

Gainesville NOWletter

Fighting for Women's Rights Since 1982

Gainesville Area NOW

President - Lori Tinney

Campus NOW

President - Stefanie Lauria

Editor - Lisa Labbe Summer 2003

Countries with the ERA: Why Not the U.S.?

1. Algeria
2. Argentina
3. Australia
4. Austria
5. Belgium
6. Brazil
7. Canada
8. Chile
9. China
10. Columbia
11. Cuba
12. Denmark
13. Ecuador
14. Finland
15. France
16. Germany
17. Greece
18. Guatemala
19. Hungary
20. India
21. Indonesia
22. Iran
23. Ireland
24. Israel
25. Italy
26. Japan
27. Luxembourg
28. Mexico
29. Morocco
30. Netherlands
31. Nicaragua
32. Nigeria
33. Norway
34. Pakistan
35. Peru
36. Poland
37. Portugal
38. Romania
39. Spain
40. Sri Lanka
41. Sweden
42. Thailand
43. UK
44. Venezuela
45. Yugoslavia
46. Zambia
- ...& more

Women Demand Equal Rights Amendment at Florida NOW's ERA Rally at the State Capitol, April 28

"Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex." –proposed ERA, 1923



Members of Gainesville Area NOW, UF/SFCC Campus NOW,
and Gainesville Women's Liberation at the Rally in Tally

Jeb Bush has called the Equal Rights Amendment "retro" and said we don't need it because women are already equal. At the same time he supports legislation that discriminates against women and makes life harder for us. Under the guise of so-called "family values," the Florida legislature is cutting welfare and childcare programs, creating obstacles to divorce, and denying reproductive healthcare. All these are impeding women's progress. Jeb Bush has given businesses and the wealthy 8.1 billion dollars in tax breaks since he's been in office. It's time for women to get some help at home.

If women in the United States are supposed to be the freest in the world, then why is the U.S. among the few stubborn and unwilling nations without a constitutional assertion that men and women are equal? Many of these countries with an ERA or something like it, actually have programs and legislation that benefit women, such as universal healthcare, equal pay, paid parental leave, and shorter workweeks. In fact, the U.S. is one of the few countries in the UN where the legislature continues to refuse to ratify the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

In the home, men still aren't doing their fair share of childcare, housework, or pregnancy prevention. In the House, legislators are cutting state funding for childcare, dismantling affirmative action, and further restricting women's access to abortion and contraception. On top of all this, Jeb Bush dares to attempt to make us re-vote on the Universal Pre-K Amendment, which passed overwhelmingly in the 2002 election. Shame on him!

We want our state government to:

1. Pass the Equal Rights Amendment
2. Implement Universal Pre-K (as we voted for in 2002)
3. Stop cutting programs that benefit women
4. Stop gnawing away at our abortion rights

CALENDAR at-a-glance -

6/28 - NOW B-B-Q

7/10 - Board Meeting

**7/11 - 7/13 - National
NOW Conference -
Arlington, VA**

7/19 - NOW Garage Sale

**7/24 - General Meeting
(Abortion & Contraception)**

This statement was prepared as a project of the 2003 Gainesville Women's Liberation Community Education Class, "Women's Liberation: Where Do I Fit In?" and read at the FL NOW rally for the ERA by Campus NOW Vice-President Kelly Mangan.

THIS IS MY STORY....(excerpted from the full story)

