

# N.O.W. Bay Area Chapter



National Organization for Women

## NEWS

Vol. VIII, No. 3, March 1980

OV  
AL OFFICE



JIMMY!  
DO BATTLE IN THE  
UNRATIFIED STATES!

SOLDIERS  
FOR  
ERA

"PLEASE DON'T BOTHER THE NICE PRESIDENT, N.O.W. HE IS  
BUSY WITH IMPORTANT INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS."

THURSDAY, MARCH 6 7:30 PM UNITING CHURCH

### WOMEN AND THE MILITARY

- \* Motivations and aspirations of military women
- \* Career opportunities
- \* Equalities and inequalities between the sexes
- \* Draft and Equal Rights Amendment
- \* Combat exclusion

### GUESTS:

Enid Santana, University of Houston student, in ROTC  
Pam Pritchett, La Porte High School student in ROTC  
Linda Reaux, Personnel Specialist, Texas Air National Guard  
Kathy Mire, Accounting Specialist, Texas Air National Guard  
Bruce Zielsdorf, Public Affairs, Ellington Air Force Group

STATE COUNCIL MEETING REPORT  
San Antonio

The first order of business was election of officers to fill vacant posts until the state conference in May. Terry Chandler is now State Coordinator (Suzanne stepped down due to health problems) and Beth Hudman is Communications Coordinator. Area II and Area III membership coordinators and the task force coordinator were also chosen.

As a fundraiser, we can have a raffle at the state conference--but because of Texas law, the gift items must be donated (ticket purchases are donations, also, from the state view). If you would like to donate an item, contact Gail Wise (San Antonio chapter).

The State Conference will be 16-18 May in Huntsville. Early registration will not only help Huntsville coordinate; it will save you money, too. For NOW members, registration is \$20 in advance or \$25 at the door. Non-members pay \$25 in advance or \$30 at the door. This may seem expensive, but it's not bad compared with some other organizations' conference fees and Huntsville NOW is doing its best to keep other expenses low for attendees. A three-meal plan may be available for \$8.25 (you can't eat at McDonald's on that any more) *but only if at least 200 people sign up and pay for this in advance.* Dorm rooms will be available for \$5.60 per night, linens provided. There will be more about all of this in the call to conference later.

The agenda and workshop list for the state conference will be approved at the next state council meeting, which will be *here* Saturday 29 March. Come and bring input! Or volunteer shelter for council members from other cities. This is a good chance to get involved.

A full page of changes to the state bylaws were considered, For details, call me--we passed all but one (another was accepted in modified form). We also discussed reimbursement of state officers and settled on a system like National's (phone, postage, printing, some travel, etc.).

There was much discussion of nuclear power. National wants input about whether this is a feminist issue. State council voted a statement of opposition to nuclear power and weapons after some debate about whether to "spread ourselves thin." One of the attendees, however, came prepared with the statement and the offer of her services as coordinator of a Task Force on nuclear power. The task force was created and voted \$200 from the budget (something else we approved at the meeting).

Announcements:

The White House Conference on the Family: the nearest forum will be in Houston 22-23 February. There should be details elsewhere in the newsletter. This can effect

Pro Family, Pro Choice March: Corpus Christi Saturday 22 March. Lodging for that night is possible. Contact 512/992-6266.

Take Back the Working Day: Dallas 6 May. Also Take Back the Night on 2 August. For more info, call Pam Tatum at 214/826-7246.

Title IX: Denton County NOW is suing the county school district. Also note that there is action underway to change a portion of the Texas Education Code that violates Title IX by allowing students to be assigned a school on the basis of sex.

It was a long day, worthwhile. Hope to see some of the rest of the chapter at the next meeting.

Respectfully submitted.  
Bonnie Huval

[Mar. 1980]

