



NEWSLETTER

President—Peg Strobel
Co-Vice-President—Joanna Cowden
Co-Vice-President—Penny Kanner
Secretary-Treasurer—Debbie Kennel
Graduate Student Coordinator—Antonla Casteneda

Newsletter Co-Editors—Rosemary Masek
Jackie Barnhart
Social Action Coordinator—Alice Clement
Media and Publications Coordinator—
Gloria Lothrop

Vol. X, No. 2

October, 1978

THE ERA AND THE AHA--Peg Strobel, President

We have prepared this newsletter earlier than originally planned because the issue of the Equal Rights Amendment has come to the forefront as a major question before the AHA in the past month with the AHA Council's decision to table a resolution asking that the AHA boycott states that have not ratified the ERA. As the activities of the AHA affect us all as historians, whether we ourselves are members or not, we wish to acquaint you with this issue so crucial to women.

As President, I speak for your elected officers in urging you to indicate to us your support of the boycott. I will relay word of this support to Joan Hoff Wilson, President of the Coordinating Committee on Women in the Historical Profession (CCWHP) who will use our support to convince the Council to reconsider and to support the boycott. There is a particular urgency in the mail ballot and petitions attached to this newsletter. We have all ignored mail ballots in the past--that is why mail ballots are so often used to preserve the status quo. This time, please take a moment to read about the issue and to return the mail ballot and petitions immediately.

If you are not an AHA member but are considering joining, you ought to write the AHA indicating that you are awaiting their action in the boycott resolution before joining. In this way you will leave your dues for the escrow fund, should it develop (See below), and you may still join the AHA just before the December business meeting, if that appears to be the best strategy then.

History of the resolution to boycott (taken from Joan Hoff Wilson's letter in the CCWHP newsletter IX, No. 2, June, 1978)

"On May 26, 1978, the AHA Council voted to table a resolution calling for the organization to join in a national campaign against scheduling future conventions in states that had not ratified the ERA. This resolution had been recommended to the Council in December by the Committee on Women Historians, the Professional Division, and over 600 AHA members who had signed petitions urging the Council to pass it. Instead, the Council decided to submit the issue to an advisory mail ballot. Proponents of the boycott won this referendum by a vote of 798 to 709.

Despite such wide and varied support, the Council voted to table the boycott resolution and to pass one generally favoring the Equal Rights Amendment. By implication this should mean that the Council cannot logically schedule a future conference in any state that has not ratified. The 1979 conference will be held in New York and the 1980 one in Washington, D.C. Beyond this there is no guarantee that conventions will not be held in states that do not favor granting equal rights to women.

Apparently arguments about "nuisance suits" against the Association (the probability of which is very slight), figured prominently in the Council's decision. To date, no professional organization has been sued for not holding meetings in anti-ERA states unless a previously signed contract was broken, although a few have been asked to give depositions in a suit against NOW brought by the state of Missouri.

We are left with the fact that the Council tabled a resolution that won the mail ballot by 53% (this represented 10% of the member-

ship when normal returns by mail are usually less than 2%); (2) was supported by the CWH; (3) was approved by the Professional Division; (4) urged by petition; and (5) endorsed, as of May 1978, by over 170 other national professional organizations. "

New developments

Since June there have been several new developments. Discussions at the Berkshire conference in women's history resulted in the following strategy. While the CCWHP proceeds to register dismay in the proper channels the Council's ignoring the desires of a large and mobilized section of the membership, the various affiliates such as ourselves will be polling AH4 members about their support for putting their AH4 dues in escrow if the Council refuses to reverse its position against the boycott. This is the subject of the attached petition. Let me quote from Joan Hoff Wilson's letter of September 11 to explain what putting dues in escrow entails; it is not equivalent to resigning from the AHA.

"Placement of dues in an escrow fund, which the CCWHP would administer, and notification to the Council of the reasons for taking such action instead of renewing membership in the normal fashion, is the legal equivalent to a rent strike. We would still technically be members of AHA; the Council would have to take legal action to prove otherwise. The other thing to note about AHA membership is that it is not required to contribute articles to the journal or to participate in sessions at national conventions. Membership simply allows individuals to run for office or to be appointed to committees. Membership also, of course, entitles one to receive the journal. Placing dues in an escrow fund would simply indicate a member's unwillingness to serve the AHA in administrative functions; it is not intended to curtail any scholarly participation in the historical profession."

Joan and the rest of the CCWHP wish to get a sense of the degree of support among AHA members to use this tactic if the Council at its December meeting does not remove the ERA resolution from the table and follow the results of its own advisory referendum to support the boycott. They need 1000 signatures and hope to collect 2000.

