

THE DEMOCRATS HAD ALREADY CONCEDED THE WAR ON WOMEN

Curiously, in his chronology of the talking point, “the War on Women,” Dave Weigel doesn’t mention the actual terrorist attack on a Planned Parenthood clinic a few weeks back. Nor does Marc Ambinder in his thoughtful piece on the outrage mobilized by the term. And these men commenting on the Democratic Party’s effort to mobilize its tribes by raising outrage over the GOP’s treatment of women are right, up to a point. In DC, that metaphor, “War on Women,” has been cognitively divorced from what happens when a man conducts a terrorist attack (one not treated as a terrorist attack, mind you) on a clinic designed to help women access the same life choices men get by default.

In their review of the outraged response to Hillary Rosen’s suggestion that Ann Romney had never worked a day in her life, neither Weigel nor Ambinder nor just about anyone else noted the unspoken implication of Mitt Romney’s defense of his wife that raising their five children (with help, mind you) was a full time job. Mitt effectively admitted that he wasn’t doing the child-rearing—still a common gender assumption among men of Mitt’s age, but nevertheless stunning in the way **no one noticed** that Mitt admitted his role as father involves outsourcing all the child-rearing to the mother. The true scandal of the Hillary Rosen poutrage, IMO, is that no one considered the flip side of Ann’s full-time job as mother: Mitt’s abdication of child-rearing as a father. Sure. When his boys were little, he was a busy man and all that—he had people to fire and jobs to outsource. But he was able to focus so closely on those things because Ann did the parenting work for the two of them.

Meanwhile, the Democrats are still going to use GOP attacks on women as a political stunt. DNC

Chair Debbie Wasserman Schultz tweeted or re-tweeted 7 comments about women's issues yesterday, in addition to the seemingly mandatory condemnation of Rosen.

I was particularly amused by this DWS tweet:

Bottom line: Choice, affordable contraception, and Planned Parenthood are at stake in this election.
<http://j.mp/I6A8c0>

As it happened, a few hours after DWS sent that tweet, I went to a Debbie Stabenow event hosted by a local women's group. As we were waiting for the Senator to speak, a top county Democrat was sitting several rows behind me trying to convince some of the women not to support Trevor Thomas. "There is absolutely no way he can win," the guy said (the polling says he's wrong, and I suspect he knows that). In addition to saying a gay man can't win, he also said a pro-choice person can't win in the district (his listeners pointed out that Stabenow herself had won the district; so have at least two other pro-choice candidates). Then he described Steven Pestka, using the line Michigan Democrats used to defend Bart Stupak as he was rolling back access to choice for women across the country.

He's with us on everything else.

But the really appalling comment, uttered by a man at a women's event, was this:

I need to win this year.

If the guy were reasonably intelligent, he might have said, "we need to win the gavel back for Nancy Pelosi." But he couldn't even muster a "we need to win" this year. Nope. It was "I need to win this year," and that's why women have to suck it up and vote for someone who has attacked their autonomy in the past.

Steve Pestka's with us on everything else, this guy said at a women's event. But he's not just

anti-choice. When he was in the State House (the experience locals point to to claim he's a better candidate than Trevor) he scored a whopping 0% on votes to support choice. That included a vote for HB 4655, which singled out Planned Parenthood to be defunded, precisely the outrage—at the national level—that Democrats use as the cornerstone of their metaphorical attack on the GOP for its “War on Women.”

As the DNC Chair was claiming this election was about “choice, affordable contraception, and Planned Parenthood,” at least one local Dem official was telling women they have to vote for a guy who has already voted against all those things because he needs to win this year.

This metaphorical “War on Women” makes nice DC theater. But Dems conceded even the metaphor some time ago.