

N.O.W.  
NEWS

Bay Area Chapter  
National Organization for Women



Volume IV, Number 9 - September, 1976

**"My husband and I both work.  
He has credit and I don't.  
How come."**

**Maybe you haven't asked for it  
properly. Ask us how to ask.**

Program Meeting: 8 p.m.

Thursday, September 2, 1976

Uniting Church - El Camino & Reseda

Clear Lake City, Texas

HAFFCU - The Need For a Feminist Financial Institution

Speakers from the Houston Area Feminist Federal Credit Union will describe what HAFFCU is, what it is doing, and what it hopes to do. Panelists include Laura Oren, President of the HAFFCU Board, Credit Committee member Marjorie Randal, and a member of the Supervisory Committee. Moderator is Rema Lou Brown, HAFFCU Manager. Members, friends, and the public are welcome to attend this program on the vital subject of women and credit.

When you got married your name changed. Your record most likely became part of your husband's in the Credit Bureau files. That means that your previous credit rating became part of a new "family unit" listed under your husband's name. That's the way it works.

You may have a very legitimate reason for wanting your own credit records. Maybe you simply want some financial independence. There may be something you want to buy or

replace independent of your husband. We understand, and so will your husband.

That's why we've printed a booklet just for you. **YOU AND YOUR CREDIT BUREAU. A Love Story.** It answers questions about borrowing, setting up charge accounts and establishing good credit. In your name. Call us at 626-3420 and we'll send you a copy. Or drop by Galleria Bank and we'll go over the booklet with you. We can help.



**Galleria Bank**  
5051 Westheimer  
Member F.D.I.C.



**"I CAN'T SAVE A DIME.** I'm an impulse buyer. I see something I like, I buy it. But Bank of the Southwest showed me how to set up an automatic savings account. Each month, they transfer a little money from my checking account to my savings account. I never see it so I never miss it . . . or spend it.

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## CALENDAR

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September 2\* Bay Area NOW Program Meeting: HAFFCU. 8 pm. Uniting Church, CLC.  
Presiding Officer: Rema Lou Brown

September 10 UH-CL Film Series - Slide lecture: The Screen Image of Women  
in American Film. \$1. (Also 9/17, 9/24).

September 14-16 State Textbook Committee meets to vote on 1976 textbook choices.  
Texas Education Agency, Austin.

September 15 Bay Area NOW Business Meeting. 7:30 pm. Uniting Church. Check  
with Frances Hicks to verify date (488-8574). All members welcome.

September 19 NOW State Council meeting. 10 am. State Capitol, Austin.

September 22 Rape Crisis Task Force - Planning meeting. 8 pm. Call 488-1777  
for location.

October 8 NOW National By-laws Convention. Kansas City, Mo.

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Presiding Officer September/October: Becky Christman (488-7339)

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Welcome to new members: Margaret Kemp, Juanita Price, Jo Young, Lilla Swisher

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\*On the agenda of the September 2 meeting: 1) Questions will be raised with respect to possible sex discrimination by UH-CL - in hiring, admissions, or curriculum. If you are aware of any instances of apparent discrimination, please be at the meeting to detail them, or call Rema Lou Brown (488-1896); 2) Volunteers needed to replace present but retiring Treasurer and Telephone Tree Coordinator - if you can count or dial, you're just right for these jobs, provided you are also strong, responsible, and Highly Motivated. Sign up rotcheer!