For this reason it is essential that you return to us immediately your response to our own mail ballot and the petitions attached to this newsletter.

We have also included the CCWHP resolutions to be presented on the floor of the business meeting in San Francisco in the event the Council does not pass the ERA boycott resolution. EACH WILL REQUIRE 25 SIGNATURES AND MUST BE RETURNED BY OCTOBER 15 TO JOAN HOFF WILSON. We may be contacting you in November to get your support for these as well. Again, from Joan's letter:

"The first resolution will call for approval of the original ERA boycott resolution by the business meeting. Failing in this, the second will call for a censure of the Council for ignoring its own internal procedures and constituency in favor of the original ERA boycott resolution. The third resolution will call for the recreation of a half-time women's position within the AHA headquarters in order to reactivate the referral service on job openings, to update and reissue the Directory of Women Historians, and to manage complaints from women historians by presenting them to the Professional Division and representing that Division's recommendations to the Council. Another resolution will call for a vote on the Council by either the chair of the Committee on Women Historians or the person who occupies the recreated women's position."

To succeed in these various efforts, we will need the informed and active support of our members. Add your voice to those calling for the AHA Council to express what represents minimal support for women in the profession.

The following officers of the WCAWH urge you to act in support of the resolution for the AHA to boycott states that have not ratified the ERA:

Peg Strobel, President	Alice Clement, Social Action Coordinator
Joanna Cowden, Vice-president	Gloria Lothrop, Media and Publications Coordinator
Penny Kanner, Vice-president	Antonia Castanada, Graduate Student Coordinator
Debby Kennel, Secretary-Treasurer	Estelle Freedman, Conference Coordinator
Rosemary Masek, Co-Editor	
Jackie Barnhart, Co-Editor	
Frances Richardson Keller, Program Coordinator	

Please

- send in the mail ballot immediately (directly below in this column)
- sign and circulate to men and women who are AHA members the petition pledging to place dues in escrow (see page 5)
- sign and circulate the petition of women members of the AHA in favor of boycotting the antiERA states (see page 7)

MAIL BALLOT

CUT OFF AND RETURN TO WCAWH,
467 Comstock, Los Angeles, CA
90024

_____ I believe that the AHA should boycott states which have not ratified the ERA

_____ I will place my dues in escrow until the AHA Council votes to boycott states that have not ratified the ERA

_____ I do not believe that the AHA should boycott states which have not ratified the ERA

As President, of the WCAWH, I have endorsed a statement in response to the AHA September Newsletter's coverage of the ERA boycott issue. The statement, drafted by D'Ann Campbell, Organization of American Historians Committee on the Status of Women in the Historical Profession, and Jonn Hoff Wilson, President, CCWHP, essentially covers the material in my message above. Although our association has not been officially polled yet (This newsletter is an attempt to do so), I acted in the name of the association, after consulting with the two vice-presidents, because time limits dictated an immediate response. Furthermore, persons at the WCAWH meeting at the PCB in August overwhelmingly supported the ERA boycott, as have our officers.

FEMINISTS PROTEST COUNCIL DECISION

The AHA Council has blundered badly in the ERA matter. Although most of the major professional organizations in the humanities and social sciences have endorsed the principle of boycotting states that have not ratified the ERA, the AHA Council has refused to make this minimal response in behalf of the Constitutional needs of thousands of women historians. Thereby it rejected petitions, the advisory vote of the membership, and the recommendations of its Women's Committee & its Professional Division.

The issue will be brought to the floor of the annual business meeting. Petitions are also being circulated and will be printed in the December AHA Newsletter demanding the consoling of the Council, the removing of the ERA boycott resolution from the table, the direct representation of the AHA Committee on Women Historians on the Council and the resignation of Vice-President Otis Pease who led the counterattack on the ERA boycott motion even though his Professional Division and its subcommittee, the Women's Committee had overwhelmingly supported the resolution. Women who have held AHA offices or committee appointments and representatives of national and regional organizations will send special letters directly to the Council describing their dissatisfaction with the Council's action and inaction. Finally, we all protest the misleading reporting of the council's decision as described in the September AHA Newsletter.