Born in a small Maine town in 1924, my path to womanhood was not lined with directional signs. It was paved with constant, unspoken messages defining roles. Boys played ball, rode bicycles, jumped off diving boards, climbed trees, caught frogs, and did the chores that would help Dad. Girls played dolls, jumped rope, played hopscotch, read books, picked flowers, played croquet, and helped Mom with the housework and cooking. Boys swam in the river. Girls did not swim. Girls did not own bicycles. As teenagers, some boys drove cars. Girls did not. Men drove cars. Women did not. These were our early-learned ground rules. We accepted them as valid. Men were the doctors, the lawyers, the bank officials, the ministers, the store owners, the town officials, the law enforcement officers, the postmasters, and the politicians. Women were the teachers, nurses, beauticians, clerks, secretaries, and librarians....until they married, when they became homemakers and mothers. These were our vocation choices as young women. If parents could afford it, they sent their daughters to college, more to find a husband than to launch their own careers. We were really only expected to earn enough money to support ourselves until we were married. We were not encouraged to be more. I attended Business College. Upon graduation, I was employed as a secretary to a brilliant attorney. I loved my work and respected my boss, a man in his 50's and a legend in his field. He was also a comfortable father figure for a girl of eighteen. His daughter also worked in the office. Years later, she told me that her father always said I had the potential to be anything that I chose to be. He started teaching me law. At that time, if you could pass the bar, you did not need four years of college, only two.

who caught my attention. Looking back, of my life. I abandoned the legal life with a man who provided no controlling, distant with both me and my unhappy, selfish, and an alcoholic. In had no voice. His response whenever you don't like it, you know what you can be more to life, I had four children to a spinal birth defect. She was our twelve. Three years later, I left the daughter helped me move and my 17 backward glance. The year was 1977. I could pay the rent. I am convinced that I



Elaine Smith (right) at the Rally in Tally

BUT, I fell in love with a young man I know that it was the biggest mistake training, choosing to spend most of my emotional support, who proved to be children, volatile in disposition, always the relationship, I soon learned that I something needed discussion was, "If do!" By the time I realized there had to consider, one severely handicapped by youngest. She died when she was marriage of thirty years. My oldest year old daughter and I left without a was 53 years old. I wasn't even sure I gained the courage to leave from the

women's liberation movement, which was giving a message of hope to all

was gaining momentum at that time. It women, young and old, that they could

do and be more than society had allowed them in the past. Four of my friends left their marriages at that same time, and I believe that they heard the message, too, and felt that it was time to stand up and be counted.

Young women were the catalyst for the cause, but older women were hearing a new song and dreaming dreams of finding the parts of themselves that had been buried for so long, of standing tall in a crowd, of finding a voice and being heard above the sighs of those suppressed in our culture....women. Blacks were being recognized and elevated in status. Women were demanding their right to emerge from the shadow of the men in their lives and to find a way to give their uniqueness to the waiting world.

The women friends mentioned above were all represented by male attorneys in their divorce proceedings, as was I. We should have known that we didn't have a chance at being awarded a decent settlement, for these attorneys all worked together to make it easy for the husband. It was a small city, everyone knew everyone else, and lawyers most certainly were not going to demand that a man sacrifice much of his hard-earned savings and other assets merely to satisfy his wife's need to survive. The judges and attorneys were all men, which resulted in much inequity in the divorce settlements. I paid dearly for my freedom when I decided to leave the marriage. I had evidence that might have changed the bias, but my attorney refused to submit it for consideration because it could have cost my husband his job. He was a bank president, his attorney was also the bank's attorney, so the collusion is obvious. As you can see, I had no voice. In the marriage, my husband handled all the money. After all, his expertise was banking. We never had a checking account. I worked for the government for ten years of the marriage and gave him my paycheck. You may ask, "Why?," but remember, you didn't live with him. I was unable to retire until I was 67 years old, and my retirement has meant living at poverty level. When he died, my husband left an estate of two hundred thousand dollars. Part of my divorce settlement was two of his insurance policies. I was even cheated there, because he had reduced the amounts and changed the beneficiaries. I should have received \$35,000. I received \$15,000. The government also played a part in my loss. The year of my divorce, a law passed demanding an offset in your social security award, if you also received a government pension. This reduced the amount of the social security due me after his death from about \$500 each month to \$92.

