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labor pains

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Speak Out Draws Tears and Anger

On May 4, 275 women attended the historic Speak Out on the issue of sexual harassment at the GIAC in Ithaca. Speaking Out is giving personal testimony and listening to others speak of their own lives.

About 20 women spoke during the day. It took great courage for these women to reveal such deeply personal stories. Women shared incidents they had never before discussed, uncovering feelings they had long since buried.

A mail clerk told of constant harassment by her boss which ultimately forced her to look for another job. She had complained, but nothing was done. When she finally reacted angrily to his advances, he responded by putting a permanent letter in her personnel file denouncing her as a poor worker.

Another woman spoke of the humiliation and anger she felt at being judged by

physical appearance rather than job performance. She told us how she felt about falling short of arbitrary sexual standards and of her resentment toward women who "measured up." She saw this as a means of dividing women workers against one another.

Those of us in the room and the speakers themselves were moved to anger and tears. One woman cried openly as she told us of having to give up her dreams of going to law school because of a professor who refused to give her a recommendation after she turned him down.

The process of exposing ourselves in this way was painful to everyone. We became enraged at the position we have been forced into and taught to accept. Sexual harassment affects women from musicians to waitresses to secretaries—we heard from them all. Some cases are more overt than others, and some are physical and some

are not, but all are emotionally destructive.

The anger we felt during the Speak Out is uniting us to fight this

oppression. On May 4, 40 women met and officially launched Working Women United.

by Julie Friedman

Morse Chain Challenged

The following interview is with Ane Becker, 49, who has been an employee of Morse Chain for seventeen years. Following the Speak Out on Sexual Harassment she contacted WWU concerning sex discrimination against her by Morse Chain Co. Ms. Becker has been unable to obtain the promotion from "Purchasing Clerk" to "Buyer," despite her qualifications and experience. Men have obtained similar promotions with no more experience than she. Furthermore, her duties as a Clerk are virtually the same as those of a Buyer. Only the job titles and the salaries differ. A complaint has been filed with the Human Rights Commission, but no decision has yet been reached.

Carlie: When was the possibility of your promotion first mentioned?

Ane: About five years ago they indicated to me that I would be promoted. I didn't think it had been approved. But, in a few weeks they moved me from my corner office to a Buyer's office. I thought that either they wanted to watch my work closely or my promotion was coming through. Time went on and nothing happened.

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Photo by Betsy Kane

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Our First Issue

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Working Women United is unique in Tompkins County. We are the only organization that addresses itself exclusively to the problems and concerns of working women. We hope that Labor Pains will become a forum for the ideas, opinions and concerns of all women in Tompkins County.

News articles about working women, especially struggles to find equality and dignity in a male-dominated work world are encouraged, as are articles on controversial topics. Labor Pains can be a place where waitresses, college professors and factory workers can all learn from one another; we may find that we have more in common than suspected at first. Being a young organization, we welcome a variety of views.

The articles in this issue reflect the opinions of the individual writers. We hope that they will stimulate responses from the community at large.

We will be glad to print articles or letters that are sent to us (limited only by space and time considerations). Please enclose your name, address and telephone number with any articles you submit; we will not print your name unless you request that we do so.

This first issue is being distributed free of charge, a practice we cannot afford to continue. Please subscribe if you find us interesting, or come to the Tompkins County Library and read a copy there.

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(Ane Becker - cont. from page 1)

I decided that I had to do something about it.

C: What are your feelings towards the other Buyers and their positions?

A: I have to train the new Buyers. I train them about my job so that they can be my boss. It gets to you.

C: You came to this job without a college degree. Have there been other Buyers who have moved through the level of your position and gone on without college degrees?

A: I could probably name 50 men at Morse Chain that have been promoted without college degrees, but not one woman. The last Buyer was a man who came in as a truck unloader and worked his way up through Buyer.

**"I train them about my job
so that they can be my boss."**

C: After you were not promoted, what motivated you to file with Human Rights?

A: I don't have so many children to take care of anymore and I had a little more courage as far as losing my job. I decided that my world wouldn't end if I did lose my job.

C: It seems to be a comment on the working woman's situation, when she must wait until her children have been successfully raised before seeking a fair position at work. After the first Human Rights interview you sought further help. Why?

A: I was very rattled and poorly prepared for the procedure of the interview. Isolated as I was, I didn't think I made my case clear to the interviewer. That night I went to see Carmita Wood. She told me about Working Women United. I had put off calling her until the first hearings were over. But when Morse Chain started fighting me I thought: "Now I've got to have some help."

C: In terms of your personal goals, what did you or do you now expect from the Human Rights Commission?

