

N.O.W. NEWS

Bay Area Chapter
National Organization for Women



VOLUME III, Number 5, May 1975

STARTING OFF EQUAL?

WE WANT
TO BE
MOMMIES!



SEX ROLE DIFFERENTIATION IN THE SCHOOLS

Program meeting, May 1, 8:00 P.M., Uniting Church, El Camino & Reseda, Clear Lake City

PATTY AND CHRISTOPHER DEDE, both of whom hold recent Ed. D's from the University of Massachusetts, will present this month's program. Patty has specialized in teacher training, child development and learning theory, and Chris has specialized in science education. Both persons have strong sympathy for the women's movement and are presently engaged in the teaching profession.

-
- April 28 - Orientation, Rape Crisis Coalition, 8:00 P.M., Women's Center, 3602 Milam
- May 1 - Bay Area NOW Program Meeting, 8:00 P. M. See Front page for details.
- May 12 - Monthly Rap Session at Linda McCollum's, 16019 Buccaneer, Clear Lake City, 7:30 P.M. Come get to know your sisters. Call Linda at 488-0950.
- May 15 - Board and business meetings, beginning 7:30 P.M., Uniting Church, CLC.
- May 16,17,18- By-laws Convention in Austin to re-write Texas NOW By-Laws. Jonnelle Owen is our elected delegate.
- May 19 - Rape and Health Task Force Meeting, 8:00 P.M., 409 S. Shadowbend, Friendswood.
-

APRIL 14th, Major E R A Hearing Day in Austin

Seventeen members of Bay Area NOW were among many hundreds of ERA supporters who rallied in Austin for the 11-hour-long Hearings on HCR 57, to rescind Texas' ratification of ERA. The "Pink Ladies" were also out in full force, crowding the door to the House Visitors' gallery. Some lucky people got passes to sit on the House floor, but many of us were among the crowds who had to vacate the gallery every hour to give other spectators a chance. If nothing else, legislators appeared to be somewhat awed by the numbers of women who had turned out. Stop ERA's Phyllis Schlafly of Illinois, wearing blue, left her "pearls of misinformation" on the ERA, as did a number of other persons from out of State. Our side was notable for presenting only Texas witnesses, including our own Frances Hicks, who by the luck of the draw for individual witnesses, addressed the Committee late in the evening as the "proud president of Bay Area NOW, radical homemaker, radical mother of three daughters, and radical member of the Lutheran Church." She was rewarded with a spontaneous ovation for this wholesome reply to our opposition's earlier mutterings about "communist conspiracy." Well after midnight, HCR 57 was sent to a subcommittee chaired by Joe Wyatt, for further study. Wyatt opposes ERA; other members of the committee are Chris Miller (pro-ERA), Bob Close (anti-ERA), Wilhelmina Delco (pro-ERA), and Bill Sullivant (anti-ERA).

Present E R A Status in Texas

As of April 23rd, Wyatt's sub-committee of Hutchison's committee of April 14th had not met. At one point during the preceding week, Wyatt became so disturbed at female House members' voting against a Bill he sponsored that he was heard to say he planned to call a meeting of the subcommittee to get HCR 57 (to rescind) onto the House Floor immediately. Senate sponsors of HCR 57 have now been found, including our own Walter Mengden. That's Austin politics, folks!

After some long-distance calls, I have managed to get some additional evidence sent to this subcommittee, particularly documents showing the insurance industry's support of the Stop-ERA movement in several other States. Rep. Chris Miller has become interested in the appearance of a Tennessee insurance executive at our April 14th Hearings, as well as the fact that Rep. Bill Hilliard, who introduced HCR 57, is an insurance man in Ft. Worth. A woman insurance person is a Stop-ERA leader in Louisiana.

Please write the members of the subcommittee listed above, as well as your own representatives and senator, at Capitol Station, Austin 78711, or at their homes:

Andrew Baker, Rt. 1, Box 336, Galveston 77550	(Galveston County)
Bill Caraway, 16202 Buccaneer, Houston 77058	(Clear Lake City, Pasadena, etc.)
Ed Harris, 703 U.S. National Bank Bldg., Galveston 77550	(Galveston County)
Walter Mengden, 3730 Willowick, Houston 77019	(La Porte, Sgabrook, El Lago, etc.)
A. R. Schwartz, 10 South Shore Dr., Galveston 77550	(ClearLake City, Galveston Co., etc.)
Ed Watson, 802 Harvard, Deer Park 77536	(La Porte, Deer Park, etc.)

