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Kootenay Women's Paper · Box 736 Nelson B.C.

A primer on

Feminism

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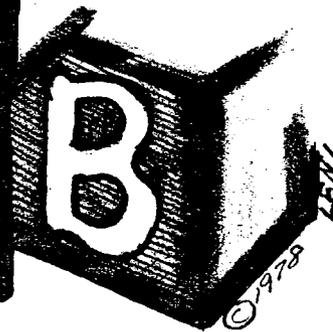
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Collectivial

The historical roots of the Women's Liberation Movement date back from the early feminists up to the new wave and its radical beginnings in the 60's.

There were individual acts of rebellion like wearing pant suits or refusing to be called Mrs. "Him". But not until 1968 in Atlantic City, New Jersey, were there organized acts of protest that drew the attention of the mass media which made women recognize that we can be a volatile political force when organized. It was in Atlantic City that a group of women registered their outrage at the sexual objectification and exploitation of women that occurred yearly at the Miss America Beauty Pageant. They exposed this internationally glorified insitution as nothing but a meat market.

Burning the trappings of that "feminine ideal" was a rejection of those values. The media exploited the bra burnings and once again branded us as hysterical females, jealous of our "more beautiful" sisters. By doing so, they obscured the issue of the sexual exploitation of women, and once again tried to pit us against each other.

So explosive was the action at Atlantic City that despite press distortion Women's Liberation broke through the consciousness of millions of women. From this revolutionary fervor, basic issues were hammered out in consciousness raising groups and the women's press.

And what did the men do?

They laughed at us when we said that language was an issue (see p.5); they trivialized the politics of housework (see p.12); they demeaned our ability to work outside the home (see centrefold); they controlled our bodies through fear (see p.4) and usurped our place in medicine (see p.6). Nevertheless, the impact of the Women's Liberation Movement is world-wide.....

Collective workers for this issue of IMAGES:
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Contributors: Bette Bateman, Sam Simpson, Vita Storey, Jacqueline Klingele. Leni Normington lives in Tarry's, B.C. She illustrates and does photography for a hobby.

We welcome your contributions and letters in the next issues. Immediately following this paper will be "10 Years After", a re-evaluation of the current women's movement, and following that will be our Fiction issue. We are looking for fiction by, for and about women.

For our faithful subscribers: Send the extra copy on to a friend who doesn't know about IMAGES.

Note: Some readers were confused by the inclusion of an article called "The Picnic" in the Sept. issue. This article, written by Wendy Hurst in 1974, appeared first in the B.C. Teachers' Federation kit on sexism - Breaking the Mold, and again in a kit produced by the Ontario Institute of Studies in Education. As a sex role reversal story, it is still pertinent.

A B C's of Women's Liberation



is for androcentrism, male bias in our schools,
is for abortion, our right to choose.



is for birth control, safe and sure, we have
a yearning,
is for bras, they sure liked the burning!



is for consciousness raising, our feminist
first step,
is for control of our bodies and the health
we will get.



is for day care, open 24 hours a day



is for equality, including equal pay.



is for feminism, our fist in the air



is for housework, all (h)ours is not fair.

is for herstory, hidden and neglected



is for language, it should be inspected.



is for men, our struggles with them,
is for medicine, witches, midwives undone.



is for pill, we all had high hopes
is for politics, now we know the ropes.



is for roses, but give us bread, too
is for revolutionary change that is due.



is for sexism, oppression not new
is for sisterhood, strength that is good for
me and you.



is for work, unrecognized, unpaid but vital
is for Women's Liberation Movement, our
organized title!

Working Groups of the B.C.F.W.

The British Columbia Federation of Women has formal sub-committees on Women Against Violence, Rights of Lesbians, Women and Work, Health, Human Rights, Media. To input to or become a member of any of these committees, one must be a member of B.C.F.W., which means that one must be a member of a member group. In the Kootenays that would be the Nelson Women's Centre, IMAGES, the Kaslo Women's Group, and the Cranbrook Women's Resource Group. (The Trail Status of Women has allowed their membership to lapse.) These sub-committees are the working groups of the British Columbia Federation of Women, taking action in areas around the province based on current BCFW policy, and formulating new policy to be ratified at the next convention.

The most recent convention, on the 11th, 12th, and 13th November, was an excellent example of women from many diverse political and socio-economic backgrounds coming together on issues of common concern and not allowing their differences to break down the bonds of communication. Resolutions were passed in support of the women of Quebec, against political harassment as in the case of Betsy Wood and Gay Hoon and an endorsement of the Statement of Principle of the Coalition Against Discrimination (directed at the Anita Bryant Crusade and Renaissance Canada), resolutions supporting a woman's right to choose the conditions of her birthing experience, the decriminalization of midwifery, and opposing bills C-28 and C-8, which attack the public sector employees' right to strike and collective bargaining.

cont. pg. 15



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Racist Deportation

Seven Jamaican women living in Toronto are under order of deportation. They have been working in Canada for at least 5 years. They all came here as domestic workers under a trade agreement between the Jamaican and Canadian governments. The Canadian government wanted single women without children. However, as there were not enough single women without children applying for these jobs, they turned a blind eye toward single mothers.

The seven mothers were given special forms to fill out, and the Immigration officer wrote "NOT APPLICABLE" in the section concerning children, since under the agreement, domestic workers are not allowed to bring children. Now, after these women have worked hard to make a new life here, they are threatened with deportation, because they have children in the care of friends or relatives back home!

Deportations of this kind have only started in the last 2 years, yet the trade agreement has existed for the past 20 years, so it's arbitrary and racist. They are a continuation of the Canadian government stepping up its attempts to divide the working class of this country. In good economic times the Canadian government is happy to use immigration to get the cheap labour it wants. But now that unemployment is high, the same people that were welcomed to work for low wages are the first ones under attack: Immigration officials scrutinize applications, some dating back as far as 10 years, for "errors and omissions". The result: racist deportations that throw workers out of the country like old objects that have served and outgrown their purpose. If these deportations are successfully executed, the government will have given another official sanction to the racist idea that immigrants are "stealing jobs" from Canadians, that they create unemployment. Facts show this is untrue: Unemployment is still high and rising, yet immigration has gone down by an average of 25% per year for the last few years.

In Toronto, the International Committee Against Racism has succeeded in temporarily stopping the deportation of the seven mothers. We must increase this pressure to reverse the deportation orders. The Immigration department claims that the new Human Rights Act has no jurisdiction in Immigration matters. This in fact means that immigrants have no human rights! In view of this, the government's claim that the new Immigration Act is "fair and humanitarian" is an outright lie.

If you wish for information about the Immigration Act, and how it relates to the rights of workers, or want a speaker on the subject for union meetings or classroom, or wish to donate to the defense of the seven mothers, write to:

SAVE THE SEVEN DEFENSE FUND
c/o D. Jacobs
5 Selby Street
Toronto, Ontario M4Y 1W3

or

International Committee Against Racism
P.O. Box 86545, North Vancouver
British Columbia V7L 4L1

Anti-abortionists Trounced

Anti-abortionist forces were soundly defeated at the Lion's Gate Hospital annual general meeting, Sept. 26 in Vancouver. All four seats up for grabs on the Board of Directors were filled with pro-abortionist people, as the hospital administration joined forces with the pro-choice people to maintain present pro-choice policies at B.C.'s largest hospital.

Wood and Hoon Indicted

Betsy Wood and Gay Hoon, prison and daycare activists, have been indicted by the Attorney General of British Columbia. These women were recently freed by a preliminary hearing judge who threw the case out of court for lack of evidence. They had faced sentences of up to life imprisonment for their alleged participation in a break-out attempt by five prisoners at the maximum security B.C. Penitentiary in January of 1978. (See IMAGES, July 1978) The "special privilege" of the Attorney General's Office, that of overriding the decision of the preliminary hearing, has had little precedence. This is the first time in our history that it has been invoked in a trial of a political nature, and that has dangerous precedent setting capabilities.

In an Images interview, Betsy Wood stated, "What I see happening in prison is violence, and no one is talking about it." Wood and Hoon spent two weeks in solitary confinement while they were awaiting trial and had been refused bail. Wood said that she sees women staying away from the prison issue because they think it's just a male question, and she proceeded to talk about the women she had seen in the "monkey cage" at Oakalla. She encouraged the women at the BCFW Convention to stop the use of solitary confinement by refusing to vote for anyone who would not give funds to women's services (ie transition houses, rape relief, daycare) and put an end to solitary confinement.

Betsy Wood is going to trial without a lawyer because due to legal convolutions the prosecutor won't speak to the accused if she has a lawyer. This is one way the legal system has of limiting the access of ordinary people to the legal apparatus. She says that they have no evidence beyond their belief that she is capable of it. When you are directly indicted you lose your choice as to judge or jury and have to take the latter, and Wood plans to use this opportunity to call Andy Bruce and Steven Hall as witnesses of their treatment.

Gay Hoon, who was working on the day in question, has been identified by the landlord as the person who signed the lease for the apartment for the prison escapees. Her lawyer has found a 30 year veteran of the RCMP to testify that it is not her signature...official report pending, trial set for November 27th. So far, three of the six charges, including aiding and abetting, and a gun charge have been dropped, leaving constructive attempted murder, prison break, and mischief as the charges to be brought up on that date.

S.O.R.W.U.C.

The Muckamuck Affair

The Muckamuck is a Northwest Indian restaurant in Vancouver, claiming to be the only one of its kind in North America. All the staff are of Native Indian ancestry. Contrary to popular belief, the owners are not.

