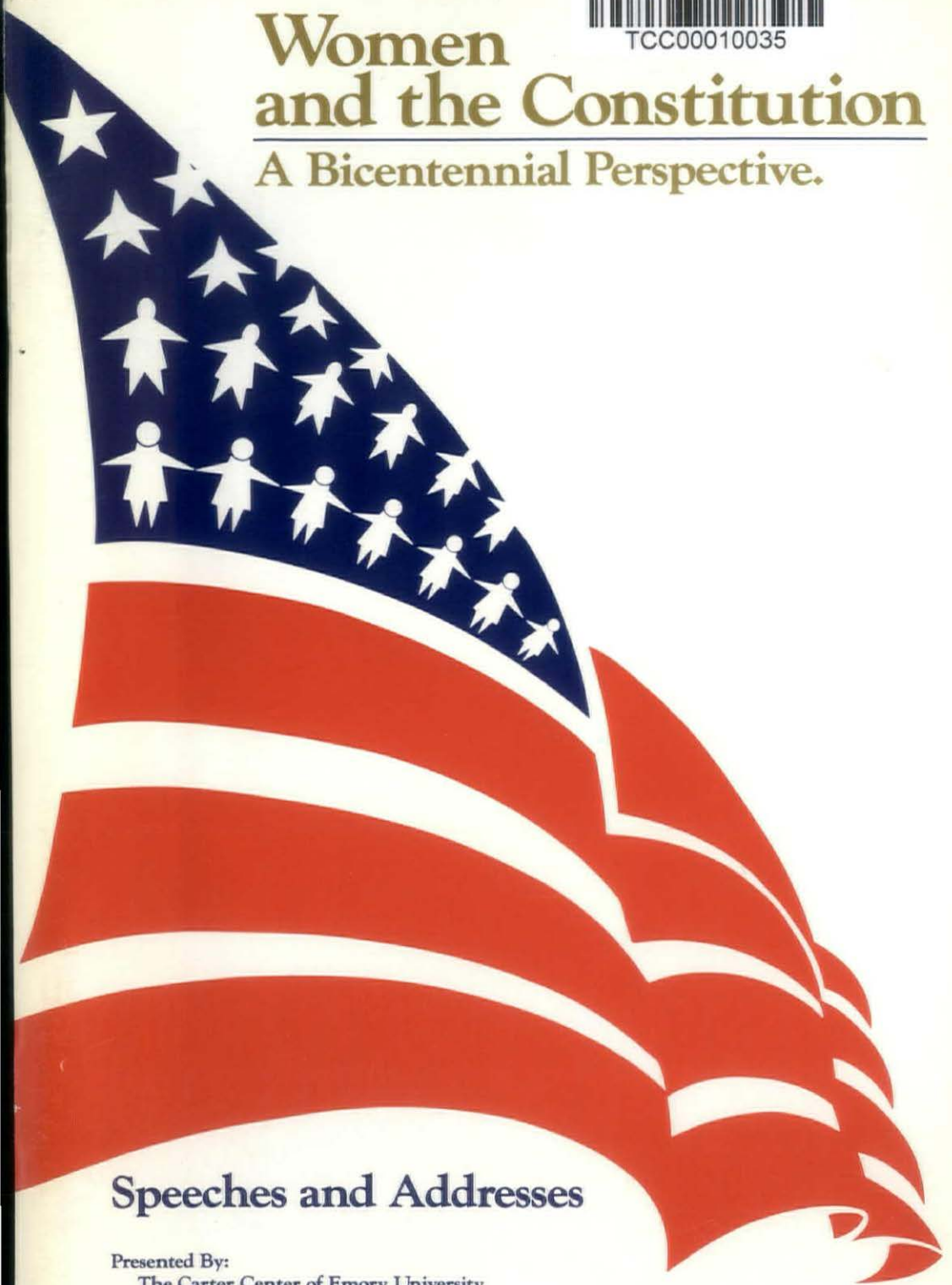




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Women and the Constitution

A Bicentennial Perspective.



Speeches and Addresses

Presented By:
The Carter Center of Emory University
in conjunction with
Georgia State University
The Jimmy Carter Library

This book contains statements from "Women and the Constitution: A Bicentennial Perspective." Extemporaneous remarks have been transcribed from recordings of the symposium. Where a written text exists, it has been given in its entirety.

Women and the Constitution: A Bicentennial Perspective

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Sponsored by The Carter Center of Emory University
in conjunction with
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and
The Jimmy Carter Library

Contents

Foreword.....Mrs. Rosalynn Carter.....	1
Introduction....Ms. Dayle E. Powell, Symposium Director.....	3
Addresses in order of delivery.....	
Mrs. Lady Bird Johnson.....	5
The Honorable Barbara Jordan.....	6
Justice Sandra Day O'Connor.....	9
The Honorable Geraldine Ferraro.....	16
Mrs. Coretta Scott King.....	23
Ms. Mary King.....	27
The Honorable Bella Abzug.....	32

Foreword: Rosalynn Carter



“Women influenced the Constitution from the very beginning.”

In February of 1988, a remarkable event took place here in Atlanta. For more than a year and a half, we at The Carter Center of Emory University, in conjunction with Georgia State University and the Jimmy Carter Library, planned a symposium we hoped would bring together women from all over the world. I met with Lady Bird Johnson and Betty Ford at the LBJ ranch in the summer of 1987 to discuss plans for the conference, and although she couldn't be with us, Pat Nixon's spirit was very much in evidence there.

We wanted a forum that would be big and bold and flexible enough to encompass women's history — our hopes and our fears, our successes and our failures. We did not envision a political symposium, but rather a gathering at which we could take an honest look at the past, assess the present and plan for the future. We posed, and I think answered, a question long overlooked by our society: What roles have women played in shaping the Constitution of the United States, and what impact has that document had on us?

The opening ceremony of “Women and the Constitution” marked the beginning of two days of remembering and discovery. We discussed the constitutional issues that affect us every day — at home, on the job, in our roles as executives and homemakers, caregivers and pathfinders, pioneers and peacemakers. We heard about the lives of some remarkable women who were ahead of their time, and we heard from some of the most accomplished women of today. All had one thing in common: to them, the word “no” represented a challenge, not an obstacle.

By the time we reached the closing session, “The Third Century, Where To From Here?” we had carefully considered where we stood 200 years ago and 100 years ago — economically, socially and legally — and were ready to look ahead to the next 100 years.

And what will that future hold? Perhaps none have a greater right to ask that question than the young people of this country, and none are more qualified to answer. The ten teenage essay winners who participated in the opening ceremony had been asked: “How will women have changed this country by the year 2087?” Although they came from places as diverse as Dorchester, Alaska and the Bronx, New York, each was chosen because she or he had expressed a unique opinion or insight into the future role of women in our society.

These are some of their thoughts:

Jon Peterson of Ponca, Nebraska wrote, “It is my hope that by the year 2087

women will help our country come to peaceful and more friendly terms with the Soviet Union through effective dialogue that will put an end to the fear of war and create a hope of peace."

From Christine Mezzacappa in Tustin, California: "Perhaps one day men and women will stand together as a people motivated to support each other and create a better world."

Cherita Armstrong from the Bronx, New York wrote, "I hope women will break down the barriers and stereotypes of America and get men to believe that women are capable of serving in any position they seek."

And Kimberly Chaddock from Grove City, Ohio, perhaps summed it up best when she said: "Today, many people speak of electing a woman president. I'm confident that, by the year 2087, this will be a fact several times over. I'm sure by then, women will have accomplished significantly more than women of today because the next 100 years will be a growth period, a time to live and experience many things that, even in 1987, seem unattainable."

These young men and women represent our future. When we set out to organize "Women and the Constitution," one of our goals was to leave a legacy for them — our children and grandchildren. Now that the conference is over, we are creating this legacy through a series of educational programs and by making materials from the conference available for study.

The Carter Center of Emory University is developing curricula to be distributed through a network of educators. Currently, there is no secondary school program in the United States that concentrates on the contribution of women to the Constitution, or on the future of women's rights. With the help of one of the country's most respected curriculum writers, we are developing educational materials for secondary U.S. history and civics classes that focus on the participation of women in the development of legislative, executive and judicial branches of American constitutional government. Papers presented at the conference and video tapes of the proceedings are being used to develop a book of educational resources on women called *Women and Constitutional Government in the United States: Educational Resources for Secondary School Courses in History, Government, and Civics*. This book will be used to teach the core values and principles of the Constitution.

In addition, the papers and speeches presented at the conference are now stored in the National Archives so that scholars, educators and students will have access to them for generations to come. A copy of these proceedings, which serve as a symbol of the knowledge and inspiration this gathering generated, is also available at the Jimmy Carter Library.

Many people worked very hard to make the vision we had for this conference a reality. My special thanks go to Lady Bird Johnson, Pat Nixon, and Betty Ford for their help and moral support. Lady Bird Johnson was able to attend the symposium and was an inspiration to all of us.

I want to thank the members of the National Advisory Committee and the Executive Board, the more than 150 speakers and panelists, and the staff of The Carter Center and the other sponsoring organizations who devoted themselves to this project for many months. Most of all, my gratitude goes out to those of you who came from all 50 states and ten foreign countries to help make this event the success that it was.

I will always remember "Women and the Constitution" as the challenging beginning of a renewed commitment for women to fully participate in the history of our country. Maybe a hundred years from now we can say "We the People" and include all of the people of this great country of ours. If what we heard from each other and from our young people is an example of changing attitudes, we can truly look forward to the future as a golden age for women.

Introduction: Dayle E. Powell



“Women have always been a powerful, although sometimes invisible force in this country.”

In 1905, Grover Cleveland said, “Sensible and reasonable women do not want to vote.” This pronouncement from the president of the United States reminds us that, even after one hundred years, not much weight was given to women’s opinions in America. Yet women have always been a powerful, although sometimes invisible, force in this country. Even in our earliest years women were influential as political thinkers and policy shapers.

When we study the constitutional era, the names of our forefathers come readily to mind. Almost every school child can recite the names of many of the delegates at the Constitutional Convention. But what of the women? Where was a record being made of the invisible participants in the constitutional process? Who would account for the roles played by women in shaping this nation?

As America was making its plans for the celebration of the bicentennial of the Constitution, no one was seriously focusing on women’s contribution to its development or examining the unique impact that document has had on the lives of the majority of U.S. citizens — women. Thus was born the concept for “Women and the Constitution: A Bicentennial Perspective.” The Carter Center of Emory University became the academic sponsor of the symposium in conjunction with Georgia State University and the Jimmy Carter Library.

From the several originators of the idea came a small working group, called the Executive Committee, which included one man. For more than a year the Executive Committee worked nights, weekends, mornings, and lunchtimes, at homes, in offices, with and without children, to oversee the plans and implementation of the symposium.

Rosalynn Carter asked the First Ladies to lend their support as conveners of “Women and the Constitution.” Betty Ford, Lady Bird Johnson, and Pat Nixon enthusiastically said “yes” and worked together with Mrs. Carter to raise money, shape the focus, and stimulate public awareness of the effort. This symposium marked a historic occasion of collaboration by four former First Ladies. In September 1987, Rosalynn Carter, Betty Ford, and Lady Bird Johnson met at the LBJ ranch for a working session and to participate in a fund-raising magazine interview. The First Ladies also used their considerable influence in securing the featured speakers and other participants in the program. While Pat Nixon and Betty Ford were not able to be present at the symposium, their support was always with us and was deeply felt.

A national advisory committee, consisting of some of the country's leading activists and policymakers, was tapped for advice on the concept of the symposium. They met together for the first time more than a year before the symposium, and they remained active by telephone, mail, and in person as consultants, sounding boards, and scholars, providing support when it was greatly needed.

A program committee, comprised of some of the nation's top scholars, was convened to shape the academic content of the program. These leaders searched throughout the nation for researchers, speakers, and experts who could document as well as speak authoritatively on the legal, historical, sociological, and economic aspects of the issues to be addressed. One hundred fifty-seven of these eminent scholars spoke at the symposium in more than 30 separate sessions. Their efforts have produced a significant body of work that will now become a legacy for our country.

Volunteers were needed to staff the effort. In response to the call that was issued, volunteers came by the hundreds. Their enthusiasm and untiring efforts resulted in the grand gift of more than 3,000 hours.

The community response was tremendous. Area museums were willing to feature female artists, some for the first time, to show the cultural contributions of American women. These museums created special exhibits, commissioned new works, and helped raise the public awareness of women's legacy. School choirs were asked to perform in the opening session. Girl Scouts were proud to be a part of the ceremony.

In addition, the symposium did not lack for financial support. Foundations, corporations, and individuals gave not only their money but their personal commitment to the symposium. A corporate sponsor conducted a national essay contest that opened participation to approximately 500,000 teenagers whose topic was, "How do you hope women will have changed our society by the year 2087?" This initiative resulted in attendance at the symposium by ten top finalists — any one of whom may be America's next-generation leader. As a result of the scholarship money raised, we were able to bring participants representing Gray Panthers, native Americans, black Americans, youths, and representatives from at least 19 states who otherwise would not have been able to attend.

The results of these combined efforts were seen in February 1988. As the nation watched, scholars told the story of women's contributions to the Constitution and evaluated its impact on their lives. Policymakers considered how women approach key issues and help set the path for the future. Two thousand women, men, and children from all 50 states and ten foreign countries met together for a reflective celebration, sharing and planning in a unique way for America's future.

The research, as well as the audio and video tapes of the proceedings, was donated to the National Archives so that our descendants will not wonder, as we have, who will account for the roles played by women in shaping, interpreting, applying and changing the Constitution.

With thanks to all those mentioned above, in appreciation for all who have come before, and in anticipation of those who will come hereafter, "Women and the Constitution: A Bicentennial Perspective" was offered for America to see and remember its mothers, sisters, and daughters who have not only rocked the cradles but who have also written the laws, argued the debates, won the vote, fought the battles, and made this country great. Yours is the credit and the honor. Mine has been the privilege of seeing it through.

Lady Bird Johnson



“I want my granddaughters to have as much chance to grow and develop as my grandson does.”

