

# Virginia N.O.W.

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May 1983



## Repeal Roe v. Wade?

Could it happen? Yes, and soon. S.J. Res. 3, the Hatch constitutional amendment as revised by Eagleton states that "A right to an abortion is not secured by this constitution." It would completely sweep away the conclusions in the Roe v. Wade decision by the Supreme Court. It clears the way for the states and the federal government to pass legislation that could restrict or completely forbid legal abortions. Further, if S.J. Res. 3 passes, the federal government would be free to pass a law completely forbidding any abortions and therefore undermine the attempt of any state to allow legal abortions. If women are to be free to choose when and how many children they will bear in a lifetime, this amendment must be stopped now.

In its present form this amendment is seen by its proponents as the most politically feasible anti-choice legislation so far because it is being promoted as a "states rights" alternative. The right-wing believes that it can go next to those states where abortion could be restricted or banned, strike there first and continue across the country. However, the wording above does not transfer power from the federal government to anyone else. In fact, this is its worst danger to the right to choose.

The federal would retain its power and be free to pass any future laws on abortion. Further, the federal government could short-circuit "states rights" by passing a law using a constitutional basis banning all abortions which would effectively prevent any state desiring to allow legal abortions from being able to do so.

In the ten words of this amendment there are no limits on how far anyone could go in restricting abortion. There are no provisions for victims of rape or incest. Women with limited monetary means would left with no way to secure as safe and affordable means of pregnancy termination even if they had medical complications placing their health in danger. There is no consideration provided for the life and health of the women who would be affected by the removal of this right. By rolling back Roe v. Wade, it completely removes what little protection women have for the right to choose.

Orrin Hatch was promised a vote on the floor this year and he will get his debate this month - probably around May 23. In committee we picked up two votes in our favor, but we cannot rest there. Every letter, call or telegram you can send counts now. Members and friends should contact their Senators today and urge them to defeat S.J. Res. 3, the Hatch/Eagleton Amendment. See page 2 for their addresses and telephone numbers.



## THE NONDISCRIMINATION IN INSURANCE ACT: WHAT DOES IT REALLY DO?

The Nondiscrimination in Insurance Act (H.R.100/S.373) is coming under heavy attack from the insurance industry in an effort to defeat it. This Act will end sex-discriminatory price and payout abuses by insurers, employers and government such as the following:

**LIFE INSURANCE:** Imposing heavy surcharges (not cost-based) on smaller policies --all that most women can afford. These surcharges recoup several times over the list price discounts for women widely publicized by insurers.

**AUTO INSURANCE:** Overcharging most women throughout their driving lifetime for auto insurance that ignores women's lower mileage (averaging half of men's) and women's resulting lower accident rates. Imposing smaller surcharges on young women than on young men is using sex as a crude substitute for mileage. Publicizing this short term lesser surcharge as a "break for women" distracts consumer attention from lifelong overcharges.

**ANNUITIES AND PENSIONS:** Cutting payouts to women 10-15%. "Justified" by women's marginally (14%) greater average life expectancy, regardless of individual health, but motivated by savings in employment costs for employers and by sales for insurance companies. Health habits (e.g., smoking) are better indicators.

**TAXES:** Levying a higher tax on women's pension and annuity payouts than on men's, a secondary longevity penalty on payouts already reduced by the primary longevity penalty.

**JOINT AND SURVIVOR PENSIONS:** Paying less to retired men and their presumably longer-lived wives than to retired women and their husbands. Large employers, prohibited by Title VII from cutting the pensions of women employees, still gain large savings in employment costs by reducing pension payouts to dependent women.

**MEDICAL EXPENSE AND DISABILITY INCOME INSURANCE:** Charging women for limited medical coverage up to levels exceeding 100% more than men are charged for full coverage, despite the fact that sex is a poor predictor of health. To compensate for group coverage that is inadequate or nonexistent, insurance companies sell individual coverage--\$5 billion in medical expense and \$2 billion in disability income insurance in 1981. Severe surcharging forces many women to forego insurance protection.

