! What in the world would make them believe they are obese? If they think they're fat, what does that make me? Then I tell myself to shut up. I've been down that road, and once is plenty.

Today I'm happy, healthy, and determined (but not too determined, mind you). I'm no longer consumed with mindless, self-defeating worries, and I've escaped the angry clutches of my disease. All I can be is me. Fabulously wonderfully perfectly average me.

--A.M. is a senior studying Creative Writing.

My Awakening

by Alissa Griffith

The Women's Movement. Ugh. Radical, man-hating, chivalry-destroying, rebellious *feminist*. Prior to my freshman year in college and my first Women's Studies course, that was what I thought. I despised the women's movement. Abhorred it. I was bitter toward the women who I believed caused today's ridiculously incompetent, lazy, broken men. I had been persuaded that this new breed of men who lack any sort of ambition was the result of the movement.

Disney left me dreaming of my strong, handsome Prince Charming searching all over town, scaling the castle walls of my heart and rescuing me with one kiss. Jane Austen enticed me with fantasies of my very own Mr. Darcy. These storybook romances were the only type of "history of women" I was ever taught during my childhood and through high school. Well, besides the drone of history class—I vaguely remember mention of the 19th amendment thrown in between the lectures of World War I and the Great Depression. These distorted snippets of information left me to form my own conclusion of the movement. I was left to wonder why any rebellious woman decided she didn't want to be taken care of anymore. What little girl didn't dream of being a princess? I wanted that life of men falling at my feet and vowing to take care of me for the rest of my life. That was the way the women had it back then, but now women had ruined it for me. They emasculated men. Or so I thought.

The horrid reality of a life without choice smacked me in the face in my Women's Studies 100 class, which

was not about burning bras and throwing away razors just for the sake of rebellion. It was for freedom—freedom from oppression that was blamed on divine command.

These revolutionary, extraordinary women lay in the street, endured hunger strikes, were imprisoned so I could sit at Ohio University today and get an education. They knew that education was the only way I would one day be able to take care of myself. They demanded that if I should become homeless or president of the US it would be by choice. They demanded that I be able to have a say. They ensured that I would not have to submit to a power-hungry, abusive man because I don't have the smarts or the finances to take care of myself. They required the government to give me a voice—to allow me to be my own person.

They cried out for equality so when I get a degree and a job I can be whomever I want to be—a housewife, secretary, firefighter, doctor, Senator, Secretary of State, or even president. They demanded a higher standard for my life. They negated the possibility of my blindly blaming my inactivity on society's oppression. They gave me a voice and in that, a choice. It's disheartening that it took this long for me to realize that the very people I was resentful of made a life for me that otherwise I could have never dreamed possible. That is my awakening.

--Alissa is a freshman Broadcast Journalism major from Columbus, Ohio. She enjoys writing, reading, shopping, and dancing in her spare time.

Girlfriends' Guide to Activism

continued from page 1...

police, press, and other activists. Susan remembers being shocked as she was being driven away at all of the cars that were lined up on the road. Susan was charged with criminal trespassing and there was talk of charging her with the felony of endangerment of one's own life. She was put on the stand during the trial and was held in contempt of court for not naming the third person involved. She pled no contest and was sentenced to 30 days in the Nelsonville jail, and hundreds of dollars in fines.

She said that the time she spent in jail was worse than the eight days she spent in the tree. "Before that I was loosely anarchist, I had no problem with the government. After that I was a full blown anarchist. I realized some people shouldn't be in there [jail], the system is unethical, who it attacks, what it does to people," Susan said. The experience only strengthened her views on anarchy, and she said "the opposite of chaos in anarchy...Everyone participates. It's a true and direct democracy and not everyone will always agree." She thinks that women should care about anarchism because everything is interconnected within it. Women are dominated in the same way that nature is, and if someone does not care for the environment then it can directly affect peoples' health and mood. She believes that the world will not be free until it is not male dominated and that it is hard for women because men get recognition

for achievements more than women do. The women keep it all together yet the men get the rewards.