A: At the time I went to them I was really trying to push Morse Chain into making me a Buyer. There is a big salary difference. I feel that I know as much as the new Buyers and I'm entitled to the same amount of money. At the time I was

continued on page 11

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Why Working Women United

Without Carmita Wood there might never have been a Working Women United. Then again, without Working Women United, Carmita Wood might never have had the courage to go forward with her appeal to the Unemployment Insurance Appeals Board.

Ms. Wood and supporting women publicly argued that she had quit her job because of sexual harassment, an intolerable working condition. (The Appeals Board decision is still pending.) Together, these women planned the successful May 4th Speak Out about sexual harassment on the job. Working Women United was launched because the women who were there realized that sex discrimination will end only if we work together. We also understood that we had to be more than a monthly coffee klatsch; we had to act.

WWU is already channeling ideas into projects. Among the Committees at work are the Legal Grievance Committee, the Political Action Committee, the Fundraising Committee, and the Publicity/Education Committee.

Although WWU is eager to accomplish a lot, we are still a young group. We need

as many women as possible to get involved. What kind of women do we need? All kinds—literally! Already Working Women United includes women from grandmothers to granddaughters, college professors to factory workers, radicals to conservatives. What unites us is our common bond of being women who have worked, who presently work, or who hope to work, and our common desire to eliminate the overt and subtle discrimination which affects all of us at work because we happen to be women. We ultimately want to build an organization with the power to guarantee and protect our rights and interests in the labor force.

WWU needs and wants to share your ideas your frustrations, your sensitivity, and your enthusiasm. You as a woman need Working Women United to fight the battles and attain the victories which an individual, working alone, would find virtually impossible to do. Only by working together can women achieve what we deserve!

Please fill out the membership form printed in this newsletter and get in touch with us soon. We need each other.

Brown Sees Red!

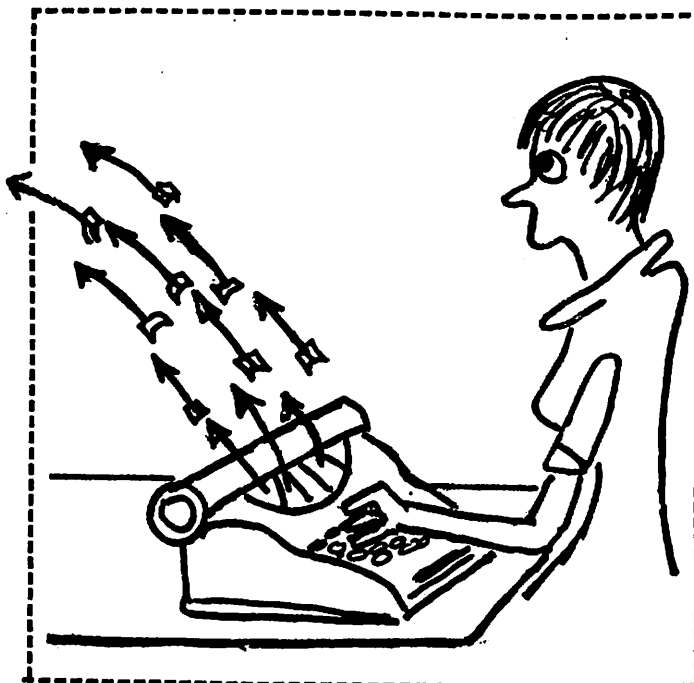
The Rhode Island Commission of Human Rights has found Brown University guilty of sex discrimination and ordered that Jane K. Thompson receive a salary adjustment and back pay.

Ms. Thompson, the Commission ruled, "should be paid for what she does. Giving a different title when she does the same work does not warrant disparate pay." She was the only woman on Brown's mental health team, but her salary was half that of the male clinical psychologist in the same job. She received only 1.5% raise when he received 5%.

The University fought the claim, saying that she lacked the "expertise" and "the Ph.D. or M.D. degree of the men justifies the skill difference." The Commission found that salary must fit "the job not the credentials."

Despite the Commission's recommendations, the legal resolution is unclear (State Human Rights Commissions traditionally lack enforcement power). Ms.

Thompson is therefore taking her case to federal court and suing for salary adjustment, back pay and legal fees.



SEXUAL HARASSMENT

The Working Woman's Dilemma

Until a few months ago sexual harassment on the job was a taboo topic. We all knew of its existence, but most of us simply accepted it as part of the work situation. Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination we can no longer ignore.

Many women have said they've never been its victims. We need to understand that sexual harassment is more than repeatedly being touched, propositioned or leered at by a male employer. It is being judged as a sexual being rather than solely as a worker. Women workers are measured by their attractiveness, flirtatiousness and availability, not by their job performance and expertise.

