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What happens if this man leaves the picture . . .

Women like this wife and mother tell their personal stories on . . .

- alimony
- child support
- credit
- inheritance
- rape
- pensions
- right to privacy
- abortion
- the draft



Ann and John Glennon and their three sons, from left, Johnny 12, Eddy 9, and Bobby 7.
photo by Helen Anrod Jones

If this man leaves the picture . . .

. . . you can be sure this woman and her children will learn what it means to live without equality under the law.

Equality—a matter which involves every woman, be she homemaker, mother, divorcee, career woman, widow—has become a subject charged with, and distorted by, emotion.

A campaign is being waged to mislead people about the effect of the proposed Equal Rights Amendment which would guarantee every woman equality under the law.

In an effort to set the record straight and to clarify areas of controversy, the personal stories of real people, in their own words, are presented here. They are women who have first hand experience with what can happen if your husband dies, or your marriage breaks up—the problems of supporting your children, getting a job outside

the home, obtaining credit, discovering that the pension stops when the husband dies or that inheritance taxes force you to sell the family property.

Statements from officials and experts in each field show how the personal tragedies of these women are shared by thousands of women across the country.

To lead off their stories, Ann Glennon, the woman in this picture, explains why she as a happily married homemaker and mother worries about women's rights.

Read their stories, then decide for yourself whether we need in the Constitution a law which guarantees that "equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged . . . on account of sex."

A Homemaker Worries About Women's Rights

Ann Glennon is an unusually neat woman. Her Alexandria, Va. living room must be the cleanest on the block; her lipstick is a perfect match for the red tunic top she's wearing, her salt and pepper hair is short and casual.

Her daily routines are orderly too. Trim at



"My primary job is at home . . . I wouldn't want an ERA if it were going to change that."

43 years old, Ann teaches social studies in the morning, a mile down the road at Queen of Apostles, the school her three sons attend. By 2 p.m., she's home, cleaned the house, made brownies, planned dinner, and retrieved the newly-repaired car from the service station. In what looks like one smooth movement, she goes to the refrigerator to pour a soda, puts another bottle in to cool, refills the ice tray, wipes the tabletop, and pulls the brownies out of the oven.

"I'm just lucky," she says, looking a little embarrassed to be praised for good housekeeping. "My husband and I are both naturally neat people."

There isn't much that can throw her off stride. Even having her eldest son in one of her classes isn't much of a trauma.

"He calls me Mrs. Glennon in class. It can be awkward if he acts up," she says. She puts her hands on her hips, and her voice takes on a mock horror: "I just say, 'Johnny Glennon, I don't know what kind of manners your mother must teach you at home,'" and Ann laughs.

She moves into the living room and sits down near the window where she can watch for the boys coming home from school.

"I got married in 1964, and Johnny made his

appearance nine months and two weeks later. I loved being pregnant," she says laughing. "That's creativity."

From then until the littlest one started first grade two years ago, Ann stayed home with the children.

"I grew up expecting that I'd get married and have babies, and my husband would take care of me for the rest of my life," she said.

She looks down at her hand for a second, reflectively, staring through her engagement ring and her wedding ring. There's another piece of jewelry around her neck, something the kids gave her for Mother's Day, along with a poem:

*M is for mealmaking, which she does very well,
O is for oven where she stands and waits for the bell,
T is for trash which she takes out a lot . . .*



"I grew up expecting that I'd get married and have babies, and my husband would take care of me for the rest of my life."

The gift was a thin gold chain, almost hidden inside the high-necked tunic top. Dangling from it is a golden charm in the shape of the biological sign for woman, a political symbol of solidarity in the women's movement.

It glimmers as she bends forward, and for a minute it seems out of place—three little boys giving their mother a poem spelling out the traditional virtues of a homemaker, and then choosing this necklace, a symbol of women's equality, to go with it.



"Women like me . . . are still only one man away from having to go out and make a place for themselves in the world."

But it makes sense to Ann Glennon. She's a happily married homemaker and a passionate convert to the fight for the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA). It pleases her that the kids recognize her devotion to women's equality, glimmering below the daily load of her housework.

"Women like me, who have a nice home and a husband who loves them, are still only one man away from having to go out and make a place for themselves in the world. We need some recognition of our place in the world as women—that we have equal status with men.

