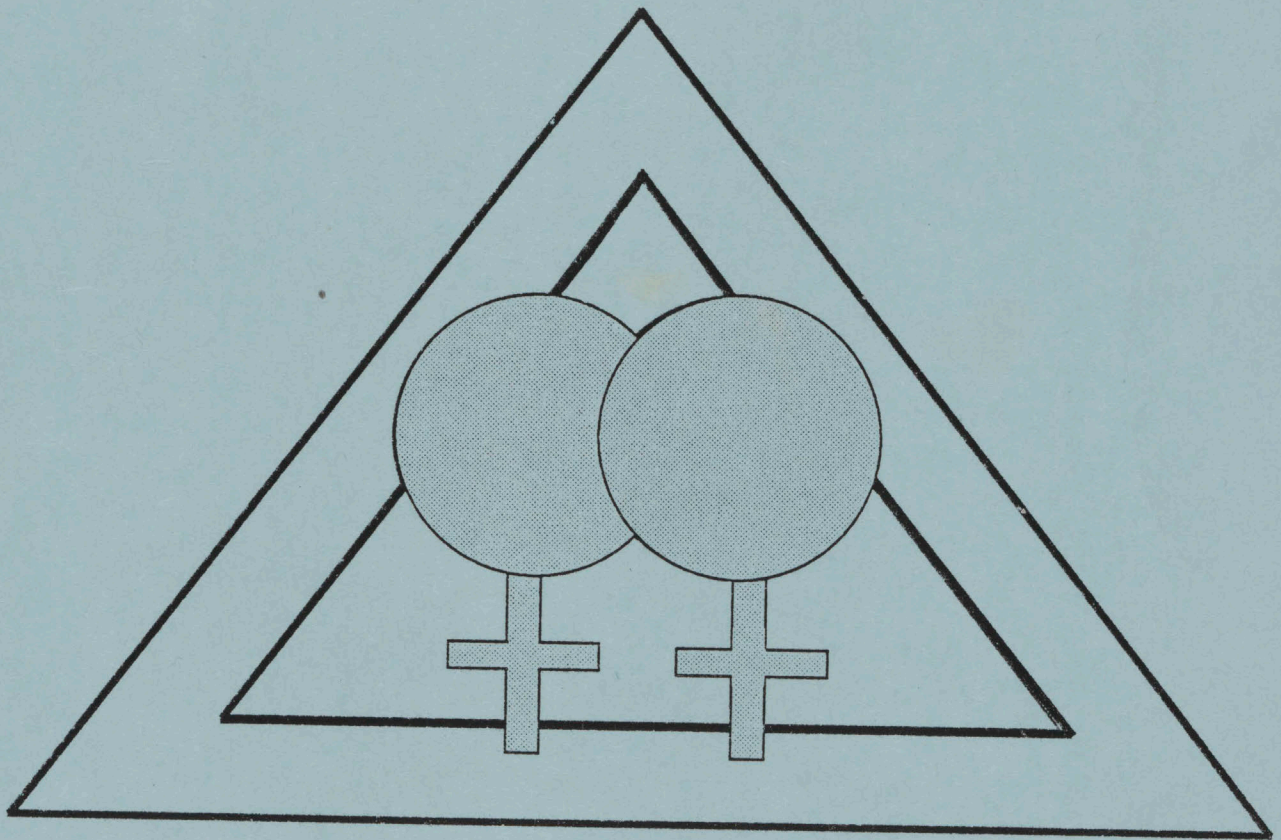


*Power  
Through  
Action*

# *National Lesbian Rights Agenda*



*San Diego, Calif.      October 7-10, 1988*  
*National Organization For Women Foundation*



7. We encourage all women to question any power relationship that encourages domination and discourages partnership, recognizing the right of people to choose their own relationships.

We encourage all women to become fluent in other languages.

We encourage women to develop and use computer skills and telecommunications skills and any other means to network with women from other countries and cultures.

We encourage organizations supporting lesbian and gay civil rights to educate women on how they are affected by the global economy and how they can change it and second to nurture the development of feminist financial institutions.

We want to see women's studies be a part of all K through 12 curricula.

8. We encourage a rededication of women to the securing of lesbian and gay civil rights legislation.

In order to facilitate the success of these goals, we need to create a national clearing house, which will include a coalition of all interested organizations to gather and distribute information pertaining to experiences and strategies (including efforts to document discrimination). We encourage all interested organizations to develop lesbian and gay advocacy funds projects to support necessary lesbian and gay civil rights lobbying efforts.

This conference strongly recommends that people take this information back to their local areas and use it to further our cause.

9. Encourage the transformation of lesbian and lesbian rights supporters into lesbian rights activists and organizers through workshops and training sessions to promote the sharing of organizational skills across a broad spectrum of tactics. To this end, we also encourage the creation of a clearing house to facilitate this exchange of information and skills on organizing as well as on fundraising.

10. We acknowledge that homophobia exists in both the heterosexual and homosexual communities.

Lesbian and heterosexual women must learn to share and trust each other so that all women can move forward. Friendships between heterosexual women and lesbians must be nurtured.