This proposed legislation prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, and national origin in the availability, price, and payout of every type of insurance and pension contract.

Although each discriminatory provision may at first appear to advantage one sex over the other, analysis shows each always works to the advantage of insurers and their employer-customers. Insurers selectively use real or imagined "differences" between women and men to manipulate prices and payouts. Those that might hurt sales or lower profits are ignored; those that might advantage insurers are used as pricing factors.

For further details, contact your chapter leaders who have received copies of testimony before congress. Write your Senators and Representatives and urge them to support this act.

**\*\*Sen. John W. Warner, 405 Russell Senate Office Bldg., U.S. Senate, Wash., D.C. 20510. (202)224-2023.**

**\*\*Sen. Paul S. Trible, Jr., 517 Hart Senate Office Bldg., U.S. Senate, Wash., D.C., 20510. (202)224-4024.**



# State Conference

JUNE 10-12

Location: Randolph-Macon College, Ashland, VA. Directions on page 4.

Registration: Begins on Friday night at 7pm. See the last page of this newsletter for the new, improved Conference Registration Form. Special rates for those who register early. Credentials for voting should be brought (NOW Times label, cancelled check, letter from chapter Treas. or Pres.). Non-members welcome to attend but cannot vote.

Our Conference will feature:

- \*A Special Focus On: NOW Together Against Racism and Sexism

- \*Election of 1983-84 State Officers

- \*Virginia Regional Caucuses to nominate Political Action Committee Representatives

- \*Election of Delegates to National Conference by At-Large Members

- \*Bylaws

- \*Resolutions: Proposal of and voting on resolutions to determine the future activities of Virginia NOW

- \*WORKSHOPS: Experts from outside and within NOW will share information and lead discussions on the issues that affect us all. There will be special emphasis on minority women, the arts, cultural and social issues, and personal development. Keep in touch with the local chapter leader in your area for the final list of workshops which will be mailed out to chapters in Mid-May.

- \*EXHIBITS: Chapters may bring tables and set up displays. Some tables may be available at the college. A small donation to support the conference is requested. All groups should contact Sue Hanna in writing (see registration form) to make arrangements.

- \*PAC AUCTION: This popular event will take place on Saturday. Bring your sense of humor as well as your wallets. Always a good time and good fundraiser. Send your name and a description of items you can donate to: Pat Winton, P.O. Box 508, Dunn Loring, VA 22027 or call 703/768-0328 (before May 15) or 703/573-0307 (after May 15). Popular items in the past: special ethnic meals, cleaning services, day cruise on Chesapeake Bay, feminist memorabilia, hand needlework items, and household items.

- \*ENTERTAINMENT: Music on Saturday night.

- \*Swimming

- \*Rooms: are dorm rooms. Bed linen provided, bring towels & soap, etc.



## LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE REPORT

The 1983 Virginia NOW Leadership Conference was a big success and an enjoyable experience according to the participants. Future and present leaders of Virginia chapters were able to learn from each other and from guest speakers on a wide variety of subjects covering basic skills in running a chapter, personal development, and politics.

The major focus of the conference workshops was on the skills and knowledge needed to run a chapter successfully. Four workshops covered the basic mechanics of chapter work. "Media and How to Use It for NOW" was given by Donna Jackson who does public relations for the U.S. Treasury. She explained the differences among various media projects and the basic elements of successful media work. "Project Planning, Implementation, and Management in a NOW Chapter" was covered by Nancy Desmond, Financial Co-Financial Coordinator and Linda C. Wilson, State Coordinator. They explained the steps to remember and some of the things to avoid in a project as well as the human side of working in a feminist volunteer organization. Two workshops were given by national Secretary, Kathy Webb. They were "Rural Organizing" and "National NOW Resources and Membership Processing Information" (the latter being one of the toughest to give but done with logic and good humor).