Once I found my freedom, I began to find my voice. It was a slow process of evolution. Given the chance at last to speak freely, I realized that I had much to say. I learned, too, that it was not always well received. On one occasion, I was the guest speaker at an awards banquet for my immediate boss at the Veterans Administration Center. He was a four-year veteran of World War II and the Catholic Chaplain at the same veteran's hospital for 35 years. The Center Director spoke briefly, giving a rather formal account of the Chaplain's career in the VA. I had written about his entire lifetime, a colorful history of 75 years, and I wrote it in verse. After I read my tribute, I received a standing ovation by the several hundred people attending. The Center Director never spoke to me again. He had been upstaged by a woman!!

In reading this, you will see that women in my generation had no support from the women in their lives, no one to tell us to dream and go forth boldly. I do not blame our mothers. We lived through a time of extreme depression. The focus of our lives was to survive. Our mothers may have had great spirit, but they also knew that it was not a time for dreaming. Today, women are gaining the strength and courage to fight for equality in education, and for equal pay and equal status in a male-dominated society. They are finding their support in one another. The change is evolving. The tiny baby-step beginning is broadening until it becomes a giant step for womankind. My daughter has found her voice, and in her discovery, she, and the other women in this time, will speak out for the women of my generation and for the generation of my granddaughters. Close your eyes, listen carefully. Can you hear the echoes of women long gone as they lift their voices to the wind, softly singing "Born Free" to the sisterhood of all the ages. Let it be a song to those who now carry the torch.

ELAINE SMITH

Please look for Ms. Smith's full story on our website.



**Pride Community Center
of North Central Florida**
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Gainesville, FL 32627
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Due to printing deadlines, we were unable to present the recent story about **Andrea Zimbardi**, the University of Florida Softball player, who was recently dismissed amid allegations of homophobia and discrimination. You can read the full story at outsports.com, just follow this link: www.outsports.com/campus/20030521andreazimbardi.htm Gainesville Area NOW strongly supports Ms. Zimbardi, and her right to play Softball. We demand that she be reinstated into her position.

True Equality for Women: ERA, Childcare, Healthcare, Equal Pay - There IS money for what we want!

When people ask us, "Where is the money going to come from?" we say, tax the wealthy companies that make money every day in Florida by paying women less. Unequal pay is costing working families—many headed by women—\$11.2 billion a year.¹ How dare Jeb give tax breaks to his buddies while he slashes already inadequate programs for childcare and healthcare.

Jeb could start by NOT cutting the 'intangibles tax' on stock investments, which is slated to be cut back as of June, costing Florida programs \$100 million. Meanwhile, cuts to the Medically Needy program amount to \$57 million and will require those who use the program to live on \$450 a month. The cut in the federal estate tax pushed through by Jeb's brother George W. cost Florida \$174 million for 2003.²

¹Florida AFL-CIO, 1999.

²Source: Jack Gordon, former Democratic Florida Senator from Miami, writing March 5, 2003.

³<http://www.weallcount.org>

Florida Tax Break Examples:³

\$262 million - corporate tax break
\$206 million - professional sports clubs
\$162.1 million - security & commodity brokers
\$123 million - movie and TV industry

The National NOW Conference: *The Drive for Equality* July 11 - 13, 2003, in Arlington VA.

- Meet the presidential candidates.
- PAC Auction Host - Comedian Elaine Boozler.
- NOW's First Annual Intrepid Awards Gala

For more information and to register online, go to
<http://www.now.org/organization/conference/2003/index.html>

Florida Governor Jeb Bush Thanks NRA for Getting Brother Elected President

During his keynote address at the recent annual convention of the National Rifle Association (NRA) in Orlando, Florida Gov. Jeb Bush thanked members for helping to elect his brother president in 2000, CNN reported April 27.

Bush cited exit polls that showed that 48 percent of the voters in the 2000 presidential race were gun owners. "Were it not for your active involvement, it's safe to say my brother would not be president of the United States," Bush said.

He added that he and his brother both support the NRA's argument that the U.S. Constitution's Second Amendment makes bearing arms an individual right with few restrictions. "The sound of our guns is the sound of freedom," said Bush.

