

MRS. AMERICA

"EPISODE 102: Feminist Fantasies"

Written by

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TEASER

CLOSE ON a WOMAN'S FACE. A model. Gorgeous and seductive. In the b.g., someone is PANTING.

MODEL

When I put on a red pant suit, and
my husband doesn't notice -
(shakes her head sadly)
That's bad. So I watch my calories.
That's good.

A SODA BOTTLE appears at the bottom of her face. Looks like she's pouring it, but hard to tell because she is invisible below the neck. We hear more PANTING...

PULL OUT - It's a commercial for Fresca soda. The rest of the woman's body is slowly revealed, in a sexy red pant suit...

INT. SCHLAFLY RESIDENCE - DEN - DAY

PHYLLIS is panting as she does sit ups, in capri shorts, cardigan and Keds. The EVENING NEWS comes back on. This is how Phyllis works out, in front of the evening news.

The phone RINGS. Phyllis goes to pick it up.

PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY

Good evening, Schlafly Residence...
Hello, Ann. Did you have a nice
Easter?

SUPER: APRIL 1972

SUPER: EIGHT STATES HAVE RATIFIED THE ERA.

SUPER: IT HAS ONLY BEEN DEFEATED IN OKLAHOMA.

INT. PATTERSON RESIDENCE - KITCHEN - INTERCUT

ANN PATTERSON, 51, a cheerful terror, cuts an article out of THE LAWTON CONSTITUTION NEWSPAPER about her win.

ANN PATTERSON

Miraculous. A true Easter
resurrection. Phyllis - we did it.
We defeated the Equal Rights
Amendment!

PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY

You did that?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANN PATTERSON

All thanks to you. They jammed it through the Senate with just a voice vote, no hearing, but we were able to keep it from getting passed in the House.

PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY

Oh, wow, Ann, I couldn't be more proud.

ANN PATTERSON

So now I'm thinking, I should start calling our friends in other states, and encourage them to do the same. It's a winnable fight.

Phyllis is getting a bit jealous.

PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY

Well. In Oklahoma...

ANN PATTERSON

Can you send me copies of your mailing lists?

PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY

You want me to send you my mailing lists?

ANN PATTERSON

If I didn't know anything about the amendment until I read your newsletter - in fact, I thought it was a good thing! - I bet your supporters around the country are having the same awakening.

Phyllis bites her lip.

PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY

I'll have to get back to you on that.

INT. SCHLAFLY RESIDENCE - GUEST ROOM - NIGHT

FRED moves a HEAVY BOX off the closet shelf. Even in his sixties, he's still a tank, strong and athletic. Phyllis paces by the bed, now showered and dressed.

PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY

It took me years to build those contact lists. That's my network.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FRED SCHLAFLY

Where do you want these boxes?

PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY

(pointing to the corner)

Just stack them up over there. I have to sort through them.

Fred puts it down, returns to the closet to get the rest.

FRED SCHLAFLY

I thought your mother was moving into John's old room.

PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY

John might move back in after graduation.

Fred shoots her a look - not if he has a say in it.

PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY (CONT'D)

I'm the one who developed all the arguments in my newsletter. All she did was hand it out. I'm supposed to let her run with it?

FRED SCHLAFLY

If you're going to run with it, you better do it fast before it's ratified in your home state and you lose all credibility.

PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY

What if I defeated the ERA?

FRED SCHLAFLY

Illinois isn't Oklahoma.

PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY

It's a long shot, but-

FRED SCHLAFLY

We're the home of Adlai Stevenson and Daley's Chicago machine.

PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY

I wanted to stay in St. Louis. But you had to drag me across the Mississippi River.

FRED SCHLAFLY

It's a better view of the Mississippi. I dragged you?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY

You saved me.

Phyllis wraps her arms around Fred's neck.

FRED SCHLAFLY

You know the one thing you've got going for you? Even liberals don't like feminists. No one does.

PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY

It's true. They are no fun.

INT. THE SANCTUARY CLUB - NEW YORK, NY - NIGHT

A funky Hell's Kitchen disco club. GLORIA, gorgeous and glamorous, in a micro mini skirt and boots, looking like she's having a ton of fun dancing with her new boyfriend FRANK THOMAS, 38, handsome, accomplished and kind, and BRENDA and her hot husband MARC FASTEAU, 27. Gloria is easily a decade older than everyone here, but she doesn't care.

Brenda moves over to dance with Gloria, leaving Marc and Frank to dance together. They're awkward about it, which amuses Gloria. Brenda leans into her -

BRENDA FEIGEN

You should marry him.

GLORIA STEINEM

He's already married.

BRENDA FEIGEN

Then after his divorce. Are you in love?

GLORIA STEINEM

He doesn't give me a hard time for swearing and smoking.

BRENDA FEIGEN

Who gave you a hard time?

GLORIA STEINEM

Ted.

That would be Ted Sorenson. Gloria dates fancy.

INT. THE SANCTUARY CLUB - NIGHT (LATER)

Frank and Gloria are in the narrow hallway off the dance floor. Gloria leans against the wall, and Frank leans into her, his hands run over her hips. It's intimate, romantic.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FRANK THOMAS

How early do you need to be up?

GLORIA STEINEM

My flight isn't until eight. But I need to be up at five for my pre-trip anxiety attack.

FRANK THOMAS

For someone who's scared of public speaking, you sure do it a lot.

GLORIA STEINEM

It's easier than writing.

Frank smiles, a smile Gloria finds irresistible.

FRANK THOMAS

I'll put you in a cab.

Okay. But first, Gloria pulls him closer, kisses him.

INT. NEW YORK TAXICAB - NIGHT

Gloria settles in for the ride. She pulls a pen and notebook out of her purse and begins to jot down notes for her speech.

GLORIA STEINEM (PRELAP)

I am not a beautiful person. I spend most of my time picking up laundry off the floor and looking at late movies just like everybody else. I come from Toledo, a kind of factory working class neighborhood where it wasn't terrific for women. Until a few years ago, I always said no, I'm treated quite equally, and giggled and said how clever of you to know it's Tuesday.

INT. GREYHOUND BUS - SOMEWHERE IN TEXAS - DAY

Gloria, sleep deprived, but still glamorous in a body shirt, jeans and boots, sits next to, FLORYNCE "FLO" KENNEDY, 56, fabulously flamboyant in every way. Gloria looks at index cards, practicing her speech, mumbling to herself, while jotting down last minute changes.

GLORIA STEINEM

For so long we have thought of ourselves primarily as sex objects, and breeders, and when we cease to become those things, we have one hell of an identity crisis.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FLO KENNEDY

Remember what the taxi driver in Boston said, about men getting pregnant?

GLORIA STEINEM

That was a great line.

FLO KENNEDY

You should say it.

GLORIA STEINEM

In Texas?

Flo nods, fuck yeah. Gloria can tell Flo loves the line.

GLORIA STEINEM (CONT'D)

You say it.

INT. AUDITORIUM - COMMERCE, TEXAS - DAY

Gloria and Flo are on a stage, taking questions from the AUDIENCE, 20s to 60s. There's a MICROPHONE near the stage and a line of people waiting. We only see the first few rows.

FLO KENNEDY

Fifty-four percent of Catholics in this country support a woman's right to control her own body. And, if men could get pregnant, abortion would be a sacrament.

This gets a huge LAUGH and APPLAUSE. Next, a MIDDLE AGED WOMAN steps up to the mic.

MIDDLE AGED WOMAN

Hello, my name is Helen. I agree with everything you say, but you didn't address my concern that if the ERA is adopted, women will be drafted. I have a teenage daughter and I'm afraid she's going to be sent off to Vietnam.

GLORIA STEINEM

I don't think your daughter, or any one, should be drafted to serve in an unconstitutional, racist war. But this whole argument about women being forced into combat is a red herring. Think about it.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GLORIA STEINEM (CONT'D)

Why would Congress go through all the trouble of passing a Constitutional amendment, that has to be ratified by thirty-eight state legislatures, a process that could take years, when they can simply add two words - 'and women' - to the Selective Service Act?

(then)

We need to remember that there are men in power right now who don't want to share their power with women. So they're throwing up all sorts of smoke screens, like the amendment is too broad, it's a Communist plot, it will destroy the family - none of which will happen if the ERA is ratified. All we are asking is to be recognized by the Constitution as equal under the law.

Gloria notices Flo chomping at the bit, and gives her the floor to bring it home.

FLO KENNEDY

You know, the ERA was introduced way back in 1923, right after we won the right to vote. But it got delayed by a male-chauvinist-pig-ocratic Congress for almost fifty years. And look where we are. We don't have equal pay for equal work, we don't have affordable childcare, we are barely represented in government, we have no legal recourse when we are discriminated at work. Do you want our daughters to have to fight for this same shit in another fifty years? I don't.

The auditorium breaks into HUGE APPLAUSE. A TWENTYSOMETHING GUY stands in front of the mic.

GLORIA STEINEM

(off the moderator)

We have time for one more question.

TWENTYSOMETHING GUY

My name is Gary and my question is - Are you two lesbians?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Gloria's impulse is to smile politely, albeit warily. So when Flo shoots back -

FLO KENNEDY

Are you my alternative?

Gloria CRACKS UP. And is delighted that this gets a huge LAUGH from the audience. The Guy slinks back into his seat.

GLORIA STEINEM

Maybe one more question.

A YOUNG WOMAN, 20, is next. She is nervous and excited.

YOUNG WOMAN

Hi - I'm Maria and we drove all the way from Lubbock to see you, and I just want to say thank you for taking time to come out here - I just admire you so much, Ms. Steinem and - everything you do as the leader of the movement and... I guess I don't really have a question...?

GLORIA STEINEM

Thank you. I am, by no means, a leader. I am just an individual woman saying what I wish some woman had said to me when I was younger.

PULL OUT TO REVEAL -

This auditorium is packed with TWO THOUSAND PEOPLE. They're standing in the aisles. Not a leader. Bullshit.

GLORIA STEINEM (CONT'D)

That said...

Gloria breaks into her winning smile.

GLORIA STEINEM (CONT'D)

If Flo and I come all the way out here today, there better be trouble tomorrow.

Flo and Gloria RAISE THEIR FISTS IN THE AIR. The crowd goes wild.

END TEASER

ACT ONE**INT. MINDSZENTY FOUNDATION - LOBBY - NIGHT**

ELEANOR looks surprised to see Phyllis on the other side of the door, holding a covered pan. She opens up for her.

ELEANOR SCHLAFLY

You came.

PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY

I even had time to bake.