Personal development within a chapter and while running one were discussed in a variety of ways. Dixie Johnson gave a demonstration of a Consciousness Raising group on Friday night and a mini-workshop on "How to Start a CR Group". Dixie was a past National NOW Committee Chair for CR. "Conflict Resolution" by Nancy Richardson of the Counseling and Divorce Mediation Center in Alexandria helped participants identify their style of interaction in a lively session including lecture and small group discussion. Dr. Alma Vasquez of the Federal Executive Institute gave a workshop on "Stress Management and How to Cope With Burnout" which included self-testing to identify burnout potential and suggestions for bringing your life into balance.

The early afternoon of Saturday was devoted to the workshop "Political Analysis of the State of Virginia and the General Assembly" by Pat Winton, Past State Coordinator. The workshop covered the basic information of the structure and formal rules of operation of the Assembly and then took the listeners beyond the formal rules into the complexities of the way things work behind the scenes, the major personalities who get things done, and the way influence works in Virginia.

Commendations and thanks go to the Conference Coordinator, Penny Newquist, Workshop Coordinator, Francis Hicks, and to the committee members who located speakers and did behind-the-scenes work. In particular, we thank Harrisonburg-Hoeklingham Co. NOW for handling registration before and during the conference as well as many other details.

### DIRECTIONS TO RANDOLPH-MACON COLLEGE:

From I-95, take 54 West (Exit marked Ashland). Cross Route 1, then take a right at Mayberry's ice cream store. (The turn is less than a mile from I-95; if you cross the railroad tracks you have gone too far.) We will be meeting in the first building on the left after the fountain.



\* \* \* \* \* DANCE FOR VIRGINIA NOW-PAC \* \* \* \* \*

Calypso and Reggae music will be heard in Old Town at Alexandria NOW's fundraising dance for Virginia NOW-PAC on June 4th at the Lee Recreation Center (1108 Jefferson St.) at 8:00pm. There will be a demonstration of Caribbean dances by Roland Barnes and Co. from Trinidad. Sonia Johnson will be special guest. Recently, she has been working to call attention to the plight of women in other countries. Representatives from the embassies of the Caribbean have been invited.

During the evening there will be a celebrity auction. Hors d'ouvres will feature Caribbean delicacies. Beer and wine will be available at a cash bar. Tropical dress is optional. All NOW members and friends of NOW are welcome. Tickets are \$12 per person in advance, \$15 at the door, \$35 to be a Sponsor and \$50 to be a Patron. For information or tickets contact Emily McCoy at (703) 360-7547 (eve).

\* \* \* \* \* CHAPTER ACTIVITIES \* \* \* \* \*

ALLEGHANY HIGHLANDS, a newly convened chapter, invited their representative Del. Bill Wilson to a program meeting where they discussed his voting record and stands on women's issues. They received good coverage by the local papers and have made quite a splash in their formerly quiet, little corner of the world.

CHARLOTTESVILLE NOW, represented by Diane Meador, presented support for the adoption of a new Community Development Ordinance by the City Council. The ordinance would open up the policy-making process for the use of Federal City Development Block Grant entitlement funds so the needs of low and moderate income people, especially women, can be addressed more equitably. For a copy of their recommendations, write to James King c/o the chapter.

DULLES AREA NOW gave a program and discussion on "Rape: How the Problem Has Changed the Reston Community and Solutions to It." This was part of a community awareness program developed by the NOW Rape Task Force and the third in a series about the problem of rape in the Herndon-Reston area. They have also held a Walk-On to "reclaim our pathways" and a film and discussion with the Fairfax County's Victim Assistance Network.

FREDERICKSBURG NOW and five other local women's groups put together the city's first Women's Forum in April. Exhibits, films and workshops covered topics of interest to women from laws, to health, psychology, financial management, computers and personal appearance.

HARRISONBURG-ROCKINGHAM CO. NOW held a pot-luck dinner before their March meeting to bid farewell to Anne Juarez as their Coordinator, who has served since the chapter started. The April meeting topic was "A Look at Sexism and Militarism".

RICHMOND NOW has sponsored a creative writing contest with the topic "The Changing Image of Women in the 80's". The chapter is also helping to sponsor the YWCA Battered Women's Shelter for one year. They are also helping to send five teenagers to the Third Annual Teenage Workshop sponsored by the Mayor's Committee on the Concerns of Women.