"When I taught before I was married, the men automatically made \$300 more than the women. I just accepted it. Women of my generation didn't think about equal rights or equal pay. It didn't worry me. I thought alimony was pretty automatic if you got a divorce, and well, I just didn't spend much time thinking about what would happen if John died.

"Now I've seen a lot of women who started out like me, with a husband and a family and everything they wanted. And I've seen what happens when their husbands run off with someone else. I've learned that few women get alimony, and even those who are awarded money in court have a hard time collecting. The women don't have any

Ann Glennon's Story

credit, because it was all in their husband's name. They don't know how to get a high-paying job. They don't know what to do with their lives.

"Even now that I'm working half a day, my salary wouldn't begin to support the family. My primary job is at home. That's our life style and I like it like that. I wouldn't want an Equal Rights Amendment if it were going to change that."

For homemakers like Ann Glennon, the fight to get ERA into the Constitution is an important one. Even for a housewife who is happy with her situation, homemaking is a fragile existence, a dependent one without protection.

"A lot of women I know don't want to think about it," Ann says. "The lady across the street always says, 'Oh, Ann, let's leave the politics to the men.' She doesn't even vote."

"Some women are confused. They think the ERA means they'll have to go out and provide 50 percent of the support for their family. That's ridiculous. We have a state equal rights law here in Virginia, and it hasn't changed my family life at all. ERA means law, not private life."

"The federal ERA would cover everybody so if John died and I had to support us all, I wouldn't feel like I had to stay in Virginia where there's a state ERA to be guaranteed of getting equal rights such as equal pay. Legal rights shouldn't be a geographical thing."

Ann Glennon worries that so many of the women she knows still picture ERA supporters as radical types.

"When I first heard about the ERA, I had my doubts too. I felt a little threatened by the whole thing, and I didn't know why we needed it."

"I still get upset when someone says, 'Oh, you're a women's libber,' when they learn I support the ERA. I know they connect supporting the ERA with someone who doesn't know how to dress, who doesn't care about children and husband and home. They think it means down with men, down with housework."

"But what makes me maddest is when I run

into Phyllis Schlafly's campaign against the ERA. She says, 'You have everything you want, housewives, and they're trying to take away your privileges.' She says, 'Just think, if ERA passes you'll have to go out to work.'

"She knows that's not true. She's playing to women's fears, and it makes me furious. I think she's against the ERA because she lost when she ran for president of the National Federation of Republican Women, and lost both times she ran for the U.S. Congress, so she has turned the ERA into an emotional issue to make herself known so that she can build a new political base."

"And while she says we should all be homemakers because that's the crowning glory of womanhood, she's been out there giving speeches, running for Congress and going to law school."

Ann Glennon thinks those against the ERA are trying to lull women into a false sense of security by pretending that the existing laws protect



"Some women . . . think the ERA means they'll have to go out and provide 50 per cent of the support for their family. That's ridiculous."

women from discrimination, that homemakers are safe as things are now.

"The anti-ERA line sounds good until you research it. Then you see it's just not true."

The first neighborhood children are trickling home from school and Ann Glennon looks out the window to see if her three are on their way.

"When I was single I had a checking account

and credit in my name—Ann Sullivan. When I got married, it was changed to Mrs. John P. Glennon. If John divorced me and married someone else, she'd be Mrs. John P. Glennon, with all the credit . . . and I'd be stuck. This summer I made sure that the credit records were in my name, too.

"And there's still discrimination in social security laws, and health plans. There are old



"The anti-ERA line sounds good until you research it. Then you see it's just not true."

state laws that still treat women like second-class citizens, and inheritance rules that favor men. If we have to fight to get each thing changed separately, it will take more years than any woman has. And what a state legislature can give, a state legislature can take away. The ERA would take care of everything across the board. It would be part of the Constitution of our country.

"It's been more than 200 years. I think it's about time women had all the rights of citizenship that men do. It would be a symbol that the women who stay home and raise the children are just as important to society as the men who go out and earn the money."

Ann Glennon sees Johnny coming across the lawn. She gets up to meet him at the door, sends him into the kitchen for a brownie, and then upstairs to change his clothes.

"I'll just feel safer when we get it in writing, as part of the Constitution, that women and men are equal before the law."

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

not true . . .

