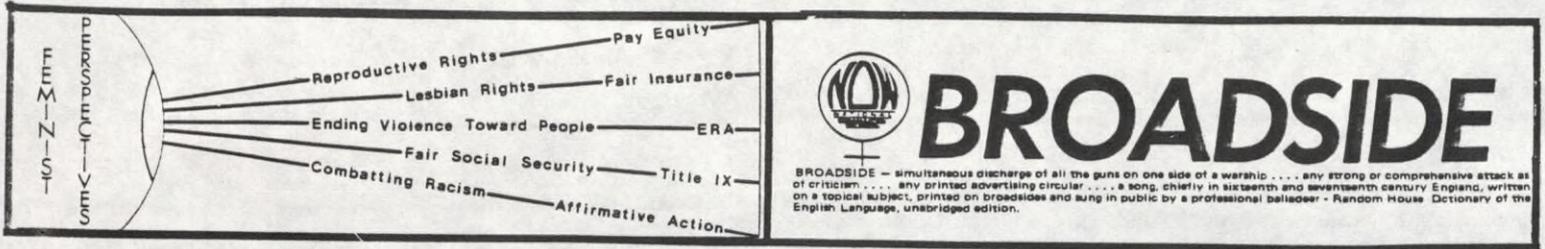


# THE JOINT NEWSLETTER OF NOW AT UH & HOUSTON AREA NOW



Vol. 8, #1

January 1988

Vol. 18, #1

## Action Alert

### KENNEDY NOMINATION

This is a difficult article to write. The conventional wisdom is that Judge Kennedy will be appointed to Justice of the Supreme Court within the next several weeks. Yet it is still essential for you to write Senators Lloyd Bentsen and Phil Gramm, and express your opposition to him. NOW has been joined by the National Women's Political Caucus and the Federal Employed Women in its publically stated opposition to Kennedy's nomination.

"Since Nov. 19, when NOW publicly announced our opposition to the Kennedy nomination, we have roundly -- and often anonymously -- been charged with a 'knee-jerk' reaction to anyone named by Ronald Reagan to fill the court vacancy" Molly Yard noted in her leadership mailing to chapters.

The myriad of organizations which opposed Bork is unwilling to risk being labelled politically unwise in opposing the man who Alan Dershowitz, Harvard law professor, has described as "writ[ing] like Powell, but vot[ing] like Bork, and votes are what's important in a swing-vote situation."

Make no mistake about it, we are in a swing vote situation. A lower court ruling declaring an Illinois law unconstitutional for interfering impermissibly with a minor woman's right to abortion, was upheld on a 4-4 vote. The next Justice will break such ties and determine whether access to abortion is made more difficult.

We must not give up the fight. The next "Justice" on the Supreme Court will have decades to not only influence, but to determine what constitutional rights we have. You have the opportunity to take action NOW to challenge Judge Kennedy's appointment. Do it for our futures -- write or call our Senators NOW!

Jeanne Sommerfeld

### ROE v. WADE

As the 15th Anniversary draws near, NOW is organizing an action to dramatize the violence against women under the current situation. On Thursday, Jan. 21, the eve of the anniversary, HANOW is sponsoring a panel discussion at 7:15. There will be speakers on the medical violence of illegal abortions, on the current legislative/judicial climate, and on the continuing violence against clinics. Prior to the discussion, we will hold a vigil. We anticipate that this will be very visual and hopefully, will encourage the media to report on the reality of antichoice violence against women seeking to exercise their constitutional rights. The location of the vigil and the discussion will be mailed to all members in early January. We need help from all of you to make this action a success. We must educate ourselves, the public and the media on the dangers women and their families are facing. Please call me at 738-5059 (an answering machine - sorry!) if you can help with this.

Jeanne Sommerfeld, HANOW V.P. Action

#### National NOW Board to Meet In Houston!

The National Board of NOW will meet in Houston from January 29 to January 31, 1988 at the Holiday Inn Crown Plaza, 2222 West Loop South. Friday's session begins at noon with a budget meeting. The Saturday and Sunday sessions start at 9:00 a.m. All NOW members are welcome to attend and see how decisions are made at the National level. Texas NOW will be holding a reception on Saturday evening, January 30th. If you would like more information or would like to volunteer, please contact me at 864-8999(eve) or 987-5218(day).

Kathy Aubin

# NOTES on NOW at U.H. ACTIVITIES

Welcome to new members Michelle Rodriguez and Wendy Trachte. Michelle has been making real progress in her work on National NOW's Campus Survey, with Natalie Simkins and Katie Traverse. Wendy is President of the Student Association Senate. She has worked with NOW in the past on UH administration plan, (now abandoned in part due to efforts by her and chapter member Cheryl Youmans) to privatize the UH Child Care Learning Center.

