

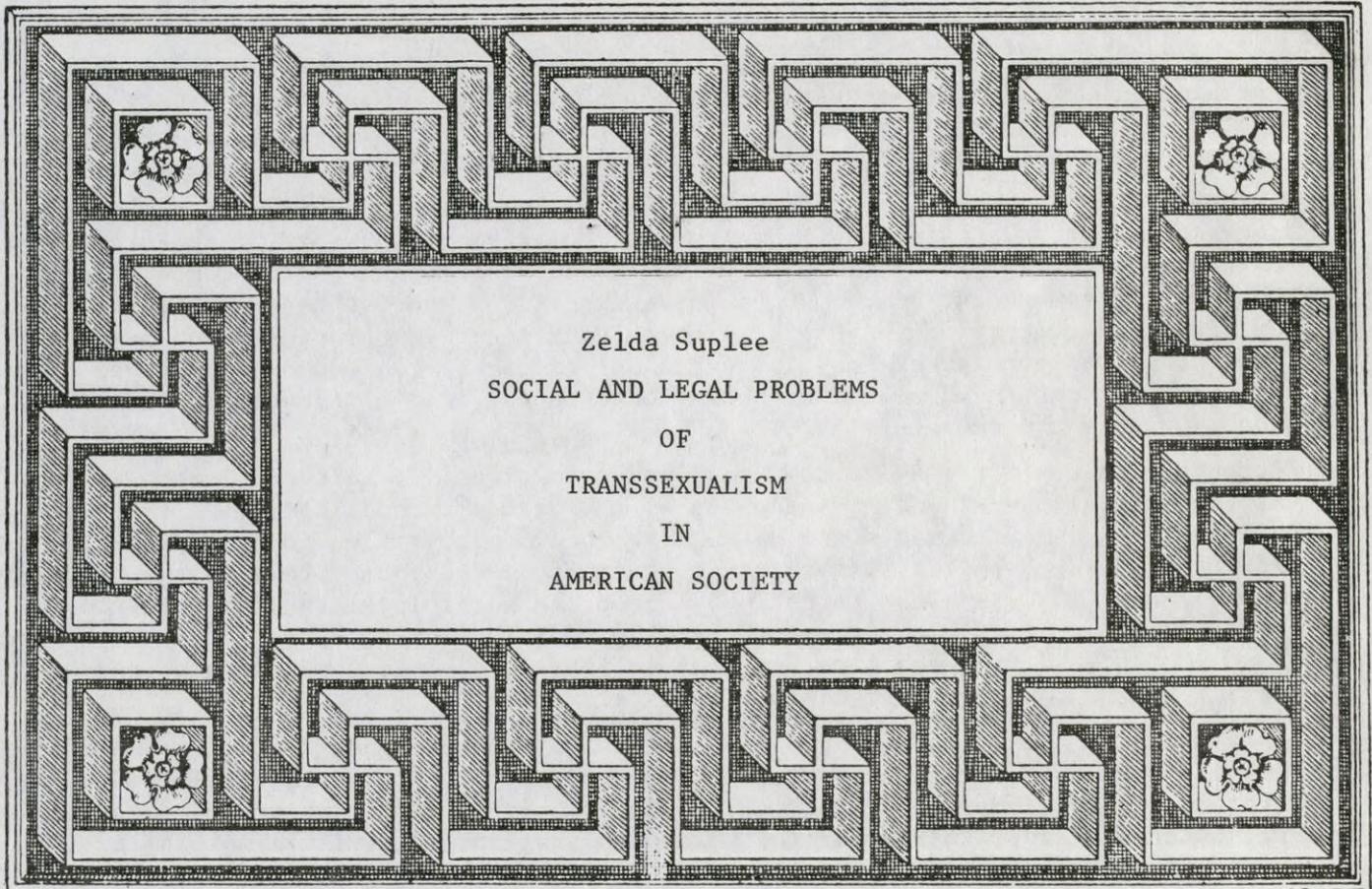
N.O.W. Bay Area Chapter



NEWS

National Organization for Women

Volume V, Number 9 - September, 1977



Zelda Suplee  
SOCIAL AND LEGAL PROBLEMS  
OF  
TRANSSEXUALISM  
IN  
AMERICAN SOCIETY

Program/Business Meeting: 7:30 P.M.

Uniting Church - El Camino & Reseda

Thursday, September 1, 1977

Clear Lake City, Texas

Zelda Suplee is Director of the Janus Information Facility, a division of the Gender Clinic of the University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston. Ms. Suplee has worked in the field of transsexual counseling for over ten years and, prior to joining the Janus Information Facility, she was the Director of the Erickson Educational Foundation. The public is invited to attend this program.