Names
(Affiliations)

Reg Strickland, President
West Coast Association of Women
Historians



SUGGESTED RESOLUTION TO COUNTER THE AHA COUNCIL'S ACTION
OF MAY 26, 1978 *

WHEREAS:

1) We are pleased with the Council's decision to hold the 1980 meeting in Washington, DC and assume that the Council's endorsement of the ERA amendment means that it will not schedule any futuro conferences in states that have not ratified the ERA until this national issue is resolved;

2) We strongly believe that professional organizations have an affirmative duty to defend the human rights and dignity of all their members, we want to point out that over 170 other national organizations have joined in the fight for first class citizenship for women in this society by officially refusing to hold meetings in states that have not ratified the ERA. (These organizations are truly impressive in their diversity and all agree that if they remain inactive on this issue of equal rights or simply offer moral support at this critical juncture in the passage of the ERA, they are implicitly condoning the unequal treatment of all women.);

3) We recognize that women historians have overcome many professional barriers in recent years with the support of the AHA, we also realize that like all women professionals, women historians have often made tremendous sacrifices in order to contribute to their fields of specialization. They are now asking the kind of support from the AHA that will make a significant difference in the lives and attitudes of its female members. In this time of economic crisis within the profession, women must be assured that they are not the victims of covert and unwarranted fear of reverse discrimination on the part of their male colleagues. We believe that there is only one remaining way for the AHA to assure women, particularly in the wake of the Bakke decision, of its serious and continuing commitment to effect affirmative action;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

Until the AHA Council honors the results of the advisory referendum on the ERA resolution and the previous endorsements of this resolution by over 600 AHA members, the Professional Division, and the Committee on Women Historians by rescinding its decision to table the ERA resolution and votes at its next meeting to join the other national professional organizations that have agreed not to meet in states refusing to ratify the ERA;

1) Members of the undersigned organizations and committees will refrain from renewing their membership in the AHA by notifying the Council in writing of their decision;

2) Members of the undersigned organizations and committees will place their AHA membership dues in a national fund (and encourage their male colleagues to do likewise) to be held in escrow until such time as the AHA Council takes positive action on this resolution.

* This resolution was submitted by Joan Hoff Wilson, CCWHP President, at the Berkshire conference in August, 1978. It was discussed and debated at length at several meetings of those attending. It was not formally adopted. Rather, it was a vehicle for formulating various ways to impress upon the AHA Council the need to reconsider its May decision to table the ERA resolution.

* * * * *

On Candidates for AHA Office: Joan Hoff Wilson

The CCWHP urges all the regional affiliates to campaign actively for feminist AHA candidates, male and female. At the beginning of October, the CCWHP will formally endorse candidates for the various offices on the basis of their responses to a questionnaire. There are two CCWHP write-in candidates: Margaret (Peg) Strobel for the Nominating Committee (Place 1) and Catherine (Kitty) Prelinger for the Committee-on-Committees (Place 1), who already have the unqualified endorsement of the CCWHP. We can no longer afford the luxury of supporting women candidates simply because they are women. CCWHP intends to insure greater accountability of women candidates and office holders than it has in the past by reminding them of their responsibility to a female constituency within the AHA; inviting them to our meetings; and by making sure they are aware of our position on issues of concern to women. If time permits, CCWHP will take out an ad in the December AHA Newsletter indicating which candidates we have endorsed.



I am a member of the AHA and I am prepared to withhold membership dues by placing such money in an escrow fund until the Council removes from the table and passes the ERA resolution calling upon the AHA to join over 170 other professional organizations that have formally agreed not to hold convention in non-ERA states until this national issue is finally resolved.

PRINT NAME (last name first): SIGN NAME: INSTITUTIONAL AFFILIATION OR ADDRESS:

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____
- 4. _____
- 5. _____
- 6. _____
- 7. _____
- 8. _____
- 9. _____
- 10. _____
- 11. _____
- 12. _____
- 13. _____
- 14. _____
- 15. _____
- 16. _____
- 17. _____
- 18. _____
- 19. _____
- 20. _____

RETURN TO JOAN HOFF YILSON, DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY, ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY, TEMPE. AZ 85281

BAY BRANCH OF THE WCAWH: Organizational Meeting

The Bay Area Branch of the WCAWH will hold an organizational meeting on Sunday evening, November 5. The greater Los Angeles area has been well served by its local branch and the same advantages will now be available in northern California. Issues to be discussed are organizational plans, the continuing debate over ERA in the AHA, and the AHA convention in San Francisco during December. For further information, call one of the following numbers:

- in Oakland, Kathy Roper, 547-3407
- in Berkeley, Margaret Rossiter, 525-3012
- Burlingame, Gayle Escobar, 347-9669



SIGNATURES OF AHA MEMBERS IN SUPPORT OF PLACING THE FOLLOWING
RESOLUTIONS BEFORE THE ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING, DECEMBER 1978

- 1. Calling for the business meeting to approve thr original resolution to boycott non ERA stator..

