

'Trickling down'

Feminist movement spreads without pressure

By LORAIN McCLISH

Judith McCombs is a feminist. And as founder of "Moving Out," a feminist literary magazine, she is very much an activist.

"It (the feminist movement) is trickling down," said the Farmington woman, a teacher of creative writing at Wayne State University and an English instructor at the Society of Arts and Crafts.

"I see it down to the high school levels now. It's still got a long way to spread. It's moving and all by itself because we haven't done all that much to pressure it."

Judith McCombs believes that the biggest push the feminist movement ever got in the Detroit area was a two-day conference sponsored by Wayne State University called "Teach-In for Women." It was held several years ago.

She called the event a "catalytic thing that cemented a lot of feelings and built up a lot of spirit. We found we were feeling the same things. 'Moving Out' came out of that. And so many other groups — the Women's Resource Center, the Feminist Credit Union, the Women's Health Co-op, Altogether Now, a whole lot of them."

The parent organization of them all is NOW (National Organization for Women) with its own effectiveness, Ms. McCombs said, based on its long life, with more effectiveness continually to be predicted as it matures.

She explained that most women went into NOW to get something. Because of this, NOW cannot help but grow stronger.

BECAUSE HER field is literary Ms. McCombs' own feelings at the "Teach-In" led her to ponder on her male-only teachers at the University of Chicago, the lack of women-authored books on the required reading lists and the periodicals which accept manuscripts from a clique of writers, mostly men.

Of the latter she said, "We were having political problems, not talent problems."

Out of this, with the help of two others, Ms. McCombs founded "Moving Out," a feminist literary magazine now into its third year of publication.

"With hindsight I can say we were ready for it. We were flooded with contributions. We started



with \$200 and not enough sense to ask Wayne for any more. Our first issue was gone almost over night. We had a demand we didn't know existed from the writers and from the readers," she said.

"Moving Out" accepts manuscripts from women writers only.

"The door is always open," she said, "and only when we have full equality can we think of going out of business."

The magazine has seen a lot of turnover, in the administration, editorships and contributors.

"A lot of people have been involved in this," she said. "I watched a chess fused between the literary and the political."

SHE IS STILL a contributor to the journal but eased out of the operating end of it when she found "women that could do a better job of it than I could." She is now boosting the feminist cause by becoming active in the Miles Modern Poetry Committee.

"We're bringing in more distinguished poets, black poets and feminist poets (to Detroit.) Society is beginning to accept poetry as part of the feminist culture. They are coming out in droves to hear us. We've filled the general lecture auditorium at Wayne State and we did this because this is what they (the audiences) want to hear," she said.

On several occasions Ms. McCombs referred to herself as a feminist and defined the word as "one who believes in full human equality for women." She believes she has become a better teacher since she took on feminist views.

"It is a fact that more men talk in class and more argue in class, which indicates the disproportion in self-confidence. I think I've been pretty successful in drawing the woman students out. It's a heavy thing we've got here, developing — or not developing — everyone's abilities."



Left: Judith McCombs
Right: Connie Cronin
Bottom: Roberto Brown



Women's poetry series begins

Poorwomen's Paradise held a capacity crowd this month for the first in a series of women's poetry readings sponsored by "Moving Out," a feminist literary magazine.

The audience in the Detroit coffee house heard the realistic and the abstract, parodies, satires and humor, poems of the hero and the anti-hero.

The subject matter stretched from sex to suicide, from nature to politics and closed with an open-ended discussion.

Many of the poet-readers were connected in one way or another, with the Miles Modern Poetry Committee, a Wayne State University-based organization, dedicated to promoting modern poetry and living poets.

LEADING OFF the series were Judith McCombs, an English and creative-writing teacher who has classes at both Wayne State University and the Society of Arts and Crafts; Roberto Brown, a Wayne State undergraduate who is in the throes of writing a non-sexist children's book, and Connie Cronin, a member of the Women's Health Project.

"Moving Out" accepts manuscripts from women only. The poetry series it is sponsoring now is open to women poets only.

Women who wish to read at one of the future performances may write to "Moving Out," Women's Poetry Readings, 169 Mackenzie Hall, Wayne State University, Detroit, 48202.

