

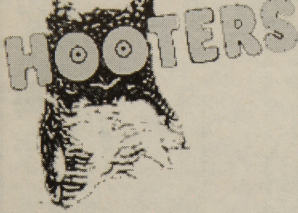
## IN MY OPINION

Caroline Porter

# Who gives a hoot about Hooters?

You know, we're really getting to be a nation full of dreadful, humorless, judgmental, boring, intolerant, bigoted malcontents. How embarrassing it was to me, as a long-time feminist, to read in Monday's paper that a new restaurant in Bloomington was being picketed by members of NOW, the National Organization of Women. The name of the new restaurant is called "Hooters" and the waitresses are scantily clad with more than ample cleavage showing.

So, the ever-serious and scowling women



of NOW actually spent Super Bowl Sunday afternoon in the cold, picketing and getting really annoyed that cheerful men and women and some children are flocking into Hooters, which reportedly also has very good food. The stern picketers thought discrimination was present because only attractive (and well-endowed) women were hired. Oh, duh, that's only been going on for the last trillion years. Yes, we all like people who are attractive. That's why we all try to make ourselves that way. And in this day and age, with all the enhancements available to us, there's not much excuse for being an ugly slob. With a clean, simple hairdo and make-up, almost anyone can be attractive.

Of course the term "hooters," which is slang for women's breasts, is crude and tacky, but then so are a lot of things we deal with every day.

So upon reading about the NOW members picketing, my first question was, "Haven't they got anything more important to fight for?" And the second question was, "I wonder if they hire women over sixty?"

If I were a member of NOW, I would spend time on the reasons women can make more money as waitresses than they can working as nurses, managers, teachers, secretaries, child care workers, reporters, bankers, realtors — you name it. I would picket institutions that don't give men and women the same salary, recognition or promotions. I would defend Planned Parenthood to the hilt, knowing their programs of family planning and birth control are responsible and that the so-called "prolifers" are not nearly so concerned with the rights of fetuses as they are denying freedom of choice to women who are here on this earth, who are someone's sister, mother, aunt, daughter, friend. The anti-abortion groups are full of angry men who hate the thought of women having choices about anything and women who want men's approval.

I'd picket the employers who hire part-time help so they don't have to pay benefits, the large corporations who don't provide child care, the State legislature, who in their vast ability to screw things up, have caused such pain and suffering to women not getting child support checks.

I'd picket the movie theaters and TV producers that show such sick violence that kids can't tell reality from fantasy anymore.

I'd volunteer at the local domestic violence agency, collect money for good, existing child care facilities, and work for a welfare program to pay mothers to stay home with their children, instead of spending far more for work training, new clothes and child care. Good grief, it would be cheaper for the taxpayer if mothers just stayed home. Better for the parents — better for the kids. And I'd work for welfare programs that subsidize those who work but still can't make a living wage. We still actually discourage people from working by withholding benefits. It's ridiculous.

Oh, there's all sorts of issues NOW could

worry about besides Hooters restaurant. And to reject the coffee and donuts offered them by the "Hooter" gals that afternoon? How rude. Come on, NOW, chill out. Start

supporting all women trying to make a living. There are just some things not important enough for us to give a hoot.

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