Says progress will be slow Prof sees 'faint hope' for women's rights

"What men have been doing and still are doing to women is even more oppressive than what whites have done to blacks," a distinguished visiting law and history professor told a group in the EMU Ballroom Tuesday night.

"There is now faint hope for change but like with all liberation struggles, it will involve both peaceful and violent measures," said David Daube, a Germanborn professor who holds degrees from the universities of Gottingen, Cambridge and Oxford.

Daube's visit Tuesday was sponsored by the University's religious studies department. "I grew up as a male chauvinist and didn't even know it," Daube told the group. He says his attitude changed when he became a visiting professor of political science at Berkeley in 1964.

"I decided then that the only group more oppressed than women is children," said the professor.

Daube said discrimination against women is an old story and he quoted Biblical passages to show the slow changes in attitudes that have taken place during the last several thousand years.

From a familiar parable from the

Gospel according to St. John, Daube illustrated the point. "A woman was caught in the act of committing adultery and traditional law said she should be stoned. But Christ intervened on

By TOM WOLFE Of the Emerald

behalf of the potential victim, saying "He that is without sin among you, let him cast the first stone."

The professor claimed the intervention was really an attack on discrimination against women. No where in the story was the woman's presumed partner discussed because of the traditional double standard, said Daube.

Daube said the more recent Biblical interpretations are generally more favorable to woman. "But there is absolutely nothing on this earth that cannot be proved by Scripture," he noted.

Daube said much present-day discrimination is based on the traditional Jewish belief that "it is a duty to marry and have children" and the Christian belief that "it is better to have no sex, but if you do it must be to have children."

This duty to procreate has generally been assumed to rest with the man, Daube said, and as a result, women have been expected to remain reticent especially during sexual relations.

Only now with the advent of birth control have women had freedom from utter suppression, Daube commented.

"In the past they were either pregnant or nursing a child and hence kept in dependence. Naturally this bred out the characteristics which would help that kind of woman." Daube said.

Without this change in circumstance, Daube said, it would be natural for women to remain submissive to their oppressors.



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