## MEMBERSHIP LIST - FEBRUARY 23, 1980

474-2200h	ALDRICH, Eleanor	1014 Baronridge, Seabrook 77586	
538-1084	ANDERSON, Gail	3410 NASA Rd. 1 #104, Seabrook 77586	
554-6416	ANDERSON, Sandra	604 Laura La., League City 77573	
538-1271	BETTENCOURT, Jean	1818 Park Dr., Kemah 77565	488-9771 Office
474-4065	BLACKBURN, Roberta	4238 Honey Oaks, Seabrook 77586	
488-1718	BLANCHARD, Judy	839 Beachcomber, Houston 77062	
333-3827	BOGGESS, Martha	2105 San Sebastian #511, Houston 77058	
488-1896	BROWN, Rema Lou	731 Buoy Rd., Houston 77062	
337-2306	BRUCKNER, Nanette	UH/CLC, 2700 Bay Area Blvd., Houston 77058	488-9370 office
333-4764	BUTLER, Twiss	18507 Point Lookout Dr., Houston 77058	
488-1431	CARMEAN, Sonia	1519 Seagate, Houston, 77062	
333-4202	CARR, Vicki	18290 Upper Bay Rd. #122, Houston 77058	
554-2437	CHIDDIX, Frederica	310 Waco St. #103, League City 77573	
471-6353	COOK, Peggy	9802 Carlow La. La Porte 77571	
474-2691	DOTY, Sonia	P.O. Box 313, Seabrook 77586	471-3200 office
	DOUGHTY, Robert	16455 El Camino Real #2, Houston 77062	486-7890 office
946-6930	DUKE, Jackie	1217 Aberdeen, Pasadena 77502	
482-2392	FRULAND, Ruth	5426 Appleblossom, Friendswood, 77546	483-3274 office
482-1067	GLENN, Elizabeth	1108 Cowart Creek Dr, Friendswood 77546	
334-2296	GRAVES, Lillian	217 Bayou View, Seabrook 77586	476-4090 office
471-4439	GRIFFIN, Dorothy	611 South Second, La Porte 77571	
482-1151	HAIGHT, Christina	17007 Townes Rd, Friendswood, Tex. 77546	
488-8574	HICKS, Frances	1407 Seagate, Houston 77062	
486-0752	HOWARD, Dorothy	1529 Bonanza, Houston 77062	483-2821 office
762-7867	HUDMAN, Beth	P.O. Box 1387, Galveston 77553	765-3800 office
331-0444	HUVAL, Bonnie	708 Verhalen, Alvin 77511	
	HINDERSTEIN, Carro	609 Fannin, Suite 521, Houston 77002	228-3912 office
330-1909	INGRAHAM, Cricket	1210 Bacliff Dr., Bacliff 77518	
488-2696	JOHNSON, Lillian	16401 El Camino Real #7, Houston 77062	
488-7841	KANEKO, Setsuko	3710 Glenmeade, Houston 77059	
334-1645	KEENE, Susan	707 Baronridge, Seabrook 77586	423-4620 office
488-3278	KUHLMANN, Patricia	2002 Richvale, Houston 77062	
538-1290	LAB, Susan	219 West Fourth, Kemah 77565	
486-5827	LINTON, Sandra	1406 Neptune, Houston 77062	488-9216 office
486-5084	LOWES, Sharon	2313 Broadlawn, Houston 77058	
334-5057	MARKLEY, Jane	127 Driftwood Dr., Seabrook 77586	
332-5774	McfADIN, Mary	1502 Seventh St., League City 77573	
488-1901	McGREGOR, Lynn	954 Beachcomber, Houston 77062	333-8188 office
481-5458	McKINLEY, Martha	950 FM 1959 #1109, Houston 77034	
554-6738	MERTZ, Nora	1908 Fairfield North, League City 77573	333-7394 office
488-7042	NETTLES, Avis	703 Seafoam Rd., Houston 77062	
488-1159	PINE, Ann	16002 Torry Pines, Houston 77062	
488-3685	PRICE, Juanita	1727 Bowline, Houston 77062	
488-1238	RAMON, Jeannene	1515 Richvale, Houston 77062	
488-4396	RANDAL, Marjorie	1922 Redway La, Houston 77062	488-9216 office
921-5910	ROSSMAN, Pamela	1011½ Fashion, Houston 77023	
488-7803	RUDNICKI, Wendy	14915 Aspen Hills, Houston 77062	
471-2862	SALETAN, Jeanne	3030 Bayou Dr., La Porte 77571	
471-4826	SELTZER, Jenny C.C.	10 Pine Bluff, La Porte 77571	
488-0190	SHANNAHAN, Jo	1419 Redway La., Houston 77062	
333-3487	SHAW, M. Dale	2107 San Sebastian #715, Houston 77058	
333-2985	SHERWIN, Terri	1442 Pirate's Cove, Houston 77058	
488-0010	SMITH, Charlotte	15714 Seaside, Houston 77062	483-4086 office
	STAPLES, Martina	3000 Richmond, Suite 101, Houston 77098	522-7500 office
334-2617	STEWART, Sally	718 Bayview, Seabrook 77586	
534-4724	STIMSON, Marie	111 Casa La., Dickinson 77539	534-3370 office
	SUAREZ, Rachel	1199 Nasa Rd. 1, Suite 200, Houston 77058	486-9461 office

MEMBERSHIP LIST - FEBRUARY 23, 1980

486-1426	SUTTON, Cyndi	15818 Brookford, Houston 77059	
337-5308	SWARTZ, Betty	1216 Sunset Dr., Dickinson 77539	
944-0033	TUCKER, Phyllis	243 Empress, Houston 77034	453-5446 office
	ULJON, Linda	4934 Andrea Ave, Annandale, VA 22003	
641-6919	UPHAM, Kathye	8326 Jennings, Houston 77017	
486-1426	WADDELL, N. Carolyn	15818 Brookford, Houston 77059	488-9240 office
482-4216	WALLACE, Adele	17119 Blackhawk, Friendswood 77546	486-9682 office
528-2283	WEIKSNAR, Melissa	2121 Peckham, Houston 77019	965-3032 office 1239
333-5204	WHITECOTTON, Nancy	18204 Vinland, Houston 77058	483-4086 office
667-8556	WHYBURN, Kay	2234 Goldsmith, Houston 77030	749-3317 office
488-1777	WHITSETT, Evie	1110 Buoy Rd., Houston 77062	226-5444 office
337-1383	YANCEY, Betty	4913 31st St., Dickinson 77539	

Bay Area NOW Business Meeting - Minutes  
 Tuesday, February 19, 1980                      Jeanne Saletan - Presiding

Members present: Jeanne Saletan, Peggy Cook, Phyllis Tucker, Marj Randal, Dorothy Howard, & Pat Kuhlmann.