Throughout the two-day convention, gun-control advocates protested outside the Orlando convention center. Members of the **Brady Campaign** and the **Million Mom March** criticized the NRA's legislative agenda, which includes allowing the assault-weapons ban to expire in 2004, and giving gun makers immunity from product-liability lawsuits.

"We believe the public does not want Uzis and AK-47s, with large magazines that hold dozens of rounds, back in their neighborhoods," said Mary Leigh Blek, director of the Million Mom March.

Courtesy of the *Million Mom March*, 4/28/03

GARAGE SALE!

To benefit Gainesville Area NOW
Saturday July 19, 8 AM - 1 PM
2626 NW 52 Ave, Gainesville

One person's trash is another's treasure--Donate items to help us raise money! Call 380-9934 to make a donation or to volunteer to help.



"If you can't raise consciousness, at least raise hell." Rita Mae Brown - author

House Passes Dangerous, Unconstitutional Abortion Ban

Prohibits Use of the Safest Abortion Procedures After 14 Weeks

Last night, the U.S. House of Representatives put women's lives at risk by passing an unconstitutional abortion ban in a 282 to 139 vote. The ban on so-called "partial-birth abortion" has now passed both chambers of Congress and is expected to move quickly to the President's desk. The Center for Reproductive Rights has vowed to challenge the law as soon as President Bush signs it into law. If enacted, this will be the first federal abortion ban in U.S. history.

"Last night's vote confirms that Congress is willing to turn a blind-eye to women's health and the Constitution," said Nancy Northup, President of the Center for Reproductive Rights. "The Supreme Court has already ruled such laws unconstitutional, so the decision to pass this ban only shows how far some politicians are willing to go to curry favor with anti-choice groups." Added Northup, "This organization has successfully challenged these laws in fourteen states and in the Supreme Court. We are ready to do so again once this federal ban is enacted."

Just three years ago, in *Stenberg v. Carhart*, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that Nebraska's so-called "partial-birth abortion" ban was an unconstitutional threat to women's health and lives. The Justices struck down the ban for two reasons: first, the ban would have prevented women from obtaining the safest methods of abortion used from the beginning of the second trimester of pregnancy; second, it lacked an exception in cases where the health of the mother was in jeopardy. The bill passed by the House last night fails to remedy these flaws.

While proponents of this ban claim that only "late-term" abortions would be prohibited, legal and medical experts affirm that the bill would outlaw use of the safest and most common pre-viability abortion procedure used after the first trimester of pregnancy - dilation and evacuation (D&E).

Feminist Daily News Wire

So-Called "Partial-Birth Abortion" Bans: Myths and Facts

Myth: "Partial-birth abortion" bans prohibit only abortions performed late in pregnancy.

Fact: The so-called "Partial-birth abortion" bans prohibit safe and common abortion procedures performed throughout pregnancy.

Aren't "partial-birth abortion" bans "late-term" bans?

No. When the United States Supreme Court struck down Nebraska's so-called "partial-birth abortion" ban, it did so in part because it found the ban's language encompassed the most common method of second-trimester abortion.

Don't "partial-birth abortion" bans apply only to a particular stage of pregnancy?

No. Of the more than 30 bans enacted since 1995, only three refer to any particular stage of pregnancy. All the others apply throughout pregnancy.

Myth: "Partial-birth abortion" bans prohibit only one particular abortion procedure.

Fact: So-called "Partial-birth abortion" bans prohibit an array of safe and common abortion procedures performed throughout pregnancy.

Isn't "partial-birth abortion" an actual medical procedure?

No. The term "partial-birth abortion" does not identify any particular abortion procedure. It is a term invented by anti-choice activists.

Don't "partial-birth abortion" bans target only D&X abortions?

No. When the Supreme Court struck down Nebraska's so-called "partial-birth abortion" ban, it did so in part because it found the law banned the most common method of second-trimester abortion. "Even if the statute's basic aim is to ban D&X," the Court held, "its language makes clear that it also covers a much broader category of procedures."

