

Environmental Quality shows concern for natural resources

By Lori Farrow



Lori Farrow '86, heads Middlebury's Environmental Quality group. (Photo by Brad Schildt)

Environmental Quality is a term with a broad range of meanings. Everything from toxic waste disposal to wildlife conservation to recycling last week's *N.Y. Times* are issues of environmental quality. The EQ group on campus takes an interest in many of these issues. "Our main purpose is to be informed about the environmental issues that directly affect our lives and to do what we can to improve the quality of our own surroundings," says an EQ member.

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The immediate environment includes the College campus. EQ has traditionally run a newspaper recycling drive by placing boxes and

signs in all the dorms. "It's one of the most noticeable ways that we can say to the community, yes, we care about our future. Protecting the earth's natural resources is an action that shows we have foresight. It shows there is another side to college students; one that is concerned with having a clean, healthy, livable earth."

One of the events sponsored by EQ was to visit a solar heated home in Cornwall, Vermont. The home is owned by Peter Oxford, who runs the bicycle shop in town and welcomes students (by arrangement) to visit him and learn that solar power is a real option in a primarily fossil-fueled world. In addition to solar panels, Oxford operates a windmill and stores energy in photo-voltaic cells. He generates more energy than his moderately sized home uses, so he is able to sell electricity to the local power company.

While giving the tour of his house, Oxford also gives a bit of his philosophy on conser-

vation. He emphasizes that it isn't necessary to have a lot of money and a fancy operation (windmill, photovoltaics, etc.) to be energy efficient. People can conserve just by making the most of the natural resources they've got. For instance, a house being built in the woods might take advantage of a hardwood forest at its southern exposure and use the trees for shade in summer, while the lack of leaves lets in solar radiation during the winter.

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In the past, EQ field trips have included attending Environmental Conferences at Tufts University and visiting the New Alchemy Institute in Massachusetts. New

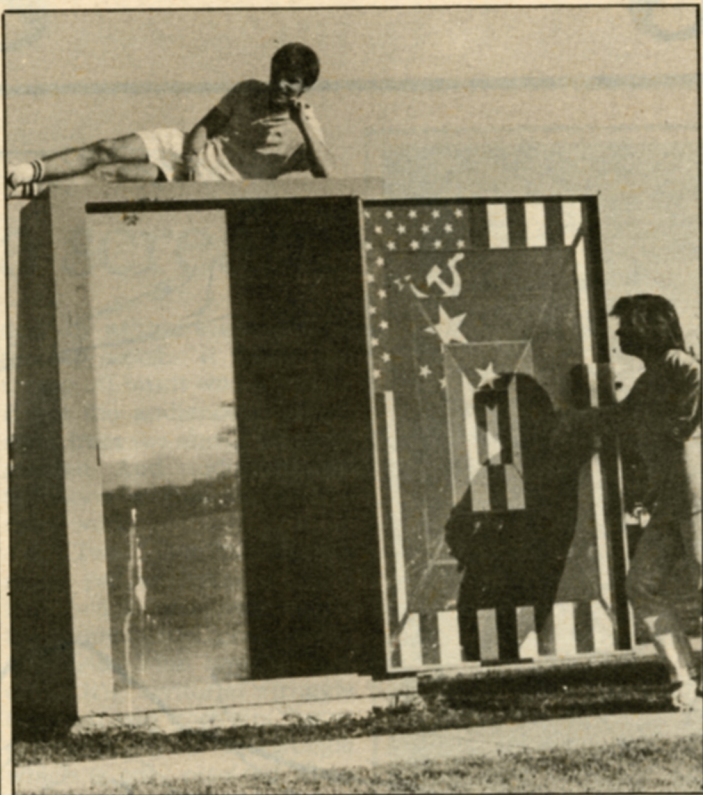
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Alchemy is a place where different lifestyles are being explored. It's run by some innovative scientists who are interested in making a world that is self-sustaining, energy efficient, and a healthy place to live. Their lifestyle includes the use of bioshelters, aquaculture, solar energy, and biological alternatives to chemical controls (such as pesticides).

EQ is sponsoring several films and lectures throughout the year. An environmental conference, which will include speakers covering a broad range of topics, is planned for the spring. People with requests for speakers in specific environmental issues should send ideas to EQ, Box 33D, or come to the Thursday night dinner meetings at 6 p.m. in the Hamlin seminar room.



Vito Acconci will be coming to Middlebury mine where he might rebuild this sculpture,

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