(conspiratorially)

Not really. It's leftover from Easter. Don't tell anyone.

That's the closest Eleanor is going to get to an apology - Phyllis taking time to show up for her event.

INT. MINDSZENTY FOUNDATION - MAIN OFFICE - NIGHT

Eleanor sits at the head of a circle of about a dozen ladies, mostly Catholic homemakers. They include ALICE and PAMELA (from the Pilot), KATHLEEN SULLIVAN, 38, a tireless worker bee, ROSEMARY THOMSON, 36, a former Sunday school teacher with beehive and glasses. Pamela has a NEWBORN in her arms.

ELEANOR SCHLAFLY

For today's study session, I thought we would discuss Father Collins's talk about the Marxist revolutionaries who instigated the Attica prison uprising.

She passes around a stack of stapled pages of the transcript.

ELEANOR SCHLAFLY (CONT'D)

These riots are all part of the New Left campaign to undermine American prisons.

PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY

I read recently that Angela Davis said if she were free today her first goal would be to abolish America's prison system.

ELEANOR SCHLAFLY

For those of you who aren't familiar with her, Angela Davis is the Black Panther militant on trial for murder in California. She has publicly admitted to being a member of the Communist party.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The women look disturbed - What has their country come to?

PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY

And do you know who is listed as
the treasurer of her Defense Fund?
Gloria Steinem.

ALICE

They are all connected.

The women all nod, as we CUT TO:

INT. SHOREHAM HOTEL BALLROOM - WASHINGTON, DC - NIGHT

We're on GLORIA'S BACKLESS DRESS, as she leans over her table to pick up a BOTTLE OF CHAMPAGNE. Frank puts several CHAMPAGNE FLUTES in her hand.

We're in the historic Shoreham Hotel, decked out for the National Women's Political Caucus champagne benefit. Hundreds of people sit at round tables. Up on stage, ART BUCHWALD, 46, Washington Post columnist is the Master of Ceremonies. Gloria begins to make her way through the ballroom.

ART BUCHWALD

I know you are asking yourselves,
why has this man, who is known as a
male chauvinist pig, agreed to
partake in these subversive
activities? Because I have seen the
future and it is women.

This gets a BIG APPLAUSE. As Gloria makes her way through the crowd, guests try to get her attention, or get up to greet her, or simply stare. She manages somehow to acknowledge every person with a smile, a hello, or a "I can't really wave with these flutes in my hand, but I see you" wave.

ART BUCHWALD (CONT'D)

It's true that I was no better than
Hugh Hefner or Norman Mailer. But
then one night, while I was reading
Playboy and watching my wife
scrubbing the floor, a light dawned
on me, and I said to myself, how
can I be free when this woman that
I married is still in chains? What
good is it to own the world when
she has to stand in line at the
Safeway? So I picked her up from
the floor and said - Go get a job,
I'll squeeze out the mop.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Everyone LAUGHS. Gloria makes her way up the side stairs of the stage and slips BACKSTAGE.

BELLA, BETTY and JILL, and a few other caucus leaders are chatting. Gloria holds up the champagne triumphantly.

BELLA ABZUG
What took you so long?

GLORIA STEINEM
I'm in heels.

Jill goes to help Gloria open the bottle.

JILL RUCKELSHAUS
Someone make a toast.

GLORIA STEINEM
Betty, you make a toast.

Betty smiles. Pushes her way into the middle of the group. While she gives her toast, the flutes are poured and raised.

BETTY FRIEDAN
To all of you amazing women who answered my call, to take our movement from the streets to Congress. Four years ago at the conventions we were still relegated to making coffee, and hosting fashion shows and teas. This time we're going to be making policy.

GLORIA STEINEM
Especially with Bella elected to the platform committee.

BELLA ABZUG
You better believe there is finally going to be a women's plank in the Democratic party platform.

JILL RUCKELSHAUS
And God willing, we'll sneak one into the Republican platform too.

They give a quiet cheer, and drink. Gloria sighs.

GLORIA STEINEM
Shirley should be here.
(off their murmurs of agreement)
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

GLORIA STEINEM (CONT'D)

To Shirley, wherever you are on the
Chisholm trail - thank you for
having the guts to stand up and say
I'm running for President,
goddammit.

Betty, not wanting to lose the stage to Gloria, has to get
the last word -

BETTY FRIEDAN

When we women come together -

As we CUT BACK TO:

INT. MINDSZENTY FOUNDATION - MAIN OFFICE - NIGHT

ALICE

- There is no stopping them. They
have so much money and political
power.

Eleanor smiles tightly, tries to veer the conversation back -

ELEANOR SCHLAFLY

Maybe we will devote next month's
study session to the women's
liberation movement. Getting back
to Attica...

PAMELA

Could we devote this session to it?
Prisons are depressing.

The group pivots toward Phyllis.

KATHLEEN SULLIVAN

I thought your newsletter about the
Equal Rights Amendment was
fantastic. I immediately called
Percy's office.

ROSEMARY THOMSON

I did too. Of course, he voted for
it anyway.

ALICE

Why aren't our legislators doing
anything?

PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY

We need to convince them that it's
in their best interest.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY (CONT'D)

Which is why I went to speak to the Majority Leader when he came to Alton for a fundraiser. I asked him how we could get a hearing to present the other side.

INT. HOTEL BALLROOM - ALTON - FLASHBACK (NIGHT)

Phyllis talks to REP. HENRY HYDE, 48, a devout Catholic and a staunch right-to-lifer. He's trying not to laugh at Phyllis.

REP. HENRY HYDE

What other side? It's not controversial.

PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY

There are two sides to every issue.

REP. HENRY HYDE

Yes, you're either for it or you're a chauvinist pig. This is an election year. So we're going to give the ladies what they want.

PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY

This is not what all the ladies want. There are millions of homemakers who are terrified of what the ERA will do to their right to stay home with their children.

REP. HENRY HYDE

Where are they? Show me the story in The Chicago Tribune, or one news program or radio show that features the poor housewives who will suffer because of this Amendment. That's how it works. The person everyone is paying attention to always wins.

As Phyllis takes this in, CUT TO:

INT. SHOREHAM HOTEL BALLROOM - NIGHT

That would be the feminists.

BELLA ABZUG

McGovern has agreed to meet with us during the platform negotiations.

GLORIA STEINEM

I'm worried. He's been waffling on abortion rights.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GLORIA STEINEM (CONT'D)

If we don't have his support, it won't make it into the women's plank.

BETTY FRIEDAN

Don't worry, I'm going to hold his feet to the fire. Ask him about his New York comment.

BELLA ABZUG

I think Gloria should do the asking. She's been campaigning for him.

Bella and Betty look at Gloria.

GLORIA STEINEM

I don't think any of us should be deciding who asks McGovern what.

(to Betty)

I'm tired of your face-

(to Bella)

- and yours. And I'm really tired of my own. Let's give other women a chance to come forward and shine.

From ON STAGE we hear someone say "GLORIA STEINEM." She is being introduced.

JILL RUCKELSHAUS

Go, go, you're up.

Gloria downs the rest of her champagne to calm her nerves and heads on stage to THUNDEROUS APPLAUSE.

Betty peers into the ballroom, at the STANDING OVATION for Gloria. She raises her hands, and they're immediately quiet, hanging on her every word.

GLORIA STEINEM

When I look out into the crowd, I see an impressive group of women - doctors, lawyers, engineers, and journalists. I am so proud of us. Finally, we are becoming the men we used to want to marry.

This gets a BIG LAUGH, some WHISTLES. They adore her.

ON BETTY, staring sullenly at Gloria, jealous, CUT BACK TO:

INT. MINDSZENTY FOUNDATION - MAIN OFFICE - NIGHT

ALICE

They're all famous. We're nobodies.
Even if we could convince a news
program to give us some airtime,
who would we send on as a guest?

PAMELA

Phyllis is famous.

ALICE

Only in conservative circles.
(quickly adds)
No offense.

PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY

I'll do the best I can.

ELEANOR SCHLAFLY

Maybe Alice or Kathleen would be
better choices. They are actually
full time homemakers.

Phyllis tries not to appear defensive, but - this is
ridiculous. Of course she should be the one representing.

PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY

They don't have experience speaking
on air. It's not as easy as it
looks.

KATHLEEN SULLIVAN

I agree. Phyllis should be our
spokesperson.

ELEANOR SCHLAFLY

If you say so. It's none of my
business.

With that settled, Phyllis gets down to business.

PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY

I'll be sending each of you a phone
tree to kick off our telegram and
letter-writing campaign. We only
need to defeat it in one house, so
I think we should forget about the
Senate - It's controlled by
liberals and only half of them are
up for re-election this year. Let's
focus on the House. You all know
the drill.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EVERYONE IN UNISON
Telephone and tell a friend.

Phyllis smiles. Her friends are total pros at this. She notices that Eleanor looks left out.

PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY
It will be very much like the
brilliant campaign Eleanor led
against "Hair" a few months ago.

Eleanor perks up. She feels a need to add -

ELEANOR SCHLAFLY
I think the trouble, though, was
that there are two very catchy
songs in the show.

SLOW FADE UP on LET THE SUNSHINE IN...

ELEANOR SCHLAFLY (CONT'D)
People hear the music for
"Aquarius" and "Let the Sunshine
In" and they think it's just like
"Oklahoma!"

As the MUSIC SWELLS, CUT TO:

MONTAGE

CROSS-CUT BETWEEN Phyllis crisscrossing Illinois recruiting homemakers to her cause... and Gloria crisscrossing the country recruiting women to her cause...

-Phyllis walks up to a suburban 1950s ranch house... sits down on a sofa with a group of HOUSEWIVES in a living room... in a church... in a YMCA...

-Gloria on the speakers' circuit with Flo... at a college campus... at a church... at a YMCA... at a high school... They get off a plane in Wichita... off a train in Philadelphia... off a bus in Green Bay...

-Phyllis and Alice sit with a new group of HOUSEWIVES.

HOUSEWIFE
When are we supposed to make those
phone calls?

PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY
Can you put your kids to bed a half
hour early?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALICE

Or better yet, put your husband to bed a half hour early.

Everyone LAUGHS.

-Gloria is a guest on THE DAVID FROST SHOW.

GLORIA STEINEM

If she chooses to be a housewife, that's fine. In fact, what we're saying is that housework and childcare is so important, and so rewarding that men should not be deprived of it.

David and the audience LAUGH... now she's on air with PHIL DONAHUE... and DINAH SHORE...

-Phyllis is on the phone in the kitchen, while preparing lunches... In her office, finishing typing up a letter, which she hands to Fred... Fred hands it back, redlined...

