Womyn's Affairs of the Undergraduate Student Government Cabinet seeks to explore and address the concerns and needs of undergraduate students through the focus of women's issues. It is the core concern of Womyn's Affairs to educate ourselves and others, as well as to take action in promoting change throughout the campus and Columbus communities. We recognize the beauty of diversity and the ignorance of divisive hate. Thus, Womyn's Affairs desires to join all women and all men in our journey to non-oppressive lifestyles. Specifically, we will be an open and supportive arena in which to address needs of the women at The Ohio State University.

What's up with USG?

The 1994 USG Elections are just around the corner! All assembly seats and the Executive Office are up for grabs. It is up to you as today's men and womyn to decide the direction USG will take in its most immediate future. USG encourages all of you to become involved in this exciting elections process. Scheduled events are as follows:

- Jan. 24: Petition Process Begins
- Feb. 4: Petition Process Ends
- Mar. 30: Informal Debate (Ohio Union Food Co.)
- Mar. 31: Formal Debate (Loc. TBA)
- Apr. 5: Regional Elections Begin
- Apr. 6: Main Campus Elections Begin
- Apr. 7: Final Day of Elections

Ohio State References:

- Womyn's Affairs 292-2101
- Women Student Services 292-8473
- National Org. for Women 299-4210
- Rape Education & Prevention 292-9479
- Women in Engineering 292-3894
- Women's Panhellenic Assn. 292-6781
- Womyn in Comfortable Shoes 292-9212
- Dept. Health Promotions 292-TALK
- University Women's Clinic 292-0158
- Urban League Rape Crisis 221-0544

Columbus References:

- League of Women Voters 221-1743
- CHOICES (hotline) 224-4663
- Women Against Rape 221-4447
- National Anorexic Aid Soc. 436-1112
- Help Anonymous Inc. 548-7324
- Stonewall Union 299-7764
- Columbus AIDS Task Force 488-2437
- Committee Against Sexual Harassment-YWCA 224-9121
- Women's Issues-YWCA 224-9121

Heather Schmick, Director of Womyn's Affairs of the Undergraduate Student Government Cabinet, wrote and produced this brochure with the full support of Christopher T. Norman, President of the Undergraduate Student Government and does not necessarily reflect the view of the Assembly of the Undergraduate Student Government.
What's up with our spelling?

To some people changing "women" to "womyn" is a political statement, and to others it is merely a difference in thought or language usage. The simple act of inserting a "y" in women will not change the world. Yet, it will start some dialogue - get people talking, debating, and thinking! That creates change! If we do not challenge our language, then we will not effectively challenge our concepts and behaviors based on that language. This, my friends, is what creates change - not spelling women differently - but what takes place when we spell it differently. We are, in essence, challenging our very political, economical, and societal institutions.

Message from Heather

Ya know, there are wild misconceptions surrounding women's issues, feminism, and their role in our society. It is easy enough to simply react to issues, without educating ourselves beforehand. I am convinced that we can do better. I challenge all of us to educate ourselves, and channel that education into action! We can either be a part of the bandwagon reactionaries, or we can strive for excellence through our personal and collective actions.

CALENDAR
WINTER QUARTER 1994

January 12
"Why aren't you a Feminist?" open discussion

January 26
"Who cares about sexual harassment anyway?" open discussion

January 28
Skate Against Rape

February 2
"What are women's issues at OSU?"

February 9
Fish Bowl Forum in honor of Black History Month

February 16
"Why aren't you a Feminist III?"

date to be announced
Coffee, Tea, and USG

February 23
"What's up with child care on this campus?"

March 1
Eating Disorders - North campus

March 2
Women's History Month Celebration

March 9
"Nobody talks about emotional abuse"

March 15
Eating Disorders - South Campus

March 16
Eating Disorders - Sororities

March 23
Eating Disorders - Olerangy area
date to be announced
End of the quarter party!