Presiding Officer: Judy Ruff 488-4999

Texas NOW's Continuing Task Force on Education For Women has completed the major phase of its 1977 action on textbooks submitted for adoption and purchase for use in Texas public schools. This is the sixth consecutive year in which the Task Force has worked toward elimination of sexism from instructional materials purchased by taxpayers. Progress is gratifyingly evident, and next year's effort is already being planned.

This year, 30 publishing companies submitted 130 titles in eleven subject categories. Task Force reviewers filed formal protests on 82 (some additional excellent Bills of Particulars were not filed with TEA because publishers withdrew the publications cited). In all, 110 Task Force reviewers throughout Texas produced commentaries on more than 120 titles.

At the public hearing held before members of the State Textbook Committee in Austin, August 17-19, Task Force speakers offered 4 hours and 20 minutes of highly compressed testimony by 5 expert witnesses, speaking on various subject areas, and 29 testifiers protesting specific aspects of 64 textbooks offered by 24 publishers.

Although Marjorie Randal's absence (she was called back to Houston by a family medical emergency just as the hearing began) was a considerable hardship, Task Force speakers maintained the high standards of excellence in presentation which people attending the hearings in recent years have come to expect. Dr. Robert Montgomery, TEA hearing officer, and members of the State Textbook Committee were courteous and attentive listeners. One committee member, a school district superintendent, has since given public evidence (in school-year opening ceremonies) of the extent to which his consciousness has been raised.

Attention is now directed to the final phases of the 1977 selection process:

- September 12-14 --- Voting in Austin by the State Textbook Committee to select a list of up to five recommended titles in each subject category.
- November 10-12 --- Final vote on adoption of texts by the State Board of Education.
- Dec. '77-Jan '78 --- Task Force lobbying on the local level to urge selection of the least sexist texts by individual school districts. Task Force coordinators will supply lists of recommendations, and everyone is urged to participate.

Our thanks to all of the following participants in the August hearing in Austin: Barbara Duke, Now Texas state coordinator and national board member (Introductory statement); Dr. Judy Corder-Bolz, UT/Austin (sex-role stereotyping in education); Dr. Susan MacManus, UH/Houston (economic implications of sexism); Antoinette d'Oronzio, San Antonio (linguistic aspects of sexism); Dr. Curtis Smith, UH/Clear Lake (content analysis techniques); Mary K. Knief, Linda O'Connell, Pam Monzingo, Reida Lockwood, Gerald Swick (Austin); Dorothy Pearson, Ruth Fruland, Marjorie Randal, Nora Mertz, Melissa Weiksnar, Betty Yancey, Betty Baker, Rema Lou Brown - Timekeeper (Bay Area); Arlene Dayton, Jane Kolodziej, Ruth McNeely, Ruth Thornton, Ronnie Waters - Coordinator (Dallas); Gretchen Jarvis (Denton); Berlyn Bock - Coordinator, Marianne Snider, Jean Yarborough (Fort Worth); Nancy Kuykendall, Chris Meaves (Houston Area); Gay Cosgriff, Nikki Van Hightower (Houston NW); Lynne Mutchler (Houston SW); Antoinette d'Oronzio - Coordinator, Susan Branch, Patsy Cheyney - Counsel, Patricia Konstam, Betty Koster (San Antonio; Myrt Taylor, Robbie Howell (Waco). And thanks also to Osborne Duke and Jim Brown for their help with Hearing logistics.

-- Twiss Butler

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Bay Area NOW August Meeting

Thanks to Phyllis Tucker, presiding officer for August, for arranging a most interesting program on women's health featuring techniques of self-examination, discussion of menstrual extraction, etc. For those who wish to obtain more information on the Women's Health Collective, the excellent and informative speakers were: Carrie Toran (797-0116) and Glenda Johnson (785-5705).

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WOMEN'S RIGHTS COORDINATING COUNCIL - Meeting notes taken by Phyllis Tucker on August 18 for Bay Area NOW. (\*\* indicates Action Item)

Representatives or members of 22 organizations attended the August meeting held at the World Trade Building, 1520 Texas. Laura Oren, Chair, presided. Continuing and new officers are: Chair - Oren; Asso. Chair - Mary Jane White; Membership Coordinator - Renee Hall; Treasurer - Donna Duerk; Newsletter - J. E. McNeil; Recorder - Any Wilson; Special Projects - Nikki Van Hightower.

