

Too often, con-artists create charities with names similar to legitimate groups and profit off the good will established by the latter. Pick a popular charity, change the word "National" to "American" or "Association" to "Foundation," and the public is sufficiently hoodwinked. Charity is big business, consuming from 1.5

the Widow of the Unknown Soldier. It's too easy, which is why there is a need for stronger laws.

**REGISTER EDITORIALS** represent the institutional view of the newspaper. They reflect the newspaper's editorial traditions and the current opinions of Publisher Charles C. Edwards, Jr., Editor Geneva Overholser, and the editorial page staff that writes and edits the editorials. The

was urgent enough it waited a special session. Any package hastily slapped together for a special group includes Dennis R. Rierson, editor of the editorial pages, Richard Doak, deputy editor of the editorial pages, and Reiko Bass, Rex Laird, Linda Lantor, Bill Leonard and Suzanne Nelson, editorial writers.

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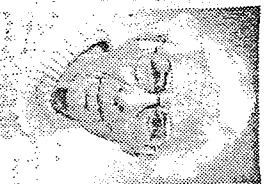
One of the main issues with which the suffragists had to deal was the racism that was rampant in America in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The other was the fear of immigrants.

# Carrie Chapman Catt, a bigot?

## It's a conclusion that's hard to avoid

**The much-admired leader of the women's suffrage movement from near Charles City, Ia., isn't so well known on this ugly count.**

By **LOUISE NOUN**



Carrie Lane Chapman Catt (1859-1947), who grew up on a farm near Charles City, Ia., led the women's suffrage forces of the United States to final victory in 1920,

and then went on to devote the rest of her life to working for world peace. Too long forgotten as an important figure in Iowa history, Chapman Catt has recently been recognized in several significant ways. In 1992, she was the recipient of the Iowa Award which recognizes outstanding service of nationwide importance by Iowa citizens, and her alma mater, Iowa State University, established the Carrie Chapman Catt Center for Women in Politics in her honor. As a historian of the Iowa women's suffrage movement, I have written extensively about Chapman Catt and her accomplishments. Recently I was surprised when an African-American friend said that she had been told that Carrie Chapman Catt was a bigot.

"Is this really true?" she asked. Although I had not thought of Chapman Catt as intolerant, I was aware that the women's suffrage movement which Chapman Catt led had made compromises in order to win support and that Chapman Catt herself advocated an educational qualification for voting. I decided to go back and take another look at the record from the point of view of groups whose interests were affected by what the suffragists deemed political expediency.

When the suffrage movement was young and there was no hope of immediate success, suffragists expressed their ideals in ringing declarations that all men and women were created equal, but as the prospect of victory came nearer to reality, compromises with this principle were made in order to win needed allies and eliminate the influence of voters whom the suffragists deemed unfriendly to their cause.

**LOUISE NOUN** is a historian of the Iowa women's movement who lives in Des Moines.

One of the main issues with which the suffragists had to deal was the racism that was rampant in American society in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The other was the fear of immigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe who were pouring into this country at that time.

Beginning with her first public lectures in 1887, Chapman Catt showed a xenophobic fear of the influence of undesirable immigrants. This was a period when nativism was rampant; natives being defined as white, Protestant Northern Europeans as opposed to uneducated recent immigrants. One lecture Chapman Catt delivered at this time was titled "America for Americans." Another was titled "The American Sovereign," the sovereign in Chapman Catt's view being the political bosses who bought the votes of the ignorant immigrant ethnic groups. These voters, she asserted, were paternalistic in outlook and an obstacle to women's fight for enfranchisement.

### Xenophobia A Major Theme

Chapman Catt's fear of immigrants was not a passing thing. In a speech to the annual meeting of the Iowa Woman Suffrage Association in Marshalltown in 1894, she warned of the great danger that lies in the votes of uneducated foreign males in the slums of our cities. There is but one way to avert this danger, she said. That is to cut off the vote of the slums and give it to women so that they will have the power to protect themselves by means of the ballot. She also advocated limiting the ballot to persons of sound mind (assuming, I suppose, that most women had sound minds), and if that policy would be too difficult to administer, she went so far as to advocate depriving all slum residents of the vote.