-Gloria drops her suitcase by the front door... She picks her suitcase up and heads out again... Catches some sleep on a plane...

-Phyllis takes a sip of coffee... and another... until the sight of a host pouring coffee makes her ill...

-Gloria is greeted like a rockstar by ANTIWAR PROTESTORS... YOUNG COLLEGE WOMEN... FARMERS' WIVES... LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTER TYPES... HADASSAH LADIES...

-Phyllis's network expands... MULTIPLE WOMEN drop stacks of letters in the mail... and send telegrams at Western Union... carry letters into their local newspaper office... and make phone calls... and more phone calls...

-Phyllis huddles with her lieutenants in her living room: Alice, Kathleen, Rosemary, Pamela.

KATHLEEN SULLIVAN

You'll never guess where I got you invited to be a guest -
(milking it)
The Phil Donahue show.

Everyone just stares at Kathleen in shock for a beat. Then,

They SHRIEK. *Oh my god!!!! Phil Donahue?! Ahhhhh!!!! I love Phil Donahue!!!* Alice jumps up and does a dance.

INT. ILLINOIS STATE CAPITOL - HENRY HYDE'S OFFICE - DAY

The entire staff is busy sorting through all the BAGS OF MAIL that fill the room. Hyde has grabbed the phone from his SECRETARY, 60s, female.

REP. HENRY HYDE

Of course I have a TV in my office.

INT. WLWD TV STUDIO - DAYTON, OH - INTERCUT

Green Room. Phyllis, in a pastel pink dress suit and pearls. She blots some of her makeup off with a tissue. Too done.

PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY

Turn it on at twelve o'clock to channel five.

REP. HENRY HYDE

What am I watching?

PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY

The other side.

Phyllis hangs up. Hyde hangs up, intrigued.

HYDE'S SECRETARY

We're going to need to hire more staff to deal with the mail.

REP. HENRY HYDE

Can we get a television in here?

INT. WLWD TV STUDIO - DAY

Phyllis stands in the wings, waiting for her introduction.

PHIL DONAHUE

...former Goldwater supporter, author and activist, Phyllis Schlafly, to talk about the Equal Rights Amendment.

Phyllis waits for APPLAUSE, then walks into the

SPOTLIGHT. She looks out into the packed crowd of mostly women. It's like a dream.

INT. ILLINOIS STATE CAPITOL - HENRY HYDE'S OFFICE - DAY

CLOSE ON a TV - Phyllis now sits on stage across from Phil.

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PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY (ON TV)
It's not enough for them to have
the right to work. They want to
legislate away any differences
between men and women, which will
mean goodbye Girl Scouts, hello
unisex restrooms.

The audience BREAKS INTO APPLAUSE.

PULL OUT - Hyde watching on a wheeled-in TV. He's smiling at
REPRESENTATIVES GINNY CHAPMAN, 49, a state-level Pelosi, and
GIDDY DYER, 53, the lone female House Republican, both
calloused from years working in a boys' club.

REP. GINNY CHAPMAN
You weren't going to fight this-

REP. HENRY HYDE
I changed my mind. I want a public
hearing.

REP. GINNY CHAPMAN
So suddenly you don't mind looking
like you hate women?

REP. HENRY HYDE
I don't hate women. I love women.
Which is why I want to protect them
from the ERA.

Giddy and Ginny stare at Phyllis's image, unnerved.

PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY (ON TV)
Are you trying to tell me it's
liberation for a woman to sit at a
typewriter all day, or stand at a
factory machine, or worse, peel
potatoes all day in an army
kitchen? Liberation is in the home.

INT. WLWD TV STUDIO - DAY

House lights are up. Wrap time. Phil enters the wings, where
his PRODUCER, 30s, male, sits, eating deli. In the b.g.,
Phyllis waits for sound to remove her mic.

PRODUCER
When I heard former Goldwater
supporter, I thought what a bore,
but she's a dynamo. And gorgeous.
She's got a nice set of gams.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PHIL DONAHUE

It was a good show.

PRODUCER

You know what would make for an even better show - have her on with Gloria Steinem or Betty Friedan.

PHIL DONAHUE

I don't think so.

PRODUCER

You get them together, debating - fighting - that's ratings gold.

Phyllis enters the wings. He smiles at her.

PHIL DONAHUE

You were great.

PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY

Thank you for inviting me.

Phil puts his arm around her shoulder and guides her to a more private area to talk.

PHIL DONAHUE

I'm just a talk show host, so what do I know, but some of the arguments you made... I'm just wondering if you had a chance, before you came on, to fact-check?

PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY

Yes.

PHIL DONAHUE

So, for example, the elimination of separate restrooms. That seems highly unlikely to happen if the ERA is adopted.

PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY

But can you tell me with absolute certainty that it won't happen?

PHIL DONAHUE

Well, I'm not a lawyer... Are you?

Phyllis's jaw tightens, but she keeps smiling.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY

Phil - let me ask you this - when Lenin started the revolution in 1917, do you think he told the people, fight with us, and we'll give you food shortages, censorship and terror? No, he promised them peace, land and bread. It starts with a simple piece of legislation like the ERA. And then the left feels emboldened to eliminate alimony and child support and a widow's social security, and before you know it, we're stripped of all our protections as American women and living in a feminist totalitarian nightmare.

Phil is at a loss...

PHIL DONAHUE

Thank you for coming on my show.

INT. MS. MAGAZINE OFFICE - NEW YORK - NIGHT

End of the workday. The staff of 18-20, mostly women, is crammed into one room with improvised furniture. One staffer uses a dishwasher delivery box as a desk. Right now they're bringing out a goodbye cake for Brenda.

BRENDA FEIGEN

I'm going to miss all of you.

GLORIA STEINEM

It's our loss and Ruth Bader Ginsburg's gain, which, I guess is also our gain.

Someone cuts the cake and hands out pieces. The magazine's chief investor, CLAY FELKER, 47, charming, a champion of women but not quite a feminist, trailed by the ART DIRECTOR, 30s, female, holding the mock up for the magazine cover.

CLAY FELKER

We can't run with this cover.

The Art Director looks at Gloria apologetically.

ART DIRECTOR

He asked me to show it to him.

ANGLE ON: MOCK UP: A photo of Shirley and in bold "SHIRLEY CHISHOLM FOR PRESIDENT"

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GLORIA STEINEM

I want a strong symbol of women's power for our first cover. And the magazine will hit newsstands right before the Democratic convention.

The Art Director mouths "I have to go" pointing to the corner of the office where a few toddlers are playing in a designated TOT LOT. Gloria nods. Go, go. The Art Director goes to pick up her child and takes off.

CLAY FELKER

We put Chisholm on the cover and it'll depress sales, especially in the South.

GLORIA STEINEM

We don't put her on the cover and it'll depress me.

CLAY FELKER

I'm already giving you a lesbian article-

GLORIA STEINEM

Oh, you're giving it to me. Thank you.

CLAY FELKER

What about Mary's idea for the cover - Wonder Woman.

GLORIA STEINEM

Wonder Woman for President.

CLAY FELKER

It's catchy.

GLORIA STEINEM

Wonder Woman is my idol, but -You know she's not a real person.

CLAY FELKER

She's better than a real person. She's a superhero. And she's got great legs.

GLORIA STEINEM

We're going with this cover.

CLAY FELKER

(grins)

Oh, I see. You want to be the only one around here with great legs?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Clay is the only one who laughs. Everyone else looks uncomfortable. He thinks: They didn't get it.

CLAY FELKER (CONT'D)

I gave Gloria her first bylined assignment because I saw her standing outside my office one day and I thought she had great legs.

Gloria can feel all her female employees watching her.

GLORIA STEINEM

Clay, I want you to imagine I am a man.

CLAY FELKER

I can't imagine it.

GLORIA STEINEM

Just try-

CLAY FELKER

You're too gorgeous!

GLORIA STEINEM

I am a man, and so is everyone in this room. Now tell us again why you hired me.

Clay crosses his arms, suddenly self-conscious. It sounds ridiculous to say aloud. He can't look Gloria in the eye. He just nods, chastened. The women in the room silently thank Gloria with their eyes. AN ADMIN breaks the tension -

ADMIN

Gloria - Phone. Post Reporter.

Gloria picks up a plate of cake and hands it to Clay, puts her hand on his shoulder to let him know they're okay.

INT. MS. MAGAZINE OFFICE - DAY (MOMENTS LATER)

Gloria is on the phone in the communal area, no privacy.

REPORTER (V.O.)

(through phone)

Betty Friedan gave a lecture at Trinity College and said, quote, "Gloria has never been part of the organized women's liberation movement. The media tried to make her a celebrity. But no one should mistake her for a leader."

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Gloria's cheeks flush. This really stings.

REPORTER (V.O.)

Do you have a comment?

She takes a moment to compose herself. Then chooses her words carefully.

GLORIA STEINEM

If I have a lot of problems about my being a leader of the Women's Movement, I'm sure she has even more.

REPORTER (V.O.)

Thanks, that's it-

GLORIA STEINEM

When you print my comments, can you please refer to me as Ms. Steinem?

REPORTER (V.O.)

We have to use Miss for unmarried women. Company policy.

GLORIA STEINEM

Then use Gloria.

Gloria hangs up the phone, mortified. She looks down, her hair falling into her face. Her colleagues try not to stare.

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO**INT. EASTERN AIRLINES - ECONOMY CLASS - DAY**

Gloria walks up the aisle of economy, trying not to be seen. That's like the sun trying not to shine. The other passengers stare either because they recognize her or they're checking her out. She finds her seat and is about to sit down next to a FEMALE PASSENGER, 60s, who promptly loses her shit.

FEMALE PASSENGER
You're Gloria Steinem!

GLORIA STEINEM
Yes, hello. What's your name?

But before the woman can respond, a FEMALE FLIGHT ATTENDANT, 20s, interrupts to tell Gloria -

FEMALE FLIGHT ATTENDANT
Ms. Steinem, I can move you up to first.

GLORIA STEINEM
That is so kind. Thank you.

FEMALE FLIGHT ATTENDANT
I figured you and Mrs. Friedan would want to sit together.

What?

GLORIA STEINEM
She's on this flight?

FEMALE FLIGHT ATTENDANT
Yes!

INT. EASTERN AIRLINES - FIRST CLASS - DAY

Betty is shocked when Gloria is ushered into the next seat.

GLORIA STEINEM
Hello, Betty.

Betty barely croaks out a hello. The two of them stare straight ahead for an interminable beat... beat... beat.

BETTY FRIEDAN
I was misquoted!

