

# Women And Alcoholism

As the modern woman has become more independent, her problems have become more visible, and alcoholism is a growing problem among women, including both the working women and those who remain at home.

Phyllis Grubb, a counselor at the Alcoholic Rehabilitation Center in Butner, says that of the 45,000 people with drinking problems who were treated by the state last year, 18-20 percent were women.

"Before, alcoholism was only associated with men—the idea that a woman could be an alcoholic was unheard of," she pointed out. "Now that women have become more autonomous they are under more pressure and have many more conflicts that might cause them to abuse alcohol."

Because female alcoholics were considered social outcasts, many women never sought help for their addictions, Grubb said. However, during the movement for independence more women have realized the need for treatment of diseases and problems, including alcoholism. She said that the difficulty of obtaining treatment for female alcoholics is increased by the differences in treating men and women. Until recently, most of the research and treatment has been centered around men.

Alcoholism in women is also harder to recognize due to varied drinking patterns, social attitudes, and consumption rates, Grubb noted. Women have difficulty seeking treatment because they often have families to care for, whereas men have a greater degree of independence.

She added that today's profile of a female alcoholic is of a young, divorced parent with two to three children, no skills, and little education. "These women have more to lose than their male counterparts," Grubb emphasized. "If a woman needs help for a long period of time she will need child care, but she probably can't afford it. However, if the problem becomes too serious she risks losing her family altogether."

Grubb said that as women have become independent, society's attitudes towards women and drinking have changed. Now alcohol is much more accessible. Bars have happy hours for female customers, and professional women might have a martini lunch along with their male counterparts.

"Alcohol is no longer a man's drink and therefore the problems that it causes are no longer just men's problems," she said. "However, most of the treatment has been centered around men."

North Carolina is attempting to help alcoholic women by providing space at the state alcohol rehabilitation centers, and by providing treatment through its network of 150 alcohol and drug programs across the state. Most of these services are provided through local mental health centers and are staffed by professional substance abuse counselors.

In addition, more programs are being formed that are geared towards women's needs, including support groups and halfway houses. For example, the Orange-Person-Chatham Residential Treatment Center in Chapel Hill is a halfway house that serves as a transitory facility for women returning from the ARC to the community. It is a six-month program that is designed to ease the transition of each woman back into society. Dot Sparks is director of the center.

The 56 year old Sparks is a recovered alcoholic who was treated several times at the ARC in Butner. She took her last drink 10 years ago and has remained sober since

## SCSC Awards Banquet

The Charlotte Chapter of South Carolina State College National Alumni Association will have its Annual Awards Banquet and Scholarship Fund Drive April 26 at McDonald's Cafeteria. Hors d'oeuvres - 7 p.m. Dinner - 7:45 p.m. Cost to the banquet is \$10 per person.

Dr. Joann Boyd, Title III coordinator and director of special academic programs, will be the featured speaker. Special guests will include SCSC student Pamela Harper, soloist and the SCSC Jazz Band. Paintings by local artist Louis Moss, SCSC '75 will also be exhibited. For ticket information, call 392-1227, 536-0614 or contact any SCSC alumni.

George Wilkerson is president of the Charlotte Chapter, Mrs. Rose H. Dannelly is chairperson of the banquet and William Blakeney and Curtis Stevens are chairpersons of the Scholarship Fund Drive.

## Second in series

then. She holds a masters degree in education, swims every day and plays tennis several times a week.

"I started drinking when I was 20 years old and it got progressively worse," she said. "My job involved a lot of traveling and it was then that I started abusing alcohol."

Sparks said that her friends urged her to get help, but as many other alcoholics would agree, one can only be helped when he or she is ready to admit that there is a problem. "I finally realized that the problem did not lie in external factors, but that I was unhappy with myself," she stated. "I realized that I was hooked and I wanted to change. The ARC provided counseling and understanding, and helped me change my old habits."

Sparks said she decided to become involved in the treatment of women alcoholics because she realized the special problems that they faced. "Women have always been the mothers and wives—the protecting elements—no one wants to believe that they, too, can be alcoholics," she said. "Because this attitude is changing, more women are coming out of the closets with their problems, but there aren't enough treatment facilities. That's why I got involved."

Orange-Person-Chatham Residential Treatment Center houses nine women and uses many forms of treatment for its clients. They attend Alcoholics Anonymous meetings, and receive counseling from the local mental health center. The house is staffed by two counselors, including Sparks, and a cook. The program has a 75 percent success rate, and they hope to create room for up to 15 clients in the future. "The clients have included a physician, a Duke graduate, and a person with two masters degrees, which illustrates the fact that alcoholics don't belong solely to the lower class," she said.

Grubb said that until 1980 North Carolina had been a leader in treating the problems of women alcoholics, but that programs were cut back due to reductions in federal funds. "We have room for 18 women here at the Butner ARC, but it is not enough," she emphasized. "There is an even greater need for support within communities so that women do not have to leave their jobs and families to seek treatment. Many communities have organizations that deal with alcohol-related problems that women can participate in, such as AA and Al-Anon, and women need to realize that it is okay to seek help."



Churches in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg area really showed their Christian love for their neighbors during WGIV's recent Mountain of Food Drive. Churches were asked to donate canned goods and non-perishable food items for the needy in the area. The church that donated the most canned goods was Cedar Grove Presbyterian Church of Concord. Members reported in with 2,680 cans of food. The church received an organ valued at \$3,000 from Clark Brothers Piano and Organ Company. Second place went to Reeder Memorial

Baptist Church of Charlotte with 900 cans of food. WGIV (1600 AM) station manager, Cal Thornton, was pleased with the success of this year's Mountain of Food Drive. Now hundreds of families will receive the food through the Loaves and Fishes Program. Above, WGIV representatives and Cedar Grove Presbyterian Church U.S. members, Theodora Jackson, Martha Moore, Julia McCauley, and George Moore, smile proudly at the success of the food drive.

## Black Business

### Losing Market?

**Special To The Post**  
Although black-owned businesses are expanding in sales and profits, they are falling behind in the marketplace, in part because of intense competition for the black consumer's dollar, according to Dr. Andrew F. Brimmer, a member of the Black Enterprise magazine's board of economists.

In 1977 (the last year for which Census Bureau data are available), receipts of black-owned businesses were \$8.6 billion, or 0.32 percent of all U.S. Sales. Brimmer, president of the Washington, D.C.-based consulting firm of Brimmer & Company, Inc. and a former member of the Federal Reserve's board of governors, estimates sales for 1984 at \$12.8 billion, but only 0.26 percent of all U.S. Sales. And while he estimates 1985 sales at \$13.3 billion, that will represent a decline to 0.25 percent of U.S. sales he explains in a feature story in the April issue of Black Enterprise.

The decline in market share on the part of black-owned businesses extends to the black community itself, says Brimmer. In 1969, the receipts of black businesses represented 13.5 percent of the money income received by the black community, but in 1984 that proportion dropped to seven percent and is expected to drop to 6.6 percent this year.

## Women's Studies

Who do you talk to when you've read a good book that really grabs you?

WomanReach is offering a six-week seminar on "Women's Studies: Literary Discussion Group" at the WomanReach Center, April 24, Wednesday, from 10:30 a.m. until noon, facilitated by Jane Grau.

For more information and to register, call a WomanReach peer counselor, Monday through Saturday, from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m., at 334-3614.

All women are welcome at WomanReach where all services are free. A United Way agency. WomanReach facilities are handicapped accessible.

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