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Executive Director
Heather Schmidt

Personal Assistant
Cathy Strauss

Asst. Director of Corporate Relations
Angela Ostrom

Asst. Director of Public Relations
Sarah Voigt

Issues Coordinator
Linda Jacobson

Intercollegiate Representative
Anu Karwa

Education Outreach Coordinator
Michelle De Franco

Community Service Representative
Nikki Attillo

Undergraduate Student Government
306 Ohio Union, 1739 N. High Street
Columbus, OH 43210
(614) 292-2101
WOMEN'S AFFAIRS

JOIN US

9/24 11:30
SAFER SEX HANDOUT

10/5 11:30 - 4:30
WOMEN-N-NETWORKS

10/4 7:00
COFFEE, TEA, & USG

10/25-29
HYGIENE DRIVE

11/9 7:00
“BECOMING SISTERS” FORUM

OF THE UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT GOVERNMENT

To join Women’s Affairs, learn more about us, contact Heather Schmidt or Angela Ostrom at 292-2101.

1993
Our Mission:

The Undergraduate Student Government Women's Affairs seeks to explore and address the concerns and needs of undergraduate students by focusing on womyn's issues. It is the mission of Women's Affairs to educate themselves, educate others, and take action in promoting change throughout the campus and community. We recognize the beauty in difference and the destruction of hate and division. Thus, Womyn's Affairs seeks to join all men and all women in the fight to end all forms of oppression. Moreover, we will strive to be open and supportive to the needs of female students at the Ohio State University.

Heather Schmidt
Director of Women's Affairs

Women's Affairs Possible Committees:

-Issues Committee: Speakers will be trained in areas of dating violence/rape. Speakers must gain knowledge in these areas and strengthen speaking skills. They will be available to high school groups and campus classrooms, as well as to the community.

-Action Committee: Members will be aware and knowledgeable of news/issues on every level (international, national, and local). They will serve as an information source for all of Women's Affairs, and when necessary, may respond through a letter, phone call etc..

-Events Committee: This committee would basically coordinate the events that Women's Affairs/Committees would be giving. The position involves the structure of events, reservation of rooms, catering, etc., as well as researching prices and available speakers/entertainers.

-Shout Out Committee: We need a special task force of people to research and address rape and sexual harassment so we may all join and shout out against violence. The research of these issues would include looking at the current policy, assessing its implementation and effectiveness, and studying the reporting system and its effectiveness. After reviewing policies and resources, the committee will need to recommend a Shout Out Plan for Women's Affairs in addressing abuse and violence of male and female students.
Womyn's Affairs stirred up lots of talk with name change

By Alan D. Miller
Dispatch Higher Education Reporter

Just changing one letter in a name caused a stir on campus.

When Women's Affairs became Womyn's Affairs in September, it heated discussion that boiled into controversy in some corners of Ohio State University.

Heather Schmidt just smiles.

"We wanted to do it to create a dialogue and it worked," said Schmidt, 21, a senior from Mansfield, Ohio, who directs the office. "We've taken a lot of flak for it. Some people — men and women, but especially men — are threatened by that Y.

"People are talking about women's issues. That's what counts," she said.

Both women and men are volunteers in the Womyn's Affairs office. It promotes education, independence and empowerment for women, she said, adding it is not a male-bashing group.

The name change also is rooted in the philosophy that Schmidt brought to what she said had been a nearly dormant arm of Undergraduate Student Government.

"Women have been, and still are in many ways, dependent upon men — socially, economically, emotionally and politically," said Schmidt, who majors in women's studies and political science. "By taking 'men' out of the name, we now have our own identity."

Once the name was changed, the dozen or so people who regularly volunteer with Womyn's Affairs programs set out to establish an identity for the organization.

That, too, caused a stir.

One of their first efforts was to create an educational brochure about safer sex — one that includes a description of abstinence as the best way to avoid unwanted pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases.

Next, volunteers took to the streets and campus-area bars to give away the brochures, condoms and "dental dams," which are latex devices used to avoid orally transmitted diseases.

"On our safer sex handouts, some people are really going to be cool about it, and others are going to freak," Schmidt said.

Last month, Womyn's Affairs sponsored a "women's hygiene drive" to collect donated hygiene products, such as soap and shampoo, to give to a halfway house for women who have been recently released from prison.

On Dec. 3, Schmidt plans a holiday dinner for campus-area women at Third Avenue Community Church, and she plans to start public forums on women's issues.