She says it angrily, like it is Gloria's fault. Gloria puts her hand on Betty's arm. It's kind. Sincere.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GLORIA STEINEM

People are always trying to divide up women. It's another way to take away our power.

Betty nods gruffly. Then, softening,

BETTY FRIEDAN

I'm sorry if the reporter upset you. I also happened to say some nice things about you that didn't get reported. I said you are a good role model because you never married, which goes to show you can be single and have a good life.

Gloria is at a loss for words.

INT. SCHLAFLY RESIDENCE - NIGHT

PHYL (who we met in the Pilot), BRUCE, 17, all-American jock, and ROGER, 16, an eccentric genius and rebel, sit at the kitchen table wading through a shoe box of letters. Phyllis takes dinner out of the oven.

Fred walks in carrying a BIG BAG OF MAIL.

FRED SCHLAFLY

Do you want this one in your office too?

Phyllis lights up. Her base is growing!

PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY

I should send Phil Donahue a thank you.

FRED SCHLAFLY

Why - is he paying for a second mailbox?

Phyl holds up a letter, giggling as she reads aloud -

PHYL SCHLAFLY

Dear Fred - California has much to recommend it, but I definitely think you gave me that picture of you so I would look at it during my trip and remember there's someplace else that is a great deal more attractive.

She makes KISSY NOISES in Fred's direction. He grins.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FRED SCHLAFLY

That's not a fan letter. Where'd you get that?

BRUCE SCHLAFLY

Mom found all your love letters and poems when she was clearing out those boxes from the guest room.

PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY

The children are having a field day.

Fred puts the mail bag down to take a closer look.

ROGER SCHLAFLY

Listen to this poem Dad wrote -
Cover-girl with executive know-how,
You don't desire a home now. For...
something, something, kinder...

FRED SCHLAFLY

(correcting)

Kuche, kirche and kinder - It's a German saying. It means kitchen, church and children.

ROGER SCHLAFLY

For kuche, kirche and kinder, will surely a career hinder.

The kids roll their eyes. But Phyllis laughs, remembering, as she closes the oven and goes over to Fred to kiss him hello.

PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY

I can't believe you ever thought I was one of those career girls.

FRED SCHLAFLY

You were working at two jobs.

PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY

Which I couldn't wait for you to rescue me from.

(then)

I was wondering if you could come to Springfield to testify at the hearing tomorrow?

FRED SCHLAFLY

You don't want to do it?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY

I'm not an expert in constitutional law.

FRED SCHLAFLY

I'm not an expert.

PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY

But you studied it in law school. The feminists are sending attorneys. I think we should have one on our side.

FRED SCHLAFLY

I'll clear my schedule that day.

PHYL SCHLAFLY

Oh my god - Mom spent this entire letter arguing for a return to the gold standard - You were such nerds!

BRUCE SCHLAFLY

Were?

The kids snicker.

INT. SENATOR MCGOVERN'S HOUSE - DAY

Japanese-styled room with low furniture. Gloria sits cross-legged against a sliding glass door. In front of her, a dozen members of the caucus sit on the floor, so they have to look up at -

SENATOR GEORGE MCGOVERN, 50, in a pin-striped suit and sporting the nervous look of a man not used to being in a room with more than two highly intelligent women. Beside him, his chief advisor on women's issues, SHIRLEY MACLAINE, 38, and campaign manager GARY HART, 34, a poor man's Warren Beatty. Bella stands against a side wall. Right in front of him, with her arms crossed, is Betty.

BETTY FRIEDAN

You don't know how serious the women are in this country, Senator. You have got to start asserting yourself on women's issues - If you don't - I couldn't be less enthusiastic about your candidacy.

Gloria exhales. Oh, boy. And yet, she doesn't want to make a move that might upstage her and incur her wrath.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SHIRLEY MACLAINE

Senator McGovern has been very vocal on women's issues.

SENATOR GEORGE MCGOVERN

I fully support the speedy ratification of the ERA-

Betty is now on her feet, riled up in her frenetic way.

BETTY FRIEDAN

Everyone does! Nixon supports the ERA! You have to have more women visible in your campaign because right now they just aren't there.

Gloria looks worried - McGovern is losing his patience.

SENATOR GEORGE MCGOVERN

That's sheer nonsense. You don't know what you're talking about.

BETTY FRIEDAN

No? Look at the CBS story of your top advisors - There are six men - Period.

MacLaine mugs - What am I, chopped liver? Bella shoots Gloria a look. Jesus. Betty is out of control. Do something. Gloria stands up. She has to save this meeting from going south.

GLORIA STEINEM

I think what Betty means is that women aren't always listened to, something you and I talked about after New Hampshire, and you were going to impress upon your staff the importance of taking women campaign aides seriously.

McGovern smiles at Gloria, grateful.

SENATOR GEORGE MCGOVERN

Absolutely - And I have.

Having gotten McGovern off the defensive, Gloria goes for the issue most important to her -

GLORIA STEINEM

I think it's fair to say that the only place we really differ with you is on abortion.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

McGovern is about to respond, but Betty, unable to stand losing the spotlight, interrupts-

BETTY FRIEDAN

Yes - and you've been saying some ridiculous things lately!

Gloria runs her hand through her hair in frustration.

BETTY FRIEDAN (CONT'D)

One day you say you believe it's a question of states' rights and then the next you criticize New York's abortion laws as being too liberal.

McGovern clears his throat, back on the defensive.

SENATOR GEORGE MCGOVERN

The Supreme Court decision will come down soon. I'll run on that.

BETTY FRIEDAN

You know the Supreme Court won't be good enough.

He looks at Hart - time to parachute out.

GARY HART

Thank you so much for coming today.

The women get up and disperse. Gloria panics. She has to win him over on abortion before he leaves!

Hart and MacLaine usher McGovern out. Gloria quickly gets up and approaches him. Maybe she can talk to him privately before he escapes. Betty is already following McGovern out-

BETTY FRIEDAN

Senator-

SHIRLEY MACLAINE

The Senator has another meeting-

McGovern ignores Betty. But when he sees Gloria approaching him, he stops, and nods to Hart. He'll listen to Gloria.

GLORIA STEINEM

I understand your dilemma on abortion. But what if we use a more general term for the plank, like reproductive freedom.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

GLORIA STEINEM (CONT'D)

It's broad enough to include not just abortion, but repeal of birth control laws, laws on sexual orientation, and forced sterilization.

SENATOR GEORGE MCGOVERN

That's interesting...

She opens up her notebook.

BELLA ABZUG

What I like about that, Senator, is that it covers concerns of men as well as women.

GLORIA STEINEM

I wrote a version you could use.

SENATOR GEORGE MCGOVERN

Can I see that?

Gloria rips out the piece of paper and hands it to him, holding his gaze, allowing herself to be vulnerable.

GLORIA STEINEM

You got into this race to get us out of the war. There are more women dying from butchered abortions than servicemen killed over there. This is our Vietnam.

Bella takes in the way McGovern listens intently to Gloria.

SENATOR GEORGE MCGOVERN

I'll get back to you before midnight.

GLORIA STEINEM

Thank you, Senator.

OVER TO BETTY watching their exchange. She pushes a stray wisp of her graying hair out of her face.

EXT. ILLINOIS STATE CAPITOL - DAY

Phyllis and Fred lead Alice and Kathleen toward the Capitol building. They wear homemade NO TO ERA pins on their dresses.

PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY

Are you ready to witness democracy in action?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

As they round the corner, they see a RALLY OF HUNDREDS OF PRO-ERA WOMEN in front of the entrance. They carry ERA-YES! signs and SHOUT "Hey, hey what do you say, ratify the ERA!"

Fred leads them through the front door. They look out of their depth.

INT. ILLINOIS STATE CAPITOL - HOUSE COMMITTEE ROOM - DAY

House Judiciary Committee hearing. The gallery is packed with the Pros on one side, and on the other... Phyllis, Alice and Kathleen. Ginny and Giddy stand by the door, watching the proceedings.

Hyde sits up on the dais with the rest of the committee. He looks over at Phyllis's side, concerned. He tries to catch her eye, but she is focused on -

Fred stands before the committee.

FRED SCHLAFLY

Our women do not consider themselves enslaved by marriage and they do not wish to be liberated from home and motherhood. And they certainly do not want to sacrifice their present privileges for some phony equality with men.

Phyllis watches him with great pride. Suddenly -

Hyde slips into Fred's empty seat next to her.

REP. HENRY HYDE

Where is the rest of your group?

Phyllis looks at him, confused.

PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY

What do you mean?

REP. HENRY HYDE

Where was your counter rally? Where are all the housewives?

PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY

They're - at home.

Hyde points to Ginny and Giddy by the doors.

REP. HENRY HYDE

Do you see those two ladies? They are the sponsors of the measure.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

REP. HENRY HYDE (CONT'D)

They have been bringing in hundreds of women here every day for the past month to lobby us. How many are you - three? They're winning.

PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY

We're not about to throw ourselves on the House floor. We're protesting with dignity through letters and phone calls.

REP. HENRY HYDE

When my guys look out into the gallery, which side do you think they're going to feel pressure from- the hundreds of ladies screaming for the ERA - or dignity?

Hyde gets up to return to his seat on the dais. Phyllis looks worried.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - WASHINGTON, DC - DAY

A gaggle of the younger, more radical women from the caucus are gathered in Gloria's room. Some on her bed, others on the floor, one lies on the floor smoking a pipe. Gloria is absently TAP DANCING on the carpet, restless.

BRENDA FEIGEN

He is not going to call.

GLORIA STEINEM

He is going to call.

KATHY, 20, college student volunteer, barges in.

KATHY

Oh my god. Gloria Steinem is tap dancing. Weird.

GLORIA STEINEM

It was how I earned money when I was a kid. I used to perform at clubs and supermarket openings. I was going to dance my way out of Toledo. That was my great dream.

The women all stare at her, a little more in love. Gloria does a little flourish, then stops. She yawns, exhausted.

BRENDA FEIGEN

Let's get a drink. Come on, everyone, out.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

As everyone gets up and makes their way to the door. Gloria mouths "thank you" to Brenda. Then she eyes the phone. Silent. Mocking her. She purses her lips, annoyed.

INT. HOUSE COMMITTEE ROOM - DAY

Fred is now sitting back down next to Phyllis. The COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN, 60s, addresses the committee. Seeing that Phyllis looks anxious, Fred takes her hand in his.

COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN

On this question, the ayes are
thirteen -

The ERA Supporters go wild, CHEERING and CLAPPING, almost drowning out the chairman. Phyllis is crushed.

COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN (CONT'D)

- The nays, five. The Senate Joint Resolution number sixty-two to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment passes out of this committee to the House floor for a vote.

Giddy and Ginny hug each other. Phyllis glances over at Hyde, huddled with the four other 'no' votes. He looks pissed.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Gloria is still waiting by the phone. She smokes a cigarette while ironing a shirt. The phone RINGS. Gloria runs to scoop up the receiver, then decides to let it ring once more so as not to seem too eager.

GLORIA STEINEM

Yes? This is Gloria.

FRANK THOMAS

(through the phone)
Hey beautiful.

Gloria smiles, distracted for a moment...

GLORIA STEINEM

It's good to hear your voice.

INT. GLORIA STEINEM'S APARTMENT - INTERCUT

Frank is on Gloria's phone in the kitchen, his coat still on. Her cat CRAZY ALICE rubs up against his leg. Her apartment is the opposite of domesticity, a boho chic crash pad with piles of cartons with books and papers littering the floor.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FRANK THOMAS

I just fed Crazy Alice.

He opens the refrigerator. It's empty except for a bottle of mustard and a carton of milk. He shakes his head.

FRANK THOMAS (CONT'D)

How come you never have any food in your refrigerator?

GLORIA STEINEM

Because then I'll eat it.

Gloria suddenly realizes - She can't tie up the line. McGovern might call!

GLORIA STEINEM (CONT'D)

Listen, can I call you back later?

FRANK THOMAS

I'm heading back to my place.

GLORIA STEINEM

It's just that I'm expecting a call. I think. I hope.

Frank is in no rush.

FRANK THOMAS

So. Who is bumping me off the line? Is it your mother? Is she okay?

Gloria glances anxiously at the clock. Eleven-thirty.

GLORIA STEINEM

Yeah, no, it's just... McGovern.

FRANK THOMAS

Just McGovern. Possibly our next president, calling you in your hotel room at midnight.

GLORIA STEINEM

Actually, he said he would call before midnight, so...

FRANK THOMAS

Oh. Okay. I won't keep you.

He sounds a little hurt.

GLORIA STEINEM

Is everything all right?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

FRANK THOMAS

It's nothing, just the younger two -
they're giving their mom a hard
time. I guess I'm not with them
enough. We can talk about it
another time.

Gloria sighs. He needs her.

GLORIA STEINEM

No, tell me what happened.

INT. HOTEL LOBBY - DAY

Bella and Gloria enter from the street. Bella eats a hotdog.

BELLA ABZUG

Your wording made it into the
platform draft, but then Shirley
Maclaine cut it out.

GLORIA STEINEM

She cut it out? -With actual
scissors? Who does that?

BELLA ABZUG

An actress.

Gloria shakes her head. Unbelievable.

GLORIA STEINEM

You don't seem too upset.

BELLA ABZUG

I'm very upset! Look at me, I'm
eating a hotdog on the grapefruit
diet.

GLORIA STEINEM

How was the committee supposed to
vote on a missing plank?

Bella nods. Exactly.

BELLA ABZUG

It didn't help that McGovern felt
attacked in the meeting. Betty is
impossible. I think we should elect
one spokeswoman to represent the
caucus at each convention so she
can't run her mouth off to
McGovern's people, or to the press.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GLORIA STEINEM

She will just campaign for the job
and browbeat everyone into voting
for her.

BELLA ABZUG

Unless you run against her.

Gloria tenses.

GLORIA STEINEM

I don't want that job.

BELLA ABZUG

You've got to - You're the only one
getting through to people.

GLORIA STEINEM

Maybe. Sometimes I wonder if
they're really interested in what I
have to say or are they just
listening to a pretty woman speak?

BELLA ABZUG

Who cares? They're listening! You
think Kennedy agonized over whether
he was elected because of his
policies or because he was more
telegenic than Nixon? No! He
thought - I can't believe I get to
be president and shtup Marilyn
Monroe.

GLORIA STEINEM

I would really be more comfortable
going to the convention as press. I
can do more good stirring up public
opinion.

BELLA ABZUG

Don't give me that crap about the
power of the press. We need you.
McGovern always says you sold him
on the women's issue.

GLORIA STEINEM

Then he shouldn't have sold us out
on abortion.

BELLA ABZUG

None of that matters if Nixon is
back in the White House. We all
need to get behind McGovern.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

BELLA ABZUG (CONT'D)

He is our best chance. We lost abortion, but we'll get other things.

Gloria considers it. Bella makes a good point. They arrive at the RECEPTION AREA.

BELLA ABZUG (CONT'D)

I have to go back upstairs. When I nominate you, act surprised and let Betty throw a tantrum. It'll only remind everyone why you should be spokeswoman and not her.

Bella takes off. Gloria turns to the front desk clerk.

GLORIA STEINEM

Can you check if I have any phone messages?

The clerk nods and goes to check.

A WOMAN, early 40s, approaches Gloria tentatively. She's clutching the MS. MAGAZINE PREVIEW ISSUE.

WOMAN

Excuse me - I heard you were staying at this hotel and I was hoping you could sign my copy of the preview issue.

GLORIA STEINEM

I'd be happy to. What's your name?

WOMAN

Theresa.

Gloria takes out a pen. When Theresa hands her the magazine to sign, she opens it up to a specific page.

THERESA

Can you sign this page?

ANGLE ON: A TWO PAGE AD: "WE HAVE HAD ABORTIONS: These 53 American women invite you to join them in a campaign for honesty and freedom". We see some of the signatures of the signed, all luminaries... Billie Jean King, Lillian Hellman, Nora Ephron...

Gloria looks up at Theresa, who smiles at her in awe.

THERESA (CONT'D)

How did you get all those famous women to agree to sign it?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

GLORIA STEINEM

That was easy. The hard part was getting our male publisher to agree to it.

Gloria signs, and hands the magazine back to Theresa.

GLORIA STEINEM (CONT'D)

How old were you?

Theresa's lip trembles.

THERESA

Seventeen. I've never told anyone.

And then the tears come. Of long buried trauma, of shame, and now, relief. Most people would be too uncomfortable with such raw emotion from a stranger. But not Gloria. She takes Theresa's hand and holds the space for her pain.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE**INT. SCHLAFLY RESIDENCE - KITCHEN - DAY**

Phyllis has called an emergency meeting for her lieutenants, Kathleen, Rosemary, Alice, Pamela. They look beleaguered.

Behind them, the Schlafly's longtime cook, WILLIE B. REED, 30s, African-American, is taking a sheet of cracklin' bread rolls out of the oven. Fred is stretching post-run.

KATHLEEN SULLIVAN

None of us has ever been to
Springfield.

ALICE

I don't even know where Springfield
is.

PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY

We'll rent buses. You can bring
your children with you. It'll be
educational.

They look at her skeptically. Phyllis is getting frustrated.

PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY (CONT'D)

Look, we need to try to get as many
women to show up next week. If we
don't outnumber them, the ERA will
be ratified.

KATHLEEN SULLIVAN

Even if we could get them there,
they would be too intimidated to
talk to legislators on the issues.

Phyllis turns to Fred for help-

PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY

Fred, maybe you could come up with
a few easy talking points.

FRED SCHLAFLY

For what?

PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY

The rally before the floor vote in
the House.

FRED SCHLAFLY

I'm sorry, I didn't hear what you
said. I was focused on the rolls.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The women smirk. Classic. Willie smiles at Fred.

WILLIE B. REED
Five more minutes.

PAMELA
Those do smell so good.

Phyllis could use a break, so she gets up-

PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY
Here - let me write down the recipe
for you.

-and grabs a pen and pad off the counter.

PAMELA
Every time I try to bake bread it
turns out soggy.

KATHLEEN SULLIVAN
You might not be giving it enough
time to rise.

ALICE
You might be using too little
yeast.

ROSEMARY THOMSON
Or it's gone bad.

Phyllis notices how much more relaxed and animated they've become since they switched to a subject they're experts in.

She looks over at Fred, who's literally standing over the rolls, waiting until he can eat one.

She smiles, an idea forming...

INT. ILLINOIS STATE CAPITOL - HOUSE LOUNGE - DAY

Giddy pours herself coffee. Ginny enters.

REP. GINNY CHAPMAN
Have you been to the gallery? Is it
filled?

REP. GIDDY DYER
To the rafters.

Ginny notices a LOAF OF BREAD on the counter with a variety of JARS OF JAMS festooned with red ribbons.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

REP. GINNY CHAPMAN

Ooh - Look at this bread. What's
the occasion?

Giddy shrugs. Ginny slices herself a piece. Hyde enters.

REP. GINNY CHAPMAN (CONT'D)

Good morning, Henry.

REP. HENRY HYDE

You're in a good mood.

REP. GINNY CHAPMAN

Why shouldn't I be in a good mood?
We've got the votes. We're voting
today. Get ready to lose.

Ginny spreads jam on the bread. She bites into it.

REP. GINNY CHAPMAN (CONT'D)

Mmm - This is delicious.

She notices Hyde grinning at her. It unnerves her.

REP. GINNY CHAPMAN (CONT'D)

Why are you in a good mood?

REP. HENRY HYDE

I'm just enjoying watching you
enjoy that bread.

REP. GINNY CHAPMAN

(mouth full)

Why shouldn't I enjoy it?

Hyde just laughs and walks out. Ginny suddenly looks uneasy.
She walks over to the counter, takes a closer look at the
loaf. A tag on it reads...

From the breadmakers to the breadwinners!

She nearly chokes on the bread.

INT. ILLINOIS STATE CAPITOL - ROTUNDA - DAY

Phyllis's new strategy to encourage homemakers to bring a
slice of home - literally - to the capitol has worked.
HUNDREDS OF ANTIS are gathered. Some have babies in
strollers. Some have SIGNS. They hand out their bread and jam
from toy wagons to legislators.

Across the way, the Pros stare, dumbfounded.

Phyllis hands a jar of jam to a passing MALE LEGISLATOR.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY
 Preserve us from a congressional
 jam. Vote against the ERA sham.

He smiles and takes the proffered jam.

OVER TO Giddy and Ginny, watching with growing anxiety. Ginny
 wipes a bit of jam from the side of her mouth.

BELLA ABZUG (PRELAP)
 We might lose Illinois.

INT. HOUSE BUILDING - BELLA ABZUG'S OFFICE - DAY

Members of the caucus, including Gloria, Betty, Bella, Brenda
 and Jill, have been milling about the outer office before
 their meeting, getting coffee and snacks. They now stare
 incredulously at Bella.

GLORIA STEINEM
 I thought we had the votes.

