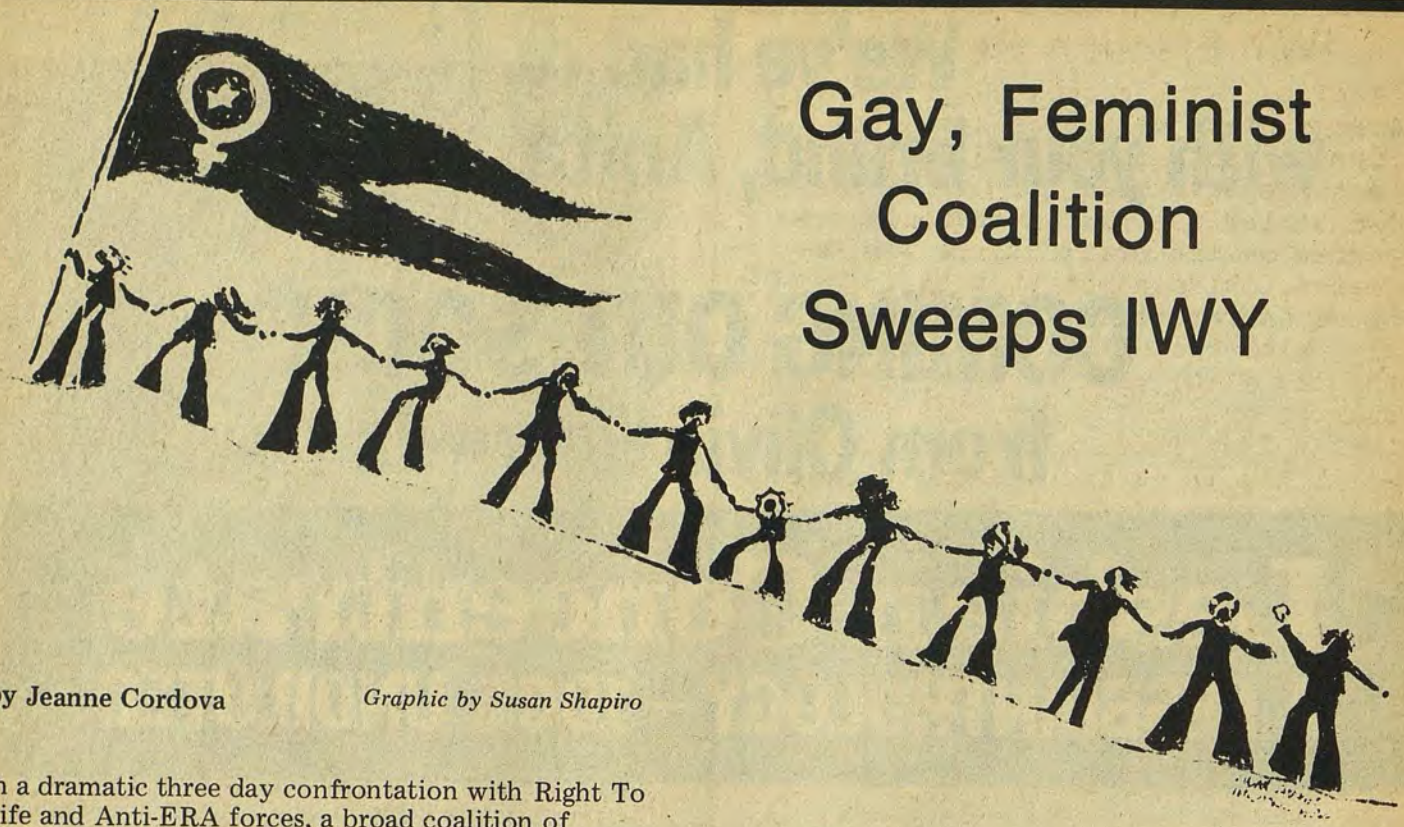
# Gay, Feminist Coalition Sweeps IWY



by Jeanne Cordova *Graphic by Susan Shapiro*

In a dramatic three day confrontation with Right To Life and Anti-ERA forces, a broad coalition of lesbians and feminists swept to victory at the California International Women's Year Conference (June 16-19). The highly organized Coalition slate included 13 out front lesbians, 15 blacks, 16 chicanas, 3 native americans, rural, young, older, and low income candidates, plus a number of anglo feminists. The popular "Orange Slate," which was initiated by lesbian feminists from the Los Angeles NOW Lesbian Task Force, was heavily backed by California NOW, the National Women's Political Caucus, local NOW chapters, the entire L.A. radical lesbian feminist community, and some 500 gay male voters.

Though official election results were not in by press time (see *Late Flash)*, sources close to the Balloting Committee reported the Orange Slate polled between 85 and 91% of the more than 4,000 ballots. The feminist victory also included the overwhelming passage of some 46 pro-feminist, minority rights, and lesbian resolutions. The two right wing resolutions which made it to the final voting session were voted down. Security police at the USC Conference site reported the three day event was attended by 10,000 persons.

### Bryant Done It

Orange Slate Coalition leaders attributed much of their success to the June 7 Dade County defeat of a gay rights ordinance. "Feminist and gay rage against Bryant drew the power of both movements together this weekend," explained San Francisco lesbian nominee Del Martin. A Los Angeles June 13 massive demonstration against Bryant (see related story) served as a focal point for IWY organizing. At that march leaflets and speeches explaining the Conference and the new Phyllis Shlafley-Anita Bryant coalition were announced to the 9,500 demonstrators. An invitation to "help your sisters" by attending the Conference and voting was extended to the men present, and the gay male community of Los Angeles responded to the unique invitation. Lilene Fifield, an L.A. Orange Slate lesbian nominee described their participation as "monumental." "When you consider that they came and and paid $5 and stood in the sun for four hours to register, vote and support lesbian women. . . . that's significant." Some of the men drove as far as forty miles to voice their anger at Bryant and her ilk.

### Radicals Rush To Rescue!

In a highly unusual political move the radical lesbian feminist community also deluged the ballot boxes some 900 strong. Noting the motivation for their presence, Liz Stevens, a member of the Ad Hoc Committee of Women For Lesbian Rights, said, "We usually don't participate in electoral politics but we saw the Bryant-Shlafley Coalition as an immediate threat to our most minimal demands and we wanted to stop that." Those demands, explained Stevens, are passage of the ERA, progressive child care and abortion laws, and protective legislation for lesbian and human rights. Radical lesbians also played significant roles in the several strategy caucuses, and in their persistent and comprehensive harrassment of "Shlaflies," particularly in workshop speech making and voting. Both radical and more liberal lesbians "politely" volunteered to help the Conference Co-ordinating Committee in registering, monitoring, crowd control, etc. etc. This generous offer of course put lesbians in key positions near workshop doors, registration tables, and microphones.

### The Story of the Orange Slate

The Orange Slate victory drive was initially spearheaded by Bobbi Bennett and Diane Abbitt of the L.A. NOW

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