Organizations listed

Numerous feminist-oriented organizations are located in the metropolitan area. Following is a list including some of the active ones and their specialties.

WOMEN'S RESOURCE CENTER houses the first Feminist Federal Credit Union and is the meeting place for 13 women's groups. It also provides a reading library, a medical and legal referral listing, a monthly newsletter, a calendar of events and a community bulletin board. Inquiries will be taken by calling 892-7161. Monthly newsletter and calendar will be sent for \$1 by writing: Women's Resource Center, 18700 Woodward, Detroit 48202.

FEMINIST FEDERAL CREDIT UNION is the first credit union set up by women for women. Membership is 50 cents. Phone: 892-7160.

NOW (National Organization for Women), Detroit, (parent chapter in Michigan,) holds all of its committee meetings in the Women's Resource Center. The group sponsors continual study committees and rap groups and publishes a monthly newsletter, "As We See It Now." Membership is \$15. Phone: 892-7161.

The Oakland Chapter of NOW meets on the fourth Tuesday of each month at 7:30 p.m. in the Birmingham Unitarian Church, Lone Pine and Woodward. Inquiries will be taken by calling 356-6669.

WOMEN'S CONVERSATION COLLOM meets every Monday evening in the Women's Resource Center to engage in political discussions in an attempt to develop ideas on feminist issues. Inquiries will be taken by calling Sandra Kaye, 273-9319.

WOMEN IN SOCIETY meets every Wednesday evening in the Women's Resource Center. Discussion group concentrates on a specific feminist issue each week. Inquiries will be taken by Linda Hadden, 893-9246.

WOMEN'S HEALTH PROJECT devoted to self-help in women's health care, meets once a week in the Women's Resource Center and sponsors periodic workshops. Inquiries will be taken by calling 825-8819.

WOMEN'S SELF-DEFENSE CLASSES are held at the Geneva House, a women's community, 883-7854.

WEST-EAST BAG is a self-help communication network for and of women in the visual arts, located at 334 E. Oakridge, Ferndale. Dee Durkee is the Detroit WEB representative, 547-3625.

WOMEN'S RADIO WORKSHOP, collective of women responsible for WDET program,

"All Together Now." Will accept suggestions or announcements for the show. Inquiries will be taken by writing to Dian Wilkins, WDET Women's Radio, 5035 Woodward, Wayne State University, Detroit, 48202.

THE WOMEN'S NEWSPAPER accepts stories and articles from women writers. Single issues may be obtained for 10 cents plus postage by writing: The Women's Newspaper, P.O. Box 27004, Detroit, 48227.

COFFEE BREAK, political education program, holds forums on the second Thursday of every month, 7:30 p.m., in the United Dairyworkers Hall, 15840 Second Ave., Highland Park. Open to men. Donation is \$1 per session.

WOMEN ON THE MOVE, political education forum, meets on the third Thursday of each month at 7:30 p.m. in Central Methodist Church, 23 E. Adams, Detroit. Membership fee based on need. Open to men. Office is located at 7316 W. McNichols, Detroit. Phone: 861-1701.

CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION answers problems on sex discrimination through the office of Rosalie Sullivan, 222-1810.

WAYNE WOMEN'S LIBERATION provides advice, reading material and acts as liaison to other women's groups on and off campus of Wayne State University. Allied with "Moving Out" and staffed by volunteers from 9:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, 169 Mackenzie Hall. Phone: 577-3409.

MOVING OUT, feminist arts journal accepts manuscripts from women writers only. Address inquiries to "Moving Out," 169 Mackenzie Hall, Wayne State University, Detroit, 48202.

'A Day for Me'

The office of the Women's Studies Program on the Southfield Campus of Wayne State University's College of Lifelong Learning is planning "A Day For Me" Thursday, Sept. 12.

The day's events are for women only from 10 a.m.-2 p.m., and there is no cost involved.

The day is planned for any adult woman who has ever asked herself: Who am I at this juncture in my life? Now that my children are in school, what can I do that is meaningful?

Participants are asked to bring their own lunch.

The college is located at 25610 W. Eleven Mile, just east of Franklin, in Southfield.