March's strength is diversity

(Continued from page 1)

— which has been uniformly holistic to almost every goal of the women's movement — has threatened a women's right to an abortion more clearly. No longer does the landmark 1973 Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion, Roe v. Wade, stand unchal-

lenged: perceptions of a conservative majority on the Court and eight (going on nine) years of anti-

abortion rhetoric from the White House have shak-

en the confidence with which women viewed their earlier judicial victory.

"It's very frightening," having Bush in the White House," said a Boston College woman. "He's so anti-

women's equality.

To the pro-choice movement, George Bush is as

great an evil as Ronald Reagan, if not greater. His earlier judicial victory.

abortion rhetoric from the White House have shak-

en the Court and eight (going on nine) years of anti-

legalizing abortion,

goal of the women's movement — has threatened a

past both the White House and the Supreme Court,

march originally led down Pennsylvania Avenue

fight is in the Court's hands. The route for the

hardly be clearer, since the next step in the abortion

opinion."

In fact, the intent to influence the Court could

futility. The Supreme Court is not unaffected by public

in the fact that nearly 200 Department of Justice

members are impressed that Jackson attended the rally,

women from Pittsburgh, feels the march

The police are now considering what that means.

Although a good portion of the crowd is too

young to have participated directly in protests, striking

marches of the 1960s, older protesters here are

quick to draw the parallel. Being a part of the crowd is a

feeling. It's as if a curtain veiling the past has been drawn aside, allowing those

present to experience the unity of purpose that most

have suffused the freedom marches led by Martin

Luther King Jr. There's an undeniable sense of com-

munity unusual in its intensity, especially considering the

fear and isolation that large crowds usually inspire.

Supporters gathered opposite the Capitol for the post-
march rally.

The anti-abortion protesters first appear as the

march moves onto Constitution Avenue. They are a

mere handful, less than 200 by most news

imates. At several locations, chasing a break-

out, the anti-abortionists calling out "Shame, shame" while the marchers chant another slogan.

neither the Capitol, several men appear carrying grotesque oversized photographs of aborted fetuses,

ished with the message, "Abortion is Murder." These posters read,

"Have You Forgotten?" or "Never Again."

Two observations about the marchers are particu-

larly striking. The first is the number of men pres-

ent; between 25 and 25 percent of the marching
crowd is male. (Conversely, among the anti-abor-

protesters, nearly three-quarters are male.) One

woman says, "I'm really, really pleased that so

many men came. It's given me a new respect for men's

movement." Most of the men seem to be accompanying wives or girlfriends —

none will admit coming to the march alone or with

male friends.

The second observation concerns the predomin-

ance of blue and white stickers reading, "Catholics

for a Free Choice." CPC turns out to be a full-

ledged organization, and two CPC members de
described as "lapsed Catho-

lics" who feel Catholicism is unnecessarily

restrictive. "Take Jews, for instance," one says. "If

you're Jewish, you can be liberal, Conservative, or Orthodox. If you're a Catholic, you're a Catholic.

The third CFC member is a jackpot of sorts.

Mary Hunt, a self-described Catholic theologian, is

a board member of CPC. She cites polls in which a majority of Catholics say they have anti-

abortion views, even though with moral qualms about the procedure) and argues that respect for individual conscience has long been a part of Catholic doctrine.

The picture of church and state, it argues, is that Catholics find they must disagree with Rome. "It's

a question of who is winning who when," she says.

At the Capitol, the marchers pile forward onto

the lawn before the entrance, standing crowded on

the ramp and in the aisle of the station.

The crowd could care less about his mixed meta-

phors. By the end of his first sentence none in the

audience is seated anymore, and when he con-

cludes, the choirs and applause roar as if they will

never stop.

Once Jackson has finished speaking, everyday

conventions begin to take over. During the first two

more hours of scheduled speakers, people begin to

pick themselves off the ground and drift off to

small groups, succumbing to the fatigue of march-

ing and travel. The Washington subway is packed

lightly, with lines extending several hundred feet out

of the station.

The speakers are tired but satisfied, convinced they've accomplished what they set out to do. Sev-

eral are impressed that Jackson attended the rally,

although one woman decides his appearance as a "campaign speech."

Susan, a woman from Pittsburgh, finds the march has affected both its targets and its participants. "I

think it lets them know we're in the majority on this issue," she said. She drew further optimism

from the fact that nearly 200 Department of Justice

lawyers had recently signed a petition arguing that

Roe should not be overturned. "I hope Bush will

see it's not a presidential issue and will leave it

alone," she said.

Others are not so confident, although they re-

main hopeful. Tyn, a Harvard freshman, might speak for that great middle ground when she

responds to the size of the march, asking, "How could they

ignore it?" How, indeed."

FRIDAY, APRIL 14, 1989 The Tech PAGE 9