



WHERE DO CORRECT IDEAS  
COME FROM?  
DO THEY FALL FROM  
THE SKIES?  
ARE THEY INNATE IN  
THE MIND?  
NO!  
THEY COME FROM  
SOCIAL PRACTICE



I'M TOLD TO BE  
A WHOLE PERSON,  
BUT NEVER **FIGHT**,  
**BUILD**, OR  
**ENVISION**--  
ONLY TO  
**RESPOND**!

PERHAPS I'M INCOMPETENT  
AND UNSURE, BUT I'M  
**CONSCIOUS** OF IT AND  
ENRAGED AT ANYONE  
WHO SAYS I MUST  
**STAY** THAT WAY!

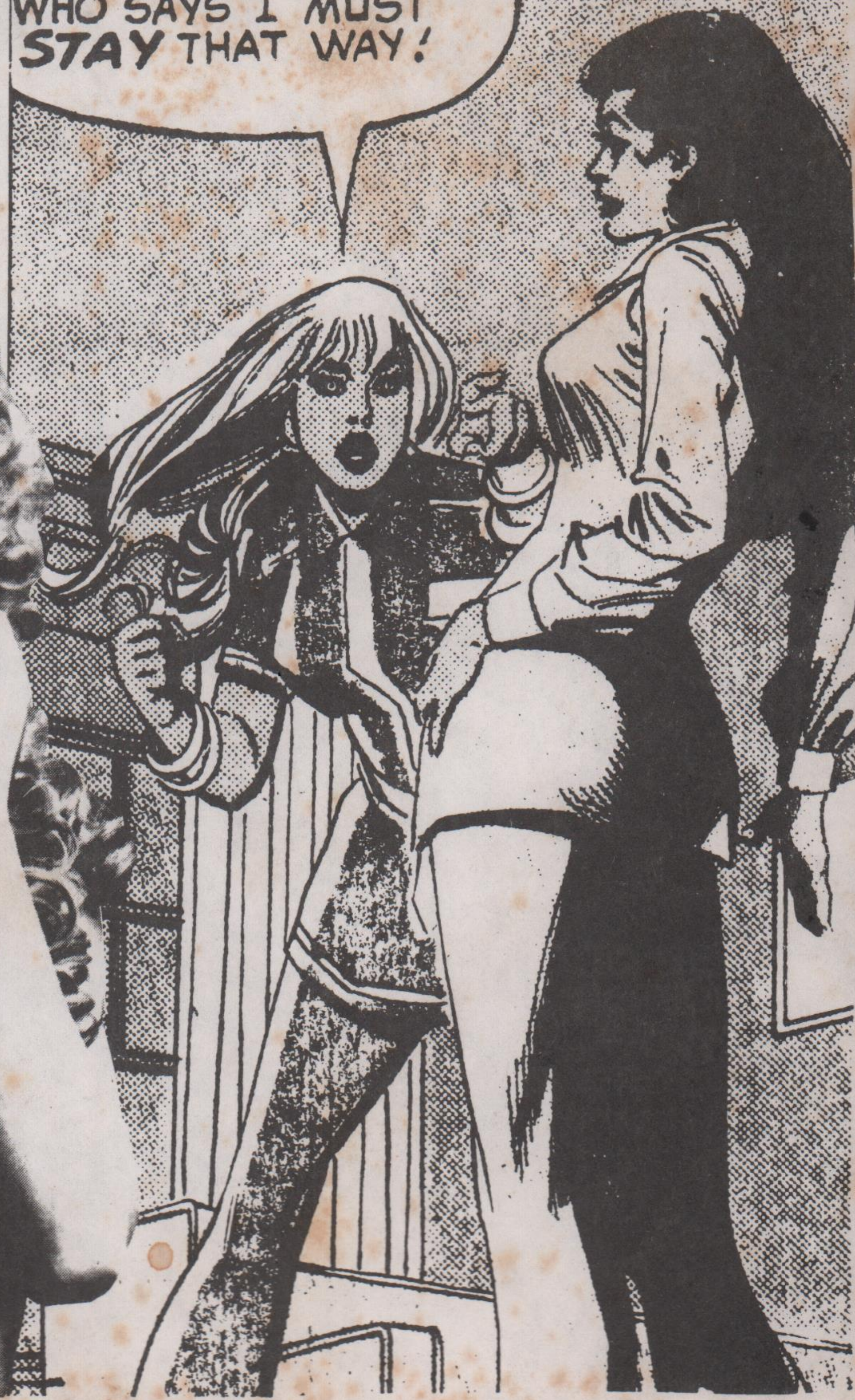
SCIENCE

PREJUDICES

TRADITION

MYTHS

NOT UNTIL WOMEN ABOLISH THE  
CHAUVINISTIC MYTH OF INFERIORITY, AND  
SHED THE ROLES OF WIFE, MOTHER, AND  
SEX-OBJECT WILL THEY BEGIN TO BE  
ABLE TO BUILD A TRUE  
VISION OF  
THEIR HUMAN  
POTENTIAL





## THE OTHER HALF

### EARLY DAYS

The first original division of labour, was between male and female; women possessed a uterus, men didn't. From that simple biological division grew an all encompassing ideology of female inferiority and its "natural" antithesis, male superiority; men have repressed, oppressed and subjugated women to the deification of the male ego since pre-historical times.