In 1964, I visited the house in Massachusetts where four generations of Adams' lived, including John Adams and John Quincy Adams. What did I really love the most? What did my heart go out to? The huge lilacs — almost trees then, bending with fragrant purple blooms, that Abigail Adams herself had planted. I have always been grateful to Abigail Adams for providing me with that small living link to my past — for reminding me of the continuity in all women's lives.

Over the years, the memory of those lilacs has stayed with me. They have come to symbolize, for me, the potential for growth in all of us. That same year, I gave the baccalaureate address at Radcliffe College, and I dug out a copy of that old speech because I think it illustrates another important point. Back then I said that “amid all the worries and uncertainties and the provocative doctrines about the role of the educated woman today, a remarkable young woman has been emerging in the United States. She is your sister, your roommate, and if you look closely enough, probably yourself.”

I think if we look around us today, we will see that we are, young and old, remarkable women. From those first women who fought for the right to choose their own paths in life to those of you who, today, manage a home or a business or a dream, we are all remarkable women. At the conference in February, we gathered to remember and affirm our past, to assess our present and to plan for the future. I have no doubt it will be a remarkable future.

I thank all of you who joined us and shared this most important event with us.

Barbara Jordan



“Life is too large to
hang out a sign: ‘For
Men Only.’”

What is the challenge inherent in the subject “Women and the Constitution” 200 years after the delegates to the Constitutional Convention signed the document? I assume that question is included in the phrase “A Bicentennial Perspective,” which is a part of the subject of this symposium. We continue to celebrate the completion of the Constitution and honor and revere the signatories. We remain awed by the quality of mind shown by the Founding Fathers. We recite the Preamble and with a haughtiness of spirit laud over others that our fundamental law, the Constitution, was structured by us. We are proud that we, each and every one of us, are the “We the People” who ordained and established the Constitution of the United States of America. That is, we created the government and it exists to serve us. That is our faith.

As grand as all of that sounds, we know immediately it is not quite the whole truth. Women were not included in the Constitution. Women could not rightly claim to have been a part of the grand, sweeping “We the People.” Why not? The rights and privileges of citizenship in the new country did not extend to women. They could not vote, hold public office, serve on a jury, tend bar, own property, study law . . . and one could go on. One may ask whether the founders were mean-spirited and just didn’t like women? The answer is no. They loved women but had a very limited 18th century notion about their role in the world.

John Adams, the second president of the United States, was not a delegate to the Constitutional Convention because in 1787 he was in London as our minister. He was, however, a member of the Continental Congress. Correspondence to him there from his wife, Abigail Adams, informs us of the desire of some women of that period to be included in the affairs of state. In 1777, Mrs. Adams urged her husband and the Founding Fathers of the new republic of the United States:

In the new code of laws which I suppose it will be necessary for you to make, I desire you would remember the ladies and be more generous and favorable to them than your ancestors. Do not put such unlimited power into the hands of husbands. Remember, all men would be tyrants if they could. If particular care and attention is not paid to the ladies, we are determined to foment a rebellion, and will not hold ourselves bound by any laws in which we have no voice or representation.

That was a strong expression of desire, but history does not record an equivalent response. There does appear to have been a genuine feeling on the part of some men in power that women were weak and needed protection. The language of some of the early Supreme Court cases is revelatory and anachronistic. In *Bradwell v. Illinois* (1872), the Court upheld the right of a state to deny women the right to practice law. Justice Bradley:

The natural and proper timidity and delicacy which belongs to the female sex evidently unfits it for many of the occupations of civil life. The constitution of family organization, which is founded in the divine ordinance, as well as in the nature of things, indicates the domestic sphere as that which properly belongs to the domain and functions of womanhood. . . . The paramount destiny and mission of women are to fulfill the noble and benign offices of wife and mother. This is the law of the Creator.

That feeling about the role of women was (should I say is?) very widespread and the voices of women in opposition muted.

This view regarding the place of women in American life was/is historical, social, cultural, natural and seemed to conform to the universal fitness of things. It was this kind of long lasting view that is in part responsible for the exclusion of women from the text of the Constitution. (I am aware that an argument can be made that women are included in Section 2 of Article IV which states that "the citizens of each state shall be entitled to all privileges and immunities of citizens in the several states." I do not and would not make that argument. Such reasoning is tortured at best. I make the same statement about the Fourth Amendment and its due process provision.)

The exclusion of women from the Constitution is no longer the case, but this changed status has had a long, slow and difficult period of development. The problem centered around the ambiguities implicit and explicit in the word *equality*. Equality is one of the foundational values of America. Our Declaration of Independence resounds with an egalitarian rhetoric. For years and generations we appeared oblivious to our hypocrisy.

We have had to shift our focus from equal meaning "same or similar" to equal as a modifier of rights, status and opportunity. Men and women are not the same. Sylvia A. Law, a law professor, has written a superb article in *The University of Pennsylvania Law Review* entitled "Rethinking Sex and the Constitution." In it she states:

The reality of sex-based physical differences poses a significant problem for a society committed to ideals of individual human freedom and equality of opportunity. . . . To the extent that constitutional doctrine shapes culture and individual identity, an equality doctrine that denies the reality of biological difference in relation to reproduction reflects an idea about personhood that is inconsistent with peoples' actual experience of themselves and the world. . . . The central biological difference between men and women is that only women have the capacity to create a human being. . . . The power to create people is awesome. Men are profoundly disadvantaged by the reality that only women can produce a human being and experience the growth of a child in pregnancy.

This author then points out that society has more than made up for this profound disadvantage by providing men with extraordinary advantages — both material and spiritual.

In 1868 the 14th Amendment was added to the Constitution of the United States. The Civil War was over and the government was trying to sort out its obligations to its black citizens. That amendment, among other things, guaranteed to all persons in this country "the equal protection of the laws" . . . that is, all persons except women. It was not until 1971 that the Supreme Court decided that women are included in the equal protection clause. To this date, we women are challenged to make sure that our rights are not ignored and that our participation in the life of the country is complete.

Joel Grossman and Richard Wells in their book *Constitutional Law and Judicial Policy Making* make the observation that:

There have been four interrelated strategies to bring about change in the rights of women. First, there have been political efforts to repeal offending state and federal laws. Second, there have been efforts to use the enforcement machinery of state and federal civil rights commissions. Third, efforts have been directed at constitutional change. . . . Fourth, . . . there have been continuing efforts to pass federal and state equal rights amendments.

All four strategies are needed and more. When the Equal Rights Amendment first passed, support in the House and Senate was overwhelming. It passed the House by a vote of 354-24 in October 1971 and the Senate in March 1972 by a vote of 84-8. It appeared to be moving toward early ratification. I was a member of the Texas Senate at that time and all of our state leaders wanted Texas to be first to ratify. The Lieutenant Governor, the presiding officer of the Senate, came to me on the Senate floor and said that as soon as the amendment arrived he would halt all business and recognize me to move for ratification. That is exactly what happened. (I don't think we were the first state to ratify in spite of our efforts.) The movement to ratify ERA stalled at 35 states. Momentum stopped. Opposition settled in. Revival? Problematical. All women do not support the Equal Rights Amendment. Those who do must respect the rights of others to choose not to support ERA. Freedom of choice is not to be restricted to only those with whom we agree.

The language of the amendment is simple. "Equality of Rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by The United States or by any state on account of sex." That amendment added to the Constitution would end ambiguity and obfuscation and place women squarely within the letter of the Constitution. I give no odds on that occurring. But I do give great odds on the future, a future which has as its centerpiece men and women working together — in our common humanity — trying to assure at every turn that we live in peace and freedom, with order and civility.

I conclude with a quote from a great First Lady, Eleanor Roosevelt. She said this at the U.N. General Assembly in 1952:

I believe we will have better government in our countries when men and women discuss public issues together and make their decisions on the basis of their differing areas of experience and their common concern for the welfare of their families and their world. . . . Too often the great decisions are originated and given form in bodies made up wholly of men, or so completely dominated by them that whatever of special value women have to offer is shunted aside without expression. . . .

That must not be. Our task is too great. Our hold on the future too tenuous. Our relationships too fragile. Time remaining too short. Space we occupy too small. Life too large — to hang out a sign — 'For Men Only.'

Sandra Day O'Connor



“Despite the relative gains women have made over the last 30 years . . . there are still significant gaps.”

This is a very special event. The Bicentennial of our Constitution has been the subject of more than a year of celebrations and observances. It has produced some dramatic changes for me and my colleagues on the Supreme Court. It was in order to better prepare for the 200th anniversary of our national charter that Chief Justice Warren Burger stepped down. One of my colleagues and a former Arizonan, William Rehnquist, has become our 16th chief justice. Antonin Scalia, a former Court of Appeals judge, has joined us. And in a few days we will also be joined by Court of Appeals Judge Anthony Kennedy.

It seems natural for Supreme Court justices to be enthusiastic about the Bicentennial of the document we spend so many of our waking hours thinking and arguing about — and so many pages of the United States Reports writing about. But it is perhaps not so common for most people today to examine our Constitution. Although 200 years ago most Americans debated the merits of the proposed Constitution, recent polls indicate that today almost half of our citizens do not know why the Constitution was drafted, or even what is meant by the Bill of Rights. Seventy-five percent erroneously believe the Constitution guarantees a free public education. Forty-nine percent erroneously believe the president can suspend the Constitution in time of national emergency. Sixty-four percent believe the Constitution establishes English as our national language. I dare say an even higher percentage have little or no understanding of how the Constitution and the Bill of Rights apply to women.

With such widespread lack of understanding about our nation's charter, the Bicentennial celebration has been welcome indeed. It provides an opportunity for each of us to learn more about the ideas embodied in the Constitution and the ways in which they shape our lives. It is not enough to simply read the document. We need to learn how the Constitution has been interpreted and applied in the courts of this land in order to understand what it has come to mean at the end of the 20th century. This seminar gives us an opportunity to review one particular area of constitutional law — specifically, its application to women. A most impressive group of speakers, sponsors and participants has been assembled to address many aspects of the subject, and I am honored to be part of it.

One reason the Constitution and the Bill of Rights have survived for two centuries is that they were, for the most part, intentionally drafted in broad and general terms. The drafters left to future generations the task of giving their words

texture and meaning in the context of changing times and current problems. Although the power of judicial review is said by some to be the "cornerstone" of our constitutional law, courts are almost never the first to ponder the constitutional questions that come before them. Article III of the Constitution empowers federal courts to decide only genuine cases or controversies. This means that in the first instance it is up to state and federal legislators and executives to decide whether the laws they enact or the actions they are about to take are constitutional. Many provisions of the Constitution are addressed directly to legislators and executive officials. And, even when the government acts, the judiciary does not come into play until someone with a personal stake in the matter challenges the government action or practice in court.

The point is that the Supreme Court almost never has the first word in interpreting the Constitution. The Court is a uniquely reactive institution. Our agenda is shaped by the issues and concerns of the nation as a whole. Almost every political, economic, and social problem and change in our society has a way of finding its way to the Court's marble halls. But we cannot just pluck interesting issues out of the air and decide them for the benefit of future generations. When the Court's agenda changes, as it surely did beginning in 1970 in the area of sex discrimination, the change is most frequently a delayed response to changes in the nation's agenda. It is dictated by external forces — the actions of the other branches of government, the decisions of the lower courts, and ultimately the concerns of the public. The Court is only rarely in the forefront of establishing new major legal standards, and its articulation of principles of social policy has typically been within the bounds of general public perceptions at the time. The story of women and the Constitution is illustrative.

Abigail Adams advised her husband in 1776 to "remember the Ladies" in drafting the new nation's charter. Women, she said, "would not hold [themselves] bound by any laws in which [they] have no voice or representation."¹ Her advice had little effect on her husband, John. He answered that men would not give up their masculine systems, but they would be fair, because in practice men "were the subjects" of their wives.² His response reflected a view of women sometimes expressed both in England and in the Colonies. It is reminiscent of the words of Samuel Johnson, the English author and conversationalist, who once told a friend: "Nature has given women so much power that the law has very wisely given them little."³

As we all know, the Constitution, ratified in Philadelphia on September 17, 1787, was produced and voted upon by 55 delegates — all men. The final draft contains no specific mention of women, although at various places throughout the document the faultlessly gender-neutral terms "person" and "citizen" are used. The Great Compromise — providing for representation in the House of Representatives on the basis of population, and representation in the Senate on the basis of two from each state — made it possible for the Constitutional Convention to produce ultimate agreement on our national charter. There was, as far as we know, no disagreement that representation in Congress should be based on the whole free population, women as well as men. The only express reference to this of which I am aware was in Resolution 7 submitted by Edmund Randolph of Virginia on June 28, which "Resolved that the right of suffrage in the first branch of the legislature of the United States ought to be in proportion to the whole number of white and other free citizens and inhabitants of every age, sex and condition including those bound to servitude for a term of years and three-fifths of all other persons not comprehended in the foregoing description except Indians not paying their taxes in each state." The Committee on Style rephrased this language as part of Article I, Section 2, referring simply to "free persons."

The Constitution, however, left the regulation and qualification of voters to be determined by each state. In 1787 only the state of New Jersey permitted women to vote, although that privilege was removed in 1807 because of controversy surrounding a particular election in Elizabethtown. It was not to be extended again to women by any state until Wyoming did so in 1869, perhaps partly with tongue-in-cheek. And it wasn't until the addition of the 19th Amendment in the early part of this century that the federal Constitution guaranteed all citizens the right to vote.

The ratification of the Bill of Rights in 1791 had little immediate effect on the legal status or rights of women. Its strictures were limited initially to the federal government; the states were free to continue as before in fashioning the political and legal rights of their citizens. State legislation affecting women was drawn primarily from the British common law. Only in the case of unmarried women were the laws in this country somewhat more generous than in England, at least insofar as property ownership and management were concerned.

It was not until after the Civil War and the resultant adoption of the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments to our Constitution that there were arguably some national guaranties for certain individual liberties that the states could not abridge. But even these additions to our Constitution did not easily translate into concepts that benefitted women as a group until the last half of the 20th century. Until that time, despite the efforts of women such as Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, and Sojourner Truth, society as a whole generally accepted the separate and unequal status of women.