Like rape, sexual harassment is an abuse of male power (in this case economic power -- the power to hire or fire). And, like rape, all women are its potential victims because it is exercised arbitrarily by our male employers.

"Men make up the rules of the game"

Men make up the rules of the game. And when the rules include a measure of "desirability," then we cannot be taken seriously as workers unless we also pass the Desirability Test.

A scale of employment qualifications which includes such tests affects all women workers. Its effects are particularly visible when we look at the situations of older women, not traditionally "attractive" women and pregnant women. They are the first to get edged out of the job market by the sexual harassment system.

Studies of the work patterns of women over 40 indicate that older women have a turnover rate one sixth that of women in their 20's, take less sick leave and are more competent. Nevertheless, these women have a higher rate of unemployment than younger women and than their male counterparts.

One obvious inference from these facts is that employers accept the stereotyped image of older women as unattractive and refuse to hire them for this reason. If employers were basing hiring decisions on objective criteria, then older women would be the most fully employed women in the labor market.

Women as a group are underemployed, underpaid, exploited workers. Temporarily, we may be fortunate enough to have a nice boss (there are some) and a secure job. However, we could be forced to compromise some day to keep our jobs, and surely we all face getting older and being replaced by a younger, more desirable woman.

As women, we are trained to compete with each other for men's favors. In the job market, where the stakes are high, we compete for jobs, promotions, raises -- for our livelihoods. We all know of situations where one woman was passed over for a job or promotions and a more "desirable" woman got the position. We know the anger and resentment we are made to feel toward the woman who won. We end up blaming ourselves or other women for this situation.

Cop Charges Cop With Harassment

(N.Y. Post) Candice Fisher, 22, of the Los Angeles Police Dept., charged Philip Berry, 31, her partner in the patrol car, with on-the-job sexual harassment.

Fisher charged that Berry made both verbal and physical passes while they were on duty. She reported that he made improper remarks, attempted to force her into an intimate position, suggested they perform an intimate sex act and once "thrust his pelvis against her body in a sexually suggestive manner."

A department spokesperson said the case is the first in L.A. history in which a male officer was charged with such offenses.



DO YOU HAVE A PROBLEM WITH SEXUAL HARASSMENT OR OTHER FORMS OF SEX DISCRIMINATION? If so, please contact Working Women United immediately. We'd like to help out as much as we can. Unfortunately, we don't yet have the resources or legal skills necessary to take on every potential case; but, contact us anyway. After discussing your problem, we may decide to fight the case with you. If we can't, we'll try to refer you to some agency which can. Furthermore, we're maintaining files on all the cases that come to us, so that when we are stronger, we will be prepared to act.

woman puts heat on fire dep't

Ithaca women are not entirely alone in fighting sexual harassment on the job. A Gainesville, Florida woman actively protested when fired from her job with the Fire Department for resisting the sexual advances of her boss.

Floretta Allen said "no" when her supervisor said he would raise her salary if she submitted to him. She reported the insult to city officials who did nothing until similar incidents were reported by other employees and by some firemen's wives.

The city then "investigated" the case, concluding Allen had "provoked" the incident. City Commissioner Russel Ramsey said, "Women would be less likely to be raped if they didn't wear miniskirts."

Enraged at the publicity about his gross behavior, Allen's boss then fired her. She was further harassed by efforts to deny her unemployment compensation.

It was then that many groups, including the local chapter of the National Organization for Women (NOW), came to her aid. Despite this, support was significantly hurt by city threats. Allen's reaction to all this is that women are tired of being harassed and must join together to fight male oppression of working women.

Woman Alone

by Carmita Wood

What does it feel like to be a controversial figure? What happens when you become a public figure involved in an issue that has only been whispered about? I can only speak for myself. I've been there--and it's rough.

When I came forward and started to fight against sexual harassment, I was alone. Even though I found a group of wonderful women who were willing to support me in this issue, especially the two women who were my witnesses, I was still alone.

Inside myself there was fear, self-doubt, and insecurity. I asked myself if I really had the courage to go through with it. Would it affect my family and friends? Would people look at me with disgust and scorn? Would they think I had made the whole thing up for some obscure reason of my own? Would it affect any future employment I might try to get? Would anyone else support me in this issue except my closest friends and the immediate group of women I was already working with?

The answer to all of these questions is yes.

I found that I did have the courage to go through with it. Yes, there were and are people who scorn me. Some think I had a colossal nerve to even bring up the issue. Yes, there are people (some of whom I admired and trusted) who think I made the whole thing up. Yes, it has affected my family. My little boy had to defend me in school when some of the other children had heard the opinions of their parents. Yes, it certainly has affected job interviews that I have recently been on. I was told by one group that they were conservative people and they couldn't afford to hire anyone involved in this kind of controversy.