Welcome also to Natalie-Simpkins, Katie Traverse, Donna Versly, Darren McCall and Jon Bourgard who have been attending meetings frequently. It is important to note that NOW at UH meetings are open to anyone who is interested in feminism at UH. You don't have to be a member to make a valued contribution.

We voted to support the Young Socialist Alliance (the youth group of the Socialists Workers Party and a student group at UH). Trouble had arisen over a YSA literature table set up at Agnes Arnold Hall Oct.28. A student who didn't think socialist literature should have a place at UH began yelling & screaming at Greg Rosenberg, the YSA member working the table -- his very first time at the job!. The anti-socialist got a UH police officer and a staffer at the reservations office to shut the table down over a "technical violation" -- i.e. Greg had failed to get a reservations permit for that day's work. But it should be noted that this often happens and UH staff do not get so iron-fisted.) After some heavy-handed threats by UH officials to terminate YSA's student group standing, YSA members campaigned for support from NOW and other student groups. Then the administration reviewed the facts and backed down - universities, after all, are supposed to be bastions of freedom of expression.

ON Dec. 12, just before finals, NOW at UH was responsible for 8 of the 3,000 marchers at the Jobs with Justice Rally in Nacogdoches -- Kim Thompson, Katie Carlin, JoAnn Evansgardner, Gerry Gardner, Mark Harris, Macci McKinley, Natalie Simpkins and Michael Williams. 3,000 people marching through East Texas for labor was a major event. Patricia Ireland, National NOW VP, gave a terrific speech relating labor issues and feminist issues. Jim Hightower, in his usual funny-but-with-serious-points-to-make way, looks more and more like a candidate for Phil Gramm's US Senate seat in 1890. But maybe best of all, everybody, including the national president of the Communication Workers of America used non-sexist, inclusive language. I think that is one message feminists have gotten through.

This month our chapter was handed a feminist issue -- the UH Athletic Department advertised in the Cougar for "young interested women" to apply for volunteer jobs as Cougar'Cruiters. As a result, advertising for women only, is NOW an official no-no. See story on page 7.

Finally, Kim Thompson, Kim Viscardi and Sandy Mollett held NOW at UH's end-of-semester celebration at their house. The only NOW business we did was to get to know each other better. Pamela Lane organized the food which was wonderful, and the games, which were hilarious. Ages ranged from four (Olivia Simpkins) to 62 (me.) Playing Pictionary, Scruples, and a Kim Thompson version of Trivial Pursuit made the evening fly. Instead of breaking up at 9 pm as planned, the party lasted til after midnight!

HAVE A HAPPY BETWEEN SEMESTER BREAK. See you in 1988 the 1ST Tuesday after school starts, 4:30, Jan 26th. On that subject, we will be reconsidering meeting times so if you would prefer a different time, call Kim, 520-8199 or JoAnn, 741-4009, if you can't be there.

JoAnn Evansgardner, Sec'y

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- NOW at the UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON OFFICERS
- Kim Thompson, President ..... (h)520-8199
- Sandy Mollett, Treasurer ..... (h)520-8199
- Jo Ann Evansgardner, Sec'y .... (h)741-4009
- Elections in February - self-nomination!
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## COUGAR 'CRUITERS CONT....

The Daily Cougar

Thursday, December 10, 1987

To the Editor:

Coach Donahoe thinks it is "petty and ridiculous" to protest the Cougar'Cruiters advertisement for "interested young women" to help the UH Athletic Department recruit football players.

NOW members think UH, even the Athletic Department, should abide by the same rules that it sets for student organizations such as NOW. University Policy for student organizations prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, handicap, creed, ethnic origin and sex.

But the Cougar'Cruiters ad was objectionable not only because it excluded male students who might want to boost their school. What the Athletic Department wanted was young women. Why? Clearly they thought that young women would be more "attractive" to young male athletes.

What does the ad reveal about UH Athletic Department's interest in young athletes who are female? We cannot be sure, but to us it

seems that they don't really count in the scheme of things in UH's Athletic Department. Female athletes confirm this. "The Athletic Department seems to go out of its way to recruit male athletes," we were told. If this is true, it is sexist.

Sexism is the belief that one sex is superior and one inferior, one sex should be dominant and one sex should be subordinate and that members of each sex should be educated consistently with their status. It should have no place at an institution of higher learning. But its roots are deep. That is why an organization such as NOW is necessary -- to help point out sexism when it occurs, and to call for correction.

Fortunately, President Van Horn agrees with NOW, which is as it should be. He has declared, "Not only does it (Cougar'Cruiters) have to be open to everyone, it's got to have a balanced composition." With respect to sexism, Van Horn said, "At this university we're not going to have it."

Jo Ann Evansgardner  
Secretary, UH-NOW



Listening Post

Phone: 840-5005

Most Listening Post callers Friday said they did not approve of colleges asking young women to help recruit athletes. An advertisement for female recruiters in the University of Houston newspaper has sparked controversy.