Texans for ERA reports that some pro-ERA mail is being destroyed by legislators' employees.

Frances

SUMMER CONSCIOUSNESS-RAISING

Around the first of June a beginners' C-R group will be organized at Uniting Church, to meet once a week for the summer. All women interested please contact Jonnelle Owen at 471-5208 or Frances Hicks at 482-7840. Consider this wise use of time, and contact friends who are budding feminists to join this C-R group. Shirley McFaul (488-2403) and Ann Smith (488-6213) will begin in July to lead a C-R group for 4 weeks. Participants will read and discuss books dealing with feminism's influence on the economic and political systems. C-R is a great way to understand your own feelings and draw nearer to other women who suffer from our social illness, lack of sisterhood.

RAPE AND HEALTH SUMMER TASK FORCE

Do you want something to fill your long, hot summer days? Why not help interview doctors, hospital personnel, and police departments for information on treatment of rape victims, and women patients generally, in the Clear Lake area? This will be a monumental task for our Chapter, but the result should be beneficial to many women who live between Houston and Galveston. If you want to lend your help to us, call Frances Hicks at 482-7840 and come to our strategy meeting, 7:30 P.M., May 19th, at 409 S. Shadowbend in Friendswood.

A VICTORY

We won! The National Senate voted on April 10, 1975, to table the Bartlett Amendment, which would have prevented women who are poor from seeking Medicaid-financed legal abortion services. The vote was 56 to 34! Texas Senators Tower and Bentsen both voted with us; we can feel free to thank them by mail.

HOUSTON AREA FEMINIST FEDERAL CREDIT UNION

As of April 8th, pledges to the Union had passed \$12,000 of our projected \$30,000. Linda McCollum asks that we now send further pledge forms to the HAFFCU Box at the Women's Center, 3602 Millam, 77002. Please do not send any checks yet. (To the many persons who have already done so, Linda advises that checks are being returned, as no donation money may be accepted until the Union is chartered.) The pledge form appeared in our April newsletter.

DICKINSON DAY NURSERY

The Dickinson Youth Care Center, 2411 Ave. D, is a non-profit day nursery operating under the joint auspices of Dickinson Church Women United and the Dickinson Youth Care Board. It is licensed to care for 20 children, ages 0-5, but specializes in children under 4. There is a long waiting list. Families served may earn no more than \$600 a month for a family of 4, screened to meet federal guidelines. Fees are \$5.00 per week per child, or \$7.50 for 2 children of the same family. These fees barely pay for supplies and the salary of one part-time worker. Anything else has been supplied by the sponsoring groups. Now the Center is threatened by new regulations requiring more equipment and a paid cook, rather than volunteers. Dickinson resources are strained and outside money is needed; in addition it would be helpful for persons to donate: time and/or scrap lumber for playground equipment, large pipes, etc., for play tunnels or climbers, splinter-free sawhorses, indoor educational toys for children 0-5, and children's records, blocks, toy brooms and dustpans, etc.

NEWS FROM MARTHA DICKEY, STATE COORDINATOR OF TEXAS NOW

Martha thanks all of us who appeared in Austin for ERA on April 14th. She asks us to be prepared to return to Austin if it should become necessary. Texas NOW Council's meeting in Austin April 12th was well attended, once again by some Chapters represented for the first time. The Council voted to "create new taskforces to work in Education (textbooks) and Older Women, and to continue the Rape and Criminal Justice taskforces." The Criminal Justice Task Force will meet in Huntsville at 1:00 on May 25th at the Public Library. Texas NOW Council will meet again at 10:00 A.M. June 14th in College Station, at 315 North Main.

Dear Sisters in NOW,

Two matters chiefly concern me this month---the ERA recission fight and its outcome in Texas, and the unsettling events at recent NOW National Board Meetings. I feel that as feminists Bay Area NOW members must give some thought to the dangers that prolonged dissension within our Organization can bring.

Women have worked many long years for equality in all parts of society, and we have been successful when there was cohesion and determination to accomplish our goal. The dissension which some of our national leaders seem determined to continue is chipping away at the strength we have relied on in this fast-growing National Organization. We need our national officers and they need us. Let's give this matter serious consideration this month. Call me and tell me your opinions.

The Stop ERA effort, alas, is still a thorn in our flesh and a hindrance to our work in other areas of feminism. With luck, we'll be able to turn to these other areas this summer, after the Texas Legislature recesses for the year. See other sections of this newsletter for summer plans.