In early February of 1978, due to unfair treatment by the owners and management, Muckamuck workers decided to unionize. By February 23, 18 out of 23 employees had signed union cards and applied for certification with SORWUC Local 1 (Service, Office and Retail Workers Union of Canada). On March 21, Muckamuck was certified, and already several restaurant workers had been fired and harassed into quitting since talk of unionizing began.

The union filed unfair labour practice complaints with the Labour Relations Board over the firings, and it wasn't until mid-May that the Board ordered a final hearing into the complaints. Meanwhile,

Cont. pg 15

SEXUALITY

From childhood I have learned the dangers of having a female body. From the time that Mother said that I was not allowed to go to the island and stay over because I was a girl, I knew that there was something to fear in my budding body. I felt ripped off, and I couldn't quite reason it out. The boys got to do all the fun and adventurous things.

Oh, sometimes they let me come along on hikes into the backwoods, but they always tried to scare me into going home. Like telling me there was a pink man, who only sucked the blood of girls, yuck, I used to wear a baseball cap with my hair all tucked up-- the guys would walk behind and throw rocks into the bushes ahead of me, trying to frighten me home.

And then there was the time that I was walking home from a friend's house, it was almost a mile down the hill to home.

A big car stopped and a man called me over. I felt a bit frightened for some reason, but he was asking about directions to someplace - I went to the passenger's side and looked in; as he asked me directions he looked into his lap, my eyes followed and I ran and ran so scared I couldn't stop. When I got home I was ashamed that I had seen what I did and I avoided my mother. I thought that somehow it was my fault that I had been through the incident; after all, Mom always warned me about talking to strangers.

What struck me even more was the fact that the man in the big car looked like my friend's father, the one that I had just visited, I never saw him very much, but he was big and fat and drove the same kind of car as that man had. I avoided going to visit my friend for a long time.

And I always felt so uncomfortable when my uncle would come and visit and he hugged me up close to him. It was always a struggle to try and get free of his overly affectionate hugs, the kind that pressed me close and he would let his hand slip down the front of me. It would happen in the kitchen, or the backroom, he would seem to catch me there - that too seemed to be my fault and I never let my mom or dad know.

I could recite events like this that happened all through my growing up, from male relatives fondling my body, to the neighbourhood boys trying to cop a feel or trying to convince me to take my clothes off in the garage.

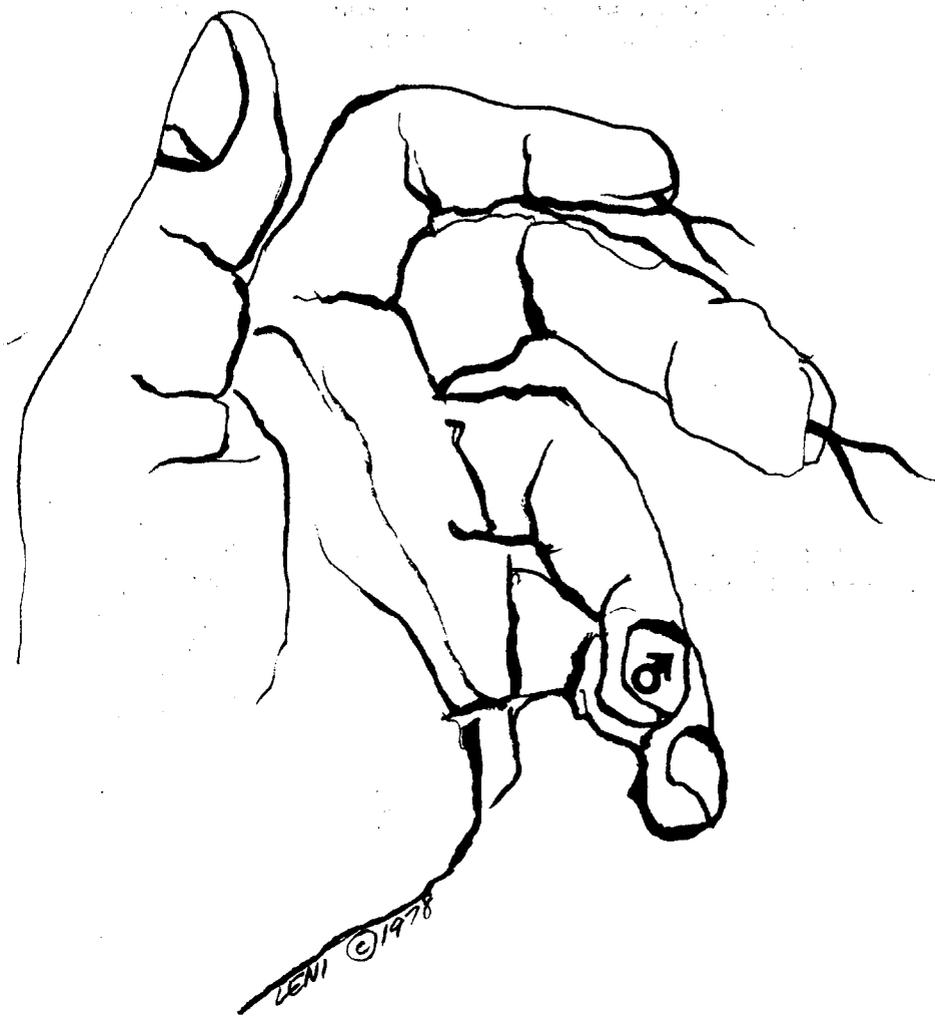
All the connotations of these experiences lead up to me feeling like I was a bad, bad girl, 'cause if I were good they wouldn't happen to me.

And then when I was older and trying to get into the scene of having a boyfriend, my sister got pregnant and I was warned in some way, by little things said here and there that I should really watch myself or the same thing would happen to me. I wanted to have a boyfriend like everyone else, but I was terribly afraid of petting, I knew that I couldn't get pregnant that way, but I also knew that I would get excited, and from there I didn't know if I could stop myself.

So I continued to go out and allow only the barest minimum of touching. I remember once that a boy unhooked my bra and I cried and cried and cried. He stuck with me, we have remained good friends, but never became lovers.

At the age of 18 I decided that I really loved a man very much. He and I were both virgins and I decided that it would be with him that I would relieve myself of the burden of my virginity. I had to do all the convincing and after I was sorry. It just wasn't the way I thought it would be. In fact, I got off on masturbating much more.

A PERSONAL MESSAGE OF FEAR



So there began my sex life, and I found that somehow I was trying to please men by being sexual -- but not getting off on the experience myself. There were all the fears of men taking advantage of me, there was fear of pregnancy, there was fear of being found out, there was fear of having rumours spread about being a loose woman. There were fears and fears and fears.

I remember being sexual with a man who I did not want to be sexual with. He and I were in the same class and were studying together. After a few hours of study I said that it was time for me to go - he jumped up and stood by the door - he begged me to stay and I said that I was tired and didn't want to be out late; he really pulled a sob story on me and said that nobody ever loved him. He came over and started to kiss me and squeeze me. For some reason I felt that I had to make him happy, it was like being a rat if I didn't. I never did study with him again and later I dropped that course in college as it was just too difficult to face him.

I think most all women could relate experiences like mine, if they just allowed their minds to open and remember. I know that there are many experiences that I would never repeat to anyone and some that I try never to think of myself. I wouldn't want to admit that they ever happened.

Now that I am older and wiser, I pick and choose the men that I relate to sexually, and I have all the convictions to my No Means No answer if any man tries to persuade me against my will. But it has taken a long time and I have gone through fear and anger and guilt and pain and hours of tormenting thoughts, trying to find out how to have complete control over my sexuality. And finally I have realized that it is not my female body that I have to fear, but the men who will try and use it against me.



A Rose by any Other Name



What's in a name? Sticks and stones may break my bones - but names can never hurt me. A rose by any other name would smell as sweet.

Chick, broad, whore, cunt, tramp, slut, lady, prostitute, wife, harlot, call girl, strumpet, housewife, streetwalker, hooker, old lady, helpmate, little woman, ball and chain, better half, spouse, the Mrs., dyke, butch, lesbian, man-hater, fair sex, weaker sex, femme, dame, tomato, belle, matron, dowager, hen, bitch, sow, doe, she-goat, nanny goat, cow, lioness, tigress, vixen, maiden, virgin, concubine and witch.

Whatever it is that's in a name, we seem to have lots of them. Not many of them that are even half nice and all of them define us in terms of our relationship to men. Simone de Beauvoir talked about this in terms of women being "the other" - that is, men are and women are what is left over. The name women itself derives from "wife-man" - is there no escape from our definition in male terms?

But you say, "That doesn't apply to me", "I've escaped all that", "I've always been liberated", and "You are what you make yourself". However, we are only as good as the raw material we make ourselves out of. Language must change both as a reflection of changing reality and as a changer of reality.

Chairmen, craftsmen, mankind, he, him, and his

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according to Websters

The dictionary defines "chauvinism" as an excessive and unreasoning attachment to one's race, group, etc. The word was derived from Nicholas Chauvin, a soldier and overzealous supporter of Napoleon Bonaparte. Although wounded many times during the French revolutionary and Napoleonic wars, he was satisfied with the reward of military honours and a small pension and retained a simple-minded devotion to Napoleon.