... because the courts will not intervene in an ongoing marriage, they will not enforce a wife's right to financial support in that marriage. So, in effect, women have no right to support while living with their husbands under the present system as this case in Nebraska shows . . .

At the age of 66, Lydia McGuire faced her husband in court. She decided she'd suffered enough during their 34-year marriage, so she asked a Nebraska court to force Charles to support her adequately.

A "dutiful and obedient" wife, Lydia had for decades worked in the fields of their 298-acre Wayne County, Nebraska farm, cooked, cleaned, washed, and cared for their home. She kept 300 chickens, selling poultry and eggs to buy clothing and groceries.

Her husband was "the boss of the house and his word was law," she testified. He allowed her no charge accounts and refused to tell her anything about their finances or business.

For four years, Charles had refused to give her money for clothes, furniture or household necessities.

The house had no toilet or bathing facilities, and no sink. Lydia pumped water from a well. The furnace had not worked adequately for five years. Her husband would not replace their 24-year-old Ford, which had a broken heater—a severe problem during the freezing Nebraska winters.

While Charles protested that he considered his wife's requests unreasonable, he owned land valued at more than \$80,000, had savings of nearly \$13,000, bonds totalling more than \$107,000 and an annual income of \$9,000.

The Supreme Court of the state of Nebraska ruled that since husband and wife were not separated or living apart from each other, the wife could not sue her husband for maintenance. The justices stated:

"The living standards of a family are a matter of concern to the household and not for the courts to determine.

"As long as the home is maintained and the parties are living as husband and wife, public policy requires [the assumption] that the husband is legally supporting his wife and that the purpose of the marriage relation is being carried out."

Supreme Court of Nebraska
[59 N.W. 2nd 336]

Some people are saying . . .

that the Equal Rights Amendment will invalidate all state laws that now require a husband to support his wife and family and will impose on wives an equal obligation for financial support of the family . . .

TRUE NOT TRUE

what the law says about the present system . . .

J.M. Krauskopf, Professor of Law, University of Missouri, and R.C. Thomas, Member of the Missouri Bar, state in the Ohio State Law Journal:

"A married woman living with her husband has no right [to support], unless her husband chooses to support her in that role. If he does not, the only support which the court might force him to pay is support at a subsistence or welfare level under criminal support statutes. And even this, the wife alone cannot compel."

It is clear that the Equal Rights Amendment would not require both a husband and wife to contribute identical amounts of money to a marriage . . . where one spouse is the primary wage earner and the other runs the home, the wage earner would have a duty to support the spouse who stays at home in compensation for the performance of her or his duties.

Association of the Bar,
City of New York

PENSIONS

not true . . .

... and not only is this not true, but unfortunately a woman has no automatic or legal "right" to share her husband's pension. With private pension plans, the husband must sign a special agreement in order for his wife to receive his pension after his death. Many men neglect to do this. Women who count on receiving that pension in their later years discover too late that they have nothing. And in the cases of Betty Spear of Hampton, Va., and Blanche Westfall of Moore, Okla., being divorced late in life from their husbands left them with no financial protection . . .

"I was married 37 years in what I thought was a permanent relationship. Then, at 56, I was the victim of an unwanted divorce. That's when I found out that what's 'his and hers' is really 'his,'" says Betty Spear.

"We had a 30-year military career. I say 'we' because I worked hard for his career and our pension. During the last 14 years, we had 12 different homes. That's a lot of moving, a lot of being alone when he was overseas, raising the children, neglecting my own interests to work for our family, helping him to further himself.

"However, during the divorce procedures, I found that no part of the retirement pension was mine, no military benefits—medical care, commissary privileges, post exchange, entertainment, nothing—and no Social Security.

"My insurance company, where we'd had car insurance for 25 years, suddenly said I was ineligible.

"I was not a career-minded person. I was a housewife and a mother and my life was my family. I didn't feel I'd ever have to work. I never put anything in my own name.

"If he were to die tomorrow, I would be out alimony as well. If he remarries, she'll get the benefits and pension I worked 30 years for. Now, I have a library job, but the pay is low.

"I know so many women who say, 'No, that couldn't happen to me.' Let me tell you, it can happen.

"It's like you blow up a big balloon. You start when you first get married, and the balloon gets bigger and bigger, and you think, now, I have everything—my husband, my children, my home—then someone puts a pin in it."

