

Gainesville NOWletter

Fighting for Women's Rights Since 1982

Gainesville Area NOW

President - Lori Tinney

Campus NOW

President - Stefanie Lauria

Editor - Lisa Labbe Fall 2003

NOW is a multi-issue political organization. Our self-defined role has been to initiate change for the benefit of the greatest number of people, to affect the legal and institutional structures of the society in a way that systematically expands the choices and possibilities available to all women. In this way, NOW takes action to bring women, as a class, into the mainstream of society, rather than offering aid to individual women in achieving personal solutions or temporary relief from oppression, exercising all privileges and responsibilities thereof in true partnership with men.

Calendar

Oct 18Pride Festival
Oct 23General Meeting
Nov 5MAP Speakout
Nov 13 Board Meeting
Nov 20General Meeting
Dec 13Holiday Potluck

THE MORNING AFTER PILL

Women: Organize to get the Morning After Pill Over-the-Counter

For greater Control Over Our Bodies and Our Lives

What is the Morning After Pill?

The Morning After Pill (MAP) can be taken up to 120 hours after sex to prevent pregnancy. Just like birth control pills, MAP works by preventing ovulation or making it difficult for a fertilized egg to implant in the uterine wall. MAP is 75-80% effective in preventing pregnancy. Common birth control pills may be used to make the Morning After Pill (go to www.Not-2-Late.com for more information).

MAP is also called Emergency Contraception, or Post-Coital Contraception. It is **NOT** the same as RU-486, the "French Abortion Pill." If you're already pregnant, MAP *will not work*.

Is the Morning After Pill safe?

MAP is safer than the use of long-term hormonal birth control, like Depo-Provera and birth control pills. Contrary to the hype surrounding MAP, there are no known serious side effects with its usage.

Doesn't MAP make you sick?

While some women experience temporary side effects, such as nausea, vomiting, and jitteriness many women experience none at all. Taking MAP with food and using an over-the-counter anti-nausea medication lessens nausea, or prevents it entirely.

Is MAP available anywhere without a prescription?

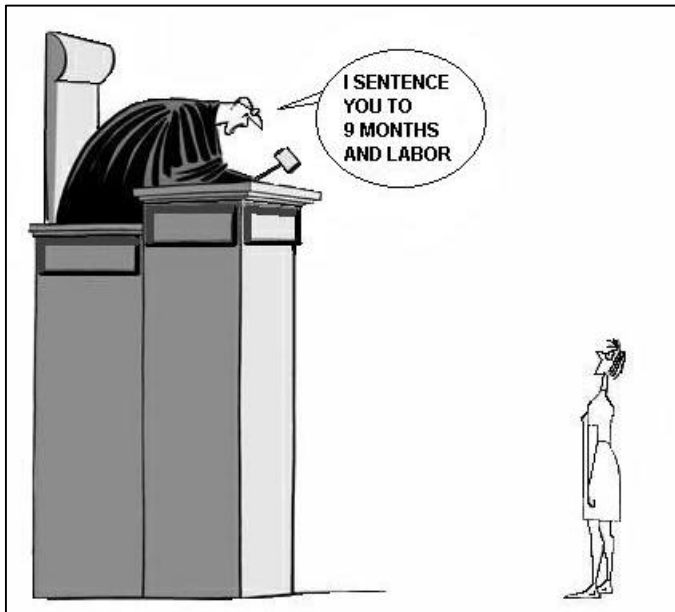
MAP is currently available over-the-counter in more than 27 countries, including France, Kenya, Norway, Guinea, Finland, and the Canadian province of British Columbia.

England recently began to distribute MAP free in school clinics to students 16 and under. France also gives out MAP for free to people 16 and under.

Why are feminists fighting for the Morning After Pill?

- Women must be able to control when and if we have a child. This is a cornerstone of our freedom and self-determination.
- We should be able to have sex without risking pregnancy, childbirth, and 18+ years of childrearing.

- MAP is one more way for us to prevent unwanted pregnancy. Because no method of birth control is failsafe, we need every option available to us in order to have full control over our bodies and our futures.



Aren't women who use MAP irresponsible?

No! In our experience it's men, not women, who are irresponsible about birth control. Many men resisted or outright refused to wear condoms; seldom took the initiative to supply condoms, and rarely paid for half the cost of any birth-control method.

This forces women to take all the responsibility for birth control - and we almost always do. When we use MAP, we are yet again taking responsibility.

Even though most of us use birth control consistently, sometimes we forget to take our pills, condoms break, our partners refuse to use condoms (or put up such a fight that we give in), or we are raped. Perhaps, we may even be "swept away" by romance or alcohol, but this shouldn't mean that we are therefore *required* to have a baby! *Men* don't have to pay this price!

What are CNOW and GA NOW doing to get MAP over-the-counter?