The 14th Amendment prohibits states from "denying to any person . . . the equal protection of the laws." There is little evidence to suggest that at the time of its adoption in 1868, this amendment was seen as a vehicle of women's equality under law. In fact, the 14th Amendment introduced sex-specific language into the Constitution. Section 2 of the amendment, which dealt with legislative representation and voting, said that if the right to vote were "denied to any of the *male* inhabitants" of a state aged 21 or over, then the proportional representation in that state would be reduced accordingly. Moreover, the Supreme Court determined in 1873 in the *Slaughter-House Cases*⁴ that the Equal Protection Clause should be narrowly interpreted to apply only to state laws that discriminated against blacks. Justice Miller, speaking for the Court, said, "We doubt very much whether any action by a state not directed by way of discrimination against the Negroes as a class . . . will ever be held to come within the purview of [the Equal Protection Clause]."⁵

The same Court on the very next day handed down the decision denying Myra Bradwell's claim that the State of Illinois had denied her the privileges and immunities of United States citizenship when it refused, because of her sex, to give her a license to practice law.⁶ The Court's holding was that the right to practice law in a state was not a federal privilege, but the concurring opinion of Justice Bradley reflected the 19th century view of the separate and unequal status of women. As he put it, their "natural and proper timidity and delicacy . . . unfits [them] for many of the occupations of civil life."⁷

Two years later the Court refused to sustain the claim of Virginia Minor that Missouri's male-only voting laws were unconstitutional under the 14th Amendment.⁸ The Court unanimously held that the Constitution did not confer the right of suffrage on anyone, and it noted that none of the new states that had been admitted to the Union had conferred that right upon women.

In 1880 the Court upheld a West Virginia law restricting jury service to men,⁹ a decision that was not overturned until 1975.¹⁰ Indeed, the practice of restricting jury service to men unless women registered separately to serve as jurors was upheld as late as 1961. That case came to the Court from Florida where an all-male jury

had convicted Gwendolyn Hoyt of murdering her husband with a baseball bat. Her defense was that his marital infidelity had so enraged her she killed him in a fit of temporary insanity. She argued that the effect of Florida's system of jury registration by women had the effect of unconstitutionally depriving her of a jury of her peers. In upholding Florida's jury practices the Court said, "Despite the enlightened emancipation of women from the restrictions and protections of bygone years, and their entry into many parts of community life formerly considered to be reserved to men, woman is still regarded as the center of the home and family life."¹¹ So stating, the Court upheld the blanket excuse of all women from jury service.

It was not until after World War I and the unrelenting efforts of the Suffragettes that the 19th Amendment was adopted in 1920, finally giving women the right to vote. But even the tremendous gain of the franchise did not result in serious demands for equality in laws relating to women in the labor force. The Federal Women's Bureau, Labor Secretary Frances Perkins and Eleanor Roosevelt, among others, opposed the first introduction of an Equal Rights Amendment, and they supported laws giving women special protection such as maximum working hours. Such a law had been upheld by the Supreme Court in 1908 in *Muller v. Oregon*, where the Court said, "...history discloses the fact that woman has always been dependent upon man. . . . She is properly placed in a class by herself, and legislation designed for her protection may be sustained, even when like legislation is not necessary for men. . . ."¹² The Court reasoned that protectionist legislation was justified because it was designed to compensate for the special burdens resting on women. Upon reading the Court's opinion it is apparent that many of the "burdens" the Court perceived were the result of societal stereotypes rather than actual biological differences between the sexes. The Court found, for example, that the two sexes differed in "the self-reliance which enables one to assert full rights, and in the capacity to maintain the struggle for existence."¹³ Yet one sees even in that opinion an awkward attempt by the Court to come to grips with the problem of how physical differences between the sexes should affect their treatment under the law, a problem that has continued to perplex the courts in the succeeding years.

For the first half of the 20th century the Court continued to defer to legislative judgments regarding the differences between the sexes. In 1948 Valentine Goesaert and three other women challenged the constitutionality of a Michigan statute forbidding a woman from being a bartender unless she was "the wife or daughter of the male owner" of the bar. The Court in an opinion by Justice Frankfurter rejected the claim that the statute violated the Equal Protection Clause, saying that "despite the vast changes in the social and legal position of women," the state could unquestionably forbid all women from working as bartenders. The Court was unwilling to second-guess the judgment of the Michigan legislature that bar ownership was hazardous to women.¹⁴

Until the latter half of this century, few women considered practicing law or medicine or any of the other traditionally "male" occupations. In family law, property law, and elsewhere, women, particularly black women, were relegated to a position that could at best be described as second class. Correctly perceiving the law as an engine of oppression, few women were eager to get on the train.

Happily, the last half of this century has witnessed a revolution in women's legal and political status. My Chambers window in Washington, D.C. commands a view of a small brick house, the headquarters of the National Women's Party and the home of suffragist Alice Paul. It serves as a daily reminder to me that less than 70 years ago women had yet to obtain that most basic civil right, the right to vote. It also serves as a reminder that single-minded determination and effort can bring about fundamental changes in even a well-entrenched system of discrimination.

The great catalyst for the growth of civil rights litigation generally was the school desegregation case of *Brown v. Board of Education*,¹⁵ decided in 1954. In the aftermath of that landmark decision, public and legislative attention began to focus not only on racial discrimination but also on sex-based discrimination. Women emerged in significant numbers all across the country in the 1960s to demand equal opportunity, primarily in the workforce. Pursuant to its power under the Commerce Clause, Congress enacted both the Equal Pay Act of 1963 and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibiting employment discrimination on the basis of race or sex. In 1972, Congress sent the proposed Equal Rights Amendment to the states for ratification. In response, although it was not ratified, many states became active in reviewing state legislation to remove discriminatory laws and to pass state civil rights legislation.

The Supreme Court began to look more closely at legislation providing dissimilar treatment for similarly situated women and men in the early 1970s. The first case in which the Court found a state law discriminating against women to be unconstitutional was *Reed v. Reed*.¹⁶ The case was decided in 1971, more than 100 years after the ratification of the 14th Amendment. Applying only a rationality standard, the Court struck down an Idaho law giving men an automatic preference in appointments as administrators of estates. Following *Reed*, the Court invalidated a broad range of discriminatory statutes under the Equal Protection Clause of the 14th Amendment. For example, a federal law providing for determination of a spouse's dependency based on the sex of the member of the armed forces claiming the benefits;¹⁷ a Social Security Act provision allowing widows but not widowers to collect survivors benefits;¹⁸ a state law requiring divorced fathers to support their sons until age 21 but their daughters only to age 18;¹⁹ a state law permitting the sale of beer to women at age 18 but not to men until age 21;²⁰ a state law requiring men but not women to pay alimony after divorce;²¹ and a state statute granting only husbands the rights to manage and dispose of jointly owned property without the spouse's consent.²² In 1976, in the case of *Craig v. Boren*, the Court adopted a somewhat stricter standard of review for sex-based classifications and held that to "withstand constitutional challenge [under the Equal Protection Clause]. . . classifications by gender must serve important governmental objectives and must be substantially related to achievement of those objectives."²³

All in all, the Court has heard over 50 cases since 1971 involving various sex-based challenges under the Equal Protection Clause to state and federal laws relating to hiring, promotions, maternity leave, disability insurance, pension rights and seniority. Some of the challenges have been brought by women, some by men. Not all such challenges have been successful. But there is no question that the Court has now made clear that it will no longer view as benign those archaic and stereotypic notions concerning the roles and abilities of males and females. A statute classifying people on the basis of sex will not be upheld without an exceedingly persuasive justification for the classification.

The volume of cases in the Supreme Court dealing with sex discrimination has declined somewhat in the 1980s. Several of the more recent cases brought before the Court have involved interpretations of Title VII rather than of the Equal Protection Clause. In *Hishon v. King & Spalding*,²⁴ a case from Atlanta, the Court held that once a law firm makes partnership consideration a privilege of employment, the firm may not discriminate on the basis of sex in its selection of partners. The Court has also recognized that sexual harassment creating a hostile workplace environment violates Title VII.²⁵ And last term, the Court held that Title VII does not prohibit an employer from adopting an affirmative action plan taking sex into account in order to remedy the underrepresentation of women in traditionally segregated jobs.²⁶

Other recent cases have involved First Amendment challenges to state and local laws designed to end sex discrimination. In *Roberts v. Jaycees*,²⁷ the Supreme Court upheld a Minnesota statute that required the Jaycees to admit women as full voting members. Just last term the Court upheld a California law requiring Rotary Clubs to admit women. The Court reasoned that any infringement on the club members' freedom of association was justified by the State's compelling interest in eliminating sex discrimination and in assuring women equal access to leadership skills and business contacts.²⁸

Fifteen years have now passed since the Court's controversial ruling in *Roe v. Wade*,²⁹ invalidating state laws restricting abortions during the first three months of pregnancy. This decision, which is of enormous interest to women, whether they favor or oppose it, rested not on the Equal Protection Clause but on a right of privacy which the Court held implicit in the Constitution. Since *Roe v. Wade*, the Court has heard approximately 14 additional cases dealing with the regulation and funding of abortion procedures.

There is no doubt that for the remainder of this century the federal and state courts will continue to see cases dealing with sex-based discrimination, affirmative action, reproductive rights, and other sensitive issues affecting women. As I have noted, the Court's response and the development of constitutional doctrine is typically a delayed response to changes and new developments in the nation's focus and agenda. The Court is not a bad place from which to get some sense of the nation's concerns, or at least its national legal concerns. The more than 4,000 petitions for review each year come from all across the country and involve a very wide range of legal issues. The Court hears oral argument in cases that have their genesis in front page actions by Congress as well as in the actions of police officers in tiny towns. The attorneys who appear before the Court, and the clients whose problems have brought them there, present a similarly broad geographical cross-section.

E.B. White said: "Democracy is based on the recurrent suspicion that more than half of the people are right more than half of the time."³⁰ In the narrow view, the Supreme Court is based on the suspicion that five justices are similarly correct. In the broader view, I think that the justices contribute to the wider democracy. We struggle with national issues and attempt to define from national perspective what it is that the federal laws and the Constitution say. If you do not agree with all of the Court's holdings, you are certainly not alone. But you may be confident that we never stop trying in our writings on every case on our agenda to contribute appropriately to the fragile balances of our national democracy.

To put it differently, the Court is somewhat akin to a fire department. When Congress, or the executive branch, or a state, lights a new fire, we are inevitably summoned to attend to the blaze. Some litigants will ask us to fan the flames, others will demand their extinguishment, and still others will request only that the fire not be allowed to spread. But unlike most fire departments, justice moves slowly, so we usually linger for a while. It often takes a series of decisions to flesh out a new statute, or to draw new boundaries between state and federal authority, or to reconsider the limits on government intrusions on individual rights. Eventually, of course, most of what can be done in an Appellate Court is completed, and thereafter we see little more of that particular conflagration. In the broad area of women and the Constitution, I would say we will linger for a good many more years.

Despite the relative gains women have made over the last 30 years, in absolute terms there are still significant gaps. For example, in my own profession, while women represent as much as 30 percent of associates employed by a group of large law firms surveyed by the *National Law Journal* in 1984, only 5 percent of the

partnership positions were occupied by women. In Congress, less than five out of every 100 members of the 100th Congress are women. Less than 5 percent of the nation's judges are women.

Some of these disparities must be attributed to women's late start in these areas. Yet some also must be attributed to tenacious cultural and social barriers. But I am sure you agree with me that society as a whole benefits immeasurably from a climate in which all persons, regardless of race or gender, may have the opportunity to earn respect, responsibility, advancement and remuneration based on ability, and from a climate in which those who do achieve success are concerned about those who cannot provide for themselves.

Despite the encouraging and wonderful gains and changes for women that have occurred in my lifetime, there is still room to advance and to promote correction of the remaining deficiencies and imbalances. Let us look forward to completing the task of helping to make real the promise of equal justice under law.

- ¹ K. Anthony, *First Lady of the Revolution* 102 (1958).
- ² M.B. Norton, *Liberty's Daughters* 163 (1980).
- ³ M. F. McNamara, *2,000 Famous Legal Quotations* 571 (1967).
- ⁴ 83 U.S. (16 Wall) 36 (1872).
- ⁵ *Id.*, at 81.
- ⁶ *Bradwell v. Illinois*, 83 U.S. (16 Wall) 130.
- ⁷ *Id.*, at 141 (Bradley, concurring).
- ⁸ *Minor v. Happersett*, 88 U.S. (21 Wall.) 162 (1874).
- ⁹ *Strauder v. West Virginia*, 100 U.S. 303 (1880).
- ¹⁰ *Taylor v. Louisiana*, 419 U.S. 522 (1975).
- ¹¹ *Hoyt v. Florida*, 368 U.S. 57, 61-62 (1961).
- ¹² *Muller v. Oregon*, 208 U.S. 412 (1908).
- ¹³ *Id.*, at 422.
- ¹⁴ *Goesaert v. Cleary*, 335 U.S. 464, 465, 466 (1948).
- ¹⁵ 347 U.S. 483 (1954).
- ¹⁶ 404 U.S. 71 (1971).
- ¹⁷ *Frontiero v. Richardson*, 411 U.S. 677 (1973).
- ¹⁸ *Weinberger v. Wiesenfeld*, 420 U.S. 636 (1975).
- ¹⁹ *Stanton v. Stanton*, 421 U.S. 7 (1975).
- ²⁰ *Craig v. Boren*, 429 U.S. 190 (1976).
- ²¹ *Orr v. Orr*, 440 U.S. 268 (1979).
- ²² *Kirchberg v. Feenstra*, 450 U.S. 455 (1981).
- ²³ 429 U.S. 190, 197 (1979).
- ²⁴ 467 U.S. 69 (1984).
- ²⁵ *Meritor Savings Bank, FSB v. Vinson*, 106 S. Ct. 2399 (1986).
- ²⁶ *Johnson v. Transportation Agency*, 107 S. Ct. 1442 (1987).
- ²⁷ 468 U.S. 609 (1984).
- ²⁸ *Board of Directors of Rotary International v. Rotary Club of Duarte*, 107 S. Ct. 1940 (1987).
- ²⁹ 410 U.S. 113 (1973).
- ³⁰ J. Green, *Morrow's International Dictionary of Contemporary Quotations* 295 (1982).

