

## Insurance Company Denies Contraceptives Despite Maryland Law

BY HOLLY ELDER

I was enrolled as a full time, undergraduate student at the University of Maryland and I recently graduated in May 2008. I was covered on my parent's health insurance policy and I was notified that they would no longer cover me on the family policy after graduation.

Soon after, I received correspondence on University of Maryland Alumni Association letterhead encouraging me to take advantage of a health insurance plan for recent graduates from the provider Assurant Health underwritten by Time Insurance Company. I signed up for a six-month policy, which included a prescription plan.

I was dismayed to discover that my policy did not cover contraceptives, specifically birth control pills. After doing some research, I discovered my insurance company is violating Maryland law.

Maryland law 15-826 states that insurance companies doing business in Maryland "shall provide coverage for any contraceptive drug or device that is approved by the United States Food and Drug Administration for use as a contraceptive and that is obtained under a prescription written by an authorized prescriber as defined in § 12-101 of the Health Occupations Article."

After I realized this, I was enraged. Typically, without health insurance coverage, birth control costs about fifty dollars per month. How many recent graduates can afford fifty dollars a month for birth control? I wonder how many women my age bought into this plan and were not able to purchase birth control after they graduated. I also wonder how many

*(see Contraception, page 3)*

### Who Said That?

"It all begins here. The whole thing." He had his cheek on her belly again, his eye at her navel. "Here it begins." ...He clung and stared at her with a remote paranoid glare, muttering nonsense. "You want to push me out!" He sat up glaring. "While you stay inside waiting. Eating it all up. See how it looks like a hill but it's really a cave. What is it that's inside? What's really waiting?" "There's no it. There's only me. Phil, don't look at me that way. It's Miriam, me, just me."

*(See answer, page 5)*

## The Sexualization of Girls: Why It Matters

BY MARY BAILEY

CHAIR, SEXUALIZATION OF GIRLS TASK FORCE

How do you feel when you see fashion ads in girls' magazines that advise girls to look "hot" if they want to attract boys? Or those music videos girls watch that emphasize female bodies and their sexual readiness? And how about cartoons for children that show women acting "sexy," complete with cleavage and few clothes?

The entertainment, fashion, and advertising industries making money off the sexualization of girls are relentless. One advertising CEO praised as "brilliant" the marketing concept that focuses on younger and younger girls. He calls this concept "KGOY," or Kids Get Older Younger. "Historically," he said, "marketing rules have said that up to a certain age boys and girls were the same." Now, "a 6-year-old girl tunes into the same pop sensations a 10-12 year-old might have listened to a generation ago," thanks to KGOY marketing.<sup>1</sup>

Or consider the marketing of Miley Cyrus, the 15-year-old star of "Hannah Montana," the popular Disney show. Miley has been a healthy role model for girls in their early teens. But recently she was posed semi-nude by photographer Annie Liebovitz for Vanity Fair. Miley, according to reports, was "draped in a sheet, bare backed, hair tousled, with a come-hither smile." In another picture, she is "baring her midriff while sprawled on her father's lap." Her youth didn't stop her parents, the photographer, the Vanity Fair editors, or the Disney PR people – all over 15 – from pushing Miley to say that posing was her decision and she thought the photo was "artistic." One journalist even wrote that Miley is a budding billionaire who "knows a thing or two about manipulating the media."<sup>2</sup>

Many of us are deeply troubled. We feel that something essential is being violated. Yet, we live in a society that seems to take the sexualization of girls in stride. It seems we are expected to "absorb" such blatant exploitation and to accept our status as bystanders.