I. WRCC Business and Announcements

- A. Each member organization should notify WRCC of their regular meeting time/place.
- B. WRCC Newsletter deadline is the 1st Tuesday of the month.
- C. Houston Community College is offering information regarding women entering non-traditional fields. Brochures available at September NOW meeting.
- D. Employment:
  - 1. Financial Aid Counselor needed at Lee College, Baytown.
  - 2. Budget Director needed for Houston City Health Dept; she must qualify under C.E.T.A.
- E. Meetings or Fundraisers:
  - 1. HCWPC needs money to send their representatives to the National Meeting in San Jose, Calif. Fundraiser Party on Sept, 4, 2210 Albans, Houston - Ellen Murgers. \$2.00 admission, cash bar, bring snacks. 3-6:00 PM.
  - 2. Texas Nurses Ass'n will sponsor a re-entry workshop", Sept. 17 - 523-3619.
  - 3. LWV will have an ERA Fundraiser - no date/time as yet.

II. IWY Information

- A. Van Hightower announced the IWY National Conference office is open at 515 Rusk, Room 5124, Houston, 77002; 226-5108/9. News, housing info and volunteer forms available through here. Office needs volunteer help.
- B. Mary Keegan has been appointed IWY Local Chair with 3 local vice-chairs: Elma Barerra, Helen Cassidy (Women's Advocates), and Hortense Dixon.
- C. Committee heads have been selected (but most not as yet notified), and will meet the first week of September.
- D. Workshops for IWY will be at Albert Thomas Convention Hall; Plenary Session at the Coliseum.
- E. Two HCWPC members have been appointed Committee Heads of "Security and Ushers". All members of WRCC are urged to volunteer for these committees. Contact Beatrice Mladenka-Fowler (772-9449).
- F. ERAmerica planning cocktail party/fundraiser for Nov. 18 - 6:00-8:30 PM. Media event - looking for big donors.
- G. WRCC plans to hold a welcoming rally Nov. 18 - 5:00-6:30 at City Hall. Focus will be in 3 areas: (1) welcoming all women to Houston (2) supporting equal rights for all women, and (3) honoring Alice Paul. Planning session to be held Aug. 27, 2:00, U. of H main campus. Tucker voted approval for Bay Area NOW, and is on the planning committee. To be on this committee call Sara Johnston - 926-5263.

III. Women's Center

- A. Several groups are still working on this; proposal is now being written. Van Hightower said committee representatives are still needed for the project, especially lawyers, accountants, and architects. Call 222-4581.

Next WRCC meeting Sept. 15, 7:30 PM, World Trade Center, 1520 Texas Ave, Houston. Complete notes from August meeting will be available at the Sept. NOW meeting. For more information contact Sonia Kay Camean (488-1431) or Phyllis Tucker (944-0033)

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Bay Area NOW's Special Agent in Dallas, Evie Whitsett, can be contacted at 9034 Daytonia, Dallas, Texas 75218 (214-324-1597).

Review: THE MANAGERIAL WOMAN by Anne Jardim and Margaret Hennig

Read The Managerial Woman carefully. Your guide to survival is the carrot to the conclusion.

Skip Chapter 4 - the writers' oedipal theory appears as if only to prove that someone passed Psych 100 at Wellesley. Do remember that Hennig and Jardim deal with the milieu of middle management, so extrapolate cautiously. And beware: you'll never again be able to keep a straight face in the conference room.

The book's publication coincided well with a series of irksome meetings I'd been attending. It bothered me to see international corporate managers who didn't even appear competent. I needed an explanation for these sore thumbs. My company tells prospective employees, "...rather than telling you...what you can do, we tell you only what you can't do." I must have been asking illegal questions about the powers that be.

Why did my colleague in production admit that one particular manager was not to be taken seriously, yet tell me how they were drinking buddies and best of friends? I'd heard "good old boys" rumors. And suspected from the way these drillers talked to each other that a certain bond comes only with the mud, sweat, and careers they've invested in boring the earth for petroleum.

Hennig and Jardim tell me that the big boys work like the little boys play. Even if everyone hates Sonny's guts, you've got to have 11 kids to make a team. And off in the sands of Libya, Sonny becomes your friend and drinking buddy--the same way you tolerated him as a little kid on your football team. Maybe Simon is simply your friend--a technical travesty. He doesn't make you win, but at least he doesn't make you lose. Because he's your friend, you'll always find a place for him on your team.

Now, about us girls (sic)--you don't like my doll's hair color? Well, you're not my friend any more. Little girls' play tends to be one-on-one, thus likes and dislikes dominate in the absence of a higher goal. This same bias in big girls dominates us in big business.

In other words, our female view of the world is microcosmic--not of the whole. Hennig and Jardim tell us that a young man entering business looks not at the personalities of the people around him, but rather at the personal ties: is this environment supportive? He sees his work as a step in a career, and will transcend personal likes and dislikes. He is much more concerned about the bouyancy surrounding him than his ability to sail with technical competence.

After all, little boys expect from an early age that "some day" they will have to earn a living. Little girls, even now, still have a scapegoat-- they figure they can always find a male to support them. The "system" naturally accepts males--who essentially have to prove failure before being thrown overboard. Females have to prove success to get on board in the first place. But females traditionally view risk as a potential for loss--not a possibility for gain.