But there are rewards. About 275 women attended a speak out on this issue. Dozens of women called me and voiced their support of both me and the issue. Men have stopped me on the streets and in restaurants and congratulated me for my courage. One man told me about his wife having to quit a job because of the same thing. In fact, I was really gratified by the number of men who were in support of the whole issue.

I was surprised, however, by the attitude of some of the women I encountered. They seemed threatened by my exposing this problem, and some were very hostile. I find it difficult to understand why.

However, I feel that I've accomplished something. It felt good to be able to stand up and say, "Damn it, that's enough! I'm a human being and I will no longer tolerate these indignities." I hope that, because of my action, there will be some men who will give it a second thought before they pat or pinch a female employee. Maybe women, too, will realize that they don't have to put up with unwanted advances at work.

I have now received another job, again at Cornell. Many people have helped me both emotionally and financially. The great lesson that I have learned is that no one can go through this world alone--everyone needs other people.



Force The Law to Fight For You

You've worked for the same company for seven years. You've just gotten a new male boss who happens to be the octopus type. He puts his hands on you. He stares at you with x-ray eyes and an x-rated mind. It's driving you crazy! You're reluctant to complain directly to your boss because you need your job and you're afraid of being fired. So what are you supposed to do about it?

Laws exist to fight the abuse of power inherent in sexual harassment, but they have not yet been fully tested or adequately implemented. The law should be able to help women, but unless women are determined to exercise their legal rights, the law will remain only so many words lying on a sheet of paper.

Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act prohibits employment discrimination. The Equal Employment Opportunities Commission, whose role is to enforce Title VII, has recently ruled that sex-based intimidation in the workplace constitutes a discriminatory practice and is therefore prohibited. Furthermore, EEOC has filed a brief in a current Arizona case (Corne & DeVane vs. Bausch & Lomb, Inc.) on behalf of two women who had quit their jobs because of sexual harassment by their supervisor. In its brief, the EEOC contended that Title VII does prohibit sexual harassment on the job: "Congress in enacting Title VII clearly intended to prevent the toleration of such sexually motivated conduct from being a term and condition of employment. For if Title VII does not provide such elementary protection against sexually motivated

conduct, its promise to women is virtually without meaning."

Workers' Compensation laws may also provide a vehicle for holding an employer liable for his sexually harassing activity. The New York Court of Appeals has ruled that employees can collect Workers' Compensation benefits for psychological injury brought on by psychic trauma. This ruling means, theoretically, that a woman who becomes psychologically affected by her employer's sexually motivated actions or remarks could claim compensation for the trauma.



What about unemployment insurance laws? New York State allows an employee to collect unemployment insurance if she quits for "good cause." In Carmita Wood's case, currently pending, the Unemployment Insurance Appeal Board will have to determine whether unwanted sexual advances are an "intolerable job condition" constituting "good cause" to leave one's job and thereby entitling her to collect unemployment insurance.

No woman should have to tolerate sexual harassment or discrimination. There are measures you can take to begin to fight back. First of all, please come talk to

us. That's why Working Women United exists. There are women in the organization who are familiar with the law and who are willing to discuss your situation with you. They can explore your options and their consequences with you. Secondly, write down everything that happens, from the seemingly irrelevant details to the most blatant acts of harassment. Include dates, times, and places wherever possible. Your record will be important to help you recall facts as well as to demonstrate that the discrimination actually occurred. Lastly, tell someone what's going on so that (1) you'll be able to say that you did complain about the discrimination, and (2) you'll have potential witnesses and supporting statements. If you can't complain directly to your boss (or even if you can), complain to another supervisor, to the company personnel or grievance office, and to as many co-workers and friends as possible. By complaining about your situation, you will have established your position for the record.

The Law can be an effective mechanism to attack sexual harassment when no other method, such as pleading with your boss or giving him a good kick, will work. But the law will not evolve to the point where it adequately protects women from sexual harassment unless women force the law to move in that direction by bringing case after case to court and making sure that the public knows about it. When this happens, our employers will be forced to admit that we, as women, mean business and only business!

by E. Yackni

SHARE THE WEALTH

by Ellen Yacknin

Picture this: Susan Winston, an assembly-line worker at Big Macho, Inc. (Big Mac for short), has worked hard at her job for 12 years. She finally realizes that all her male co-workers are being promoted and getting raises. Meanwhile, here's Susan, sorting her widgets day after day, and not getting anywhere. She gets up enough nerve to file a complaint with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (the agency charged with enforcing the employment provisions of the federal human rights acts). Eventually, the EEOC awards Susan a promotion and \$4,543.63 in back pay.

