

Girl meets boy

... Steve Ferrell, the ultimate winner

Role Reversals Reveal A Whole Other Side To The Sex Coin

By PATTI WILLIAMS

SUMMIT — In the so-called "war of the sexes," men have problems too — and perhaps have greater difficulty than women in admitting them.

Warren Farrell, a noted feminist lecturer and author of "The Liberated Man," explored this concept in a five-part presentation before members of area National Organization for Women (NOW) members and a few men at the Unitarian House last night.

At the outset of the program, Farrell cited the benefits of the wo-

this power in order to appear "like a man."

"When women enter politics, they enter it on a man's level, not female," Farrell said. "Sen. Thomas Tagleton knew America well enough to know he could not reveal he'd undergone shock treatment in the past."

"This," he added, "is only part of the problem facing us today. It's not what I did as a man, but what I looked like doing it."

Reflecting on childhood experiences which promoted this thinking, Farrell reminisced about his pitch-

while groping at each others feet as an exercise in sensuality. The session brought smiles of contentment to the faces of those lost in each other's toes.

Changing attitudes toward sex roles was demonstrated by a session of "role reversal dating." The "boys" formed a line and women assumed the "male role" of asking them for a date. All activity was simulated, of course.

The project was successful — many commented on the awkward feeling that accompanied the change. "It was really hard trying



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Photos by Michael Gaffney

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At the outset of the program, Farrell cited the benefits of the women's liberation movement for men — as individuals and in their relationships with women. As part of his effort to organize male consciousness-raising groups throughout the country, Farrell noted several areas in need of liberation.

"The question of sex role stereotyping occurred to me through mention of the women's movement and it's important to look at liberation from a two-sex perspective," the author explained. "There are so many things that have promoted a negative image of women in society that something such as losing a job to a woman makes us think of ourselves as less than a man."

Farrell said society has duped everyone into thinking that only what men do is important.

In the area of politics and business it has been assumed, Farrell said, men have a monopoly over the system of power and men must have

"This," he added, "is only part of the problem facing us today. It's not what I did as a man, but what I looked like doing it."

Reflecting on childhood experiences which promoted this thinking, Farrell reminisced about his pitching days in Little League.

"The best pitcher on the team chewed tobacco. So when it was my turn, I did the same," Farrell said. "It didn't matter how bad I pitched, as long as I looked good. And I was warned against waving to my parents in the stands."

Regarding sexual liberation, Farrell explained men need to work on sensuality development and interaction.

"Overall, there is a lot to be gained from the behavioral changes we are exploring," Farrell noted. "I want to get men to the point of being able to listen without having to give answers; to be involved in each other's roles to the extent of empathizing and sympathizing; to be open and vulnerable, to have feeling, to cry and ultimately, to love."

About 80 participants joined in a barefoot toe-touching session in which groups of 10 closed their eyes

summed the male role of asking them for a date. All activity was simulated, of course.

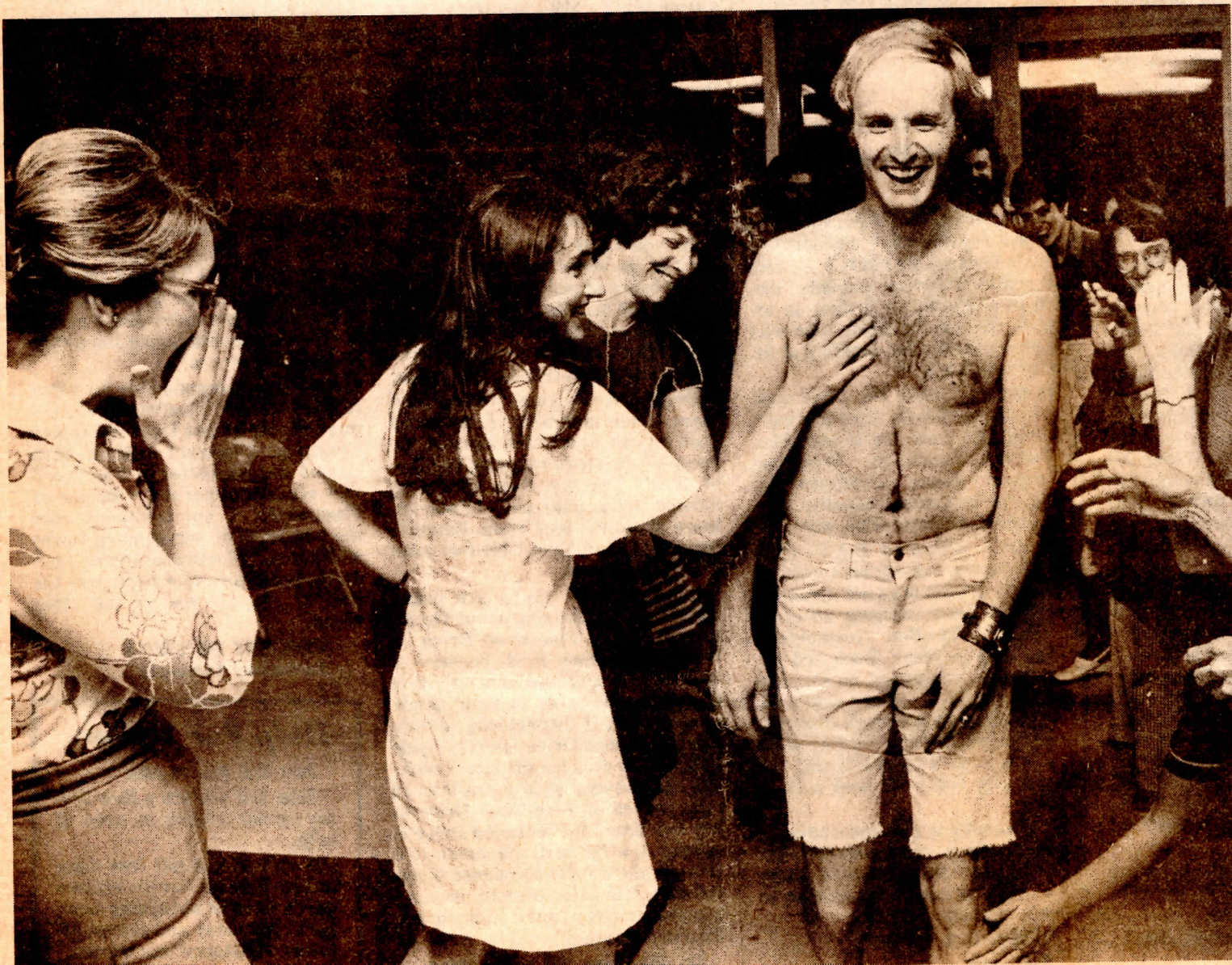
The project was successful — many commented on the awkward feeling that accompanied the change. "It was really hard trying to be the aggressor," one woman said. Her chosen partner echoed her words in reverse.

A male beauty contest which seemed to raise everyone's consciousness culminated Farrell's effort to make people aware of sexist attitudes. Six "beauty finalists" clad in bathing trunks paraded through a double line of women who subjected the contestants to whistles, back slapping and even a touch or two below the belt.

Steve Farrell, who is involved in a local men's consciousness-raising group, was the contest winner.

"Although some of the demonstrations were exaggerated to a point, they made me aware of what women are put through," he said. "The hardest part was the dating; it was difficult to be on the other side."

The program ended as participants formed groups to discuss the evenings' activities.



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