Of 732 callers, 113, or 15.4 percent, said they approved of the practice, while 619, or 84.6 percent, said they did not.

*We ARE the MAJORITY!*

### FEMINIZATION OF POWER!

\* Heard on National Public Radio: McKaysville (state missed) had always had an all male city council and a male mayor. A woman there decided to change that. She ran for mayor and organized a female slate of candidates for city council. SHE WON ALONG WITH 4 OF THE 5 CANDIDATES FOR COUNCIL! The fifth lost by only 3 votes.

### Feminization of Power Rallies

- \* Cincinnati: Over 700 people attending; 69 co-sponsors; and over 200 signed up for Search Teams.
- \* Cleveland: Standing Room Only of over 800 despite a snow storm; 82 co-sponsors; and dozens of Search Teams formed.
- \* Pittsburgh: Over 450 attended; over 90 co-sponsors; 225 signed up for Search Teams and 20 PEOPLE ANNOUNCED THEIR CANDIDACY!
- \* Philadelphia: Over 750 attended; over 100 co-sponsors; 200 volunteers for Search Teams; and 41 PEOPLE ANNOUNCED THEIR CANDIDACY!

# Roe v. Wade—15th Anniversary

## But the Violence Continues

In 1973, the Supreme Court in one remarkable decision decriminalized abortion in the United States. Activists who had been working on the issue at the time thought the war was over and the deaths and maiming of women from illegal and botched abortions ended.

Even if we ignore the stark psychic violence against women of living with the reality that they had no legal right to determine when or whether to bear a child, the physical violence against women in illegal abortions was bloodcurdling. The tales, with which even 15 years later we are all too familiar, of boiling water, caustic liquids, coat hangers and knitting needles used to abort by desperate women and back street butchers are unbearable to contemplate.

But with the decriminalization of abortion, a new form of violence against women has replaced the old. The victory that seemed in hand is under siege. There is an increasing threat that these days may be upon us once again, especially for young and/or poor women.

At the risk of oversimplifying, I think that the "new" violence can be divided into three categories.

(1) Legislative and Judicial Efforts. The volume of activity in this area is so broad that it is impossible to include them in an article of reasonable length. We are all aware of the legislative efforts to limit a woman's access to abortion, including special restrictions for young women and poor women. Unfortunately, these laws are too often upheld by the courts. There have also been determined efforts to amend state constitutions to limit abortion rights. These have required extraordinarily expensive efforts by feminists. We have won all but one of these referenda. It also appears that Title X regulations will be formally amended before January to exclude funding to facilities which provide counseling or referrals for abortion services. (See October issue of this newsletter for specifics.)

What may be the most shocking example of "legalized violence" against women may be seen in the recent case, In re: A.C., out of the D.C. Court of Appeals. The judges in that case upheld a ruling that a 27-year-old woman with terminal cancer should be forced to undergo a caesarian section to "save" her 26-week fetus. The woman, her family, her doctors and the hospital obstetric staff were opposed. The caesarian was carried out, resulting in the immediate death of the fetus and the death of the woman two days later. The court opinion stated that the government's interest in preserving the health of the fetus was more important than the mother's "right against bodily harm." (See Ellen Goodman column reproduced on page 6.)

(2) Clinic Violence. The bombings seemed to reach a peak in the last few years but they have not ended. They are simply not newsworthy enough for us to be aware of the nationwide threat against abortion providers and against women seeking access to health facilities where abortions are done. The harassment of women entering such clinics is unabated. The picketers literally terrorize women by shouting "murder" and other verbal abuse, often physically obstructing their path, "praying" for their souls, etc. Undoubtedly some women are intimidated by these tactics -- and all are guilt-tripped. The woman is cast as the villain rather than the victim -- an ancient ruse designed to make women feel ashamed instead of angry. It surely keeps some women from standing up and joining the struggle for their own rights and for every woman's right to control her life and future.

Another form of violence is the misinformation and distortions the anti-choice propagate at every opportunity. It is exemplified in the fake clinics set up to lure in women seeking information on abortion. They are then subjected to lies and propaganda designed to frighten them and make them feel guilty about even considering making up their own minds.

(3) Violence to Women's Psyches. 74 percent of Americans believe that the decision in Roe v. Wade is essential to their life, liberty and pursuit of happiness. No form of birth control, no matter how precisely used, is 100 percent effective. Despite this, women are constantly bombarded with accusations that they are amoral and incapable of making such a serious decision. They are told they are at best careless, at worst hedonistic, and deserve to be "punished" and forced to continue a pregnancy to term. While this type of violence is difficult to show on the 10 o'clock news, it is immensely harmful. It can be subtle or blatant but it causes all women to one degree or another to doubt their own ability to make choices in painful, difficult situations. To be told that a fetus is always more important than a pregnant woman diminishes every woman's humanity.