Now picture this: Susan, Big Mac, and Widgets in the same big, unhappy relationship. This time, however, instead of filing a complaint with the EEOC on behalf of herself alone, Susan comes to Working Women United to ask what we can do. WWU files a class action complaint with the EEOC on behalf of not only Susan, but

every woman who used to work at Big Mac, every woman who currently works at Big Mac, and every woman who may end up working there in the future. This time, Susan's name isn't even used; she remains anonymous throughout the whole investigation. The Big Wheels at Big Mac never even suspect that it was their own Susan Winston who raised the complaint in the first place. This time, when the EEOC hands down its decision in favor of the women at Big Mac, it awards \$174,298.75 in back pay to all affected women, and forces Big Mac to institute a training/promotion procedure for all women at the company to prevent sex discrimination from occurring again.

The difference between these two scenarios is staggering. \$100,000 awards are not simply dreams. They are possible for large groups of people in what are called class action suits. Some of the main features of class action suits are: (1) It costs nothing to file a complaint with the EEOC;

(2) If you file through an organization such as WWU you can remain anonymous--your name will become public only if and when you give your written release; (3) You and WWU may file a complaint on behalf of other women without seeking their permission to do so. The other women will be notified of the action later; (4) Neither you nor WWU needs to provide all the information and proof related to the discrimination. The EEOC is charged with making its own investigation.

Because class actions are painless and because they can help so many people, they are potentially one of the most powerful tools we have. Working Women United is ready to act! We can organize the best tactics, and we will locate a lawyer who might work with us on a contingent fee basis. If you are aware of any instances of sexual harassment or discrimination, please contact WWU immediately through H.A.P.: 256-5299. We will talk to you and discuss what we can do together to fight work related sex discrimination in Tompkins county.

SMALL CLAIMS

by Caryn Spector

Have you ever been:

*Refused your security deposit on grounds that your apartment was filthy after you spent hours scrubbing it?

*Pinched by your boss?

*Told that labor on your car cost \$100 when the labor only took a half-hour?

These and many more are grievances which can and should be brought to a small claims court.

The small claims court has been referred to by many as a "peoples' court"--the filing fee is only \$2 and you do not need a lawyer. We

have not personally filed, and we don't know how the system works in practice. However, we are planning to attend the open hearings at City Court and will have information from those observations available soon.

Since many of us were not familiar with small claims procedures, we undertook a small scale investigation of Tompkins County's facilities. We went to Legal Aid, the Cornell law library, and the City Court on Clinton St. We found little or no written information on who can file, how it is done, and how useful it is. This lack of information makes more compli-

cated what should be a simple procedure. Lack of knowledge has been used against every oppressed group as a way of keeping them/us powerless. WWU wants to change this situation. We are planning a small claims workshop, open to all women, which will clarify any questions about using this means of obtaining our rights. Those of you with immediate questions can call Caryn Spector on Monday afternoons at 256-3445.

law

NOT ON THE MENU

by
Joan Willmer

What can we do?

A waitress was fired recently because she refused to shave her legs. She argued that waiters don't have to shave theirs, but the manager didn't buy the argument. Waitresses have to be more than clean, well groomed and good at their work; they must provide a "come-on" for male customers. Accordingly, waitresses are probably harassed by pawing, dirty-mouthed men more than any other single group of working women.

The male managers or owners of a great many eateries and beaneries where good food is not the main concern are often the worst of sexual harassers and exploiters. They seem to regard their waitresses as objects of open sport.

Paula was harassed by a regular customer. This man preferred giving his order with one hand half way up the waitress's thigh. Paula maneuvered to take his orders from inaccessible angles; the customer was not only persistent but ingenious. Paula complained to the manager who told her to grow up and to handle her own problems.

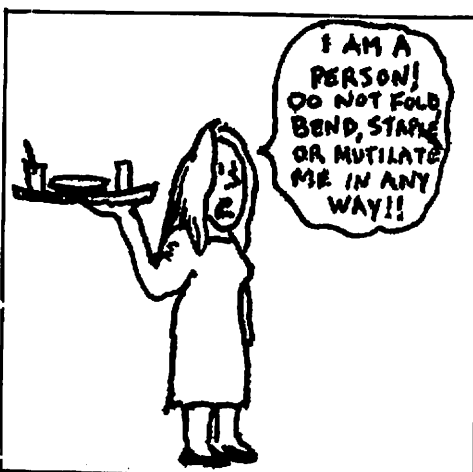
One night a regular waitress was off sick and Paula took on the extra tables. During the rush hours, the manager's wife came in to help. Paula gave the manager's wife the table with the regular customer. The manager made it his business to be near that table throughout the man's meal. In fact, any time his wife worked, the manager kept an eye on his customers' behavior!