"For a man...is the image and glory of God, but the woman is the glory of the man. For the man is not of the woman, but the woman of the man, neither was the man created for the woman, but the woman for the man." (I.Cor.II)

All living creatures share the instinct to survive, reproduction in all complex animals depends on the half that possesses the uterus. To insure the survival of the species, during gestation the female needs protection and help, this was most important in primitive society. Because the female is biologically equipped to bear and suckle her new born, the second division of labour followed "naturally." The men of the tribe being in a better position to seek for the requirements necessary to the continued existence of the whole tribe. The tribe was the family and the children were part of the whole tribe, the only certain relationship was between mother and child, all men were father. Though there were no sexual repressions or possession of women, the tribal leaders were men. Men were the hunters. Organised hunting needs leaders to be successful, and the tribe depended on the success of the hunt; food gathering was not sufficient to sustain a growing population.

Hunting was eventually replaced by domestication of animals and food gathering had given way to cultivation. In this period before the "dawn of civilization," there was the discovery of iron and the invention of the plough and sword, the first producing a relative abundance of food and the second a more efficient method of fighting over that abundance. The original division of labour now placed power over the whole community firmly in the hands of men. Whereas previously all things had been held in common by the tribe, with the ability to produce more food, the ever increasing population, travel and new discoveries, came private property, trading and new markets, so came the privatization of the patriarchal family. The need for man to be sure his son was genetically his son, necessitated the repression of female sexuality, by making her a prisoner and by socializing her from birth - the use of a double standard morality - to except her slavery and acquiesce to her inferior status. This socialization process has been openly practised for many centuries, until the suffragette movement caused it to become obscured under an equalitarian veneer. The ideology remains non-conscious.

### THE DOMINANT IDEOLOGY IN INDUSTRIAL BRITAIN.

Prior to the Industrial revolution in Britain, life was exceedingly hard for all but the aristocracy; small farms had grown up around domestic industry. Large families lived in two roomed dwellings, working from dawn and by candle-light well into the night, often in damp and polluted atmospheres at looms or anvils, to scrape enough money to buy their meagre diet. The whole family worked, children as soon as they could stand.

"Much of the success of the domestic worker depended on the fact that he could control a cheap labour supply in his wife and children or apprentices. This laid the work of wife and children open to considerable sweating and very long hours were worked" L.C.A. Knowles 'Industrial and Commercial  
Revolutions.'

Often in rural areas the woman and children worked this way, while the men tended the fields of the feudal lords.

The industrial revolution changed the place of work to the factories and coalmines. However this meant working women and children were (technically) no longer slaves to their men, but to an employer, (also men) and economically independent, but for the women of the aristocracy and rising middle class, it meant the separation of the family business from the home and established it firmly as the man's



prerogative. "The wife and mother, no longer intimately involved in the business 'undertaking', was confined to domestic life and, with domestic servants, became more and more of a functionless member of the household - one ornament amongst others in the pattern of conspicuous consumption - totally subjected to the authority of her husband. She had, with slight qualifications, no rights to property, education, or occupation." R. Fletcher 'The family and marriage in Britain'.

The middle classes were quick to ape the attitudes of the ruling classes to their women. The education these ladies received was one that befitted ladies of their position and enhanced the impression of idle, silly, gossiping women of 'Pride and Prejudice' fame. "With her isolation from the business the woman lost touch with affairs, her life became narrowed, if less strenuous, when the children went to a boarding school 'to finish' or grew up, she was often condemned to a tea-drinking, 'fancy work', district visiting existence after a few crowded years of child rearing." L.C.A. Knowles *ibid*. For rearing, read bearing as often even this job was performed by a nanny. (another woman.)

The conditions under which the working class lived was not considered amiss by the upper class. However, it is easy to imagine that the Victorian reformers, when investigating these conditions were horrified by the contrast between working class women and children and that of their own. This seems to have offended their morality far greater than the over all appalling living and working conditions also suffered by the men, hence women and children under nine, were no longer to be employed in the mines - (Where women pulled carts loaded with coal on their hands and feet through tiny passages not high enough to stand up in. This caused serious deformities to the pelvic girdle and rendered child bearing an agonising and dangerous procedure.) Confinement meant loss of work, ten or twelve days after. Babies were pacified with a mixture of opium often killing them, though many were miscarried, still born or died shortly after birth anyway, also the squalid, unsanitary conditions claimed the lives of many mothers.)

Women's and children's hours of employment were cut by the Ten Hour Act, 1850 and 1853. Although this took a great burden off women's backs, once again it made them economically dependent on men, and loaded the financial burden more heavily on the man's wage packet. Women and children's labour power was now worth less. This is not to say, that although working class women, worked as long and hard as men, that they were in anyway equal to men, far from it; legally they had no rights. These women did little housework or cooking, the staple diet being bread and potatoes.

The morals of the workers were considered very low by the ruling class, who of course set the moral standards. Marriage was rarely institutionalized, the home being used only for sleeping and eating. "Family life" was non-existent. The strain of supporting a family often led to the man deserting wife and children, though due to the overcrowded living conditions, and his total "immasculation" by the ruling class, he could not enforce strict monogomy on his wife, so any children need not genetically be his. It was only the upper class women who were socialised to believe that sanctified sex was only for procreation and not for women's enjoyment. Sexual repression belonged to the ruling class and like the incest taboo was vigorously enforced. In the ever crowded conditions that prevailed amongst the working class, incest too was unavoidable, when so many children by necessity slept in the same bed.

The nineteenth century reformers, while removing women and children from the hard labour market to which they were accustomed, and which provided them at least with a certain measure of economic independence, officially stamped women as the weaker of the sex and set the standard for the socialization of women and children, still present to this day. Quite fortuitously for the ruling class, albeit accidentally, this divided the working class by isolating half from the point of production to the home, where later they proved to be, lacking any solidarity such as that in unions, and with but few exceptions, highly vulnerable to manipulation as consumers and strike breakers.