This gives us the background for today's term "male chauvinism", which can then be defined in very similar terms. Male chauvinism is an excessive and unreasoning attachment to the male ego image of power and authority. It is buttressed by an emphasis on physical aggressiveness, superior strength and size.

To large numbers of people, both male and female, this is acceptable and even deliberately sought after. However, today when so many people and groups are seeking equality, there is a definite swing in the opposite direction. The term "male chauvinism" has taken on a derogatory meaning.

from "What Every Woman Should Know About the Women's Liberation Movement" by Marijean Suelzle, 1971

not only reflected the reality of our world but helped create it. Although a slave by any other name is still a slave, to free ourselves we must perceive ourselves in strong, independent, and powerful ways. The media has tried to do its part in discrediting the women's movement with labels of "bra burner", "women's libber (lipper)", "lib chick" (alternate? press), but the truth and courage of radical, militant women both of the ages and of the last ten years has managed to shine through to an amazing number of women. Many of these women are not even conscious of that light shining on their lives, but that does not negate its presence. The strength and beauty of any woman strengthens us all. Unfortunately, the converse is also true. So yes, it does matter if you don't mind being called a chick because that label reinforces a negative stereotype of women.

The changes in language in radical, liberal, and official circles in the last several years has been quite stupendous. Although these changes are easy to criticize as superficial window dressing, it never the less is very heartwarming to hear the 2-10 year old crowd speaking of snowpeople. Also, it is downright satisfyingly amusing to hear "chairperson" drop from the most unlikely lips without the slightest hesitation. "Chairperson" - that word (me, being a meeting junky) is music to my ears. So long decried as "awkward" and "ugly sounding" (otherwise we would be happy to use it), it now rolls right out of thousands of improbable mouths.

And we weren't supposed to feel left out of "mankind" - after all, by definition it included women also. However, when it has been suggested that we switch to "womankind" for all people for the next 500 years, "the human race", "people", and "human kind" gained greatly in popularity.

So whenever anyone gives you the old line about the rose, remind them that a rose also has thorns and can be dangerous.

I will not call you whore
sister

Last night
with roast beef and potatoes
I earned the dress I'm wearing.

I moaned especially loud
in bed

when Johnny
needed retainers.

I whined piteously, cutely, coyly
until the floors were
carpeted
and
Matching custom drapes were hung
from
windows of a mortgage.

I did not challenge
though knowing I was right
but
sat quietly
demurely
cowardly

because I wanted peace
"for the children's sake".

I will not call you whore
sister

Unless you call me wife.

(Taken from *Prairie Woman*, Sept. 1978, with thanks.)

Witches, Midwives

Make no mistake. Women acted as healers long before the advent of the male medical profession. The roots of the modern women's health care movement are buried many centuries ago in feudal Europe, and have recently been unearthed in two excellent books by Barbara Ehrenreich and Deirdre English.

Witches, Midwives and Nurses: A History of Women Healers, and Complaints and Disorders: The Sexual Politics of Sickness present a feminist and class analysis of women's changing historical role as healers and as patients. For those of us who were raised on the story of Florence Nightingale, and who associate the word "doctor" with "man", it is indeed startling information.

Ehrenreich and English tell us that witches in feudal Europe were in fact lay healers serving the peasant population, that they were political participants in rebellion against the ruling classes, and were ruthlessly suppressed by the Protestant and Catholic Church holding hands with an emerging male medical profession which serviced the rich.

Women were the unlicensed doctors and anatomists of that time. They were herbalists, midwives, abortionists and nurses, travelling from village to village passing their knowledge from mother to daughter, healing people who had no access to upper class physicians. Barred from medical lectures, learning from each other, they were condemned by the Church, were called "wise women" by the people, and charlatans and witches by the authorities. But that is not the extent of their oppression. Sure, we've all heard of witch trials, and have the impression some women were burned. I was sickened to learn that in feudal Europe literally millions of women were burned live at the stake. It was a ruling class campaign of terror against the female peasant population. Witches represented a political, religious and sexual threat to the Protestant and Catholic Churches alike, as well as to the state.

It was the church and state that organized, financed and executed the witch hunt. In some villages, as many as 400 witches were put to death in one day. The point is, these peasant women had respect and power among their people, and as such were eliminated. Thus began a bitter struggle for dominance in a powerful arena, medicine.

While peasant women practiced among their people, young men of wealth began their medical training in university, where women were not admitted. The church still maintained strict control of medicine, and would permit little of what we would call "science". Instead, they used leeches for bleeding, quasi-religious rituals, and prayer. These were the doctors who testified against witches "who developed an extensive understanding of bones and muscles, herbs and drugs, while physicians were still deriving their prognoses from astrology".

As medicine became a "profession", licensing laws were used to drive all but the university-trained out of practice. These were used particularly against women who had gained some education and were in direct com-



Three witches hanging, from the title page of a contemporary pamphlet on the 3rd Chelmsford witch trial, 1589

petition for urban clientele. Thus, the church legitimized the doctors' professionalism, denied women access to university training, and denounced non-professional healing as equivalent to heresy: "If a woman dare to cure without having studied she is a witch and must die."

"The women's health movement of today has ancient roots in the medieval covens, and its opponents have as their ancestors those who ruthlessly forced the elimination of witches."

Witches, Midwives, and Nurses

Although the witch hunts did not totally wipe out the female peasant healer, she was definitely branded as "superstitious and possibly malevolent". So thoroughly was she discredited among the emerging middle classes that in the 17th and 18th centuries it was possible for male practitioners to make serious inroads into that last preserve of female healing - midwifery. Using obstetrical forceps, male practitioners claimed medical superiority over women. (Forceps were classified as a surgical instrument, and women were legally barred from surgical practice.) "Female midwives in England organized and charged the male intruders with commercialism and dangerous misuse of the forceps. But it was too late - the women were easily put down as ignorant 'old wives' clinging to the superstitions of the past."

At this point in Witches, Midwives and Nurses, Ehrenreich and English move to the American medical scene. Although the story is definitely American in detail, we Canadians can look around us and imagine a fairly similar scene. We are not surrounded by female doctors.

The question they ask is not so much how women got "left out" of medicine and left with nursing, but how did these categories arise at all? How did one particular set of healers, who happened to be male, white and middle class, manage to oust all the competing folk healers, midwives and other practitioners who had dominated the medical scene in the early 1800's?

The conventional answer would be that the public saw the light of science as represented by the male medical profession and outgrew its earlier faith in quacks, as represented by midwives, patent medicine salesmen, Indians, and ex-slaves. Ehrenreich and English contend that rather than a bout between "science" and "superstition", the battle was part of the 19th century's long story of class and sex struggles for power in all areas of life.

"How did one particular set of healers, who happened to be male, white and middle class, manage to oust all the competing folk healers, midwives and other practitioners who had dominated the medical scene in the early 1800's?"

Witches, Midwives, and Nurses

In the early 1800's, formally trained doctors, called "regulars", vied for monopoly of the medical practice. Their medical training had little to recommend them over lay practitioners who used herbalism and diet, rather than the heroic measures of the "regulars" (such as massive bleeding, opium, and calomel, a laxative containing mercury). The "regulars" training consisted of as little as two months in medical school, often with no clinical practice. "In the judgement of Oliver Wendell Holmes, Sr., himself a distinguished physician, if all the medicines used by the 'regular' doctors in the US were thrown into the ocean,

and nurses

it would be so much better for mankind and so much worse for the fishes." But the lay practitioners could not pull the political strings that the "regulars" could, with their close ties to the upper class-controlled legislatures; states soon passed laws banning the practice of medicine by the "irregulars".



But the "regulars" made their political grab too soon and almost lost. There arose in the 1830's and 40's mass indignation in the form of a radical, popular health care movement which came close to smashing medical elitism in the US. Although often dismissed as the "high tide of quackery and medical cultism, in reality it was the medical front of a general social upheaval stirred up by feminist and working class movements". The popular health care movement was an assault on medical elitism, and an affirmation of people's medicine. They denounced the "regulars" as members of the "parasitic non-producing classes", trained in universities where students "learn to look upon labor as servile and demeaning". Women were the backbone of the Popular Health Care Movement, and the links were so strong between feminism and the health care movement that it was hard to tell where one began and the other left off, as is true today.

This movement was so strong that the "regulars" were nearly defeated. They became merely one more sect of healers, amidst homeopathy, Eclecticism, and more. By the 1840's, medical licensing laws were repealed in most states.

"She (woman) has a head almost too small for intellect but just big enough for love."

1848 obstetrical text

Later in the 19th century, the popular health care movement degenerated into competing sects, and the "regulars" went back on the war path. But this time with a difference. They banded together and formed the American Medical Association, and again began attacking lay medicine for its openness to women, and women healers on outright sexist grounds. Male doctors rightly associated the entrance of women into medicine with organized feminism. Any woman who did become a "regular" faced harassment in medical school, hospital doors and internships were closed to them, and her "brother" doctors refused her admittance into medical societies and would not refer patients to her.

It is at this point very strange that the women's health care movement disassociated itself from the popular health movement, and tried to join forces

with the male "regulars". Members of the "irregular sects" were purged from the faculties of women's medical colleges, and these middle class women joined with the men of their own class to attack lay practitioners and midwives. The class differences between women were sharpened as middle class women became "Victorian ladies" and working class women went into the factories.