VIRGINIA HIGHLANDS NOW gave a program on why feminists should care about defense spending and government policies in defense, how the defense budget affects budget decisions on social programs and the special obligations of U.S. citizens to promote world peace.

Please send your press releases and chapter newsletters to the State Coordinator for inclusion in the state newsletter whenever possible: \* \* \* \* \*

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\*\*\*\*\*  
Corrections or changes should  
be sent immediately to the  
State Secretary & Coordinator.



1983 VIRGINIA NOW CONFERENCE REGISTRATION FORM  
June 10-12-Randolph-Macon College, Ashland, Virginia

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone <sup>(w)</sup> \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone <sup>(h)</sup> \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Chapter \_\_\_\_\_ Roommate preference (name) \_\_\_\_\_

Check if you'll take the house selection roommate "Roommate Du Jour" \_\_\_\_\_

Smoker \_\_\_\_\_ Non-smoker \_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate if you have special needs or disabilities:

Childcare needed \_\_\_\_\_ # of children \_\_\_\_\_ ages \_\_\_\_\_  
(Children can sleep in sleeping bags on floor in parent's room for free. They will have to pay for meals.)

Time of arrival \_\_\_\_\_ Time of departure \_\_\_\_\_  
(No arrivals after 11 PM, Friday, June 10 if staying at college on Friday night.)

Conference Costs

For the whole enchilada, Friday evening through Sunday  
Meals, lodging, and day use fee \$44 per person  
(three meals Saturday, two Sunday) pay by May 27

Registration - if paid by May 27-  
member \$15, non member \$20

Registration - at the door -  
member \$20, non member \$25

Low income registrants can pay on sliding scale, what  
you can afford for registration.

Total \_\_\_\_\_

For just Saturday or just Sunday, no over night accommodations,  
no meals

Saturday, Day use fee \$11, registration \$7 = \$18

Sunday, Day use fee \$11, registration \$5 = \$16 Total \_\_\_\_\_

You can buy meal tickets at the conference, but we need to know what meals you  
will be buying (Don't forget, children will need meal tickets too.)

Meal	number	Meal	number
Sat breakfast	_____	Sun breakfast	_____
Sat lunch	_____	Sun lunch	_____
Sat dinner	_____		

Please send in registration form by Friday, May 27. Please include the \$44 meals/  
lodging fee if you are staying all weekend. All other costs can be paid at arrival.

Make checks payable to:  
Virginia NOW Conference

Send to: Virginia NOW Conference  
c/o Sue Hanna  
1407 Washington Avenue  
Fredericksburg, Virginia 22401

## NEW NATIONAL BOARD MEMBERS ELECTED

Long-time Virginia NOW activist Jean Marshall Crawford was elected to a seat on the National Board of NOW at the Mid-Atlantic Regional Conference in Baltimore on April 16. Also elected were Vickey Monrean, A.M.Y. Randall and Fran Barboza-Clark. Jean Crawford is currently serving as Virginia's Co-Legislative Coordinator and is a past State Coordinator and Co-Coordinator. She has also been Chair of the Virginia NOW-PAC and an Assistant State Coordinator. Vickey Monrean will be the new Regional Director as well as Board Member. She began her involvement in NOW in Pennsylvania as a founding member of Erie NOW and later worked in the national office on direct mail fundraising as well as many other projects for the ERA. A.M.Y. Randall is currently the Maryland State President and has a wide variety of experience including doing a regular radio show on women's issues. Fran Barboza-Clark has been involved in NOW New Jersey concentrating on support work for battered women and ERA and reproductive rights organizing.

## CANCELLATION OF "CAGNEY AND LACEY"

CBS is considering cancelling one of the few shows on TV that presents an honest picture of working women in non-traditional jobs. "Cagney and Lacey", a show about two women police detectives working in the New York City Police Dept., has been under threat of cancellation in the past. We need to show our support for this kind of programming. For years the networks have given us models of male crime fighters: "Magnum PI", "Matt Houston", "Dukes of Hazard", "Starsky and Hutch", to name a few. Can't we have at least one hour a week of programming that shows two intelligent, active women succeeding in a challenging non-traditional job?