Chapman Catt's attitude toward African-Americans is somewhat more ambiguous than her attitude toward foreigners. On a personal level she had warm relationships with African-Americans. Mary Church Terrell, president of the National Association of Colored Women, was highly esteemed by Chapman Catt and Terrell described Chapman Catt as completely free from racial prejudice. Yet there is no question that Chapman Catt, along with the suffrage movement as a whole, was willing to ignore efforts to disfranchise African-Americans in the South in order to win white Southern support for women's suffrage.

### Backing Limited Suffrage

In 1894, Chapman Catt accompanied the veteran suffrage leader Susan B. Anthony on a trip through

the South. At that time Southern states were moving to disfranchise African-American voters by means of unfair and unreasonable qualifications for voting. Chapman Catt, taking the expedient route, implicitly reassured her white audiences that she found nothing wrong with limited suffrage. She presumed that their motives for wanting an educated electorate were of the very highest. She then went on to argue that the best way to secure enlightened voters was to enfranchise their mothers, wives and sisters.

In 1900, Chapman Catt became president of the National American Woman Suffrage Association, a position that she held for the next four years. In her address to the annual

**Perhaps the lesson we need to learn is to examine ourselves to see that our actions do not stray too far from our ideals.**

NAWSA convention in 1901, she declared that one of the main obstacles to the enfranchisement of women was the "ill-advised" enfranchisement of the foreigner, the Negro and the Indian. She deplored the introduction into the body politic of these "vast numbers of irresponsible citizens. . . They have made the nation timid" (The nation here means only native-born white Americans.)

At the 1904 convention of NAWSA, Chapman Catt reiterated her fears about the dangers to the "nation" of foreign and African-American voters and spoke approvingly of efforts in the South to disfranchise African-Americans. Several states have made successful efforts to disfranchise Negroes, she said, and although there was good reason to suppose some of the methods employed were unconstitutional, there was none of the vigorous protest from the Northerners which would have been heard 20 years earlier.

"The North," she continued, "thinks it has discovered that the Negro vote is largely purchasable." Although this assertion must be an exaggeration, she conceded, the prevalence of such a rumor gives force to the opinion of persons who have come in most direct political contact with the Negro. She went on to say that with migration of the Negro to the North, it was little wonder that the North was beginning to question the wisdom of his indiscriminate enfranchisement after the

Civil War. Chapman Catt also discussed the ill effects of new immigrants voting and strongly advocated a literacy test for voters. In addition, she suggested careful consideration of adoption of a small property requirement as a condition for voting.

### Broadening Her Base

In 1916, Chapman Catt was persuaded to again assume the presidency of NAWSA as the women's suffrage cause seemed on the verge of success. A number of states had fully enfranchised women, and Illinois had recently granted them the right to vote for president. By this time Chapman Catt realized the necessity of broadening the base of women's support and she reached out to the working class in large cities, among whom there was an indication of increasing support for the suffrage cause. Xenophobia was no longer a major theme in Chapman Catt's rhetoric, although as late as 1920 she was still advocating an educational qualification for the ballot.