We may be bystanders, but we are not necessarily indifferent to what we witness. Psychologists tell us that when people are confronted with what seems to be a social consensus, they tend to rely on the consensus rather than on their own perceptions. The results of this tendency are usually pretty harmless. But in the case of the sexualization of girls, our silence may mean we are unsure as to how and when to intervene, or even if we should intervene. After all, we live

*(see Why It Matters, page 3)*

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## The Medical Right: Remaking Medicine in Its Image

BY MARY ROSE CURTIS, CO-CHAIR,  
ADVOCACY TASK FORCE, RIVER ROAD UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST  
CONGREGATION

A group of fundamentalist organizations has made substantial inroads in limiting access to women's reproductive health care. Since 2000, according to the Religious Coalition for Abortion Rights, the Medical Right has accomplished the following:

- Secured broad rights for the pharmacists and other health providers to refuse to fill prescriptions for birth control and emergency contraception.
- Placed abstinence-only education in the public schools of 47 states.
- Built a network of heavily funded crisis "pregnancy centers" that re-enforce their religious political agenda.
- Delayed approval of non-prescription sales of emergency contraception for three years as a part of their campaign against birth control.
- Cast doubt about the effectiveness of condoms to prevent the transmission of HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases.
- Placed obstacles before medical researchers studying stem cells as an avenue for curing a host of diseases.
- Injected its definition of personhood into laws and regulations across the country, laying a foundation for declaring fetal life to be equal in status to adults and children, potentially upending abortion rights.

The Medical Right's multi-pronged attack is now focused on the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) in order to influence their ethical guidelines. Although ACOG's last assessment of ethics was published in November 2007, its Ethics Committee will meet again in September to re-evaluate its guidelines, which seems to be a clear reaction to the assault of the Medical Right.

In addition, on March 14, 2008, Michael Leavitt, Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services, called for rejection of current ethics in order to re-assess protection of the conscience rights of physicians. The Bush Administration joined this campaign.

I called the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology and spoke to Executive Director Dr. Ralph Hale's secretary. She strongly advised us to write, call, or e-mail Dr. Hale because he is receiving almost no opposition to the religious right's attack.

We must advocate strongly that the reproductive rights of women be the focus of the re-assessment. The beliefs of a particular religious minority must not be hoisted on our whole free society!

*(Write to Dr. Ralph Hale, Executive Director, American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, at 409 12<sup>th</sup> St. SW, Washington, DC 20024. Call Dr. Hale at 202-638-5577, or e-mail him at Rhale@ACOG.org.)*

### Increase Your Connection to MCNOW!

If you are receiving this newsletter via the US mail, it means that MCNOW does not have your current e-mail address or that you prefer to receive your news in the mail rather than as an e-mail attachment. If you provide us with your e-mail address, we will send you via e-mail:

- This newsletter, *From Now On*
- The MCNOW Feminist Calendar, which lists events in the nearby community of interest to women
- Action alerts through our MCNOW listserv

We understand that most of you are inundated with too many e-mails, so we are careful not to overload your e-mailbox. Send us your e-mail address, and we'll try to inform you, not annoy you. Send to [info@mcmdnow.org](mailto:info@mcmdnow.org).

### Notice To All Readers

Whether joining MCNOW or renewing, please check the box on the membership form saying you'd like to affiliate with MCNOW (chapter # MD0200). All memberships go through National NOW to be verified. Checking the box means MCNOW receives its portion of your dues. It also means you are on the official rolls to receive this newsletter. So please don't forget!

## Contraception (continued from page 1)

women stopped taking birth control when they bought this insurance. Even worse, I wonder how many women my age had an unexpected pregnancy right after college, possibly smashing the dream of a career or continuing their education. And far worse than that, I wonder how many women were forced to get an abortion because they could not afford birth control.

It seems so wrong to me that young women are being denied protections under Maryland law.

I complained in a letter to the Maryland Insurance Administration and I sent a letter to the University of Maryland Alumni Association. The alumni association promptly got back to me and told me they were going to contact the insurance company to investigate this matter. The official I spoke with also said she was going to contact all I sent the letter to, to let them know they are investigating the situation. She told me she would get back to me within a week, but I haven't heard from her. Hopefully, she will call me soon.

I sent a copy of the letter to Maryland Senator Brian Frosh. He responded with a letter stating he is "unable to intervene in administrative deliberations." Finally, I sent the letter to my three Maryland delegates in District 16, Bill Bronrott, Susan Lee, and William Frick. They contacted the deputy Commissioner at the Maryland Insurance Administration on my behalf.