Marj Randal - Discussed starting a group for divorced women. Counseling them (legal, emotional, etc. problems).

Phyllis Tucker- The State Council Meeting will be held at A Uniting Church. There will be a need for alternate housing for people who will be attending this meeting. Contact Phyllis.

Food will be needed at the meeting. Dorothy volunteered to make the arrangements for sandwiches.

A nursery worker will be needed for the meeting. There will not be more than 2 or 3 children.

Jeanne Saletan - On May 3, 1980, both Texas Primary Elections are held, and all must be registered by April 3, 1980, to vote.

As soon as polls close, register to be delegate for state senatorial district caucus in June state convention. The first 104 people will be chosen as regular delegate.

"White House Conference on Families" - The delegates for this conference will be chosen by lottery. Those selected will be sent to Los Angeles (all expenses paid) to speak on the subject of families for 5 minutes. If interested, contact Jeanne for coupon lottery ticket.

Miscellaneous?! - On Saturday, March 1, 1980, at UH/GLC an Elder from the Mormon Church, Salt Lake City, will be the keynote speaker, at 9 a.m. Bay Area, Houston, Galveston, Huntsville NOW & other groups will participate in a picket.

Some of the signs will read: "Morman Bosses Fear Equal Rights", "A Mormon of Quality Does Not Fear A Woman of Equality", "The Mormons Need Sonja Johnson", "A Family Should Not Depend On Patriarchy"

Friday night, February 29, 1980, there will be a poster-picket making at Dorothy Howard's place, at 7:30 p.m.

## NARAL

The fight for abortion rights was dealt a devastating blow December 6 when the house adopted an amendment to the Child Health Assurance Program bill (CHAP) which prohibits Medicaid funding for abortions except when necessary to save the life of the woman. This amendment actually seeks to change Title XIX of the Social Security Act, which is the medicaid statute. It is more serious than an appropriations bill prohibition because it writes restrictions into the authorizing language itself, which does not come up yearly for review and approval. It is, in effect, A PERMANENT PROHIBITION AGAINST FUNDING FOR ABORTIONS THROUGH MEDICAID EXCEPT WHEN NECESSARY TO SAVE THE WOMAN'S LIFE. The amendment also interferes with court orders to fund abortions because the court orders are based on what is said in the Medicaid statute. This extremely serious prohibition against Medicaid funding for abortion services is not public law and will not become law and go into effect as long as it is not also approved by the Senate.

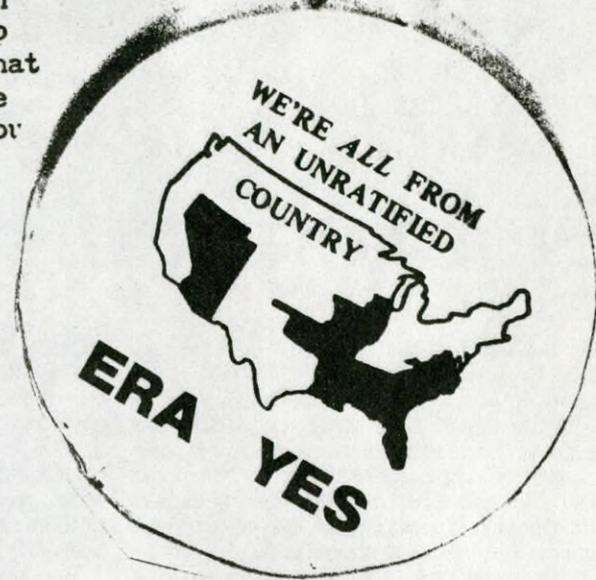
Next year, look for: attempts to obtain more restrictive appropriations legislation (to prohibit funding except when the life of the woman is endangered); anti-abortion targeting on more and more authorization bills, which will involve a variety of government programs; and very serious efforts to restrict any state funding of abortions.

While review of our recent legislative history is sobering, we should not be discouraged. An increasing number of Congressional offices are reporting that contact from pro-choice constituents "back home" is steadily increasing—and NOTHING IS MORE IMPORTANT TO A SENATOR OR MEMBER OF CONGRESS THAN WHAT (S)HE HEARS FROM "BACK HOME"!!! The legislative picture will start to look brighter as the pro-choice majority takes time to let its Members of Congress know—through letters and phone calls to Washington, D.C. and to local district offices—that pro-choice votes are appreciated and anti-abortion votes are noted and WILL MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN THE VOTING BOOTH.

**ACTION NEEDED:** Call the Houston offices of Senator Lloyd Bentsen 226-5496 and Senator John Tower 226-5673 and urge

them to oppose the Bauman and Voelker Amendments to Senate Bill 1204. Say that you are pro-choice in the matter of abortion and your vote. ACT NOW. Or write:

Senator Lloyd Bentsen  
or Senator John Tower  
515 Rusk  
Houston, Texas 77002



### ERA ACTION TEAM

Help! After a splendid start, we are limping along for lack of workers. Rotating troops are needed to make it to June 1982 or final ratification, whichever comes first. Alice Paul gave 50 years for ERA. Can you give one session per month? WEDNESDAY EVENINGS or THURSDAY MORNINGS. Attorney Rachel Suarez is a member who is giving her office for the evening sessions. Days we will be at Evie's. Call Lynn McGregor 488-1901 or Jeanne Saletan to sign up.

