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Explaining the anti-pageant petition

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Letters to the editor



Explaining the anti-pageant petition

To the editor:

I would respectfully like to respond to Ms. Jane K. Bailey and her remarks on the petition being circulated concerning the Miss U.M.O. Pageant.

I am sure that all of the women who attended the first organizational meeting will agree that the most important result of that meeting was not the formulation of the petition. In my opinion the *Campus* over emphasized this activity. The important fact was that eighty active, interested women came together to discuss long range goals and supportive action. The important results were the discussion of the possibility of a Woman's Yellow Pages, legal

aid and counseling services, the establishment of consciousness raising groups, academic course planning and the discussion of the possibility of an on campus woman's center.

We are not in anyway attempting to halt the Miss U.M.O. Pageant. We fully recognize your right to participate in such activities but we also feel that those opposed have the right to express their opinion. I spoke at length to the fraternity organizer in order to be informed of the criteria and standards. We felt that this was reasonable as we did not want to seek out individual candidates and be accused of "harassing" them.

We realize that the Miss UMO pageant was organized as tastefully as possible, i.e. the bathing suit competition is being held in private. The UMO Pageant has adhered only to the minimum standards necessary to remain part of the Miss America network. For this much I suppose we should be eternally grateful.

The fact remains that from little Miss UMO's mighty Miss Americas grow. The competition for these pageants encourage both men and women to look at the female as an object with a certain "grace of form and figure," who can also sing and dance. The question is: Why should women be encouraged to use their bodies as objects in the pursuit of educational scholarship? Some women do not agree with this larger "concept" of such pageants. Some women want other people to think about why. Louise M. Velletri