In sisterhood, Frances Hicks

NOW

BAY AREA CHAPTER OF THE NATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR WOMEN

President: Frances Hicks	482-7840	<u>Information Sources</u>	
Vice President: Marjorie Randal	488-4396	Alternatives for Young Women:	
Documentarian: Twiss Butler	333-4764	Julie Walker	488-3854
Treasurer: Linda Eichblatt	488-4382	ERA Status: Frances Hicks	482-7840
		Legislative: Dorothy Pearson	332-3993
<u>Task Forces</u>		Publicity: Etta Richards	488-5546
Childcare: Pamela Linbeck	482-1558	Speakers' Bureau: Jonnelle Owen	471-5208
C-R: Linda McCollum	488-0950	Newsletter: Officers and Task	
Education: Mary Buxton	333-3872	Force Chairpersons	
Membership: Shirley McFaul	488-2403	No more printing by Sperry Univac, because	
Women in Sports: Linda Eichblatt	488-4382	NOW is suing the company in St. Paul, Minn.	

NOW

JOIN N.O.W.: Clip and mail with your check to Linda Eichblatt, 16589 Buccaneer, Hou. 77058

- _____ I would like to become a member of Bay Area NOW and National NOW. (\$15.00)
- _____ I want to join, but can only afford \$ _____.
- _____ I am not a member but would like to receive the newsletter for a year. (\$3.00)
- _____ I would like to make a contribution of \$ _____ to NOW.

NAME _____ Home Phone _____ Other Phone _____
 ADDRESS _____ City and Zip _____
 Occupation and Employer _____

It should have been for her, Eve was first to be denied,
 it is yet to be for me. and all her daughters after;
 How long will they deny us? why slave, why plaything for so long?

 A man is on the moon; she bore him; she reared him; and yet she is not equal.

-- Anon.





Houston Rape Crisis Coalition
3602 Milam • Houston, Texas 77002 • Phone 524-5743

Some services offered through the Houston Rape Crisis Coalition: 24-hour telephone service through Crisis Hotline; advocates to assist victims through hospital, police & court processes; discussion group for victims; referrals to professionals; information and speakers on topics related to rape, sexual assault and self-protection; moderately priced self-defense courses.

NEWSLETTER

April/May 1975

Vol. 1 Issue 2

Legislation Update

Two bills which substantially reform the existing laws on rape are in subcommittees in both Texas houses. House Bill 284 was sponsored by Reps. Sarah Weddington and Kay Bailey. Senate Bill 63 was sponsored by Sens. Betty Andujar, Jack Ogg and Bob Gammage. Following is a partial comparison of the proposed bill and the existing law.*

EXISTING LAW

- no definition of consent.
- compels by threat.
- does not exist at present.
- does not exist at present.
- one year statute of limitations on rape.

PROPOSED LAW

- adds a definition of consent.
- compels by any express or implied threat communicated by action or words.
- hearing in advance of trial to introduce evidence of previous sexual conduct of victim. Only relevant previous sexual conduct with defendant or within one year of offense.
- uncorroborated testimony can convict.
- three year statute of limitations on rape.

* this comparison courtesy of Kathy Bonner, Director of the Texas Rape Prevention and Control Project.

In Our Opinion

Maria Goretti is the first saint of the twentieth century. As related in the LIVES OF THE SAINTS, she was "martyred for the virtue of purity." Maria was twelve years old when her nineteen year old neighbor, Alessandro, decided that she would be his. Angered by her refusals, Alessandro "fashioned a dagger, sharp and slender, over nine inches long. This would be his final argument." One afternoon, he approached Maria in her home when she was alone. She recognized that she had "only two choices, submission to his lustful desires or death." For Maria, however, the decision was already made. Her mother "had done her work well. Her child's fear of the knife was not nearly so intense as her fear for the soul of Alessandro." As he stabbed her again and again, Maria cried, "No, no, you must not! You will go to Hell!" Maria suffered terribly for 24 hours and then died, after forgiving Alessandro.

This story is well known to women who have been educated in Catholic schools. St. Maria Goretti is hailed as a model of Catholic womanhood, a young girl who chose death over "dishonor." We question the wisdom of teaching young women that rape should be avoided at all costs, even death; and we are certainly at odds with the notion that a woman who is raped is somehow responsible for the soul of her rapist. Perhaps the time spent relating this story to students could be better used by establishing a self-defense course for them.

NOTE: After his release from prison, Alessandro joined the order of the Capuchin friars and became Brother Stephano.

Joann Little Action Day

The National Organization for Women is sponsoring a national action day for Joann Little April 14-- the opening date of her trial. Anyone interested in working on this project should contact Alice Shrader.

