



# BROADSIDE

HOUSTON AREA NOW

BROADSIDE--Vol. 11, No. 5

MAY, 1980

## NATIONAL MARCH FOR THE E.R.A. TO BE HELD MAY 10 IN CHICAGO

The National Organization for Women is coordinating another Great March, comparable to the July 9, 1978, March in Washington, D.C. The purpose this time is to inform Illinois legislators that we're ALL from an unratified country, and we do not intend to stay that way. Illinois is very close to ratifying the ERA; the ERA was defeated only by a very few votes several times last year in Illinois, which is the only Northern industrial state not to have ratified the ERA.



Hopes are high that a huge turnout will impress Illinois legislators that this country does indeed believe in Equality under the Law.

Texas NOW is hoping to send about 150 people to

Chicago May 10. NOW members across Texas are working hard to publicize the event; hopefully, three Greyhounds and a group on Delta Airlines, resplendent in white, will represent the State of Texas in Chicago May 10.

Contributions to defray the costs of this effort are still badly needed. Send your contribution (only if you can't send YOURSELF or a FRIEND to Chicago!), to Houston Area NOW, P.O. Box 66351, Houston, Texas 77006.

For further information about the March, call Jan Stevens at 445-2220, or Aileen McMurrer at 524-0439.

Those who attended the July 9 won't be able to miss this--those who missed July 9--NOW's your chance!



COALITION OF GREATER HOUSTON NOW CHAPTERS

HERIZONS--Vol. 5, No. 5  
MAY, 1980

## WIN \$500.00!!

Houston Area NOW is sponsoring a raffle to raise funds for 1980. Only 100 tickets will be sold at \$10.00, so chances of winning are pretty attractive. Raffle tickets are available from Margi Tufts, 665-8494; Kathy Duncan, 977-7297; or B.J. Lancon, 481-2806. The drawing for the winning ticket will be held at the June 5 business meeting of HANOW, at the World Trade Building, 1520 Texas Ave., 7:30 pm. Winner need not be present to win.

## BULLETINS!--BULLETINS!--BULLETINS!--

\*\*\*NOW's Boycott of unratified states in support of the Equal Rights Amendment was ruled legal by the 8th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals. NOW was sued by the state of Missouri two years ago for their boycott; Missouri Attorney General John Ashcroft charged that St. Louis had lost \$11 million and Kansas City \$8 million in convention business. Ashcroft referred to NOW as "economically powerful people." !?

\*\*\*Norman Lear, producer of ALL IN THE FAMILY and other groundbreaking television shows, gave \$500,000 to establish a fund to promote the ERA in the memory of Edith Bunker, the straightforward if somewhat harried homemaker wife of bigot Archie Bunker on ALL IN

THE FAMILY. She is being written out of the show next fall by having her die. Lear hopes that people will remember Edith Bunker with a contribution to aid the ERA.

## HISTORY:

- 100,000 BP (Before Present) - Woman invents the Wheel.
- 99,999 BP - Looking down, Man invents the Pedestal.
- 75,000 BP - Woman uses Wheel to construct the Water Wheel, the Spinning Wheel, and the Rotisserie.
- 50,000 BP - Man still trying to figure out what to do with the Pedestal; considering using it to mash mastodons.
- 40,000 BP - Woman uses Wheel to create Wagons, the Windmill, and the Frisbee.
- 25,000 BP - Males envious of Woman's more useful circular devices want to trade; Women refuse, invent the Sundial.
- 10,000 BP - Men take Wheel by force, claim it as their own. Put Women ON Pedestal, calling it an honor.
- PRESENT - Men invent bombs and nuclear disasters, calling it "progress." Women reject Pedestal.
- FUTURE - Women fully integrate their own views into society; Men and Women join together in making the World a place of Harmony, conducive to Living. Cooperate in calling THIS progress, learn to call death-dealing things Evil.

## ANTHROPOLOGY/ANTHRO-APOLOGY?

Those of us who have studied anthropology have been subjected to typically male-oriented reasoning in the interpretation of artifacts and evolution. Apparently male human beings evolved in such a way as to keep the species extant; females, adjunct rather than operative, merely evolved into whatever would be most attractive to the males; therefore, women exist today only because of our improved ability to be attractive to males, and, by extension, we are useful only to males, and not to ourselves. Or so one might think, judging from traditional anthropological reasoning. Our breasts, for instance, are large to attract men; the clitoris is a mysterious, hedonistic appendage. So the question is dropped.

Occasionally, however, one finds a somewhat refreshing view. Ashley Montagu wrote a whole book entitled *THE NATURAL SUPERIORITY OF WOMEN*. While we are trying to establish equality, not superiority, for women, it hurts little to have our special qualities pointed out and admired.

Elaine Morgan's *THE DESCENT OF WOMAN* contains a more positive view of female evolution; evolution progresses, after all, in a positive manner: one's strong traits are preserved, rather than one's useless traits being lost.

