

LUBBOCK **NOW** TIMES

The Newsletter of the
National Organization for Women

In Lubbock
November 1978

Slick Flicks, Chicks Pics

Just over a year ago, the popular press (exemplified by Newsweek and The New York Times) noted that Hollywood filmmakers were in the process of re-discovering women. Disaster movies, Mel Brooks's farces, and especially male "buddie" pictures (the genre built upon Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid, M*A*S*H, and Deliverance) were being joined by films about women.

Just out or due within the next twelve months were stories of divorced and separated women (The Goodbye Girl, An Unmarried Woman), career women and housewives (The Turning Point), professional and political women (Network, Julia), and so on through such disparate features as Annie Hall and Pretty Baby. Audiences had gone to see early versions of the form, so the studios were agreeable. Reliable directors were offered the films and accepted the jobs. Plots and casts seemed promising.

"YEAR OF THE WOMAN"

The 1977-1978 season was heralded as "The Year of the Woman." The returns are now in, and the results are only mildly encouraging.

First the good news: Hollywood has, indeed, re-discovered women. Films--good, bad, and indifferent--are again being made about fifty-one percent of the population. Oh, some of these women are weak (Marsha Mason in The Goodbye Girl) and others dangerously unbalanced (nearly everyone in Carrie); they generally have little consciousness of themselves as women, and when that consciousness does

appear, it is too often shown to be emulation of the male model or fawning search for Mr. Right (Jill Clayburgh's burst of random promiscuity and subsequent adoration of Alan Bates in An Unmarried Woman). But too much can be made of this.

Roles for actresses exist, and
(continued on Page 4)

DECEMBER PROGRAM: CREDITABLE WOMEN

The December meeting of NOW will be Tuesday, December 5, at 7:30 pm, at the Wesley Foundation, 2420 15th. The program will be "Women and Credit" given by Barbara Pharr and Deborah Roe.

Barbara Pharr, who is starting work on a Masters' Degree in family finance, will discuss the definition of the "Four C's": The Equal Credit Opportunity Act, the best ways to establish credit, the importance of checking and updating your credit files, and the alternative methods for establishing credit when discrimination arises.

Deborah Roe, who works in investigation at Sears Credit Central, will discuss the point system (how it can work for or against you), the Credit Bureaus and their computer systems, the process of reading your credit report, and the best ways to repair a damaged credit file.

In this age of plastic money, the facts and figures to be presented in this program are pertinent to all of us.

Action Meeting

The December Action Meeting will be held at Pam Brink's house, 2123 17th, on Wednesday, December 6, from 7:00 to 9:00 pm.

The monthly Action meeting is where most of the decisions on NOW business are made. The meeting is open to all members, so please make the effort to attend. Your participation is very important.

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LUBBOCK NOW TIMES

is published monthly by the Lubbock chapter of the National Organization for Women.

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Articles, poetry, etc., should be submitted to the editor, P.O. Box 83, Lubbock 79408, typed, double-spaced on a 35 character line. Articles may be subject to re-write.

Now Texas Women Can Sue For It

(The following article appeared in the Austin American-Statesman, October 13, 1978.)

On October 11, the Texas Supreme Court, reflecting the philosophy embodied in the state's Equal Rights Amendment, applied the principle of sexual equality.

The landmark ruling affirmed that wives who lose their mates' companionship through the negligence of a third party can sue for damages. The court acted on behalf of a wife whose husband was injured in a collision. She sued the owner of the other car.

State ERA Responsible

A state district court had ruled that under common law Texas wives did not have the same rights as husbands to sue for loss of conjugal rights and companionship. But the appeals court said that wives acquired those rights when Texas voters adopted the ERA to the state constitution in 1972, and the Supreme Court agreed that in light of "present social realities," both spouses are equally liable to injury and equally entitled to damages.

The appeals court's application of the state ERA shows the amendment's two-pronged power to both ban bias in civil law and update common law. Unlike civil law amenable to re-writing, common law is derived from usages and customs. Passage of the amendment officially recognized Texans' rejection of the double standard, and so offered the court a solid platform from which to re-evaluate common law.