The next step in Susan's life will start with her marriage in June, her move to Massachusetts, and her search for a job that deals with different issues, such as reproductive rights. She will miss the tight-knit community of Athens and said if she could she would "buy a piece of land in Hocking with a cave and just live in the cave."

Her advice for people interested in becoming a part of the world of activism is to make connections. All that one has to do is open the lines of communication: volunteer, intern, attend conferences, write letters, etc. Starting with grassroots organizations is the first step. If you reach out and talk to people one on one, then change can be brought about.

"People trick us into believing what is status quo and in the 'American Dream,'" Susan explained. "People are always wanting more and that is the reason they don't tell people with power 'no' because they hope that one day they too can have that for themselves."

February's Girlfriend's Guide to Activism series speaker was former UCM co-director and founder of Rural Action, Carol Kuhre.

On March 29th, 2006, Judith Grant, Director of the Women's Studies Program and Professor of Political Science, will speak at UCM at 6:00 p.m.

--Jen is a junior Magazine Journalism major from Aurora, Ohio. She also writes for *Speakeasymag.com*.

La Gringa en México: Exploring masculinity in Mexico

by Christine Fram

"Hola, mamacita," "Hi, baby," "Come here, pretty," "Eres muy guapa."

These are phrases I hear on a daily basis from taxi drivers, bus drivers, construction workers, men passing in cars, guys in bars, boys walking on the sidewalk, even the police. And so it goes in Mexico, a place where the objectification of women, women as decoration, sexual playthings, appears literally around every corner.

I chose to spend the winter quarter of my senior year studying in Mérida, Mexico. Mérida is on the tip of the Yucatán peninsula, about 4 hours west of Cancún. I knew before coming here that the role of women would be different than that in the US. While their situation is better than it used to be, they are still subordinate to men.

I also knew I would have to endure the phrases above being shouted, whispered, and thrown at me, but what I wasn't prepared for was the amount of power they have over me, how something that seems so benign could make me feel so insecure and almost guilty that I am a woman. I still cringe at every whistle.

There is a Spanish word to describe the phenomenon: "machismo." I define it as any action that men use to show their dominance. Mexican men I've asked define it as a man ordering a woman around, sometimes violently. Whatever it is, women get a raw deal, because Mexico is known for its machismo. It's seen when police officers hold automatic weapons; it's evident with the "fresas," the spoiled rich boys offering you all you can drink. They are men who get off on having power. They get off on having a pretty girl and taking care of her. Many times us Americanas are those pretty girls.

On the one hand, it's nice being treated like a princess. It can make you feel pretty even when you have pimples on your face and a really bad sunburn. Men open doors for you, give up their seats on a crowded bus, pay for your drinks, pull out chairs or find one for you. I'm not going to lie; I like that aspect.

Yet on the other hand lurks the darker side of all this gallantry, the underlying reason that women are somehow less capable, so the man must take care of them and see to their needs.

I think machismo and chivalry, or "el caballero," are related. Both depend on the idea that a woman is different, maybe less capable, maybe less intelligent, maybe more delicate, and therefore the man must step in to take charge. A woman needs help, he thinks, so he enters and gives her orders to clean, to stay in the house and cook, to have sex. Or, he takes her out for dinner, opens doors for the damsel in distress.

Both actions allow him to assert his dominant role. Both actions make him feel better about himself.

Aggression plays a part in machismo, too. The aggression of Mexican men emerges quite early, sometimes in the first conversation. I've noticed many will come right out and say they like you, contrary to the American style of courtship. It takes a long time for crushes to come out

into the open in the States; sometimes they never do. Here, a guy will ask for your number and call you the next day. He doesn't play games; if he likes you, you know it.

Oh boy, do you know it. Oftentimes it's overwhelming to an American girl abroad. I would compare a Mexican male's behavior to a constant barrage of bullets with the intention of weakening you one by one. I'm not used to such persistence or attention. But I will return to the States soon and be able to escape the feeling that I'm just a piece of meat. What would it be like not to be able to get away?