Bay Area NOW August Meeting: Summary

"Quality Education Equals Parents Plus Schools" a panel discussion arranged by Betty Yancey and Rachel Reed, featured CCISD students Edie Whitsett and Camilla Randal, Dorothy Steele of the Clear Creek Classroom Teachers Association, and Richard Griffin, CCISD administrator. Ms. Steele said that, perhaps as a result of the unprecedented level of parent/school involvement introduced by Head Start, school teachers and administrators are more receptive to "more contact" with parents than they formerly were. She advised parents to make any necessary complaints first to the teacher, to "always be courteous," and not makers of "a blatant noise," and stated that "I've never been in a shouting match with a parent, thank God." Pointing out that effective parents are needed and that "a happy child is easy to teach," she noted that "any discipline problem can usually be traced to the home." Communicating her own enthusiasm for the classroom - "I teach home living and I love it" - she reminded her audience to "praise the schools and the teachers." Ms. Whitsett suggested as areas of school's practices that could use improvement the need for students to be present at parent-teacher conferences ("to defend myself and present my case to people who are judging me"), a revision of homework assignments ("smart people don't need busywork") with the SRA approach perhaps serving as a model for schoolwork away from school, a restructuring of student government to convert the present "personality contest" into a meaningful opportunity for students to assume responsibility for matters concerning them. "The school is for me and I ought to have a voice in it, or at least know what it's doing." She stressed the desirability of broader school support for student-generated activities, and the need for participatory voting by both parents and students on school issues. Ms. Randal discussed the bias toward male leadership and traditional male activities that characterize high school organization, noting official emphasis on boys' athletics and the ceremonies surrounding

Summary of August Meeting (cont.)

them, such as pep rallies, which do not necessarily have a great deal of spontaneous student support. Work and status, she said, are stratified by sex - "counselors, secretaries, and receptionists are female; head counselors and principals are male" - a situation which makes it easy for male authorities to dismiss female dissatisfaction with the status quo as mere bids for attention from "women's libbers." She advised students to look for the best teachers to study with, and to maximize available options within the school framework. Mr. Griffin acknowledged present national anxiety over apparent lack of effectiveness of public schools, academically and socially. "Lack of partnership" of those concerned, he suggested, may be a factor. Saying that "elementary (level) is what I know best," he remarked that "We do awkward things in school compared with what we know about the nature of children."

As always, dialogue among panelists and the audience of members and guests was spirited.

The Screen Image of Women in American Film

This film series will be presented at the University of Houston - Clear Lake on Friday nights at 8 p.m. from September 10 through November 12. Per-session charge \$1. Slide lectures and newsreels will accompany such well-known films as "Birth of a Nation" and "The Devil is a Woman." A nod to the other side of the stereotypic view is promised by the October 15 slide lecture: "The Independents--Autonomous Women in a Male Fantasy World."

→ ♀ businesses in Houston (Pokey Anderson is compiling a list of women's)  
 (businesses in Houston. Note her criteria, as )  
 (listed below, and send her information on )  
 (people you think may be eligible for listing.)

To keep this manageable, I'm working with the following parameters:

- ° located in Houston metropolitan area
- ° a business at least 50% owned by a woman or women, or
  - a business managed by a woman, or
  - a woman working in a field where compensation is primarily by commission (insurance, real estate, car sales, etc.), or
  - a woman who (although regularly employed by one of those "95% institutions") is willing to provide a skill or service in her free time.

The test is, does the money you spend there end up in a woman's pocket.

(Fill in as much as you know, but even "Becky somebody who runs that plant shop at the corner of Westheimer and Kirby" will help. I'll be contacting everybody to see that their listing is accurate before we go to press.)

→ Name of woman \_\_\_\_\_  
 Name of business \_\_\_\_\_  
 Type of business \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address of business \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Note if not in city of Houston,  
 e.g. Pasadena, Clear Lake City, etc.)  
 Business phone \_\_\_\_\_  
 (If bus. phone unavailable, home phone.)

Return to:

Pokey Anderson  
 1531 Maryland, #4  
 Houston, TX. 77006  
 526-7828

Protest Hearings on Textbooks before Texas Education Agency, Austin, Texas, August 19-20, 1976

Because many members are not familiar with our project, let me give just a little background. For several years, the NOW Continuing Task Force on Education for Women has consisted of feminists throughout Texas who are interested in eliminating sexism in textbooks utilized by our public schools. Each spring, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) announces the categories of textbooks to be adopted that year. Publishers submit candidate textbooks, and copies are sent to each school district. At this time our Task Force coordinators (this year they were Marjorie Randal, Kay Whyburn, and Twiss Butler) send information packets to NOW chapters and to any other person interested in participating in the screening of these books for sexism. These written reviews (bills of particulars) are returned to the coordinators and forwarded to TEA who in turn sends them on to the publishers. This year over 100 women and men submitted 229 individual bills. The publishers' responses to the bills are made to TEA and forwarded to the coordinators.