Some people are saying . . .

under the Equal Rights Amendment women will lose their right to their husband's pension benefits.

TRUE NOT TRUE



Betty Spear—after sharing a 30-year military career with her husband, she finds herself alone and without benefits.

... and Blanche Westfall's story

"I was married 23 years to a man who had a very good job in civil service. A year before he retired, he divorced me. At the time, two of our four children were still at home," says Blanche Westfall.

"He was supposed to pay \$150 a month for child support, but I only collected it a few times before he disappeared. I eventually found him. He had remarried. And a week after I located him he died of a heart attack. His new wife got his insurance and that was the end of any alimony or child support for us.

"My husband refused to let me work all the years we were married. He wanted me to stay home and keep house, which I did. I sewed for the three girls and they always looked nice.

"But now I'm 55 and nobody wants to hire me. I have no pension, no Social Security, no Medicare or Medicare, nothing to show for my 23 years. I'm living with my 86-year old mother on the money she has left.

"If I'd known what I know now, I wouldn't have signed those divorce papers. I thought that after being married more than 20 years, I would have gotten some kind of benefit.

"That's my story, and I don't like it."

What a Member of Congress says . . .



U.S. Rep. Patricia Schroeder: Five million women over 65 live alone—half below the poverty line.

"I have received hundreds of letters from homemakers discarded or widowed after 20, 30 and 40 years of marriage, who think their stories are unique. They are shocked to realize that they have little recourse after a divorce and no security. They are dropped from pension and health insurance plans and find it difficult to get a job.

"According to census figures, there are over five million women over the age of 65 who live alone. Half that number are living their last years below the official poverty line.

"What happened to them is not inevitable, but the result of discrimination throughout their lives which strikes its cruelest blow at the end. It is my view that our country's retirement system contributes to the economic impact of sex discrimination and punishes women for their traditional role in society.

"It is the wives and mothers who do not have paying jobs who need the Equal Rights Amendment more than any other class of women, although ERA opponents have tried to convince them otherwise.

"The ERA will set the climate for recognizing a homemaker's non-monetary contribution to the marriage and the family, equal to the monetary contribution of the wage-earning partner."

Rep. Patricia Schroeder (D-Colo.)
U.S. House of Representatives

PRIVACY

not true . . .

Right of privacy first recognized by the U.S. Supreme Court in *Griswold v. Connecticut* (1965) would make this type of integration illegal. Thus, undesignated bathrooms would not materialize as a result of ERA passage. States will also maintain the right to require segregation of sexes in sleeping quarters in such places as colleges and military barracks.

Jesse Scharff, Vice Principal of Wilde Lake Middle School, Ellicott City, Md., a state with an equal rights law says . . .

"Maryland has a state Equal Rights Amendment and our boys and girls don't share restrooms and they don't share locker rooms."



School official Jesse Scharff says unisex bathrooms in schools are a myth.



Attorney Ellen Luff says ERA has nothing to do with bathrooms.

Some people are saying . . .

that the Equal Rights Amendment will "desex" everything, eliminating separate restrooms and sleeping quarters for men and women in public schools, restaurants, hospitals, and other public facilities . . .

TRUE NOT TRUE

What the Maryland Governor's counsel says . . .

"We have a state equal rights law in Maryland, and the bathrooms are the same now as they always were. Men use men's rooms and women use women's rooms. Under the law it is perfectly permissible to discriminate between the sexes when it comes to physical functions or undressing. Privacy is covered by the Constitution. I've researched it, and I can say absolutely that the ERA does not mean pushing men and women into the same bathrooms or dorm rooms or anything."

Ellen Luff, Counsel to the Governor's Commission to Study Implementation of the ERA (Maryland)

ALIMONY/ CHILD SUPPORT

Some people are saying . . . that under the Equal Rights Amendment, divorced women will lose the rights they now have to alimony and child support.

TRUE NOT TRUE

not true . . .

. . . and not only is this not true but under the existing system, it is a myth that alimony and child support are automatically awarded to women and, if awarded, that the women receive payment.

The story of Martha Messenger of Danville, Ill. clearly shows what frequently happens . . .

"I had never even considered a divorce. It was a complete surprise. We had been married for 40 years.

"I was married at 18, right out of high school. I never worked outside our home. I spent all my time taking care of my husband and raising our two children.