Richard Leakey, son of anthropologist Mary Leakey, attends the issue of inherent male/female differences with some seriousness

in his last two books, *ORIGINS* and *PEOPLE OF THE LAKE*. Although he does use the term "man" as a generic reference to human beings a few times, Leakey usually uses non-sex-related collective nouns. (Thanks for small favors!) Leakey does have some interesting points.

"Admittedly there are now many formidable and deeply entrenched barriers in the way of women who wish to participate equally in the political and economic life of our society. These barriers are constructed on a foundation of social prejudice and conditioning. But they remain so intractable because a long evolutionary history has almost certainly implanted within us a propensity towards sexual differentiation of status, with males dominating. Having said as much, we should stress that with childbearing no longer a major obstacle in the way of a woman attempting to pursue a long-term career, there is nothing to prevent a total restructuring of society so that men and women may contribute equally to the domestic economy. A greater participation in political affairs would soon follow, perhaps to our advantage--as would also women's freedom to take lovers and to separate from their spouses." (*ORIGINS*)

My major questions to the points raised in this passage are Do anthropologists offer a REALLY logical explanation of

male domination? And, is child-BEARING really an obstacle, or is it really child-REARING, which is, of course, social, as opposed to being biological. The pregnant cave-woman had little choice about giving birth, but she certainly had to make a conscious choice to breast-feed. Taking away a woman's capacity for controlling her reproductive abilities can definitely be called an obstacle.

In PEOPLE OF THE LAKE, Leakey devotes an entire chapter to "Sex and the Need for Women's Liberation."

"What we see in society today may be a cultural pattern woven with the threads of basic biological imperatives.

"This, of course, is an essentially unprovable proposition. In which case we perhaps should look to another aspect of culture for a solution--justice. Society is riddled with laws and prejudice that assume the inferiority of women. No such assumption is justified. And as we are a thoroughly cultural animal capable of ordering society as we choose, the only just way to proceed is to assume that men and women can achieve equally in social, economic, and political spheres. It can be done. But, as long-established social traditions have very deep roots, the Women's Liberation movement faces an enormous task in removing the expression of those traditions and replacing them with a set of values based on justice." (PEOPLE OF THE LAKE)

Anthropologists, particularly

those who are women, are coming around to interpreting evolution from a less male-superior perspective. Are they on the right track? Or is the male-superior perspective so pervasive that we haven't really viewed evolution from an impartial viewpoint? Why do they keep calling child-bearing a disability? Could it be that women and children stayed back at the cave while the men (and maybe women without children) hunted not because the woman must give her breast to the child every few hours (a child is QUITE portable), but because the child's crying might alert the hunted bison? A small point to quibble over, perhaps; but there may be many small points like this.

When do we allow ourselves to be more androgynous than when we are babies? Despite pink and blue blankets, diapers, etc., babies have no social compunction when it comes to playing sex roles.

Some other sciences seek to find a biological answer in hormones or chromosomes or brain cells for our sex roles; if such an answer exists, it only came about through evolution, which is a fascinating, if sometimes speculative branch of anthropology. Some consider anthropology to be an effete pursuit. I say the surface has barely been scratched--anthropology has much to offer in understanding ourselves.



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# CALENDAR

MAY, 1980

- 1--HOUSTON AREA NOW Action Meeting, 7:30 pm, World Trade Building, 1520 Texas Ave.
- 8--HOUSTON AREA NOW Program Meeting, 8:00 pm, World Trade Building, 1520 Texas Ave. Speaker from EEOC.
- 10-ERA Activities in Illinois.
- 11 Watch for local coverage;
- 12 if you can, GO!!!
- 13
- 15-Informal Meeting/Rap session at the Office, 4600 Main, HAFFCU Room, 7:30 pm. We will discuss the May 10 March, State Convention, anything else you can think of! Everyone welcome!
- 16-Texas NOW Convention,
- 17 Huntsville. Call any NOW
- 18 officer for further info.

VOTE MAY 3. We need to get more feminist people in government. An important race to watch is the Ron Waters bid for Jack Ogg's Texas Senate seat. Waters is a supporter of women's issues; Ogg is not.

Aileen McMurrer, President of Houston Area NOW, will be a featured speaker APRIL 26, a Saturday, at a MILITANT Forum. The location is 806 Elgin, second floor. Time is 7:30 pm. The topic will be THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT; a very good film, BANNERS AND BABIES will be shown. Donation \$2.00. Open to the public.

AFTER THE DINNER PARTY--a committee under the sponsorship of Texas Arts and Cultural Organization is providing a public forum for discussion of THE DINNER PARTY art exhibit. Meetings are Saturday mornings, 10-12, from now through the close of the exhibition. The forums will be held at St. James Episcopal Church, 3129 Southmore. Call TACO (527-8438) or St. James Church (526-9571) if you plan to attend. Coordinators for the groups include Carole Drennan, Kris Halstead, and Mary Ross Taylor.