BELLA ABZUG
 We had the votes. But then, this
 group showed up with bread and
 suddenly we didn't have the votes.

BETTY FRIEDAN
 What group?

BELLA ABZUG
 Housewives with bread and -
 baked, you know - homemade.

Everyone reacts to it being housewives.

JILL RUCKELSHAUS
 What kind of bread?

BETTY FRIEDAN
 What does it matter what kind?

JILL RUCKELSHAUS
 I'm hungry.

Bella jokingly yells over to the assistant's bullpen.

BELLA ABZUG
 Can we get Ginny Chapman on the
 phone and find out what kind of
 bread it was?

This cuts the tension a bit.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JILL RUCKELSHAUS

That is all it takes to get a man
to change his vote?

BELLA ABZUG

Well. There was also jam.

INT. ILLINOIS STATE CAPITOL - HOUSE CHAMBER - DAY

ON BELLBOTTOMED LEGS filing into the rows on one side.

CLERK (V.O)

Senate Joint Resolution sixty-two
constitutional amendment.

ON STOCKINGED LEGS filing into the rows on the other side.

CLERK (V.O) (CONT'D)

Equality of rights under the law
shall not be denied or abridged by
the United States or by any state
on account of sex.

The two sides face off. It looks like we're in a weird time warp. The side of the Pros feels like a snapshot of the seventies with loose blouses and looser hair. Phyllis's side - a fifties time capsule, pastel colored dresses and skirt suits, beehives, and pearls.

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE, W. ROBERT BLAIR, 42, opens the debate.

HON. W. ROBERT BLAIR

The Lady from Cook, Mrs. Chapman.

Ginny stands. Besides her and Giddy, there is only one other female representative on the floor.

REP. GINNY CHAPMAN

Mr. Speaker, Members of the House -
The need to combat sex
discrimination cannot be
questioned. Over one thousand Laws
of State and the National
Government discriminate on the
basis of sex. The cost of this
inequality is truly too high to
bear. The way to remedy it is by
voting yes on this resolution.

Ginny sits. The Pros STAND UP and CHEER WILDLY. Hyde looks up and catches Phyllis's eye in the gallery. He smiles, emboldened by the turnout.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HON. W. ROBERT BLAIR
The gentlemen from Cook, Mr. Hyde.

REP. HENRY HYDE
(standing)
Well Mr. Speaker, Ladies and
Gentlemen of the House, they say
that diamonds are a girl's best
friend. You know what a man's best
friend is, don't you? It's his dog.
And may I say - Vive La Difference.

The Pros GROAN and BOO him. CUT BACK TO:

INT. HOUSE BUILDING - BELLA ABZUG'S OFFICE - DAY

GLORIA STEINEM
They finally found the best smoke
screen for their chauvinism. Women.

BETTY FRIEDAN
I don't think the housewives are a
smoke screen. I know these women. I
grew up with them. They've never
thought of themselves as feminists,
they're not equipped to earn a
living. This amendment is hitting a
nerve with them.

GLORIA STEINEM
No one is legislating that they
can't stay in the kitchen all day
baking bread if that's what they
want to do.

BELLA ABZUG
The problem is they're not staying
in the kitchen. They're bringing
the bread to the legislature. Now
the ERA looks controversial. Do you
know how much harder it is to get a
controversial amendment into the
Constitution?

As this sobering news sinks in...

GLORIA STEINEM
We just have to keep traveling
around the country talking to them
until we get through. I spend half
my time on the road.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BETTY FRIEDAN

Proclaiming that marriage is prostitution and alimony is war reparations - How have they not been converted?

JILL RUCKELSHAUS

We all could be more careful in our rhetoric. We don't want them to feel we are against them.

BRENDA FEIGEN

We are against them.

GLORIA STEINEM

Look, we can say - and I always do - that the Movement is for housewives too, but if we are being honest, their very existence hurts us. Working mothers will never be able to get ahead at the office so long as their male colleagues have wives at home doing all the domestic labor and child rearing for free. And the boss will keep giving the men promotions and raises because - it's only fair - they have to provide for a family. Revolutions are messy. People get left behind.

INT. ILLINOIS STATE CAPITOL - HOUSE CHAMBER - DAY

The debate is over. Phyllis and the Antis lean forward in their seats, anxious, straining to hear the roll call.

GLORIA STEINEM (V.O.)

These housewives are the last gasp of the patriarchy, brainwashed to believe that if they don't play the game, they will lose the love and protection of men.

DOWN ON THE FLOOR - QUICK POPS of LEGISLATORS recording their vote, while in the b.g. Ginny and Giddy race from desk to desk, desperate to keep their colleagues from defecting...

FUNDAMENTALIST REPRESENTATIVE

The Ladies in my district send this message to their Sisters - Please, leave our happy homes alone.

ANTI-RED REPRESENTATIVE

I think the housewives do deserve a no vote.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STATES RIGHTS REPRESENTATIVE

I vote no.

On the other side of the gallery, the Pros have become more subdued. They've been keeping score and it's looking grim.

HON. W. ROBERT BLAIR

On this question, there are eighty-two ayes, seventy-six nays and nine present.

Phyllis quickly does the math - They WON! The Antis are up on their feet, CHEERING, jubilant.

The Pros are stunned. Down on the floor -

Ginny and Giddy look devastated.

BACK UP TO Phyllis - She's ecstatic. She pulled it off!

INY. HOUSE BUILDING - BELLA ABZUG'S OFFICE - DAY

The caucus has migrated to Bella's office. They sit around the table. Bella runs the meeting.

BELLA ABZUG

We will make a more concerted push in Illinois next year. Moving on - it's time to elect a spokeswoman to represent us at each Convention.

Betty catches Bella look over at Gloria. She thrusts her chest forward-

BETTY FRIEDAN

I nominate Jill for the Republican convention and myself for the Democratic.

BELLA ABZUG

You can't nominate yourself, Betty.

GLORIA STEINEM

Before we get to that, can we discuss making a push for abortion rights as a minority plank? According to the rules, if we gather enough signatures to petition the platform committee, they have to bring it to the delegates on the convention floor for a vote.

The younger members immediately get excited, realizing.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KATHY

Which would be televised.

BRENDA FEIGEN

And forty percent of the delegates are women. Those are great odds.

Betty looks directly at Gloria when she says -

BETTY FRIEDAN

I hate to say it, but it was probably a blessing that the committee rejected abortion rights. We can't risk anything getting in the way of our ratification campaign. We are already halfway there.

Gloria looks around the room for support. But many of the women are spooked in the wake of the Illinois loss. Even -

BELLA ABZUG

It might not be the right time.

GLORIA STEINEM

When is the right time?

BELLA ABZUG

After we get McGovern into the White House, and we have control of both branches, we can make another push.

GLORIA STEINEM

So, a year?

BELLA ABZUG

If the ERA is safely in the Constitution -

GLORIA STEINEM

Two, then? Or maybe a decade?

There are some awkward laughs around the table. They're not used to seeing Gloria angry. It's intense.

GLORIA STEINEM (CONT'D)

No, really, I want to know - How long are we supposed to wait? How many more women are going to die in botched abortions while we wait for men to feel comfortable with us having control over our own bodies?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

GLORIA STEINEM (CONT'D)

How many women are going to be forced to give birth to babies they can't afford to feed while we wait for housewives, who have no idea what it's like to have to work to survive, to feel comfortable with women having power? How much time do we give people to adapt to change? Or am I the only one so fucking tired of waiting?

Gloria never raises her voice, but the room is so silent, you can hear a pin drop. All eyes are on her.

BELLA ABZUG

We will get it done next year.

She gets up. She feels trapped. She has to get out of there.

BELLA ABZUG (CONT'D)

Where are you going?

GLORIA STEINEM

I have to get back to New York.

BELLA ABZUG

What about the vote? For the conventions.

GLORIA STEINEM

I'm sorry.

Gloria leaves. Only Betty seems happy about it.

INT. ILLINOIS STATE CAPITOL - HALLWAY - DAY

A LOCAL REPORTER interviews Phyllis. Her supporters gather behind her, in awe of Phyllis's ease in front of the press.

PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY

This is a victory for the traditional American family, and for the institution of marriage, which is the best deal for women the world has yet devised.

Phyllis leads the Antis triumphantly toward the exit. She turns to Alice -

PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY (CONT'D)

I am just going to run to the ladies room before we go.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Phyllis heads to the bathroom, and finds herself face to face with Ginny, blocking her path.

REP. GINNY CHAPMAN

We will get it ratified next year.
You just got lucky.

Phyllis isn't sure what she means by lucky.

PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY

Thank you so much.

REP. GINNY CHAPMAN

Can I ask you something?
(without waiting)
When you go on Donahue, do you know what you're saying isn't true, or do you just not know what the hell you're talking about?

Not wanting to engage in vitriol, Phyllis tries to get by -

PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY

Excuse me -

REP. GINNY CHAPMAN

I read your newsletter. It's all hysteria and lies. Unisex bathrooms, no child support, girls in foxholes? Please. Do you understand the first thing about Constitutional law? Do you even have a law degree?

This rattles Phyllis. But she keeps her cool.

PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY

I am just getting started.

She quickly ducks into...

INT. ILLINOIS STATE CAPITOL - LADIES ROOM - DAY (MOMENTS LATER)

Phyllis shuts the door, humiliated. She takes a moment to catch her breath, before hiking up her skirt.

END ACT THREE

ACT FOUR**INT. SCHLAFLY RESIDENCE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

POP - Champagne bottle opens. Phyllis is surrounded by her entire family - Fred, Dadie, Bruce, Roger, Phyl, Andy, Anne, and, playing the PIANO is JOHN SCHLAFLY, 21, in another life, a gay Broadway musical composer, but he's stuck in this one and making the best of it. Eleanor sits off to the side reading The Alton Evening Telegraph. Through the window - the bluffs of the Mississippi River. A Norman Rockwell portrait.

Phyllis pours the champagne into flutes. Fred raises his glass in the air -

FRED SCHLAFLY

I'd like to make three toasts.

(he gestures toward John;

John stops playing)

To the return of our prodigal son.

We're so proud of our first college graduate. Don't even think about moving home.

Everyone laughs.

FRED SCHLAFLY (CONT'D)

To my mother-in-law, who will soon be gracing us with her lovely presence every day.

DADIE STEWART

If I ever finish packing.

Fred turns to Phyllis -

FRED SCHLAFLY

And to my darling wife - on her victory in Springfield yesterday. I am so proud of what you've accomplished.

Phyllis beams. Everyone raises their glasses and CHEERS. John continues to PLAY. Eleanor looks up from the newspaper.