ROBERTA BLACKBURN, JEAN STEIN, ANN PINE and WENDY RUDNICKI have been most frequent workers. This month we also had Sandi Anderson, Louise Dennett, Anne Atkinson, Maryann Haggemaker and Rosemary Williams. Also Marie Stimson working from home base.

ERA presentations were made to LULAC, HCWPC, UFO and Women in Action talk comes up on Monday, March 17. Frances Hicks and Jeanne Saletan invite speakers and accompanists to go with them.

Messages are going to all presidential candidates insisting that they make ERA a visible important issue in their campaigns. John Anderson needs encouragement to continue his strong ERA support. Baker and Bush must be told that their weak endorsements just won't do. As the candidates come through Houston we will be out there with voice and with signs saying ERA WHAT HAVE YOU DONE FOR IT LATELY?

# Abortion

The Houston Post/Wed., Feb. 20, 1980/ 11A

## Both sides plan renewed push before final ruling made

By MARK SAUER  
Post Reporter

Those on both sides of the volatile abortion issue vowed to step up campaigns to get their respective arguments to the public before the U.S. Supreme Court makes a final ruling on its decision Tuesday that the government must resume funding abortions for the poor.

The ruling was greeted in Houston in a predictable fashion, with pro-abortion groups delighted and anti-abortion groups dismayed. The high court ruling came pending full-scale review of the issue before the end of the current court term.

"We are outraged by the ruling," said Robert Powell, vice president of the Texas Right to Life Committee.

"The power of the purse belongs to our elected officials, not to the courts. A majority has shown through their elected representatives that Americans do not want to pay for abortion on demand and now the Supreme Court has usurped their power and said, 'You not only will tolerate it (abortion), you will pay for it,'" he said.

"WE BELIEVE AID to the poor should be in the form of food and housing, not help for killing their babies," Powell said.

Phyllis Van Kerrebroek, president of the board of Houston Planned Parenthood, applauded the ruling for its broad definition of medically necessary abortions.

"This definition is much more liberal than what we have now, but it could be more re-

strictive than the original 1973 Supreme Court ruling allowing abortion on demand because the term *medically necessary* was not included in that," Van Kerrebroek said.

"We believe (the ruling) reinforces the constitutional rights of religious freedom and equal protection under the law. We hope it will become permanent when the court makes its final decision," she said.

Tuesday's action temporarily upheld the decision of U.S. District Judge John Dooling of New York City who last month struck down the so-called Hyde Amendment, a congressional restriction on federal spending for Medicaid abortions.

**UNDER DOOLING'S RULING**, Medicaid money must be available for all eligible women seeking "medically necessary" abortions — a definition Dooling took beyond physical health to include the best interest of a woman's mental and social well-being.

The Most Rev. John L. Morkovsky, Roman Catholic bishop of the Galveston-Houston Diocese, said he was saddened by the ruling.

"With the conviction that abortion is the killing of an infant, I find it most deplorable that the Supreme Court considers killing a right that must be provided by tax funds for some members of our society," he said.

"It is so contrary to the principles on which our nation was founded — that human beings deserve dignity and the undeniable right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness," the bishop said.

**JOAN GLANTZ, SPEAKING** for the

American Civil Liberties Union which favors abortion on demand, called Dooling "courageous for not letting religious biases interfere with his judgment."

"Judge Dooling gave this case a most thorough hearing, he listened to all sorts of perspectives on the matter and he decided that to deprive (a poor woman) of an abortion is to perpetuate a form of religious discrimination," Glantz said.

"Congress has to be educated. Apparently they feel it's OK to put a lot of tax money into taking care of poor people but a much less expensive measure to honor a woman's decision to have an abortion is not OK," she said.

Jerome Chapman, a commissioner with the Texas Department of Human Resources — the agency which administers federal funds for abortions — said he was awaiting a telegram from the Department of Health, Education and Welfare late Tuesday directing how soon such funding will become available.

"I ASSUME WE WILL GO back to the system we used before the Hyde Amendment and that is when a physician felt an abortion was necessary, another physician was consulted and then the case was then taken to our medical department for what was essentially a third opinion," he said. "We have always been rather cautious about this."

Chapman said the matter could be acted on by his agency's board of directors this week through an emergency action.

### DINNER PARTY GUIDE TRAINING SCHEDULED

Judy Chicago and Diane Gelon will lead the Dinner Party Docent training session Wednesday, March 5, in the Developmental Arts Building at UH/CLC.

#### Training Session Schedule:

- 11 - Noon: Personal time with the Dinner Party exhibit
- Noon - 1: DP Orientation by Gelon and Chicago
- 1 - 2: Docent procedures and scheduling by Rema Lou Brown
- 2 - 2:30: Questions/answers by Jean Quataert and Brown

Everyone who wishes to be a docent should try to be at this session. Those who cannot attend during the day will be offered this training on a weekend date after the opening of the DP exhibit. Gelon asks that Docents be familiar with the Dinner Party book and Through the Flower, Chicago's autobiography.