"We have generated discussion, and now we need to set up a time and place for it to happen," Schmidt said.
Drive for hygiene products this week

Womyn's Affairs of the Undergraduate Student Government is sponsoring a women's hygiene drive Oct. 25 through Oct. 29 to collect hygiene products such as shampoo, soap, tampons and toothpaste.

The products will be donated to the Traynor Halfway House, a working/living program for women offenders who have been incarcerated and are now acquiring job skills and motivation to assist their re-entry into mainstream society.

Heather Schmidt, director of Womyn's Affairs said, "it would be my hope that students would be interested in giving to this project. I think most students are able to give a bottle of shampoo and Traynor House is even willing to take half-used products.

"How many of us buy a bottle of shampoo and end up not using it because we don't like it? Well there are some people who have a need for that and instead of throwing it out, how about donating it to this project?"

Schmidt said she was impressed by a similar drive at Purdue University and decided to organize one on the OSU campus.

Drop boxes will be located in Drake Union, the Ohio Union, residence halls and Lincoln Tower. Drop boxes will also be located at some area businesses including: Bermuda Onion, Fan the Flames, Kukala's and German Village Floral and Nursery.

— Jane Hahn
USG sponsored panel discusses the meaning of feminism

By Julie Stebbins
Lantern staff writer

A program Monday sponsored by the USG Womyn's Affairs cabinet allowed a six-man panel to discuss the role men play in feminism and the effect that feminism has on their lives.

Michael Scarce, a graduate student from Columbus, said feminism can mean different things to different people. To some, it could be a social movement. For others, it is a very personal thing, and still others find it a topic of political debate.

Scarce, who is the first man to graduate from Ohio State with a Women's Studies degree, said he prefers to use the term "feminisms" because there are many different types of feminism that people practice.

"Feminism seems to not necessarily break down those walls between masculinity and femininity, it just becomes the same derogatory society. We are talking about the value that is placed on male and female, the value that is placed on masculinity and femininity," Scarce said.

Tsalawagi Helton, a senior from Columbus, said women are undoubtedly second class citizens. He added men are at the top of the power hierarchy, not women.

"When you look at the way women were treated, they were treated in a disrespectful fashion," Helton said.

Helton said the belief that men and women are the same is a trap. He said being equal does not mean they have to be the same and white feminism has begun to notice this.

Helton, who is Native American, said his culture does not have the problems with feminism that white culture has.

"To treat a woman in any way that is to be considered disrespectful, and could be considered derogatory, is unheard of because they are human beings and they are sacred," Helton said of Native Americans.

Chris Meade, a senior from Columbus, said he had a "Leave It To Beaver" type house, where women worked in the home.

"I think feminism is rebellion. I think it is a rebellion against nature," Meade said. "I think that men and women have defined roles that God has given us."

Meade said he believes a lot of problems in society can be attributed to feminism, such as households headed by a single-mother.

"There has to be someone in the home that has to be a leader," Meade said.

Rich Kopac, a former OSU student, said his first encounter with feminism occurred on a date a year ago. He said every other word out of his mouth was babe and chick and he and his date debated why he should not use those words.

Kopac said his next encounter with feminism took place while working for a man who said feminists were lesbians. He said he knew this view was wrong.

Damian Kapral, a student in Continuing Education, attributed his views about women to his mother. Kapral said feminism is constantly in flux. He also said that romance between genders has become clumsy.

Derrick Lampkin, a senior from Shaker Heights, Ohio, said feminism is a word which describes just a small part of the world.

"A key word about feminism for me is balance," Lampkin said. "We need to establish balance within ourselves."

Lampkin said opposites are combined with each other to form harmony. He said while he is a physical manifestation composed of male attributes, he also has components of femininity in himself. He added women are composed of opposites as well and have components of masculinity.

Heather Schmidt, director of Womyn's Affairs, said the discussion was a success because of the diversity of both the panel and the audience.

"It went wonderfully," she said, and added that the discussion was honest and the viewpoints expressed were very diverse.
Hostility toward women discussed with Gee

By Amy Schafer and Julie Stebbins
Lantern staff writers

Various members of Womyn's Affairs and the university community met with OSU President E. Gordon Gee at his home Sunday to discuss violence and academic hostility toward women.