"When I was 58 years old, after our divorce, I was dependent upon alimony for support. But it took a year of haggling between the lawyers before they could reach a settlement. Now I only get \$100 a month, which isn't enough to live on. I had to find a job in order to live.

"I could not afford to live in our home anymore. We had to sell it. I went to live with one of our daughters.

"I was in shock the whole time. I was sick for two years because of the divorce. I dropped down to 86 pounds. My daughter had to take care of me. Sometimes I wonder how I ever lived through it.



Martha Messenger—a woman who once believed she had nothing to worry about.

"Just by luck I fell into a job. I've been working for six years now, as a housekeeper in a home for retired ladies.

"I don't see many of my old friends much anymore. I don't have much time because I'm working. When I get through with work, I'm too tired to socialize. I don't get many days off and I work every other Sunday.

"I'm 66 now. I can't work forever but I have to keep working. My pension won't be much. My ex-husband lives with his new wife on his pension out in Arizona.

"I just wonder, when do I get to retire?"

What two family attorneys say about the present system . . .

According to a five-year study of support payments by the Urban Institute in Washington, D.C., most women receive no financial support from their ex-husbands, and those that do find the payments inadequate. Of the 45 percent of families in a sample group who collected support, more than three-fourths received less than \$3,000 per year, putting them below the poverty line.

" . . . Child support and wife support typically [are] not paid on time, if at all . . . The law and court orders are most flagrantly disregarded.

" . . . One [court] report shows that there were [back payments due] in 89 percent of the cases, and that no payments were ever made in 47 percent of the cases, even though the payments all were ordered to be made directly to the court. In other states, it has been estimated that there are [back payments] in at least 50 percent of such cases.

" . . . Defiance of support and alimony orders is much more common than is generally appreciated."

—Law and the Family,
by Henry H. Foster, Jr. and Doris Jonas Freed
Vol. 2, p. xv

EMPLOYMENT

Some people are saying . . . that women are already adequately protected against discrimination in employment by the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Equal Employment Opportunities Act of 1972, which provide all the legal machinery needed to deal with discrimination . . .

TRUE NOT TRUE

not true . . .

. . . says Victoria Zevgolis of Hopewell, Va., who found she was barred from the job she wanted because she is a woman.

"Gone are the days when women worked for 'pin money.' I work because I have to, to keep my head above water.

"I have a clerical job during the day and I needed a night job to make ends meet. There aren't many places I could work at night, so I applied at a well-known national hamburger chain. I was told it was the employer's policy not to hire women at night because of 'security problems.'

"It didn't make sense, because this restaurant is a family place in a low crime neighborhood, where there has never been a problem. It would just mean working to 10 p.m. week nights and 1 a.m. on weekends. And it wasn't just me. Another woman applied because her husband was out of a job, and a woman with children who could only get a sitter at night—we were all turned down.

"That was in April, 1976. I went to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission office which is supposed to investigate employment discrimination. I filed a complaint, then waited six months. When I called back, they hadn't even assigned an investigator.



Victoria Zevgolis—she found 33,000 cases ahead of her at the EEOC.

"I decided to sue, using an American Civil Liberties Union lawyer I heard about. We don't have a trial date yet. That's the trouble with trying to enforce the laws now. You're talking about years to resolve them.

"It's shocking that a major corporation can get away with this."

What Equal Employment Opportunity Commission figures show . . .

At the end of 1976, about 33,000 sex discrimination cases were backlogged at the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) and were increasing at the rate of 6,000 cases per year.

According to the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare Office for Civil Rights, sex discrimination complaints filed in 1970 were still waiting for processing in that office six years later.

Adding to the confusion, there are 25 federal agencies involved in enforcement of equal employment laws. When the U.S. House Labor Committee's Subcommittee on Equal Opportunities studied the government's efforts, it concluded that they are "weak, uncoordinated and largely ineffective."

"It's a hell of a mess," added Subcommittee Chairman Augustus F. Hawkins (D-Calif.).

PROPERTY LAWS

Some people are saying . . . that the Equal Rights Amendment will deprive widows of tax, property, and homestead benefits . . .

TRUE NOT TRUE

not true . . .

. . . and not only not true but preferential treatment for widows in many states does not exist as the case of Mary Heath, a widow in Cody, Neb. illustrates.