## EDUCATION AND THE WOMAN'S PLACE.

The reforms of the latter C19 were not passed as humanitarian acts on the part of the ruling class, the decreasing empire and the industrial progress of other countries, necessitated more efficient machinery and a more effective work force, in order to remain competitive in a growing world market. Improved production methods required skilled workers. As early as 1807, Earl Stanhope in a speech to the House of Lords said:

"...in a manufacturing country, when so much of excellence in our productions depended on a clear understanding and some degree of mathematical and mechanical knowledge, which it is impossible to attain without first receiving the rudiments and foundations (the three R's), the superiority of workmen with some education, over those who had none, must be sensibly felt by all the great manufacturers in the country." G. Sergeant (Text Book of Sociology.) Universal elementary education did not come into being until the late C19, when by this time the economic threat from abroad had grown - (Forster Education Act 1870 though not fully implemented till 1880.) Rapid improvements in industry not only required skilled workers, but healthier workers too, and of course women were best suited to service the working class, already conveniently less valuable as workers (ten hour Act).

"Woman's place is in the home": To organise and manage a comfortable home for her family, bearing and rearing children like a good mother should. This was the lot of the Victorian woman, endless reproduction ended by early death, average life expectancy 45 years. Having established a woman's place in the home, the first world war demanded she came out again. In the factory they were now expected to do men's jobs that previously they had been deemed unfit for, but their emancipation was short lived. Men returning from war wanted their role back and women were persuaded back to the home, but the discontent symbolised in the suffragette movement had grown culminating in universal suffrage for women in 1928.

The second world war, for women, was a repeat performance of the first, this time however it was not such an easy task to persuade women that their place was in the home, it had to be made to seem important.

## THE GLORIFICATION OF MOTHERHOOD.

To assist the state by providing healthier workers and (previously working class children had grown up, as children will - without assistance), to rear children in conjunction with state schools to be 'useful' workers. Sociologists, psychologists, doctors, social workers, the media etc. bombarded women with surveys, research, pictures of the "ideal" mother and nystified them into believing that mother hood is the highest achievement and the absolute fulfilment of her life's expectancy.

"That a child needs its mother, and, deprived of her constant and exclusive care and attention, the child will suffer unmentionable difficulties and will probably turn out to be a delinquent." 'The Myth of Motherhood' Spokesman Pamphlet No.21; the author Lee Comer quotes from who she sees as the "arch perpetrator" of these ideas Dr. John Bowlby:-

"It appears that there is a very strong case indeed for believing that prolonged separation of a child from its mother (or mother substitute) during the first five years of life, stands foremost among the causes of delinquent character development and persistent misbehaviour." Bowlby 1947. and

"What is believed to be essential for mental health is that the infant and young child should experience a warm, intimate and continuous relationship with his mother (or permanent mother substitute) in which both find satisfaction and enjoyment." 1952

Not miraculously at the age of five maternal deprivation, when the mother compelled by law, hands her child over to the state, is no longer a cause for concern. Note also the emphasis on mother or permanent mother substitute, what about paternal deprivation, Daddy is seen only in terms of economic support. As it is in the economic interests of the establishment to keep women isolated in the home, so it is to keep the father alienated at work, his role is to "participate



in parenthood. Alas there is no doubt that women embrace this myth of motherhood and base their lives on being the only essential ingredient in their child's life, believing the mother/child relationship of supreme importance, magnified by women's magazines into conventional wisdom.

"Thus we arrive at this supposedly self-evident truth; a child needs its mother and by implication, a mother needs her child." Lee Comer, *ibid*.

Let alone the damaging effect this myth has on the woman herself, what of the effects on a child who suffers from maternal overprotection? It is obvious that any movement that sets out to liberate women, must also liberate children.

#### THE BIOLOGICAL MYTH.

There is absolutely no biological connection between the bearing of children and the rearing of children. Even the suckling of babies from the breast has gone out of fashion. A man is equally able and equipped (as no special equipment is necessary), to provide a baby/child with the all it requires. Despite this fact the job of rearing falls exclusively on the female. Though this division of labour was necessary to the survival of the tribe in early society, it is no longer true of today in the sense of survival. Child rearing has become synonymous with housework (shitwork) and although economically and logically it is not essentially woman's work, it has been made so, morally and personally and as she is trained to this dead end job from birth she's encouraged to feel guilt and shame should she not reach the "Woman's Own" standard in Housewifery.

"One is not born, but rather becomes a woman. No biological, psychological, or economic fate determines the figure that the human female presents in society; it is civilization as a whole that produces this creature." Simon de Beauvoir 'The Second Sex.'