After receiving a response from the Maryland Insurance Administration that stated my insurance company was not under Maryland jurisdiction, I called Delegate Bronrott again because, it seems to me, my insurance company should have to obey Maryland Law 15-826. I think the Maryland Insurance Administration is wrong. Delegate Bronrott assured me he is going to look into this matter further.

Drawing attention to this inconsistency is not simply about me getting reimbursed for the birth control, which was not covered under my health insurance; it is about protecting the rights of women who aren't aware they're being denied coverage.

It seems to me that health insurance providers have only one motivation and that is to make a profit. They're able to lower expenses by refusing to cover costs for contraceptives. Assurant Health should be investigated and penalized for breaking Maryland Law.

### Submissions to Newsletter Welcome

*From NOW On* reserves the right to edit submissions. Ads are accepted for nominal fees.

**Call** 301-236-0069

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SUBMISSION DEADLINE FOR THE FEBRUARY ISSUE:  
**JANUARY 20, 2009**

## Why It Matters (continued from page 1)

in a nation that honors free speech rights, and we are uncertain what would constitute appropriate action. So, as bystanders, we tend to accept the status quo, even though we feel that something is not quite right.

Now, human rights belong to every person in society. But sexualized children don't think in terms of their rights. They do what they are told, believe what they are shown, and don't understand that adults have responsibilities to protect children as their sexuality emerges. In effect, such children, girls mostly, can be sitting ducks in a sexually predatory culture. Not only are their rights as persons not recognized, but in some cases, such as child abuse or child pornography, they may not even be seen as persons at all.

There are organized groups that oppose child pornography and child abuse, but our society is largely silent about the depiction of girls in our mainstream culture, our everyday world, the world most little girls inhabit. The American Psychological Association's report, "The Sexualization of Girls," lays it out plainly enough. It shows that our culture is not sustaining girls in their development, but rather, is undermining their personhood.<sup>3</sup>

A child's right to personhood is the principle upon which to address the sexualization of girls. It is a concept we can build and act upon. The political philosopher Ronald Dworkin articulated this when he said that the most fundamental right we own is "the right to equal concern and respect." Calling it the paramount right, Dworkin said equal concern and respect is the pre-condition of every other right, including justice and liberty.<sup>4</sup> Free speech, for instance, does not derive from an abstract right to freedom. Behind the every demand for liberty and justice is the basic need to have our personhood respected. We cannot even conceive of freedom without that gut-level, core desire for concern and respect. As the necessary condition for all other rights, surely it includes the right of girls to develop an understanding of themselves and define their own life goals free from the sexualizing views of others.

If Miley Cyrus is scripted to follow Britney Spears' career path, does the personhood of Miley — and of the young girls who watch her show — ever cross the minds of Miley's handlers? Can they and other such handlers be persuaded that a girl's right to personhood is a valid human right? In my view, this is the task.

But how are we to defend the right to personhood in the face of other people's claims to rights? For instance, there's that advertising CEO's claim to free speech as he focuses his ads on ever younger and younger girls. Rom Harre, a scholar at Georgetown and Oxford articulated it succinctly. He pointed to the obvious problem: Rights, he says, "can easily be turned into unreasonable demands" when they are not "tempered by good sense." "There is no end," he said, "to what can be demanded by those who think their right unbounded."<sup>5</sup>

(see *Why It Matters*, page 4)

## As I See It

BY HOLLY JOSEPH (joseph.holly@gmail.com)



Forty years, I believe, is a very short time for the sea changes I've witnessed in my lifetime with respect to women and families. When I was young, the two-parent family was the bedrock of life in the

world around me. It was the ideal, and deviation from it was discouraged. There was unquestionably a stigma for those children whose parents were divorced, for reasons beyond their being quite in the minority. If one salary sufficed for a family, the more substantial salary was usually the man's. Children left with a single, working mother often faced a double stigma: living with only one parent and in a reduced financial state. My friend still tells with sadness that her mother, a widowed teacher, had to find someone to take her in for lunch when her school didn't allow anyone to stay at school during lunchtime. Stay-at-home mothers were the norm, and any deviation found little community support. It could hardly be said that the times were sympathetic to children or mothers without fathers or husbands.