"I worked along-side my husband, Floyd, for 33 years. Together, we'd built up a ranch of 3,400 acres and 120 cows.

"I'd done everything on the ranch, feeding the pigs, milking the cows, driving the tractor. Two years before he died, Floyd was all crippled up so I had to do everything, with the two boys who were still in school. Never did have any help at home either. What was done, I did, although I won't say I had time to be a very good housekeeper.

"Then Floyd died in 1974, and I found out I had to pay \$23,000 in inheritance tax for my own ranch. We were already in debt about \$40,000 and it's getting worse. I still don't know what's going to happen. If I had died instead of Floyd, he wouldn't have had to pay any tax.

"They told me because I didn't make any monetary contribution to the ranch, I have to pay this inheritance tax. I used to believe what belonged to the husband belonged to the wife, too. I had a few cattle myself and my dad built our house for us, but I never got any credit for that. And I didn't get any credit for my work on the ranch all those years. If I chose to work on the ranch, why should that be worth less than going to town and getting a job?

"And it's not just me. Three of my friends here in Cody had to sell their farms when their husbands died because they just didn't have the money to pay the tax."



Widow Mary Heath struggles to save her farm as state seeks \$23,000 in inheritance tax.

The past president of women lawyers says . . .

Marguerite Rawalt: "The homemaker . . . has no ownership."



"The laws of 42 states say that the one who earns a salary is the one who owns the property acquired in a marriage. The homemaker, having no earnings of her own, therefore, has no ownership in that property. If her husband dies without a will, she may be penniless.

"For example, where husband and wife own farm land, even jointly, estate tax laws penalize a widow. Since the law makes the husband sole owner, estate taxes at his death will be measured by the whole value and the widow receives only what is left after payment of taxes. She may have to sell all or part of the property to pay the tax.

"On the other hand, if the wife dies first, since no value is placed on her services, the husband does not have to pay any inheritance tax.

"In the eight states which have community property laws, husband and wife each own half of the property acquired during marriage, even though the wife may have no outside earnings. But four of these states still give the husband, and not the wife, the management rights, enabling him to create debts and sell the property without the knowledge or consent of his wife."

Marguerite Rawalt, past president
National Association of Women Lawyers

CREDIT

Some people are saying . . . that the Equal Rights Amendment is unnecessary because existing federal laws adequately protect women from discrimination in the areas of credit, insurance, pay, and social security . . .

TRUE NOT TRUE

not true . . .

. . . discrimination in these areas continues, as in the case of Barbara Montgomery from Dallas, Texas . . .

"I had opened an account at a local department store while I was married and for 15 years was the only one who used it—to buy clothes for the family and necessities for our household. I must have spent thousands of dollars there over all those years.

"After my divorce last year, I wanted to put the account in my name. They told me that in order to do so I had to fill out a credit application. I found out that the new equal credit law in effect at that time didn't require me to do so, but the store insisted.

"Twice I filled out an application. The first time they told me they had lost it. I filled one out again. When I called them back about the second application, they told me they had never heard of me before.

"It was obvious they were deliberately losing my applications and not telling me why I could not get credit. I had been told that this store hassled women, but I never suspected they would give me any problems. After all, I had paid my bills there for 15 years. I am a history professor teaching full time at El Centro College in Dallas. I



Barbara Montgomery—the Equal Credit Opportunity Act didn't help her.

have two cars. I own a house. I make a sufficient salary and always pay my bills. I need credit in my own name.

"I did not get a credit card until my ex-husband called the store on my behalf. Even then, the credit card they sent read 'Mrs.' Barbara Montgomery.

"Someone asked me why I didn't complain directly to the head of the store. Why should I have to plead with him to open an account?"



Kathleen O'Reilly calls existing law merely 'symbolic.'

A Consumer Federation of America official says . . .

"Women should not be lulled into complacency by the passage of such legislation as the Equal Credit Opportunity Act. Woefully inadequate enforcement and inadequate consumer education have made ECOA more of a symbolic than a substantive advancement."

Kathleen O'Reilly
Legislative Director
Consumer Federation of America

ABORTION

Some people are saying . . . that the Equal Rights Amendment will wipe out state regulations and the first trimester restrictions on abortion now set by the 1973 U.S. Supreme Court decision . . . and will force doctors, nurses and personnel in public hospitals who oppose abortion to participate in something they feel is wrong . . .