Geraldine Ferraro



“If you don’t run, you
can’t win.”

I am delighted to have the opportunity to participate in the symposium, “Women and the Constitution: A Bicentennial Perspective.”

As you already know, I have just been appointed a Fellow at Harvard’s Institute of Politics at the Kennedy School of Government. Accordingly, I no longer give speeches. Politicians give speeches. Professors give lectures.

Actually, the tradition and history of Harvard gives you a different perspective on bicentennials. Harvard is old. When Harvard celebrated its bicentennial, Andrew Jackson was president, and only Indians were caucusing in Iowa.

Before I begin my formal comments on my assigned topic, I do want you to know how important I think it is that this symposium is being held. The women who have put this event together deserve our thanks, and the thanks of the delegates to the Constitutional Convention.

Two hundred years ago, they wrote a brilliant political document that was, for more than half the population, seriously flawed. This conference is about how far we have come in correcting those flaws.

It is, of course, a special pleasure because this event is being sponsored by The Carter Center. President Carter did more to advance the cause of women’s equality than any other president this country has had. In his appointments, both to the executive branch and to the courts, in the policies he pursued, in the tone he set and the convictions he held, he was an ally of the women’s movement.

We know that men of quality are not threatened by women of equality. Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter are partners in public life just as they are in private life, and their example is one of which American women and men can be proud.

I also have a personal appreciation to express. In 1978, I was seeking election to the House of Representatives. It was my first run for elective office and Queens had never before sent a woman to Congress.

In a very tough race, Miss Lillian came to campaign for me, and gave my candidacy a big lift. I won, and I will always be grateful for her help. It was a wonderful example of woman helping woman into political power.

I have been asked to address the topic, “Women in Public Office: The Opportunities.” More and more women are winning elective offices and assuming positions of power and authority in government and the political process.

Let me say that the election of 1984 was a wonderful learning experience for me. In running for national office, you have a chance to practice politics on the

highest level. And for all the differences I had and still have with President Reagan, I can only admire his skills as a politician.

So, in the bipartisan spirit of this conference, I thought I would borrow one of the president's techniques and talk about the movies.

If you recall several years ago, a marvelous film won the Academy Award. It was called "Chariots of Fire" and told the story of Harry Abrahams, a member of the British Olympic team in 1920.

After losing a race to his arch rival, a dispirited Abrahams turned, as movie heroes usually do, to the woman in his life.

Feeling sorry for himself, he said, "If I can't win, I won't run." To which she responded, "If you don't run, you can't win."

But, he whined, "I've worked so hard; what will I aim for?" Again, she had the answer, "Beat him the next time."

In that scene are two excellent pieces of advice that go to the heart of women's opportunity in politics. If you don't run, you can't win, and if you go out and work as hard as you can, and you aren't successful, go out and do it again to beat him the next time.

Please note that while the scene came from a movie about the athletic exploits of men, the political wisdom came from a woman.

I believe it is especially important, in this political year, that we bring women together to talk about increasing our participation. Like the Olympics, politics gets top billing only every four years. For most Americans, the window of opportunity for changing attitudes opens with the Iowa caucuses and closes shortly after the returns are tabulated in November.

Politics in general in this country would benefit from a longer span of public attention, and women, blacks and other underrepresented groups specifically have the most to gain. Voter apathy smiles on those who wish to preserve the status quo, and the status quo is not committed to dramatic progress in electing more women. One small indication of how far we have to go is reflected in a phone call recently received by the political director of the National Women's Political Caucus. It was from a columnist with a San Francisco newspaper.

Was he calling to ask about Dianne Feinstein's future plans? No. Did he want to discuss the potential Senate candidacy of California's Secretary of State, Marge Fong Eu? No. How about the impact of women in the California presidential primaries? No, none of those things. He wanted to know whether the leaders of women's organizations have taken a position on mini-skirts. This is true. Actually, he was probably directing his question to the wrong person entirely. Men may care about mini-skirts. Political women are much more interested in coattails.

Women are, by any objective measure, grossly underrepresented in elective office. I would say shockingly underrepresented; however, nobody is shocked. That's simply how it is.

In 1974, Jeanne Kirkpatrick wrote a book called *Political Woman*. Published by the Center for the American Woman and Politics at Rutgers University, it was a study of women state legislators from around the country. One of the jacket blurbs lauding the book was written by Bella Abzug. That was probably the last time Bella praised Professor Kirkpatrick's political views.

In her book, Kirkpatrick wrote that the most important and interesting thing she found about women's political role was that it was so insignificant. Sure, women have always been active and enthusiastic campaign volunteers. But, she wrote, "half a century after the ratification of the 19th Amendment, no woman has been nominated to be president or vice-president, no woman has served on the Supreme Court."

At the time, there was no woman in the Cabinet, no woman in the Senate, no

woman serving as governor of a major state, no woman mayor of a major city, and no woman in the top leadership of either party.

In the 14 years since, we have made some measure of progress. Associate Justice Sandra Day O'Connor sits on the Supreme Court and women have been represented in every Cabinet since President Nixon's. Two women serve in the United States Senate, and major cities as diverse as Houston and San Francisco have elected woman mayors.

Today, two women serve as chief executives of their states, Madeleine Kunin in Vermont and Kay Orr in Nebraska. In Kentucky, where the state constitution prohibits a governor from succeeding herself, Martha Layne Collins completed her term last year. And in Arizona, Secretary of State Rose Mofford, who is currently Acting Governor, will succeed Evan Mecham should he resign or be forced from office. According to the National Women's Political Caucus, women today hold 43 of the top statewide elective offices in the country, which comes out to 14 percent.

As we look at party leadership positions in the House of Representatives, we find Congresswoman Lynn Martin of Illinois serving as vice chair of the Republican Conference while Mary Rose Oaker of Ohio holds the corresponding position in the Democratic Caucus. Congresswoman Oaker is now engaged in a close contest to chair the caucus in the next Congress, a job no woman has ever held.

As an interesting footnote, the position Mary Rose now holds has traditionally been called Secretary of the Caucus. It has always been held by a woman, and no woman has ever gone from that position to the top spot. In this Congress, the 100th, the title of the position was changed from secretary — obviously a woman's job — to vice chair. In the next Congress, the vice chair will be Congressman Steny Hoyer of Maryland, who is running unopposed. And though Mary Rose is really going to have to fight for the position of chair, even though she has fulfilled the duties of the second spot for four years, if I were a betting woman, I would bet that now that the title has been changed and men are seeking the position of vice chair, it will be seen more as a stepping stone to the top job.

Other women have climbed onto the lower rungs of the leadership ladders in both parties in the House. But in the top jobs — speaker, majority or minority leader, majority and minority whip — still no women.

Of course, a woman has been nominated to the vice presidency, but no woman has been nominated, or even seriously contested for the nomination of her party, for president of the United States. That will not change in 1988. Pat Schroeder considered the race, and her travels around the country generated the only real enthusiasm in the campaign last summer. But after careful thought, Pat decided it wouldn't work.

One reason was that, nine months before the Iowa caucuses, it was too late. Dick Gephardt has been in Iowa since John Deere was still a fawn.

Pat wanted to concentrate on defense policy. Her decision not to run was based in large part on her conclusion that presidential politics requires more expertise in counting delegates than counting warheads.

Pat also thought that the process was a little ridiculous. She was not the first to reach that conclusion. Dale Bumpers, Sam Nunn, and Bill Bradley have all looked out over the edge of the cliff and realized that they could serve their country better in the Senate than on the chicken dinner circuit. And of course, a few governors have taken the same view.

On the Republican side, Professor Kirkpatrick was urged by many to make the race for president. She declined, citing what she called the "mean maleness" of presidential politics, which, she said, "shares a number of characteristics with some purely male competitive sports." In any event, Kirkpatrick remains high on every Republican's list of possible running mates.

The debate over women as presidential or vice presidential candidates has turned chiefly on the question of qualifications. We constantly hear it asked, "Is there a qualified woman?" To which women have responded, "Compared to whom?"

The fact is that the American electorate is accustomed to expect certain types of experience in candidates for national office. It doesn't hurt to be governor of a large state, or to be a senator of long experience. Like it or not, at this point in our country's political development, very few women hold those positions.

If we look at Senator Nancy Kassebaum's record of her ten years in the Senate, her expertise in budget and foreign policy undoubtedly qualifies her as a national leader. And 14 years in the House of Representatives, including work on the Armed Services Committee, are enough to give Congresswoman Schroeder the necessary experience, wisdom and political skills to be taken seriously as a presidential candidate.

However, it is not realistic or reasonable to expect every woman who wins election to the Senate, or to a governor's mansion, or who attains some seniority in the House, to run for president. That has to be a personal decision, and right now there just aren't a lot of women in a position even to consider a race for the White House.

What difference does it make if a woman runs for president? Plenty. Every time a woman runs for any elective office, it's like throwing a stone in a lake. The ripple effect is felt far beyond the immediate point of impact.

In the lake of U.S. politics, the presidency is the biggest stone. When a woman runs, the ripple effects will be felt everywhere. We know those effects are there, even if they are hard to measure. We got a sense of it in 1984. It's the young woman writing after the election, "I've decided to go to medical school because of you. I figured, if you can do it, I can too." It's the woman in her eighties holding on to a walker and whispering in my ear, "I never thought I'd live to see this day." It's the seven-year-old writing from her school in Minnesota, "Someday, I'm going to run for president."

There are also other, more specific ways in which a woman presidential candidate would make a difference. For instance, in the farm states this year, chapters of the women's political caucus have been unable to concentrate their energies on organizing voters for upcoming primaries and caucuses. The problem is they have been too busy helping women who have been victims of domestic violence.

One of the states where the farm crisis has resulted in a dramatic increase in the incidence of domestic violence is Iowa. Every presidential candidate talks about the farm crisis. Many speak compellingly of the need to preserve the family farm. But when it comes to speaking out on the threat to the women in those farm families, there is silence.

You can be sure that domestic violence, as an outgrowth of the farm crisis, would find its way onto the priority list of a woman running for president, and that issue would stay on her legislative agenda if she won.

In a book called *In a Different Voice*, Harvard Professor Carol Gilligan tells us that women's voices are essential to good government, and not necessarily because we are more caring or more effective. Rather, women add another dimension to the political process. Instead of engaging in confrontation, women are more apt to negotiate. Instead of looking at short-term solutions to problems, women are more apt to think in terms of generations to come. Instead of thinking in win-lose terms, women are more apt to see the gray area in between.

For all these reasons, it would be terrific if a woman were running for president. But even though no woman is in the race, we can still play an important

role in the presidential elections.

We can — and should — work to change the emphasis put on process to the detriment of substance. And while we're at it, we can — and should — seek to shorten that process. Campaigns should not require people to put their lives on hold for two years so they can personally conduct a census survey of Iowa and New Hampshire. We can — and should — seek to reduce the importance of fund-raising. The job is President of the United States, not President of United Way. We can — and should — register more women to vote.

While there is no woman in the race, women hold positions of power in the campaigns of the men running for president. That's progress, too.

Dukakis has women as campaign manager, Iowa coordinator and foreign policy advisor, and he wins high marks on this count. Each of the other Democrats also has women serving in senior positions in his campaign. We're not talking tokenism anymore; we're talking women sharing power. On the Republican side, Dole, Bush and Robertson each has women press secretaries. Kemp's political director is a woman. This is not an exhaustive list, but you get the idea.

It does make a difference. For one thing, when women run campaigns, it affects issue priorities. It is not a coincidence that one of the areas in which George Bush is violating his self-imposed loyalty test to the Reagan agenda is women's issues, especially child care.

When women run campaigns, it changes the perception that men have a corner on the skills required for big-time political success. The women who hold positions of responsibility in presidential campaigns, whether or not their candidate is ultimately successful, will forge contacts and gain credibility that will endure beyond this election cycle.

Many of them will be back, with higher ambitions and sharper skills, in 1992.

Even better, some of the women will be with the winning candidate, and they will have ever greater opportunities as high-ranking officials in a new administration.

That's important too. The current administration has widely been regarded as hostile to women's issues. That is in part because this president's inner circle of advisors, and I'm not equating that with his Cabinet, have, except for his wife, been men. Run down the list: Michael Deaver, Ed Meese, Don Regan, Howard Baker, James Baker, William Clark, Lyn Nofziger, Caspar Weinberger. All men.

The next president will have been elected with a campaign team that included women in the inner circle.

We have come a long way. It was 70 years from Philadelphia to Seneca Falls, and 70 more from Seneca Falls to ratification of the 19th Amendment and the fulfillment of the suffragettes' dream.

Activists of the time believed women would use the franchise to achieve certain policy ends by voting for candidates with different priorities. They were wrong. In 1920, women voted the way their husbands told them to vote. It took more than half a century for the gender gap the suffragettes were looking for to finally show.

Beginning with Ronald Reagan's election in 1980, pollsters and election analysts noticed and reported a new phenomenon. Women, long the 98 pound weaklings of American politics, were flexing their muscles. New voting patterns began to emerge.

Women voted more strongly Democratic — and on key issues such as peace, disarmament, social welfare, and the environment — differently from men.

In 1984, the gender gap was seen as a possible key to a Democratic challenge against a popular incumbent president running in a time of peace and prosperity. Ellie Smeal's book, *How and Why Women Will Elect the Next President*, was based on the potential for tapping the newly independent women's vote.

The premise was that if the gap persisted at the levels that had been documented, it could cost the Republicans the election. Well, it did persist. President Reagan's popularity simply overwhelmed it.

The gender gap is still with us today, and was crucial in the 1986 midterm elections. Nine Democrats, including four from southern states and five from western states, won elections to the United States Senate in which they received less than 50 percent of the men's vote and more than 50 percent of the women's vote.

Those women's votes have made a critical difference in the Senate. Had those races gone the other way, the Republicans would have kept their majority. Strom Thurmond rather than Joe Biden would have wielded the gavel at the Judiciary Committee hearings.

All nine of those Democratic senators voted against the confirmation of Robert Bork, who was defeated by eight votes. Had there been no gender gap in those nine states, Judge Bork would have been confirmed and the discussion at this symposium on the future of women's rights under the Constitution would have taken on a very different tone.