ELEANOR SCHLAFLY

Looks like we should also be toasting Mayor Daley.

PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY

What do you mean?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ELEANOR SCHLAFLY

(re: newspaper)

It says here Eugenia Chapman claims she lost seven people who were organization Democrats from Chicago because she made public her support for Stevenson over Daley to lead the Illinois delegation to the Democratic Convention. Daley was furious at her so he put the word out to his people to vote against the ERA.

Eleanor smiles so sweetly, it's hard to tell if she's clueless or sticking it to Phyllis.

PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY

She's just spinning tales so she doesn't look incompetent.

ELEANOR SCHLAFLY

It was defeated by seven votes, no?

Phyllis shrugs it off -

PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY

A win's a win.

But she deflates. And worries - Is that what Ginny meant when she said she got lucky?

INT. MS. MAGAZINE OFFICE - NIGHT

Frank has joined Gloria for a dinner of takeout sandwiches at her desk. A smattering of employees are still at the office working, but it's mostly empty. Frank is reading an article in a NEWSPAPER with great interest.

FRANK THOMAS

I didn't know your mom was a reporter.

GLORIA STEINEM

For The Toledo Blade. She quit after Sue was born.

FRANK THOMAS

Have you read this interview?

GLORIA STEINEM

I don't need to read it. I talk to her every day.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FRANK THOMAS

Some of these quotes...

(reads aloud, wow)

"At first, when people said nasty things about Gloria, I'd take tranquilizers and cry. But I've grown a lot lately, and now I laugh it off."

(then)

You should read it.

Gloria takes off her glasses and rubs her eyes.

GLORIA STEINEM

I don't have time to get upset about my mother telling the world she wishes I would find a husband.

Frank smiles over the newspaper.

FRANK THOMAS

So you did read it.

GLORIA STEINEM

I got worried she might have said something crazy, like, I wish Gloria would find a husband.

Frank laughs.

FRANK THOMAS

Is that so crazy?

Gloria gives an enigmatic smile.

GLORIA STEINEM

Maybe next year.

Frank just looks at her. But she's impenetrable.

FRANK THOMAS

We are not getting any younger.

GLORIA STEINEM

No one is getting any younger. Five-year-olds aren't getting any younger.

FRANK THOMAS

You don't want to have a child?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

GLORIA STEINEM

I already had a child. My mother. I must have done a terrible job, too, because look how she turned out.

Discussion over. Frank puts down the paper.

FRANK THOMAS

I should let you get back to work.

Frank crumples up the paper his sandwich was in and throws it clear across the room, makes the garbage can, which Gloria finds sexy. She leans over her desk to kiss him.

FRANK THOMAS (CONT'D)

Call me when you're done. I'll come over.

Frank walks across the office, passing the final proof of the first issue. The cover is WONDER WOMAN racing through city traffic, with the banner: WONDER WOMAN FOR PRESIDENT. He looks back at Gloria, smiling his approval.

FRANK THOMAS (CONT'D)

Wonder Woman. Neat.

He exits. Gloria stares at the cover.

INT. SCHLAFLY RESIDENCE - PHYLLIS'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Phyllis flips through PAUL FREUND'S ARTICLE: The Equal Rights Amendment Is Not the Way. It's all marked up. She looks back at the piece of paper in her typewriter. She's only gotten as far as the title: The Right to Be a Woman.

She takes a break to open some mail. The first is a typed letter from the Conservative Ohio Union.

ANGLE ON - "Please approve your bio for the program: Mrs. Phyllis Schlafly, a leading conservative author and spokeswoman, and past Vice President of the National Federation of Republican Women."

Phyllis takes a pen. Puts a little arrow after her name and writes in - an Illinois housewife. She folds the letter and puts it in the return envelope.

INT. ST. LOUIS UNION TRUST COMPANY - DAY (FLASHBACK)

A YOUNG PHYLLIS, 25, sits at her typewriter, dressed in a smart pink dress with pearls. There's a burning cigarette in a nearby ashtray. A YOUNG FRED, 39, approaches her desk.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PHYLLIS STEWART

May I help you?

FRED SCHLAFLY

I would like to speak to your boss if he has a few moments. The name is Fred Schlafly.

PHYLLIS STEWART

May I tell him what it's regarding?

FRED SCHLAFLY

He wrote an article in your newsletter this month about Senator Douglas that was just brilliant.

PHYLLIS STEWART

You liked it.

Phyllis takes a drag of her cigarette.

FRED SCHLAFLY

Liked it? I loved it. He found this obscure quote from his writings -

PHYLLIS STEWART

That proves he's a socialist.

FRED SCHLAFLY

So you don't just sit there and look pretty. You also read your company's materials.

Phyllis smiles, amused.

FRED SCHLAFLY (CONT'D)

Anyway, I just had to come all the way down here and meet the guy who dug up that intriguing quote, see if he has any other dirt on the Senator. Is he available?

PHYLLIS STEWART

He is.

She stands. But doesn't go anywhere.

FRED SCHLAFLY

Can I talk to him?

PHYLLIS STEWART

You are talking to him.
(puts out her hand)
Phyllis Stewart. Nice to meet you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Fred just stares at Phyllis, too stunned to shake her hand. And just like that, he's no longer a confirmed bachelor.

INT. SCHLAFLY RESIDENCE - FAMILY ROOM - NIGHT

Fred is watching news coverage of the upcoming Democratic National Convention.

NEWS CORRESPONDENT (ON TV)

President Nixon plans to spend at least two weeks at his oceanside home here in San Clemente, a working vacation his aides call it, while the Democrats meet in Miami Beach to choose his opponent.

Phyllis walks in, holding Freund's article.

PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY

Do you have a few minutes?

FRED SCHLAFLY

Can it wait until after the convention coverage?

It can't. She walks over to the TV, and switches channels.

PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY

You know how this ends. They run McGovern, Nixon squeaks by, everybody's unhappy. It only gets you agitated.

She finds an old black & white musical playing, FOR ME AND MY GAL. Gene Kelly and Judy Garland are just beginning the opening song. That's better. She holds out the article -

PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY (CONT'D)

Can you show me where Freund draws a connection between the ERA and integrated public restrooms, prisons and reform schools.

FRED SCHLAFLY

Does it matter? We won.

PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY

I know, but - Can you just show me where it says it? Please. I'm writing my next newsletter on the subject.

FRED SCHLAFLY

So write it and I'll look it over.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Phyllis sits down next to Fred on the sofa.

PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY

Or you could walk me through the legal arguments so I don't have to bother you each time.

FRED SCHLAFLY

I like when you bother me.

PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY

You're not the only one who got admitted to Harvard Law School. I was invited too.

Fred looks at Phyllis curiously.

FRED SCHLAFLY

When was that?

PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY

When I was getting my masters. My constitutional law professor said I was brilliant.

FRED SCHLAFLY

You really want a crash course in legal research and writing?

PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY

Yes.

FRED SCHLAFLY

All right. The first thing you need to know about presenting legal arguments is that while you have a lot of leeway to be creative, you never want to make a statement that is objectively verifiable as being false.

PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY

Okay.

FRED SCHLAFLY

For instance, you wouldn't say you were invited to attend Harvard Law School, when it only takes a phone call to find out that you got your masters in 1945, five years before the law school went co-ed.

Strangely, Phyllis doesn't look ashamed. She truly believes -

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY

They would have made an exception
for me.

INT. GLORIA STEINEM'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Gloria is curled up on her sofa with her cat. Her shoes are still on, like she just plopped down as soon as she walked in the door. This is the first time she's alone in a while and it feels amazing.

She's watching the same musical Phyllis had on. Gene and Judy are crooning, *and sometime I'm gonna build a little home for two or three or four or more in love land for me and my gal...* Then begin the dance number. Gloria loves this movie. The magic is broken by -

RING! It must be Frank calling to make plans to come over.

The phone RINGS again. Gloria gets off the sofa to get to it. As she makes her way to the phone...

She starts to TAP DANCE to the music. TAP. TAP. RING. RING.

Instead of picking up the phone, she keeps TAPPING around the room, ignoring the RING. RING. RING.

As she dances around, her self-consciousness washes away. Alone, without anyone making demands on her, without a care -

She's free.

The phone stops ringing. Gloria keeps tapping, her face flush, happy.

INT. DOCTOR JOHN SHARPE'S HOME - DAY (FLASHBACK)

A YOUNG GLORIA, 22, looks small and scared in a big chair across from DR. JOHN SHARPE, 60s, a kindly man, and a FEMALE SURGEON, all-business, in a stylish suit, smoking a cigarette in one of those long cigarette holders. The room looks more like a living room than a doctor's office. Maybe it is his living room. It is 1957, after all, and abortion is a crime.

DR. JOHN SHARPE

Does your fiancé know?

GLORIA STEINEM

Ex-fiancé -No. He's back in the States.

DR. JOHN SHARPE

May I ask why you haven't told him?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GLORIA STEINEM
We would have to get married.

Dr. Sharpe doesn't press.

SURGEON
There will be a little bleeding. If there is a lot, call me. You will be confined to bed for a few days until the bleeding stops. I will give you pills for that. And I hope you will use birth control in the future, especially if you plan to spend the year in India.

Gloria exhales, overwhelmed with relief.

GLORIA STEINEM
Thank you.

SURGEON
Don't thank me.

The Surgeon glances at Dr. Sharpe, as if to say - I'm only here as a favor to him.

DR. JOHN SHARPE
You must promise me two things.

Gloria is already nodding her assent, she doesn't even know what he's asking of her.

DR. JOHN SHARPE (CONT'D)
You will never tell anyone my name.

Gloria keeps nodding, too terrified to speak.

DR. JOHN SHARPE (CONT'D)
And you will do what you want to do with your life.

She stops nodding. Takes in what he's saying. She sits up straighter. She looks less scared, more determined. She looks directly at him for the first time.

GLORIA STEINEM
I will.

INT. GLORIA STEINEM'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

CLOSE ON Gloria's feet - TAP. TAP. TAP.

INT. GLORIA STEINEM'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Bella is at her doorstep.

BELLA ABZUG

Congratulations. You were elected to be our spokeswoman at the convention.

GLORIA STEINEM

I didn't want to be nominated. That's why I left the meeting.

BELLA ABZUG

Which only made you more attractive. If Betty didn't already hate you, she definitely does now.
(then, more serious)
Please accept. We need you.

Gloria takes a deep breath.

GLORIA STEINEM

I'll do it. On two conditions.

BELLA ABZUG

Okay...