As the 15th Anniversary draws near, NOW is organizing an action to dramatize the violence against women under the current situation. On Thursday, Jan. 21, the eve of the anniversary, HANOW is sponsoring a panel discussion at 7:15. There will be speakers on the medical violence of illegal abortions, on the current legislative/judicial climate, and on the continuing violence against clinics. Prior to the discussion, we will hold a vigil. We anticipate that this will be very visual and hopefully, will encourage the media to report on the reality of anti-choice violence against women seeking to exercise their constitutional rights. The location of the vigil and the discussion will be mailed to all members in early January. We need help from all of you to make this action a success. We must educate ourselves, the public and the media on the dangers women and their families are facing. Please call me at 738-5059 (an answering machine - sorry!) if you can help with this.

Jeanne Sommerfeld, HANOW V.P. Action

1. Please note that a clinic of this type in Dallas was successfully sued under our consumer protection statute.

### WOMEN'S CENTER CELEBRATES 10TH ANNIVERSARY

On December 9, 1987, the Houston Area Women's Center celebrated its 10th anniversary. It took thousands of volunteers and hours of dedication and a dream that refused to die to be able to celebrate a decade of service to women.

The opening of HAWC in 1977 was a continuation of a dream that began in 1972 and failed for lack of monetary support in 1976. The dream began in three rooms that were funded and staffed by Houston Area NOW, Harris County Women's Political Caucus, and Women's Equity Action League members. Many of these women and men were on the Honor Role of HAWC. Some of the NOW members honored were: Yvonne Broach, Rema Lou Brown, Twiss Butler, Helen Cassidy, Marion E. Coleman, Debra Danburg, Jan Dilbeck, Laura Douglas, Peggy Hall, Margie Harris, Majorie Randal, Bill Royster, Iris Silvers, Iris Sizemore, Jan Stevens, Jo Stewart, and Phyllis Tucker.

Special Community Service Awards were given to Adelyn Bernstien, Eleanor Tinsley, Pokey Anderson, Gertrude Barnstone, Frances T. Farenthold, Joan Glantz, Poppy Northcott, Jeanne Saletan, Cilia Teresa, Nikki Van Hightower, Mrs. Charles White, and Kathryn J. Whitmire.

To each of the above and to all the volunteers and donors to the HAWC, Houston Area NOW wishes a happy anniversary and a big thanks for all that you have done and will continue to do.

Kathy Aubin

Unfortunately, we are unable to reprint for you, due to space limitations, National NOW's case-by-case analysis of Kennedy's decisions and the implications for women's rights. We will be happy to send you a copy if you leave a message at 728-5059.

# Houston Area NOW News

## PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

This time of year has always been a healing time for me. A time to assess the year's accomplishments and what's available for next year. Wendy Clarke Levy, outgoing president, ably enumerated the Chapter's accomplishments last month. To Wendy, I want to give my special thanks for a job well done. You represented NOW well. Thanks for being willing to continue as an officer with the Chapter.

The new board has met to plan for 1988 and will be again on January 10th to continue with this planning and prepare for the program meeting on January 21. One of the things we did decide was to dispense with a business meeting along with a program meeting. So during 1988 the monthly meetings held on the second Wednesday of the month will be a program and/or action meeting, announcements will be made as necessary and hand-outs of vital information will always be available at these meetings.

A combination board/business meeting will be held each month at a time and place to be determined by the Board. All HANOW members are always welcome at these meetings, which will be scheduled & announced.

1988 will be an exciting year, an election year, and an excellent time for you to schedule 10 Minutes A Day For Feminism. So look at your schedules and take the time to put NOW on them. Not just for the Chapter but for yourself as well. Since I decided to become more active in NOW in 1980, I have enjoyed the companionship, learned more than I ever thought possible, met many many people, and gained in every way by my decision...Consider the possibility for yourself...See you in 1988!

Let me take this opportunity to wish each of you a happy holiday season.

Katherine H. Aubin

## NOVEMBER MINUTES

The minutes were approved as printed in the November newsletter. Lee Lanoos reported that the chapter would have approximately \$275 in its account after paying the outstanding expenses.

The proposed bylaws and operating rules were considered next. A motion was passed allowing the President to make typographical and grammatical changes. The Bylaws were passed as amended. The amendments were (1) the addition of the phrase "who are not officers" after the reference to board members on page two in the section on appointments; (2) the addition of the phrase "of the members attending" to the requirement that amendments to the

bylaws be approved by a 2/3 vote; and (3) the time period for notification of proposed changes to the bylaws was changed to 75 days in advance to the President, and mailings to the membership 60 & 30 days before the vote. The Operating Rules were also passed as amended. The amendments which passed were (1) the duties of V.P. Action exclude acting as spokesperson in the absence of the President; (2) clarifies that the election committee would present nominees to the chapter in October; (3) method of nomination includes but is not limited to self-nomination; (4) reduces the number of members required to propose an amendment to the Operating Rules to 3; (5) changes references to the finance committee in the annual audit section to make the audit be at the direction of the Board; and (6) changes to 30 days the time period for notification of proposed changes in the operating rules.