As we continue to look at those midterm elections, however, we have to concede that we didn't do very well in electing women. In the 100th Congress, there are 23 women serving in the House, with 412 men.

Five of the women in this Congress are new members serving their first terms. That's the good news. The bad news is that, even with five new women, we registered no net increase in women members because an equal number left.

The 1986 class of women is noteworthy not only for its size, but also for the backgrounds of its members. Nancy Pelosi achieved what may be a historic first by winning a special election to succeed Congresswoman Burton. It is routine for men to succeed men, but when a woman leaves public office, the likelihood is that a man will replace her. The other four had extensive experience in their respective state legislatures. The important point is what this portends for the future. The oldest "Catch 22" for any new job seeker is to be told, "We can't hire you; you don't have the experience." How are you supposed to get experience if you can't get hired — or elected — in the first place?

The numbers of women serving in state legislatures prove that women can get elected. From 1969 to 1987, the number of women serving in those legislative bodies increased from 300 to almost 1,200.

Of course, women have not yet achieved equal opportunity with men. We still have to work harder to be given a chance to prove ourselves. And voters still need to be taught that women are equally capable of handling foreign policy, national security and economic issues. However, the voters are learning. With our help, they'll get there. And so will we.

Then we will have more women in the House and in the Senate as well. Unfortunately, the immediate prospects are not encouraging.

In the last ten years, in the elections from 1978 through 1986, 23 women ran for the Senate as the nominees of one of the major parties. Three have won — Senators Kassebaum and Mikulski, and former Senator Paula Hawkins, who was defeated in her bid for re-election. And remember, Mikulski had run statewide and lost a Senate bid in 1974. Several of the others lost narrowly.

Twelve got less than 40 percent of the vote. The latter ran as sacrificial lambs against powerful incumbents who were practically guaranteed re-election.

Were those races worth running? Absolutely. If you don't run, you can't win. And just as important, every time a woman runs, women win. A greater number of women running means a greater opportunity for eventual success in making the process fairer and for electing a Congress that is more representative of all the people.

The 14 years since Jeanne Kirkpatrick wrote *Political Woman* have been a time of great excitement. So many more women are getting involved. So many historical firsts have occurred. Reading through the directory of women in Congress, one is overwhelmed by the number of "firsts." That's exciting because it says we're doing better. But we have to remember that when we have fewer women making history, we will have more women making policy.

How fast can this happen? One study pessimistically concluded that at the rate we're going, 40 years from now we'll still have only 53 women in the Congress. That isn't good enough. We need to persuade more women to run. If you don't run, you can't win. And while we're at it, we have to develop the concept of politics as an honorable profession.

In the meantime, women continue to make progress. Last year, for the first time ever, two women competed for the governorship of a state. It was in Nebraska, that hotbed of progressive, feminist thought.

You know what I think must be beautiful about a race like that? When both candidates are women, they can ignore all those tiresome questions about whether a woman is capable of doing the job. A woman will win the race and will do the job. Next question.

We also have to start paying attention to the kinds of goals we should be setting for ourselves. Half the House of Representatives? Half the governors? A woman president? When will it happen? In this century? In our lifetimes? I don't know. But I know this: It will happen, in time. I'm sure of it. I'm also sure that it is not just a matter of time. It is a matter of work, and faith, and confidence — of a commitment to the idea that some leaders are born women.

If you don't run, you can't win. But if you don't work, and work hard, you might as well not run.

Barbara Mikulski did not win election to the Senate because the people of Maryland decided it was time to elect a woman to the Senate. No groundswell erupted demanding that history's injustices be righted. She won because she had built a record of achievement and distinction, first in the neighborhoods of Baltimore, then in the City Council, and finally in the House of Representatives.

It happened because she is an outstanding politician. It happened because she has an excellent record of leadership. It happened because she has the ability to inspire people.

And it just so happened that she is a woman.

That's how a woman will one day be elected president. She will be elected not primarily because she is a woman, or in spite of being a woman, but because she has won the confidence of the American people that she can lead.

She will have proven herself as senior senator from Texas, or as chairwoman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, or in her bold handling of the state budget crisis as governor of Illinois. She will have shown that she possesses the rare combination of qualities the American people look for in a president, and then it will be time. And history will be made, and tears will be cried like you wouldn't believe. I'm looking forward to it. On their behalf, and on behalf of all the women whose lives will be better because of your work, I thank you.

Coretta Scott King



“If women . . . don’t lead the struggle against poverty, racism, and militarism, then who will?”

It is a great pleasure and an honor to take part in “Women and the Constitution: A Bicentennial Perspective.” I want to commend the conveners, sponsors and organizers of this symposium. You brought together a remarkable group of women leaders and scholars who have dedicated their lives to the protection and extension of women’s rights under the Constitution.

I have been asked to speak on the topic, “The Civil Rights Movement’s Impact on Women’s Rights.” From the early days of the republic, women have spoken out for equality. Women like Abigail Adams understood that freedom was an indivisible ideal, instead of an elitist privilege. Continuing this tradition into the 19th century, Lucretia Mott was a major force in launching the abolitionist, feminist and peace movements in this country. Freedom has always been an indivisible goal for all Americans.

It is clear, however, that the civil rights movement profoundly influenced the explosion of feminist thought and action that began in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The movement inspired a broad range of freedom struggles and lent a new legitimacy to the constitutional rights of protest and the moral obligation of civil disobedience of unjust laws.

The movement was not only about rights for black citizens. Title 7 of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 provided a powerful tool women could use to fight sex discrimination in hiring and promotion on the part of private employers, employment agencies, and unions. The movement was also a direct challenge to McCarthyism and the climate of fear and repression that was consuming the soul of this nation. The movement showed millions of Americans that you can, indeed you must, defy authority when that authority is in the wrong.

We must remember that women were among the most courageous and dedicated civil rights workers. From Rosa Parks and Johnnie Carr to Fannie Lou Hamer and Viola Liuzzo, who paid the highest price in the black freedom struggle, women could be found in the front lines of every campaign from Montgomery to Memphis. Let’s be clear that all of these women were great feminists because they stood up for freedom and they were not about to be turned around by threats or violence.

The civil rights movement reminded America of the promise of equality that had been dishonored by generations of racism and paternalism. No one knows better than I do that there was some male chauvinism in the movement, and even

today I occasionally have to straighten out some of my male colleagues. But once people start talking and thinking and organizing for freedom, there's no end to it.

It is important to appreciate that the civil rights movement influenced the women's rights struggle. But it is even more important that we recognize that women and minorities must build and strengthen the coalition for civil and human rights if we are to make real the promise of the Constitution.

Our brother, Justice Thurgood Marshall, has eloquently criticized the Constitutional Convention of 1787 for protecting slavery and for not providing the franchise for women. This has ruffled the feathers of some of the proponents of unbridled constitutional boosterism. Some people apparently feel that blacks and women should join in an uncritical celebration of a document that protected the slave trade and denied women their democratic rights.

But Justice Marshall tells it like it is. Our criticism of the unamended Constitution is not intended to be divisive. Instead we want to ensure that coming generations understand the importance of protest and dissent in making the Constitution a document of which all freedom-loving people can be proud.

Just as the civil rights movement helped enforce the Reconstruction amendments, the women's rights movement is needed to enforce the spirit and letter of the 19th Amendment. We still have a way to go, however, before we can say that the Constitution is working for all Americans.

In recent years, we have seen a dramatic increase in the number of black elected officials. But black office holders are still less than 2 percent of all elected officials, even though we make up more than 12 percent of the population.

Women are also severely underrepresented in American political life. Today women comprise about 53 percent of the population of the United States. Yet, even though women are a majority of American voters, we hold only one out of every seven elective offices in the nation. It's clear that not enough women are running for office and not enough are voting.

For black women, who suffer a burden of double discrimination, the lack of political representation in national and higher state level elective offices is almost total. It seems hard to believe that in 1988 only one black woman sits among the 535 members of the United States Congress, although black women are about 7 percent of the population. Black women hold less than one-half of 1 percent of all elective offices in America.

If black women were fairly represented in Congress, we would have about 30 black women in the U.S. House of Representatives and seven black women serving as U.S. senators. We would have three or four black women governors, instead of none. Seven black women would be mayors of the nation's 100 largest cities, instead of none.

If America is to fulfill the promise of the Constitution, it will need many more women of all races holding elective offices. Let us resolve that there will be more women officeholders because we are going to take the responsibility to make it happen. We're going to mobilize all-out voter registration and get-out-the-vote campaigns in every major city in the nation until the women of America are fairly represented at every level of federal, state and local government.

To help rectify the injustice, we have to make a greater effort to campaign more vigorously for election law reforms and take full advantage of existing laws. This means utilizing every possible opportunity to set up voter registration tables in our churches, temples and schools, at cultural events, in our places of employment, as well as in unemployment and welfare offices and other social service agencies. The variety of creative voter registration tactics we can employ is limited only by our imaginations.

As women, we have come a long way in the last decade, but we still have a lot

of work to do to make sure that issues of concern to women are placed squarely in the forefront of the national debate in this election year. Affirmative action; quality, affordable child care; the Equal Rights Amendment; the Civil Rights Restoration Act; Parental Leave; and so many other reforms we care about will be voted on in Congress in the months ahead.

The women of the 1980s and 1990s have a historic mission. In a very real sense, it was the mission of black Americans during the civil rights movement, not merely to obtain our freedom, but to expand democracy for all Americans. In the same way, it is the mission of women not only to improve their own circumstances, but to advance the values of caring and compassion in American society and throughout the world.

The women of America have time and again demonstrated a remarkable capacity for overcoming hardship and adversity. We are more than equal to the historic struggle that lies ahead, and we look forward to the future with courage and commitment because our cause is just. Let the word go out from Atlanta that in 1988 we will organize ourselves as never before, and nobody is going to turn us around.

Let us encourage more women to run for office. Let us encourage those who prefer to work behind the scenes to become superstar campaign managers and superstar deputy voter registrars. We must remember, however, that voter registration and get-out-the-vote campaigns are only one part of political empowerment. We must also become more aggressive lobbyists to advance our legislative interests.

We need a clearly defined legislative agenda, and we have to build and strengthen legislative alert networks so that every women's and minority's organization in America is quickly informed when Congress is ready to act on bills we are concerned about.

In addition to greater political empowerment, we have to start thinking about a more systematic approach to coordinating our economic power. Women's groups especially should join together and form a nationwide selective patronage council that will help inform and support those who support us. Every week women make consumer choices involving countless millions of dollars. Imagine what could happen if we began to coordinate consumer choices on the basis of corporate social responsibility.

As part of our struggle for greater economic empowerment, we need to become more active in organizing stockholders' campaigns and play a greater role in trade unions and other progressive groups that can join us in coalitions for common goals.

We need to do all these things, not only to improve the living standards of women and our families, but because we have a historic mission to put things right in America. We have something special and unique to contribute to this country and the world, something that arises out of the joy and suffering of our collective experience as women.

We have a strength and tenacity and a gift for nurturing and compassion that has been finely honed and tempered in our struggle to raise families in a sexist society. Let me put it this way: if the women of America don't lead the struggle against poverty, racism and militarism, then we must ask, who will?

We can send women of conscience, ability and integrity to the halls of power in Washington, D.C. and to our state and local governments, if we will pick up the ballot and use the power. If we exercise our rights and responsibilities as citizens, and as consumers with all of the compassion and wisdom of womanhood, we not only will win the struggle against racism and sexism, we just might save this nation from its pending appointment with Armageddon.

As we struggle for political and economic empowerment, we must make sure that women become the moral vanguard for a more compassionate and humanitarian world community. We must advocate a vision of a world where starvation and hunger will not be tolerated. We must lead the way to a world where no child lives in fear of a nuclear holocaust or suffers the ravages of war and militarism. We must project a bold new vision of a world where valuable resources are no longer squandered on the instruments of death and destruction, but are creatively harnessed for economic development and opportunity. This is the ultimate mission of women in politics.

I believe that, after two centuries of struggle, we are on the right road to making the Constitution work for all Americans, and that women will be leading the great freedom movements as we move into the new millennium. Make no mistake about it, we will face increasing resistance in the years ahead because political and economic power are never surrendered without conflict. But we are more than equal to the historic struggle that lies ahead, and we look forward to the future with courage and commitment because our cause is just. Women are getting organized as never before, and nobody is going to turn us around.

If we, the women of America, sow the seeds of political and economic empowerment, in the not-too-distant future we will reap a bountiful harvest of freedom from sexism, racism and militarism. And when that day comes, sisters, the morning stars will sing together and the children of God will shout for joy.

With this faith, and in this spirit, together we shall overcome. Thank you and God bless you.

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Mary E. King



“Another woman’s success . . . enhances you, strengthens you and makes it harder to isolate you.”

“Those who do not remember the past,” said George Santayana in *The Life of Reason*, “are condemned to repeat it.”

In order for me to talk about the future, I must first sketch a part of the past that I suspect many of you are not aware of, through no fault of your own. The crafting of current history has been so lacking, and sometimes just sloppy, that it is hard to remember the past — even the near past. The fact is that the modern American women’s movement has deep roots in the unique struggle that took place between 1960 and 1965 in the southern civil rights movement. Furthermore, there is an unrecognized black woman at the juncture where the two movements connected in time and place.

I was here, living and working on the other side of Atlanta in the segregated black community. I was working for one of the two main groups on the front lines in the Deep South during the civil rights movement — the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC).

I arrived in Atlanta to go to work for the movement in 1962. The laws of segregation then were essentially those passed during the 1890s. Lynchings of blacks by white mobs occurred on average once every two and one-half days. Seventy years later, as one of the first whites in my organization to be allowed to go to Mississippi, I could see with my own eyes that lynch laws still pertained and lynchings still took place with impunity. In half the counties in the Mississippi Delta when I first went there in 1963, not one single black person was registered to vote. Black people lived in a state of slavery without the chains. Ruthless, random violence was perpetrated by law officers, vigilantes, and terrorists.

As the daughter of the sixth Methodist minister in five generations of North Carolina and Virginia ministers, I could not expect to walk up to SNCC’s door on Raymond Street and be welcomed. As a white woman going to work for a black movement, I had to earn trust.