A child not born of two married people was the stuff of tabloids and scandal. If there were open adoptions that long ago, I never heard of them, and stories were constructed to set up the "ideal" family for those who wouldn't have had one without such a story. And those my age heard the sad tales of children learning about their adoption from others instead of their adoptive parents.

Roe v. Wade in 1973 reduced the number of children who needed to be placed in adoptive homes when abortion was decriminalized. And shortly thereafter, in 1974, divorce surpassed death as the leading cause of family breakup.

I believe that the change in attitude came gradually, with relatives welcoming children whether they condoned their mother's actions or not. The new wave that brought children without live-in fathers also brought women who sought to be mothers without fathers. Still more assertive were those who availed themselves of technological advances to have children by fathers they did not even know.

On the other hand, as mothers have had opportunities for employment open to them, the role of fathers has expanded beyond that of merely breadwinner and punishment administrator. In this model, fathers became more involved with their children, with many being co-equal partners of their children. And when parents divorced, child custody shifted from unquestionably the mother's to shared (joint), the new the norm.

Do you remember the Promisekeeper movement of the late 90's which tried to get fathers to become involved in their children's lives? The concern became that the fathers were becoming so empowered in their new role that they were stepping over the women in the families.

If I have truly lived through a change in parental roles in the family, I look forward to living to see what the future brings in new styles for parents and families.

## Why It Matters (continued from page 3)

In summary, it comes down to one simple principle – the principle of personhood that guarantees the right of all children to freedom from sexualization.

Most Americans believe in the right to free speech to protect political and religious liberty. I submit that, if they think about it, most Americans also will agree that sexualizing a generation of young girls isn't just exercising free speech rights, it's crossing a line. And, if children do have a paramount right to concern and respect, then we have a right to see that they *get* it.

1. Time, October 29, 2007, p. 63
2. The Washington Post, April 30, 2008, page C1
3. [www.apa.org/pi/wpo/sexualization](http://www.apa.org/pi/wpo/sexualization) or the summary on [www.mcnow.org](http://www.mcnow.org)
4. R. Dworkin, "Freedom's Law (Cambridge, MA, 1996), page 17. Dworkin limited the "right to concern and respect" to adults, perhaps wanting to avoid extending the right to fetuses. Whatever his concern, we believe that children need the equal protection this right provides.
5. Finkel and Moghaddam, editors, "The Psychology of Rights and Duties," 2005, page 233

### The Sexualization of Girls: But What Can We Do?

Taking on the Big Three culture-shapers — the entertainment, fashion, and advertising industries — will not be easy. We are just at the beginning of our effort. The struggle will be based on one simple principle: Girls have a right to live free from sexualization. Following are some things we can do to encourage people to move from awareness — to indignation — to activism — to results:

- Demonstrate in front of stores selling sexualized clothing for children.
- Urge schools to adopt programs that counteract the sexualization of girls.
- Ask socially conscious mutual funds to drop companies that sexualize girls through their advertising and products.
- Encourage publications from the "UU World" of the Unitarian Universalist Church to "Woman's Day" on supermarket shelves to print articles on the sexualization of girls.
- Seek alliances with like-minded groups, such as those opposed to domestic violence and child abuse. And why not MoveOn.com? Or, since we are not promoting government censorship, the ACLU?

MCNOW's Task Force needs members to work on efforts such as the above. Right now, a portion of the public seems to range between the awareness and indignation stages. But with more members, we can address the broad spectrum of people necessary to bring the Big Three culture-shapers to face up to their responsibilities.

**"GIRL IS NOT A FOUR-LETTER WORD"**

## “So-Called” Crisis Pregnancy Centers

BY JEANNETTE FELDNER  
MCNOW REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS TASK FORCE



MISSING  
SOMETHING  
THIS MONTH?

*Free pregnancy testing*

Rockville Pregnancy Center  
**301-770-4444**

**Discreet. Confidential.**

Did you know that this picture is being run in many high school newsletters in Montgomery County? It seems like a reasonable offer to teens seeking professional information on pregnancy, adoption, abortion, and parenting. However, the truth is that the Rockville Pregnancy Center is a “Crisis Pregnancy Center” (CPC), whose main mission is to steer young women away from choosing abortion, usually without regard to their medical or family circumstances.