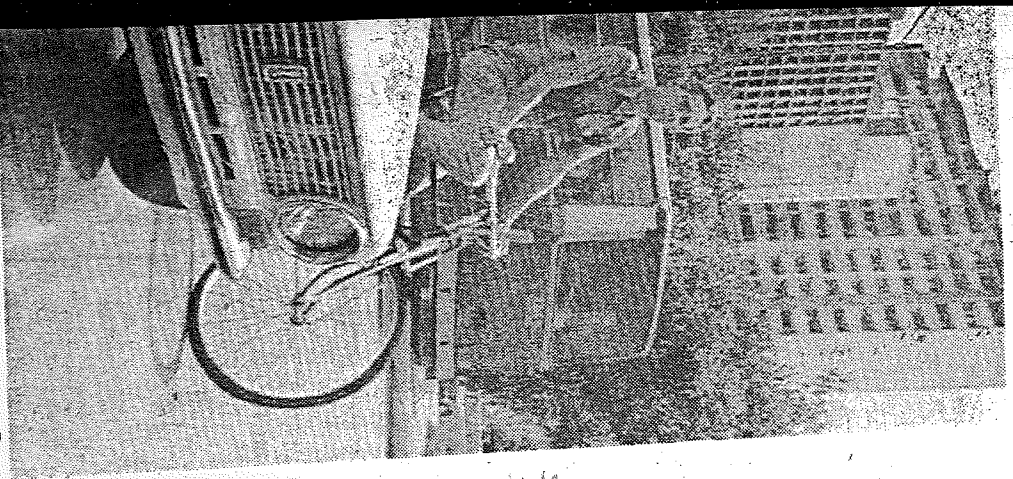
By 1916, African-American women, unwelcome in most suffrage societies, had formed their own groups to support women's right to vote. Yet even liberal white suffragists feared that association with African-American suffragists would hurt their cause politically.

In 1919, when the Northeastern Federation of Women's Clubs, an African-American organization, applied for cooperative membership in NAWSA, Ida Husted Harper, writing in behalf of Chapman Catt, begged the federation to postpone its application for membership. She explained that the suffrage amendment was now a question of cold, hard politics and that in order to secure its passage, the votes of Southern members of Congress were necessary. Harper argued that once the amendment had been ratified, African-American as well as white women would be enfranchised. Aileen S. Kradtior, in her book "The Ideas of the Woman Suffrage Movement," points out that "Most of the Northern suffragists who endeavored to secure the necessary Southern support evidently never suspected that their compromises might not appear perfectly reasonable to Negro women as well."

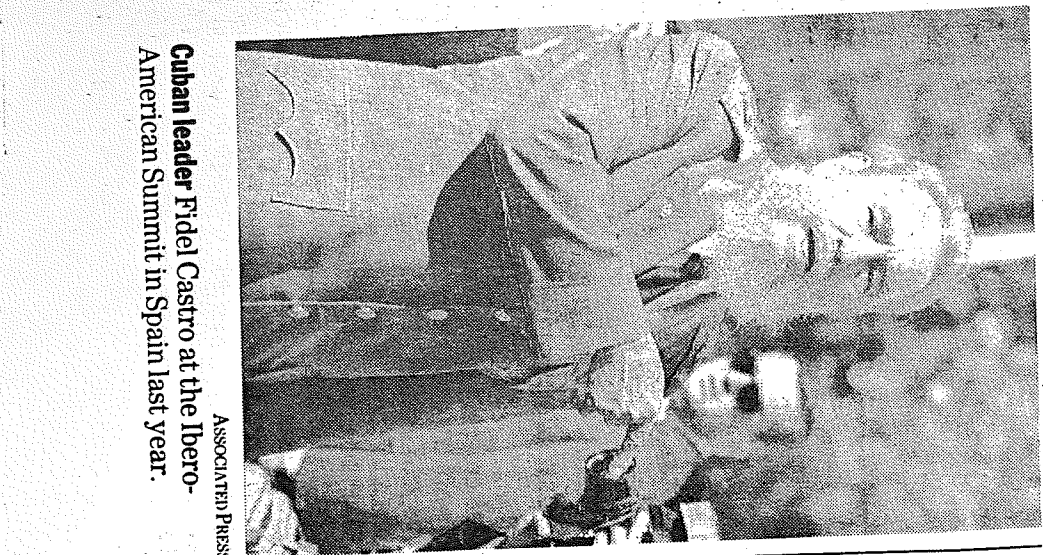
### A Tolerant Side

Under different circumstances Chapman Catt was much more tolerant. Speaking at the first conference on the Cause and Cure of War in Washington, D.C., in 1925, she told her audience that she was disturbed by the fact that there were no people

**CATT Please Turn to Page 2C**



Country suffers from a gasoline shortage.