<p>Deadline for Next Month's LUBBOCK NOW TIMES December 11</p>

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In the meantime, please patronize our advertisers and, almost more importantly, tell them every single time you enter their business establishments that you have come because they advertise in the Lubbock NOW Times. At the very least, let them know that you support and read the newsletter. Our patrons

want continually to feel our presence in order to justify their expenditure, so bombard them with praise and encouragement. And, of course, eat, drink, Christmas shop, hair style, sooth your aching body with healthy remedies, plumb, remodel, and buy cars and houses from our noble advertisers.

Loathing Women

(From The Avalanche-Journal, 10/21/78)

The loathing of women has been a powerful thing in Judeo-Christian culture and Americans are the most vicious in this. Although in Italy for 5,000 years, women have done all the work, run the country, and yet they've been treated as chattels.

---Gore Vidal.

The Women Office Worker

BILL of RIGHTS

Here is "The Bill of Rights for Women Office Workers" we promised you as a response to the boss rating test we ran in our October newsletter. (From Working Women, 1258 Euclid, Cleveland, Ohio 44115)

1. The right to be respected as women and office workers.
2. The right to comprehensive, written job descriptions specifying the nature of all duties expected of the employee.
3. The right to detailed information specifying compensation, terms, conditions and benefits of employment.
4. The right to compensation for overtime work and for work not included in the job description.
5. The right to choose whether to do the personal work of employers (typing personal letters, serving
6. The right to defined and regular salary reviews and cost-of-living increases.
7. The right to comprehensive medical coverage for any temporary medical disability without jeopardizing seniority, benefits, or pension.
8. The right to maternity benefits and to having pregnancy and other gynecological conditions treated as temporary disabilities.
9. The right to benefits and pay equal to those of men in similar job categories.
10. The right to equal access to promotion opportunities and on-the-job training programs.
11. The freedom to choose one's lifestyle and to participate in on-the-job organizing or outside activities which do not detract from the execution of assigned tasks.
12. An end to discrimination on the basis of sex, age, race, marital status, or parenthood, as insured by law.
13. The right to written and systematic grievance procedures.

Slick Flicks Still Chicks Pics

(continued from Page 1)
they are strong roles. The films may not show women who struggle to take control of their lives, but they do, at last, acknowledge that women have lives.

We cannot expect feminist consciousness to erupt, Athena-like, from the heads of studio executives. First must come simple recognition that women can be, ought to be more than attractive ornaments for the camera occasionally to linger over, that women do now have realistic options besides housewife, schoolmarm, gun moll, and slut. It is that recognition--missing in most Hollywood films since the fifties--which has been developed and explored this year.

Bad News

But, and this is the bad news, most of these films are offensive, offensive aesthetically and offensive politically, offensive by commission and by omission.

Three major models of the form were supposed to have been An Unmarried Woman, Julia, and The Turning Point. Each has strong potential, extraordinary performances, and high ideals. Yet each is, ultimately, a disappointment. By looking at what happens to these films we can see the year's pattern emerge.

Implausible Wholesomeness

There's an implausible wholesomeness about An Unmarried Woman. Nobody who knows New York City can accept these spanking clean streets, pristine lofts, and the film's single wino as anything but wish-fulfillment. The city is just not that shiny and bright. After a rain, streetlights do not shimmer picturesquely off cobblestones. New York is a hard, gritty place, and an occasional sassy cab driver is not enough to capture that on film. Life for a woman whose husband has apparently without prior hint, up and left her is tough also. But a few tears,

a bit of feminist therapy, and three sympathetic friends are not enough to convince us of that. Not when forty minutes later there is passionate love with Alan Bates.

Perfect Lover

As writer and director Paul Mazursky sees it, the major problem for an abandoned woman in this society is the search for a perfect lover. Maybe, say the film's partisans, but she won't go to Vermont with Bates. She's going to struggle along on her own in New York. That, after all, is the message of the final scene: Jill Clayburgh struggling home with an oversized painting. But, of course, that's the problem.

It's Bates's painting. He made it; he gave it to her. He leaves her to struggle until he chooses to drop into the city for a weekend. And the struggle's not too hard now, for he will come to town.