#### SOCIALIZATION.

It is not unusual for would be parents to express the desire to have a son first born, then a girl. A son to carry on the patriarchal lineage, a son to protect his young sister at school, a son to take care of his mother, while father's away, a stand in for head of the household, a son and heir. When she grows up he'll be a doctor, scientist, politician. When she grows up she'll be a housewife, mother, possibly a beauty queen. Of course, when he grows up, unless born of middleclass parentage, he won't be a doctor or even a spaceman, he'll stay around the train driver mark. But no matter what her class her future's likely to remain the same. Her toys, dolls, prams, cookers, sewing machines, his building bricks, meccano sets, chemistry sets, cars, airfix. In the first five years of a girl's life she's constantly exposed to her worst enemy- her mother, who likewise had suffered. Whereas the girl's "upbringing" remains in the mother's hands, boys "upbringing" is taken over by father from the age when daddy takes him into the toilet to show him how men do it. So the boy transcends from the narrow world of home, represented by his mother, to the more wondrous and exciting world outside, represented by his father. The girl is encouraged to follow her mother; any attempt to immitate "masculinity" (freedom) is frowned upon, sooner or later (as with tomboys). She submits to passivity. She will help mother about the house, for real, while her brother is out playing football with his mates. Her play area the safety of the back garden, the world outside is full of madmen, who will rape, assault and murder her, she needs protection. Even when the mother is aware of her own sex role training and determined her daughter should be given equal opportunities, the insidious nature of sexism is all prevailing in the rest of the non-conscious society. The books she reads - while John climbs the apple tree, Janet watches admiringly from the ground, Cinderella, Snowwhite and the Sleeping Beauty all wait patiently for their male liberators. Girls comics elaborate on this fairytale theme and television is a whole sexist world of its own. Little girls, while helping mummy in the kitchen, learn what washing-up liquid is best for their hands, while the champion dirt collectors are boys. Those are mild compared to the manikin/St. Bruno variety of sexploitation. And that's just the adverts; what of the cowboys, spacemen, policemen, detectives, spys, high powered business men; women are only incidental to the plot and all, series after series, screw their way through a whole bevy of beauties - the love them and leave them policy.



Women don't make good heros.

School helps to enforce this pattern of role training. While boys do woodwork, metalwork, physics and chemistry, girls do housecraft, needlework and biology. The teachers themselves did not escape this socialization process; while the boys early training will suit him to his life time role of wage slave, a girl's training is required, in practise for a few brief years. The rest of her life she too has to fit into the role of wage slave, but for this end she has received no training and not without reason. Somebody has to do the shitwork and human labour is still cheaper than cybernetics in capitalism. Because she is an unskilled worker her earning power is limited - excuse - women are unreliable workers, always having babies etc. It is the capitalist mode of production that directly influences the socialization of women to motherhood (reproduction of labour force), domestic slavery (servicing the workers) and menial employment (necessary to the running of capitalism). Previous to capitalist society, the privatisation of women along with all material objects had already effectively "naturalised" the myth of female inferiority. Revolution that abolishes private property and puts an end to production for profit is the only way for women and men to achieve economic liberation, then role-socialization will have no further use. It is not the W.L.M. that is politically divisive but those men who refuse to admit the validity of women's oppression and make no attempt to eliminate sexism in themselves. We may consider all men to be the enemy of all women as long as they remain unconscious of the nature of sexism in society; there can be no liberation for women without socialist revolution, and no socialist revolution without women's liberation. Cinderella will now be liberating herself.

"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." Pat Mainardi 'The Politics of Housework' (A Woman's Work is Never Done).

#### A FEW FACTS

10% of women working in Britain early less than 25p per hour. 36% of women manual workers earn less than 25p per hour. 40% of men earn less than 55p per hour, but 83% of women earn less than 55p per hour. 96.4% of women earn less than £1.00 per hour. Men outnumber women by 20:1 in the £2,000 - £3,000 income bracket and 30:1 at higher levels. Only 1 in 1,000 British engineers is a woman. Only 15% of practising doctors are women. British medical schools restrict their intake of women to about 15% - regardless of qualifications and the desperate need for more doctors. Only 28% of places at all universities are taken by women. Only 16% of places at Oxford and Cambridge are granted to women. etc. etc. etc.

#### WOMEN'S LIBERATION WORKSHOP - THE GROUP.

The workshop is a federation of small groups, each formed by women from the same area. The group is autonomous and is free to participate in any activity as a group or as individuals. The group is leaderless, structureless, without rules and regulations, other than those agreed on by the participants, none-competitive and democratic relationships are free to flourish in this environment. What has brought these women together, is their growing frustration with their inferior status. The mode of socialization that has repressed them, from the earliest divisions of labour, enforced by the arrival of private property. Alone, this repression renders them inadequate to fight against the cause of their frustration. In the group they share a common experience; no longer in isolation women are able to understand their specific oppression and direct their energies through the strength of understanding and solidarity, to making revolutionary change.

CONSCIOUSNESS RAISING - The purpose of a small group is through sharing our experience, both psychological and physical as women, each person will reach a state of awareness of herself, as an equal individual and of the multi-faceted nature of her - economic exploitation + sexual repression = Total oppression. From the point of conscious awareness we are able to analyse the causes of our oppression, empirically; not vague theories that "experts" would have us believe. With our own political analysis we are ready to plan for action - economic, social and sexual revolution.