It is here where ruling class patronage of the "regulars" dealt the final death blow to lay medicine. The importation of the "germ theory" of disease revolutionized the basis of university training, and the "philanthropy" of the Rockefeller and Carnegie foundations (fortunes built in coal and oil by the ruthless exploitation of working people) provided learning opportunities for men that no female lay practitioner had access to. These foundations, by deciding which schools got money, and further legitimizing the "professional doctors" of their own class, literally destroyed any chance women and blacks had to practice medicine. Thus, the male doctors, who had been just another sect who set themselves up with a fancy name, due to class privilege and thanks to some foreign scientists and eastern foundations, became the "men of science, beyond criticism, beyond regulation, very nearly beyond competition".

Again, the last rout was midwifery. Rather than upgrade the skills of midwives by teaching them more hygienic and scientific methods, as was done in England, Germany and most other European nations, midwifery was banned in state after state under extreme pressure from the medical profession. The ban on midwives meant one less source of competition for the new doctors, and the final defeat of women as independent practitioners.

the lady with the lamp

The only remaining acceptable role for women in medicine was nursing. And this profession was legitimized and epitomized by Florence Nightingale, who brought to the role her concept of upper class reformism and femininity. This was the time when "ladies" of the upper class could go out and work on other people's causes - care of the sick was one of them. As for femininity, she brought the virtue of wifely obedience. Doctors, still sceptical that nursing was just one more attempt by women to infiltrate medicine, were won over by their absolute subservience and obedience.

The lines were clearly drawn: doctor/power/male/intellect/action/decision-making/ money and glory versus nurse/subservience/female/nurturance/obedience/poverty and loss of power. The male and female role to the ultimate.

As Ehrenreich and English say, "the stakes of the struggle were high: Political and economic monopolization of medicine meant control over its institutional organizations, its theory and practice, its profits and prestige. And the stakes are even higher today, when total control of medicine means potential power to determine who will live and who will die, who is fertile and who is sterile, who is 'mad' and who sane."

cont. pg 15

Woman treating dislocated jaw.





Women's Liberation at work



"We want to support our lives the way we choose to live; we want to make honest wages for honest work, and work hours that fit our needs and our families. We are eager to take training that teaches techniques and skills that help build our chances of getting into the job market; some would like traditional jobs, others prefer to think in terms of non-traditional work. These are the jobs that are interesting. These are the jobs that PAY."

(excerpt from IMAGES Sept./Oct. 1976)

This was a statement written two years ago by women who had been trying to set up a women and trades course with Manpower sponsorship. A meeting was arranged with the Nelson Manpower to determine the focus of an already approved "employment orientation for women" course to be held in Nelson. What was requested was a course that would provide accessibility to non traditional areas of work. It would acquaint women with various trades, use of tools, training options and personal skills necessary for psychological survival in male-dominated fields. I was one of the instructors for this Employment Orientation for Women course, and prior to that, had worked on a Manpower sponsored Outreach Project in Nelson. In writing this article, I have attempted to analyse a situation in which women acted together to state their needs regarding employment. As well, I want to present an example of the way in which a bureaucracy, in this case Manpower (now changed to "Canada Employment and Immigration Centre") functions to take care of its own interests which are very different from the needs of its so-called "clients".

By way of a beginning to this herstory, I want to trace certain historical events that provide an understanding of our economic and social oppression as women. Women work for the same reasons that men work, not just to earn some "pin" money. As feminists, we believe that a woman has the right to choose how she wants to live. That choice is severely limited by her economic dependence on a man's income for her and the children's livelihood. The economic realities shaping



our lives have been responsible for both the propagation of the "feminine mystique" that urges women to stay at home when not needed in the labour market, as well as the demand by feminists for equal opportunity. Women have always worked. The division of labour based on sex is a historically recent development oc-

curing with the coming of the Industrial Revolution and the factory. Under this system the man sells his labour in exchange for a wage designed to support a wife and family. The woman provides the support and sustenance in the home that enables the man to do his job outside the home. Many of these women and their children as well, worked long hard hours in the mines and factories for much less than a man earned, only to come home to another endless job. Housework was set aside for the women and was given no social value in terms of productivity. The sex-typing of work has economic ramifications. The kind of work set aside for men involves challenge and interaction with the external world. Through the active manipulation of machinery, tools, machinery of the bureaucracy, man (to mean predominantly males) exerts a certain amount of control over his environment by rising to the challenge (however large or small) of making them work, fixing them, or making new things with them. From that activity it is possible to gain self-worth and a feeling of control over one's environment. In the same way, fixing your own car, using power tools, doing carpentry - work which is male-typed- has the same value of the power of control over one's environment. For women to take on these tasks, is symbolic of taking on a certain relation to the world which challenges the way in which we are "supposed" to behave. Work defined as "woman's work" is by nature repetitious, monotonous and does not challenge her to exert any control over her environment (on the contrary, she is controlled by her environment which constantly gets dirty and messy). The nature of housework gets carried over into female-typed work outside the home in restaurants, hotels, stores, offices, hospitals. In the production of goods- the building of a cabinet, house, producing a car- there is a visible end product and satisfaction is gained in the form of a pay check at the end of the week or in the admiration of the end product. In housework and childcare there is no visible end result, no pay cheque. The tasks in maintaining a family clothed, fed, and cleaned up after are endless. By putting women in the economic position of providing this labour for free ("a labour of love"), the economic system further exploits us by saying that women's work outside the home is worth less than men's. In this way, control over the work force is achieved by maintaining a large reserve of unskilled workers who can be pulled in and out of the home to fit the needs of the economy, and be paid less than men for it. This is one reason why men had to finally admit women into "their" trade unions after the war. Women were doing the men's jobs during the war, and presented a threat to "male's" jobs after the war because their labour was cheaper to buy.

An economic factor that has contributed to a resurgence of the feminist movement is the fact that today more and more families find one paycheck is no longer enough to support a family, women are continuing to steadily enter the labour market and are staying. Another factor is the breakdown of the nuclear family; women are left to support their families on their own. Female job ghettoes have been increasing in areas of commodity production and services. According to statistics, the wage differences between males and females are growing wider apart, even after almost a decade of "equal pay for equal work" legislation. In the earlier years of the women's liberation movement this was seen as our only "legitimate" demand. Even ardent male chauvinists agreed with this principle, and everyone gave it plenty of lip service. But the catch is in the job classifications which remain discriminatory. A secretary at Cominco said that "equal pay for equal work" is a meaningless demand when you're stuck in a job classification with no opportunity for equalizing your pay in relation to other classifications and no upward mobility (as is true of most

female-typed jobs). A further step is the demand for equal pay for work of equal value. The Federal Human Rights Act now contains the clause, "An employer may not in the same establishment have a difference in wages between male and female employees who are doing work of equal value." It remains to be seen how this recent legislation gets worked through the cumbersome court procedures to be of benefit to working women. The same ineffectiveness of affirmative action programs has resulted in a few token women being put into high level jobs mostly at management levels. Employers are now able to produce official memos stating that they are equal opportunity employers. The word "qualified" crops again and again, as employers insist that if a woman is qualified she has equal opportunity for the job. This means that women applying for work at the KFP plant or sawmill, if they are required to have previous experience in mill work as part of the necessary qualifications, are unable to get work because there are so many "qualified" males around. I like what Betty Lehan Harragan has to say about the term "qualified" in her book, Games Mother Never Taught You: "It's a word that can mean nothing or everything, depending on who's using it. Ardent feminists are quite convinced it is a contemporary euphemism for penis, and in a high proportion of cases they are absolutely right. There is no question that all established corporations discriminate against female employees in a thousand overt or subtle ways, both wittingly and unwittingly. To put it in more positive terms, business continues to follow its historical practice of discriminating in favor of white males for important jobs while welcoming the influx of women employees to fill the bottomless pit of support services."

The needs of the capitalist economy have generated two opposing lines - on the one hand, the feminine mystique says that "woman's place is in the home", and on the other hand, during times of economic growth, women are used as large reserves of cheap unskilled labour. During times of high employment, women are used as scapegoats, are the first to be laid off and are forced to go back to the home. "Women's anatomy is her destiny" is a statement that has been challenged by feminists. What is clearly obvious is how our child-bearing capabilities are manipulated by the economic system. After the second world war, the image of femininity that was communicated through the mass media was that the biological capacity for motherhood made it improper to attempt any other career. Women's important and fulfilling contribution in society was to be a homemaker and consumer. The line "Women belong in the home" was a powerful economic tool used at that time both to raise the consumption of goods and to force women out of the industrial jobs, thereby averting serious male unemployment after the men came home from the war. My most recent personal experience of being clouted with the feminine mystique was when I was applying for a teaching position at the Nelson School Board office. The school administrator gave me a statistical account of the declining enrolments in each school in the district and how this was putting teachers out of work. I was told, both by him, and a while later by a principal for whom I was subbing, that a woman my age should have three children - the inference being that it was my fault that teachers were out of work because I wasn't producing enough babies to keep the enrolments up. I am both the problem (I'm unemployed) and the cause of the problem (I don't have as many children as I'm "supposed" to have). By telling me that my place is in the home having babies, I am being scapegoated as the cause of the unemployment problem. This is supposed to make me feel, and react defensively, "Gee, I'm going to stop looking for work-it's such a struggle anyway", "Maybe I should have another baby", "Maybe I'll be able to get by on welfare". This is what the system wants us to do, and this

is what they punish us for doing.