TRUE NOT TRUE

not true . . .

Abortion is a highly emotional issue. Many people have been led to believe that the Equal Rights Amendment and abortion are related. The truth is that there is no connection between the two issues. Laws affecting abortions can apply only to some or all women, and to no men. Abortion laws fall completely outside the scope of equal rights laws, which have to do only with extending rights, benefits and responsibilities equally under the law to both sexes. Pointing up the lack of connection between the ERA and abortion laws is the fact that the Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion in the early weeks of pregnancy was handed down in 1973, when—as now—there was no national equal rights law in effect.

"To my knowledge no nurse in the state of Maryland has ever been forced to participate in a procedure to which she is morally or professionally opposed.

"And I have heard no statements indicating that the equal rights law in our state has caused any change in this practice."

Mary McCann-Spicer
District 5 President
Maryland Nurses Association



Nursing official Mary McCann-Spicer sees no connection between abortion and the ERA.

Nursing officials say . . .

"Nurses have the right to refuse to assist in the performance of abortion and/or sterilization procedures in keeping with their moral, ethical and/or religious beliefs, except in an emergency where a patient's life is clearly endangered . . . This refusal should not jeopardize the nurse's employment nor should they be subjected to harassment or embarrassment because of their refusal."

Statement on Abortion and Sterilization
Nurses Association, American College of
Obstetricians and Gynecologists

A Catholic official says . . .

" . . . Ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment would demonstrate that we are a nation truly committed to equality. Ratification would go far toward ensuring that sex, like other immutable and irrelevant characteristics, plays no part in determining individual worth or opportunity." Rev. Theodore M. Hesburgh, CSC
President, University of Notre Dame

RAPE

Some people are saying . . . that the Equal Rights Amendment will wipe out the laws which protect women against sex crimes such as rape and will allow adult males to commit serious bodily injury to females . . .

TRUE NOT TRUE

not true . . .

The Equal Rights Amendment can only strengthen protective laws. In the following case of Susan P., prosecution of her attacker was not hindered by a state ERA but, in fact, was strengthened by the state's new sex-neutral rape law.

On a snowy February afternoon two years ago, Susan P. balanced her groceries in one arm, a newspaper under her other arm, and fished for the key to the front door of her Boston apartment building.

Two men stood at the door. They mentioned a name and asked if Susan knew the person. She said no, and let herself into the building. Both men followed her.

As she turned in alarm, one man grabbed her throat and held a knife at her neck. They told her to take them to her apartment.

Once in the apartment, they said she wouldn't be hurt if she remained silent. They ransacked her belongings, taking jewelry and a stereo. As one man searched her bedroom, his companion forced Susan into a bathroom. While holding a knife to her throat, he forced her to commit a sex act.

After the men fled, Susan called the Boston police. Within four days, she was able to pick out the two assailants from police photos. They were arrested immediately. Both men were indicted by the Grand Jury for armed robbery. Susan's assailant was charged with rape under the state's new sex-neutral rape law, passed after Massachusetts



Anna Lazlo, who worked on the case of Susan P., refutes anti-ERA charges.

enacted a state Equal Rights Amendment.

The new law broadens the definition of rape to cover other sex acts perpetrated by force and extended the law to include homosexual assaults. It recognizes that both men and women, boys and girls need protection from those who would sexually violate them.

In August, 1975, both men went to trial and were convicted. Susan's assailant was sentenced to life at Walpole State Prison in Massachusetts.

"We successfully prosecuted this case and the ERA was not an issue," said Anna Lazlo, chief victim specialist with the Suffolk County (Mass.) District Attorney's Office.

What the District Attorney's office says . . .



Attorney Lloyd McDonald confirms the state ERA has actually helped convict rapists.

"Massachusetts' state Equal Rights Amendment has had no effect on the prosecution of rape in this state. In fact, our sex-neutral rape law now makes 'rapists' out of those who commit homosexual rape. It has not hindered enforcement of other sex laws, such as seduction and statutory rape."

Lloyd McDonald
Suffolk County (Mass.) District Attorney's Office

THE DRAFT

Some people are saying . . . that the Equal Rights Amendment will require women—even mothers—to register for the draft and to serve alongside men in combat and this would ruin the morale and the effectiveness of the military . . .