**What about the 25 women** who succeeded in middle management, who formed the kernel of Hennig and Jardim's interviews? They tended to be oldest daughters, who were treated as an oldest son might have been. They preferred adult to peer circles as they grew up. Yet most of them entered the business world as secretaries. Loyalty to an individual who was working his way up the ladder resulted in their parallel ascension. They sacrificed the 9-5 job for their career.

The authors ask you to imagine that you are headed for a foreign country. Naturally, you'd prepare yourself by reading up on the language, customs, and geography of the place. Should we not do the same when embarking on a career journey? Where are our maps to the mountain tops? Who is our interpreter of the strange events around us?

How do we learn what questions, what behavior is taboo? None of my formal education attempted to prepare me for what to expect in the business environment. The emphasis: excel in academic work, and the job will fall naturally into place. Maybe. But careers are not so seat-of-the-pants.

Hennig and Jardim aren't optimistic about changing the character of the upper echelons; even those females who penetrate the male establishment will probably be so convinced of its propriety that any feminist concerns will fall on deafened ears.

I regret that the authors make no mention of contemporary entrant males. A friend of my age (and in the international department, no less) bespeaks the same lack of orientation, beneath his three-piece suits. Should we both aspire to middle management, I wonder if his being male, despite several older sisters, is preferred to my "first and female" claim to fame. Neither of us was into team sports. Would the scaffold specialists bet on his business background over my technical training? What about marital status? (He thinks his bosses hope he'll marry, to make him a more stable overseas prospect. Because I'm married, the decision has supposedly been made for me. But I think my supervisor is more sensitive to my ambitions).

Hennig and Jardim don't mention integrated lavatories. There are those who believe that the important survival tips come only over the flush of a urinal. One of my superiors regrets the absence of Tupperware catalogs in the men's room. In my company, the key to one washroom opens the other. Perhaps the environment is more pregnant with possibilities than we'd dreamed.

-- Melissa Weiksner

Pregnancy leave - If Joe Christie doesn't need it, why should women get it?

The following news item should put feminists on notice of yet another realistic indication of the low esteem in the market place for what they like to tell us is Woman's Most Glorious Achievement: Motherhood. While the men of God are whittling away at women's right not to bear unwanted children, the insurance men are refining the arrangements for punishing women who bear children, wanted or not. Joe Christie needs to hear from you, and so does the Governor.

★ *The Houston Post* 9  
TUES., AUGUST 9, 1977

## Hill bars denial of pregnancy leave

AUSTIN (AP) — State agencies cannot, as matter of policy, deny extended sick leave with pay because of pregnancy-related disabilities, Atty. Gen. John Hill ruled Monday.

In an opinion to Chairman Joe Christie of the State Insurance Board, Hill said such a policy would violate a provision

of the General Appropriation Act.

The act entitles state employees to paid sick leave for sickness, injury "pregnancy and confinement."

The board proposes to adopt a policy denying extended sick leave in cases

involving pregnancy, miscarriage, abortion or childbirth.

Hill said that as long as it didn't adopt a blanket policy denying extended sick leave in such cases, the board could make exceptions to the amount of sick leave taken based on a review of each case.

# Words and Women

By Casey Miller 1976  
and Kate Swift

ANCHOR PRESS/DOUBLEDAY  
GARDEN CITY, NEW YORK

This fascinating book is a social history/linguistic analysis which describes how the English language reflects - and shapes - women's experience. To let it speak for itself is irresistible.

and missiz (or mizz in some parts of the country)? Is the sibilant in Ms. any more disagreeable to the ear than the hiss in Miss? For sheer silliness of sound one would be hard pressed to beat the long-accepted plural form of Mr., commonly if inelegantly pronounced messers. Finally, is Ms. any less true an abbreviation than Miss or Mrs.? If the problem is guilt by association with the opprobrious *mistress*, all three titles must share it.

It its earliest meaning mistress described a woman, either married or unmarried, who had authority over servants, children, or a household. It was a prestigious word, like master, and when prefixed to a woman's name was a title of respect. Some time in the seventeenth century the noun mistress and its written abbreviations Mis., Miss, and Mrs., acquired the additional meaning of

concubine and occasionally of prostitute. The only forms to escape this association were apparently those prefixed to proper names as courtesy titles, and these eventually acquired their own pronunciations distinct from *mistress*. In this period Mrs. was applied to all adult women, Miss to female children. Among other examples the Oxford English Dictionary cites Samuel Pepys's diary entry of 1666, "Little Miss Davis did dance a jig after the end of the play," and Tobias Smollett's observation of 1751 that "Mrs. Grizzle . . . was now in the thirtieth year of her maidenhood."