NARAL ProChoice Maryland has done extensive research on CPCs, and found that most of these centers are run by non-professionals who provide false and misleading information to deter women from considering an abortion. (Several years ago, Walt Whitman High School student reporters did an undercover investigation of the Rockville Pregnancy Center and found it to be a CPC as described here. For NARAL study, see <http://www.prochoicemaryland.org/issues/200801301.html>)

Reports by the National Abortion Federation as well as the Special Investigations Division of the U.S. House Committee on Government Reform — Minority Staff come to the same conclusion. Volunteer staff members at these centers provide deceptive antiabortion messages to women, including that abortion is painful and life-threatening, has long-lasting physical and mental health consequences, increases the risk of breast cancer, and can lead to sterility or death. (The U.S. House report can be found at: <http://oversight.house.gov/story.asp?ID=1080>)

## What to do

MCNOW’s Reproductive Rights Task Force is interested in countering or replacing the Rockville Pregnancy Center ad with an ad that offers free pregnancy testing, has a medically-trained staff, and offers accurate and comprehensive medical information about a young woman’s full range of options.

High school newspapers should refuse to print misleading ads for CPCs. If an advertisement offers “pregnancy options counseling” and does not clearly state a position on abortion and birth control, students should call to investigate. If an advertiser refuses to provide a referral for abortion services, it is likely a CPC using misleading advertising. Students should ask the newspaper to demand honesty from its advertisers. Readers can also:

- Check your local high school’s student newspaper and see if there is an ad for a pregnancy center. It most likely will be the Rockville Pregnancy Center. Educate the editors about CPCs and ask that the ad be removed.

- Send information about the ad and contact information for the high school newspaper to MCNOW at P.O. Box 2301, Rockville, MD 20847-2301 or email it to [info@mcmdnow.org](mailto:info@mcmdnow.org). MCNOW’s Reproductive Task Force will contact the editors and see about replacing the CPC ad with a Family Planning Clinic ad that will offer real choice to teens in need.

### Answer to Who Said That, page 1 Marge Piercy, author *Small Changes, 1973*

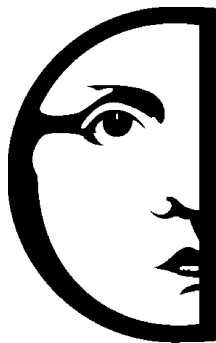
The quote on page one exemplifies the cultural attitude toward women’s sexuality in the 1970s and earlier. This “Freudian” approach existed, not just in America, but in other Western countries, as the following examples illustrate. But have such sexual animosity and weirdness really disappeared - or just morphed into a new cultural expression? (Go ahead, take a guess.)

Albert Memmi, Tunisian/French sociologist and author: “I hope that all I am about to say will be treated as highly suspect: for the first time in my life I am on the wrong side of the fence; in talking about women, I observe, with embarrassment and a touch of malice, that this time I am to be counted among the oppressors.” (*Dominated Man, 1968*)

Simone de Beauvoir, French philosopher and author of *The Second Sex*, in a 1970s *Ms.* interview: Q: “What were the reactions to *The Second Sex* when it appeared in 1949?” Simone de Beauvoir: “Very violent! Very hostile!” Q: “By whom?” Simone de Beauvoir: “By everyone. ...Mauriac, for example, wrote to a friend who was at the time working at *Les Temps Modernes*: ‘Ah! I have just learned a great deal about your boss’s vagina....’ And Camus, who at the time was still a friend, said to me, ‘You have just ridiculed the French male!’ Professors could not stand the book and hurled it across their lecture rooms.”

# The Watchful Eye

BY MARY BAILEY



“No incoming president has set a more ambitious work-family agenda than Barack Obama,” writes Wall Street Journal columnist Sue Shellenbarger. The agenda includes a federal sick-day mandate and expanding family leave. Washington will first address paid sick leave under The Healthy Families Act sponsored by Sen. Ted Kennedy (D-Mass) and Rep. Rosa DeLauro (D-Conn). Their bill requires employers with 15 or more employees to provide seven paid days for their own or a

family member’s illness. President-elect Obama also wants to expand the 1993 family-leave law. Currently, workers of companies with 50 or more employees can take up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave to care for newborn and adopted children and one’s own or family member’s illness. “But under this law, about half the work force isn’t eligible.”