It is hoped that docents will be asked to work 3½ hours twice a month after the opening.

For further information call Rema Lou Brown, 488-1896, or Barbara Friend, 488-9236 or 488-9237.

[Mar. 1980]

WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE ON FAMILIES

BANOW MEMBERS HAD LETTERS PUBLISHED  
IN HOUSTON NEWSPAPERS IN FEBRUARY

Members of BANOW testified at the Houston hearing on February 22-23. Twiss Butler criticized the traditional patriarchal family. Jeanne Saletan spoke on Homemakers Rights. Rema Lou Brown also spoke.

It is especially important that the feminist point of view on the family be represented because of an organized right wing takeover. You can still be effective by submitting written testimony to:

Governor William Clements, Jr.  
State Capitol  
Austin, Texas 78711

Express yourself on problems faced by American families and their possible solutions. Suggestions: ERA, child care, single parent households, education, employment, housing, ABORTION RIGHTS. Include a request that the governor appoint you as one of 53 delegates to national conference or take your chances in lottery for 25 additional delegate places or do both! Coupon below.

TELEPHONE HOTLINE TO THE GOVERNOR'S OFFICE  
FEB. 22-MAR. 7, EXCEPT WEEKEND. TO OFFER SUGGESTIONS  
ON FAMILY LIFE NEEDS CALL 1-800-252-9600.

I am interested in representing Texas as a delegate to the White House Conference on Families in Los Angeles, July 10-12, 1980. I understand that my transportation and accommodation expenses will be paid. (There will be 25 names drawn by officers of the Texas Bank from those submitted.)

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone (AC: ) \_\_\_\_\_  
Occupation \_\_\_\_\_

Return to: Texas Bank  
P.O. Box 1328  
Austin, TX 78767

If your name is drawn  
you will be contacted  
by March 31.

first paragraph of letter on draft by Twiss Butler which was omitted from publication when appeared in Houston Chronicle:

Phyllis Schlafly's guilty secret is out at last. Even without the ERA, U.S. women have always been subject to the draft--as well as to all other obligations of male citizens such as paying taxes and obeying the law. The big difference, however, is that except for the right to vote women are deprived of all the civil rights that the constitution guarantees to men, including equal protection of the law. If women have not previously been summoned for military service, the main reason is the reluctance of federal and state legislators to publicly confront this constitutional inequity and correct it. Women's automatic exemption from the draft was part of the "protective" smokescreen long used to conceal refusal to allow women their civil rights.

cont. →

Hard to do POST 2/17/80

George Romney (Post Jan. 12) asks, "What greater or higher calling can there be than to bear life inside you and give it nurturing and training?"

I... answer: **PROVIDING** for that precious life that child, when two parents' incomes are needed to purchase necessities and education for their offspring, or **PROVIDING** the sole support of your children when you are a single parent.

In either case, it is hard to do when women still earn about 60 cents for every dollar earned by men.

Yes, we do need an ERA for economic reasons.  
Sandra V. Anderson  
604 Laura Lane, League City, Texas 77573

Ms. POST 2/17/80

Even the esteemed London Times ("London Times bids 'Ms.' goodbye, good riddance," Post Jan. 30) is subject to prejudices and blind spots. The Times has completely missed the point on "Ms.," which was coined as a polite form of address for all women comparable to "Mr." for all men.

"Ms." is neutral on marital status. We don't need to know if a man is single or married in order to know how to treat him on the job or in most public situations. Likewise with women.

Marital status is irrelevant. When you do need to know if she is married, please ask her just as you would ask a man.

"Ms." has the advantage of making written communication simple and it is easily spoken if you pronounce it more like "Miss" than "Mz." What seems strange today will fall comfortably into our language tomorrow if you try using it with conviction.

Jean Stein

18307 Anne Drive, Houston, Texas 77058

Write to Sound-Off, The Houston Post, Houston, Texas 77001. Sign your letter and list your home address and daytime telephone number. And please keep it short.

It will be a male decision

From Twiss Butler, 18507 Point Lookout Dr.

Final ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment has been blocked by a total of six legislators in three states. Similarly, decisions regarding registering and drafting women, as well as sending them into combat, will in the end be made by a few male leaders according to their personal advantage or whim.

Women's rights, not to mention their alleged "physiological and psychological" capabilities, will have nothing whatever to do with these decisions.

General Meeting February

HAFFCU

Film IN THE BEST INTERESTS OF CHILDREN was about families headed by lesbian mothers. We welcomed visitors from Houston N.O.W. chapters.

Members decided that nuclear energy and nuclear weaponry IS a feminist issue by a vote of 13-4.

We were urged to oppose the relaxation of rules governing surveillance of American citizens by writing to our U.S. senators and president.

HAFFCU, Houston Area Feminist Federal Credit Union will probably remain open, according to Joyce Cragg, Treasurer. There is at present no CETA employee to maintain office hours, and Joyce plans to open the office at 4600 Main only on Fridays. Credit Unions around the country are making few loans because their legal interest rate ceiling is only 12 %, financially very unfavorable these days. HAFFCU is, however, making a few loans.