Cuban leader Fidel Castro at the Ibero-American Summit in Spain last year.

# Country not cracking

"We have no famine," he insisted. (Our trip guide later offered the explanation that the wife might just be a poor manager and had not properly spaced her food allotments to cover the intervals when rationed products become available.)

I detected no signs of disloyalty in this family or disaffection with the Castro regime. Nor did I among three young journalists with whom several of us had a long, intimate, philosophical discussion one evening. They remained committed to the Revolution of 1969, they said.

The journalists said they wanted better relations with the United States, but only on Cuba's terms. They did not want the United States to dominate their country as they perceived that it had in the past. Almost no one mentioned Fidel Castro. We rarely saw his name or face in public places. Most of the displays seemed weathered.

During the time we were there I saw only two stories mentioning Castro in "Granma," the official Cuban Communist Party daily newspaper. A long story about the eye ailment quoted him as calling on world health groups for help. The second

reported that he had received a Russian vice president, who had come to Havana supposedly to patch up relations between the two countries.

(The editors at "Granma" said that Castro seemed to have stopped sending long articles to the newspaper, for which they were grateful.) In seeming to downplay Castro, the Cubans may have been suggesting to us that it is not because of loyalty to Fidel that they are accepting the sacrifices of the "Special Period."

The young journalists seemed to be saying that, whatever might happen to Castro or to the economy, they intend to remain loyal to their country and committed to its independence. And whatever happens, they don't want the Cubans who have established themselves in Miami to return to take over the country.

**KENNETH RYSTROM** is a professor of communication studies at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University at Blacksburg, Va., and a former *Register* editorial writer.

# Another side of Catt

**CATT**

*Continued from Page 1C*

of color at this conference. The reason, she explained, was because "the so-called first-class hotels have an agreement that no colored person shall be accommodated either by room or in the dining room." She said that in the United States we do not face the color question fairly and squarely and our failure to find some kind of a decent solution for it is used against us throughout the Western hemisphere." Catt's statement is an example of how much easier it is to live up to one's principles when expediency is not a concern.

To get back to my friend's question, "Was Carrie Chapman Catt a bigot?" The record shows that she was indeed racist in the policies she supported if not in her fundamental beliefs; she was also xenophobic. Does this make her a bigot? I reluctantly admit that it does. This is one side of Chapman Catt's character. Does it overshadow her inspired leadership in the effort to win the vote for women and to promote world peace? I would argue that it does not.

Chapman Catt lived at a time when many social scientists claimed that the new immigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe as well as African-Americans were racially inferior. It also was a time when lynchings were a common occurrence and the federal government did nothing to stop them. Chapman Catt was a product of these times and her views were generally acceptable in her social milieu.

As Kradtitor points out, the suffragists exhibited both the strengths and the weaknesses of other reform movements in American history, especially when in justifying their demand for the vote they voiced principles too extreme for their own consistent allegiance. "The pioneers of the suffrage movement, living in a time when victory for their cause was eons away, did not have to concern themselves too much with tactics. . . . Later, when victories could be won here and there at the cost of small concessions to political expediency, the hard facts of political life and the equivocal position in American society of these middle-class women exerted a pull away from the high ideals and ringing declarations. To win support from needed allies they compromised with those principles perhaps more than the requirements of the alliances dictated. More often they voiced the ideals and advocated the compromises at the same time."

How judgmental from today's point of view can we be of this ugly side of the suffrage movement? What would we feminists have done under similar circumstances? Perhaps the lesson we need to learn is to examine ourselves to see that our actions do not stray too far from our ideals.



