

CWLU NEWS

Newsletter of the Chicago Women's Liberation Union 2875 W. Cermak Rm. 9 (927-1790)

EQUAL RIGHTS AMENDMENT

(Reprinted from May 16 Off Our Backs)
"Equality of rights under law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex."

The Equal Rights Amendment is before Congress for the 47th consecutive year. The Constitutional Amendment Subcommittee of the Senate Judiciary Committee held hearings May 5-7. This committee held similar hearings in 1956. The Equal Rights Amendment has been passed by the Senate twice, in 1950 and 1953, but was defeated in the House both times.

Historically, women's organizations have supported the amendment, while the labor movement and women within that movement have opposed it. Organizations such as the National Women's Party, the National Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs, and the National Organization of Women have fought for the amendment in order to set a constitutional standard of absolute equality of the sexes. (Continued on next page)

ALICE HAMILTON DEAD

by Elaine Wessel
Dr. Alice Hamilton, the woman for whom our clinic will be named, died on September 22 at the age of 101. She had lived at Hull House from 1897-1919, during which time she participated in the Illinois Occupational Diseases Commission in 1910 (the first of its kind in this country), and several comparable federal studies.

In 1919, she was appointed a professor at Harvard Medical School, the first woman to have such a job (this was years before Harvard Medical School had any women students). Her appointment to Harvard was clearly recognition that she was the foremost American doctor in the field of industrial medicine. She retired from Harvard in 1935.

In addition to her professional activities, she was a supporter of many radical activities throughout her life. (Continued on next page)

CALENDAR

- Oct. 1 Thurs. ----- Steering Comm. mtg., 7:30, Christ the King, 25 W. JACKSON
- Oct. 3 Saturday-----College Organizing Workshop, Roosevelt U, 420 S. Michigan Room 420 at 12:00 noon
- Oct. 4 Sunday-----Citywide meeting--panel on Equal Rights Amendment 1:00-5:00 at U. of Chicago, Ida Noyes, Woodlawn and 59th Sts.
- Oct. 6 Tuesday-----Anarchist study group (meets every Tues.) 8:00 at northside center, 2150 N. Halsted (2nd floor rear apt)
- Oct. 7 Wednesday-----Women's Revolutionary Art Coop (every Wed.) 8:00 northside ctr
- Oct. 12 Monday-----Decisionmaking meeting for northside center (every second and fourth Mon.) 8:00
- Oct. 15 Thursday-----CWLU Steering Committee, 8:00 Call office for location
- Oct. 16&17-----Abortion Conference sponsored by TRIAL with Nancy Stearns leader of NY coalition as speaker. Call 935-0364 for more info
- Oct. 19 Monday-----Introductory program for new women--orientation to CWLU, 7:30, northside center, 2150 N. Halsted (2nd floor rear apt)
- Oct. 25 Sunday-----line tasting, sign making party to make signs for women*s contingent for Oct. 31 anti-war demonstration--1-6:00 northside ctr

The amendment would nulify laws considered protective of women as well as those which are clearly discriminatory. It would nulify "protective" laws placing special limitations on women with regard to hours of work and the amount of weight lifted on the job; laws providing alimony to be awarded to ex-wives but not ex-husbands; discriminatory preferences, based on sex, in child custody cases; and the exclusion of women from the Military Selective Service Act. Discriminatory laws prohibiting women from certain occupations dual pay schedules for men and women, and Social Security and other social welfare legislation which give greater benefits to men than women would also be prohibited by the amendment.

THE AFL-CIO and all of the major trade unions, women in the labor movement, as well as many left wing groups who have traditionally fought for women's rights have long opposed the amendment. The amendment would wipe out all of the gains the labor movement has won restricting hours and conditions of work for women. Their argument is twofold: Existing protective legislation should not be destroyed before it is expanded to include both sexes; and the multiple roles which women play in this society necessitate that their problems be dealt with through special provisions for them.

The United Auto Workers (UAW), at their convention this April, became the only major trade union to go on record supporting the amendment. The Women's Department of the UAW presented a resolution in support of the amendment to the convention and it was passed with no opposition. A staff member of the Department stated that many of the so-called protective laws are in fact used to discriminate against women. "Those laws which truly protect ought to apply to both men and women," Dorothy Haener said. The struggle to protect all working people should not be waged under the banner of sexual discrimination.

The effect of the amendment, if passed, on working as well as middle class women is difficult to predict. We probably have another three years to argue the question. It took women 50 years to secure the vote, and the Equal Rights Amendment is a spry 47.

by Heidi Steffens country.