TEA sets the date for the Textbook Selection Committee to hear oral testimony of citizens of the state who have written criticisms, and at this time the publishers have a chance to rebut the testimony, to make concessions, or to request that the books be considered without changes.\* Our Task Force was allotted a block of time (about 8 hours of actual testimony) and this was parceled out by the coordinators to the testifiers according to the seriousness of the sexism in the book on which they were testifying, or to the lack of response on the part of a publisher. We had thought to be scheduled for Thursday afternoon, but found we were to start mid-morning. Many of our testifiers were not arriving until Friday, causing us to filibuster somewhat to allow us to carry over to the next day.

TEA had their official timekeeper---and we had Rema Lou Brown...sitting by us as we testified, signaling to us to speed up or to "stretch it out." It was very comforting to some of us to have a sister close by when it came our turn to "face the lions."

Barbara Duke of Austin introduced our Mary Buxton, the first expert witness. Mary is presently employed as Research Analyst by the American Society for Medical Technology. NOW's other expert witnesses were Judy Corder-Bolz, Assistant Professor of Sociology, University of Texas, and Cliff Whyburn, Associate Professor of Mathematics, University of Houston.

There were 28 testifiers including Mary Buxton, Marjorie Randal, Twiss Butler, Mary Fae McKay, Rema Lou Brown, Frances Hicks, Dorothy Pearson, and Rebecca Saletan of Bay Area NOW. A standing rule of the committee had been that any person who had submitted a signed bill was eligible to testify on any bill submitted by the Task Force. This year, TEA changed the rules, after we had submitted our schedules and had started to testify, declaring that a person could testify only in the category on which they had reported. Some of our women arrived in Austin only to find that they had been declared ineligible (Jean Saletan of Bay Area was among them).

TEA also harassed our coordinators by trying to change our schedules (requiring us to testify on all books of one publisher at a time--rather than on all books of one category). In spite of the harassments, we did receive glimmerings of hope that some of the committee members might be sympathetic to our cause. In a few weeks we will know just how much influence we might have had, when the committee's selections are announced.

Cheers to Marjorie Randal, Kay Whyburn, and Twiss Butler for a splendid job of coordinating our efforts and maintaining timely presentations under the pressures at Austin! Thanks, also, to Rema Lou Brown! See you all in Austin next year!!!!

\*A publisher will offer a candidate book to TEA for a certain price. Any changes requested by TEA will be added to the price! This being the case, not too many changes are made. Our only hope is that the most sexist books will be eliminated from consideration. Last year's work was reflected in the books presented this year...and this year's efforts will hopefully result in the presentation of some really good textbooks next spring. Dorothy Pearson

Interesting Reading...review by Becky Christman

As I read Jo Freeman's book, The Politics of Women's Liberation, I began to see my own participation in the movement in a perspective not available to me before. Many questions I had were discussed and, for some, I even found answers!

The subtitle, a case study of an emerging social movement and its relation to the policy process succinctly describes the scope of the book, originally a doctoral thesis. Ms. Freeman was personally involved in the women's movement from 1967-69. In the years between 1970-74, she followed the movement through friends, traveling, lecturing, and publications. So, she writes from the benefit of this double experience.

After describing the dynamics which operated to originate the movement in the '60's, she goes on to tell about the various types of organizations, how they differ and how, in spite of differences, they or we work together. The history of NOW is presented and then the other smaller groups are described along with the important functions they have performed, and continue to carry out. The latter part of the book is devoted to the relationship of the movement to public policy. Ms. Freeman notes with us that this aspect is complex and ongoing. She compares the women's movement to the civil rights movement and notes that in matters of equal opportunity for women the federal bureaucracy has moved more quickly than was the case regarding minorities. She sees the national women's organizations such as NOW as currently viable influences on public policy.

It seems to me that this book is worthwhile reading for all feminists because it is written by a feminist and gives us a view of our recent history and an all-important political analysis.

At the end of the book there is an excellent bibliography entitled "publish women or perish," along with footnotes suggesting all kinds of additional reading.

Rape Crisis Task Force

Task Force sponsored training for rape victim advocates will begin in October. To inquire about schedule, call Help Line (488-7222) or Evie Whitsett (488-1777).