Obama would cut the eligibility from 50 to 25 workers, and add children’s school needs and the care of additional family members. However, “such proposals face historic obstacles, in the form of a cratering economy and paralyzing state deficits,” with paid family leave the “biggest political hot potato of all,” Shellenbarger says. (Wall St Jnl, 11-19-08)

Since the D.C. government began focusing on child trafficking, the activity has moved from the streets to Web sites, such as Craigslist, that publish ads for sexual services in private homes and hotels. As a result, six D.C. schools have contracted with Fair Fund, an organization that usually fights international sex trafficking, to reach and warn children directly. Fair Fund’s curriculum, now in its second year, has reached 820 students and trained dozens of teachers. At first, Fair Fund targeted health classes, but this year it includes English, history and social studies classes. Many students seeking help speak of homelessness, being raped by fathers, hunger, and teenage prostitution. But other students don’t even know that trafficking happens in their neighborhoods. Said one 16-year-old boy, “It’s kind of hard for them to believe. But a lot of them are dealing with similar issues like abusive boyfriends and abusive sex. It helps them to talk about it.” A new report, “Pathways Into and Out of Commercial Sexual Exploitation,” co-authored by Fair Fund’s executive director, Andrea Powell, calls for better training of non-youth-oriented law enforcement personnel, more shelters for prostituted children, and extending to US children the health care, relocation, and reintegration services offered to internationally trafficked victims. (Wash Post 11-24-08)

Forty states have successfully pressured Craigslist to help block ads offering illegal activities such as sex trafficking in children. Under the agreement, the classified-ad Web site will require those posting erotic services ads to provide a working telephone number and pay a fee with a valid credit card. If subpoenaed, the site will provide the information to law enforcement. Law enforcement will use the information as a “roadmap” to track sex traffickers, said Connecticut

Attorney General Richard Blumenthal. Craigslist reported it is suing 14 software and Internet companies that help people post ads that circumvent its safeguards. In addition, said CEO Jim Buckmaster, it is sending “cease and desist” letters to numerous individuals and companies that help trafficking ads evade Craigslist’s protections. (Wall St Jnl, 11-7-08)

Public schools in Rhode Island are implementing the nation’s first comprehensive health curriculum to teach students in grades 7-12 about dating violence. Now mandated by state law, the Lindsay Ann Burke Act, named for 23-year-old woman murdered by her boyfriend, requires schools to develop a policy and train all school staff for handling dating violence. The new law gives domestic violence agencies access to schools that were previously closed to dating violence educators. Kate Reilly, coordinator of the initiative for the state department of education, has put together a model policy for the schools from bits and pieces of policies in California, Massachusetts and Texas. And Ann Burke, mother of Lindsay Burke and middle school health teacher, has trained 120 teachers from 71 schools through the nonprofit Lindsay Burke Memorial Fund. Burke also provides teachers with DVDs and lesson plans from Dr. Vangee Foshee’s curriculum “Safe Dates” and Liz Claiborne’s curriculum, “Love Is Not Abuse.” Both curricula discuss warning signs, the dynamics of dating violence, and information on how friends and family can help. (womensenews.org, 10-21-08)

## Women’s Legislative Briefing

Sunday January 25, 12:30 – 5 pm  
University of Maryland, Shady Grove Campus  
Building 11, 9630 Gudelsky Drive, Rockville

Keynote Speaker: Congresswoman Donna Edwards of Maryland’s 4<sup>th</sup> Congressional District.