Alice landed a job as a

waitress in a restaurant where it was the custom of the staff to have a drink together after closing time. On her first night, Alice was relaxing with her new co-workers when the owner appeared, smiling and joking with his staff. He sat next to his newest employee and in conversation they discovered a hobby in common and discussed it on an equal basis. Finally the owner rose to leave. Smiling, he extended his hand and gave a firm, warm squeeze to Alice's left breast. Alice was so shaken she made no move to protest.

Alice's ex-co-workers Lucy, had a similar experience with this owner; he approached Lucy from the rear one day and snaked a congenial arm over her shoulder to cup a hand around one breast. Lucy reacted with involuntary automatism--she whirled around, fists clenched and ready. Bewildered, the owner never accosted Lucy again. Several days later, however, he directed the manager to fire Lucy because she was "no better than a slut."

A waitress is seen as the predatory object of both those who employ her and those she serves.



How do we, women determined to assert our dignity, proceed to remedy this situation? A campaign must be worked out. It must not jeopardize the real benefits that waitressing affords, and it must not merely create further and more antagonistic rifts between what should be a common community of men and women.

A different system of rewards in the food service field might be a starting point. It is possible to move for the general institution of a service charge on bills. Waitresses would not have to go beyond the bounds of dignity to please customers in order to insure the payment of a tip.

The service charge would be one means of removing a waitress from a position in which she finds it difficult to protest indignities but the management would have to be on her side. A cynical management can always demand that its waitresses act to "please" the customers.

There would have to be a concurrence on the part of all waitresses. Many would find the set service charge a threat to their earning capacities. There are women with strength and wit who can play the man's game, keep their dignity intact, and still con the man via his machismo to come across with a better than average tip. This kind of waitress would stand to lose by the imposition of a standard charge which is usually distributed equally among all personnel.

CONT. ➤

Waitresses (continued)

There is the possibility of unionizing food service personnel. The union contract could demand that management would be responsible for the "atmosphere" of the establishment, and the dignified treatment of the employees. However, many waitresses are fearful of unionization. Some feel that unionization could threaten the advantages of flexible hours and good pay with limited training. Management might as a result respond by demanding more of the employees in the way of training, experience and more rigidly scheduled hours.

There is another, slower path of action: waitresses could try to create a dialogue between themselves and their management. If all waitresses in one restaurant refused to be subjected to customer indignities, and insisted on discussing the problems of

sexual harassment with the management, it is possible that the atmosphere of the restaurant could be so influenced that the indignities would cease.

Unfortunately, we are a competitive society. Solving problems communally is just not our way. To make a point we usually have to start a fight. We need a courageous and assertive group of waitresses to bring a charge of battery against an habitually harassing customer. (Unwanted pinching, breast squeezing or kissing constitute battery!) A well-publicized case of battery would demonstrate the determination of a group of working women to insist upon their right to respect and to personal privacy. The momentum of those events could be used by groups of waitresses to make their move in a less hostile but firm manner--insisting on being heard and on being respected.

IS THIS REALLY FUNNY?

Following are three classic examples of men's abuse of their power to extract sexual favors from women:

She paid bill with Sex: Still Owes \$377

The facts are that the contractor who was a friend of her husband agreed to do the job free but presented the woman with a \$625 bill when he learned they were divorced. He suggested she pay it off by sleeping with him.

Family Court Judge Indicted for Taking Favors

A woman whose case was before him was told she would get favorable consideration for her case if she complied with his sexual advances..Most family court cases deal with support and child custody...

Woman Wins \$300,000 in Sex Cure Case

Therapist Renatus Hartogs (who gives women readers advise in his regular column in Cosmopolitan magazine) recommended that a patient have sex with him as a cure. The woman, who suffered serious side effects as a result was awarded \$300,000 in damages...



In each of these cases men have irresponsibly abused their power to take advantage of women who were in financial, legal, emotional or medical need. Yet without exception these articles have been reported in a titillating or amused tone. Only when society sees women as fully human will we no longer be humiliated in this way.

