



SUPPORTING WOMEN'S RIGHTS. Actor Alan Alda showed a variety of expressions as he explained his views on the

Equal Rights Amendment at Kenyon College Saturday. — Timothy E. Black, Advocate

Alda shares opinions on feminism

Editor's note — Toni Gallagher, winner of two seconds and a third in writing competition at the Press Club of Central Ohio competition held Saturday at Newark High School, is a student at Newark and authored the following story. She "covered" "M*A*S*H" star Alan Alda in a speech Saturday afternoon at Kenyon College.

By TONI GALLAGHER

The Equal Rights Amendment is a national issue, even in a ratified state such as Ohio. It is not just a symbolic gesture, not a valentine to women. ERA is urgently needed to remedy a state of emergency which is getting worse.

Actor and feminist Alan Alda explained this state of emergency to a full gymnasium at Kenyon College Saturday evening.

"The earning power of women in the United States is lousy," stated Alda. He cited the difference in salaries between an average man and an average woman: six thousand dollars. Women are paid 59 cents for every dollar a man earns. An average male high school dropout receives annually \$1,500 more than a female college gradu-

ate.

The state of emergency to which Alda referred extends to protection by the law. "Equality differs between states," he said, then gave examples. In Florida, a wife needs her husband's permission to start a business. In other states, a woman cannot sue her husband if she is beaten by him.

A woman should not have to shop for a fair state, Alda contends. "Everywhere we go, we're Americans."

Some argue that the 14th Amendment protects women enough. However, it does not always apply for sexual discrimination. "There is not the same protection for women in the Constitution as there is for men," Alda explained, "That is why ERA is needed."

State laws are being passed to remedy certain situations. However, these laws are often inadequate, not enforced, or easily changed, he said.

The Equal Rights Amendment itself contains only 52 words: "Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United

States or by any State on account of sex.

"The Congress shall have the power to enforce, by appropriate legislation, the provisions of this article.

"This amendment shall take effect two years after the date of ratification."

In Oklahoma, one of fifteen states where ratification has stalled, fully 80 percent of the people questioned agreed with the text of the ERA. "The words of the amendment sell it," said Alda.

Fourteen state constitutions contain statements very similar to the ERA. In those states, none of the dire events predicted by opponents, such as homosexual marriages and co-ed bathrooms, have happened. Even with ERA, Alda insists, "You won't find a woman in a men's restroom unless she's fixing the plumbing."

Three more states are needed to ratify the amendment, with June 30 being the cut-off day. "We're trying harder than we've ever tried before," Alda said. If ERA is not ratified by the end of June, the ratification process must begin again from scratch; and Alda confirmed, "It will."

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