Myth: "Partial-birth abortion" bans won't harm women's health.

Fact: So-called "Partial-birth abortion" bans gravely endanger women's health.

Don't the bans have exceptions to protect women's health?

No. Almost all the bans have no health exception whatsoever and only a dangerously inadequate exception to save a woman's life.

Gainesville Area NOW Bar-B-Q



Saturday, June 28, 2003

5:00 PM

6825 NW 43 Place

**- Potluck -
NOW will provide Burgers and
Veggie Burgers**



**Come and meet Gainesville Area
NOW, and see what actions we
have done and what we're working
on for the future of women.**

Call 373-5913 for more info.

Isn't a health exception unnecessary?

No. When the Supreme Court struck down Nebraska's ban, it did so in part because the ban failed to include a health exception. The Court has long held that laws restricting abortion access must contain an exception to protect women's health.

But if the bans were limited to D&X abortions, wouldn't they protect women from an unsafe procedure?

No. According to the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, a D&X "may be the best or most appropriate abortion procedure in a particular circumstance to save the life or preserve the health of a woman." Likewise, although the Supreme Court established that Nebraska's ban was broad, it held that even if a so-called "partial-birth abortion" ban were targeted narrowly at D&X, "a statute that altogether forbids D&X creates a significant health risk."

Shouldn't legislatures prevent the use of new, unproven medical procedures?

No. If legislators prevent doctors from developing new surgical procedures or improving existing ones, they will impede medical progress. Legislatures will inevitably endanger patients if they micromanage surgical techniques from the state house.

Myth: "Partial-birth abortion" bans are necessary to prevent elective abortions late in pregnancy.

Fact: So-called "Partial-birth abortion" bans are not confined to any stage of pregnancy, and third-trimester abortions are not elective.

Don't women seek elective third-trimester abortions?

No. Long-standing, unchallenged statutes in 40 states and the District of Columbia prohibit elective abortions by any method after fetal viability. Moreover, women do not carry healthy pregnancies for seven or eight months and then abort on a whim. On those extremely rare occasions when women have third-trimester abortions, they do so because their fetuses have severe or fatal anomalies or because the pregnancy endangers their lives or health.

Myth: Congress drafted the current federal "partial-birth abortion" ban so that it reaches only one procedure and safeguards women's health.

Fact: The most recent federal so-called "partial-birth abortion" legislation is still a broad and dangerous ban.

Isn't the current federal ban limited to abortions performed late in pregnancy?

No. The ban applies throughout pregnancy.

Hasn't Congress limited the current federal ban to one procedure?

No. Far from describing one discrete abortion procedure, the ban's definition, like that in the Nebraska law, sets forth steps that physicians take routinely in performing a variety of safe, common abortion procedures throughout pregnancy.

Doesn't the current federal ban have an exception to protect women's health?

No. Contrary to the Supreme Court ruling that a law restricting women's access to abortion must contain a health exception, the current federal ban lacks any exception.

Courtesy of the ACLU

Gainesville Area NOW's general meeting on July 24th, will focus on reproductive rights, the so-called partial-birth abortion ban, and emergency contraception. Join us at the Pride Community Center, 1107 NW 6th St. at 7:30 PM.

Make Emergency Contraception Available Over the Counter

Emergency contraception (EC) has been proven safe and effective at preventing unintended pregnancies, but timing is key because EC must be taken within 72 hours of unprotected sex. For most women, access to a doctor takes longer. In much of the world, EC is available without a prescription, the U.S. lags behind. The FDA is considering an application to allow EC over the counter, which could prevent half of all unintended pregnancies in the U.S.

Urge Secretary of Health and Human Services Tommy Thompson at 202-690-7000, to ensure easy access to Emergency Contraception by making it available without a prescription.

SAVE THE DATE -- APRIL 25, 2004!