My work with the Nelson Outreach Project brought up these issues in a way in which we could experience and begin to understand the nature of the economic and social forces that create unemployment. There was a growing focus on economic development based on local control of resources. The research done on women's employment provided the committee with a sensitivity to women's issues. The developing potential of the N.O.P. as a political tool against the inequities of the present economic system. The outcome of this 2-year project culminated in a confrontation with a contingent of top Manpower bureaucrats in the board room of Regional Headquarters in Vancouver. These men, in whom the system has invested a great deal of power, pronounced the project cancelled, their reason being that economic development was not within their mandate. They recognized the potential of this very articulate, uncompromising committee to politicize and develop strategies in response to the system's control over our lives - a threat posed to the interests of a system that these government bureaucrats represented. They



dangled the carrot in a final assertion of power. The women's part of the Nelson Outreach development proposal would be funded, if the economic development part was dropped. By dividing the project in this way, they sought for more control over its direction, and by divorcing women's employment they could categorize and deal with women's issues as a thing apart and removed from the economic realities.

The Committee, of course, refused very vehemently to be manipulated in such an underhanded way. The demise of the N.O.P. had been premeditated by the Manpower Regional office. The meeting of the review board and the Committee was a display of their assertion of power. They killed two birds with one stone - got rid of a project that was contentious and forced the resignation of the Special Programs Co-ordinator, who was dedicated to the feminist cause. It was her and the Outreach worker who were responsible for initiating the beginnings of the women and trades course in Nelson. Selkirk College proposed a more traditional Employment Orientation for Women (EOW), however, including in the outline an examination of non-traditional employment and shop experience in carpentry, welding and automotive mechanics. Manpower funded the course because, in a way, they could rationalize to themselves that it was a follow-up to the women's part of the Outreach Project, the carrot they had dangled in front of the Committee, thus making it seem that the Committee really could be co-opted. This consolidation of power and belief in their ability to co-opt alleviated their anxiety about the contentiousness of the project and validated their own claim to power. (cont. pg. 12)

WOMEN'S LIBERATION AT WORK *cont.*

I taught the two-month EOW course in Oct/Dec 1976. The following is taken from a report written by myself and co-instructor, Jean Hanley. "The use of Human Resources recipients as students for this course created some interesting situations, for the obvious justification of funding in order to get these women off welfare and into jobs made it fairly simple to rationalize the course to the public. The experiences of these women as welfare recipients did make them interested in finding ways to support themselves, but the fact that they were (all) legitimate clients of Human Resources meant that they all had legitimate reasons for not being employed in the first place, whatever their motivations in getting work might be. These women were not planning on non-traditional employment, and the various experiences in these areas (of non-traditional work) were impositions on their more traditional orientation. One was told by the welfare worker that she would be cut off funding if she did not take this course, even though she had two children and would have to travel a 70 mile round trip each day to participate. The instructors were not informed that their students were operating under this kind of pressure by the agencies involved, and had to deal with a certain amount of resistance that made the tone of the classroom less favourable for the other participants.

Since a single unemployed woman can receive about \$85 a month if she owns her own home or lives with her parents, and this sum can scarcely be deemed a living allowance, it was also difficult to face daily that there were women facing this kind of economic pressure to become employed. The two women in this situation certainly had sufficient motivation to get work, and their inability to do so was more connected with the severe competition for jobs that women face here.... if the successful entry into training or jobs was expected then a more homogeneous group would be desirable". This is not to say that there is no need for courses such as EOW. On the contrary, and courses that promote equality are of great value provided that the training is designed and carried out from a feminist perspective, that its purpose is not to reinforce the traditional stereotypes that keep women "in her place". The Nelson EOW provided the opportunity for us to examine our common experiences in group and to discover our strengths as women, in the context of women as workers.

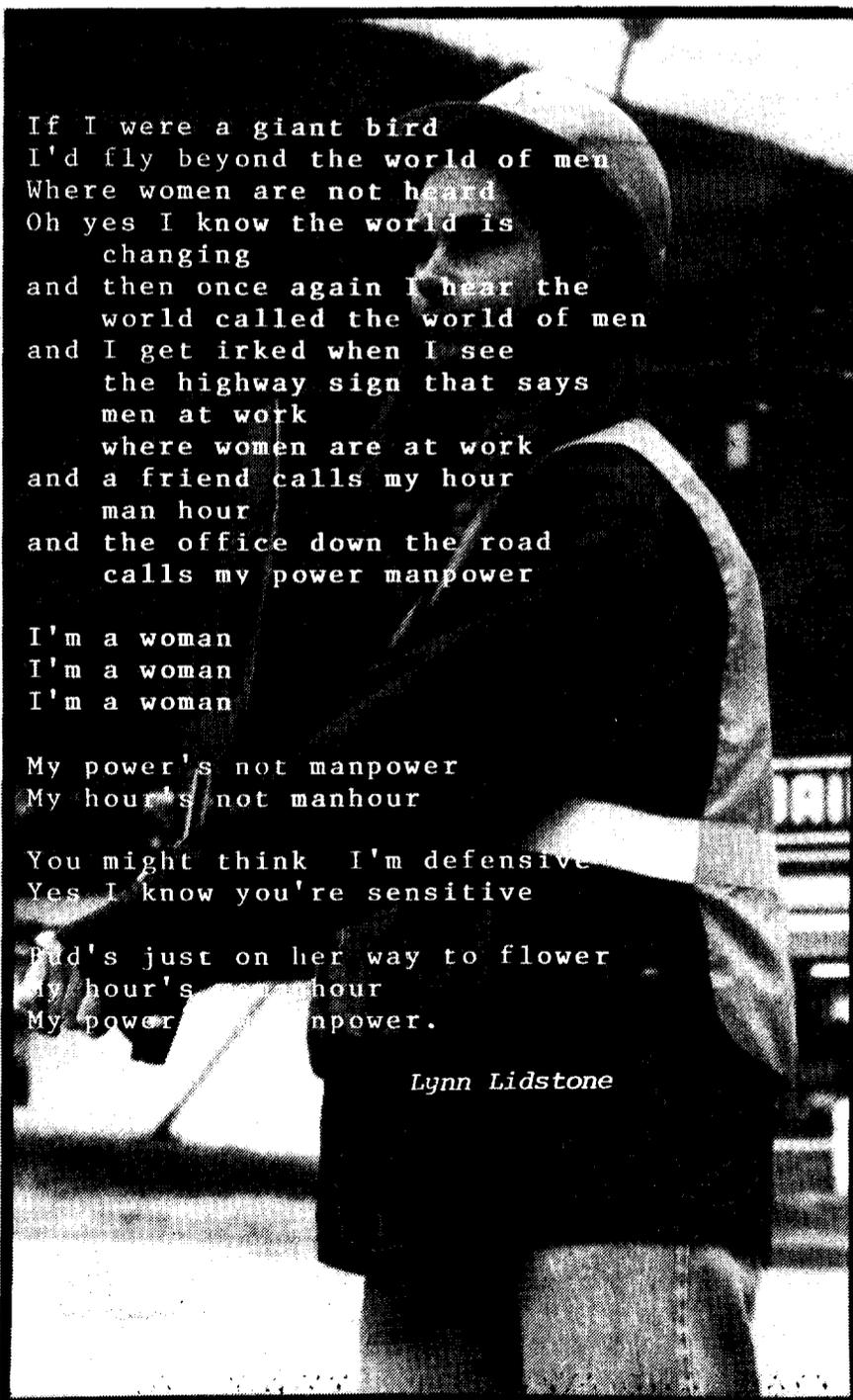
The women who were rejected by Manpower from taking the course had been lobbying for a women and trades course. They were refused entry into EOW because they were "over-qualified", "over-educated", and "over-motivated". They were told that if they wanted a trades course they could go to Haney where the Department of Labour was putting on a Women and Trades Course. (I might add that applicants for this course were not being solicited outside the Lower Mainland because of the lack of available spaces.) There-in lied the contradiction that we as women experience as intense frustration and personal inadequacy. We are caught in a situation whereby we have never before been so ready to fulfill our social and economic aspirations (we're qualified, educated, and motivated) yet, at the same time, the opportunities are made so unavailable to us and we remain chronically unemployed.

In keeping with the changes, I will refer to Manpower as Canada Employment and Immigration Centre. CEIC does not want to sponsor another EOW course. They say they can't find enough women to fill the seats. Yet when the women and trades course was being talked about as a possible orientation to have in the EOW course, women were going to the Centre on their own to ask to be wait-listed for this. If CEIC was at all responsive to the needs of unemployed women in this area, and sponsored a course that met our needs, they would have no trouble in getting women to fill the training spaces. Instead they put on a course that they say they have trouble filling, and then use this as an excuse for not repeating the course. CEIC's response to Selkirk College regarding further EOW courses has been both in

Nelson and Trail that "men need it as much as women" thus further clouding the whole issue. Instead, they sponsored two Basic Job Readiness Training Courses in Nelson and Trail. Still, three quarters of these classes were made up of women, and CEIC in Trail was having difficulty finding males for the course. In the meantime, the women's co-ordinator for the Pacific Region, Jo Mitchell, under pressure from women's groups, appointed a women's liaison worker in each CEIC office. In Nelson CEIC, this worker is Wenda Plante. She is responsible to Jo Mitchell in promoting women in the labour force. The focus has been primarily to quietly encourage individual women into non-traditional training. The local CEIC does not want to instigate anything that would flare up into another volatile meeting with feminists who are stating their demands loud and clear.