Campus NOW and Gainesville Area NOW, together with the NY State Reproductive Rights Taskforce, are using the grassroots organizing tools of

Consciousness - raising (CR) and speakouts to win easier access to MAP. CR help us get to the root of sexism by analyzing women's everyday experiences. In speakouts, women publicly talk about their lives, making demands for change.

Our personal pains and struggles are NOT individual shortcomings, but part of bigger, political problems. We can't solve them on our own, but when we unite and organize in the feminist movement, we have the power to make change.

In 1970, the Women's Liberation Movement won the right to abortion in NY— three years before *Roe v. Wade*— using CR and speakouts to mobilize women into action. **We can do it again with the Morning After Pill!**

Based on CR conclusions that we gathered from women in NYC, D.C. and Gainesville, the following are some reasons why we need MAP available over-the-counter:

Lack of publicity & accessibility

"I completed pharmacy school without ever hearing about MAP. I later learned about it on the job."

"I knew about MAP, but had trouble finding pharmacies that stocked it, or clinics open when I needed it."

"The time I needed MAP, I had to brave football-game-day traffic to go to the university's infirmary, which turned out to be closed."

Cost & required doctor's visits

"One time I had to wait out the month wondering if I was pregnant because I couldn't afford to go to the doctor and get [MAP]."

"The cost that I found [for MAP] in NYC was exorbitant: It ran from \$50 - \$150 with doctor's visit."

Fear due to misinformation & hype

- Some women don't take MAP because of the myth that it causes uncontrollable vomiting.

"I decided not to get [MAP] because I was very busy and had heard that it would make you sick and vomit for days... I got pregnant and got an abortion a few months later."

Available birth control is unsatisfactory

- Almost all women were unsatisfied with their current methods of birth control.

"The pill makes me sick, so I rely on condoms, even though they do make me nervous because they can break or come off."

"At the time [I took MAP], I wasn't on birth control because I couldn't afford it."

"I tried using condoms for about a month, during which time I got two yeast infections from the added irritation, and twice condoms came off inside me."

"I was on the pill for a year and gained almost 35 lbs. I also didn't like that it increased my risk of cancer."

Men not taking reproductive responsibility

(resisting to wear or supply condoms, not getting vasectomies, not paying for their fair share of birth control, etc.)

- Many women fight to get their partners to take responsibility for pregnancy prevention.

"I've taken [MAP] 3 or 4 times... once because the guy tricked me and said he had used a condom when he really hadn't."

"I had a boyfriend who didn't want to use condoms... I wanted to use condoms, but he basically wore me down, and once we didn't use anything."

What is the national campaign to gain over-the-counter access to MAP?

In December, the Federal Drug Administration (FDA) will hold hearings to decide whether to make the Morning After Pill available over-the-counter. Campus NOW and Gainesville Area NOW think that women should be able to go into any pharmacy and buy the Morning After Pill without a prescription.

We should have the absolute right to control our bodies, 24 hours a day, and without having to ask a doctor or a pharmacist for permission.

How can I help win greater access to MAP, abortion, & birth control?

1. Join a grassroots feminist organization that fights for your reproductive freedom! **Join NOW and support your local feminists.***
2. Come to the next Campus NOW or Gainesville Area NOW meeting (call or email for more info).
3. Help spread the word by getting involved in the campaign - help flyer, make posters, make phone calls, etc.
4. Join us when we travel to D.C. in April 2004, for NOW's "March for Reproductive Freedom."



Join us for a SPEAKOUT on Wed, Nov. 5, 2003 at 5:15 pm, eastside of the Downtown Plaza, to hear women - the real experts - talk about their experiences with birth control, MAP, and abortion.

Thanks to Gainesville Women's Liberation for many of the ideas herein and excerpts from their 1977 community education class action flyer "Women's Liberation: Where Do I Fit In?"

Check out Gainesville Area NOW's new & improved website!
www.gainesvillenow.org

Elections:

Gainesville Area NOW is holding it's Executive Board Elections at the October meeting. The slate of candidates is:

President--Lori Tinney

Vice President--Stephanie Seguin

Treasurer--Pam Ellis

Secretary--Christie Bhageloe

All members are urged to attend the meeting. Join us on Thursday, October 23, at 7:30, at the Pride Center on NW 6th Street.



Pride Community Center
of North Central Florida
PO Box 5383
Gainesville, FL 32627
(352) 377-8915
pridecommunitycenter.org

PRIDE Parade
1:00 PM-2:00 PM

(Intersection of 7th St & University Ave)

3rd Annual Pride Parade in Downtown Gainesville.
Parade down University Avenue to the Downtown Plaza
for the Pride Festival

PRIDE Festival
2:00 PM-9:00 PM (Downtown Plaza)

PRIDE Celebration of Gainesville presents it's 11th year of pride in Gainesville with PRIDE WEEK 2003, beginning October 10th and concluding with our downtown festival, with numerous vendors, entertainers, and gay organizations represented. Check out <http://gainesvillepride.org> for more information.