Featured Workshops:

- Working for Economic Equity  
*(flexible leave, paid family leave, and other work-life issues)*
- Securing Our Future  
*(Social Security, pension reform, and other issues regarding family economic security)*
- Protecting Women and Families  
*(family law, child support/child custody issues, domestic violence, and sexual assault)*
- Ensuring Women’s Health  
*(universal health care coverage, women’s health, including reproductive health)*
- Negotiating the Legislative Process  
*(introduction to the budget and legislative process)*
- Achieving Elected and Appointed Office  
*(from judgeships, the Board of Education, to the legislature)*

The briefing will conclude with a reception providing guests the opportunity to meet with County and State elected officials and to network with advocates and representatives of other women’s organizations. Register now! This event is free and open to the public. Pre-registration required at 240-777-8330 or [www.montgomerycountymd.gov/cfw](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/cfw).

## How It Was

JAN 1971

### JANUARY

- 2 Four women carpenters greet their first customers at Lady Carpenter Enterprises in Greenwich Village, New York City.
- 9 DC NOW moves its meeting place to the Cleveland Park Library. Guest speaker Bernice Sandler of Women's Equity Action League explains the rules of Federal Contract Compliance and Executive Orders. If you have a complaint, she said, don't write to a federal agency. Instead, to generate activity in the department, contact your congressional office—then let it call the agency for an answer.
- 14 A men's group meets at the Rockville Unitarian Church to raise their level of consciousness, explore their own role in exploiting women, and discuss applying their insights to their own lives.
- 14 Francoise Parturier, French writer and feminist, gets one vote in her historic bid for membership in the 335-year-old male stronghold, L'Academie Francaise.
- 15 The National Press Club, Washington DC, announces it will finally admit women members.
- 16 Fourteen young girls in Upper Marlboro, Md. write National NOW asking that their "NOW or NEVER" club for girls ages 7 through 12 be part of NOW.
- 20 The Montgomery County Committee of DC NOW meets with county librarians to determine if a better selection of books pertaining to women could be made available to the public.
- 22 Rep. Edward Koch of New York introduces a bill in the House of Representatives to increase tax deductions for childcare.
- 25 In its first sex discrimination decision, the Supreme Court rules that women with small children cannot be denied jobs unless fathers of small children are also denied.  
Sometime Jan. 1971: Approximately a year after DC NOW filed a complaint with the DC Human Relations Commission, the three major Washington newspapers stop using sex designations in their help wanted ads.

(Selections from *The Liberated Woman's Appointment Calendar, 1972-1973* and *DC NOW's newsletter, 1970*)

## A Mixed Bag

"Depending on your political tastes, Hillary Clinton, Sarah Palin or even Tina Fey could be seen as Woman of the Year," according to MSNBC. "In many ways it was a watershed election year." Not only did Clinton become the first female presidential candidate, "she almost won."

Women's reactions to the election are a mixed bag, MSNBC noted. Some women are glad that a woman had reached the top level of politics, while others felt that women's progress at all levels was too slow.

Pro-Hillary women were terribly disappointed to see her lose the primary and then be passed over as the vice presidential candidate. Some were consoled when Barack Obama picked Clinton for the important position of Secretary of State. Noted Marie Wilson, president of the White House Project, which trains women to run for office, Clinton's campaign has probably inspired a generation of young women to run for office.

As for Sarah Palin, her very presence as John McCain's running mate meant progress for women. "Whatever her qualifications," said Wilson, "every time we get a woman in that position, it has the effect of normalizing women in that position." Further, she noted, it was the Republican Party that nominated her, a party that traditionally is less supportive of women in the workplace, particularly those with small children. Suddenly the party was defending this mother's ability to balance the job with her family.

Overall, however, Wilson found the 2008 election disappointing. Although there were gains at the top, they were somewhat symbolic and did not trickle down to the lower levels of government. "We're not really moving the dial," said Wilson. At this rate, women in Congress won't win parity with men until 2063. (MSNBC 12-4-08)

## MCNOW NEW OR RENEW MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

**Yes**, sign me up for \_\_\_\_\_ years of NOW membership @ \$35/1 yr, \$65/2 yrs, \$95/3 yrs

I am a New Member

I am a Renewing Member

Member # \_\_\_\_\_

(Please fill in if you know your number. If not, MCNOW Membership Chair can find and fill in.)