It was a black woman who gave me the needed stamp of approval: Ella Baker. She was the unrecognized woman who has been so overlooked by historians. Yet she was one of the major voices of American political struggle in the 20th century.

Born in 1903, the granddaughter of slaves, Ella Baker was a regal woman with remarkable self-assurance, perfect diction, excellent posture and a high forehead. An organizer for 50 years, during the 1930s and ’40s, Ella Baker traveled alone as a field secretary for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People

(NAACP), organizing NAACP chapters south of the Mason-Dixon line. In those days she had to work clandestinely — underground. When the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), led by Dr. King, was organized in 1957 after the Montgomery Bus Boycott, Miss Baker set up a series of mass meetings for the new group. In 1958, she became its full-time executive secretary and later acted as advisor to Dr. King.

Yet, Ella Baker was too feisty for this priestly and patriarchal leadership conference, and so, in 1960, she left by mutual agreement. Just about that time, an electrifying event occurred. Twenty-eight years ago this month, on February 1, 1960, four students at North Carolina's all-black A & T State University decided to sit down at a lunch counter, order a Coke, and refused to leave when they weren't served. The "sit-in," as this spontaneous eruption was called, spread like brush fire. Within two months, 35,000 students had "sat-in." By the end of 1960, 70,000 students, most of them black, but some white, had sat-in and 3,600 had been jailed. Hundreds of lunch counters were desegregated.

It was Ella Baker who brought the student sit-in leaders together in Raleigh, N.C., and allowed SNCC to come into being. While SCLC was organizing a network through the ministerial leadership in the black church, SNCC was closer to the ground, not afraid to work in the most repressive black belt counties. It emphasized political organizing and had a Gandhian view of leadership.

SNCC's ideas about leadership were strongly influenced by Ella Baker, who became our senior adviser, and these ideas relate to the future for women. SNCC believed that there are leadership qualities inherent in everyone, no matter how humble his or her circumstances, and that these qualities could be brought forward by behind-the-scenes organizing. (Incidentally, the difference in perspective on leadership between SCLC and SNCC was the distinguishing characteristic between the two groups — something else that is being overlooked by those who write history.) Ours was a peoples' movement! One of the speakers here, Keith Lance, underscored the fact that it was "armies of nameless women" who "organized not a lot but organized well," who got the 19th Amendment passed. So too the civil rights struggle was made up of armies of nameless people. Think of the implications when we talk about women! What I hope to show you is how women, in the coming decades, will be more successful if we adopt SNCC's ideas of leadership.

I was privileged to be able to work with Ella Baker on a daily basis during 1962 and 1963. She influenced me and the rest of SNCC profoundly at a formative period in our lives. We were a small 41-member staff in our early 20s when I started — ragtag, fearless, flung across the black belt counties. Throughout much of the 1960s, we held the nation by the scruff of its neck. We believed in something bigger than ourselves. We were ready to die for each other. Some of us did.

SNCC was a unique phenomenon within a unique struggle. We insisted that ideals should be made reality. We insisted that belief and action must be one. We insisted that ideas must come from action, from experience — not from rhetoric or ideology.

When I say belief and action were one, let me explain. I was indicted for "acts of violence and war" in Danville, Virginia — the same statute passed after the Nat Turner slave uprising under which John Brown was hanged at Harper's Ferry — and I had to escape across the Dan River into North Carolina where nuns in a Roman Catholic convent gave me asylum.

I spent the Christmas of 1963 in jail in "Big Rock," the grimy Atlanta city jail downtown near the state capitol, for ordering a cup of coffee with my black fellow workers.

Three of those fellow workers — James Chaney, Andrew Goodman, and Michael Schwerner — were killed by law officers in Neshoba County, Mississippi, in 1964.

But what I went through was nothing compared to what was endured by the people with whom we worked. Fannie Lou Hamer is an example. Mrs. Hamer was the last of 20 children, the granddaughter of slaves, a large-boned woman with mournful eyes who walked with a limp as a result of childhood polio. She started picking cotton when she was six, and had little formal education. After 18 years' working on a plantation in Ruleville, Mississippi, Mrs. Hamer was fired from her job because she went down to the Sunflower County Courthouse and registered to vote. A few nights later, night riders fired 16 shots into the house where she had moved.

After she was evicted from the plantation, Mrs. Hamer joined our staff as an organizer for SNCC and was paid \$10 a week (\$9.64 after deductions, if we had enough for a payroll that week). She would frequently stand when she was moved and sing the spiritual "This Little Light of Mine" as a personal declaration of commitment. In 1964, it was Mrs. Hamer who brought the fear and terror of Mississippi's disenfranchised blacks to the eyes of the nation. She held the Democratic National Convention and the national television audience spellbound with her account of being beaten until she could barely walk in the jail in Winona, Mississippi. She became one of the great orators and organizers of 20th century America.

We can't all be Ella Baker or Fannie Lou Hamer, but we can be inspired by their lives. We can recognize that Fannie Lou Hamer is an exemplar of the kind of woman leader we should be bringing to the forefront in the future who can speak to the pressing economic problems of women.

The civil rights movement and the modern women's movement came together around this period. For most of the four years I was in the movement, I lived and worked in Atlanta and Mississippi with Casey Hayden, a beautiful, blond Texan. As a result of our immersion in the movement to the exclusion of everything else, and from lessons learned from women such as Ella Baker and Fannie Lou Hamer, we were beginning to see ourselves with a political identification as women. We began to ask ourselves if SNCC's view of leadership as inherent in every community and every person didn't mean that the concerns of women should be articulated within the framework of the civil rights movement. The political self-determination we had been working toward in the movement was coming to mean, literally, "self" — ourselves as women.

Although our group had many successes in Mississippi, we also had many traumas. We had broken the back of the violence in Mississippi. We had gotten the Civil Rights Act passed. We had the eyes of the nation on us. We could see any member of Congress we wanted. Fannie Lou Hamer even left the actress Shirley MacLaine stirring her beans while she went to a meeting one day.

On the other hand, 80 people had been beaten in Mississippi alone in the summer of 1964. Thirty-five churches were burned. Over 1,000 people were arrested, many of them the white volunteers who came by the hundreds. Thirty-five shooting incidents had occurred. Dismayed, we watched helplessly as the nation reacted one way to the deaths of Andy Goodman and Mickey Schwerner, who were white, and another way to the death of Jim Chaney, who was black. We realized, despairingly, after all our collective self-sacrifice, how deeply woven into the warp and weft of America was racism.

In this troubled period, everyone on SNCC's staff was invited to submit a position paper on whatever topic we wished. Casey and I wrote one on women. We wrote it anonymously, because, in the brooding silence of those times on that issue, we were afraid of ridicule. Imagine! We who had been forced to reckon with our own deaths before going to work for SNCC were afraid of ridicule!

In raising the question of women, we wanted to broaden the debate in favor of

a more purely democratic SNCC. We were also asking whether, as women, there would be room for us in the movement to act on our beliefs.

A year later, in 1965, no longer in secret, Casey and I wrote another manifesto and sent it to 40 women organizers across the country. That document became one of the sparkplugs for organizing the early consciousness-raising groups of the late 1960s. It was passed around the country from hand to hand, from group to group.

Just as it is an error of history to fail to recognize the role of SNCC in the civil rights movement, it is also an error to omit the role of the civil rights movement in building an American concern for the rights of women.

The two causes are historically linked. This takes nothing away from either. It adds to the depth of the women's movement when we acknowledge that part of its inspiration was in the civil rights struggle. This connection implies that justice — not the selfishness we are sometimes charged with — was the tinder for organizing by women in the late 1960s.

And it was a black woman at this juncture, Ella Baker, who, through her influence on Casey and me, influenced a cadre of other women organizers.

Having briefly reviewed an overlooked part of a past that Santayana cautions us to remember, we can now ask what the civil rights movement teaches for the third century of our republic as it pertains to women.

First of all, genuine civil rights issues are at the core of any concern for women both today and tomorrow:

- equal pay
- stereotyping
- lack of constitutional guarantees
- problems of self-perception
- a variation on the theme of disenfranchisement: the fact there are so few women elected as representatives
- poverty, for if I learned one thing in the civil rights movement it was that women who are poor work harder than anyone else.

The civil rights movement was a peoples' movement and in many locales, it took root despite the established leadership in the black community. The women's movement is also a popular movement and that is its strength.

In the same way that Fannie Lou Hamer was SNCC's standardbearer, the women's movement must raise new voices from farms, from factories, from textile mills, from canning plants, and from among the homeless, 40 percent of whom are women.

One of my fellow workers was asked what we had accomplished in SNCC. He answered that the release of human energies that took place through SNCC was like the splitting of the atom. We too must release the energies and enhance the self-esteem of women from every walk of life. This is not an issue of "equal pay for all the lawyers in the corporate boardroom!" This is not the cultural revolution in China. We must not all be investment bankers.

Our women's movement, today and tomorrow, must reflect the diversity and pluralism of our democracy. This means that there will be no stability in our movement. It also means we must recognize dignity in different forms of self-expression.

It will be necessary to have kaleidoscopic strategies, because ours is a fundamental question that transcends differences between rich and poor. The question of women transcends all ideologies, governments, and political systems. As Arvonne Fraser said yesterday, you can neither argue that socialism is better for women, nor can you argue that democracy or capitalism is better for women.

At Fannie Lou Hamer's funeral, Andrew Young recalled that the great black thinker W.E.B. DuBois said that the 20th century would be the century of the color line, the relations between the darker- and lighter-skinned races. Andy went on to say, and I believe he was right, that the 21st century will be the century concerned with relations between women and men.

I believe that our third century will see women from all walks of life emerge as elected leaders. What a paradox that Great Britain, with its ancient patrilineal systems and Westminster government, where women play such a small role in business and academia, has seen Mary Queen of Scots, Queen Anne, Queen Elizabeth I, Queen Victoria, Queen Elizabeth II, and Margaret Thatcher. We, with our chaotic, open, pell-mell, liberal democracy, have achieved so little formal leadership from women.

But in order to promote women into elected representation in proportional numbers, we must learn from the civil rights movement to address, cogently, questions of power and leadership, and how to wrench power and leadership from within the humblest, even from debilitating, circumstances.

To do this, we will have to explore the mentality in which some women seek to cut down other women who begin to rise. There is not one woman here today who has not experienced this. The fact is that we must support each other as SNCC workers tried to do — behind the scenes. Another woman's success does not diminish you. If you think about the success of this colloquium or of anyone here, these successes enhance you, strengthen you, and make it harder to isolate you. If Bella Abzug succeeds on a policy initiative, it makes it easier for me to accomplish a policy change and it makes it harder to isolate me.

Let us also remember that movements are synergistic in their effects. While the civil rights movement was about freedom for blacks, it also liberated the white South. White southerners, before the movement started the reforms that pulsed through the 1960s, '70s and '80s, did not have freedom of assembly, freedom of speech, or freedom of the press. Today, there are more black mayors in Mississippi than in any other state. But equally as important, the civil rights movement lifted the stigma from the South as a region. It ultimately made it possible for a white southerner, Jimmy Carter, to be elected president. It made it possible for the South to move on, to develop, and to flourish.

So too, finally, we must acknowledge and commit ourselves to action on this basis: There can never be justice for women without an alliance to eradicate racism. As Coretta Scott King declared earlier today, "If the women of this country do not save us from poverty, racism, and militarism, then who will?"

Bella Abzug



“The women’s movement
has put ‘women in
movement’ everywhere.”

This conference has been a very moving experience. I agree that it is the love of our young and the love of ourselves, so eloquently expressed by our young contest winner, that has motivated many of the significant changes sought by the women’s movement. I think it was a very mature and outstanding statement by our young essay winner to recognize that there always has to be love of self as a human being and peace within oneself in order to move others. It was extremely nostalgic, even if somewhat painful, to be reminded of the history of the civil rights and the women’s movements by Mary King. In my own case, for many years I was content to be a practicing lawyer and believed seriously that law was the social instrument for change — and that it was in this way, as many of you here who are lawyers and students believe, that we could make a difference in society.

But three major events in my own life caused me to recognize that the political power structure was really the place where the values of society were either developed or rejected and where people had the most influence. One was my own participation as a lawyer in civil rights cases in the ‘50s. I represented a black man in Mississippi where justice was indeed separate for black men and white men. He was falsely accused of rape as a result of the discovery of a secretive affair between him and a white woman. He was three times convicted and sentenced to death (imposed only on black men for the crime of rape). Twice I secured dismissals in the Supreme Court on constitutional grounds, but he was ultimately executed.

The second event, also in the ‘50s, was the witchhunting in the McCarthy period, in which an effort was made to destroy the liberty and freedom of the people in this country. I was a young lawyer, representing some important people in Hollywood — in the theatre and in the media — who dared to believe in change and who sought through their support of various liberal causes to carry out their beliefs. Because they did not conform to existing governmental policies, they were labeled “Commies” and hounded at inquisitorial congressional committee hearings.

The third event was just referred to, and that was the resumption of nuclear testing in the atmosphere by the Soviet Union and the United States. We formed Women’s Strike for Peace because we were concerned that strontium 90 and other radioactive fallout would be harmful to generations of our children. These events made clear to me that the patriarchal society that had created these kinds of threats to humanity required spokespersons who felt free to be independent, outspoken and somewhat bold about the changes that society required. Since I had always

believed that women should have a more equal role in society, I decided rather late in life to run for Congress. In doing so I felt it was necessary to dispel myths as to what women's roles should be. Therefore, it was in my campaign that we initiated the slogan, "This Woman's Place is in the House — The House of Representatives." The night I was elected, my oldest daughter got up and said, "Thank God we got her out of our house and into their house!"

It was, of course, a very significant experience. You have been fortunate to hear from Congresswomen at this conference who have played very important roles, very fundamental and core roles — Martha Griffiths, Geraldine Ferraro, Olympia Snowe.

