

# OPINIONS

1973

## ... and abortion

Editorial Board  
February 2, 1973

Lost in the shuffle with last week's Vietnam ceasefire brouhaha was the Supreme Court's decision that, in effect, repealed anti-abortion legislation across the country. In years to come this decision will probably have a far greater effect than the peace. It came as a pleasant surprise from a Court that has produced little in the way of remarkable rulings recently.

In their seven-to-two decision on *Roe vs. Texas*, the Court in effect stated that a woman, on the advice of her doctor, is free to have an abortion during the first three months of pregnancy. During the second three months the state can only regulate, and not prohibit, abortion.

The ruling affirmed a woman's right to privacy and control over her own body in accordance with

the "due process" clause of the Fourteenth Amendment.

The implications of the decision are far-reaching; in the next decade it will affect the growth of the U.S. population, the role of women in society, and the health of mothers and their children. The prognosis is encouraging.

Another positive sidelight to the decision, especially in view of President Nixon's outspoken opposition to abortion reform, was the behavior of the Nixon appointees. Of the four, only Justice William Rehnquist voted negatively. In a period of increasing Presidential power, their independence is welcome.

The agonizing decision to have an abortion and the burden of knowledge that goes with it call for a great deal of soul-searching. What the Supreme Court has done is to put the decision where it belongs — in the hands of the individual.

2018

## Journalism Program Would Revitalize Academics

Editorial Board  
March 2, 2018

President Carmen Ambar is future-oriented. She thinks, as she says, in a "doubly futurist" way, in that Oberlin needs to reconfigure its coursework and infrastructure to not only serve children being born today who will be applying for college 18 years down the road, but also to equip them with tools that will allow them to thrive for the decades to come after they graduate from Oberlin. High school students today are questioning the value of a liberal arts education, and we've seen the consequences of that doubt in this year's drop in admissions and retention. In short, we need to redefine the liberal arts education to keep it viable for students' futures today and in the generations to come.

Although Oberlin certainly provides students with unique world perspectives, it also needs to give students the ability to convey them to the world. How can one person change the world if they don't have the tools to keep up with the way the world has already changed?

In a pre-internet era, having a liberal arts degree from Oberlin certainly gave journalist alumni the multidisciplinary knowledge to navigate the equally diverse topics that reporters cover.

However, several alumni from the Review — many of whom began their careers in journalism before and into the digital news age and have seen changes to what makes journalists employable — have stayed in touch, assuring us that knowing how to write a standard story isn't enough anymore. Journalists of all kinds need to know how to analyze statistics, code interactive news stories, produce audio and visual media, and how to double in different positions. They need to be swiss army knives of sorts, able to adapt to the rapidly changing technological and increasingly multimedia way news is produced and consumed.

If Oberlin students don't graduate equipped with the tools they need to succeed in journalism — especially given the increasing price tag of an Oberlin education — of course prospective students interested in journalism would look elsewhere for college.

While Oberlin does have some outlets to help students learn about and practice journalism — whether through the Rhetoric and Composition department's occasional journalism courses or by taking a shot at working for a campus publication — students are largely left to fend for themselves if they want to be journalists. Editors at the Review have personally experienced and seen their writers experience simultaneous interest and trepidation in wanting to enter journalism, and many let fear or doubt in their own ability get the better of them. Furthermore, working as a non-staff member of the Review or for other campus publications is financially inaccessible, since reporting and writing articles takes considerable time with no monetary compensation. The current resources for journalistic growth at Oberlin are therefore limited, and creating a journalism pathway — whether within the Rhetoric and Composition program or separate from it — would be a great stepping stone for students to understand and participate as reporters while also gaining academic credit.

A journalism concentration would include basic reporting classes, much like how the Rhetoric and Composition department offers Journalism Basics and Literary Journalism. It could also allow students to credit existing courses in existing departments towards their concentration if those courses supplement the foundational skills of writing and editing. For example, students could learn fundamentals of audio with courses in TIMARA, coding in Computer Science, and

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1968

## What We Have Here Is A Failure To Communicate

Bob Watts  
April 9, 1968

*Sophomore Bob Watts is a member of Oberlin College Alliance for Black Culture and a member of Student Senate. — Ed.*

What do you mean when you say AFRO-AMERICAN HOUSE black racism?

First of all, we are talking about a culture center that would be:

1. a place where art exhibits can be displayed on a more permanent basis.
2. a place where a library of black books can be kept and used on the premises, and don't forget discussed.
3. a place where black speakers can give forums and be guests of honor at dinners.
4. a place for recreation such as dances for black students on campus. As it is most of our dances are held off campus in town — which might serve to intimidate whites who could profit from the experience.
5. a place where blacks and whites could live in the same environment at a ratio of about 50-50.
6. a place where activities would be planned and problems discussed. Presently, the College does not offer a good atmosphere for discussions between blacks and whites.