WHY NO MEN - no man can ever know what it is like to be a woman and vice versa. Men cannot experience the frustration of being the "second sex"; in a patriarchal society the male is socialized to be self-reliant, independent, his ego developed often at the expense of women's, the world is his, he leads, dominates, is aggressive. While women are trained to be dependant, follow passively, submit, the home the limits of her world, bearing children the only creativity expected from her. They are destined to live vicariously through relations with men and children. To allow men into groups would lead to better equipped men duplicating this process. Keeping men out is a necessary defensive measure and in the present circumstances one that women need not be ashamed of. Women want to control their own lives, make their own decisions and participate in feminist activities without the help or hindrance of men. It is unfortunate that men should feel threatened by such activity, especially those who call themselves socialists, for what is under attack, the domination of one sex by another, the sex roles that enhance the polarity, the patriarchal family that represses all its members, the family, and its economic roots that creates and recreates the sex dichotomy. This fear must be seen as the desire of the dominant to remain dominant and of course they do. The ruling class was able to appease the first feminist movement by giving them the vote and reforming the laws, this being accomplished all was forgotten, but appeasement is short lived, the movement has risen, stronger and wiser than the last; the ruling class is again under threat from a movement that seeks to shake its roots; there is only one role for women and that cuts across all classes. The first few years of the W.L.M. was accompanied by an avalanche of anti-propaganda by the media, making mockery - on the one hand it was full of lesbians, on the other liberated lays, or the bra-burning, saggy titted variety for puerile minds. Women are used to such inane jokes - the wife and mother-in-law are popular targets as are other oppressed groups - blacks, jews and Irish among them. The dominant class hands down to the rest of society (as it handed down its ideology of women's place), its fear of an ideology turning sour. So men feel threatened by a movement that excludes them. Women have had to accept a double standard in this respect without a murmur. Nothing is more exclusive than the sanctioned, all boy's together, boys will be boys - such clannishness has become so acceptable that it would appear to be a law of nature. The rich men's smoking clubs, old boys network, Freemasons, strip clubs, Rugby clubs, football clubs, stag parties and a night out with the boys, nobody throws up their hands in horror at these exclusive male activities. Of course women can be members of a football club, though they don't participate except in services, making the sandwiches, washing the teams shirts or alternatively, stripping to be watched. Who fears the W.V.S. and W.I. where bored housewives can be do-gooders or excel at women's work, cooking, embroidery etc. In comparison to these the W.L.M. is a threat, one that must be taken seriously by rulers and revolutionaries alike. Labelling the movement silly or unimportant only increases the anger. Once again the ruling class is forced to use appeasement tactics. This is emphasised by the sudden success in getting the anti-discrimination Bill through Parliament (the ruling classes public front).

THE FOUR DEMANDS - the W.N.C.C. put forward these demands in 1971, though no conference decision was made on why or how they should be implemented. The November 72 conference showed a feeling that these demands were inadequate, was there in fact any point in demanding reforms from the State, would such action only hinder revolution, women's suffrage was the cause of the first movement resting on its laurels. Let's take a look at these demands.

(1) Free 24 Hour Child Care - notice that the words are childcare and not nurseries. Why should women be expected to give up these jobs in order to rear a family rather than men - women generally have inferior jobs, less pay, are socialized to see child rearing/home making as their job, does a feminist really want to put her kids in a state run nursery, where this socialization practise can be continued, if not, then who is she making this demand to. Communal child care can only be established in a communal society, which capitalism cannot offer, perhaps this accounts for the lack of action on this demand.

(2) Equal Pay Now - the equal pay act comes into effect in 1975, what



will it mean, that "women's work" will be re-classified in a way that employers will be able to go on with unequal pay for "unequal work". As a socialist I realise that unions (though not revolutionary movements) are needed by the working class to protect their interests against the capitalists, by organising demands for higher pay. Likewise the need for the lowest paid groups of workers, i.e. women, to organise for equal pay - why should some slaves be expected to sell their labour for less than others. In effect women are asking for the repeal of the Cl9 reforms that removed them from the hard labour market, automation should and could remove everyone from hard labour. An equal pay Act that worked could cause women to suffer mass unemployment. Why employ women who take time off for maternity and to nurse hubby's cold, for the same price you can buy hubby. The question must be, why, what and who are we working for?

(3) Equal Education and Job Opportunity - As a kid I wanted to be a forensic scientist. I'm not, why not? The socialization process starts in the home, when girls are given dolls and boys meccano sets. The school acts as an enforcement agent on these already established sex roles. Education is a process that trains us further into the acceptances of authority; already part of the family structure, it represses all natural creativity, originality, individuality of children and encourages competitiveness, conformity with the social norms and moves, in order that all square pegs should fit into round holes, that await them in the endless adult life of work routine and boredom, without questioning the point of such an existence. Capitalism is a society which survives on the alienation of the individual, be it in factories, women in homes, children in schools, sick in hospitals, the aged in institutions, etc. The breakdown of our alienation can only be achieved through revolution. The A.D. Bill should be seen for what it is - an attempt to appease.

(4) Free Contraception and Abortion on Demand - An active campaign has been built round this demand. This is one demand that women must at present make of the government. As we can't make contraceptive gadgets ourselves, the only free method of birth control open to women is abstention or homo-sexuality. Though it seems fairly likely that free contraception will become available to all women, as a necessary step forward halting the "population explosion" and as the latest figures of births showed a rise in the rate of "illegitimate" births since the change in the abortion laws. Contraception is infinitely better than abortion, yet many women still die from trying to abort themselves. It is a woman's right to decide whether or not she shall have a child, no man, or government should have the power to interfere with that right.

The four demands should not be confused with the real struggle, though any woman who has the energy and is not mystified by such diversions should be supported. The revolution isn't tomorrow; if life can be made economically easier today why wait? Never the less if these demands were granted tomorrow, the sex role dichotomy would still remain; nothing short of revolution will change this.

S.D. RITCHIE.

LETTERS, ARTICLES AND CONTRIBUTIONS AND FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO:-

FLAT 1,  
ST. ANDREWS MANSIONS,  
ST. ANDREWS ROAD,  
BARONS COURT,  
LONDON, W.14.



## REVIEW.

The Power of Women and the Subversion of the Community. 25p.  
The Falling Wall Press Ltd., 79, Richmond Road, Montpelier,  
Bristol, BS6 5EP.

This pamphlet contains two essays, the first by Mariarosa Dalla Costa was written in 1972 and is a product of the new womens' movement in Italy. The second was written by Selma James in 1952 and was an attempt to describe some of the everyday life of American women in rapidly changing circumstances. It is the sort of stuff that forms the regular material of such magazines as Shrew and Spare Rib in this country today.