I have been asked a very important, substantive question at this conference — "Why do you wear that hat?" I was a pretty young lawyer, working for a law firm at a time when women made up only 2 percent of the bar. Whenever I went anywhere I would say, "How do you do, my name is Bella Abzug and I am from the law firm of such and such," and they would invariably say, "Yes, sit down." I would sit down and nothing much would happen. I would then clear my throat again and say, "How do you do, I am Bella Abzug and I am from the law firm of such and such," and they would say, "Yeah, we know, but we are waiting." I would say, "What are you waiting for?" They would always say, "We are waiting for the lawyer." They thought I was the secretary or the clerk, which is okay, but I was the lawyer. I had this terrible identity crisis and I went home and discussed it with my husband, Martin. In those days, professional women wore hats and gloves, so we decided I should put on a hat and a pair of gloves. That way, whenever I went anywhere, people would know that I was there for business. I have since taken off the gloves, as some of you have no doubt noticed. But I grew to like wearing hats and I continued to wear them.

Then the day came when I grew up and decided to run for Congress. Everyone made a very big fuss about this hat. Most people thought it was a campaign gimmick. When I got to Congress in Washington, they made an even bigger fuss about the hat. I didn't know whether they wanted me to keep it on or take it off. Since I decided they wanted me to take it off, I decided to keep it on.

I have to say that this conference has been a kind of political chicken soup. It helps you get out of bed in the morning and say, "I can conquer the day." But what we have to do is more than that. We have to conquer the third century. And we shall. Congratulations, Mrs. Carter, Mrs. Johnson, Mrs. Nixon, Mrs. Ford, and Dayle [Powell]. The Houston Conference, in which the First Ladies participated, came about because of the exclusion of women in the commemoration of the bicentennial of the country. That conference produced a 26 point consensus agenda. This conference, born out of the exclusion of women in the commemoration of the Constitution, will, I believe, regenerate the collective conscience of the nation. From here on out, women, I believe, will be excluded no more. I believe that the leadership shown here by Mrs. Carter, Mrs. Johnson, Dayle, and the others is really most significant coming from this part of the country, and from the people who have been in the highest places of power. Many of us have attended many conferences, but I believe that this one will have the kind of impact that we have hoped for and that we all believe must happen.

Kimberly [Chaddock, essay contest winner], I dream with you that in this third century a special joint session of Congress will be addressed by the president of the United States, elegant and regal in her purple silk dress. As she surveys with pride her Cabinet and Supreme Court justices, eight women and one man, she will read from the teleprompter, "Ms. Speaker, Ms. Vice President. . . ." It would be justice at last — the first time in recorded history that a country was run almost exclusively by women even if some turned out not to be geniuses or great leaders. They could

hardly do worse than some of our male leaders have done.

Women probably would do better if only because they would come into political power without a sizable vested interest in the institutions and forces that, regrettably, are turning the American Dream into a nightmare.

Is my dream unfair? Probably. Men constitute almost half the world's population, 47 percent in the United States. It would be undemocratic to exclude them with all of their skills, creativity, energy, talent, and ideas. Yet that is, of course, exactly what men have done. But women have allowed it to happen. Fifty years after empowerment through the franchise, our "born-again" women's movement burst forth like wildfire — garnering support from men and women alike for the idea of equality. It is true, there was a twin uprising of the civil rights movement and the women's movement; both movements came into being in response to violence. Just as blacks (Negroes in those days), struggling against the violence of slavery, developed a movement that led to their emancipation, women struggling against the institution of slavery recognized a violence toward themselves in that they lacked enfranchisement, and the suffrage movement was born. The civil rights movement and the women's movement had a rebirth, once again in response to violence — the violence of the Vietnam War. It was the Vietnam War that raised the consciousness of women and blacks. They realized that a power structure that could create such an illegal and immoral war needed the participation of the people who had been excluded from making those decisions — blacks and women. Thus the reason for the rebirth of both of those movements in this country.

I believe that social justice, economic equity, peace and meaningful change will come about only, as Mary King has suggested, when the two movements come together, and there is cooperation among working middle class and professional people who have a common interest in realizing the American Dream.

The women's movement has put "women in movement" everywhere — in the countryside, in the cities, and in the rural areas. Women of every kind have a broader view of what they want for themselves and their families. Some even call themselves feminists. Many men have accepted this new view. The 26 point plan of action adopted at the Houston Conference — over which I was, by the way, the presiding officer appointed by an extremely supportive President Carter — reflected our pact with women in the nation. Have we accomplished it? To some degree. Important legislation on federal and state levels has been passed. There has been some improvement in job education and career opportunities. There have also been some positive court decisions handed down, including the right of privacy and the right to choose more elected and appointed members of legislatures and the courts.

Yet most of our agenda is unfinished. As 44 women's organizations reminded the Democratic presidential candidates in Iowa last month, our public policy priorities for the 1988 election are as follows: family policies assuring access to housing; child and elder care; family and medical leave; equitable education; economic opportunity including occupational preparation; comparable pay; raising the minimum wage; welfare reform; comprehensive health care and safety including long-term care; minimal health coverage and reproductive choice; civil and human rights protection; and a federal budget balancing adequate defense with local economic and human development.

It is the unmet needs of human beings in our society that we women have undertaken to meet. Gains on specific legislative measures that have been referred to in many of the panels here have been and will continue to be very incremental, very slow, very gradual, as have been our gains in the courts and in relation to the Constitution. Our constitutional equality is still denied us, while we hear cries to make unborn fetuses persons in the Constitution before women are declared persons in the Constitution.

I think the Equal Rights Amendment will pass one day, under a very different administration. In the meantime, we should declare ourselves equal and act on it — putting the pressure on the courts, legislatures, and public representatives to agree also to make this declaration of our equality and to take every step to make us equal, because we are! Nothing in the world, whether we have a constitutional provision or not, will change that fact! Our unfinished agenda is denied because those who control the economics and politics of the status quo traditionally have resisted social change, because it will weaken their power. They continue to plunder the economy for the benefit of a few, and fail to invest in education and a productive and revitalized civilian industry, choosing instead to pour our skills and technology into the military. All of this renders us uncompetitive in world markets and makes the U.S. one of the largest debtor nations in the world.

But it is the nuclear arms race more than anything else that is robbing women, and indeed the American people, of personal security in the false name of national security. Today we are cutting immunization programs for children in order to finance the weapons that may someday kill them. Every new shelter for a missile means fewer homes for the homeless and apartments for families. Every new warhead guidance system that can read enemy defenses will mean fewer schools where children will learn to read. Although we have embarked on the first step toward peace with the INF Treaty, which we support, security is still dealt with in military terms alone.

In a world where homelessness, famine, disease and poverty consume human beings; in a world where food, air, and water are increasingly poisoned; where one-third of the forests are dying, where shorelines are receding, and where arable land is becoming desert and eroding; where it is predicted that the average temperature of the earth will rise to 103 degrees because of the perforated ozone layer, the concept of national security through military means is outmoded and absurd.

If we are right that feminism is something more than a political philosophy and movement relating only to the rights and just powers of women; if we are right that it is a vision of what we love and how we would like society to be for men as well as for women; if we are right that it is a vision of a new just and humane order in which all people, regardless of race, religion, sex and sexual preference, physicalities, class, age, and ethnicity can live and produce together in harmony, mindful of today's and future generations, then our goals must be more than just bringing women into existing structures.

Our mission is to transform those structures, to accomplish these goals, because present institutions will not do it. As I travel around the world, I see that child care and maternity care exist in many poorer countries. They are essential to our changing workforce in this country. Blue collar workers (who have not been spoken of much at this conference, and who make up a large majority of the workforce), as well as pink and white collar workers, the women trying to break out of the welfare system, and the elderly all need health care. In this country we are shockingly far away from an understanding that the health of a nation depends upon the health of its people, particularly its elderly people, particularly its elderly women who live so much longer on this earth than ever before. Other countries, which we consider much less progressive than we are, have universal systems for their citizens of old age. Other countries have pensions and benefits more comprehensive than ours.

When I was in the Congress, I introduced the concept of social security for homemakers in their own right. It was laughed at. People were outraged. Although it is now much more accepted, it is still not on the drawing board. I believe women must organize in a different way than we have been doing lately. Yes, in coalition. But we have to demand that it not be only on our agenda, but that it be on the

agenda of government, labor and industry. Industry cannot succeed with the workforce as it is today unless there are significant programs of childcare, of maternity leave, and of health care. It cannot! And that means the country cannot succeed. These programs have to be on the primary agenda of organized labor to make them part and parcel of every contract that is entered into. And of course, they have to be part and parcel of our political agenda and the agenda of the government and made priorities at this juncture in history. It is shocking! It is absolutely shocking that every day we are on the Hill lobbying these legislative measures with little success. We passed a childcare bill in 1972 that was vetoed by President Nixon and we never got it back on the board. Our plea should be to see that the ABC Childcare Bill that Olympia Snowe and others have introduced will go somewhere. It is much less than we need, but we have to begin to expand and accelerate our demands by involving all of America in this fundamental issue which requires childcare for every family that needs it in this country!

As we seek seats of power, there is always the danger that we will become adoptive and speak in the language of those whom we seek to change, forget our own language, and become reluctant to speak of other ways. I think that has happened somewhat. It is true that this has been a difficult period for any movement where people want social change. During this administration, I regret to say, we find ourselves not only on a plateau, but experiencing a backlash against the fundamental gains we had made under Republican as well as Democratic administrations. I believe we have also allowed ourselves to lower our sights and our demands, and I disagree with that. I believe we have to begin thinking in new ways, maybe of some unusual things. Is it really possible to secure equity by always playing by the rules in the playpen of the patriarch? I think not. The rules were not crafted to include us. Just the opposite. For example, just as we have found it necessary to seek constitutional and legal remedies to overcome past discrimination against women and minorities in employment through affirmative action, which the Supreme Court has upheld, should we not seek the same remedies to overcome past discrimination in the political arena? At the rate we are going, it will take 410 years to get equal numbers of men and women in the United States Congress. Why not ask the political parties for an affirmative action program to commit all open seats to women until some measure of equity is reached?

And why not think about a concept requiring one of the two senators from each state to be female? Or maybe even in better times to pass a constitutional amendment to that effect. Why not a campaign to get the United States Senate to ratify the U.N. Convention to Eliminate All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, which is in a sense an international equal rights enactment that 94 countries have already ratified? Among those who have not ratified are the United States and an assortment of Islamic nations.

It is shameful. It is shameful enough that we represent less than 5 percent of the members in the Congress of the United States. I just read a report of the 78th International Parliamentary Conference in Bangkok in October 1987. It said that in 144 national parliaments, women made up 15 percent of the lower chambers and 10 percent of the upper chambers. So we are even behind the world.

Perhaps it is in the area of foreign policy that women are really discriminated against. They are virtually invisible. And that is why the Women's Foreign Policy Counsel, which I co-chair with Mim Kelber, published a directory detailing the professional profiles of 275 women, a sampling of thousands of women working on a broad range of foreign policy issues and in international affairs. Only about 3.6 percent of senior level foreign service officers and career candidates in the State Department are women. There are no minority women on the top career rung. There are no deputy or undersecretaries of state, and of the four assistant

secretaries, only Roz Ridgeway deals with foreign policy issues.

Do we not have to demand of candidates, of those in power, that there be a meaningful presence of women in the State Department? In the Defense Department? In the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency? In the National Security Council? Certainly after the Iran-Contra affair, we need a little difference in perspective on how to run a country. Women are also totally underrepresented in United Nations delegations. I, for one, am sick to death of seeing men getting off a plane from the Soviet Union and men getting off a plane from the United States to sit around a negotiating table where, with the exception of Roz Ridgeway, women are totally absent in making the decisions of life and death that affect us and our children and our future! Rarely are women, with the occasional exception of Jeanne Kirkpatrick, even involved in the public debate that goes on in the media, on radio and on TV. We must accept responsibility for having not sufficiently demanded participation. This is especially crucial as we see the world in conflict every single day, as we see crises everywhere. We have got to insist that this must change!

Women are active in more and more spheres of society, but are we bringing our values into these spheres or are we just knocking on the door and saying, "Let me in?" Even as we work within the system, we have to be ahead of it. So grave is the crisis created by those who have led us in the past that we must not only be ahead of the situation, we must be unafraid to take the lead in solving it. This conference initiated by the First Ladies is a meaningful effort to show that there has to be something more, that there has to be something different. We owe the First Ladies a great debt for bringing about this conference because it will give us greater credibility. It will also encourage many to pay attention to our demands sooner when we do get into the system. When we do participate, we have to do as Diane Isler has suggested and take the leadership in infusing a feminine ethos into society's deliberations.

For example, at the U.N. Conference in Nairobi in 1985, we had a decade. Once they gave us only a day — called International Women's Day. Then they gave us a year in 1975, which was called International Women's Year. Then, from 1975 to 1985, they declared it the Decade of Women. Who knows, if we behave they may let us into the whole thing. I have always felt that we would not need a Day, a Year or a Decade of Women, or a Year of the Child, or a Year of the Elderly, if women shared governmental power with men. Then, the needs of all people would be integrated into the everyday policies of nations everywhere. At this conference in Nairobi, where I conducted a panel on "What If Women Ruled the World?" a parliamentarian from Ireland said, "To men, security is cruise missiles; to women, it is a house and a future for the children. To men, development is to conquer territories; to women, it is human planning to secure the survival of the planet." This is an example of the feminine perspective that is lacking in world decision-making.

Leaders tell us there is no room in the budget for the programs we seek. Knowing that these programs provide real security for this nation, we should be prepared to break with the policies of the past. We have to insist, for example, that in the Congress of the United States, the rules must be changed and that priority planning has to precede budget planning. We should not be afraid to propose a master plan of priorities that would include our view as to the kind of housing we need. We should try to develop a view about how you raise money for the homeless — perhaps a piece of the tax deduction that people get on their mortgages and their interest rates should go to building homes. I am not telling you what to do, I am merely suggesting that we have to do more than we have and be unafraid to be creative. We also have to bring our views on how you structure a city or an urban area or a farm and delineate the roles women play in that structure. We must more

boldly project our views with respect to transportation and our views with respect to the judicial system and particularly our views on the necessity for broad and deep reductions in the military that would still allow our country to be secure and defended, which was the original intent of defense.