Joann Little is a 20-year old black woman from Beaufort County, North Carolina. She was in Beaufort County jail awaiting appeal of a conviction on breaking and entering when a 62-year old white male guard was found dead in her cell August 27, 1974. He was found nude from the waist down and the county medical examiner said there was clear evidence of recent sexual activity. This information was suppressed in local media.

Joann fled the jail but later turned herself in. She is charged with first degree murder which carries mandatory death penalty in N. Carolina.

Self-Defense Classes

Three beginner and one advanced six-week courses in self-defense will begin the first week in April. Three sessions will include short talks on procedures in reporting rape and services available to the community through HRCC, which is sponsoring the classes.

Thursday night beginner classes will start April 3 at 7 p.m. at the University of Houston Student Center Satellite Building in the "Unfinished Room." Two Monday night beginner classes begin April 7 at 6:30 and 7:30 p.m. at St. Theresa's Church, 6622 Haskell, in Memorial Park opposite the Golf Club House. Classes will be in the gymnasium. An advanced class will also begin Monday, April 7, at 7:30 p.m. at St. Theresa's.

Registration will begin a half hour before each opening session. The fee for the six sessions is \$7. Checks are acceptable. Enrollment is limited to 100 in each class at St. Theresa's and 50 at U of H, but arrangements can be made for additional classes if there is need. Instructors George Huebner and Sharon Samply both have black belts. For further information contact George at 527-0335 or the Women's Center, 524-5743.

Miscellaneous

* Houston Rape Crisis Coalition received verification of non-profit corporation status February 28, 1975.

* City Council recently passed an ordinance budgeting money to the Houston Police Department in compliance with Texas law which requires that medical exams for rape victims be paid by the agency requiring the exam. Special thanks to Women's Advocate Poppy Northcutt and Mayor Fred Hofheinz for their support in the passage of this ordinance!!!

* A statewide workshop dealing with the crime of rape will be held in Austin April 24-26. Various workshops will deal with medical, police and court procedures and the effects of the media on rape prevention and control. Registration is \$15. For more information, call 524-5743.

* Twenty-four hour advocate service for rape and sexual assault victims is available. Crisis Hotline takes the calls and refers them to an advocate from the Houston Rape Crisis Coalition. The advocates provide information and companionship through the police, hospital and court routines. Referrals to professionals and discussion group for victims are also available through the advocates.

Current advocates will continue to share their experience and knowledge with trainees in informal training sessions. In past trainings advocates have dealt with procedural information as well as immediate and long-term effects of rape on the victims. To volunteer contact Summer Milton through the Women's Center, 524-5743, or the Hotline, 228-1505.

From the Bookcase

"41 Ways to Protect Yourself Against Violence," Wendy Schuman,
THE NEW INGENUE, March 1975.

--a few quotes: "The pursuit of safety shouldn't control your life,
only tailor it somewhat....wearing sexy clothes has less to do with
getting raped than simple opportunity....make it clear to her (the
victim) she has nothing to be ashamed of."

"What the Rape Victim Should Know About the 'Morning-After Pill,"
Kay Weiss, M.P.H.

--Booklet tells what D.E.S. is and documents reasons for not taking it.
Available through HRCC or Advocates for Medical Information,
2120 Bissonnet, Houston, Texas 77005.

When & Where

Tuesday, April 1 program meeting 7:30 p.m. Women's Center 3602 Milam
Dr. Jean Lyles of Hermann Hospital Emergency Room will speak on patient
rights and medical procedure for rape victims.

Thursday, April 3 Self-Defense course begins (see article inside)

Sunday, April 6 Clean Up Day at Women's Center for HRCC. noon to 3 p.m.
ALL MEMBERS ENCOURAGED TO HELP!!!!

Monday, April 7 Self-Defense courses begin (see article inside)

Monday, April 14 Joann Little Action Day (see article inside)

Tuesday, April 15 HRCC Business meeting, Women's Center 7:30 p.m.

Thursday-Saturday, April 24-26 Workshop in Austin (see article inside)

Monday, April 28 Orientation to Rape Crisis Coalition, 7:30 p.m.
Women's Center

Tuesday, May 6 HRCC program meeting, 7:30 p.m., Women's Center
Ms Dee Smathers, Harris County Child Welfare Dept., will speak on
rape and sexual abuse of children.

Tuesday, May 20 HRCC business meeting, 7:30 p.m., Women's Center

For meeting schedule of discussion group for victims contact Kathy Parker
through the Women's Center, 524-5743.