The Task Force also provides opportunities for participants to do public education work on this subject, or to work on publicity. Interested people are invited to attend a Planning Meeting on September 22, at 8 pm. Check with Evie for location.

Susan Brownmiller - Right Again

In Brownmiller's Against Our Will: Men, Women, and Rape, there is a chapter titled "The Myth of the Heroic Rapist" which examines the glorification of Jack the Ripper by male writers, reporters, and critics. "Jack the Ripper's grip on the masculine imagination is so out of proportion to the case of an unknown man who stalked, mutilated and murdered five prostitutes in London's East End in the autumn of 1888 that we must wonder precisely what his attraction holds," says Brownmiller. Her quote from Colin Wilson offers a clue: "The sexual act has a close affinity with murder...Murderer and victim are in the same sort of relation as the male penetrating the female." The item opposite (Houston Post, 7/25/76) was headlined "Author claims Victorian conspiracy in Jack the Ripper investigation" and offers an elaborate theory that Jack "was a conspiracy at a very high level, a sort of Victorian Watergate in which the cover-up succeeded." Note the lyrical joy in the opening lines.

## *Author cl*

**Chicago Tribune Service**

LONDON — Jack the Ripper, that midnight slasher of 19th Century prostitutes, long has been the world's most captivating killer.

He has become the very epitome of the homicidal maniac, the untraceable murderer who killed for his own demented kind of fun, terrorizing the population and gleefully taunting the police with his successes.

He has been made the subject of song, movies, prose, poetry and even children's rhymes. He was never caught, and despite hundreds of attempts he never has been convincingly identified.

But now there is a new theory of Jack the Ripper, one that advances him from

Houston Post, August 20, 1976, Austin (AP) - "A woman shed tears Thursday over vulgar words in a dictionary, proposed for Texas high schools, ... because it contained numerous slang expressions for sexual intercourse (etc.) ... After reading several others in their scatological meanings, she choked up. 'I'm not going to read any more,' she sobbed."

A check of the Random House dictionary shows that the sort of slang words mentioned above are, usually, accurately and objectively defined. What is obscene about the book is its sexist bias. Although words insulting ethnic groups are cited as offensive, this term is not applied to words grossly offensive to or contemptuous of women. Such words don't even merit the disparaging label given to "honky." Instead, for example, "tail" is coolly defined as "12...coitus, or a woman considered as an object of coitus" while "cunt" is "slang (usually vulgar) 1. the vagina. 2. a woman, especially as an object of sex." In general, words used disparagingly of men are not described in that sense, and there are significant imbalances in definitions of what should be equivalent terms. While a bachelor is simply "an unmarried man," a spinster is "a woman beyond the usual age for marrying and still unmarried." Such examples abound, but the following comments on "female" and "male" will serve to show how it's done. A few tears of rage might be in order:

**fe-male** (*fē'māl*), *n.* 1. a human being of the sex that conceives and bears young; a woman or girl. 2. any animal of corresponding sex, either bearing living young or producing eggs. 3. *Bot.* a pistillate plant. —*adj.* 4. belonging to the sex that bears young or produces eggs. 5. of, pertaining to, or characteristic of this sex; feminine: *female suffrage; female charm*. 6. *Bot.* a. designating or pertaining to a plant or the reproductive structure of a plant that produces or contains elements that need fertilization. b. (of seed plants) pistillate. 7. *Arch.* noting a part, thread, etc., into which a corresponding male part fits. 8. *Obs.* womanish; weakly. [ME, var. (by assoc. with *male*) of *femelle* < ML *femella* female, L: little woman, dim. of *femina*; see *FEM*] —*fe'-male-ness*, *n.* —*Syn.* 1. See *woman*. 5. *FEMALE*, *EFFEMINATE*, *FEMININE* refer to attributes of women. *FEMALE* is both the general and scientific term, and was formerly used to designate anything not male: *female organs in a plant or animal; a female seminary*. *EFFEMINATE* is seldom applied to women; it refers reproachfully or contemptuously to qualities which, although natural in women, are ordinarily and weak when possessed by men, and often suggest homosexuality: *effeminate features; an effeminate voice*. *FEMININE*, corresponding to masculine, applies to the attributes particularly appropriate to women, esp. the softer and more delicate qualities. The word is seldom used merely to denote sex, and, if applied to ideas, objects, or the like, suggests the delicacy and weakness of women: *a feminine figure, point of view, features*. —*Ant.* 1-8, male.

