

7-25-1984

## Remarks to Alpha Kappa Alpha

Geraldine Ferraro

Follow this and additional works at: [https://ir.lawnet.fordham.edu/vice\\_presidential\\_campaign\\_speeches\\_1984](https://ir.lawnet.fordham.edu/vice_presidential_campaign_speeches_1984)



Part of the [Law Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Ferraro, Geraldine, "Remarks to Alpha Kappa Alpha" (1984). *Speeches*. 23.  
[https://ir.lawnet.fordham.edu/vice\\_presidential\\_campaign\\_speeches\\_1984/23](https://ir.lawnet.fordham.edu/vice_presidential_campaign_speeches_1984/23)

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the 1984 Vice-Presidential Campaign at FLASH: The Fordham Law Archive of Scholarship and History. It has been accepted for inclusion in Speeches by an authorized administrator of FLASH: The Fordham Law Archive of Scholarship and History. For more information, please contact [tmelnick@law.fordham.edu](mailto:tmelnick@law.fordham.edu).

REMARKS BY REP. GERALDINE A. FERRARO TO ALPHA KAPPA ALPHA  
SORORITY - WASHINGTON, D.C. - JULY 25, 1984

Thank you, Dr. Bryant, for your introduction. I had the privilege of hearing Faye Bryant speak earlier this year when she testified at our Democratic Platform hearing in Houston.

It was also my pleasure to meet during the Democratic Convention with several other distinguished members of Alpha Kappa Alpha, including C. Delores Tucker, vice chair of the Democratic National Committee. I thank all of you for your ideas and your participation as we face the challenge of this election year.

Before I begin, I want to take special note of the presence here tonight of two outstanding Alpha Kappa Alpha members who are also outstanding Members of the United States Congress -- my colleagues Cardiss Collins and Katie Hall.

And I want to recognize the Directorate of Alpha Kappa Alpha, most particularly your pioneering member and second president Lorraine Green.

Lorraine Green was fighting for women's rights before women won their right to vote. We all owe her a debt of gratitude for where we are today.

When Walter Mondale asked me just 13 days ago -- can it really be less than two weeks? -- to take the second spot on his ticket I was honored and delighted -- not only for myself but for all Americans who have been denied the full measure of opportunity promised by our great country. I was proud that the Democratic Party was proving itself, once again, the party of inclusion, not exclusion; the party of fairness for all, not privilege for a lucky few.

I was proud that the sign that says "White Male Only Need Apply" would no longer hang outside the door of the White House. As a woman and an Italian-American, I am honored to be making history on behalf of both groups. But I also know something else. Until every American can dream of growing up to be President, the American dream will not be fulfilled.

We are proud of this breakthrough. But you and I know that there are still millions of women who have not had the chance to move forward as I have done. Millions of women who have been denied a good education; denied a well-paying job; denied proper recognition of the value of their

underfunded schools while an Administration -- this Administration -- stands up for segregated academies. And who have seen the college education they themselves have attained slip away from their children because student loan programs have been cut.

And who knows more about unemployment than families who have watched their boys and girls look in vain for decent jobs. Unemployment among our black citizens is more than twice as high as joblessness among white Americans. The job gap has grown -- not decreased -- since Ronald Reagan took office.

We care -- all of us -- about the feminization of poverty. But who understands it better than those black women and women of color who are supporting families on their own but getting paid even less for their work than white women.

This Administration has sought to balance the federal budget on the backs of our neediest citizens. And what has the Reagan team given us in return? A \$200 billion deficit and a surplus of hunger and homelessness and despair.

We are in this together. I cannot succeed -- the Mondale-Ferraro ticket cannot succeed -- without your support and your votes and your commitment. Nor should we

contributions to our society; denied, as black Americans of both sexes were once denied, a place in our Constitution.

There are those who have tried in the last four years to call our causes "special interests" -- to set sister against sister and brother against brother. You -- who have fought so long and valiantly for civil rights, for decent education, for political empowerment -- you understand that our strength lies in what we can do together.

To those who would paint a white face on all American women I say: American women come in all colors, all religions, all national origins.

We care -- all of us -- about peace and national security. But who understands these issues better than women who have lost sons and brothers and husbands in Vietnam and Lebanon and Grenada. We cannot forget how many of the names engraved on the Vietnam Memorial here in Washington are the names of young black men and women.

We care -- all of us -- about better schools and greater job opportunities. But who understands these issues better than mothers who have seen their children sent to

succeed if we do not understand that it is time to open doors in this country, not to close them. That it is truly time to let each American become all he or she is capable of being. That it is time to see all the colors of the Rainbow when we utter the words "We the People."

It was your former president, Lorraine Green, who invited Eleanor Roosevelt, a white woman born to privilege but committed to justice, to become a sister of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority in the 1930s.

In this, Eleanor Roosevelt's centennial year, I pledge my best efforts to renewing and revitalizing and expanding the historic partnership which is making the American dream of opportunity a reality for all of us. In the 1960s women fighting for greater rights had a slogan -- Sisterhood is Powerful. You of Alpha Kappa Alpha have known that for 75 years. Your tradition of excellence and commitment have energized us all. The voter registration drive you launched here this week is an inspiration to every American who seeks to take part in the promise of America. I promise you that the Mondale-Ferraro ticket will prove itself worthy of your ideas, your hard work and your votes. Thank you.