In 1915 she accompanied Jane Addams to Europe in an attempt to protest World War I. She supported Sacco and Vanzetti in the 1920s and was involved in many other labor movement and free speech fights. Of course, she was also active in the Women's Rights movement of the time.

Needless to say, the Establishment press didn't say very much about her death. The Chicago Daily News buried its brief, three-paragraph item on the back page; even the New York Times' article was only slightly longer; and neither mentioned the fact that she had lived at Hull House for over 20 years, nor did they mention that she was, for all practical purposes, the founder of industrial medicine in this country. If Dr. Hamilton had been a man and a conservative, her death might have been front-page news, but she was merely a woman (and a radical at that), so she's unimportant to the pig press.

Rock Band

The WOMENS LIBERATION ROCK BAND is restructuring itself. The band is serious about its role of creating a political counter-culture and holds competence as a necessary means towards that end.

We would like any women singers or musicians to call either Lynette Davis 864-9367 or Kathy Rowley 784-8063 about auditions.

Auditions

At the citywide meeting on October 4, the main topic of discussion will be the Equal Rights Amendment and what our position on it should be. A panel will present the pro and con positions and literature on the subject will be available from other women's groups around the

FEMINISM

OLD WAVE AND NEW

by Ellen DuBois

(SECOND PART OF AN ARTICLE BEGUN IN LAST CWLU NEWSLETTER)

By the time the Civil War had started, women were (1) beginning to understand how they were oppressed; (2) slightly wary of working with men on other political issues; (3) but not totally convinced that it was impossible for women to work as political equals with men in reform political activity. When the War began, the women dropped all their activities as feminists, and threw themselves into patriotic work. They were very conscious that their participation in the national wartime mobilization would be a test of their political seriousness. They also expected to be amply rewarded for their selfless activity once the war was over. They were not. And that was where the final blow was struck and the leading feminists realized they could not put political trust in men; that it was nearly impossible for even the most liberal of men to understand how much woman feels her oppression and how much she wants her freedom.

The first hint of this final betrayal by liberal men was in the 14th Amendment. This amendment -- the second of the three amendments that followed the Civil War -- defined the rights of citizenship, and prohibited the denial of those rights to persons on the basis of race, color, or previous condition of servitude. This was all fine and good except for one thing -- the federal government was extending its protection only to all citizens of the male sex. Not only were women ignored by the Amendment, but they discovered that, after its passage, they were considerably worse off than before. For the first time, the word 'male' appeared in the Federal Constitution. Previously, political discrimination against women had been a matter of local statute and public sentiment. Now, with the 14th Amendment, this discrimination was being endorsed on the national level. Women were furious. They appealed to male abolitionists and radical republicans for support; is this how they were to be repaid for their loyal services during the War? Wendell Phillips, leader of the abolitionist forces, assured them that their time would come, that when he started laboring for the franchisement of the

black man, he would labor for women also. Two years later the Fifteenth Amendment was passed by Congress. It prohibited disfranchisement on the grounds of race, color or previous condition of servitude -- but not one word about sex. Once again, women discovered that they could not put their faith in male reformers because the oppression of women was not top priority for anyone but themselves. They had been literally abandoned by the most radical political movement of the day. As it turned out, the decision of the abolitionists to ignore women's claim to the ballot was a particularly momentous decision. It took another fifty years to get the ballot for women. This was the final blow -- feminists had learned that if women ever were to win their rights, they would have to win them without the help of men.

Looking back on the 1860's, Elizabeth Cady Stanton wrote:

"We would warn the young women of the coming generation against man's advice as to their best interests, their highest development. We would point for them the moral of our experiences: that woman must lead the way to her own enfranchisement, and work out her own salvation with a hopeful courage and determination that knows no fear nor trembling. She must not put her trust in man in this transition period, since, while regarded as his subject, his inferior, his slave, their interests must be antagonistic."

The process has been the same for the feminists of the second wave. First, we began to understand that women were oppressed, throughout our society, and that the oppression of women had crept into even the most radical political movements of the day. Then we started to raise questions about the oppression of women and the "proper spheres" (19th Century) or "stereotyped roles" (20th Century) of men and women. But we have found that at worst men were uninterested (or amused) by such issues -- and at best

(Continued on next page)

MEDICAL FILE

Sisters often call the Union for recommendations of physicians and therapists who treat women with dignity or for names of doctors they should avoid. Please help us develop a useful file by sending in the following information to Ellen Fisher 2951 King Drive #913, or Rachel Jacobs 2951 King Drive #602, who are working to get the information together for use.