MARY DALY WORKSHOP

January 21, 1980

Mary Daly, feminist philosopher and author of BEYOND GOD THE FATHER, THE CHURCH AND THE SECOND SEX, and GYN/ECOLOGY, THE METAETHICS OF RADICAL FEMINISM, will be the principal speaker at the Mary Daly Workshop to be held at the First Unitarian Church, Saturday, March 22nd at 8:30 a.m. Admission is \$10.00 for the entire day. Child care and lunch will be available. Persons who pre-register will receive a free ticket (\$3.00 value) to attend Mary Daly's presentation on Friday, March 21st at 8:00 p.m., at the University of Houston Clear Lake City Auditorium. You may pre-register by sending your admission fee to Women's Group, First Unitarian Church, 5210 Fannin, Houston, Texas 77004. For additional information call 437-5215 or 440-1924.

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

       I would like to become a member of Bay Area NOW and National NOW. (\$22)

       I am already a member of National NOW and wish to pay local dues. (\$ 7)

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

       I am not a member but would like to receive the NEWSLETTER for a year. (\$4)

       I would like to make a contribution of \$\_\_\_\_\_ to NOW.

       As a NOW member, I authorize my name and address to be published on the chapter roster.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Other Phone \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ City and Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation \_\_\_\_\_

Mon. March 17: WOMAN AND FAMILY

10:11:30 AM 1-316 Film: Who Remembers Mama? Discussant: Pamela Linbeck, Family Counselor

Noon-1:30 PM Forest Room Book Review: The Women's Room with Dr. Harriet Wadeson

1:30-3:00 PM 2-504 Presentation: Texas Family Code. Rachel Suarez, attorney

3:00-5:30 PM 2-504 Panel: Dilemma: Being a Married Feminist, Gay Cosgriff, Carol Drennan, Barbara Ellman, Dr. Cheryl Rampage

5:30-7:00 PM 1-314 Film: In the Best Interest of the Children (Lesbian Child Custody) Discussant: Patti O'Kane, attorney

7:30 PM BAYOU AUDITORIUM-SONIA JOHNSON of Mormons for E.R.A., GUEST SPEAKER  
Admission \$3.00 (\$2.00 for students)

30BB /The Houston Post/Sun., Dec. 9, 1979

## Sonia Johnson: uplifted by her beliefs, put down by church

By ELLEN GOODMAN

BOSTON — I first heard the news in a television dressing room sitting with Germaine Greer. The report was brief: Sonia Johnson was going to be tried by a Mormon tribunal for criticizing her church's political actions against the Equal Rights Amendment.

For many months, the 43-year-old Virginia founder of Mormons for the ERA had been publicizing the fact that "grass-roots" opposition to the amendment in many Western states was actually organized opposition of the Mormon church. Now the church had struck back.

They would put her on trial to see if she should be cut off from the rights, privileges and fellowship of the religion her family had belonged to for five generations. To deny her, as they believe they can, a place in heaven.

In the quiet of the dressing room that morning, Greer exploded: "Good. Now this Sonia person will find out that you can't be a Mormon and a feminist."

"Good" was a cruel word for this human drama, which had brought pain to an entire family and anguish to many others. But days later — after the brief, unsatisfactory trial — I repeated this exchange to Sonia Johnson

and asked: "Can you be a feminist and a Mormon?"

"Well," she said softly, "we're about to see."

On Dec. 5, she found out. The church said no, and as she held on to the other end of the phone, crying, she added, "It's no surprise . . . but when it happens . . . I've put off grieving, but now I can't help it."

Sonia Johnson is not alone. The answer, flat and unequivocal, is important to every woman and man who believe in equal rights and belong to a church opposed to them. It is important to anyone who has ever felt uplifted by religious beliefs and put down by religious institutions.

Hers is the most extreme, but not the only, example of what is happening to men and women in many other traditional fundamentalist religions — men and women advocating change in a time of entrenchment. From Sister Teresa Kane, the nun who spoke up to the pope, to William Callahan, the priest being "reassigned" because he believes in women clergy, there is renewed hostility from many hierarchies. Women are again offered specious special privileges in return for a shroud, and allotted a place only as long as they will stay in it.

Still, Sonia Johnson was a curious choice for an ecclesiastical trial. "Ironically, I am what they made

me," she said. "I am strong because the church makes strong women. There is a song in the church: *Do What Is Right and Let the Consequences Follow*. I took them at their word."

For years, the woman was aware of the ambivalence of the Mormon church: "The basic teachings of the church are that we are all God's children, that he considers everyone equally. But in another teaching it says women must be obedient to their husbands.

"In the gospel, the teaching is very egalitarian, but in the practice the men are in charge of everything."

She accepted this double message — as have so many other women — as the price of admission to her community. But in April 1978, a letter from the Mormon hierarchy was read in the church where she was organist, calling the ERA unnecessary and a threat to the family.

"I said to myself, no, that's not true," so she began her own crusade, criticizing the church for interfering with the state, for politicking, and, she believes, "killing the ERA in this country."

For this, she has been excommunicated, set aside from her heritage and her family: from a brother who won't speak to her, a father who fears for her immortal

soul, and a mother who alternates between pride and despair.

Ironically, she has even been criticized by Barbara Smith, the leading Mormon woman who once told a reporter, "I have always thought people should speak their own opinion even if they don't share mine."

