



Political Activism at The University of Akron

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I first attended The University of Akron as a nineteen-year-old but left school to marry and have a family. About ten years later, I returned as a divorced woman seeking credentials that would give me the wherewithal to support them. One day on the campus bulletin board, I saw a notice about a student meeting to consider a protest because US forces had just bombed Cambodia. I attended this meeting, and it was voted to mount a demonstration in solidarity with other college campuses. I volunteered to operate the “field kitchen.” Ironically, I used fifty dollars of my family's food stamps to purchase a case of instant coffee, and the kitchen was open for business.

Speakers and organizers were congregated on the steps of Buchtel Hall. Someone was trying to hoist a homemade revolutionary flag, when a young man stepped from the crowd and asked to be allowed to take the Stars and Stripes down before the red and black cloth was raised. After a bit of shouting by the demonstrators and the committee, three voices spoke up and said, "Let him take the flag." He quietly lowered the flag, folded it under his arm and disappeared. I wish I knew who he was, and I hope he kept the flag.

An announcement was made that classes were cancelled and that the University was shut down. Wild cheers went up: "Yeah! No midterms! Hooray!" Wait a minute—No midterms?

As the night moved into dawn, small tents popped up on the Buchtel lawn. Some of the mob began to mellow and drift into the tents. Then the sex began. One of my comrades found me and—putting an arm around my shoulders—said, "Come on, Carol, it's time to go home." It was, and we did.