# Healthy decision

environmental tobacco environmental tobacco four times the expected and two and one-half expected heart disease n-exposed workers. This a California waitress ngerous occupation for the highest mortality of occupation group.

reasonably free of pre-ases of death and disability has a duty to define causes of death and dis- that scientific data. We d on scientific data to environmental tobacco significant preventable

gales restaurants is an emotional as well as health issue. No one likes to be told what they can or cannot do. The only exceptions we make in our willingness to have our behavior limited is when we can see that the restriction is for the overwhelming public good and when we acknowledge that the action benefits a great number of people who would otherwise be harmed.

Therefore, we accept prohibitions on shouting fire in crowded theaters, and we wear seat belts and shoulder harnesses in motor vehicles. The scientific data showing the dangerous consequences of exposure to environmental tobacco smoke fit this

glance at any restaurant that allows smoking shows the number of people smoking to be relatively small and the number of people breathing the second-hand smoke to be great. The few smokers who "go elsewhere" can open up a welcome breath of fresh air for those who prefer not to be exposed — the over 80 percent of our population that does not smoke.

Los Angeles will allow us to collect the first large-scale data on the impact of smoking bans in restaurants. In the meantime, the surrounding cities are not welcoming smokers and their increased costs with open arms. They are rushing to put their own restrictions on smoking in res-aurants into place. Good medicine

# OPINION

## The Moines Sunday Register

A GANNETT NEWSPAPER

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### HONEST DEBATE NEEDED

## Not all women want combat duty

By LINDA CHAVEZ

First Lt. Jeannie Flynn, who will become the first woman combat pilot in the Air Force, symbolizes for many people what the debate to open up combat positions to women is all about.

She is a distinguished ROTC graduate of the University of Texas, holds a master's degree in aeronautical and aerospace engineering from Stanford University and graduated at the top of her Air Force pilot training class.

When Secretary of Defense Les Aspin announced recently that he was lifting restrictions on women in some air and naval combat positions, and instructing the military to justify why women should be kept out of other combat roles, commentators heaped praise on the decision on behalf of all those Jeannie Flynn's past and present who had been denied the opportunity to be all they could be in the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marines.

By focusing on opportunities for a few hundred female pilots, however, the debate on women in combat fails to address the much larger issue of the obligations this decision may well place on the more than 200,000 other servicewomen now in the military and the countless others who may be called to serve involuntarily in the future.