Supported by her husband and children and friends, Sonia Johnson doesn't worry about being excluded from heaven. "I don't think that God is bound by men's mortal errors. I'm not afraid of God doing something that Old Boy-ish." But she feels the loss of her community and the pain of her family acutely.

She has learned what can happen when a rigid religious hierarchy moves against its own critics. The message is as old as the Inquisition.

On the day before the decision came, Sonia Johnson talked about her affection and her fear of rejection. "I don't want to leave it. I do love it. I feel it is as much my church as theirs. But maybe I can't be a feminist and a Mormon. Maybe they won't let me be. That may be what I'm going to discover. Which is pretty sad for the church, isn't it?"

"Ironically, I am what they made me," said Sonia Johnson. "I am strong because the church makes strong women. There is a song in the church: 'Do What Is Right and Let the Consequences Follow.' I took them at their word"

WOMEN'S WEEK IV CONT.

Tuesday, March 18: Woman's Body, Woman's Mind

- 10:00-11:00 AM 1-316 Film: Beauty Knows No Pain Discussant: Nellie Wegmann  
 Noon-1:30 PM Forest Book Reviewz The Mermaid and the Minotaur with Dr. Gretchen Mieszkowski and Students  
 Room  
 1:30-3:00 PM Presentation: Body Imagry in Art. Lynn Randolph, Women's 2-532  
 Caucus for Art, Houston  
 3:00-4:30 PM Presentation: Women and Utopias. Dr. Curt Smith and Students 2-508  
 5:30-7:00 PM 2-508 Book Review: Fat is a Feminist Issue with Dr. Carol Snyder, Dr. Rita Justice, Dr. Toby Myers, (Gail Padgett), [REDACTED]

Wednesday, March 19: WOMEN AND MEN

- 10:00-11:30AM 1-314 Film: Men's Lives Discussants: Rema Lou Brown, Dr. Howard Eisner, Moderator: Dr. Craig Oettinger  
 Noon-1:30 PM Forest Book Review: For Her Own Good with Twiss Butler  
 Room  
 1:30-3:00 PM 2-504 Presentation: Sexist Language, What's Going On? Dr. Glenn Freedman, Marjorie Randal, Manager of WRS  
 4:00-5:30 PM 2-504 Panel: Masculine/Feminine: A Question of Androgyny  
 Forest 6-7:30 Gail Anderson, Dr. Carol Snyder. Moderator, Dr. Oettinger  
 7:30-9:00 PM 2-532 Panel: Impact of Feminism on Men's Lives Dr. George Lipsitz, Dr. Andrew Smith, Dr. Ballard Pritchett, Gavin Clabaugh, Clay Hicks,

Thursday, March 20: WOMEN AND THEIR WORK

- 10:00-11:30AM 1-316 Film: Woman Power; A Woman's Place Is  
 Discussant: Dr. Jean Quataert  
 12:00-1:30 PM Forest Book Review: Games Mother Never Taught You with Nancy  
 3:30 Room Mollada, Executive, and Christina Haight, Student  
 2:00-4:00 PM 2-504 Presentation: The Corporate Wife. Carolyn Ulrickson  
 5:30-7:00 PM 2-532 Panel: Two Career Marriages, Dr. Beverly Crane and Dr. Don Wright, Ruth Fruland and Len Srnka, Mary Ann and Don Holton.  
 Moderator: Carolyn Waddell  
 7:30-9:00 PM 2-532 Presentation: Women in the Organization. Society for Women Managers

Friday March 21: WOMEN AND RELIGION

- 10:00-Noon 2-532 Panel: Changing Roles for Women in Religion. Betty Masquette, Episcopal Minister, Janis Ross, St. Joan's Alliance, Ann Wilde, Presbyterian Elder, Jeanne Baletan, Jewish Layperson.  
 Noon-2:00 PM 2-532 Book Reviews: The Church and the Second Sex with Rev. Royster; Beyond God the Father with S. Anne Cook  
 2:00-4:00 PM 2-225 Demonstration: Consciousness-Raising for Women. Helen Copitka and Jane Markley

7:30 PM BAYOU AUDITORIUM ; DR. MARY DALY, PHILOSOPHER, THEOLOGIAN on THE METAETHICS OF RADICAL FEMINISM GUEST SPEAKER  
 Admission \$3.00 (\$2.00 for students)

W.I.R.E.S.

Elizabeth Glenn is the new Director of WIRES, Women's Information, Referral, Exchange Service.  
 792-4664

April 3 is last day to register for May 3 primary. Write-ins are permitted. Call Voter Registration 224-1919, ext. 310 for information.

They have a 2-foot long card file

# Support Your ERA. You Didn't Get Where You Are Alone

BY JANE O'REILLY

**S**OMEONE KNOCKS AT your door and asks you to donate time and money toward passage of the Equal Rights Amendment. What is the correct response?

- I gave at the office.
- I got where I am today all by myself. Why can't other women?
- I'm a feminist, of course, but I'm not a joiner and I don't consider myself part of any movement.
- I don't think the ERA will ever pass. Why don't we work for something we can win? I hate to be on the losing side of anything.
- I don't want to seem like a crank.
- All the gains have been won.
- We already have enough laws to make us equal.
- What exactly is the Equal Rights Amendment, anyway?