And so the discrepancy between a male's paycheque and a female's paycheque grows ever wider, especially in an area such as the Kootenays that employs men in high-paying, highly competitive jobs in the lumber, mining and construction industries, leaving women to the female job ghettos. Only through organizing and working towards elevating pay in these female job ghettos, and a united struggle to break through non-traditional job barriers can we hope to gain the economic independence to determine how we want to live our lives and the kind of society we want to live in. Any women who are interested in discussing further the issues raised in this article can contact me through the Nelson Women's Centre.

Vita Storey



If I were a giant bird
I'd fly beyond the world of men
Where women are not heard
Oh yes I know the world is
changing
and then once again I hear the
world called the world of men
and I get irked when I see
the highway sign that says
men at work
where women are at work
and a friend calls my hour
man hour
and the office down the road
calls my power manpower

I'm a woman
I'm a woman
I'm a woman

My power's not manpower
My hour's not manhour

You might think I'm defensive
Yes I know you're sensitive

Had's just on her way to flower
My hour's manhour
My power's manpower.

Lynn Lidstone

Book Reviews

The Personal is Political

Some months ago I read a book called Loose Change (Sara Davidson, Doubleday, 1977). I read it avidly, barely stopped to eat, told my friends about it. It follows the lives of three women who arrive as well heeled (and high heeled!) sweet young things in the Berkley of the early sixties. From then on they all start going through "changes" and to a greater or lesser extent are affected by the student protest movements of the sixties, "flower power", "back to the land", feminism, the "new awareness". Moving from cult to cult, they also move from lover to lover. On the whole, sex improves. And that's about all I can remember. I can not remember the names of the characters or their personalities.

Shortly after reading Loose Change, I picked up another book about women going through changes. It is called Burning Questions, (Alix Kates Shulman, A.P.Knopf 1978), and I couldn't put it down either. The central character, Zane, arrives in Greenwich Village in the late fifties as a "Teenage rebel", and remains there to live through the "beat generation", the new left, marriage and motherhood, the "hip" movement, the peace movement, feminism. I remember quite a bit about Zane - as well as her name. She is strong, inner-directed, always a rebel. I can't imagine what she looks like, but I know what's in her head - her thoughts about China, people, politics, everything.

I believe Burning Questions is a good book, perhaps even a great book. I believe Loose Change is a fun book, but I'll never read it again. In part it is because I'm ideologically happier about Zane by the end of the book - where she emerges as a thoughtful, committed feminist. By contrast, I'm uncomfortable about the fact that feminism slides off the backs of the three women in Loose Change as do all the other movements which touch their lives. Further, the character drawings are so very different. The mature Zane is a whole person whose self is a blending of her life experiences. The women at the end of Loose Change are whatever the current scene is - at best I see them wearing superficial patchwork quilts of many colours. Feminism in Loose Change is yet another movement, quickly drawn and as quickly discarded. It appears as something which existed at one time and one place. Burning Questions, however, utilises a solid, historical account of the Women's Movement in New York as background and foreground. Both novels treat the joys, problems and endless contradictions that are part of the lives of all women, especially women with some level of feminist consciousness. But Shulman, (also author of Memoirs of an Ex-Prom Queen) presents a charac-

ter constantly aware of such contradictions, who analyses them almost as they happen, and who leaves us with the optimistic feeling that the next time a situation arises she will deal with it differently. Above all, Burning Questions is a personal/political novel - Loose Change is a personal/psychological novel.

PLANN

READ THE WOMEN'S ROOM BY MARILYN FRENCH!

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The Everywoman's Almanac 1979 is out now - but it's different.

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Everywoman's Almanac 1979 is still a day calendar, appointment guide and address book with plenty of space for notes. A section titled "Facts for Everywoman" provides useful information about the law, health, and patients' rights as well as a listing of the major women's centres across Canada. Numerous photographs, cartoons, and graphics and one-liners make Everywoman's Almanac 1979 informative, fun and visually appealing. The sewn binding is durable and longlasting; the Almanac fits handily into pocket or purse.

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THE RICHNESS OF LIFE IS THE DISCOVERY OF
YOUR OWN EXPERIENCE

Politics of Housework

by Pat Mainardi
(1968, revised 1970)

Though women do not complain of the power of husbands, each complains of her own husband, or of the husbands of her friends. It is the same in all cases of servitude; at least in the commencement of an emancipatory movement. The serfs did not at first complain of the power of the lords, but only of their tyranny.

-John Stuart Mill, *On the Subjection of Women*

Liberated women—very different from Women's Liberation! The first signals all kinds of goodies, to warm the hearts (not to mention other parts) of the most radical men. The other signals — HOUSEWORK. The first brings sex without marriage, sex before marriage, cozy housekeeping arrangements ("You see, I'm living with this chick") and the self-content of knowing that you're not the kind of man who wants a doormat instead of a woman. That will come later. After all, who wants that old commodity anymore, the Standard American Housewife, all husband, home and kids. The New Commodity, the Liberated Woman, has sex a lot and has a Career, preferably something that can be fitted in with the household chores — like dancing, pottery, or painting.

On the other hand is Women's Liberation — and housework. What? You say this is all trivial? Wonderful! That's what I thought. It seems perfectly reasonable. We both had careers, both had to work a couple days a week to earn enough to live on, so why shouldn't we share the housework? So I suggested it to my mate and he agreed — most men are too hip to turn you down flat. You're right, he said. It's only fair.

Then an interesting thing happened. I can only explain it by stating that we women have been brainwashed more than even we can imagine. Probably too many years of seeing television women in ecstasy over their shiny waxed floors or breaking down over their dirty shirt collars. Men have no such conditioning. They recognize the essential fact of housework right from the very beginning. Which is that it stinks.



Here's my list of dirty chores: buying groceries, carting them home and putting them away; cooking meals and washing dishes and pots; doing the laundry, digging out the place when things get out of control; washing floors. The list could go on but the sheer necessities are bad enough. All of us have to do these things, or get someone else to do them for us. The longer my husband contemplated these chores, the more repulsed he became, and so proceeded the change from the normally sweet considerate Dr. Jekyll into the crafty Mr. Hyde who would stop at nothing to avoid the horrors of — housework. As he felt himself backed into a corner laden with dirty dishes, brooms, mops and reeking garbage, his front teeth grew longer and pointier, his fingernails haggled and his eyes grew wild. Housework trivial? Not on your life! Just try to share the burden.

So ensued a dialogue that's been going on for several years. Here are some of the high points:

"I don't mind sharing the housework, but I don't do it very well. We should each do the things we're best at."

MEANING Unfortunately I'm no good at things like washing dishes or cooking. What I do best is a little light carpentry, changing light bulbs, moving furniture (how often do you move furniture?)

ALSO MEANING Historically the lower classes (Black men and us) have had hundreds of years experience doing menial jobs. It would be a waste of manpower to train someone else to do them now.

ALSO MEANING I don't like the dull stupid boring jobs, so you should do them.

"I don't mind sharing the work, but you'll have to show me how to do it."

MEANING I ask a lot of questions and you'll have to show me everything anytime I do it because I don't remember so good. Also don't try to sit down and read because I'm going to annoy the hell out of you until it's easier to do them yourself.

"We used to be so happy!" (Said whenever it was his turn to do something).

MEANING I used to be so happy.

MEANING Life without housework is bliss. No quarrel here. Perfect agreement.

"We have different standards, and why should I have to work to your standards. That's unfair."

MEANING If I begin to get bugged by the dirt and crap I will say "This place sure is a pig sty" or "How can anyone live like this?" and wait for your reaction. I know that all women have a sore called "Guilt over a messy house" or "Household work is ultimately my responsibility." I know that men have caused that sore — if anyone visits and the place is a sty, they're not going to leave and say, "He sure is a lousy housekeeper." You'll also take the rap in any case. I can outwait you.

ALSO MEANING I can provoke innumerable scenes over the housework issue. Eventually doing all the housework yourself will be less painful to you than trying to get me to do half. Or I'll suggest we get a maid. She will do my share of the work. You will do yours. It's women's work.

"I've got nothing against sharing the housework, but you can't make me do it on your schedule."

MEANING Passive resistance. I'll do it when I damned well please, if at all. If my job is doing the dishes, it's easier to do them once a week. If taking out laundry, once a month. If washing the floors, once a year. If your don't like it, do it yourself oftener, and then I won't do it at all.

"I hate it more than you do. You don't mind it so much."

MEANING Housework is garbage work. It's the worst crap I've ever done. It's degrading and humiliating for someone of my intelligence to do it. But for someone of your intelligence...

"Housework is too trivial to even talk about."

MEANING It's more trivial to do. Housework is beneath my status. My purpose in life is to deal with matters of significance. Yours is to deal with matters of insignificance. You should do the housework.

"This problem of housework is not a man-woman problem. In any relationship between two people one....."

is going to have a stronger personality and dominate."

MEANING That stronger personality had better be me.

"In animal societies, wolves, for example, the top animal is usually a male even where he is not chosen for brute strength but on the basis of cunning and intelligence. Isn't that interesting?"

MEANING I have historical, psychological, anthropological and biological justification for keeping you down. How can you ask the top wolf to be equal?

"Women's Liberation isn't really a political movement."

MEANING The Revolution is coming too close to home.

ALSO MEANING I am only interested in how I am oppressed, not how I oppress others. Therefore the war, the draft and the university are political. Women's Liberation is not.

"Man's accomplishments have always depended on getting help from other people, mostly women. What great man would have accomplished what he did if he had to do his own housework?"

MEANING Oppression is built into the system and I as the white American male receive the benefits of this system. I don't want to give them up.