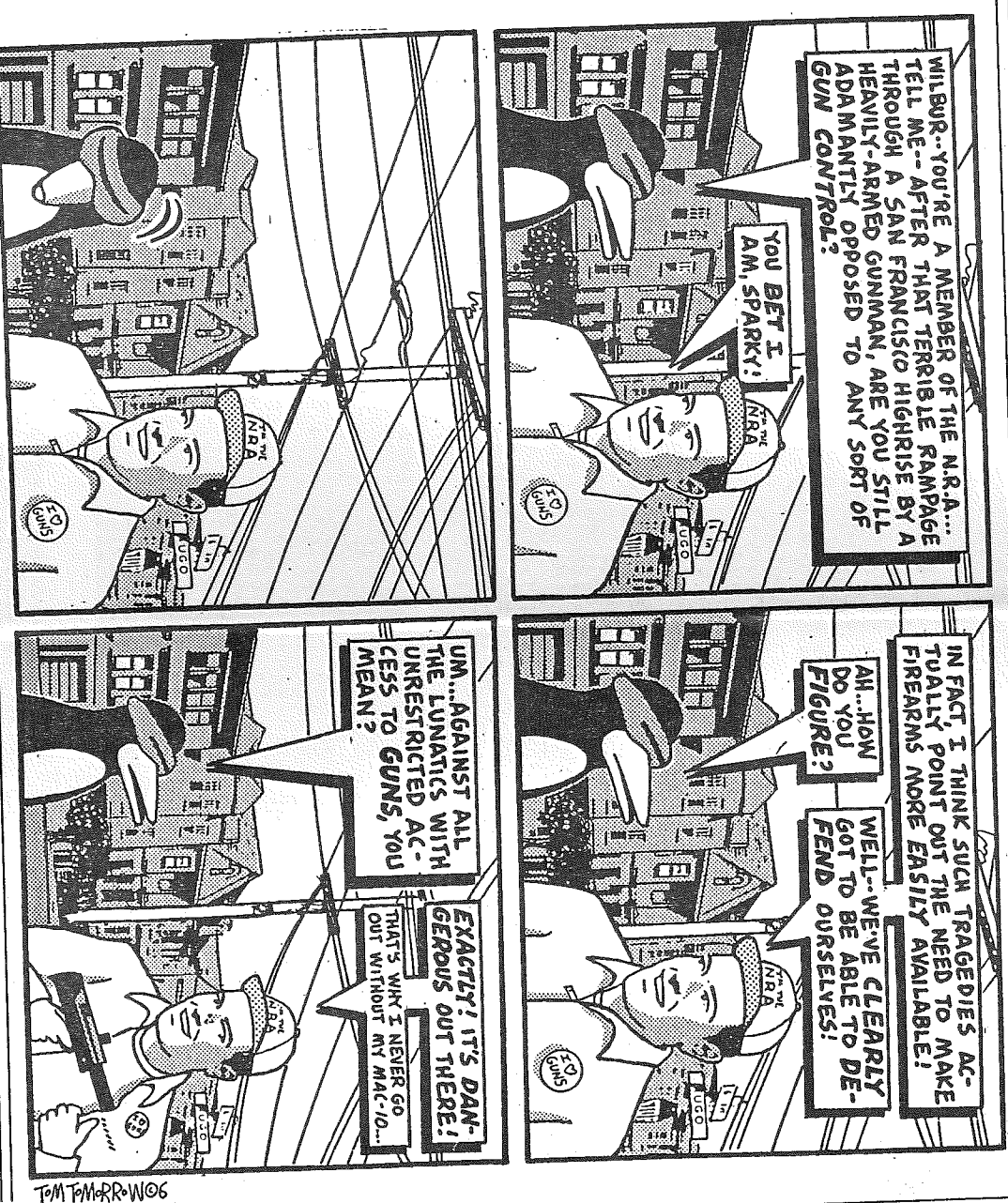
As admirable as Flynn is, former Staff Sgt. Joni Carter, an 11-year Army veteran, is more typical of servicewomen both in terms of her experience and her goals. Carter entered the service right after high school.

"I was looking for direction in my life and the Army offered me both a challenge and a chance to travel," she told me recently. What she was not looking for was an opportunity, much less an obligation, to serve in combat.

Women make up 11 percent of the all-volunteer force, a historic high, and most — 90 percent — are enlisted or non-commissioned personnel like Carter. Because military service itself is voluntary, many proponents of women in combat seem to believe that assignment to combat positions will also be voluntary once the ban is lifted, affecting only those ambitious and talented young women who want to sign up for combat duty.

### THIS MODERN WORLD

## By Tom Tomorrow



TOM TOMORROW

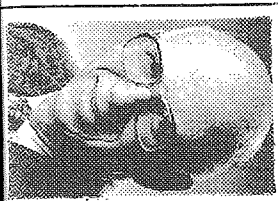
David Broder

## Ross Perot: Still out there

It is well-established in custom and precedent that when the cat's away, the mice may play. While President Clinton was off summiting last week, Washington was trying to divert itself from a withering heat wave by playing

titly they helped craft as "a different kind of Democrat." They want to nudge him back into line by urging him to woo the Perot bloc.

Their argument is straightforward, if self-serving: "President Clinton's dilemma can be stated simply as a Perot adviser last year, has a thought that could give nightmares to Clinton, congressional Democrats and establishment Washington. Suppose Luntz says, Perot buys a



That's not the way the military works — nor should it be. The services currently may assign women to any position not closed to them by law or regulation, just as they do men, based on the military's needs, not the individual's preferences.

The overwhelming majority of women in the military say they have no interest in volunteering for combat.