TRUE NOT TRUE

not true . . .

. . . the U.S. military has been attempting to determine through practical experience with both male and female members of the armed forces which jobs in the military women can effectively perform. Based on the results of these tests, the military will decide which assignments should be opened to women and which should continue to be restricted to males because of physiological, mental, combat effectiveness and military efficiency reasons.

Should the military establish that assigning women to certain duty would substantially impair the discipline or morale of the armed forces—lessening the ability of the country to defend itself—women could be excluded from those assignments despite the ERA. In the military, an individual's constitutional rights are balanced against the needs and responsibilities of the armed forces.

A U.S. Senate report says . . .

A Senate Judiciary Report (S. Rept. 92-689) on the Equal Rights Amendment states:

" . . . the ERA will not require that all women serve in the military any more than all men are now required to serve. Those women who are physically or mentally unqualified, or who are conscientious objectors, or who are exempt because of their responsibilities (e.g. certain public officials, or those with dependents) will not have to serve, just as men who are unqualified or exempt do not serve today. Thus the fear that mothers will be conscripted from their children into military service if the Equal Rights Amendment is ratified is totally and completely unfounded. Congress will retain ample power to create legitimate sex-neutral exemptions from compulsory service. For example, Congress might well decide to exempt all parents of children under 18 from the draft."



Maj. Gen. Jeanne N. Holm sees the military making its own decisions.

What Military officials say . . .

"Congress has always had the authority to draft women. Just because ERA is ratified does not mean that they will be drafted. The same is true of women in combat. If the Congress and the courts determine that this is not the proper role for women, they could so rule."

Lt. Col. Verna Kellogg, USAF
U.S. Department of Defense

"I would expect that [these] issues—combat and the draft—will be settled soon by the military itself . . ."

Maj. Gen. Jeanne Holm, (USAF Ret.)

If These Stories Make You Angry . . .

These personal accounts of what faces women today show that women continue to face serious discrimination in America. Millions of people feel that ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment, a legal extension to women of our American tradition of fair play and justice, will go a long way toward ending that discrimination.

Women still face a hodge-podge of archaic state laws. They limit where and when a woman can work, whether she can start a business, get a mortgage or control her property on the same basis as a man. There are limitations on how many women are admitted to colleges; insurance companies charge women higher premiums than men; and courts do not recognize the contributions of the homemaker.

Pay for female college graduates still equals that of male high school drop outs; women's rate of unemployment is 8.7 percent, compared to 5.1 percent for men; they hold only two percent of the top jobs in the country; 12 million children are dependent on women as breadwinners and 60 percent of those families live in poverty.

Individual struggles against discrimination waged in legislatures and courts for more than 50 years have not erased this unequal treatment. Not until 1971 did the U.S. Supreme Court first knock down a law which discriminated against women. But it did not invalidate earlier decisions which upheld sex discrimination. To do so, justices need a guiding principle from the political branch of

government.

Only a Constitutional amendment, with its massive legal, moral and symbolic impact, can provide the needed push to change persistent patterns of discrimination in America.

Without it, the personal pain of women described on these pages will continue.

Thirty-eight states must approve the Equal Rights Amendment to make it the 27th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. Thirty-five states have already done so. These 15 states have not: Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Nevada, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Utah and Virginia.

To help your state approve the ERA you can:

- contact your state legislators by letter, postcard, or telegram asking them to vote for ratification of the ERA. If you don't know the names of the state legislators who represent your district, you can find out from your city hall or local newspaper. Then write the legislators at the address listed here.
- write to the Governor of your state and President Carter to encourage them to become political leaders in the efforts to ratify the ERA.
- write a "letter to the editor" to your local newspaper, telling why you favor the ERA.
- call into your local radio talk show, asking listeners to support the ERA.
- pass this publication on to a friend.

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State Capitol, Little Rock, 72201
State Capitol, Tallahassee, 32304
State Capitol, Atlanta, 30334
State House, Springfield, 62706
State Capitol, Baton Rouge, 70804
New Capitol, Jackson, 39205
State Capitol, Jefferson City, 65101
State Capitol, Carson City, 89701
State Capitol, Raleigh, 27602
State Capitol, Oklahoma City, 73105
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