By the beginning of the nineteenth century, however, the titles were no longer being used to distinguish children from adults. They had become labels identifying marital status: Mrs. distinguished married women and the "infantine term *miss*," as it was characterized in H. J. Todd's 1818 edition of Johnson's dictionary, was applied to unmarried adult women as well as to children.<sup>30</sup>

No comprehensive study has been made of what prompted this change, but the timing strongly suggests a connection with women's increasing participation in the Industrial Revolution. The period was one of social ferment. Up to the time that large numbers of women left their homes to work in the new industries, the ordinary woman's primary identity had been that of daughter or wife/mother. She lived and worked under the roof of the man who ruled her person—her father or husband—and her relationship to him was apparent or easily learned. Once women gained a measure of independence as paid laborers, these ties were obscured and loosened. A man could not tell by looking at a woman spinning cotton in a textile mill to whom she "belonged" or whether she was "available."

Under these circumstances a simple means of distinguishing married from unmarried women was needed (by men) and it served a double purpose: it supplied at least a modicum of information about a woman's sexual availability, and it applied not so subtle social pressure toward marriage by lumping single women with the young and inexperienced. Attached to anyone over the age of about eighteen, Miss came in time to suggest the unattractive or socially undesirable qualities associated with such labels as "old maid" and "spinster" or the dreadful word *barren*. So the needs of patriarchy were served when a woman's availability for her primary role as helper and sexual partner was made an integral part of her identity—in effect, a part of her name.

Ironically, women's availability titles are often described in secretaries' manuals and books of etiquette as "courtesy titles" or "titles of respect" comparable to Mr. The sham of such descriptions was ingenuously exposed in the 1962 edition of *The New York Times Style Book for Writers and Editors*, still in print in 1975 and used by individuals and institutions throughout the country (though the *Times* had periodically amended its own rules, including the one regulating the use of Mr.). Under the entry "Mr., Mrs., Miss," the 1962 style book devotes forty-two lines to the uses of Mr., including the information that "In general, Mr. is not used with the full name. It is used in second references to men of good standing. In general again, Mr. is not used with the names of persons who have been convicted of crime or who have unsavory reputations known without question to be deserved." A few paragraphs further on the style book notes, "Mrs. and Miss are a different case. They are to be used for all females, reputable or not, since they are needed to denote marital status." Needed by men and welcomed by many women, for in our society the status conferred on a woman by marriage and proclaimed by the symbol Mrs. is potent magic.

At one time English also had separate and unambiguous words to distinguish a person by sex: *wif* for a female, *wer* and *carl* for a male. *Mann*—a human being—dropped the second *n* in combined forms like *waepman* and *carlman*, both of which meant an adult male person, and *wifman*, an adult female person. *Wifman* eventually became *woman* (the plural, *women*, retains the original vowel sound in the pronunciation of the first syllable), while *wif* was narrowed in meaning to become *wife*. But *wer* and *waepman*, *carl* and *carlman* simply became obsolete; they were no longer needed once *man* was used to signify a male—especially. One cannot help but wonder what would have happened to the word that originally meant a human being if females rather than males had dominated the society in which English evolved through its first thousand years. Would *man* still mean a human being, but especially an adult female?

The question underlines the essential absurdity of using the same linguistic symbols for the human race in one breath and for only half of it in the next. Alma Graham, a lexicographer, draws these contrasts: "If a woman is swept off a ship into the water, the cry is 'Man overboard!' If she is killed by a hit-and-run driver, the charge is 'manslaughter.' If she is injured on the job, the coverage is 'workmen's compensation.' But if she arrives at a threshold marked 'Men Only,' she knows the admonition is not intended to bar animals or plants or inanimate objects. It is meant for her."<sup>16</sup>

Alleen Pace Nilsen notes that adults transfer to children their own lack of agreement about when the many compound words like workman and salesman apply to both sexes and when such compounds are to be used of males only. She offers some examples to illustrate the different levels of acceptability we sense in such words: "My mother's a salesman for Encyclopædia Britannica" and "Susy wants to be chairman of the dance" are acceptable to many people, but not to all, as is evident from the existence of the terms saleswoman, chairwoman, and chairperson. "Carol Burnett did a one-man show last night" and "Patsy is quite a horseman, isn't she?" are also acceptable, but they draw attention to the discrepancy between the masculine gender term and the subject's sex. "Miss Jones is our mailman" and "Stella Starbuck is KWWL's new weatherman" seem questionable, perhaps because of the newness in relation to women of the activities they describe. "My brother married a spaceman who works for NASA" and "That newsman is in her seventh month of pregnancy" are generally unacceptable.<sup>17</sup> • • •

It is not really known at what point children begin to come to terms with the dual role the word man has acquired or with the generalized use of *he* to mean "either he or she." Certainly the experience is different for boys and girls—ego-enhancing for the former and ego-deflating for the latter. The four-year-old girl who hides her father's pipe and waits for a cue line from him to go find it is *not* expecting to hear "If somebody will find my pipe, I'll give him a big hug." Yet the same child will sooner or later be taught that in such a sentence *him* can also mean *her*.