This conference urges all women to actively work for civil rights for lesbians so that all women's rights can move forward.

This conference urges all heterosexual women to participate in National Coming Out Day by telling others about their commitment to working for lesbian rights. Also, lesbians must support heterosexual women who are working for lesbian rights.

11. Recommend that we support passage of the Equal Rights Amendment preferably with the more inclusive and positive Alice Paul language with the addition of the words "under the law". (Women and Men shall have equal rights, under the law, throughout the United States and in any area subject to its jurisdiction); and that we encourage outreach by the ERA campaign to women of color, lesbians, differently abled women, older women, and women from all walks of life, to be a full part of the campaign, and that the campaign shall initiate CR on racism and homophobia.

12. So long as any woman is stigmatized for her sexual behavior, no woman is free to discover, experience and fully realize her own sexuality.

We believe that prostitutes' rights are an integral part of the lesbian agenda. We believe that prostitution should be decriminalized and recognized as a legitimate form of employment. We believe the business should be regulated in terms of working conditions and benefits but not the individual worker.

We believe that candidates for public offices who seek feminist support and endorsements should be held accountable on this issue.

13. Whereas, due to the nature of incest, childhood sexual assault, and childhood sexual abuse, discovery is usually not made until the survivor's adult years and perpetrators are still at large with access to children,

In order to empower women to have control over their bodies,

We recommend that organizations support legislation that will:

- a) make incest, childhood sexual assault, or childhood sexual abuse a felony in all states
- b) make incest, childhood sexual assault, or childhood sexual abuse reportable without a statute of limitation
- c) support State Departments of Social Services of all states to investigate all reports on perpetrators with access to children without any limitation to years
- d) allow adult women the right of suing a perpetrator without regard to limitations by years
- e) change divorce and custody laws so that accusation of incest, childhood sexual assault or childhood sexual abuse be thoroughly investigated by experts in the field before granting custody or visitation rights.

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14. In order to reach the goal of affirming ourselves and the diversity of relationships we participate in, we recommend that the following items be included to foster the creation, preservation, and protection of our families.

- that we make efforts to eliminate the use of sexual orientation as a reason for determining parental rights;
- that we work towards the day when contracts between lesbian parents are recognized and deemed legally binding by the courts;
- that in lesbian relationships where one woman is the sole legal parent, i.e. biological parent, the partner may choose to be seen as a defacto parent;
- that written agreements between co-parents be legally binding and that the courts recognize the status of co-parents;
- that we expand networking and resource services for lesbians and lesbian parents in particular including:
  - community mediation and conciliation services,
  - the sharing of information about the many legal documents that will protect our relationships such as wills, durable powers of attorney, and designations of guardianship, etc.,
  - the development of lesbian parent support groups;
- that sexual orientation not be grounds for differential treatment in the areas of access to donor insemination, foster parenting, adoption, guardianship, child custody, etc.;
- that we work toward the day when those in same sex relationships have the option of legalizing their union with all the benefits and responsibilities of heterosexual relationships;
- and that we call all lesbians to accountability to emotionally, politically, and financially be supportive of lesbian parenting issues.

15. We recommend advocating for the following:

- inclusion of domestic partnership as a viable family form or the exclusion of the family form concept as related to benefits language
- inclusion of sexual orientation within the non-discrimination clauses of contracts and policy manuals
- education of human resource and benefits personnel within our own sphere
- legislation at federal, state, and local levels requiring non-discrimination language that would include sexual orientation
- selection by each of us of a "next step" within the work place for awareness and action on this issue.

16. The Power Through Action Conference strongly recommends that lesbian, gay, feminist and progressive organizations both national and local, move to the top of their action agendas strategies to legalize other relationships and/or domestic partnerships (including but not limited to lesbian and gay relationships) and confer on them all of the rights, privileges and benefits the participants in heterosexual marriages now enjoy.

We further resolve: that these organizations develop resource referral services to identify and provide access to relevant legal materials and professionals.

17. The fight for the rights of lesbians and gays in the military is an important component of the overall movement for lesbian and gay rights and touches on issues of sexual, racial and class discrimination. Litigation, political actions and public education are all necessary components of this effort.

We recommend that the organizations supporting lesbian and gay civil rights involve themselves in this effort and educate their members on a local and national level about the issue.

18. We recognized that women with different abilities exist within the lesbian community and whose differences enrich our community. We commit ourselves to provide the opportunity to all women for full participation and visibility in any events and organizations in which we are involved.

We recommend to the body that due to the high cost of health care and the unavailability of insurance to persons with pre-existing conditions that we should endorse a national health care plan. We further recommend that providers offer access to affordable health care and appropriate diagnosis with emphasis on maintaining dignity and privacy, and without oppression on the basis of our lesbianism.

We recommend an equalization of rights, privileges and benefits granted by both public and private sectors for partners; both in insurance coverage and in care taking situations.

We further recommend that an effort be made to educate lesbians about the necessity of establishing durable powers of attorney to protect our rights as human beings.