Mariarosa's essay is far more analytical dealing specifically with woman's role as housewife and with the particular form that womens' exploitation and oppression takes under capitalism. By re-emphasising the social nature of capitalist exploitation she shows how women are exploited as an integral part of the working class. This is important since many left-wing and radical groups though they have eventually recognised the women's lib movement as important, still see it as secondary to the "real" or "primary" movement of "workers" in industry. Women, these people argue, have tended to be a drag on the militancy of their husbands and boyfriends so a bit of Womens Lib might be useful. The movement and its aims are not seen as valuable in their own right. As Mariarosa puts it:-

"As long as housewives are considered external to the class, the class struggle at every moment and any point is impeded frustrated and unable to find full scope for its action."

Mariarosa pinpoints numerous contradictions between the reality and ideals of capitalism, for instance, of the homosexuality of the division of labour:-

"Capital, while it elevates heterosexuality to a religion, at the same time in practice makes it impossible for men and women to be in touch with each other physically or emotionally -- it undermines heterosexuality except as a sexual, economic and social discipline."

The arguments put forward are equally important in dealing with the misleading, if understandable, views of many Radical Feminists who would dismiss any united attack on the capitalist system as a diversion of the Womens Movement.

Mariarosa describes how women could only get a measure of independence and social involvement till recently by working for an employer like their husbands, but suggests that, "The advent of the womens movement is a rejection of this alternative", and that women must more and more reject the myth of liberation through work. The work of a factory may well be as boring as housework but it will continue to provide many women with an important social lever via the pay packet. I can see no third alternative that the movement itself could offer to most women. Total liberation can only be achieved in a wageless society.

Mike Ballard. January 1973.



## SOLIDARITY, THE MARKET AND MARX

IN 1960 a group of ex-trotskyists calling themselves "Socialism Re-affirmed" began to publish a journal called Agitator, changed after a few issues to Solidarity. Solidarity modelled itself on another group of ex-trotskyists in France running a journal Socialisme ou Barbarie. In 1961 Solidarity, Socialisme ou Barbarie and similar groups in Belgium and Italy published a joint manifesto entitled 'Socialism or Barbarism'.

This represented a considerable advance beyond orthodox Trotskyism. The concept of 'socialism' being established by a vanguard party mobilising the masses during an economic crisis was abandoned. Instead, declared the manifesto, it "will only be achieved through the autonomous and self-conscious activity of the working masses". Capitalism was said to have acquired the ability to iron out slumps and booms and to ensure a slow but steady rise in living standards. So, in this view, the basic contradiction of capitalism was no longer economic, but was between order-givers and order-takers. The bureaucrats who managed capitalism were always trying to reduce the workers to cogs, to treat them as objects, but the workers were always resisting this. Out of this struggle, said the manifesto, 'socialist' consciousness would arise in the form of a demand for "workers' management of production".

In fact this was how Solidarity (and the others) defined 'socialism'. In one sense they had gone beyond Trotskyism which saw 'socialism' as the management of production by a 'workers state', i.e. a State controlled by a vanguard party purporting to represent the working class. But in another sense they had not. For 'socialism' was still considered as an era of 'workers power' between capitalism and communism, as a 'transitional society' in which money, wages, prices, etc would continue to exist:

"All revenue derived from the exploitation of labour will be abolished. There will be equality of wages and pensions until it proves feasible to abolish money" (paragraph 27).

This idea of 'equal wages' can be found in Lenin's State and Revolution and in fact Solidarity's concept of 'socialism' is taken from this pamphlet of Lenin's. The main difference being that 'workers power' was defined in terms of the government being controlled by a central assembly of factory-based Workers Councils rather than by a vanguard party.

At one time Solidarity never hesitated to say that by 'workers power' (which is still the sub-title of their journal) they meant "a Workers' Council Government", the phrase used in the 1961 introduction to the 'Socialism or Barbarism' manifesto. In the 1969 introduction, however, this was changed to "the rule of the Workers' Councils", reflecting the anarchist influence which Solidarity had in the meantime come under. Dropping the claim to stand for some kind of government did represent an advance in Solidarity's thinking. 'Workers power' was now re-defined to mean, in the words of a basic policy statement As We See It issued in 1967, the "democratisation of society down to its very roots". Not that this made its conception of 'socialism' any clearer. When in 1972 this statement was amplified in a pamphlet As We Don't See It readers were referred for more details of Solidarity's idea of 'socialism' to another Solidarity pamphlet issued earlier that year called The Workers Councils.

This pamphlet is an edited translation of an article which originally appeared in issue No. 22 of Socialisme ou Barbarie in 1957 under the title "Sur le Contenu du Socialisme" (On the Content of Socialism). It is in fact a blue-print for 'workers self-management' of a market economy. Cardan (alias Chaulieu) who wrote the article is clearly in the same tradition of so-called 'market socialism' as Tito, Liberman, Ota Sik, etc in East Europe, the main difference being that he wants such an economy to be controlled by Workers Councils while they want it controlled by a bureaucratic State (maybe in conjunction with 'workers councils').

Nobody who has read the original article can deny that Cardan was an advocate of so-called 'market socialism'. Solidarity themselves clearly found this embarrassing because they have edited out its more crude manifestations. In their introduction they apologise:

"Some will see the text as a major contribution to the perpetuation of wage slavery --because it still talks of 'wages' and doesn't call for the immediate abolition of 'money' (although clearly defining the radically different meanings these terms will acquire in the early stages of a self-managed society)" (p.4).

and, again, in a footnote:

"All the preceding talk of 'wages', 'prices' and 'the market' will, for instance, undoubtedly have startled a certain group of readers. We



would ask them momentarily to curb their emotional responses and to try to think rationally with us on the matter"(p.36).