**Yes**, I would like to join/renew, but have limited resources. I am enclosing \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (\$15-\$34/year sliding scale: what you can afford)

**Yes**, I would like to affiliate with MCNOW (chapter # MD0200)

I am enclosing an additional contribution to MCNOW in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email\* \_\_\_\_\_

\* By giving us your email address, you will receive a periodic MCNOW Feminist Calendar, keeping you up to date on local news and events of interest to women.

Please make your check payable to **Montgomery County NOW** and mail along with this application to: **MCNOW**, P.O. Box 2301, Rockville, MD 20847-2301 (To renew online with credit card, visit [www.mcmdnow.org](http://www.mcmdnow.org))



**Montgomery County Chapter of the National Organization for Women**

MCNOW (Chapter #MD0200)  
P.O. Box 2301  
Rockville, MD 20847-2301  
301-236-0069  
info@mcmdnow

Visit us at  
**www.mcmdnow.org**

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**MC NOW Calendar of Events**

**Chapter Meetings generally take place on the first or second Monday of each month. All members are welcome.**

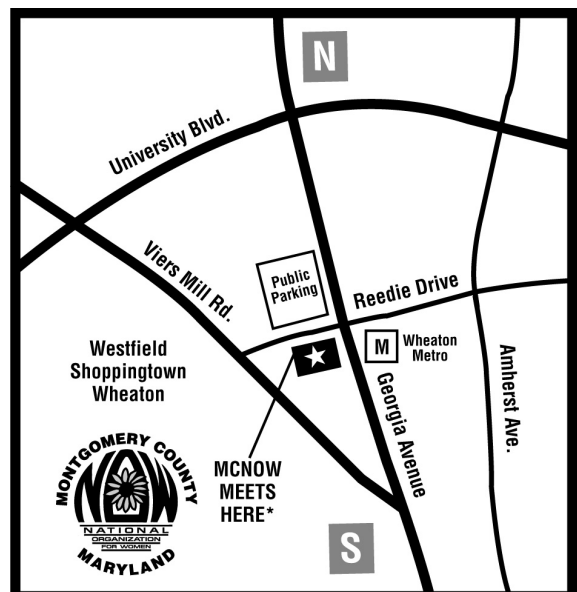
**JANUARY**

- 5 (Mon) 7 pm. MONTGOMERY COUNTY NOW CHAPTER MEETING. Mid-County Regional Center, 2424 Reedie Drive, Wheaton. (See map)
- 21 (Wed) 4:30 pm reception, 5 pm briefing. MD LEGISLATIVE AGENDA FOR WOMEN (MLAW) annual briefing. President's Conference Center East, Miller State Office Bldg, 11 Bladen St., Annapolis. 2009 agenda and introduction of legislators. \$25 fee by Jan. 16, \$30 after. Photo ID required. Contact 443-519-1005 or [admin@mdlegagenda4women.org](mailto:admin@mdlegagenda4women.org).
- 25 (Wed) Women's Legislative Briefing, see page 6
- 26 (Mon) 6:45-8:45 pm every Mon. for 8 weeks. Rape Prevention and Self-Defense Skills. Near Gallery Place Metro. \$239, limited scholarships available. 301-608-3708 or [lauren@defendyourself.org](mailto:lauren@defendyourself.org).

**FEBRUARY**

- 2 (Mon) Equality MD's 9th Annual Lobby Day, Annapolis. 4:30 pm rally at Lawyer's Mall outside State House, 6-8 pm lobbying of legislators. Full schedule at [www.equalitymaryland.org](http://www.equalitymaryland.org).
- 14 (Sat) 6:30 pm-1 am. 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Gala Valentine's Day Dinner and Dance, Mautner Project (national lesbian health organization). Contact Jeanie Atkins at [info@mautnerproject.org](mailto:info@mautnerproject.org).

22 (Sun) 10:20 – 11:10 am. SEXUALIZATION OF GIRLS talk in the Fireside Room, River Road Unitarian Church, River Road and Whittier Blvd. Presented by Mary Bailey, Chair of the MCNOW Sexualization of Girls Task Force.



\* Mid-County Regional Center, 2424 Reedie Drive, Wheaton, MD 20902  
First Floor Conference Room  
For directions, call 240-777-8100 or contact [info@mcmdnow.org](mailto:info@mcmdnow.org)