

# Speaker misquoted on pay for sex

**YOUR ARTICLE** on March 3 entitled **FSU SPEAKER: WIVES ARE UNAPPRECIATED PROSTITUTES** by Hettie Cobb is an example of sensationalistic, biased journalism.

It is interesting that of the entire talk concerning the fundamental problems women have in our society, your reporter chose to invent something which would discredit, distort, and divert attention away from the fundamental issue.

That fundamental issue is the wagelessness of women in the home who labor for nothing and do housework whether they are full-time housewives or have a second job. Some may have a husband to support them but this does not mean that they get their own money for performing housework which includes the social production of children, the servicing of them and of husbands so that they are reenergized and can go to school or work the next day.

They are not entitled to social security benefits, retirement, sick pay, vacation leave or pay (they work harder on everyone else's vacation or weekend), or disability benefits. They are forced, whether they realize it or not, to rely on the beneficence of a husband.

The fact that women receive no salary in the home has been and is still the reason for their low value on the job market as so many of us have experienced. Any employer knows that the minimum wage is more than a woman is getting at home. Women therefore have little if any bargaining power.

The basic issue is that this situation keeps women from leaving relationships which may abuse them and their children which is

only now, with the emergence of the women's movement and establishment of refuge centers, becoming public. Battered wives are forced to stay in these situations because they do not have a little money of their own even though they work at home.

Speaking on the Wages for Housework movement, Silvia Federici spoke at length about the real benefactors of daily unpaid labor—the employers of the husband and the government and industry at large who take control of the child when he is ready for the work force or for the military.

The reporter of the article quoted Ms. Federici as saying "women ought to charge their husbands for sexual favors." This is not only incorrect, but it is contrary to the entire Wages for Housework position, and was not said in any form by Ms. Federici, whose talk we have on tape. Their position, clearly stated by Ms. Federici, is to seek payment for household labor from the government who has the ability to tax those who profit from unpaid labor. The payment is for housework, like any other occupation, not for being one sex or the other.

The discussion of prostitution was in the context of what lengths women have had to go to get some money in order to live in our society. Ms. Federici did not say that housewives are prostitutes which the headline in the early edition suggested.

**ADELE LISKOV**

**Tallahassee Women's Collective**

**(The story incorrectly reported that Ms. Federici said women ought to charge their husbands for sexual services. Actually, she said women ought to be paid by the government and not just for sexual services but for all types of work they do in the home. — editor)**