Many women, especially poorer women, can't escape the machismo. It becomes normal for them, so that they don't think anything of a man soliciting them on the street. Good women are expected to marry, but divorces are expensive and difficult to obtain. Many women are forced to live in unhappy, sometimes unfaithful and abusive marriages. My roommate visits the poorer parts of Mérida for the DIF, the Department of Infants and Families, a government agency designed to help people of lower means. At one house, she witnessed a husband and wife screaming at each other and the wife bursting into tears. He doesn't like her to leave the house because he thinks she has a boyfriend. She says she just wants to buy groceries. She wants to go to therapy. He thinks it's for crazy people. My roommate had to leave the house without resolving anything, just a feeling of dread and pity.

Women like these don't have many options. The DIF offers help such as couple's therapy, but if husbands don't want to go, well, that's it. If men don't want to get a job, want to have kids, refuse to use condoms, women usually don't question it. They submit.

The other day I read an article in the paper, buried in an inside section and at the bottom of the page, entitled "In the world, a woman has a right to a life without violence." The author, a woman, said that much of this violence is psychological, and it begins when she is still in the womb, when her disappointed father learns she is not a boy. Imagine growing up knowing that your sex is working against you, or, what is more probable, not knowing enough to realize that something is wrong with how people treat you.

This article gave me hope. Maybe the situation is changing in Mexico. But what can I, as a foreigner, do? Well, I wear big sunglasses and I ignore the catcalls. I thank guys for buying my drinks, and I offer to pay for the next round. I hold my head high when I walk down the street, and maybe Mexican women will take notice and start to do the same.

--Christine is a senior Journalism/Spanish major with strong feminist tendencies, which can be traced back to the eighth grade. She hopes to continue to practicing her bad Spanish, even after she comes back to Ohio.

War No More

Athens Can't Wait Coalition participates in movement to remove President Bush and his policies from office

by Matt Seaver



(Left) While organizers were excited about the walkout, Athens Can't Wait has struggled to get people to attend the bi-weekly meetings in Bentley Hall. Rogoff and several other organizers, who are the only faithful attendees of the meetings, hope that more successful events on campus will in turn bring more people to the meetings.

Jordan Rogoff, a senior from Cleveland, Ohio, is part of a growing movement in Athens, the U.S., and around the world, to drive President Bush from office. Here on campus, Rogoff helps organize and plan events as part of the Athens Can't Wait Coalition. On November 2, 2005, as a response to the one-year anniversary of President Bush's re-election, Athens Can't Wait held a student walkout and a rally on College Green that culminated in a march up Court Street to the Army Recruitment Center on Grosvenor Street. More than 200 people participated in the event. Rogoff and other organizers for Athens Can't Wait are now in the process of planning upcoming events similar to the November 2nd walkout along with other ways to get their message to the public.



(Right) Rogoff first became involved with the resistance movement this past summer while working for The World Can't Wait Coalition.



(Left) On walkout day, many students wore armbands to support the strike.

(Below) Monika Gasztonyi, the lone recruitment supporter at the protest, blocks the door to the recruitment office as protestors arrive. As Rogoff (bottom right) and other protestors move closer to the office doors, Gasztonyi resorts to pushing and shoving to keep them back.



(Opposite) Approximately 200 people participated in the walkout. While the police asked organizers not to block the street, the protestors became too much to handle and, with megaphone in hand, Rogoff led the demonstration the entire length of Court Street.