GLORIA STEINEM

As long as Shirley stays in the race, McGovern is my second choice for president.

Bella doesn't like it, but what can she do?

BELLA ABZUG

What's the second?

GLORIA STEINEM

We are going to force a vote on abortion on the convention floor.

Bella just looks at Gloria. Something's different. In place of her usual reluctance, there's a steadfastness. She slowly nods. Gloria smiles.

CUT TO BLACK.

END OF EPISODE

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A NOTE ON THE REST OF THE EPISODES...

I was inspired by our meetings about this series, and I came away thinking that the mantra of the feminist movement should be our mantra for the series: The personal is political. I want every episode to explore the ways in which the characters' personal histories both shaped their political desires and got in the way of them achieving them.

While the early episodes will stay in one feminist character's POV, all our main characters will be featured in most episodes, and once they've all been introduced, around the midpoint, it'll start to feel more like an ensemble, and some of the secondary characters will get their own storylines.

EPISODE 3 (1972)

SHIRLEY'S POV. Shirley loved to say: "If they don't give you a seat at the table, bring a folding chair." More like kick down the door and announce yourself. After drum-rolling her presidential campaign in Episode 2, this episode is devoted to her ground-breaking campaign for the presidential nomination and her clash with Bella over the Movement's endorsement of her. Through Shirley's heartbreaking story of betrayal, I want to explore the larger, long-ignored story of the feminist movement that is only now being discussed and reckoned with - the tensions between white feminists and women of color. There is great irony in the feminist leaders criticizing housewives for seeking the protection of men over rights, when they themselves are aligning themselves with the patriarchal establishment over a marginalized woman (and predictably, get crumbs. The abortion rights vote is obstructed by McGovern's people, driving Gloria to tears of rage.)

Phyllis's story is the birth of a national anti-ERA movement; how she capitalizes on her win in Illinois to transform her ragtag circle of Catholic homemaker friends into a national movement. While the feminists' egos get in the way of unified leadership, Phyllis figures out a way to avoid all that by appointing herself the National Chairman of STOP ERA and begins her ten-year rule as benevolent autocrat.

EPISODE 4 (1973)

BETTY'S POV. Set against the backdrop of the historic Roe v. Wade decision, which both sides think is a boon to their cause, this episode centers on the debate between Betty and Phyllis. For two episodes, we have seen Betty behave badly, pick fights and just generally be a pain in everyone's ass. In this episode, she finally gets her day in court. Betty is the first to see Phyllis as a real threat and insists on doing opposition research on Phyllis, hoping to uncover

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

something in her past to discredit her. But when Betty is invited to debate Phyllis, the other feminists implore her not to. To have someone of Betty's stature engaging with Phyllis directly in a debate only legitimizes her. But Betty is desperate to rehabilitate her image after being marginalized at the conventions and excoriated for taking down Gloria and Bella in a very public way afterwards. So she agrees to the debate. And she's arrogant enough to think she'll wipe the floor with this lightweight from Alton and reclaim her position as Mother Superior of the Movement. But if she doesn't win the debate, the Antis will be seen not just as legitimate, but as worthy opponents.

I am fascinated by people who share such a similar biography and yet end up on opposite ends of the political divide, which is why the pairing of Betty and Phyllis is very exciting. This episode is a chance to dive deeper into Phyllis's childhood, and Betty's, and discover clues to their divergent paths. I hope we come away from this episode with more empathy for Betty, after learning her sister was considered "the pretty one," and that she was excluded from her school's sorority because she was Jewish.

EPISODE 5 (1973)

Did you know there used to be pro-choice, feminist activists in the Republican party? I didn't! For everyone who thinks the women's movement is and always was a lefty thing, this episode will be a real eye-opener. Turns out the Pros were a motley crew of political views, and the Republican feminists seem to be the only ones getting along with Betty, Bella and Gloria. It's a shame Phyllis ran them out of the party in 1980. In this episode, set against the backdrop of the Watergate scandal, we get to know one of the Republican feminists who fought tirelessly for the ERA right up until the bitter end...

JILL RUCKELSHAUS, 35 (now introduced in the Pilot and Ep. 2). Jill got her foot in the door because she is married to the Deputy Attorney General. But she has proven a force in her own right: she has gotten a job in the White House in the Office of Women's Affairs, she was the spokeswoman for the caucus at the Republican National Convention, and she is single-handedly maintaining Nixon's endorsement and support of the ERA, no small feat given that Nixon in the fall of 1973 is... distracted.

This episode will have Jill - in partnership with Betty, Gloria and Bella - facing off against Phyllis, who the feminists now recognize as a force to be reckoned with. Jill uses her position in the White House to lead the Pros in state battles, but just as she's gaining momentum on the ERA, the standoff over the secret Nixon tapes comes to a dramatic climax. Jill's husband must choose between heeding Nixon's

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request to fire the Watergate Special Prosecutor and resigning. What advice does Jill give him during the famous (and today very relevant) 'Saturday Night Massacre,' knowing that his decision will jeopardize her own position in the White House?

Phyllis capitalizes on the anger among Right-to-lifers over Roe V. Wade, building coalitions among disparate religious groups—the fundamentalists, the Mormons, the Orthodox Jews. We get a window into Phyllis's deep frustration with the Republican establishment through a flashback to 1967, when she was ousted for being too far right. As her coalition grows, she begins to see a way out of being an outsider in her own party. She is going to use the ERA to weaponize an army of conservative homemakers to bend the Republican Party to her will.

EPISODE 6 (1974)

This episode takes the larger theme of the series, the culture clash over the changing roles of women, and drills down to the most granular level to explore how these changing roles can threaten the stability of a marriage. On the feminist side, we feature BRENDA and her husband MARC. They are flying around the country with Gloria, fighting for the ERA in embattled states and giving talks about how to have a liberal marriage. And yet, there are cracks. Marc, who is also an attorney, is jealous of his wife's hotshot job with the future Notorious RBG at the ACLU. He's also itching to start a family. But Brenda has just had her first sexual encounter with a woman and she's starting to question her sexuality.

Meanwhile, Phyllis keeps running into feminists who throw her lack of law degree in her face during debates. Fed up, she decides the only way to shut them up is to get a law degree, but Fred flips out when he finds out.

The episode culminates in a televised debate between Marc and Brenda and Phyllis and Fred on The Tomorrow Show (a 1970s talk show). The day of the taping, Brenda learns she's pregnant and Fred lays down the law - Phyllis isn't going to law school.

EPISODE 7 & 8 (1976-1977)

The first National Women's Conference contains so much story, it will be divided into two episodes. Ep. 7 will take place in the year leading up to the event, and be told from BELLA'S POV, and Ep. 8 will cover the event itself.

At the top of Ep. 7, the feminists only need four more states to ratify in order to win. But somehow, they're on the defensive. The number of states ratifying has slowed. The

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feminists argue over whether to continue to make the ratification of the ERA their primary goal or whether to focus on other issues. After much debate, they agree they're going to go all out, balls to the wall for the ERA. To do so, they need to organize a concerted national effort to match Phyllis's campaign. Bella has the genius idea to organize the first-ever Women's Conference in order to make a big push for the ERA. She even persuades Congress to give five million dollars to the cause and is appointed Chairman of the conference. The planning of the event intersects with her leaving her House seat to run for the Senate.

On Phyllis' end, we get to play the fun of Phyllis running her growing grassroots movement out of the law school phone booth while attending classes with students half her age. When she finds out about the National Women's Conference, she kicks her campaign into high gear, first enlisting Fred to sue to stop it, and when that fails, organizing a counter-rally to upstage the Pros.

Both sides are grappling with how to handle the cultural flashpoint of lesbian rights. The Pros are fighting over whether to embrace lesbian rights in their platform at the conference, while the fundamentalists in the Anti group are putting pressure on Phyllis to dial up the anti-lesbian rhetoric and tie it to the ERA in their counter-rally. This becomes a very emotional issue for both Phyllis, who is realizing that John is gay, and surprisingly unsettling for Bella, who has always been for lesbian rights, but having trouble with her own daughter coming out to her.

When the Pros and the Antis arrive in Houston, it will be the first time in the series that all our main characters are in the same place. Gloria, Shirley, Bella, Betty, Jill and Brenda. The conservative backlash is considered so intense that local police are worried about violence. Jill promises the delegates "We're going to cut the hearts out of the Anti-ERA people". It is ON.

The feminists unexpectedly get along famously and come together in a beautiful way. Bella and Shirley make up. Even 'Lavender Menace' Betty comes around and fully embraces lesbian rights. The conference is a huge success, but sadly, does nothing to help the ERA and the feminists are at their wit's end.

EPISODE 8 (1978)

With the 1979 deadline looming on ratification, the feminists are fighting how to handle the fact that they are still three states short. The movement is split over whether they should fight for an extension (Gloria, Bella and Shirley), or let it go and move on to other issues (Betty, alone, but once again, correct). The extension faction prevails and they succeed in

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getting President Carter to decide to push to grant them a three-year extension to 1982. But at what cost? As Betty predicts, Phyllis is able to use the extension to make the feminists look like they are unfairly changing the rules of the game.

EPISODE 9 (1979)

This episode centers on the "End of the ERA Dinner" Phyllis throws in Washington on the original deadline of the ERA, March 22, 1979, in the very same hotel where the feminists gathered so optimistically in Episode 2 for their fundraiser. Part of Phyllis's motivation is her strong desire to get out of the ERA game and back into her true love, military defense. Woven into her story is the feminists' final push to get the last three states ratified, their painful reckoning with the failure of the ERA, and the impact of the growing conservative backlash on their psyches and their personal lives.

EPISODE 10 (1980)

The finale focuses on the battle between the GOP Pros and Antis over the removal of the ERA from the party's platform, which had been in the Republican party platform for forty years. Phyllis is gunning to get it dropped. It would be the last nail in the coffin for the ERA, which hasn't had a state ratification in three years. But really, it is a battle over the soul of the party.

Leading the fight for the Pros will be Jill and Mary (from Ep. 7). They organize a rally the day before the Convention. Eleven thousand women march through the streets of Detroit, carrying signs of a weeping Abraham Lincoln: "Will the party that freed the slaves become the party that enslaves women?" Jill shouts into the crowd: "Give me back my party!"

It all comes down to whether Reagan will support the ERA. Both sides work frantically behind the scenes to win his support. Phyllis wins out. The ERA is dropped from the GOP platform. And Reagan goes on to win the election in a landslide, with the help of Phyllis's army.

Phyllis presumes she will be rewarded for helping put Reagan into the White House with an appointment in the Pentagon. She is not. She will be stuck working on women and family issues for the rest of her life.