Elections were held next. Congratulations to our new officers. Susie Sheed will continue to handle our press releases.

Reports were made on State Council by Kathy Aubin and Darlene Sentresi; upcoming National Board meeting by Kathy Aubin; essay contest by Lee Lanoos and Susie Sheed; Feminization of Power by Jeanne Sommerfeld. Darlene Sentesi, Cathy Murphy, Marian Newman, Nancy Edwards, and Michelle McKenzie were appointed HANOW delegates to State Council. We discussed which day chapter meetings should be held on. We will meet on the 2nd Wednesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. (However January meetings will be Wed. Jan. 13, & Thurs. Jan. 21). Discussion of the unauthorized use of our mailing list was tabled until the next board meeting.

Jeanne Sommerfeld

## HANOW CANDIDATE SCREENING

On Wednesday, Jan. 13, HANOW will hold a candidate screening to make recommendations for endorsement to Texas NOWPAC, due Jan 31.

Help is needed before the 13th to do mail outs and follow-up to candidates. We have an opportunity to bring the Feminization of Power closer to reality. Call Kathy Aubin, 987-5218 (day) or 864-8999 (eve.) to volunteer.

## HOUSTON AREA NOW OFFICERS

Kathy Aubin, President ..... (h)864-8999  
(o)987-5218

Jeanne Sommerfeld, V.P. Action, (h)728-5059

Darlene Sentesi, V.P. Comm... (h&o)350-6493

Wendy Clarke Levy, Treasurer .. (h)728-2244

Michelle McKenzie, Bd. Member . (h)520-0129

\_\_\_\_\_, V.P. Membership

\_\_\_\_\_, Secretary

# Democratic Leadership-Deaf &/or Dumb

If the Democratic party drops ERA and Abortion Rights planks from its '88 platform it will tell Americans and the world that women don't matter. And if the strategy to win the South succeeds, we will know just how truly ignominious women's position is. Even with the vote, women can safely be ignored, despised, trivialized.

One has such a sense of deja vu. In 1852 Florence Nightingale wrote an essay, "Cassandra" which asked the question, "Why have women passion, intellect, moral activity -- these three and a place in society where only one of three can be exercised?" In 1987, anti-choicers deny even the capacity to moral activity to women.

But however bad the situation, organized feminists do not give up. NOW's Molly Yard testified passionately in opposition to Judge Kennedy. She, and leaders from the NWPC didn't need any gift of prophecy to know Kennedy is a mortal danger not only to women's rights and lives, but to the rights and lives of the under-represented generally. All they had to do was look at his record.

Where are the liberal "leaders" who recognized danger in Bork and Ginsberg? Right where the men of Cassandra's and Nightingale's time seem always to have been -- not listening -- to their peril as well as ours -- a peril that will take decades to play out.

If Democratic party (and "liberal" leaders) could hear what feminists are saying, they might find themselves in the same position with women voters that they currently enjoy with black voters -- getting about 95 percent of women's votes! Although their performance on issues of concern to blacks no longer justifies it, they still reap rewards for passing and enforcing legislation such as the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

To think what it would mean to our future if leaders of the "party of the people" were true to the idealistic aspects of their history, is to think of a country that would lead the way for justice for all, a country where men would not be little boys grown up, playing soldier with world-destroying weapons and women would not bear the burden of nurturing and cleaning up after them, a country where all women and men would be politically, socially and economically equal.

Tragically, because feminists are mostly women and Democratic leadership is entirely men, history will repeat itself. Inequality will continue to scald our souls until enough women's (and decent caring men's) consciences are so raised as to make us rise up and call a halt. And it will be the end of the Democratic Party.

Paraphrasing Susan B. Anthony, and Ellie Smeal, I PLEDGE NOT TO VOTE FOR, NOR SUPPORT WITH MY MONEY OR TIME, ANY PARTY WHICH DOES NOT FULLY SUPPORT AND WORK FOR WOMEN'S RIGHTS AND FEMINIST PRINCIPLES.

JoAnn Evansgardner

1. Cassandra, a woman in Greek mythology, "beloved of Apollo," was promised the gift of prophecy if she would yield to Apollo's desires. She accepted and then backed out. His revenge was to keep his promise, but to see that she would never be believed.

## Democrats discuss changing platform May drop ERA, abortion

WASHINGTON (AP) — Democratic chief Paul Kirk declared Friday the party's 1988 platform should not be "a litany of social, cultural or ideological litmus-test buzzwords," suggesting such issues as abortion and the proposed Equal Rights Amendment might be dropped.