Postscript

Participatory democracy begins at home. If you are planning to implement your politics, there are certain things to remember.

1. He is feeling it more than you. He's losing some leisure and you're gaining it. The measure of your oppression is his resistance.

2. A great many American men are not accustomed to doing monotonous repetitive work which never issues in any lasting let alone important achievement. This is why they would rather repair a cabinet than wash dishes. If human endeavors are like a pyramid with man's highest achievements at the top, then keeping oneself alive is at the bottom. Men have always had servants (us) to take care of this bottom strata of life while they have confined their efforts to the rarefied upper regions. It is thus ironic when they ask of women - where are your great painters, statesmen, etc. Mme Matisse ran a millinery shop so he could paint. Mrs. Martin Luther King kept his house and raised his babies.

3. It is a traumatizing experience for someone who has always thought of himself as being against any oppression or exploitation of one human being by another to realize that in his daily life he has been accepting and implementing (and benefiting from) this exploitation; that his rationalization is little different from that of the racist who says "black people don't feel pain" (Women don't mind doing the shitwork); and that the oldest form of oppression in history has been the oppression of 50% of the population by the other 50%.

4. Arm yourself with some knowledge of psychology of oppressed peoples everywhere, and a few facts about the animal kingdom. I admit playing top wolf or who runs the gorillas is a silly business but as a last resort men bring it up all the time. Talk about bees. If you really feel hostile bring up the sex life of spiders. They have sex. She bites off his head.

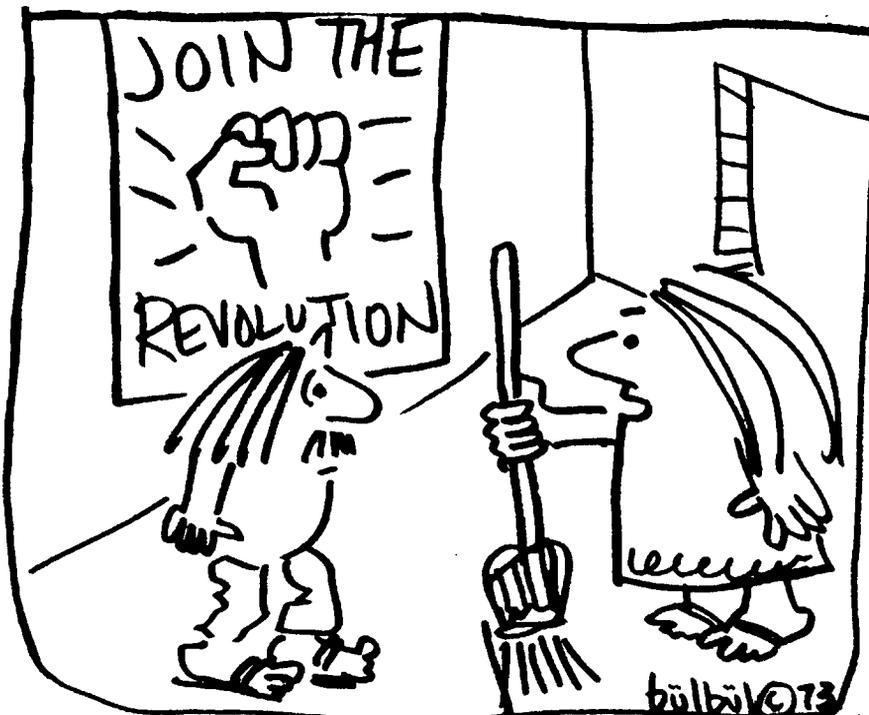
The psychology of oppressed peoples is not silly. Jews, immigrants, black men and women have employed the same psychological mechanisms to survive: admiring the oppressor, glorifying the oppressor, wanting to be like the oppressor, wanting the oppressor to like them, mostly because the oppressor held all the power.

5. In a sense, all men everywhere are slightly schizoid - divorced from the reality of maintaining life. This makes it easier for them to play games with it.

It is almost a cliché that women feel greater grief at sending a son off to war or losing him to that war because they bore him, suckled him, and raised him. The men who foment those wars did none of those things

and have a more superficial estimate of the worth of human life. One hour a day is a low estimate of the amount of time one has to spend "keeping" oneself. By foisting this off on others, man has seven hours a week - one working day more to play with his mind and not his human needs. Over the course of generations it is easy to see whence evolved the horrifying abstractions of modern life.

6. With the death of each form of oppression, life changes and new forms evolve. English aristocrats at the turn of the century were horrified at the idea of enfranchising working men - were sure that it signalled the death of civilization and a return to barbarism. Some workingmen were even deceived by this line. Similarly with the minimum wage, abolition of slavery, and female suffrage. Life changes but it goes on. Don't fall for any line about the death of everything if men take a turn at the dishes. They will imply that you are holding back the Revolution (their Revolution). But you are advancing it (your Revolution)



- HERE BERT, BRING THE REVOLUTION HOME.

7. Keep checking up. Periodically consider who's actually doing the jobs. These things have a way of backsliding so that a year later once again the woman is doing everything. After a year make a list of jobs the man has rarely if ever done. You will find cleaning pots, toilets, refrigerators and ovens high on the list. Use time sheets if necessary. He will accuse you of being petty. He is above that sort of thing - (housework). Bear in mind what the worst jobs are, namely the ones that have to be done every day or several times a day. Also the ones that are dirty - it's more pleasant to pick up books, newspapers, etc. than to wash dishes. Alternate the bad jobs. It's the daily grind that gets you down. Also make sure that you don't have the responsibility for the housework with occasional help from him. "I'll cook dinner for you tonight" implies it's really your job and isn't he a nice guy to do some of it for you.

8. Most men had a rich and rewarding bachelor life during which they did not starve or become encrusted with crud or buried under the litter. There is a taboo that says that women mustn't strain themselves in the presence of men - we haul around 50 pounds of groceries if we have to but aren't allowed to open a jar if there is someone around to do it for us. The reverse side of the coin is that men aren't supposed to be able to take care of themselves without a woman. Both are excuses for making women do the housework.

9. Beware of the double whammy. He won't do the little things he always did because you're now a "Liberated Woman," right? Of course he won't do anything else either....

I was just finishing this when my husband came in and asked what I was doing. Writing a paper on housework. Housework? he said, Housework? Oh my god how trivial can you get. A paper on housework.

Working at Home

I almost wrote you a love poem
this morning
about how the flavor
of us
mingles in my mind
about how
I cannot separate
where you begin
or I leave off
in my recollections
about how
you curl
around my heart
red flower
and I
around yours.

But
you left for work
this morning
left your
dirty
dishes
on the table
the newspaper at sea
upon the couch
me tossing
on the waves
of anger
following after.
you left the work
we share
to me.

I asked you
if you knew
what you were doing
Did you plan to
do it now
or later
already womanshit
offering you a way
out
the disgusting
and degrading
scene of Woman
stopping Man
on his way
to important things
like earning money
pulpmill paper
poisoners of the earth...
stop abruptly at the edge
the screaming pit
roaring madness
I stop
you say you'll do it later
stop
I push you out the door
lying through my teeth
go to work
I'm sorry
I'm sorry I'm sorry I'm sorry I'm sorry
I am sorry
I neatly avoided
the Hysterical Housework scene
after all we are friends
and lovers
and we know better than that
now
don't we.

I did the dishes
hot tears
rinsing my face
my son
hugs me
offers
Kleenex to my nose
I am the child
he vacuums the rug
I'll be damned
if he doesn't
understand
silently
he is taking care
slipping into the traces
feeding the baby
never once
making me feel
he's doing
me
a favor.
Listen
I sent you out the door
because I know
what it is like
to be stopped
when you want to go
are going.
I am spinning my wheels
because I wanted
to go too
only today
my office is the house
and the work
you say
you'll do later
surrounds me now.
We have been
congratulating ourselves
for nothing.
Part-time liberation
lasts
just as long
as we remember
and our memories
are so short.

I know if I had
explained myself
out of myself
made plain
all this to you then
reminded
you would have
been glad
to keep the balance even
except
I've said all this before
I am repeating myself
I am stuck
a record with the
housewife label.

by Susan Hykin

a space of one's own

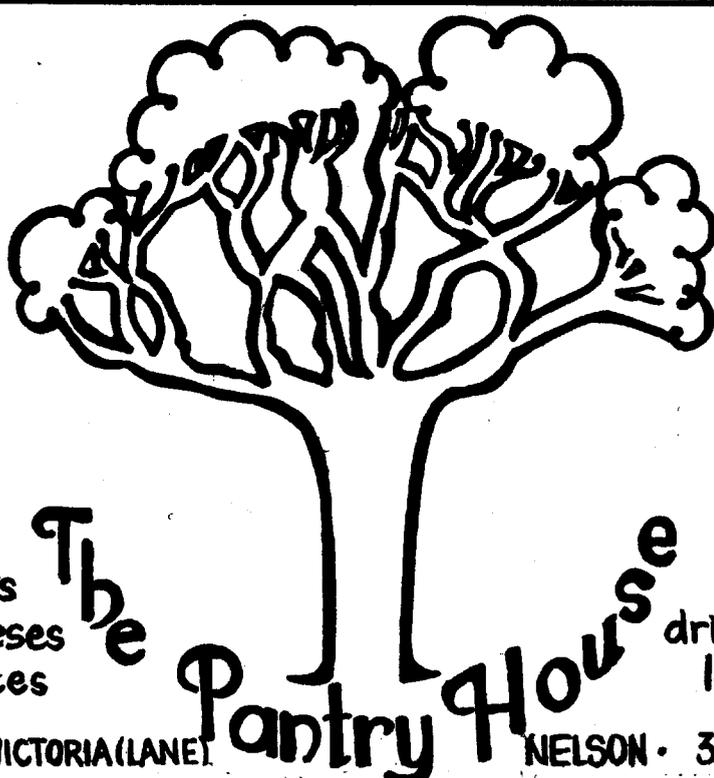
it's getting to the point
of having to hide any pieces of
paper with handwriting on them,
says the woman with no space
her books are shoved into a corner
I wish I had a desk,
she muses,
the kids have one

I have the dining room table
or the kitchen counter

somebody walked off
with my new felt-tipped pen
it was on my dresser

and when I was reading
yesterday's newspaper
somebody roared in, and
shrieked
where's dinner??!