*st. mi. Cap.: Malé.*  
**male** (*māl*), *adj.* 1. of or belonging to the sex that begets young by fertilizing the female. 2. pertaining to or characteristic of this sex; masculine. 3. composed of males: *a male choir*. 4. *Bot.* a. designating or pertaining to any reproductive structure producing or containing elements that bring about the fertilization of the female element. b. (of seed plants) staminate. 5. *Arch.* noting a part, thread, etc., fitting into a corresponding female part. —*n.* 6. a person of the male sex; man or boy. 7. any animal of male sex. 8. *Bot.* a staminate plant. [ME < MF *mas/le* < L *masculus*]. See *MASCULINE*] —*male'ness*, *n.* —*Syn.* 1. *MALE*, *MASCULINE* are descriptive of one belonging to the paternal sex. *MALE* always refers to sex, whether of human beings, animals, or plants; *Male animals are often larger than the females*. *MASCULINE* applies to the qualities that properly characterize human males: *a masculine love of sports*. The term may be applied to women, suggesting some incongruity (as, *a masculine appearance*), or with complimentary or ambivalent implications: *She has a masculine mind*. 2. manly. —*Ant.* 1, 2, 4-8, female.  
**Ma-le** (*māl*), *n.* a city in and the capital of the Maldives Islands, 8515 (1963).  
**male-**, a prefix meaning "evil," occurring in loan words from Latin: *malediction*. Cf. *mal-*, [*< 1*].  
**ma-le-ate** (*māl'ēt*), *n.* *Chem.* a salt or ester of maleic acid. [*MALEIC ACID* + *-ATE*]

Whatever Happened to TITLE IX? Department

WASHINGTON — The Senate Thursday voted 88-0 to exempt father-son and mother-daughter school activities from federal sex discrimination laws.

The unanimous vote followed debate in which Sen. Birch Bayh, D-Ind., praised federal efforts against sex discrimination but called recent rulings against traditional all-male or all-female school social activities "the most idiotic I have ever heard of."

The provision approved Thursday is an amendment to a pending six-year, \$35.3 billion education and vocational assistance authorization bill.

It applies to sex discrimination rulings issued by the Health, Education and Welfare Department and follows controversial HEW bans against father-son functions and all-boy chorale groups in schools.

President Ford recently ordered HEW to rescind its ruling that father-son and mother-daughter functions were sexually discriminatory.

The overall Senate bill, once passed, would have to go to the House for action.

The sexual discrimination exemption states that traditional father-son and mother-daughter school functions are permissible so long as the school offers "opportunities for reasonably comparable activities . . . for students of the other sex."

The amendment, offered by Sen. Paul Fannin, R-Ariz., also exempts American Legion youth organizations — including Boys State, Boys Nation, Girls State and Girls Nation — from sex discrimination laws.

★The Houston Post  
FRIDAY, AUG. 27, 1976

Coach's Corner:

Little-known Facts

The emotion carries over into team unity, what you often hear men players say is lacking on their team. It takes five to ten years for most men's teams to develop the kind of rapport the Dandelions had last year, claims Edwards.

"We can also tell when a woman has been out partying or dancing too late. We can't tell that with a man, but we can tell if he's spent the night with a woman. That kind of activity really takes the edge off a man and he's subpar on the field. That's why fighters are kept away from home six weeks to two months. However, you just don't know that with a woman.

"You know, with men in most sports there are the stars who feel they should have special privileges," he adds. "What I really like about the women is that even with the ones who have superior talent, there are no showoffs, no prima donnas. Everyone is willing to pull her share." ☉

# Unsung Heroines in American History

Conclusion of article reprinted from Equal Rights Monitor 7/76

• EMMA LAZARUS wrote the poem which is inscribed on the Statue of Liberty: "Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free."