Send us:

- Doctor or therapists name
- sex and approximate age
- address and phone no.
- hospital affiliation
- specialty
- approximate fee

For clinic info send:

- Clinic name
- address and phone
- Is there a geographic or residence requirement?
- Do you see the same doctor each visit?

Please rate the following either excellent good, fair or horrible:

1. Finances: are fees set according to ability to pay or are they standard: If standard, are they reasonable? Do pills, diaphragms, pap tests cost extra?
2. Clinic appointments: can one make appointment in advance, or do you have to just come in and wait?
3. Clinic care: how is medical care and communication. How does it compare with private doctor?
4. Is there sexual, racial, class discrimination at particular clinic or doctor?
5. Medicaid/insurance: does doctor/clinic accept medicaid? insurance plans?
6. Birth control: are all methods fully explained and offered regardless of age or marital status?
7. Obstetrics: do patients have choice in delivery methods and breast or bottle feeding?
8. Venereal diseases: is treatment good regardless of ability to provide info on past sexual contacts? Is one treated well?
9. Quality of medical care: are medical histories kept? etc.
10. Doctor-patient communication: does it exist?

FEMINISM OLD WAVE AND NEW CONTINUED....

that men were incapable of fully understanding the oppression of women.

So, like the feminists of the 19th Century, we have gone the separatist route and formed a movement of our own. We work in Women's Liberation because we are not permitted to function fully in other movements for social change and because, if we don't demand our own liberation, no one else will.

Perhaps two waves of feminism will be enough to free us.

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APARTMENT TO SHARE!!!

Sisters: We are two women living in Uptown who want one or possibly two women to share our big apartment with us. We are interested in working out a communal situation and also in sharing our experiences in and working together on women's liberation, both in this neighborhood and/or whatever else you may be involved in. We need someone soon! So please call us at:

784-8063.

Ask for Kathy Rowley or Sue Holtzman. The rent is \$57.60 a month for a 6 room apartment with a porch and 2 bathrooms.

CWLU now has a cassette tape recorder and some tapes that can be used to help us share discussions, music, etc. with other sisters. The recorder and tapes will be kept in the office, so if you want to borrow it, check on what we've got, or contribute interesting or empty tapes, call the office (927-1790). Also if you have a different size tape that we should copy on a cassette cartridge to make it more accessible, we can do that. Let's share our experiences and resources.

LETTER TO KATE MILLET

(NOTE: The following letter was received by CWLU and we thought CWLU members might find it interesting--Vivian and Day)

Despite your efforts to disclaim leadership of the Movement and prevent your deification, the media persist in acclaiming Sexual Politics as the first "coherent theory to buttress its (the Movement's) intuitive passions" and as "the Bible of Women's Liberation". We fully recognize the value of your book and agree that the effect it is likely to have on women everywhere is incalculable. However, we feel a more emphatic repudiation on your part as the supreme ideologue of the Movement is essential. In order to assert our principles and prevent their cooptation by the male power structure, we must, within the Movement, fight the development of a class system based on skills which are not available to everyone. We must fight the ascendancy of leaders in order to encourage the development of leadership skills in all women.. We fear that the artificial creation of leaders, as has always been the case in male--dominated societies, will inevitably suppress the initiative of the majority.

Though we could issue a statement ourselves, we feel it would be far more meaningful and effective for you to do so. If you were to address a letter to the New York Times, as is our suggestion, the chances of their publishing it are obviously greater than they would be were it to come from us.

We must assert that the Movement has consistently been publishing its ideas and theories over the years, though widespread publicity is relatively recent. The notion that women have been floundering in their own directionlessness and incoherency until the publication of Sexual Politics is altogether misleading and harmful. We urge you to write a letter on the behalf of all women, denying a monopoly on ideas, denying the existence of a hierarchy within the movement, and censuring the distortions to which the media have submitted Women's Liberation in its misrepresentation of your position in the Movement..

Sincerely,
The Feminists
New York, New York

CWLU needs your dues pledge. We are now paying \$100 per week for the staff of our organization. In order for us to continue to function, grow and meet expenses, women must begin to pledge money on a regular basis. Please fill out this form and mail with your donation to CWLU 2875 W.. Cermak, Chicago 60623.

I, _____ will pledge \$ _____
(name)

a month/ every six months / a year (circle one) to keep the Union going.

Enclosed is \$ _____.

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CHICAGO WOMENS LIBERATION UNION
2875 WEST CERMAK ROOM 9
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60623



Joan Berman
3766 N. Wayne
Chicago 60613