Heather Schmidt, director of Womyn's Affairs, led the discussion on women's concerns. Both men and women attended the meeting, giving examples of the mistreatment of women on campus.

Jennifer Curtiss, a resident advisor in Mack and Canfield Halls, said she posted 15 fliers on a women's workshop, and within one hour, the fliers were gone, she said. Curtiss said a female student on her floor was responsible for removing the fliers.

"It's not just men who are afraid to confront these issues. It's women too," Curtiss said.

Nancy Radcliffe, OSU Rape Education and Prevention Program representative, said more money should go to less visible programs that educate women and men, instead of obvious programs like CrimeWatch.

Security programs only aid women about 10 percent of the time, Radcliffe said. The other 86 percent of violent incidents might occur when a woman knows her attacker.

Rebecca Woods, USG member, mentioned the fear some might have in confronting professors who make sexist remarks because they control students' grades.

Michelle DeFranco, a senior in communications and women's studies, said one of her professors said to use the phrase "he or she" instead of "he" in their papers.

After instructing the students on this point, DeFranco said, the professor clearly stated he was not a feminist.

"Would being a feminist ruin his reputation?" DeFranco said.

Gee said some of these problems develop at home. A number of students come from small communities where people may not be exposed to urban life, he said.

"Students come from communities that live in cocoons," he said.

Schmidt asked everyone to come up with solutions to the "bigger than life" problems that women face. One idea was to refer to students by their numerical rank.

For example, a freshman would be called a first-year student. Gee said even he was guilty of referring to female students as freshman.

Another proposal was to hold departments accountable for their actions against women. Students asked Gee to have certain departments change their curricula.

Gee said that as university president, he can not demand faculty to teach and behave in a certain manner because of academic freedom. He said his power is limited because he can not hire or fire faculty and staff.

As the meeting concluded Schmidt said Womyn's Affairs would produce a document listing women's problems and their possible solutions.
Year ends for Womyn’s Affairs

Year-end meeting focuses on raising interest in organization

By Julie Stebbins
Lantern staff writer

Womyn’s Affairs held an open discussion Wednesday to discuss the organization’s strengths and weaknesses of the past year.

Heather Schmidt, director of Womyn’s Affairs, presided over the group’s last meeting for the school year. She asked the audience members to express their feelings about Womyn’s Affairs programs, as well as ways to get more women and men involved in them.

A major concern expressed was the student body’s lack of interest in the organization.

Jennifer Novelli, vice president of USG, said Womyn’s Affairs should work with other student organizations at the undergraduate and graduate levels. This might encourage more students to attend the meetings, she said.

Novelli also said Womyn’s Affairs should co-sponsor events with other groups.

Michelle De Franco, Womyn’s Affairs assistant director, said the organization needed to talk to the greek system because of the issues with which they deal.

“We were thinking about why we did not address the greek system-fraternities and sororities. Not together, but separately,” De Franco said.

Chris Norman, USG president, said the greek system is open to new ideas and wants to get involved.

Other ideas to promote Womyn’s Affairs were:

- To stand in the Oval and discuss different ideas such as feminism.
- Contacting the directors of Residence and Dining Halls to involve resident advisors and students living in the dorms.
- Focusing more on issues that affect minority women.
- The programs that received the most attention at the meeting were “Men on Feminism,” “Bar Culture,” “Tea with Gee,” and “Why Aren’t You a Feminist?”

USG Chief of Staff Mike Meneer said the program on child care needed to be heard.

“We had students who came in that had a real concern. They have kids that they are caring for,” Meneer said.

He also said women at Ohio State need child care that the university does not provide.

Schmidt said although Womyn’s Affairs accomplished its mission of educating and activating this year, there needs to be more community service projects next year, including improvement on the annual hygiene drive.

This event, held each fall, lets students donate hygiene products to the Traynor Halfway House.

This facility gives women who are leaving jail and re-entering society a place to re-establish their lives and find jobs.

“I think the most important thing that Womyn’s Affairs has done this year is to challenge the campus community and also challenge ourselves,” Schmidt said.

The Womyn’s Affairs cabinet presented Schmidt a plaque for her work as director at the conclusion of the meeting. Schmidt will be graduating in June. USG will be interviewing for a new director when the new officers are installed.