*In the world of SCIENCE:*

• FLORENCE SABIN, while still a medical student in the 1890's, prepared the first model of the brain stem of a new-born child, a model so exact that it was used in medical schools everywhere. In her first assignment as a professional medical researcher, she cracked the mystery of the function of the lymphatics, a problem that had baffled medical science for 200 years. Invited in 1925 to head the new department of cellular studies of the Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research, Sabin coordinated the study of tuberculosis which laid the groundwork for the disease's control in the 1940s. She was the first woman elected to the prestigious National Academy of Science.

*In the field of EDUCATION:*

• MARY McLEOD BETHUNE, born the first free person in her family, created Bethune-Cookman College and served as its president from 1904 to 1942. She started the college on a dumping ground called "Hell's Hole" and raised the down-payment by selling ice cream and sweet potato pie. In time, the college expanded to 27 buildings, a faculty of more than 100, and acquired an "A" rating in the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. In 1933, FDR appointed Bethune to be Director of the Division of Negro Affairs of the National Youth Administration, the first black to hold high federal office. In the course of her life, Bethune never

forgot her call to education: "For I am my mother's daughter and the drums of Africa still beat in my heart. They will not let me rest while there is still a single Negro boy or girl without a chance to prove his worth."

*In the world of POLITICS:*

• MARGARET BRENT, Maryland landowner, became the first woman in America to ask for the vote and the right to be seated in political office in 1647. She was ejected from a meeting of the colonial assembly for making these demands; she was refused a voice in the affairs of government since "it would set a bad example for ye wives of ye colony."  
• 267 years later, JEANNETTE RANKIN, elected to the U.S. House of Representatives from Montana, was the first woman to be elected to national office. On her first day in Congress, Woodrow Wilson asked the body to declare war on Germany; in the face of great opposition, Rankin cast her first vote in Congress: "I want to stand by my country but I cannot vote for war. I vote no." Near the end of her term she guided the woman's suffrage amendment to victory in the House.

*In the world of MODERN BUSINESS:*

• MARY WELLS serves as founder of Wells, Rich, Greene, Inc., one of the country's largest advertising agencies. In April 1966, Wells formed her own agency; within the first six months of operation, the total billings amounted to about \$30,000,000.

The list is endless. In every field, in every decade, formidable women have risen above discrimination and "woman's place" to achieve remarkable goals. Yet despite individual achievement,

for the most part the history books continue to recount the records of men. We may well wonder why.

In *The Women, Yes!* (Hecht et al., 1973) several factors are suggested for the unfair treatment of women by the historians. Often women have had the initiative and imagination to found new institutions or to organize movements only to discover that this male-oriented society required that the women step back and give titular leadership to men. The U.S. Sanitary Commission is a case in point. It was organized and operated by women during the Civil War to care for wounded soldiers. Yet its first president was Henry W. Bellows, "a Unitarian clergyman who could provide the male prestige that was thought necessary."

A second factor is the fact that this country's formal history emphasizes war and military leaders. Therefore, "William T. Sherman, who burned his way through Georgia, is in the Hall of Fame; Clara Barton, who helped clean up the mess, is not."

Finally, we must remember that most historians have been male. In every field, male authorities have been quoted and acclaimed; female authorities have been largely ignored.

But we must not take this documentary omission for lack of action or lack of imagination on the part of our foremothers. As the authors of *The Women, Yes!* tell us, "Women have made history; they simply have not been given credit for it."

As a result, part of the effort before us as we begin the third century as a nation is to discover our female heritage. Until we do, any history of the U.S. must remain misshapen and ill-informed.

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 N.O.W. and National N.O.W. (\$15)

\_\_\_\_\_ 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 N.O.W.

\_\_\_\_\_ As a N.O.W. member, I authorize my name and address to be published on chapter roster.

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

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

Occupation and Employer \_\_\_\_\_

Interests and/or skills which I can contribute to Bay Area N.O.W. projects:

Criticism of Bay Area N.O.W.'s program, organization, goals:

# WHO REALLY CARES ABOUT HOUSEWIVES?

Ratification of the ERA may be boiling down to a question of credibility and where the uncommitted should place their trust — with the antis or with the pros.

The antis are a curious lot: the Communist Party, the Ku Klux Klan, the American Independent Party, the John Birch Society, some elements of the hierarchy of the Catholic Church, organizations of women like "Hot Dog" and "HOW", "Fascinating Womanhood", "Total Woman" and in collaboration with the John Birch Society, "Stop-ERA."