THE HOUSTON MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS will show a film series featuring women directors. All films will begin at 8 pm, and will be shown Saturdays, May 3 through June 28. Directors include Mai Zetterling and Jeanne Moreau. \$2.00. The Museum will also show BEAUTY KNOWS NO PAIN, a documentary film which gives a behind-the-scenes look at the stress and rigors of training to become a Kilgore "Rangerette." This film will be shown Wednesdays and Sundays through May 18 at 12:15 pm and is free. Films are shown at the Museum of Fine Arts, 1001 Bissonnet at Main.



### ACTION ALERT: POLITICAL

WE REALLY NEED FEMINIST VOICES IN THE TEXAS LEGISLATURE. DEBRA DANBURG IS RUNNING FOR STATE LEGISLATURE, DISTRICT 79. SHE NEEDS WORKERS FOR HER CAMPAIGN--CALL 868-0970 TO SIGN UP.

A GROUP OF HOUSTON PEOPLE WHO SUPPORT JOHN B. ANDERSON FOR PRESIDENT NEED YOUR TIME FOR PHONE WORK; CALL DAVID CLAYTON AT 988-8958 OR NORM O'NEILL AT 780-8524 IF YOU CAN SPEND A LITTLE TIME FOR ANDERSON.

### ACTION ALERT: ERA

The Memorial Drive Church of Christ has a tape service which allows callers to request tapes by number, and then listen to a five-minute recording on one of a variety of subjects. They offer a tape on ERA, which features a woman going over all the unfounded Schlafly-type arguments against equality. The woman then proceeds to insult one's intelligence by saying she's glad to be a woman and she opposes equality for women in the same sentence. In spite of saying in the tape's introduction that all allegations are supported by the Bible, they can present no verses to support the idea of inequality under the law, referring only to one scripture, namely one which tells of Eve being made from Adam's rib. I've never heard of the Book of Schlafly being in the Bible, myself; not only is this church getting into state matters, but they are opposing women's rights and attempting to manipulate their members by trying to pit them against those people (the majority, by the way) who support women's rights.

You can express your objections to this tape by commenting to Bible Call, P. O. Box 19263, Houston, Texas 77024.

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**\*\*INFORMATION FOR INCLUSION** in the next BROADSIDE/HERIZONS newsletter should be submitted by the 15th of each month for the next month's issue. Material may be mailed to Jan Stevens, 6726 Desert Rose, Houston, Tx. 77086, or you may give it to Jan at the HANOW Program meeting, 2nd Thurs. each month.

Views and opinions expressed in BROADSIDE/HERIZONS are those of individual authors and do not necessarily express those of any NOW chapter or National NOW.

**Now is  
the Time...**

HOUSTON AREA NOW  
 P.O. Box 66351  
 HOUSTON, TX. 77006

President	Aileen McMurrer	524-0439
Vice-President	Patricia Bastidas	528-0296
Secretary	Leslie Reston	776-9827
Treasurer	Jan Stevens	445-2220

**to join  
NOW!**

MONTROSE AREA NOW  
 1803 FAIRVIEW  
 HOUSTON, TX. 77006

President	Peggy Hall	522-4468
Vice-President	Kay Whyburn	667-8556
Secretary	Peggy Mazeika	981-1074
Treasurer	Burnet Oliveros	526-0664

NORTHWEST HOUSTON NOW  
 1031 ARROWHILL  
 HOUSTON, TX. 77077

President	Susan Blanchard	376-5486
Vice-President	Elaine Oliver	468-7348
Treasurer	Marilvn Hannahs	496-2136

I wish to join \_\_\_\_\_ chapter of NOW.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

I enclose dues: \_\_\_\$30.00 Regular \_\_\_\$16.00 Hardship

I wish to pay either of the above in two installments and I enclose  
 \_\_\_\$15.00 Regular \_\_\_\$8.00 Hardship

This is my first installment \_\_\_ This is my second installment \_\_\_

Make your check payable to the chapter of your choice, and send to the appropriate address as listed above. Dues include membership in the local chapter, Texas NOW, and National NOW.

BULK RATE  
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Houston, Texas  
Permit No. 9902



# National Organization for Women

**ACTION ALERT: THE DINNER PARTY**

Workers are still needed to take tickets, money, and act as docents at THE DINNER PARTY exhibit in Clear Lake City. It's really a lot of fun! Call Rema Lou Brown at: 488-9215, 488-9216, 488-9217.

**Defend a Woman's Right to Choose!**

**10:**

HANOW  
P. O. BOX 66351  
HOUSTON, TEXAS 77006



THE EQUIGHTS AMENDMENT

SECTION 1: Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex.

SECTION 2: The Congress shall have the power to enforce, by appropriate legislation, the provisions of this article.

SECTION 3: This amendment shall take effect two years after the date of ratification.