But Cardan did not speak only of 'wages', 'prices' and 'the market'. He also spoke of 'profitability'(rentabilite) and 'rate of interest'('taux d'interet'). This was evidently too much even for Solidarity's curbed emotion since these words nowhere appear in their edited translation.

It is very revealing to give some examples of the way Solidarity has toned down the 'market socialism' aspects of Cardan's original article:

<u>Original</u>	<u>Solidarity's version</u>
shops selling to consumers (magazins de vente aux consommateurs)	stores, distributing to consumers(p.24)..
The market for consumer goods (le marche des biens de consommation)	consumer goods(heading,p.35)
This implies the existence of a real market for consumer goods(Ce qui implique l'existence d'un marche reel pour les biens de consommation)	This implies the existence of some mechanism whereby consumer demand can genuinely make itself felt(p.35).
Money, prices, wages and value	'money', 'wages', value(heading,p.36).

In fact Cardan envisaged a market economy in which everybody would be paid in circulating money an equal wage with which to buy goods which would be on sale at a price equal to their value(=amount of socially necessary labour embodied in them). And he has the cheek to claim that Marx also held that under socialism goods would exchange at their values. Before going on to refute this we must draw attention to two other phrases which occur frequently in the original, namely 'gouvernement' and 'parti ouvrier socialiste'(socialist workers party), which are nowhere to be found in Solidarity's version. 'Government' becomes "Council(of the Central Assembly of Workers Councils)" while 'socialist workers party' becomes "libertarian socialist organisation"!

But --and this brings us on to a discussion of whether or not Marx thought socialism would be a market economy-- the best change is towards the end. The original article says(of 'socialism' as a transitional society between capitalism and communism):

"In their essence these views absolutely coincide with the ideas of Marx and Lenin on the subject. Marx only considered one kind of transitional society between capitalism and communism, which he called indifferently 'dictatorship of the proletariat' or 'lower stage of communism'... Lenin's view, in State and Revolution, were only, in this regard, an explanation and a defence of Marx's view against the reformists of his time"(translated from the French).

In the Solidarity pamphlet this becomes:

"In their essence these views closely co-incide with Marx's ideas on the subject. Marx only considered one kind of transitional society between capitalism and communism, which he called indifferently 'dictatorship of the proletariat' or 'lower stage of communism'..."(p.57).

No mention of Lenin! Which is unfair to Marx since it is with Lenin's views on this point and not with Marx's that Solidarity's position coincides('absolutely' or 'closely', take your pick!).

For Marx never spoke of socialism as a 'transitional society' between capitalism and communism(indeed he never spoke of a 'transitional society' at all); and he did not use the phrases 'dictatorship of the proletariat' and 'lower stage of communism' indifferently. What he did do was to speak of a 'political transition period' between capitalism and 'the lower stage of communism'; it was the words 'socialism' and 'communism' that he used indifferently. 'Socialism' as a transitional society between capitalism and communism(or socialism) characterised by 'workers power' and equal wages, which Solidarity has inherited from its trotskyist past, was one of Lenin's distortions of Marxism.

Marx himself always made it clear that socialism/communism, even in its lower stage, meant the abolition of the market('commodity production') and, in the Poverty of Philosophy and Value, Price and Profit he specifically singled out the idea of a society of 'equal wages' for derision. For him socialism/communism was a society in which production would be democratically planned by the community(the State as a coercive instrument having disappeared immediately socialism/communism was



established)solely and directly to satisfy their needs. Writing in 1875 Marx had to concede that,in the early stages,consumption would have to be rationed(he suggested, this be done by means of labour-time vouchers,but specifically said that these would no more be money than a theatre ticket was),but eventually all goods and services would be free for everybody to take according to need. Today,nearly a hundred years later,this stage could be reached very rapidly once socialism/communism had been established.

Solidarity,in advocating a self-managed market economy,is not advocating socialism at all,but some unrealistic blueprint which would never work --either because if the working class had reached the degree of consciousness needed to establish it then they would establish real socialism instead or,if they hadn't,then it would degenerate into some kind of state capitalism. However,it is significant that,as we have shown, Solidarity should feel guilty about advocating a self-managed market economy rather than a moneyless socialist society. In time maybe they'll have the intellectual honesty to repudiate their previous views on this,as they have done on the concept of a 'workers council government'.

Some members and ex-members of Solidarity have already come to do this and,faced with the dogmatism(or rather Cardan-worship) of the others on this and other issues,have left. For instance,a document issued by four ex-Solidarity members in Aberdeen entitled Revolutionary Politics and The Present Situation refers to workers' self-management of production as involving "the abolition of the production of exchange values and the production of use values"(instead). Another breakaway group The Oppositionist,in its October 1972 issue,calls for the 'abolition of the wages system':

"The Socialist Revolution is a complex and many sided struggle to eliminate the wages system itself. We do not advocate workers control of production whilst striving to retain the market economy of capitalist production. Without the destruction of the 'market' the ramifications of capitalism would grow stronger not weaker...  
Workers cannot control production and retain the wages system"  
(their emphasis)

Another document,issued in London,entitled a Critique of Cardan calls for the abolition of commodity production and wage labour and describes socialism as "a system where men can have full control over social wealth in common,for use,and so control their own natures" and says "it is also about a completely different kind of production;for the sake of useful consumption of the society as a whole,not for the creation of commodities".

Unlike Solidarity these groups are coming to adopt real socialism as their aim, though in fact it was Solidarity's rejection of Marxism rather than its 'market socialism' that caused them to split off.