Save Women's Lives: March for Freedom of Choice

You asked for a March -- you've got it! Put that date in your calendar and plan now to get to Washington, DC on April 25.

We are excited to tell you that the National Organization for Women, and our sister organizations the Feminist Majority, NARAL/Pro-Choice America, and Planned Parenthood, are organizing a massive march of abortion rights activists and supporters in Washington, D.C. on April 25,

2004. This will be an historic action to send a message that women will not go back to the days of back-alley abortions.

In 1992, NOW organized the March for Women's Lives and 750,000 people poured into the streets of Washington, DC to protect abortion rights. Gainesville Area NOW and Campus NOW organized the largest delegation from Florida for NOW's Emergency March for Women's Lives In April 2001. We also had 2 members who spoke at the march about their own experiences with abortion. This march and rally will be even bigger, and will deliver a critical message that we will not allow our rights to safe, legal, and accessible abortion and birth control to be reversed or eroded any further. Today, even more is at stake - birth control, emergency contraception, international family planning, and even scientific research.

Gainesville Area NOW works for unrestricted access to abortion for all women and believes that marching in the streets is the most effective way to put pressure on politicians, judges, and the men in our lives to stop guilt-tripping us and chipping away at our abortion rights. We will start planning now so we can bring an even larger delegation to D.C. We will vigorously mobilize activists across the country, and with your help, NOW will bring hundreds of thousands to the nation's capital next spring. We only have to look at other countries' policies on abortion, emergency contraception, and child care to realize how backwards the United States is when it comes to women's equality. One of our board members, Stephanie Seguin came back from France with a hopeful story about what access to emergency contraception is really like. Many U.S. women decide to stay in bad marriages because of factors such as losing health care for themselves and their children, and the measly crumbs doled out from our welfare system; while women in countries such as France, have universal health care, public child care, and other programs in place that allow women to leave an unhappy or abusive relationship.

The four organizers have created a joint website (www.marchforchoice.org) where you can register and learn more. Of course we'll keep you updated on our plans, and we hope you'll be a part of NOW's growing delegation from your community.

We need your help to save women's freedom and women's lives and, in doing so, to highlight the growing divide between the extreme anti-women agenda that permeates official Washington and the mainstream pro-choice beliefs in this country.

Please make plans now to stand with us in Washington, DC on April 25th, and bring friends and family with you. We are marching for our mothers, our daughters, and ourselves -- our futures are on the line.

Check out Gainesville Area NOW's website! www.phys.ufl.edu/~labbe/nlw

The Low Road by Marge Piercy

What can they do to you? Whatever they want.

They can set you up, they can bust you,

they can break your fingers,

they can burn your brain with electricity,

blur you with drugs till you can't walk, can't remember,

they can take your child, wall up your lover.

They can do anything you can't stop them from doing.

How can you stop them?

Alone, you can fight, you can refuse,

you can take what revenge you can, but they roll over

you.

But two people fighting back to back can cut through a
mob,

a snake-dancing file can break a cordon, an army can
meet an army.

Two people can keep each other sane, can give support,
conviction, love, massage, hope, sex.

Three people are a delegation, a committee, a wedge.

With four you can play bridge and start an
organization.

With six you can rent a whole house, eat pie for dinner
with no seconds, and hold a fund raising party.

A dozen make a demonstration. A hundred fill a hall.

A thousand, power and your own paper: a hundred
thousand, your own media: ten million, your
own country.

It goes on one at a time, it starts when you care to act.

It starts when you do it again after they said no, it
starts when you say "We"

and know who you mean, and each day you mean one
more.

Gainesville NOWletter
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PRESORTED STANDARD
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Inside this issue:

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- * "My Story" by Elaine Smith
- * Abortion Ban
- * "The Low Road" a Poem
- * Jeb & the NRA
- * NOW March for choice

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-

White with Royal Blue Lettering
Small, Medium, Large, X-Large
\$15.00

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

\$15.00 - 34.00 Sliding Scale

I want to join:

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