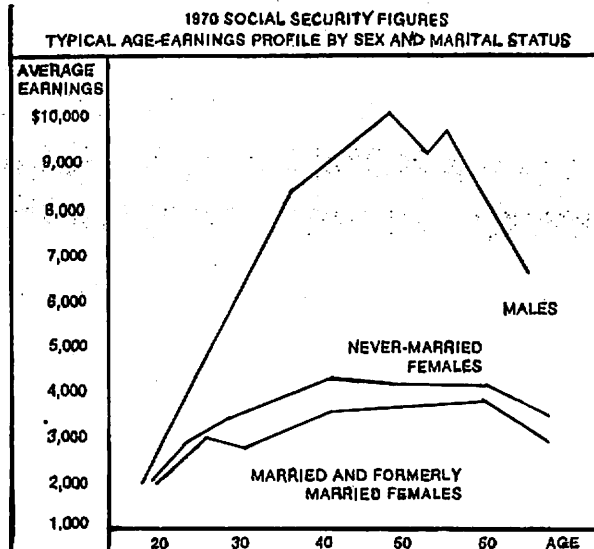
HAVE YOU REALLY COME A LONG WAY, BABY ?

The earning gap between men and women is greater now than 17 years ago.

1955 - Women earned only 64% of men's salaries.

1972 - Women earned only 58% of men's salaries for comparable jobs, with equal educational backgrounds, across all occupational groups.

why
the
difference
?



Women are occupationally more disadvantaged than 30 years ago. In spite of an increasing rate of women working, the rate of higher status jobs held by women is decreasing.

1940 - 45% of all professional and technical jobs were held by women.

1970 - Only 39% of all professional and technical jobs were held by women.

\$hort-Changed

The deteriorating economic situation threatens even the small gains made in the fight against sex and racial discrimination in employment. As usual, women and minorities are the last hired and the first fired. Already unemployment is 33% higher for women than men and 2.5 times higher for female heads of families than male heads of families. Also, women number 70% of the 1 million who have stopped looking for jobs out of discouragement. And it's going to get worse.

Why?

Only 15% of working women are unionized and even

those are subject to the sexism of the unions and the seniority system.

If we buy the propaganda, as we did after WWII, that we should return home and give the jobs to men who "really" need them, then we are lost. We are more than a surplus reserve in the labor market. Most women work out of economic necessity. Our families depend on us, too. We must continue to fight for our right to a decent job.

However, there is a danger whenever there aren't enough jobs to go around, (and there never are, even when times are "good") that women will be pitted against men, blacks against whites, and old against young as we

ISSUE DRAWS NATIONAL SUPPORT

The Speak Out held in Ithaca on May 4 was a ground-breaking event. We have found support for our efforts to raise the issue of sexual harassment from people all across the country. Eleanor Holmes Norton, Commissioner of Human Rights of the City of New York, is instituting programmatic changes in the guidelines she enforces based on testimony given to Human Rights Commission hearings by an Ithaca woman; Congresswoman Bella Abzug supports our efforts to raise research money to continue to study the problem of sexual harassment; and, Karen DeCrow, president of NOW, says she is traveling around the country telling audiences about the exciting work WWU is doing and the importance of the issue of sexual harassment on the job.

WWU will be doing the much-needed research to examine the real impact of sexual harassment on working women. The questionnaire distributed at the Speak Out will serve as the starting point for accumulating broader statistics about just how widespread sexual harassment is. Armed with the results of this study, we will better be able to fight to protect women from the stress and anxiety of unwanted sexual advances in their work situations.

scramble for the few crumbs allowed us.

We should direct our frustration at the source of the problem - a government that can't provide jobs for all who want or need them. Fair employment is obviously impossible without full employment.

When will Cornell Comply?

"The proportion of women faculty members in colleges and universities (excluding two-year institutions) has increased only 1.6% over the last ten years -- from 19.0% in 1962-63 to 20.6% in 1972-73," reports the Office of Education. Cornell is crawling along at the same slow pace with only a 1% increase in women faculty in the last 5 years. At the level of full professor there is only one more woman than there was five years ago.

In the area of non-faculty positions the status of women isn't much better. For ex-

ample, all positions in the top two levels of administration are occupied by men, while 78% of the positions in the lowest levels are held by women. This isn't surprising when you consider the fact that Cornell's last Affirmative Action Plan did not even mention women!