Likewise, we must resist the exploited uses to which technology and computerization have been put, which are desecrating the earth and the space above and below it as well as dehumanizing the human species itself. If they are so anxious to have Star Wars in space, when we have no space for the homeless here on earth — everything has space, the fish have the sea, the birds have the trees — then I say one of my other dreams is that we are prepared to establish a lunar White House and a lunar Kremlin and we will take over the earth and try to run it. We have dug in on our immediate agenda and we should do just that. I am not suggesting we don't continue that incremental effort to try piece by piece to get what we need. However, unless we build outward as well, we will not accomplish it. In this era of international interdependence, our vision cannot be anything but a global vision — one in which we try to rebalance the participation of men and women to bring about a new perspective in decision-making that has been totally lacking before this time. We have to be prepared to modify or cancel patriarchal values that have been unfair to both women and to men, except those of privilege.

To paraphrase Marilyn French, the idea that we can transform the world may seem utopian, idealistic and just simple-minded, but change always seems to happen. It is not inconceivable that humans, especially female humans, can participate in and influence the direction of that change. We certainly don't want to yield to the right wing and the ultra-fundamentalists who want to create their own direction, telling us what to think, where to pray, what books to read, and what lives to lead. We don't want to yield to people who deny the existence of our pluralist society. We must reiterate (as the speaker before me said) that we will not have freedom, justice, liberty, or equality unless we can eradicate sexism, racism, poverty and institutional violence at home and abroad. We must be prepared to promote our concept of true global security — one that is based upon an environment that is restored, a humanity that is fed, housed, clothed and respected. We must seek a world in which nations are secured by the health, education, and cultural diversity of their people, and in which countries are engaged in the challenge of peaceful coexistence, economic cooperation and nonviolent competition instead of military intervention, economic exploitation and combative power politics. Though we have been trained to speak softly (that is, some of us), and carry a lipstick, women are now coming out and must come out to demand a bigger stick — a seat at the table where every decision that affects us is made. We must! It is not that I believe women are superior to men. It is just that we have had so little opportunity to be corrupted by power. And we want that opportunity. We can argue at length about whether women can change the nature of power or whether power will change the nature of women. I believe that women will change the nature of power. Women are less wedded to policies of the past. We haven't had anything to say about it.

I believe that women are prepared to change the status quo. We must if we are to obtain our goals. We don't own the corporations, the oil wells, the uranium mines, the defense plants. We tend to be more independent and to bring our values — of nurturing and caring and compassion — into the work that we do in politics and elsewhere. The true answer may come only when there is a critical mass of women, that is, as many women as men governing and counseling us, and that is exactly what our task is. That will not happen unless we also prioritize and fight hard to take money off the ballot, reform the campaign finance laws, get public financing and check off for time on radio and TV, or equal time. As far as the

present presidential candidates are concerned, one party's candidates have almost totally abandoned the women's agenda. The other party wants us to accept the fact that it believes the women's agenda is a given. Regrettably, some of our party leadership believe that women's issues are a detriment. They obviously don't understand the gender gap. We know that women's views on foreign policy, on fairness, on economic issues, on reproductive freedom, as was pointed out by Geraldine Ferraro, make them vote differently. Women's support for liberal senators has changed the relationship in the Senate in that all the senators elected to make the Democratic majority were elected by a sizeable gender gap.

The candidates do know that our program is important. They don't lose a lot of sleep about it at night, nor do other male members of Congress. They talk about it, but not enough. Some have incorporated women into high places in their campaigns, very sincerely in many instances, and in some cases as a substitute for program enunciation and to prove that they really are interested in women. That is good, but it is not enough. A lot of other women who are still hoping to be incorporated also accept this condition. Those of us who like to see things happen have to be much more determined to have our core program adopted as part of the campaigns and to require public commitment by candidates to our program. We should make our endorsements of candidates contingent upon this. Those of you who are already committed to candidates should monitor the campaigns, and if the candidates fail to live up to the promises that they have made on our agenda by not talking about it, then you can withdraw your commitment. Heaven knows there are other candidates to support. These suggestions are merely illustrations; I am not telling you to go out and do this, I am merely suggesting that we should change our tactics somewhat, raise our demands somewhat. We should be prepared to demand of the ultimate candidate strong commitments to new directions for us and our families.

In our century, nothing has happened without the effort from people on the outside, especially the movements of change. The movements of change are comprised of people who really think they can make a difference. I have always believed that I make a difference. I believe that every single individual in this audience makes a difference. Kimberly and every one of her friends makes a difference. Millions of people no longer believe this. Part of our effort should be to make certain that we make people realize they are human beings with something to love, something to look forward to — a future in which every individual does indeed make a difference. We know that when a woman came from the back of the bus, a civil rights movement was born. We know that when women decided that they no longer wanted to be second class citizens, a women's movement was born. We know that when people decided that the war in Vietnam was illegal and immoral, they were able to end the war. We know that when a president thought he could be king and invalidated our precious Constitution, a president was forced to resign. We know that people oppose intervention in Central America, and a peace process is underway. We know that the people's opposition to apartheid resulted in sanctions being adopted by Congress despite presidential opposition. We know that the significance of this conference is that each one of us, as Mrs. Carter said so eloquently, can go out there and make a difference and rebuild and rekindle and get prepared to make this movement a movement that will change lives not only for ourselves but for all humanity in this country and elsewhere.

In conclusion — believe it or not — when I was in Congress under the Nixon Administration, I called up Martin one day and said, "Martin, we were invited to go to the White House, but I don't think we can go," and he said, "Well, why not?" I replied, "Well, I have been saying some pretty terrible things about the president, like let's impeach him." Martin said, "Of course we are going to go to the White

House, because I want to see the place where I am going to live when I get to be First Man.”

My beloved Martin didn't live to see that day; he has left us in a sense. But Martin, our daughters will see that day. We have our Chisolms, and we have our Ferraros and our Schroeders and our Kimberlys and many, many more — our Amys, our Lynda Birds. And I believe that our daughters will see that day, and moreover, that our daughters will someday participate in a conference like this one, not organized by four First Ladies, but by four First Men.

Thank you very much.

Biographies

Rosalynn Carter

Rosalynn Smith Carter, born August 18, 1927, graduated from Georgia Southwestern College in 1946. That same year, she married James Earl Carter, Jr., then an ensign in the U.S. Navy. Later Governor and Mrs. Carter served the State of Georgia and, in 1976, Mr. Carter became president of the United States. Mrs. Carter has worked as a partner with her husband in all his endeavors. During her years in the White House, she served as official emissary to the leaders of seven Latin American countries and attended Cabinet meetings to stay abreast of the issues. Improving conditions for the mentally and physically handicapped and furthering volunteerism have been among Mrs. Carter's concerns. She has served as a member of the Georgia Governor's Commission to Improve Services for the Mentally and Emotionally Handicapped, as a volunteer at Georgia Regional Hospital, on the President's Commission on Mental Health, and as Honorary Chairperson of the Board of Trustees of the John F. Kennedy Center for Performing Arts. Among her honors are the Volunteer of the Decade Award from the National Mental Health Association and The Award of Merit for Support of the Equal Rights Amendment from the National Organization for Women. Mrs. Carter works with President Carter in building homes for the needy for Habitat for Humanity, and continues her partnership with him in working through The Carter Center toward many of the goals established during the Carter presidency.

Lady Bird Johnson

Claudia Alta Taylor "Lady Bird" Johnson was born in Karnack, Texas. She received bachelor degrees in 1933 and 1934 from the University of Texas and honorary degrees from Texas Women's University, the University of Texas, Middlebury College, the University of Alabama, Southwestern University, and Williams College. In 1934 she married Lyndon Baines Johnson, who later became U.S. congressman, senator, vice president, and 36th president of the United States. Mrs. Johnson has had varied interests throughout the years, ranging from public broadcasting to cattle ranching. Her work in beautification and humanitarian programs is well known and includes founding the Commission for a More Beautiful Capital; serving on the Advisory Council of National Parks, Historic Sites, and Monuments; serving as Honorary Trustee of the Washington Gallery of Modern Art; and as Trustee of the National Geographic Society. Recognition for her work includes awards from the Helen Keller World Crusade for the Blind, the Washington Heart Association, the National Association of Colored Women's Clubs, B'nai B'rith, and American Women in Radio and TV. She received the Department of Interior Conservation Award, the Woman of the Year for Quality of Life from *Ladies Home Journal*, and the Medal of Freedom from President Gerald Ford.

Bella Abzug

Bella Abzug is a lawyer and longtime political activist, especially for women's rights. After graduating from Columbia University Law School where she was an editor of the *Law Review*, Ms. Abzug practiced law for 25 years before deciding to run for Congress in 1971. She was elected and served in the U.S. House of Representatives from 1971-1977. It was during the campaign that the slogan, "A Woman's Place is in the House...the House of Representatives," was initiated. A founder of the National

Women's Political Caucus, Ms. Abzug authored the legislation that created the historic National Women's Conference in Houston, Texas in 1977 and served as its presiding officer. Ms. Abzug is co-chair of the Women's Foreign Policy Council, which is dedicated to making women more visible in public debate formulation and decision making in foreign policy. In 1987, she was a fellow at the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, where she conducted seminars on Women and Political Power and Women and Foreign Policy entitled: "What if Women Ran the World?"

Geraldine Ferraro

In 1984, Geraldine Ferraro became the first woman vice presidential candidate to run on a national party ticket. Her historic nomination highlighted a lifetime of achievement. Ms. Ferraro served three terms in the U.S. House of Representatives, first elected to represent New York's Ninth Congressional District in 1978. She won reelection in 1980 and 1982 by increasing margins. Prior to that time, she served as an Assistant District Attorney in Queens County, New York and as chief of the Special Victims Bureau, which prosecuted crimes committed against the elderly, women, and children. She was appointed in 1988 to be a fellow at the Institute of Politics at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University.

Barbara Jordan

Barbara Jordan has served the state of Texas throughout her career as an attorney, state senator, U.S. representative, and public university professor. Elected to the Texas Senate in 1966, Ms. Jordan was chosen President Pro Tempore in 1972. Entering the U.S. Congress in 1972, she served on the Committee on the Judiciary, the Committee on Government Operations, and the Steering and Policy Committee of the Democratic Caucus. Her retirement from the House of Representatives in 1978 took her back to Texas, where she joined the faculty of the Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs at the University of Texas in Austin. Since 1982 she has held the LBJ Centennial Chair in National Policy at the LBJ School. Known for her public speaking skills, Ms. Jordan was voted the "Best Living Orator" in 1984 by the International Platform Association. She remains active on a national level, serving as a member of a variety of corporate and advisory boards.

Coretta Scott King

Coretta Scott King is the founding president and chief executive officer of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Center for Nonviolent Social Change in Atlanta, an institution dedicated to the memory of Dr. King and his human rights legacy. In addition to her responsibilities at the Center, Mrs. King leads a broad coalition of religious, labor, business, civil and women's rights organizations to educate and lobby for full employment and genuine economic opportunity for everyone. During the Carter Administration, Mrs. King was named alternate delegate to the United Nations. She serves as cochair of the Full Employment Action Council, representing over 100 national organizations dedicated to a national policy of fair and equal employment. She led the U.S. delegation to the Women's Meaningful Summit in Athens in May 1988. In addition, she was the first woman to preach at a statutory service at St. Paul's Cathedral in London.

Mary King

Mary King has been directly involved in the significant domestic and international issues of the last 20 years, including civil rights and women's rights. Her book, *Freedom Song: A Personal Story of the 1960s Civil Rights Movement* (William Morrow & Co., 1987; Quill Books, 1988) was awarded a 1988 Robert F. Kennedy Book Award. It is a highly acclaimed autobiographical account of her work for four years, beginning in 1962, as one of the few whites at the center of the most risk-taking of the civil rights organizations based in Atlanta, the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). In 1977, President Carter appointed her Deputy Director of ACTION with worldwide responsibility for the Peace Corps as well as for VISTA and other national domestic volunteer service programs. She also advised the president on matters pertaining to women. Since leaving that administration, Ms. King has been active in opening new trade markets for American technology in Africa and the Middle East; indeed, her work over the last ten years has taken her to 80 developing countries. In 1976, she helped to found and was president of the National Association of Women Business Owners. An officer of the Arca Foundation, Ms. King is also a member of the Board of Directors of Save the Children Community Development Federation and the Board of Governors of Wesley Theological Seminary.

Sandra Day O'Connor

In 1981, Sandra Day O'Connor was sworn in as the first woman Supreme Court Justice in U.S. history. Prior to that time, she served on the Arizona Court of Appeals from 1979-81 and as a Superior Court Judge in Maricopa County, Arizona from 1975-79. Justice O'Connor held legislative office as an Arizona state senator from 1969-75. During her senatorial service, she was elected Senate Majority Leader, chairman of the State, County, and Municipal Affairs Committee, and served on the Arizona Advisory Council on Intergovernmental Relations. She graduated *magna cum laude* from Stanford University in 1950, and was awarded an LL.B. from that institution in 1952. Her law school honors include the Board of Editors of the *Stanford Law Review*, and Order of the Coif.

Dayle E. Powell

Dayle E. Powell is fellow for Conflict Resolution at The Carter Center of Emory University (CCEU), where she is currently developing an international network to support the peaceful resolution of conflict. She has also been active in documenting and exposing human rights abuses in South Africa and has worked on reconciliation efforts in Northern Ireland. Prior to joining CCEU, Ms. Powell served for seven years as an Assistant United States Attorney for the Northern District of Alabama and was law clerk to the Chief Judge on the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals. She obtained her bachelor's degree from Jacksonville State University and her Juris Doctorate from Cumberland School of Law, Samford University.

Women and the Constitution

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(The opinions expressed herein are not necessarily those of the contributors.)

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Plaintiffs, Lawyers, and the Courts

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Ann B. Hopkins
Sarah Ragle Weddington

The Contemporary Supreme Court and Women

Ruth Bader Ginsburg
Jane Harman
Phyllis Kravitch
Janie Shores

ERA: Was it Worth It?

Erma Bombeck
Liz Carpenter
Judy Carter
Sey Chassler
Ellie Smeal

Heroines of Constitutional Change

Christine King Farris
Leola Brown Montgomery
Rosa Parks
Delores Tucker

Women Political Leaders Reflect on the Constitution

Martha Griffiths
Ruth Mandel
Eleanor Holmes Norton
Olympia Snowe

Panel Speakers

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