They are not likely to have a say in the matter, however. As the Presidential Commission on the Assignment of Women in the Armed Forces noted in its report last November, "The Armed Forces have never had a 'voluntary assignment policy.' Such a concept would hinder combat readiness and effectiveness, especially in an era which necessitates a readily deployable force."

Once the military lifts restrictions on combat assignments, the services can assign any woman to any position for which the military determines she is qualified.

This does not mean that the military leadership is eager to assign women to most combat positions. Earlier this month, a group of military officers charged with drafting policy to implement Aspin's directive recommended that women continue to be barred from ground-combat positions.

Ready or not, the ultimate decision may not be entirely up to the American people or the military, but rather to the courts. More significantly, the courts' resolution of the issue has the potential to affect all young women, not just those who currently serve in the military.

The problem arises from a 1981 Supreme Court decision upholding the constitutionality of male-only draft registration. The case, *Rostker vs. Goldberg*, stemmed from a Vietnam-era suit that lay dormant in the courts for nearly a decade after President Richard Nixon ended the draft in 1973.

Plaintiffs revived the case in 1980, when President Jimmy Carter, in response to the Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan, decided to reinstate draft registration and proposed that women, as well as men, be required to register, and that they be eligible for conscription.

Congress rejected the president's proposals, and the court upheld Congress' action. But the language of the decision virtually guarantees it will be overturned if challenged under the new rules opening some combat positions to women.

Although I'm unconvinced, perhaps women should be required to serve their country in wartime, and maybe those who join the all-volunteer force should expect to end up in combat.

Still, there has been little honest public debate on this issue, without which we should not proceed. We ought at least to acknowledge that opening the cockpit hatch to women like Jeannie Flynn will thrust untold others into a wild blue yonder of unanticipated duties and obligations.

**LINDA CHAVEZ** is a fellow at the Manhattan Institute. She wrote this for *The Washington Post*.

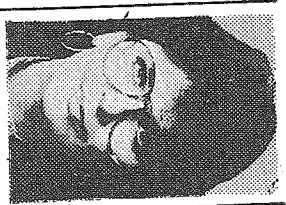
**If only one out of 10 voters heeded his advice, Perot could claim credit for defeating maybe 60 House members and eight or 10 senators.**

speculation games — about the merits of critic, Ross Perot, and his millions of followers.

The leaders of both the Republican and Democratic parties fervently wish that Perot would go away, of course, but the Dallas billionaire and 1992 independent presidential candidate keeps hovering on the horizon. Even Clinton pollster Stanley B. Greenberg, who says he is "not certain about Ross Perot's durability," quickly adds that he's "very certain about the durability of the Perot voter bloc."

"The depth of their alienation," Greenberg says, "is such that it is hard to imagine they will be won over to any other party unless there is a sustained demonstration of successful change."

Greenberg was commenting on a detailed study of Perot voters that he had made for the Democratic Leadership Council (DLC), the centrist group Clinton once headed and which provided much of the rhetoric and many of the ideas on which the president campaigned. Today, DLC president Al From and his allies worry that Clinton is losing the iden-



**"Blanche on the Lam" is about race and class from the perspective of a character whose voice is rarely heard in fiction.**

**W**hen two women who might have become attorney general were disqualified over the issue of their domestic help, we got a hard, quick look at just how little we value people who take care of our house and our children.

Over and over again we heard that women turned to undocumented workers because they simply couldn't find American workers willing to do the job for the pay available. Nobody seemed to think taking care of home and kids was important work. Our mouths said we did, but the pay scale said something else. It is, of course, important work. It's also often boring and almost always low paying. Therefore, the people who perform it can't be much, right?

You know that's how a lot of people think. You know it is.

Enter Blanche White.

Blanche is a black domestic worker. She is a fictional character out of the mind of Barbara Neely, who has while writing a mystery novel about Blanche White, also written (as she puts it) about race and class in America from the perspective of a character whose voice is rarely heard in fiction: an intelligent, perceptive, poor working-class black woman with a wry sense of humor and a healthy sense of place.