Kirk said a brief, positive platform could help end the "voodoo politics" of Democratic candidates — particularly those in the South — who run away from or against the party in state and local races.

The Democratic National Committee chairman received immediate support for his latest step aimed at controlling the tenor of the 1988 campaign from the two top Democrats on Capitol Hill — Senate Leader Robert Byrd of West Virginia and House Speaker Jim Wright.

But black activist Maynard Jackson said he was reserving judgment.

"If you are silent on major issues and by silence implying rejection of them, we may have to get into a debate about that," the former Atlanta mayor said.

Kirk said the platform must be broad enough to appeal to millions

of Americans who have been voting for Republican presidential candidates but still short enough to be "an open letter" that voters actually might read.

In a move certain to draw opposition, he said that traditional platform inclusion of abortion and the ERA might have to end.

"I would consider it a narrow issue," Kirk said to reporters about abortion. Asked about the ERA, he indicated that was almost in the same category.

However, he quickly added. "We're not going to sound retreat on anything . . . All of these things are accepted as a given."

A properly constructed platform, he said, would rob the GOP of a target in the 1988 general election, leaving the Republicans short of campaign ammunition.

"They will be left to defend their sorry record of debt, deficit and division and a vision of the future to which they gaze longingly through a twisted rearview mirror," Kirk said.

Kirk's move to shape the platform is geared in part to win back votes in the South, where many Democrats have backed their party for state office but the GOP for the White House.

"Gone are the days when our own state and local Democrats feel compelled to run away from — or even against — the party's national platform and thus its presidential nominee in order to win as a Democrat back home. That's voodoo politics," he said.



JACKSON: Uncertain

### FAMILY & MEDICAL LEAVE ACT

Patricia Schroeder and William Clay, chief House sponsors of the Family & Medical Leave Act have agreed to a Labor Committee compromise which excludes from coverage employers with fewer than 50 employees for the 1st 3 yrs, thereafter employers with fewer than 35; 95% of employers & 62% of employees will not be covered the 1st 3 yrs, thereafter, 93% of employers & 57% of employees will not be covered.

The number of weeks of unpaid leave was reduced from 18 to 10 (in a 2 yr period) for family leave; from 26 to 15 (in a 1 yr period) for medical leave. To be covered, employees must have been employed for 1 yr & work 20hrs/week. The original bill required only 3 months employment. Write your representative to support the bill but without this gutting compromise.

Info from Eleanor Smeal Report 12/7/87

Ellen Goodman

# 'A Potential Life . . . A Dying Mother'

BOSTON—At the outset, the court coolly offered a rasher of sympathy. "Condolences," it began, "are extended to those who lost the mother and child."

I don't know how I would take those words if I were the parents or husband of the 27-year-old Washington woman who lost her rights before she lost her life. How would I respond to the condolences of a court that justified the decision to treat a sick woman as if she were already dead?

The woman I know only as A. C. was a fighter. She had to be. A. C. had bone cancer at 13 and spent much of her life in and out of hospitals, in and out of surgeries that left her with one leg.

At 27, married and believing she was free of cancer, she became pregnant. Then, on June 11 of this year, the doctors told her that the back pain and shortness of breath she was experiencing were due to a large tumor in her lung. She went from being an expectant mother to being a terminally ill patient with perhaps only days to live.

If A. C. had not been pregnant, she might have died as she chose. After all, we have become more sensitive to the wishes of the dying. We don't override their desire to control or refuse intervention. Indeed, we require the informed consent of any conscious adult.

But A. C. was carrying a 26-week fetus. So, unknown to her, the administration of The George Washington University Hospital called the hospital attorney to ask if the hospital was required to perform a forced Cesarean section.

The lawyer in turn requested an emergency ruling from the District of Columbia Court of Appeals. In less than six hours, through a series of bizarre and rushed hearings, the D.C. court gave its final ruling while A. C. was being prepped for surgery: the hospital had to try to "save the child."

Despite the objections of a woman who was well enough to communicate

clearly "I don't want it done," despite the objections of her family, despite the objections of her physicians, a Cesarean section was performed.

The baby, by no means "viable," died immediately. A. C. died two days later. On her death certificate, the surgery is listed as a contributing factor.

Now, months later, the court that issued its "condolences" also upholds the view that A. C. properly forfeited her rights because she was about to die. As the attorney for the fetus had said, "All we are arguing is the state's obligation to rescue a potential life from a dying mother."

Is this to be a new standard then. Is this how we are to think about other dying people? Would we allow the state to harvest organs or bone marrow or blood from a dying member of society, against his will, to give it to a "viable," existing adult? Do you lose rights as you lose your health? Or is it only if you are a pregnant woman?

Increasingly, pregnancy is the exception to the rule. In several states that have a "living will" statute, everyone has the right to refuse extraordinary treatment except for pregnant women. We have seen several cases in which a brain-dead woman has been kept on respirators so that a fetus might survive.