Afro-American House would fill this void.

7. a place which stimulates to a much higher degree the element of the black student, and, consequently, provides a more comfortable atmosphere for him.
8. a place where the four classes could be found. Thus, a place for freshmen.
9. a place which would be supervised by a black house-mother. When is the last time you saw a black house-mother at Oberlin?
10. a place that could also be a co-op because of Saga's designs to save money. It appears that they don't plan to be in the dorm we have chosen for next year.

There is no place on campus presently which meets any of these potentialities. This is a place which would be of great interest to white as well as black students on campus because the question of the role of the black man can no longer be ignored, unless, of course, one is deaf, dumb, and blind. Therefore it is important to every member of this community that this house, this cultural center, be materialized as soon as possible. This does not mean the year after next. It means next September.

How can this goal materialize? Where can it be set up? Baldwin Cottage seems to be the only

dorm with an undecided fate. But you say, "Baldwin Cottage is for the senior women!" I hope that students can understand that senior women also have to face the real world when they graduate. They, just like everyone else on this campus, can profit from living in Afro-American House. The question of the existing communication between the races is a difficult one. How are we going to answer it? Surely not by saying that senior women have a better choice in residence. The problem is so much greater than that of senior women's housing, that if that is the reason Afro-American House must wait, then it is obvious that there will be no answer to the race question. If the Oberlin College faculty, administration and student body cannot see beyond petty problems on campus and look at something far more important than senior women's housing, then I am really sorry for what the white man has done to himself.

I really don't know how to urge everyone to support this project. Since the College is admitting more and more black students, it must start making Oberlin College relevant to their values too. Afro-American House will not solve the race problem, but I'll be damned if it will make it any worse. Your support is needed. We cannot do it alone.

1967

## Jack Concludes Tour With Personal Views On War

Alex Jack  
May 26, 1967

*Copyright 1967 Oberlin Southeast Asia Program*

*This is the last of Mr. Jack's articles from South Vietnam. It represents his personal views on the war. — Ed*

SAIGON — Penny and Do are two little girls, both 12 years old. Penny lives in an affluent Southern California community and Do in a poor province in the Mekong Delta. One child has never known war and the other has never known peace.

Early last April, a letter-writing campaign to support American servicemen in Vietnam was organized in Penny's home town. Like her classmates, Penny could not understand what it was all about, but she wrote as best she could. "Dear Friend," she began, "I have long brown hair, brown eyes, and I'm 4' 8." I have a brother that is ten and a sister six. My brother likes model hot rods and surfing and my sister likes dolls like most girls her age. We're fighting a big enough war — school. It probably doesn't seem much of a war to you though ... It's raining like anything, and it seems like it won't stop. ... Yours truly, Penny."

One day last month, Do was helping in the ricefields. Like

other children in her village, she never had the opportunity to go to school. Suddenly, a squadron of bombers appeared overhead. Today, Do lies in a Saigon hospital, horribly burned by white phosphorus, wondering whether her family survived. And if so, what about tomorrow?

One girl happened to be born in a nation of plenty, and the other in a country destined to suffer. The story of Penny and Do calls into question the meaning of God, history, justice and existence. And more than anything else, this is what Vietnam is all about.

Vietnam is "showing aggression does not pay," and the annihilation of a whole village by F-100 bombers in response to reported Vietcong in the vicinity.

Vietnam is "one nation," and the shooting of a Montagnard who resists the use of his tribal forests as a Northern infiltration route.

Vietnam is "the military junta in Saigon," and a civil servant with a fixed income who turns to blackmarket activities to support his family in an inflationary city.

Vietnam is "pacifying the countryside," and a farmer whose rice-field has been bulldozed and who subsists in a refugee camp on a handful of Texas rice each day.

Vietnam is "a war of libera-

tion," and the murder of a Buddhist teacher in Hue for opposing NLF taxes.

Vietnam is "the Geneva Accords," and the torturing to death of a guerilla unit by Korean captors.

Vietnam is "defending freedom," and life imprisonment by Premier Ky of a student leader, a religious venerable or a labor organizer for advocating peace.

Vietnam is "failure to carry out land reform in the South," and a Northern refugee whose parents were liquidated in Hanoi twenty years ago.

Vietnam is "the invasion of the South by the North," and a regrouped Viet Minh determined to liberate their country from the foreign financiers and successors of the French.

Vietnam is "an imperialist war," and an American soldier of East European origin seeking to avenge the death of his family under Stalin by fighting Communism.

Vietnam is "a class of war profiteers," and a young girl forced to support her siblings by prostitution.

Vietnam is a country of uprooted, ignorant, sincere, and innocent persons such as these, multiplied thousands of times over.

(See JACK, page 7)