Heather Tisdale
Oakville, Ontario



The Pantry House

nuts
cheeses
spices

grains
dried fruits
legumes

619A VICTORIA LANE
NELSON • 354-4066

health cont.

And it is no wonder that we are angry, that we see male power as no coincidence. With science as a weapon, the powerful have been able to justify their power. No longer relying on moral or religious prejudice, medicine has been able to say "objectively" that women are inferior due to "hormonal imbalances". The ideology of "rationality and science" has been strategic to women's oppression.

In the next issue of IMAGES, I will explore Barbara Ehrenreich and Deidre English's book, Complaints and Disorders: The Sexual Politics of Sickness. It presents a fascinating and shattering view of the woman as patient, taking us up to the modern women's health care movement.

I highly recommend the following books for all those interested in women's health care and self-help. They have been most enlightening and politicizing for me and for many friends:

Witches, Midwives and Nurses: A History of Women Healers and

Complaints and Disorders: The Sexual Politics of Sickness

Barbara Ehrenreich and Deidre English
The Feminist Press
Box 334, Old Westbury, New York 11268

Our Bodies, Ourselves: A Book By and For Women
The Boston Women's Health Book Collective
Simon and Schuster

Healing Yourself

Joyce Premsky
402 - 15th Avenue East, Seattle, Washington

Ask for them at you local library, bookstore and women's centre.

SORWUC cont.

management continued to harass the employees with threats, bribery, suspensions and hour-cutting.

During this same period, Muckamuck workers attempted to negotiate their first contract. They met with management four different times. Each time, management came late, left early, and complained that the union was not bargaining in good faith. Management said the contract was too long, refused to discuss re-instatement of those that were fired for union activity, and refused to negotiate in the Indian Centre because it was not "devoid of colour", according to Bill MacDonald, one of management's lawyers.

By the end of May, the restaurant workers, frustrated with negotiations and the ineffectiveness of the Labour Relations Board in dealing with their complaints, handed out leaflets to customers to explain the labour situation, and on May 28 took a strike vote. A majority of the staff voted for strike action. Within a week, the owners obtained a hearing before the LRB with a complaint that workers were "bargaining in good faith". The Board was of little assistance to either party. Muckamuck workers took their option to strike June 1st.

The restaurant has been closed ever since, and the owners continue to refuse to negotiate. Talks resumed for one day in July, with the assistance of a mediator selected by both parties. But that meeting ended with management again refusing to discuss re-instatement of workers fired for union activity, and insisting on an "open shop", which essentially means no union.

Doug Christmas, principal owner of Muckamuck, also owns Ace Gallery in Vancouver, and intends to open a new restaurant right next to it called "Names". In August, Muckamuck workers and over 100 supporters staged a "moccasin walk" from Muckamuck to Ace Gallery to call attention to their strike and to the owners' reluctance to deal with it. George Manual, president of the B.C. Indian Chiefs, met the striking

workers and expressed support for the Muckamuck workers' struggle and for labour struggles in general.

It's been 9 months since Muckamuck workers joined SORWUC, and 5 months since the strike started. These restaurant workers have been exploited for 7 years and they don't plan to return to work until the labour situation is resolved. They are appealing for strike fund donations. Please send your contribution, large or small, to Muckamuck Strike Fund, SORWUC, #1114-207 West Hastings Street, Vancouver, B.C.

Information from Ethel Gardner, a striker.

IMAGES is making a contribution to the strike fund and would be happy to forward your donations.

BCFW cont.

The policies that have been passed at previous conventions are available at the Nelson Women's Centre, along with the constitution of the British Columbia Federation of Women.

This convention was a time for women across the province to learn from each other, and workshops were made available for this. There were workshops on community organizing, rape relief, women and unions, assertiveness training, constructive criticism, abortion organizing, sexual harassment on the job (put on by the Human Rights Branch), use of the establishment media, as well as structure and function of the BCFW.

Much work was done and we managed to take a night for socializing and dancing to the excellent women's boogie band, Skylark. There were books for sale (and IMAGES of course) and a great deal of information shared on an informal level. Six women went down from the West Kootenays and two from the East Kootenays. A full standing committee was elected, including from the Kootenays Vita Storey and Bette Bateman sharing a regional rep position, Marcia Braundy as a Member at Large, and Darcy from Cranbrook as another regional rep.

Buy a friend a sub for Christmas

Being a Feminist

Being a feminist means having an analysis of the oppression of women: how it happens, who profits from it, how it is maintained.

Being a feminist means having a commitment to struggle, alone and with others, to change the society that promotes that oppression.

It means women making decisions about their own lives, alone and with other women, because men have decided for us for too long.

It means working as hard as we can to join with our sisters in struggle and supporting them when the going gets rough.

Being a feminist means encouraging individual women to develop their capabilities; to be able to support themselves financially and create self-respect and satisfaction.

It means joining together with other women, and men too, to get legislative changes which will make women's lives less dependent on the largesse, or lack of it, of the government and the society-at-large. (ie. a woman's right to choose to have or not to have a child, maternity benefits, family law reform, homemakers being included in the Canada Pension Plan, labour legislation, rape laws, etc.)

Being a feminist means being angry at male violence against women and children, and giving support - emotional, physical, financial, and political - to those women and the facilities (now under the gun) that have been developed to combat and protect. (ie. transition houses, rape relief centres, women's centres, crisis lines, etc.)

Being a feminist means not buying the image the media sells us of what the "perfect person" is, (Buy a subscription to IMAGES instead, for you and your friends and relations!!), but to realize that we all have abilities, talents, and ideas that make us whole people. It means not accepting their image of what we can do, how we can live, what our limits are, and how much we can accomplish. The important thing is to try it out for ourselves when a question of what is possible comes up. We are constantly being bombarded by sexism on T.V., in magazines, advertisements, etc, by people who have studied the manipulation of others.

Being a feminist means when we come up against a physical barrier, we can stretch ourselves to try to get over or around it; when the barrier is legal, we can fight it with everything we have and get others to join us; when the barrier is one of those subtle ones, we must first check within ourselves to see if we are accepting the message, and then speak out about it with everyone we can get to listen.

Being a feminist means being willing to take on a share of all the work, once we decide we don't want it to be role defined. (ie chopping wood, fixing the plumbing or the roof, or at least being willing to learn.)

Being a feminist means political support for day care centres even if you aren't a mother, and the same for the rights of lesbians: the oppression of any particular group of women is the oppression of us all.

Being a feminist means demanding equal pay for work of equal value, demanding the government fully support and stand behind its Human Rights Code, demanding part-time employment with full benefits become a viable lifestyle. Women should be encouraged to enter any area of employment they may

choose, including among the options the apprenticeshipable trades, the professions, housewifery, technicians, parenting, politics, etc. There should be upgrading and developmental courses in those areas where women previously have had less contact. Women should unite to get into the higher paying male-dominated jobs, as well as fighting for better conditions and more respect in the job and home ghettos where women have always been.

Being a feminist means being aware of the sex-role stereotyping we and our children have received in school, and working to change that. It means being aware of the textbooks that are being used, the images being presented, and counteracting them when necessary by talking about them, with your children, the Home and School Association, your friends, and writing letters of protest to the Minister of Education and your school principal. Children should have free access to the tools that will help them develop themselves into capable adults.

Being a feminist means supporting life skills courses which would include shop and industrial arts, cooking, sexuality, parenting, health, homemaking skills for everyone, regardless of their sex.

Being a feminist in our personal lives often comes down to housework, where the personal is political as it so often is. Who does the cooking and the dishes, whose value system and time sense on cleanliness is afforded the most respect. It is in our relationships we work out the details of living day to day, where we realize many of the joys and sorrows of living in a world we are trying to change.

Being a feminist means choosing your lifestyle. For some of us, the sorrows have driven us to choose a more fulfilling life without a partner; for others, women loving women has found satisfaction; and for still others, the struggle of living in relation with a man is the choice, gaining satisfaction from the small and sometimes large changes our mates make over the years. But for many of us, the questions are becoming more pointed...what are we getting back for all this nurturing and support we are giving out, and is it enough??!! (see next issue for further discussion)

Being a feminist means not being afraid to voice your opinion when you disagree or see or experience something about sexism that you don't like or feel is unfair.

Being a feminist means feeling good when you see your sisters on their way to gaining strength in their lives.

Being a feminist is going on your way with them.



"Mother, what is a Feminist?"
 "A Feminist, my daughter,
 Is any woman now who cares
 To think about her own affairs
 As men don't think she oughter."

- Alice Duer Miller, 1915