More controversial, we now see pregnant women who are not brain dead, not even terminally ill, being threatened or forced into medical treatment. Last year, Pamela Rae Stewart was arrested in California on the charge of fetal neglect for having disobeyed her obstetrician's orders. The case was thrown out of court, but the pattern persists.

Some 24 women in this country have been ordered to have Cesareans. In the case most commonly cited by courts, a Georgia woman in her 39th week of pregnancy was ordered to have surgery because, the doctors said, there was a 99 percent chance the fetus could not survive delivery. The courts fail to add that before the surgery could be performed, the baby arrived on its own—healthy.

Lynn Paltrow of the American Civil Liberties Union, which is petitioning for a rehearing, believes "we are treating fetuses with rights above and beyond any existing person." In this case, she adds grimly, "The question is no longer whether the fetus is viable, but whether the mother is."

The court argues that A. C. lost only a few hours, or at most days, of life. But those hours and days are not the state's to decide.

The court treated A. C. as if she was dead. They shortened and brutalized her life in a wholly misguided fantasy of playing savior. All they offer is pious condolences. Justice would be a more appropriate memorial.

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## ANTI-CHOICE LITIGATION STRATEGY

The Pensacola, FL based The Litigation Project has launched a new anti-abortion strategy. The idea is to bring medical malpractice suits against doctors who perform abortions.

In what appears to be the first such case, a jury in Arizona rejected malpractice claims totaling \$2.1 million brought by a Phoenix woman against a Planned Parenthood clinic and the physician who performed her abortion. One of her attorney's is the spokesperson for Arizona Right to Life, according to UPI story.

Info from The Eleanor Smeal Report 11/23/87

## DEAD LETTERS BUT FOR NOW

Jim Holley, Sound Off Editor, Houston Post

In reponse to Paul Harasim's column about Vince Ryan's upset election to city council . . .

Harasim, after detailing Vince Ryan's romantic past with Harris County Treasurer, Nikki Van Hightower, then goes on to trash her for not supporting Vince and challenges her commitment to get more women in office as being no different than the male chauvinist's pigs cry "A man can do it better."

The difference is that feminists want a 50-50 split of all the jobs, both those women currently hold, such as nurturing and cleaning up after children and men and those they don't hold, such as decision making in the public world!

We want it because it is fair. In fact it is more than fair, because women are more than 50 percent of the population.

But feminists also want it because in the present state of affairs, women learn to pay more attention to some very important matters, like "garbage pick-up, backed up sewers, and potholes in the streets." Would Houston have billboard reform and no-smoking ordinances without Eleanor Tinsley leading the fight? With only two women out of 15 city councilors (13.3%) it is clear that feminists must work to increase the number of women on council.

Harasim cites Misty Jones as wondering "whether Nikki understands how the game of politics is played." Without a doubt, Van Hightower knows what she is doing -- changing the rules of the game so that women get a fairer deal.

When women and men are economic, political and social equals, it won't matter whether a man or a woman is elected. But for the present, the feminist slogan has got to be,

50-50 or FIGHT!

Jo Ann Evansgardner

# But What Can I Do?

Wilma Scott Heide, former president of National NOW, often told chapters that when an injustice came to their attention, the first step should always be to attempt to have the institution involved change the behavior. Only if this was unsuccessful, should NOW members do the work themselves of fixing the problem. Last month this principle was illustrated in connection with an advertisement run by the U.H. athletic department.

The offensive ad was noticed both by NOW at U.H. officer, Jo Ann Evansgardner, and by Houston Post reporters. As a result of the problem being brought--forcefully--to the attention of the University, the President, Richard Van Horn, made a public statement that sexism would not be tolerated at U.H. The ad, the editorial cartoon and some other materials are printed here and on page two.

The reason why this episode is particularly noteworthy is that it illustrates the importance of doing SOMETHING when you come across an injustice. Many changes will take years of concerted effort to happen, but they all have to start somewhere. And it is a pleasant surprise when some changes happen quickly. If you are wondering or have ever wondered, what you can do when something makes you mad, the simple answer is almost anything. How we make change is by insisting -- over and over again -- through education, lobbying, letter-writing, pickets, protests, elections, and talking to people we know--that the change must happen. Working on issues as a group through NOW increases the power that each one of us has. So, for the New Year, come and work together with NOW to start changing what you know is unjust.

Jeanne Sommerfeld

**COUGAR'CRUITERS**

UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON ATHLETIC DEPT.  
RECRUITING ORGANIZATION

The University of Houston Athletic Department is now accepting applications for membership with the Cougar' Cruisers

**Cougar' Cruisers is affiliated with the recruiting of prospective student-athletes**

All those interested young women, please pick up applications at the athletic building in room 155, or at the football office.

