

Feminists win settlement over arrest during protest

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Three women involved in the "Myth California" pageant last year have reached a settlement with the San Diego Police Department stemming from their arrests.

The three — including Santa Cruz feminist-activist Ann Simonton — were arrested and held in jail overnight on charges of littering outside the hall where the Miss California pageant was being held.

Pageant organizers had moved the event to San Diego from Santa Cruz two years ago, partly because of a need for a better auditorium, and partly because of the problems caused by the vociferous protestors.

The protest followed the pageant to San Diego, however, with Simonton leading the charge.

The arrests in 1986 came after Simonton dropped a rose, Diane Germain, of San Diego, threw a handful of cornflakes on the ground, and Dee Hackman, of Santa Barbara, put out a cigarette on the street, Simonton said. The criminal charges were dropped, and the three filed suit in June of this year against the Police Department alleging police harassment and violation of their First Amendment rights.

The women and the city of San Diego reached a settlement in that lawsuit last week. Although the agreement included a stipulation that neither side divulge the amount of the settlement, both sides gave enough information to indicate the three women will get a total of between \$5,000 and \$10,000.

Simonton said the settlement was between \$5,000 and \$20,000,



ANN SIMONTON
Settlement over arrest

and said that she felt the award was substantial.

San Diego Chief Deputy City Attorney Gene Gordon said the settlement was less than \$10,000, and called it "relatively insignificant." The city would have had some difficulty defending the case, Gordon said, and he conceded that the women had been arrested for relatively "trivial purposes."

Simonton said she was happy with the settlement.

"I feel really hopeful for what this could mean for people doing civil disobedience," she said.

Simonton and her colleagues again protested at the Miss California Pageant this year, but this time there were no arrests.