

AN OPEN LETTER TO THE GRINNELL COMMUNITY FROM PARTICIPANTS IN THE
DEMONSTRATION AGAINST PLAYBOY MAGAZINE

On Wednesday afternoon we took off our clothes and sang "You've got to walk that lonesome valley" as a personal affirmation of the dignity of our beings and as a protest against the depiction of human bodies as objects to provide pleasure, devoid of their personal meaning. We felt that rhetoric would not answer the Playboy philosophy. Neither would a symbolic gesture be meaningful. We needed to test our own moral courage and convictions.

What moved each of us was the belief that the body is beautiful and the need to establish our own concerned selves in these bodies that are variously called "dirty," "suspect," "inappropriate," that are decorated with gadgets and creams for purposes of "sex". Sex was not a question as we disrobed, neither was money or law. We felt that only by demonstrating our individual pride in our personal bodies could we both affirm life and show the Playboy version in its own artificial light. Those who were present at the Gates Hall demonstration know that we succeeded in doing that: in attesting to the beauty and dignity of the whole person in an honest individual act of communication. We acknowledge that some people were offended by our nakedness. We are proud that others understood its meaning and were moved. We continue to feel that our action was meaningful.

Right now the attorney general is conducting an investigation to determine whether or not civil charges can be pressed against us. Meanwhile, within the college community, nothing has been done to our knowledge to evaluate or "try" our case before the entire community. The administration acting unilaterally and in a capacity which it regards as strictly informational, notified our parents concerning the demonstration and their interpretation of its consequences. We feel that both the message and consequences of our action are the just concern of the whole community. We invite concerned students and faculty to discuss our action with us Wednesday at 4 p.m. in South Lounge.