-- Saturday, October 18, 2003 --

Gainesville Area NOW is Business Partner with the Pride Community Center and proudly supports Pride Week. Stop by and see us at the GA NOW table on the downtown plaza.

Gainesville Area NOW's October General Meeting:

**Public Access Television &
the Struggle for Women's Freedom**

Thursday October 23rd,
7:30pm at the Pride Community Center,
1107 NW 6th Street

Join us in discussing the local campaign to get a public access TV channel from Cox cable to democratize our media and get more truth out about what is happening in our community and in the world. We aren't hearing anything near the truth about the feminist movement from the few corporations that own the news in the U.S.

We'll watch an excerpt from a NOW TV show that runs on a public TV station in New Jersey. Mavra Starke, NOW activist and TV host interviews Kathie Sarachild and Marisa Figueiredo about Redstockings' groundbreaking theory on women's liberation and the direction our movement should go to give the movement and everyday women a stronger base from which to fight for justice in our lives (go to www.redstockings.org for a preview). They make a case for putting "social wage" programs like parental leave, national health care and child care higher on our agenda. We'll also view clips of videos on national health care and talk about what is at stake for women in these campaigns. We've invited a guest from the Public Access Television campaign to answer questions and let us know how NOW can help.

This meeting is presented by Gainesville Area NOW's Universal Health Care Committee. To get involved, contact Candi Churchill at: GA_NOW@juno.com or 352-377-9935.

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Inside this issue:

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- * Pride Festival

Gainesville Area NOW is selling T-shirts! Call to place an order, or go to our online store.



Quote on back : "Because women's work is never done and is underpaid or unpaid or boring or repetitious and we're the first to get fired and what we look like is more important than what we do and if we get raped it's our fault and if we get beaten we must have provoked it and if we raise our voices we're nagging bitches and if we enjoy sex we're nymphos and if we don't we're frigid and if we love women it's because we can't get a "real" man and if we ask our doctor too many questions we're neurotic and/or pushy and if we expect childcare we're selfish and if we stand up for our rights we're aggressive and "unfeminine" and if we don't we're typical weak females and if we want to get married we're out to trap a man and if we don't we're unnatural and because we still can't get an adequate safe contraceptive but men can walk on the moon and if we can't cope or don't want a pregnancy we're made to feel guilty about abortion and ... for lots and lots of other reasons we are part of the women's liberation movement."

Anonymous - from the British Women's Liberation Movement



T-shirts- \$15.00

White with Royal Blue Lettering

Small, Medium, Large, X-Large

Membership Application

I wish to join NOW and commit myself to take action to bring women into full participation in the mainstream of American society now, exercising full rights and responsibilities in equal partnership with men.

Name: _____

Address: _____ Phone: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ Email address: _____

National, State, & Local dues: _____ Amount enclosed: _____

\$35.00 Regular

I want to join:

\$15.00 - 34.00 Sliding Scale

Gainesville Area NOW _____ Campus NOW _____

Checks can be made out to: Gainesville Area NOW or Campus NOW and mailed to PO Box 2235, Gainesville, FL 32602

Morning-After-Pill Questionnaire

Date _____

This questionnaire is part of Gainesville Area NOW and Campus NOW's continuing efforts to increase women's reproductive freedom. Our goal is to gather data for use in the national campaign to win over-the-counter access to the morning-after-pill. Your identity will remain confidential. We appreciate your time and honesty. Please use the back if you run out of space. This page may be mailed to the Gainesville Area NOW address, or brought to any NOW event/meeting.

1. Which forms of birth control have you used? Circle all that apply.

- | | | | |
|--------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| a. condoms | b. spermicide | c. the pill | d. sponge |
| e. diaphragm | f. withdrawal | g. rhythm | h. tubal ligation |
| i. vasectomy | j. IUD | k. other(s) _____ | |

2. Were you satisfied with any of them? Why or why not?

3. What role did your partner play, financial or otherwise?

4. Have you ever been afraid you were pregnant? Why? (ie: condom broke, missed a pill, etc.)
What, if anything, did you do about it?

5. Have you heard of the Morning-After-Pill? Where did you hear about it?

6. Have you ever used or tried to get the Morning-After-Pill?

- a. Was it difficult to obtain?
- b. Did it cause any physical side-effects?
- c. Would you take it again?

Would you like to be contacted for NOW meetings and actions.
If so, please give us your contact info.

Name _____
Phone _____
Email _____

*For more information on the
Morning After Pill campaign, or
to get involved, contact Campus
NOW or Gainesville Area NOW.
Call 377-2301, or email
campus_now@hotmail.com.*