Cornell is currently preparing for a Compliance Review of its employment practices. The enforcement agencies, however, are not doing their jobs. In fact, the U.S. General Accounting Office has recently reported that it discovered a pattern of "al-

most non-existence of enforcement actions" that leads Government contractors to believe "that the compliance agencies do not intend to enforce" the regulations which prohibit employment discrimination. (N.Y. Times, 5/5/75)

Well, that means only one thing. It's up to us. It's up to us to put Cornell on notice. Women at Cornell are already checking the facts and figures. We'll be watching and waiting to see that the status of women employees at Cornell is not overlooked.

by Ginny Vanderslice



Ane Becker (cont. from p. 2)

unaware of back-pay benefits; I was seeking a promotion. Now that I am angry, I would like to go after them for back pay. I want to be sure that they are going to attend to every woman at Morse Chain; there are many that are capable of more than their positions demand. The only thing I can say is that since I started this I have never felt so Black. I know how the Blacks feel, not going anywhere no matter what they do. They have to push twice as hard, too.

by Carlie Cleveland

Sexual Harassment

(cont. from p. 4)

All of us need to examine more closely the power of the men who judge us by standards that are not job-related. When these sexual criteria are applied to us we have few choices about what to do. We have to assert that no woman should have to tolerate sex-based intimidation on her job. Only when we stand together and fight for what is rightfully ours -- the right to be judged on our ability alone -- will we finally end discrimination and make equal opportunity a reality for ourselves and our daughters.

announcements

Are you experiencing sexual harassment or other problems on the job? Do you need to speak with other women who can understand? Contact Hazel Brampton at (607) 257-1560 from 5 P.M. to 8 P.M. Calling will not commit you to any sort of action. Your confidentiality will be maintained.

If you're interested in joining discussion groups about these problems, call Hazel Brampton at the same number.

LAWYERS NEEDED. If you are a lawyer interested in working on class action suits dealing with sexual harassment or other forms of sexual discrimination, please contact Working Women United at 256-3445.

A men's support group has been formed to discuss issues of sexual harassment and discrimination. Any men interested in joining please call Don Barr (256-3036) or Jim Schmidt (256-3445).

"The Working Women's Dilemma," a video tape on sexual harassment is available for rental from WWU for \$35.

MEETING SCHEDULE

For more info, call WWU at HAP - 256-5299

General Meeting: Every woman comes to hear what WWU has been doing and to decide what actions to take as an organization. You're invited too! FIRST SUNDAY OF EACH MONTH, 1 P.M., GREEN ST. FIREHOUSE (310 W. GREEN ST.). CHILDCARE PROVIDED,

Coordinating: This is where every committee lets the others know what it's doing. It's also a good place to catch up on what we've been doing. 2ND & 4TH TUES. OF EACH MONTH, RM. 321 SHELDON COURT, 8 P.M.

Newsletter: Its importance goes without saying. We'd like to make the next issue even better than this, but we need your help. No regular meeting time, so please call at the above number to find out how you can help.

Speakers Bureau: Let us tell you about ourselves and the problems of working women. We provide speakers to interested organizations. Call the above number to set a date. If you'd like to become a speaker, training sessions begin in August for engagements beginning in September.

Political Action: What do businessmen say about sexual harassment? Finding out and publicizing what they think is just one of our projects to politicize the issues of sexual harassment and other forms of sex discrimination. WED., 7:30 P.M. ROOM 321 SHELDON COURT, 410 COLLEGE AVE.

Legal/Grievance: While we help individual women with their personal legal sex discrimination problems, we're also learning how to do legal research, and teaching other women their legal rights. ALTERNATE MON., 7:30 P.M., RM. 321 SHELDON COURT.

Fundraising: Even a working women's organization can't exist without money! Help us raise the funds we need to stay alive. MON., 12 NOON, RM. 321 SHELDON COURT; BRING YOUR LUNCH!

Membership/Recruitment: Tompkins County area women need us just as much as we need them. But first we have to find each other. If you're good at keeping track of people, we can use your help. ALTERNATE THURS., 7:30 P.M., RM. 321 SHELDON COURT.

MEMBERSHIP FORM

As an organization, Working Women United is committed to improving the lives of working women and building a sense of our own power, and to altering the relations of power within the work situation.

Regular Membership will be open to all women who pay dues. \$5.00 per year is suggested, but pay what you can. We need money.

Supporting Membership will be open to all who wish to contribute financially to the growth of WWU.

All members will receive the newsletter.

PLEASE FILL OUT AND RETURN THIS FORM

I would like to become a member of Working Women United:

- ☐ Regular a) Dues enclosed amount: \$ _____
b) Dues pledged amount: \$ _____ in _____ installments
- ☐ Supporting a) enclosed amount: \$ _____
b) pledged amount: \$ _____ in _____ installments

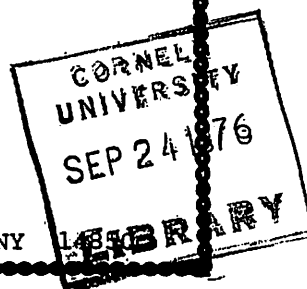
Newsletter subscription only: ☐ \$3.00 per year

Name _____
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Phone # _____

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