Anyway, this is a gentle city whose only litter is an occasional
(continued on Page 5)

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SLICK FLICKS, CHICKS PICS

(continued from page 4)

page from The New York Times blown about by a soft breeze. And Bates is a gentle lover. Tender and cuddly and adorable; he's still willing to fight with Charles Grodin to defend Clayburgh's honor. Bates is certainly more charming than her husband, more sophisticated, more mellow. But he dominates her as thoroughly, even from a distance. By now we might have expected her to have learned a lesson, to have grown. She hasn't. All she's gained is hipness, the Mazursky equivalent of consciousness.

Julia Stronger

Julia is a stronger film, perhaps because the characters are real, strong people. There is the touching, if overly sentimental, friendship between Lillian Hellman and her wealthy childhood friend Julia. There is Julia grown up, giving her money and ultimately her life in the fight against fascism in pre-war Germany. And there is Lillian forcing herself to be brave and smuggle money into Germany to help Julia with that fight.

Yet Julia too is a gentle film filled with moonlight and open fires on Nantucket beaches, fatherly advice from Dashiell Hammett, and tears of love and sorrow from Lillian. That a collection of stunning performances prevents this from becoming totally soporific is the film's major miracle.

Just Pretending

And when we put the film alongside the essay which inspired it, we find a distressing change. Hellman's bitterness and pathos are replaced by smugness and affectation. As one critic noted, "We never believe...that Fonda's Hellman is a playwright; she's just pretending. She's a lapdog nipping at the heels of Julia and Dash; beyond that, she's shallow and inept." The case is sound, if overstated.

Overstatement is at the heart of
(continued on page 6)

Bentsen, Jordan, 5th Circuit Post?

(The following article appeared in Texas Monthly, November 1978)

Senator Lloyd Bentsen must be overjoyed about the new Omnibus Judgeship Act, which gives Texas some new seats on the federal bench. Bentsen will have almost total say over who gets them. Ten new federal district judgeships will go to Texas, along with probably four new seats one step up the ladder on the fifth Circuit Court of Appeals. Particularly desirable plums for lawyers and lesser judges, Fifth Circuit judgeships are well-paid, well-pensioned, prestigious, and intellectually stimulating.

For Years

Barbara Jordan has for years been mentioned as a possibility for one of the Fifth Circuit seats, but there's more talk now that one of her staunchest allies, former State District Court Judge Andrew Jefferson of Houston, will get one instead. Bentsen's most influential supporters in Houston are adamant about keeping Jefferson off the district bench and are pushing him for the Fifth Circuit as a way to diffuse his power. Two prominent Texas federal judges who are said to want the new Fifth Circuit seats badly are Pat Higginbotham of Dallas and W. Wayne Justice of Tyler,
(continued on page 11)

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possessions



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CONTEMPORARY LIFESTYLE
FURNITURE & ACCESSORIES

SLICK PICS

(continued from Page 5)

The Turning Point, the classiest soap opera of the decade. Shirley MacLaine and Anne Bancroft, best friends, each had to choose between marriage and career. MacLaine picked marriage, Bancroft career. Twenty years later, each a success, they meet and struggle with the doubts and consequences of those choices. In the balance hang their friendship and the future of MacLaine's family.

This is heavy stuff and ought to have offered some real insight. It doesn't, however, for our attention is constantly distracted by the dancing of Mikhail Baryshnikov and the desire to see what will happen when Bancroft needs to show that she is legitimately a prima ballerina. Furthermore, the resolution to their conflicts is so muddled by assorted backstage sexual posturing, so startlingly banal in its morality (things are tough all over; make the most of what you've got), and so glib in its execution that we are left both unconvinced and unenlightened.

What went wrong? I think the answer is twofold, and both parts have implications for what is likely to happen this year and next.

First, high intentions are in-

(continued on Page 7)

The Bookshelf

Olsen, Tillie. Silences. 1978. \$10.95.