- 2. To censure the Council for ignoring its own internal procedures and constituency in favor of the original ERA boycott resolution.

- 3. To recreate the half-time position of Special Assistant to the Committee on Women Historians and to reactivate the referral service on job openings, to update and reissue the Directory of Women Historians, and to generally promote the interests of women within the profession.

- 4. To create a position on the Council for either the Chair of the Committee on Women Historians or its Special Assistant.

Please sign and circulate this petition to persons who are members of the AHA. Note that these are simply titles of resolutions, and that the exact wording of the full resolutions will be worked out with the Parliamentarian of the AHA. If additional signatures are sent, please be sure to head them with the title of the resolution being supported.

RETURN BY OCTOBER 15 (DEADLINE BY AHA IS NOVEMBER 1) TO:

Joan Hoff Wilson, Department of History, Arizona State University
Tempe, AZ 85281

VOTE NO ON PROPOSITION 6: A Message from Alice Clement

Proposition 6 on the November (California) ballot, known as the Briggs Initiative, has serious and adverse effects for all of us as teachers and human beings. As teachers, we should be particularly aware of the potentially devastating effect the Proposition would have on civil liberties and academic freedom. Its passage would begin an era of witch hunting among teachers, for homosexual and heterosecual teachers alike. The proposition's loose language would make it possible for a school board to fire a teacher whether or not he or she had committed any crime.

The proposed law includes in its definition anyone who is found "advocating, soliciting, imposing, encouraging or promoting private or public homoecual activity directed at, or likely to come to the attention of, school children and/or other employees." Teachers in the humanities or in the social sciences could be restricted from discussing the contribution of gay men and women to literature, science, politics, society and the arts. Discussions of life-styles could come under the imprecise language of the initiative. Proposition 6 would set up in some classrooms and among colleagues a police state mentality, restricting free speech and violating the most fundamental right to encourage in the classroom the free flow of ideas.

Public shool persons are already protototed from sexual misconduct of both a heterosexual and a homosexual kind by existing state law, as the State Department of Education has repeatedly pointed out.

WOMEN MEMBERS OF AHA IN FAVOR OF BOYCOTTING ANTIERA STATES

Print Name: (last name first)

Sign Name:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____
11. _____
12. _____
13. _____
14. _____
15. _____
16. _____
17. _____
18. _____
19. _____
20. _____
21. _____
22. _____
23. _____
24. _____
25. _____

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____
11. _____
12. _____
13. _____
14. _____
15. _____
16. _____
17. _____
18. _____
19. _____
20. _____
21. _____
22. _____
23. _____
24. _____
25. _____

RETURN TO JOAN HOFF WILSON. DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY. ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY, TEMPE, AZ 85281

WCAWH MEMBER HONORED:

Eetelle Freedman, Stanford University, has won the Dean's Award for Distinguished Teaching. Congratulations, Estelle!

CONFERENCE NEWSNOTES:

The National Women's Studies Association will hold its first national conference on the campus of the University of Kansas, Lawrence, from May 30-June 3, 1979. The NWSA Conference committee invites proposals for panels, seminars, workshops, papers, and creative activities in feminist education. The deadline for contacts and queries is January 1, 1979.

Write Emily Abel and Peg Strobel, c/o Center for Women's Studies, California State University, Long Beach, CA 90840

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name _____ Institution _____

Home Address _____ Phone _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Mail to: _____

_____ Faculty: Job Title _____ Subject _____

_____ Student _____ Unemployed _____ Non-teaching historian _____

Fields of interest _____

DUES: \$5 for employed persons; \$2 for students and unemployed

Send directly to Debbie Kennel, 1250 Norman Place, L.A., CA 90049

COPY FOR THE NEXT TWO NEWSLETTERS SHOULD BE SW T DIRECTLY TO JACKIE BARNHART,
Department of History, Calif.State University, Chico, CA.

In the next issue: Call for papers from the Organization of American Historians,
PCB, etc.; conference reports; calls for action.

BY SURE TO SEND IN THE MAIL. BALLOTS TO WCAWH AND JOAN HOFF WILSON
CIRCULATE THE QUESTIONNAIRES
SEND IN DELINQUENT DUES



467 COMSTOCK AVENUE / LOS ANGELES, CA. 90024



Susan Bell
8 Montecito Rd.
Woodside CA 94062