Spring Quarter Course Offerings

Women's Studies Courses:

WS 100: Introduction to Women's Studies (4)

#06272 | MW | 9:10-11:00am | Morton 126| Hallz
#06273 | TTH | 12:10-2:00pm | Morton 122| Freeman
#06274 | MW | 10:10am-12:00pm | Bentley 135| Peck
#06275 | MW | 1:10-3:00pm | Clippinger| Hobson
#06276 | TTH | 11:10am-1:00pm | Ellis 214| Nickles
#06277 | WF | 10:10am-12:00pm | Morton 227|
Koonce

WS 200: Issues in Feminism (4)

#06278 | MW | 10:10am-12:00pm |Morton 322|Grow
#06279 | MW | 2:10-4:00pm |Bentley 120|Grow

WS 350: Feminist Theory (4)

#06280 | MW | 3:10-5:00pm |Bentley 204|Little

WS 360 Internship: Women and Work (4)

#06281 | F | 10:10am-12:00 pm| Ellis 109| Wales

WS 411/511: Women and Globalization (4)

#06282/06286 | MW | 1:10-3:00 pm| Bentley 205|
Collins

WS 460: Gender, Sexuality, and Culture (4)

#06283/06287 | MW | 2:10-4:00 pm| Ellis 103|
Reynolds

Cross-Listed Courses:

COMS 420: Gender and Communication (4)

#01653 | TTH | 10:10am-12:00pm | Central Classroom
310| Miller

COMS 422: Communication in the Family (4)

#01654 | MW | 4:10pm-6:00pm | Central Classroom
313| Chawla

ENG 153A: Writing & Reading Gender (5)

#02860 | MTWTH | 1:10-2:00pm | Ellis 103| Staff

ENG 306J: Women and Writing (4)

#02895 | MTWTH | 8:10-9:00am | Ellis 020| Staff
#02896 | MW | 8:10-10:00am | Ellis 108| Staff
#02897 |MTTHF | Arr.| Arr.|Staff
#02898 | TTH | 8:10-10:00am | Ellis 108| Staff
#02899 | MTWTH| 9:10-10:00am | Ellis 110| Staff
#02900 | TTH | 10:10am-12:00pm | Ellis 108| Holt
#02901| MTTHF | 11:10am-12:00pm | Ellis 119| Staff
#02902 | TTH | 12:10-2:00pm | Ellis 110| Staff
#02903 | MW| 1:10-3:00pm | Ellis 020| Staff
#02904 | TTH | 1:10-3:00pm | Ellis 108| Staff
#02905 | MW | 3:10-5:00pm | Ellis 120| Staff
#02906 | MTTHF | 5:10-6:00pm | Ellis 014| Staff
#02907 | TTH | 5:10-7:00pm | Ellis 106| Staff

ENG 325: Women and Literature (4)

#02938/9 | TTH | 3:10-5:00pm | Ellis 111| Holm

HCCF 360: Human Sexualities (4)

#03349 | TTH | 5:10-7:00pm | Grover W305| Janson

POLS 420/520: Women, Law, and Politics(4/5)

#05333/05377 | MW | 1:10-3:00pm | Bentley 220|
Richards

POLS 478: Feminist Political Theories and Movements (4)

#05346 | TF | 11:10am-1:00pm | TBA | White

PSY 378: Psychology of Gender (4)

#05456 | TTH | 3:10-5:00pm | Porter 107| Young

SOC 467/567: Violence Against Women(4/5)

#05675 | TTH | 3:10-5:00pm | Bentley 025| Schwartz

SOC 470: Sociology of Gender (4)

#05676 | Arr. | Arr. | Arr. | Staff

Updated course listings and course descriptions can be found on the Women's Studies Program's Web site: <http://www.ohiou.edu/womenstudies/>

Scholarship Opportunity for Women

Ethel H. Moll Scholarship (\$2,000)

The family of the late Ethel H. Moll, a Xenia, Ohio resident, created this scholarship for nontraditional women students. Moll came to Ohio University in 1953 to resume her interrupted college career and served as the first Director of Jefferson Hall on the Ohio University campus for many years before her retirement.

This scholarship is open to any woman over the age of 25 who is returning to college to complete an interrupted education and who will be a first, second, or third-year student on the Athens campus. She must have a minimum grade-point average of 3.0 and demonstrate financial need.

To Apply: Submit a one-page letter stating your academic achievements and career goals by March 31, 2006 as well as your reasons for seeking the scholarship to:

Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships
Chubb Hall 020
Athens, OH 45701