This book is a collection of Olsen's essays, thoughts by other writers, short speculative comments, and statistics concerning literary "silences," those black holes in a writer's life when the words won't come. In her first venture into nonfiction, Olsen tries to explore the circumstances which cause these creative vacuums, especially the "silences" that happen because a writer happens to be born a woman, into poverty, or of a racial minority. When its mellow, contemplative tone doesn't subtly incite you, it will sustain you.

Submitted by Pam Brink.



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Silent Statistics

In Silences, Tillie Olsen lists these interesting statistics:

Nobel Prize for Literature, 1920-72:
49 recipients
5 women

Bollingen Poetry Prize, 1950-73:
24 recipients
4 women

Pulitzer Prizes:
Fiction, 1920-73:
47 recipients
16 women

Drama, 1920-73:
45 awards
56 recipients
6 women

Poetry, 1922-73
51 recipients
11 women

National Book Awards:
Fiction, 1950-73
26 recipients
3 women

Poetry, 1950-73
26 recipients
3 women

Guggenheim Fellowships for Fiction
Drama and Poetry (mixed), 1926-72
419 recipients
79 women

Flicks, Chicks

(continued from Page 6)
sufficient to either good cinema or sharp insight. These films ooze nobility of purpose. Hollywood's response to years of neglect is to bring in big money, big names, and fine ideals.

Second, and this is a corollary, the big names in Hollywood are all men. The major women's pictures are written, directed, and produced by men. Contrast these films with a minor, independently produced gem like Joan Micklin Silver's Hester Street to see what a difference gender can make.

Only when the studios are willing to accept women behind the cameras, as well as in front of them, will there be any progress. Only then will "The Year of the Woman" truly arrive. There are small signs that the time is coming. Some promising films have yet to open in Lubbock. Until then? Well, at least there's some good work for actresses these days.

--Jeffrey M. Gamso

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The Newsletter staff welcomes your generous contributions to the Lubbock NOW Times. The more information we receive from our varied membership, the more constructive and interesting our paper will be. However, we must beg your assistance in managing our publication.

This page contains the basic Newsletter guidelines to be followed when you contribute any kind of written information to the Lubbock NOW Times.

We ask you to abide by this format for lay-out purposes. Although the newsletter is totally re-typed for printing, it is crucial that we have articles in correct form when we set up the pattern for this final typing; THEREFORE, we cannot accept anything for publication unless it adheres to the following guidelines:

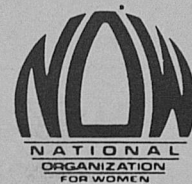
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2. All material must be typed on a 35 character line (margins on 5 and 40 and/or 45 and 80). Do not go over margins more than 2 spaces nor under 2 spaces if at all possible.
3. Do not abbreviate:
 - a. Months
 - b. People's official names or titles
 - c. Your name
 - d. Words in general
4. Write out all numbers up to 101.
5. Include the following for each article if applicable:
 - a. Name of periodical
 - b. Day, month, year published
6. Mention general time and meeting dates in Committee Reports and include the time and date of the next meeting. Include all essential information (who, what, where, when, why) in the first paragraph of your article or report--most important information first--then expand.
7. Mail your contribution to: The Editor, Lubbock NOW Times, P. O. Box 83, Lubbock, Texas 79408, by the following deadlines and absolutely no later: December 11, January 15, February 12.

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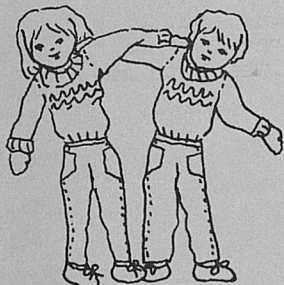
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A small revolting version of my
mirror image,
Feeling myself through your lack,
Disgusted by uneasy existence.

---Little

Bentsen, Jordan

(continued from page 5)

but both are probably long shots--
Higginbotham because he's a Republican
and Justice because he's too liberal.

There may also be a fifth new Texas
judge on the Fifth Circuit soon.
Judge Homer Thornberry of Austin,
whose health is not good, may move
up to senior judge status, and the
frontrunner to replace him is said to
be veteran Austin liberal lawyer Dave
Richards.

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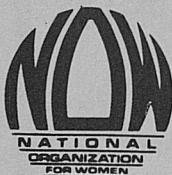
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