At a meeting of the Modern Language Association the story was told of twin girls who came home from school in tears one day because the teacher had explained the grammatical rule mandating the use of *he* when the referent is indefinite or unknown.<sup>18</sup> What emotions had reduced them to tears? Anger? Humiliation? A sense of injustice? It is unlikely that any woman can recapture her feelings when the arbitrariness of that rule first struck her consciousness: it happened a long time ago, no doubt, and it was only one among many assignments to secondary status.

In reporting on her work with children, Nilsen provides some in-

Catholic stereo - Does tuning out the Bishops' input reduce intellectual dissonance?

I usually read the Catholic press, as I do the Baptist or Mormon press, for insight into religious rationalizations for the oppression of women - a small reconnaissance action to try to anticipate the direction from which the next attack will come in the Holy War on this depraved half of the human race to which I belong. Occasionally, however, the religious press reveals, as well, the interesting tensions that prevail between the churches' inability to keep intelligent churchwomen in a state of purest ignorance, and the churches' essential need to retain the loyal support of these women if the religious establishment is to survive. I can feel only sympathy and concern for women who are struggling so conscientiously with the conflicting dictates of Father Church and their own common sense. The following articles are examples.

-- Twiss Butler

## NAWR DELEGATES

Texas Catholic Herald 8/19/77

# Take stands on issues

NEW ORLEANS (NC) - The 500 delegates at the convention of the National Assembly of Women Religious (NAWR), meeting in New Orleans Aug. 4-7, called for a moratorium on nuclear build-up and agreed not to meet in states where the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) has not yet been ratified.

Those resolutions were among seven approved by the NAWR House of Delegates during the final session of the convention. In other resolutions, the group objected to the process by which the Vatican's draft of canon law for Religious was formulated and the lack of grassroots involvement by American Sisters in developing the document, backed an investigation into the condition of sugar cane workers, agreed to promote the establishment of shelters and self-help programs for battered women, urged religious congregations to consider investing in the Westside Planning Groups Inc., and supported the Sisters of the Precious Blood in their suit against Bristol-Myers for its alleged misrepresentation of Third World sales practices for its infant formula.

The ERA was another major topic at the convention, with at least one speaker emphasizing that pro-ERA and pro-life positions are not inconsistent. The only way the abortion issue will be resolved, said Sister Jane Marie Luecke, chairperson of NAWR's Women in Church and Society Committee, is by bringing women to a sense of their value and dignity as citizens and persons.

"If we have adult responsible women who feel in contro

of their lives, especially physically and economically, then we will have women who will not find themselves in the situation of facing an unwanted pregnancy," Sister Luecke said.

"It should be widely recognized," she added, "that bishops who have taken a national stand against abortion have not done so about the Equal Rights Amendment. The issues are not tied to each other, because if they were, the bishops would also have taken a national stand against the Equal Rights Amendment."

SISTER Margaret Cafferty, director of the Catholic Committee on Urban Ministry, urged NAWR members to act as a bridge between Catholic lay women and the women's movement during the forthcoming International Women's Year conference because, she said, if they do not, "we may well end up with an International Women's Year conference in Houston that cannot agree that women are equal."

A resolution calling on the NAWR to cooperate with the National Council of Catholic Women in areas of joint concern was defeated. Delegates argued that two organizations with ideological differences cannot bond effectively, and said that the NAWR might risk diluting its commitment to working with the poor by spreading its members too far.

The Knights of Columbus is an organization for Catholic men.

INDIANAPOLIS (NC) - The top policy-making and legislative body of the Knights of Columbus (K of C) has endorsed a proposed family rights amendment to the Constitution while it took a swipe at the Equal Rights Amendment and efforts to legitimize homosexual "marriages."

Other resolutions passed at the 95th meeting of the Supreme Council reaffirmed the K of C's position that abortion violates the unalienable right to life spoken of in the country's Declaration of Independence and attacked "living will" legislation, which the council said "permits the direct taking of life."

THE 398-MEMBER body, which met in Indianapolis from Aug. 16-18, also mandat-

ed that all 6,000 local councils in the United States, Canada, Mexico, Puerto Rico, Guatemala, the Philippines and the Virgin Islands should choose family life directors to maintain contact with widows and dependent children of deceased Knights as a means of strengthening those families.

