

The Progressive Forum

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Gloria Steinem Leads Fall Season Which Includes James Hansen and Ken Burns

PHOTOS OF STEINEM, HANSEN, BURNS ATTACHED

The Progressive Forum, Houston, will present Gloria Steinem, a pioneer in advancing women's social equality, speaking on "The Progression of Feminism: Where Are We Going?" on Monday, September 17, 2007, at 7:30 p.m. at The Wortham Center Brown Theater. Steinem's book, *Outrageous Acts and Everyday Rebellions*, will be on sale, and she will sign books at the end of the evening. The event will also commemorate the 30th anniversary of the historic National Women's Conference which took place in Houston in 1977 attended by over 20,000 women including Steinem.

Dr. James Hansen will appear on Wednesday October 24, at 7:30 at The Wortham Center, Cullen Theater, in a program entitled "Climate Change: The Latest Science." Dr. Hansen is head of the NASA Institute for Space Studies in New York City and was the first to raise broad awareness of global warming when he testified to Congress in the 1980s.

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Ken Burns, the acclaimed PBS documentary producer of such features as “The Civil War,” “Baseball,” and “Jazz,” will appear Tuesday November 13 at The Wortham Center Brown Theater at 7:30 in a program called “The War,” the title of his latest 14 hour series on World War II which PBS will air over two weeks beginning on Sunday, September 23 and then repeat over the next few weeks. Burns will appear at The Progressive Forum in a Veterans’ Day event and will sign the series companion book at end of the evening.

Randall R. Morton, president of The Progressive Forum, said, “Steinem’s event will recall important Houston history. Feminist scholars say the 1977 National Women’s Conference in Houston was historic, a turning point in the struggle for women’s Equality, and help set the feminist agenda for the last 30 years. In Steinem’s essay called “Houston and History” in her book, *Outrageous Acts and Everyday Rebellions*, she said, ‘For myself, Houston and all the events surrounding it have become a landmark in personal history.... Figuring out the date of any other event now means remembering: Was it before or after Houston?’”

Historians compare the Houston conference to the Women’s Rights Convention held by suffragists in 1848 in Seneca Falls, New York. In fact, an article in *Time* magazine dated November 28, 1977, reported that a torch relay from Seneca Falls to Houston kicked-off the conference, the final leg run by conference leader Bella Abzug, Billy Jean King, and others in a driving rain. *Time* said, “Nothing like it has been seen in the U.S. in at least 129 years-or ever...the largest political conference of women ever assembled in the country.”

Morton said the National Women’s Conference took place November 18 to 21,

1977 in the Sam Houston Coliseum, now demolished and replaced by The Hobby Center. It was attended by two thousand delegates and eighteen thousand observers. The wives of three U.S. Presidents attended, Rosalyn Carter, Betty Ford, and Ladybird Johnson as well as Coretta Scott King. The Houston conference was the first national women's assembly financed and authorized by the federal government. And it was the first to feature elected representatives from every state and territory to address justice and equality for women in a kind of constitutional convention. The conference enacted a comprehensive National Action Plan to submit to the federal government identifying barriers for women and ways to overcome them with the Equal Rights Amendment as its centerpiece. The plan included measures that set the agenda for women's rights for the last thirty years such as ending sexual discrimination in employment and education, marital property relations, lesbian and gay rights, abortion rights, women's health, child care, battered women, a cabinet level women's department, and many others.

Gloria Steinem is a co-founder of Greenstone Media, the first women-owned radio network in the U.S. launched in September 2006. She was also co-founder of the Women's Media Center in New York in 2004 which works to assure that women and women's experiences are reflected in the media. In 1971, she convened the historic National Women's Political Caucus, a group that advances the numbers of pro-equality women in elected and appointed office at the national and state levels. In 1972, she co-founded Ms. magazine and remained one of its editors for fifteen years. She was co-founder and president of Voters for Choice, a pro-choice political action committee for 25 years. She is also a founder of Take Our Daughters to Work Day, now a national day

devoted to girls that has now become an institution. In a poll conducted by *Atlantic Monthly*, she was part of a list of the 33 most influential living Americans. Mr. Steinem graduated *Phi Beta Kappa* from Smith College in 1956 and spent two years in India on a Chester Bowles Fellowship and was influenced by Gandhian activism. Her books include *Revolution from Within: A Book of Self-Esteem*, *Outrageous Acts and Everyday Rebellions*, *Moving Beyond Words*, and *Marilyn: Norma Jean, on the life of Marilyn Monroe*. Her writing also appears in many anthologies and text books, and she is editor of Houghton Mifflin's *The Reader's Companion to U.S. Women's History*. She is currently at work on *Road to the Heart: America As if Everyone Mattered*, a book about her more than thirty years on the road as feminist organizer. She lives in New York City.

The Progressive Forum is a nonpartisan, nonprofit 501(C)(3) civic speaker organization presenting seven events a year in Houston's finest theaters. Its purpose is to enrich our democracy and culture by presenting the greatest minds from all the fields of human endeavor, the sciences and the humanities, as well as politics and public affairs. Its progressive viewpoint is rooted in the mainstream constitutional, enlightenment, and egalitarian values of America's founding fathers, moderate values that need affirming, now more than ever.

The Progressive Forum originated a new model in the field of public affairs to deliver a higher quality experience to much larger audiences than typically attend speaking events by operating like a performing arts company. It uses the finest theaters, pays speaker fees to attract the world's top cultural stars, uses intensive marketing, and offers convenient box office services.

Founder and president Randall R. Morton has owned Randall Morton International, Inc., for 31 years, an advertising and public relations agency whose clients have included leading oil equipment companies in the U.S., Japan, Mexico, and Europe. Morton created and hosted the Oilfield Breakfast Forum, which became the largest

speaker platform in the oil industry whose surplus went to Houston's SEARCH Homeless Project. While earning a degree in government from Georgetown University in Washington, D.C., he served as an issue writer for the Democratic National Committee.

Tickets for all events range from \$15 to \$64 with further discounts at certain price levels for students, seniors over 65, and groups of fifteen or more. A limited number of premier-patron and patron seats range from \$110 to \$200 and includes a private reception with the speaker, autographed book, commemorative book plate, and center-front seating location. Tickets are available on line at www.progressiveforumhouston.org which allows you to print your tickets at your computer. The online box office system automatically provides you a 10% discount (except for patron levels) if you purchase tickets for all three fall events, Steinem, Hansen, and Burns, a subscription package. For tickets by phone, call the box office 832-251-0706. Box office services are provided by ClicknPrint. There is no physical box office to purchase tickets in advance. For more information, call The Progressive Forum office at 713-664-0020 or email info@progressiveforumhouston.org.