“I feel really lucky that I had the opportunity to be director of Womyn’s Affairs,” Schmidt said. “It’s been the absolute best year of my entire college career.”
Community goals discussed at Womyn’s Affairs meeting

By Dana Owens
Lantern staff writer

The Womyn’s Affairs Cabinet of USG held its annual “Let’s Get Busy” forum at the Ohio Union last week to discuss goals for the 1994-95 school year.

Angela Ostrom, director of Womyn’s Affairs said the group needs to concentrate on three areas: activism, advocacy and community.

“We need to reach out to the community,” Ostrom said. “Getting people who have an issue they want to deal with is what we want. We want to be a vehicle for them,” she said.

Ostrom said she believes the meeting is a good recruiting program for women and men. “We are interested in people who see a program and want to devote time to it, people who want to do some activism,” she said. “We want to get people educated and have them become familiar with important people at OSU and the community.”

Carolyn Tyjewski, a senior majoring in English and black studies, said everyone needs to work together to make positive changes.

“Womyn’s Affairs doesn’t only serve women. It's ridiculous to say this is only for women,” she said. “If you have the willingness to put yourself in the foreground, things will get done.”

Bridget Mizer, a mother and a junior majoring in Women’s Studies, said she came to the meeting because she believes childcare for undergraduate students should be a priority for Womyn’s Affairs this year.

“as an undergraduate, it's important to get childcare,” she said. “The waiting list here for childcare is two years, that's ridiculous.”

Ostrom agreed and said she would like to be active in areas such as: A mentoring program, a career day for women, a seminar on dating violence, fund-raisers and inviting big-name speakers to campus.

“We would also like to reach out to Women Against Rape,” she said. “They are the only hotline in the county and they are having financial problems. They are well respected and I think we can help them out this year,” she said.

Cathy Strauss, assistant director of Womyn’s Affairs feels strongly about this coming school year. “We did a lot of good things last year, and we'll do a lot of good things this year,” she said.

Ostrom recently received a letter of congratulations from OSU President E. Gordon Gee. In his letter, Gee noted the benefits of Womyn’s Affairs.

“Many have benefited from the contributions your organization makes to the quality of life for women at The Ohio State University. I am confident that your commitment and concern will provide the necessary direction and momentum needed for another successful year.”
Two USG cabinet positions that recently consolidated into one — Womyn's Affairs and Minority Affairs — have a former top Womyn's Affairs official skeptical about whether USG can effectively serve both groups.

"You must be committed to be a part of the university process and student government to voice women's issues," said Angela Ostrom, former director of Womyn's Affairs.

However, USG President Kevin Sheriff, who made the decision to consolidate the two positions, disagrees. Sheriff said the change will help USG deal with issues that are "relevant for students."

The consolidated cabinet, according to Sheriff, will be better equipped to deal with "tangible issues" that USG knows are out there, such as Student Run Radio and the publishing of teacher evaluations.

The decision to make the change followed on the heels of the inauguration of Sheriff and Vice President Jenny Nelson in May, Ostrom said.

"They (Sheriff and Nelson) became the force which kept us from being hurt who we wanted to be," Ostrom said.

Even though Womyn's Affairs no longer has its own seat, both groups will still be well represented, Sheriff added. "If there is someone doing work on women's issues, it is a quiet voice," Ostrom said.

Ostrom said it is important for USG to remain diverse.

"It's hard for the student body to know how important those groups are," Ostrom said. "Our goal was to bring women's issues into the forefront, focus on bringing women and their experiences into the community."

Sheriff said USG remains committed to serving women and minorities. As an example, he cited a planned AIDS awareness program, which will emphasize how women are affected by AIDS.

"We feel academics has been our focus this quarter," Sheriff continued. "Next quarter, we will be working on specific programs."

Still, Ostrom is concerned about losing an important function of Womyn's Affairs — participating with other women's groups.

"Our program was innovative for student government," Ostrom said. "While we were there (on USG), something was happening."

"We built up a name within the university. We were doing well, why would you do something to it?"

USG is accepting applications for the new, combined position, Sheriff said.

Qualifications are similar to other cabinet members, and include leadership and communication skills, experience working with minorities and women, and willingness to work hard, Sheriff said.