That measure was urged on the body by Supreme Knight Virgil C. Dechant in his report to the assembly. Under the measure, widows and dependent children will be eligible for all programs, such as student loans, scholarships and fellowships.

The proposed family rights amendment endorsed at the meeting would "give full protection of the law to the family as the fundamental nucleus of our society." The Arizo-

na State Council initiated the petition for the amendment as an answer to the "uncontrollable flood of hard-core pornography which degrades human sexuality and thereby imperils the morals and welfare of the basic social unit - the family."

According to another resolution approved at the conclusion of the three-day gathering, the proposed Equal Rights Amendment now being considered by state legislatures has "negative possibilities relative to protection of women under certain circumstances and in other areas of human rights." The council said "continued study of all ramifications of this proposed amendment" is needed.

IN REAFFIRMING its position on abortion, the council called it "an unspeakable crime which has claimed more innocent lives than all the wars in the history of our republic."

The resolution challenged Planned Parenthood and similar organizations, "which counsel abortion and make abortion-clinic services readily available."

At the same time, the council lauded agencies such as Birthright, the pregnancy counseling service, and other agencies "which offer advice and practical help to mothers seeking moral alternatives to abortion."

The K of C policy statement urged all people to fight abortion, which it said "surely will be recorded in history as the worst social evil ever to befall our civilization," and pledged support for the U.S. and Canadian bishops' efforts on behalf of the unborn.

Texas Catholic Herald. 8/26/77

# The Women's Year Conference—THE OTHER ISSUES

THE TEXAS CATHOLIC HERALD

August 19, 1977

By JIM CASTELLI

WASHINGTON (NC) — In Puerto Rico, almost all of the women at a women's year conference raised their hands when asked if they had to ask their husbands' permission to come to the meeting. Many of the women attending opposed making divorces easier to obtain because they believed their husbands would leave them for younger women.

In Vermont, women asked for college scholarships for older women returning to school.

In West Virginia, widows of coal miners went door to door to attract women to the state conference.

In Colorado, Democratic Representative Patricia Schroeder recalled that some congressmen had voted against funding the state meetings because they believed "women could not organize such a project."

**IN MAINE, WOMEN** looked at slides of advertising that stereotypes women and treats them solely as sex objects.

In Idaho, women urged uniform national standards for legal rights for homemakers.

In Iowa, a campus minister told a workshop how his marriage had been broken up when he and his wife grew in different directions after several years of working in the women's movement. Part of the problem, he said, is that masculine stereotypes lead men to be too assertive over women and prevent men from seeking support from other men.

In Massachusetts, women talked about "battered wives" — wives who are beaten by their husbands.

The secular and religious press alike have focused primarily on the Equal Rights Amendment and abortion

disputes at state women's conference meetings.

**BUT LITERALLY HUNDREDS** of other issues were discussed at the meetings and many showed the kind of pain women — and men — face in today's society as a result of both discrimination against women and efforts to deal with that discrimination.

The International Women's Year Commission sent each state a set of 16 "core recommendations" for women to approve, disapprove or modify. One involves the ERA and one involves "reproductive freedom," leaving 14 other recommendations in less emotional areas.

Margaret Mealey, executive director of the National Council of Catholic Women (NCCW) and a member of the Women's Year Commission, told NC News that NCCW agrees with Women's Year recommendations on many issues.

For example, she said, while NCCW has no official position on the issue, "most of our women would be in favor of amending the Social Security Act" to make housewives — or "homemakers" — eligible for Social Security.

**AND WHILE SOME** conservative groups have protested the commission's recommendations in support of federal support for day care, Miss Mealey says NCCW strongly supports such aid as long as it allows for the role of the "voluntary sector" — churches, community organizations and so on.

"We're very concerned with the necessity of the volunteer in society," she said, noting that NCCW women at state conferences have supported volunteer activity.

"On employment, we've always supported equal pay

for equal work. There's a federal law on that now, of course, but discrimination continues," she said.

Child abuse is another major concern to Catholic women, she said.

She also said NCCW is concerned with international women's issues and human rights for women throughout the world. "We've always been involved in that kind of issue, particularly through the World Council of Catholic Women," she said.

**OTHER CATHOLIC WOMEN** active at state conferences included three human life coordinators in New York State — Audry Kelly of the archdiocese of New York, Evelyn Aquilla of the diocese of Buffalo and Miriam Barth of the diocese of Buffalo.

They operated the only pro-life booth at the New York conference. Their material included information from the U.S. Catholic bishops' Respect Life program which deals with problems of aging, food and health care in addition to abortion, teenage pregnancy and death and dying issues.

Following are some "core" recommendations discussed at state women's meetings:

- Laws prohibiting discrimination against women in education (including school sports), employment and credit should be vigorously enforced.