VIRGINIA NOW  
7435 Sabin Drive  
Manassas, VA 22110

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Fairfax, VA  
Permit No. 1229





## THE NEED FOR THE EQUAL RIGHTS AMENDMENT

The significance of the ERA is much more than symbolic. The ERA is a basic bread and butter issue. The ERA directly relates to poverty and the working poor.

What is at stake is constitutional equality for women in this century.

What is at stake is economic independence for women -- whether women will continue to earn only half of what men earn and whether women will be forever relegated to the dependence which low wages and low status impose.

## DISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF SEX CONTINUES TO PLAGUE OUR COUNTRY

Federal legislation in the areas of employment, education, credit, and Social Security, for example, have not eliminated the need for a comprehensive, inclusive statement as part of our Constitution.

The ERA is necessary in order to establish a national policy and to set a standard for the elimination of discrimination based on sex.

Even legislation which prohibits sex discrimination contains major loopholes and problems. Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (as amended) is often cited as one of the reasons why the ERA is not needed.

- Title VII prohibits sex discrimination in employment but does not include coverage of the federal government.
- The courts have begun to narrowly interpret Title VII. The effect has been that employers have been allowed to maintain certain discriminatory seniority systems, to maintain pay schedules which do not reflect equal pay for work of equivalent value, and to maintain discriminatory disability plans.

## EQUAL PAY AND EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY DO NOT EXIST

The most graphic example is in the area of employment where women continue to be denied equal pay and equal employment opportunity on the basis of sex alone. On August 7, 1978, the United States Civil Rights Commission published a report which showed that:

- Since 1960, women have been unable to make any significant strides toward economic and social equality with males
- Women still earn only half as much as white males, and women with college degrees earn less than men with high school degrees
- There is "virtually no financial ladder" for women, since there has been little or no improvement in the earnings of full-time working women between the ages of 20 and 44

In fact, the wage gap between women and men is widening and women earn less today (as compared to men) than they did over twenty years ago.



## COURT DECISION ARE NOT THE ANSWER -- THEY HAVE ADDED TO THE PROBLEM

The treatment of sex under the Equal Protection Clause is according to the whim of the court:

- The court has upheld that sex discrimination is not a "suspect" class under the Equal Protection Clause of the 14th Amendment.
- The most recent pronouncement regarding the judicial standard of review for sex discrimination was made by Justice Lewis Powell in delivering the opinion of the Court in the Bakke case:

"The court has never viewed such classification as inherently suspect or as comparable to racial or ethnic classifications for the purpose of equal-protection analysis."

- In 1977, in a split decision, without opinion, the Court let stand a "separate but equal" ruling. By endorsing the opinion of the Third Circuit Federal Court of Appeals which upheld the constitutionality of certain Philadelphia public schools that are sex segregated in Vorchheimer v. School District of Philadelphia (532 F. 2d 880, 3rd Cir. 1976), the Supreme Court reverted to the days of Plessy v. Ferguson (163 U.S. 537 1896).

## PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR ERA REMAINS STRONG

Public support for ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment remains strong.

- The most recent Gallup Poll shows that Americans approve of the ERA by 58-31 percent, a nearly two-to-one margin.
- A recent Harris Poll shows a 55-34 percent support for ERA.
- With respect to the ERA extension, these recent polls show that Americans favor Extension 57-40 (Harris) and 43-40 (Gallup).
- Polls have also been conducted in some of the unratified states indicating that citizens of the state support ERA although the state legislature has not approved ratification.

## THE BURDEN MUST BE SHIFTED

Recent studies have shown that there are over 1800 state laws that do discriminate on the basis of sex.

- It is an unconscionable burden to expect those who are the victims of discrimination to challenge every law and to monitor every existing or proposed piece of legislation that discriminates.
- ONE LAW AT A TIME IS THE SLOW ROAD TO EQUALITY!