

Threshold Conference Report

The Threshold Conference was held at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill during the October 26-28th weekend. Throughout the weekend, Lisa Stein and I listened to the best environmental speakers in the world including Norman Meyers, Harvey Wasserman, Ed Furia, Dennis Hayes, John O'Connor, Jeremy Rifkin, Terry Sanford, Randy Hayes, David Brower, Howard Ris, Claudine Sneider and Barry Commoner. As a result of listening to these speakers we got many ideas for future speakers to bring to the University of Colorado. In fact, we may be bringing a few of these speakers for Earth Day this year. In addition, we became very excited about a man who spoke about the Tongis National Forest, Lou Gold, and brought him out to speak on campus this semester. I believe that the students at the University of Colorado are already benefiting from having sent Lisa and I to the conference in this respect.

In addition to the speakers, we spent a lot of time in workshops. The most useful to us were those focused on Earth Day organizing. We worked in groups to come up with ideas for Earth Day. One of the major products of these sessions was a pledge program that we are using for the Earth Day here at CU. The hope is that we will be able to obtain pledges from student, faculty, and staff groups all over campus. We also spent time going through the audit, which is being done on this campus, so that all Earth Day coordinators understood it. Hopefully, this audit will be done at campuses all over the country and provide information about campuses in general.

Many important themes of Earth Day were spelled out to us at the conference. One of these is that Earth Day will not work if it is only occurring in the United States. For this reason, it will be occurring all over the globe. The other major theme was that Earth Day needs to be inclusive and that minorities should be included. Environmentalism will not work if it is a white elitist cause and therefore, Earth Day should work to broaden the environmental movement. As a result of this idea one of the major evening Earth Day events on campus will be a panel discussion about Toxic Waste in Minority Communities, focusing on the Toxic dumps found on Native American reservations and in poor urban areas around the country. In addition, we are working with ~~STATE~~ to make some programs for Earth Day and Native