- "Federal and state laws relating to marital property, inheritance and domestic relations should be based on the principle that marriage is a partnership, in which the contribution of each spouse is of equal importance and value."

- "Alimony, child support and property settlements at divorce should be such that minor children's needs are first to be met and spouses share the economic dislocation of divorce."

- "**HOMEMAKERS DISPLACED** by widowhood or divorce should be helped to become self-sufficient members of society through programs providing job counseling, training and placement, advice on financial management and legal advice."

- "Federal and state governments should cooperate in providing more humane, sensible and economic treatment of young women who are subject to court jurisdiction because they have run away from home, have family or school problems or commit sexual offenses. . . . Disparities in the treatment of male and female juvenile offenders should be eliminated."

- "Public and private women's organizations should work together to give publicity to the positive roles of women over 50 and to provide the services that will enable older women to function comfortably in their own homes instead of moving to institutions. Medicare coverage should be liberalized and the use of generic drugs of certified equivalent quality should be allowed and encouraged to reduce the cost of medicines."

- "State and local governments should revise rape laws to provide for graduated degrees of the crime, to apply to assault by or upon both sexes; to include all kinds of sexual assault against adults; and to otherwise redefine the crime so that victims are under no greater legal handicaps than victims of other crimes. Local task forces to review and reform law and practices of police, prosecutors and medical personnel should be established where they do not now exist."

(NEXT: Are Catholic women caught in the middle?)

CALENDAR

- 8/27/77-8p.m. - Susan B. Party - Helen Cassidy res - 4368 Graduate Circle
- 9/1/77-7:30p.m. - BAY AREA NOW Program Meeting - Uniting Church - El Camino Real at Reseda
- 9/4/77-3-6p.m. - Kathy Whitmire Fundraiser - 2210 Albans (Munger res) \$2.50 door - cash bar
- 9/5/77-2-7p.m. - Merylyn Whited Fundraiser - Theodore's 19th Century Fox - Avondale at Westheimer - \$10 donation - cash bar - live music by Don Sanders & Holly Blue
- 9/15/77-7:30p.m. - WRCC Meeting - World Trade Center - Texas at Crawford
- 9/20/77-7 p.m. - Southwest Houston Program Meeting - Jungman Library - IWY Poster Party
- 9/27/77-7:30p.m. - West University Program Meeting - West University Elem School - Domestic Violence
- 9/29 and/or 9/30/77 - Eleanor Smeal, National NOW Pres, will be speaking in the Houston area. Call Frances Hicks - 488-8574 - for more details
- 9/30-10/2/77 - TEXAS NOW CONFERENCE - San Antonio
- 10/1/77-8 p.m. - Merylyn Whited Fundraiser - 3320 S. McGregor (Evelyn Castillo res) \$5 door - cash bar
- 10/? - BAY AREA NOW GARAGE SALE - Please bring your items to the September and October meetings - or to 1529 Bonanza (Dorothy Howard res) after September 1.

SUPPORT! SUPPORT! SUPPORT! SUPPORT! SUPPORT! SUPPORT! SUPPORT! SUPPORT! SUPPORT!

MERYLYN WHITED	KATHY WHITMIRE	CRAIG ROBERTS
for	for	for
Houston City Council	Houston Controller	Houston School Board
HDQ: 2007 Westheimer 521-9065	HDQ: 2405 San Jacinto 654-7147	HDQ: 2323 Watts 668-5341

We need fuller participation by the membership. Please consider areas of interest and share with us. (Please bring this slip to the next meeting for our "suggestion box.")

\_\_\_ I would like to help with the NEWSLETTER. \_\_\_ I would like to help with the telephone tree.

\_\_\_ I would like to work with the Older Women's Task Force (call Jean Saletan - 471-2862).

\_\_\_ I would like to work on \_\_\_\_\_ (Task Force or Project).

\_\_\_ I would like to conduct a program meeting (month) \_\_\_\_\_ (subject) \_\_\_\_\_.

I am interested in the Hospitality Committee \_\_\_ Publicity \_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_.

I am interested in fund-raising \_\_\_\_\_.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_.

JOIN N.O.W.: Clip and mail with your check to - Marjorie Randal, 1922 Redway, Houston 77062

\_\_\_ I would like to join BAY AREA N.O.W. and NATIONAL N.O.W. (\$20.00)

\_\_\_ I want to join, but can only afford \$ \_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_ I am not a member, but would like to receive the NEWSLETTER for a year. (\$4.00)

\_\_\_ I would like to make a contribution of \$ \_\_\_\_ to N.O.W. (tax-deductible.)

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Other Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address and Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Occupation \_\_\_\_\_

Employer \_\_\_\_\_. Please list interests and skills which might contribute to N.O.W. projects \_\_\_\_\_