Or,

- I'm so glad you asked. I'm a successful, savvy woman, and by now the very thought of the ERA exhausts me. We've been trying to pass an equal rights amendment since 1923—56 years! It's incredible that it should even be necessary, that half the population—my half—is not included in the Constitution of the United States. When I think about what that means, that I am not considered equal under the laws of this democratic country, that I am a second-class citizen, I get so angry I get tired. Powerlessness is wearying. Successful women can't express anger at the system without seeming to be cranks. So we waste our energy being mad at other women.

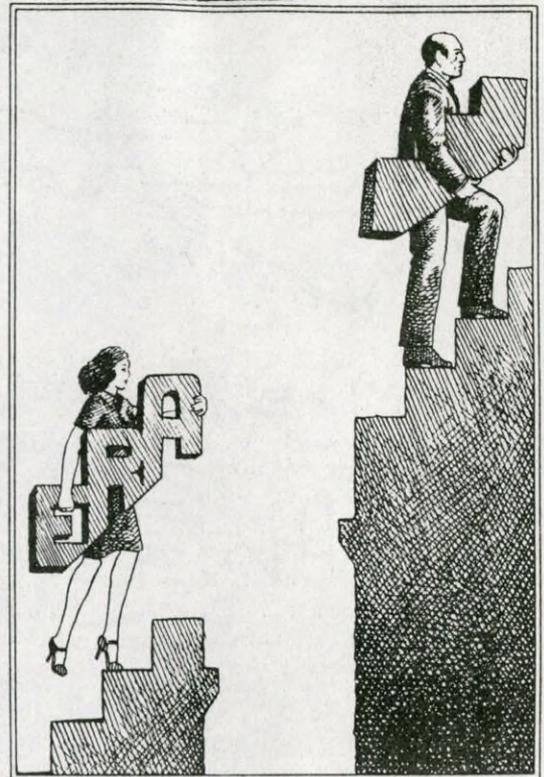
Take the older women, the "I did it myself, why should I help other women?" crowd. They are the ones who felt the fiercest strain of being odd, of always having to be better than men. Like a fraternity hazing, they had to eat worms to get into the club. Isn't

*Jane O'Reilly's collection of essays on women's issues, The Girl I Left Behind Me, will be published by Macmillan in the spring.*

that reason enough to change the system, not perpetuate it?

And the younger women, the ones who think all the gains are already won. Do they think they can get into medical school simply because they are smart? Don't they know that they are being admitted to professional schools, being hired by corporations, being granted tenure, because they *have* to be, because hundreds of other women went to court to demand enforcement of affirmative-action laws? How can they deny they are reaping the benefits won by thousands of women—pregnant teachers, older stewardesses, university women, A.T.&T. workers, reporters, even Little League girls—who risked expensive, discouraging, embarrassing years fighting to get and keep their jobs and to redress past discrimination? Without the Equal Rights Amendment, the lawsuits will go on forever. Even with the Amendment, the battles will go on, but at least we will have a better weapon—a universal legal definition of equality of the sexes.

Saying we already have enough laws to make us equal is false comfort. We have a lot of laws designed to make us equal, but they apply only to some parts of our lives, and some parts of the country, and are subject to the whims of legislators and the interpretation of the courts. We have many more laws based on the presumption that women are *not* equal, and the Supreme Court, without an equal rights amendment, does not consider laws that discriminate against women as automatically suspect (as racial discrimination is considered automatically suspect). A woman who believes we already have enough laws will be surprised, if she gets a divorce in Georgia, to find that the house occupied by the family is the property of the husband even if she has earned the money and made the payments, or, if she and her husband jointly run a business in Maine, to



learn that the profits are the property of the husband.

**H**OW CAN WE TALK about gains, when women are still making 57 cents for every dollar men earn in the United States? When only 276 women serve on the corporate boards of the biggest 1,300 corporations? When women and children make up 79 percent of the poor in this country? When 50.8 percent of the college population is now women, but women with five years of college are still paid less than men with four years of high school? When women make up 40 percent of the work force but 80 percent of us are in the lowest paying, dead-end jobs? When 94 percent of the people making over \$15,000 a year are white males? Maybe that's the reason men tell us we don't need the ERA.

Sure, it would be nice to be on the winning side. So let's make sure we are. Without equal rights, women will always be on the losing side. Thirty-five states have ratified the ERA. We need three more, and we organized and won an extension until June 30, 1982 to get them. No one is going to push the ERA except us.

I'm not a crank. I'm smart enough to have something to say, and in a position to be heard. I have an obligation to all women—including myself. How much money do you want, how many telegrams shall I send, how many speeches shall I give? Where do I join?

Which is *your* answer? =

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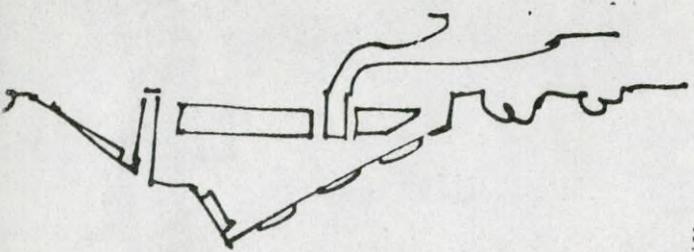
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