Applications taken from Nov. 30th through Dec. 4th

**Deadline for applications Dec. 4th!**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL 749-7105**

## SCOTTY/By Michael Fry The Houston Post/Mon., December 7, 1987/ 3E



### MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION & NEWSLETTER SUBSCRIPTION FORM for HOUSTON AREA NOW or NOW AT UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON (Chapter # 0190) (Chapter # 0445)

1. \_\_\_\_\_ I wish to join NOW. (Specify HANOW or NOW at UH by writing the chapter # in the blank.) Dues for NOW are on a sliding scale from \$35 to \$15. This amount is divided among your Chapter, Texas NOW, and National NOW. Please send the largest amount for your dues that suits your circumstances. Your dues include subscriptions to The National NOW Times, The Texas NOW Times and this joint chapter newsletter.)

2. Enclosed are my dues in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_. If joining HANOW, make your check payable to them & send to: HANOW, PO Box 66351, Houston, TX 77266/6351. If joining NOW at UH, make your check payable to them and send to: NOW at the University of Houston, Box 509 UC, 4800 Calhoun, Houston TX 77004.

3. \_\_\_\_\_ I do not want to join NOW at this time, but I would like to subscribe to this Newsletter. Enclosed is \$7.50 for one year's subscription (next 11 issues - make check payable to NOW at UH and send to them at Box 509 UC, 4800 Calhoun, Houston, TX.)

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: DAY \_\_\_\_\_ EVE \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ TOWN \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_



NOW at UH MEETING  
 Semester Organizing Meeting  
 Time: Tuesday, Jan. 26, 4:30  
 Place: Campus Activities, UC/UG

EDITORS' NOTE  
 We had planned to give ourselves a gift  
 this month by doing a 4 page newslet-  
 ter. Given all the news, we wound up  
 with 8 - pp 5-6 are our gift to you.  
 JoAnn Evansgardner & Jeanne Sommerfeld

HANOW MEETINGS  
 Candidate Screening for TXNOWPAC  
 Time: Wednesday, Jan. 13, 7:00-9:00  
 Place: HAWC, 4 Chelsea Pl.  
 Roe v. Wade - Vigil Against Violence  
 Time: Thursday, Jan. 21, 6:30-9:00  
 Place: To be announced, call 728-5059

**HOUSTON AREA NOW and NOW at U.H.**

**The Joint Newsletter of**

HANOW  
 P. O. BOX 66351  
 HOUSTON, TX 77266-6351

BULK RATE  
 U.S. POSTAGE  
 PAID  
 Houston, Texas  
 Permit No. 9902

# Calendar

1988

Monday, Jan. 4, Candidate Filing Deadline.

Friday-Sunday, Jan. 22-24, Women's Agenda  
 Conf. Des Moines Iowa. See flyer.

Sunday, Jan. 10, HANOW work mtg to prepare  
 for Roe v. Wade action, and Board Mtg.  
 Call VP-COMM for directions.

Tuesday, Jan. 26, 4:30, NOW AT UH WEEKLY  
 MTG, Campus Activities, UC/UG

Monday, Jan. 11, DEADLINE FOR NEWSLETTER  
 ARTICLES. 741-4009, JoAnn

Friday-Sunday, Jan. 29-31, National NOW Bd  
 Mtg., Holiday Inn Crown Plaza, 2222  
 West Loop South. NOW members welcome.  
 Come see how NOW runs.

Wednesday, Jan. 13, 7:00-9:00, HANOW CANDI-  
 DATE SCREENING MTG, HAWC, 4 Chelsea Pl

Saturday, Jan. 30, Texas NOW Reception &  
 Fundraiser -- meet your National Board

Saturday-Sunday, Jan. 15-16, Newsletter  
 typing and layout. 741-4009

FEBRUARY - check this space next month for  
 NOW at UH meeting times - or call Kim,  
 520-8199 or JoAnn, 741-4009.

Monday, Jan. 17 6:30, Newsletter collating,  
 etc., 728-5059

Wednesday, Feb. 10, HANOW PROGRAM MTG.  
 Topic to be announced.

Thursday, Jan. 21, 6:30-9:00, Roe v. Wade -  
 Vigil Against Violence. Place to be  
 announced, call 728-5059

Saturday, Feb. 13, DEADLINE FOR JUDGING  
 ESSAYS IN HANOW WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH  
 ESSAY CONTEST. Note: Volunteers are  
 still needed, call Lee, 864-1772.  
 FLASH: HISD Supt. Joan Raymond will  
 award the prizes.

Friday, Jan. 22, CELEBRATION OF CHOICE  
 DINNER, sponsored by TARAL. First  
 Unitarian Church, 5210 Fannin. Tickets  
 \$15.00 at door or in advance by mail.  
 TARAL, 2332 Wroxtton, Houston, 77005.

Saturday, Feb. 27, TEXAS NOW STATE COUNCIL,  
 Beaumont. Call 864-8999 for info.