The simple fact of the matter is that "Stop-ERA" and all the other anti-feminist groups previously mentioned have done nothing for women — homemakers or otherwise. Phyllis Schlafly, the radical right political opportunist who organized the Stop-ERA groups, cites all the laws feminist organizations like NOW have worked to have passed these past 9 years to "prove" the ERA is unnecessary. There is no record she ever lent a helping hand in their passage. There is no record, in fact, that she's ever done — or even been for — anything of benefit to women who work either outside or inside the home.

Aside from specific NOW accomplishments and what the entire feminist movement has done to promote and safeguard the interests of working women, we also have a substantial record of changes in attitude, practices and law of direct benefit to homemakers that have been overlooked. These need to be broadcast to the world, especially to the homemakers Mrs. Schlafly and her associates have gullied into opposing the ERA.

These benefits include the following:

- Feminists got credit laws changed so that a married woman's credit can be in her own name and she can develop a credit history that will survive, even if her marriage ends in divorce or widowhood.
- Feminists pressured for the new law that provides for joint management of community property (instead of management by the husband alone) so that wives have to be consulted and involved in decisions vital to the financial security of the family.



By Toni Carabillo  
National Advisory Board

- Feminists have focused attention on childbirth conditions and on the comfort of women rather than attending physicians. It is also feminists who are changing attitudes toward menopause.
  - Feminists brought attention to the safety of birth control methods and to the hazards of so-called feminine hygiene sprays. It was also feminists who spearheaded the campaign to establish women's right to choose; that resulted in the 1973 Supreme Court decision on abortion.
  - Feminists focused public attention on the need for community as well as work-site child care facilities (for the 13.3 million working mothers and the 2.5 million women heads of household) and it is feminists who have succeeded in getting larger deductions allowed for the costs of child care.
  - Feminists have drawn attention to the wholesale failure of the courts and state agencies to enforce child support agreements so that after one year, only 38% of fathers are in full compliance and 42% have made no payment at all. (Even then, these agencies only take action after the mother and children are on Welfare so that they can recover the money for the State.)
  - Feminists have pressured employers, both public and private, to adopt the concept of "parent leave" so that either or both parents can respond to family emergencies.
- Feminists are focusing national attention on the problem of household violence and the fact that cases of battered wives outnumber rape cases by 3 to 1.
  - Feminists have raised the consciousness of the country to the mistreatment of victims of rape in medical, police and court procedures and have succeeded in making changes in all three, as well as altering generally accepted attitudes that rape victims somehow provoke the assault.
  - Feminists are working for better Social Security provisions for homemakers, including accounts in their own names, so that benefits will not be lost if the marriage doesn't last.
  - Feminists have pressed to establish the concept of "Responsible Divorce" so that even under the new dissolution of marriage procedures, financial support is dependent during the marriage. (Few remember it was feminists who opposed the new dissolution laws because they were premature in a society that had failed to provide either equal opportunity or encouragement for women to achieve economic independence.)
  - Feminists developed and initiated the new "Displaced Homemaker" legislation designed to assist women between the ages of 35 and 65 — too old for welfare assistance and too young for Medicare or Social Security — but who have lost their position as homemaker because of widowhood, divorce or loss of family income.
  - Feminists — recognizing that in a society where if something isn't assigned a dollar value, it is in fact totally unvalued — have stimulated recent calculations of the dollar value of homemaker's services and are pressuring to have it counted in the Gross National Product (GNP) which measures the goods and services produced by the people of the United States.
  - And last but not least, it is the whole feminist debate over women's role in this society and the exposure of the hypocritical treatment of wives and mothers — paid homage once a year on "Mother's Day," but taken for granted and excluded from genuine public concern the other 364 days of the year — that has in fact inspired "housewives" to begin calling themselves "homemakers" and has inspired new self-esteem as well as public recognition of the value of their role.

If those who oppose the ERA could cite a similar list of accomplishments of benefit to women, they might have some credibility as the homemakers' champion and defender. Until then, they deserve neither credibility nor trust. Homemakers, keeping in mind all we have done in their interest in the past, might better take *our* word for it — we all need the ERA.