In Neely's first book, "Blanche on the Lam," (St. Martin's, \$16.95 cloth; Viking Penguin, \$4.95 paper) Blanche works for Grace and Everett. She always called her employ-

Marshall, say. "The plurality he won in 1992 is too narrow a political base from which to fulfill his pledge to fundamentally change the nation's course. Only by rallying independent (Perot) voters behind his program can he operate from a position of strength."

Since the DLC leaders believe it essential for Clinton to woo the Perot supporters, they urge him to "take a more assertive approach toward Congress... push Congress harder to enact a program of radical change.... The worst thing that can happen to President Clinton is that he permit himself to be captured by the Washington establishment."

That is far easier said than done. A Democratic president cannot disown the Democratic Congress or the Washington "establishment" at the same time he is imploring Congress to pass his program and trying to woo the Washington interest-group establishment to his side. If it becomes a contest between Clinton and Perot over disdain for Congress, Perot will win hands-down.

In fact, Frank Luntz, the young

**Linda ELLERBEE**

## Falling for an obvious con game

ers by their first names in her mind. It helped her to remember that having the money to hire a domestic worker didn't make you any better than the worker, only richer. She also called her employers ma'am and sir to their faces, no matter how much they insisted on some other title or name. She'd once had two cats named Ma'am and Sir."

Blanche is a real woman, and real easy to like. She's big ("... she bought a set of underwear, including two pair of queer-sized pantyhose. As usual, the latter purchase made her think that if she were a queen, she sure as hell wouldn't stuff herself into a pair of sausage casings."), and she has a dangerously large attitude and heart.

Blanche constantly worries about catching what she calls "The Darkies' Disease," in which the domestic worker begins to care for those she takes care of and begins to think that she is loved by her employers in return. Blanche is reminded of a woman who takes the same bus she does and is always talking about old Mr. Stanley, "who said she was more like a daughter to him than his own child, and how little Edna often slipped and called her Mama. That woman and everyone else on the bus knew what would happen to all that close family feeling if she told Mr. Stanley, or little Edna's mama, that instead of scrubbing the kitchen floor she was going to sit down with a cup of coffee and make some phone calls."

Sunday before next year's mid-term congressional election, and says something to this effect: "You can decide on Tuesday if Washington will continue to waste your money, raise your taxes, send your jobs to Mexico, mortgage your children's future, and ignore your wishes. Or you can recapture the capital for yourselves, the owners of this country. All you have to do is to vote for the challenger in your state and district, and Washington will be your capital again."

If only one out of 10 voters heeded his advice, Luntz says, Perot could claim credit for defeating maybe 60 House members and eight or 10 senators. "The day after the election, he would be the most powerful guy in America. And it's no risk to him, he's still independent and unobligated to either party."

That's the kind of mischievous thought mice indulge when the cat's away.

**DAVID BRODER** writes for *The Washington Post*.

Blanche has a lot of trouble understanding "The Darkies' Disease." She's been known to get it, but she doesn't get it. "What she didn't understand was how you convinced yourself that you were actually loved by people who paid you the lowest possible wages... you had to pretend that obvious facts — facts that were like fences around your relationship — were not true."

And America is a classless society, right?

Buy "Blanche on the Lam." The book, like the character, is fine, funny and proud. The life of Blanche White has some important, basic things to say, things many people don't want to hear, especially those people who held the power for the past 12 years and believed that if you didn't prosper in *their* America, it was your fault and just too damn bad. Blanche is living (living fiction-al?) proof that those people were (and still are) wrong, down to the very place where their souls ought to have been.

"Too proud. That was always her problem... she didn't want to admit to anyone that she worked six days a week and still didn't make enough money to take care of herself and her children. Her low salary wasn't her fault, but it still made her feel like a fool, as if she'd fallen for some obvious con game."

**LINDA ELLERBEE** is a syndicated columnist and television commentator.