

1989

Karen Thompson Press Release and Poster All College Convocation 1989

Denison University

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NEWS...from Denison University



Public Affairs Office • Box A • Granville, Ohio 43023 • 614-587-6266

November 16, 1989

Ref: 89/90-83
For Release: Immediately
Contact: Leslie Ringle '90
Stewart B. Dyke

ACTIVIST FOR GAY AND LESBIAN RIGHTS TO PRESENT DENISON CONVOCATION

GRANVILLE----Karen Thompson, an activist for gay and lesbian rights and the rights of the disabled, will present an All-College Convocation at 8 p.m. Thursday (Nov. 30) in Denison University's Slayter Auditorium. Her address, "Why Couldn't Sharon Kowalski Come Home?," is sponsored by Gay and Lesbian Advocates at Denison (GLAD), Women's Programs and the Office of Student Life and is free and open to the public.

Thompson is currently involved in a highly publicized struggle to gain custody of her partner, Sharon Kowalski, who was paralyzed in a car accident in 1983. In 1985, after winning unrestricted guardianship of his daughter, Donald Kowalski forbade Thompson from visiting Sharon Kowalski by isolating her in a nursing home that was not equipped for intensive rehabilitation.

After a three-and-a-half year separation, Thompson was reunited with Kowalski in February of 1989 following her recent success, in a long line of legal defeats, to move Kowalski from a nursing home to a rehabilitation center for intensive treatment. It was seen as not only a victory for advocates of gay and lesbian rights, but also for the self-determination of disabled people as well.

Thompson, along with Julie Andrzejewski, is the co-author of

a book, "Why Can't Sharon Kowalski Come Home?" that details her plight to gain guardianship of Kowalski and thus play an active role in her rehabilitation. The book received an "Editor's Choice Award" from Lambda Rising in 1989.

In addition to this recognition, Thompson also received the Humanitarian Award from the American Psychological Association in 1989. She also won the 1989 Chrysalis Feminist of the Year Award from the Minneapolis Women's Center and the 1988 Human Rights Award from the Human Rights Campaign Fund.

Thompson was the keynote speaker at the National March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay Rights in 1987 and spoke at the recent National March on Washington for Women's Rights in April of this year.

Since 1974, Thompson has served as an associate professor of physical education and recreation at St. Cloud State University, (St. Cloud, Minn.) where she has also served as an adjunct professor of human relations since 1986.

A 1969 graduate of Muskingum College, Thompson earned her master's degree in physical education and athletics from St. Cloud State University and is currently a doctoral candidate at Ohio State University.

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CALENDAR LISTING: Denison University, Slayter Auditorium, Granville, Ohio---All-College Convocation featuring Karen Thompson, advocate for gay and lesbian rights and the rights of the disabled, speaking on "Why Can't Sharon Kowalski Come Home?"; 8 p.m. Thursday (Nov. 30). Free. Call 614/587-6366 for more information.

KAREN THOMPSON

*Activist for Gay and Lesbian Rights
and Rights for the Disabled*



speaking on

**“WHY COULDN’T SHARON KOWALSKI
COME HOME?”**

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 1989

8:00 P.M.

SLAYTER AUDITORIUM

A GAY AWARENESS WEEK ACTIVITY

ALL-COLLEGE CONVOCATION

Sponsored by Outreach, Women’s Programs, Office of Student Life