Solidarity has published a number of texts by Cardan critical of Marxian economics, theory of history,etc and would now no longer claim to be Marxist. Actually these weren't criticisms of Marxism but rather of the crude economic determinism that passed for <sup>M</sup>arxism in the Trotskyist and ex-trotskyist movement. As such they were Cardan's repudiation of his own past.

At the same time Solidarity tended to move away from the view that the struggle for 'socialism' was primarily industrial and came to see it as a many-sided struggle to change all aspects --education,sex as well as work-- of social life. Apart from the fact that their aim wasn't socialism,this represented an advance on their former views which had tended to idealise the factory worker and to see the experience of factory life as the generator of 'socialist' consciousness. This was mistaken because socialism is not just an economic change;it is a total revolution in social relationships. So that movements outside the factory(such as protests against sex discrimination,war or pollution) have just as much chance,with socialist intervention,of generating socialist consciousness as the factory struggle.

Unfortunately,Solidarity's internal critics have not realised this and,regarding this change of emphasis as part of Solidarity's rejection of Marxism,have reverted to idealising the factory struggle and relegating the other struggles to a secondary status. In fact the Liverpool-based Workers Voice(though in fact not a Solidarity breakaway),with its detailed descriptions of particular factory struggles,reads like Solidarity did ten years ago --including talk of the need for a workers party and for workers to have their own state power. The Aberdeen group's document quoted earlier states that in its view the main area of struggle remains the factory,with the implication that it is from this struggle rather than that of "movements outside the factory"(such as those against pollution or for sexual liberation) that socialist consciousness will arise. The supporters of the American journal Internationalism in this country take a similar view.



Internationalism also reverts to economic determinism in making the rise of socialist consciousness depend on an economic crisis, though they are reasonably clear on what socialism/communism is (even though they do unnecessarily distinguish the two):

"While under capitalism use values are only the material form of exchange values, and commodities are produced for sale, under socialism production cannot be limited by the requirements of profit, of capital accumulation, but must be determined by the needs of the human community. The consumption of the working class cannot be limited by its wages or the value of its labor power, but will be determined by its needs and the technical capacity of the productive apparatus which it sets in motion. The elimination of wage labor, of production based on the law of value, is not a task for some future or higher stage of socialism, but the immediate task and content of the proletarian dictatorship. It is only on this foundation that the movement towards that higher stage of communism of which Marx speaks, the stage characterized by the formulation 'to each according to his needs' can begin". (Internationalism, Political Perspective, pp. 9-10).

But all these groups still have a hazy conception of who the working class are, tending to confine it, or at least to make the most important part of it, the industrial proletariat, whereas in fact it is composed of all who depend for a living on selling their ability to work, irrespective of where they work or what work they do.

The basic contradiction of capitalism is that between socialised production and class monopoly of the means of production, which manifests itself as working class discontent with its general conditions of life, not just its work experiences, under capitalism. A failure to recognise this is the one great weakness of these ex-Solidarity groups. If they did, they would also realise that socialism is not just concerned with emancipating workers as workers (i.e. wealth-producers) but as human beings (i.e. as men and women). It would also give them a clearer conception of socialist society. Socialism aims not to establish "workers power" but the abolition of all classes including the working class. It is thus misleading to speak of socialism as workers ownership and control of production. In socialist society there would simply be people, free and equal men and women forming a classless community. So it would be more accurate to define socialism/communism in terms of the common ownership and democratic control of the means of production by and in the interest of the whole people.

Nevertheless, the emergence of these groups calling for the abolition of wage labour and of commodity production once again confirms that capitalism continually throws up socialist ideas.

Adam Buick

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1) This book, against the background of a deluge of writings on and by women's liberation, stands out as no modest achievement for radical feminism. Shulamith Firestone has raised radical feminist theory (and methodology) to a level requiring an answer by Marxism, and by doing so has facilitated a mutually beneficial dialogue with the socialist movement.

Marxism has not to date provided an adequate theory of the family and the specificity of women's oppression. To Marx and Engels women were largely symbolic and today, despite the widespread activities of women's liberation, socialists (male and female), have failed to grasp the "women question". The narrow economism reflected in so many left programmes for women - as workers - detracts from the importance of home and family to women - as wives and mothers. Recent developments on the theory of women as producer of healthy, intelligent and obedient workers, whilst being of some significance, still bypass the psychological aspects of women's oppression. Not unrelated is the recurring underplay of the ideological importance of the family to capitalism. Although not aimed directly at the inadequacies of Marxist discussion of women "The Dialectic of Sex" does reveal the above, and other inadequacies; more than that it makes positive contributions to a debate which should have healthy repercussions upon the socialist movement and to its theory and practice concerning women's liberation.

2. When she writes that it is a mistake "...freezing what were only incidental insights of Marx and Engels about sex class (sic) into dogma". Firestone refers to an actual mistake. But in continuing she herself makes an equally grave error "Instead", she writes "we must enlarge historical materialism to include the strictly Marxian" and "...develop a materialist view of history based on sex itself". In this model - developed by the application of her "synthetic method, integrating Marxism (the Marxism of Engels, "Origins...") with Freudianism - "sex class" becomes the dynamic of human history and the infrastructure occupies the ill-defined culture (male) level of society. The text and accompanying diagrammatic representation of the model do nothing to explain how a fundamentally unchanging division of society (sex class) can account for historical development and epochs.

Advances are, however, made upon Kate Millet's simplistic view of history as a sea of rampant male chauvinism, and her misunderstanding of Engels to read that the oppression of women antedates private property as by no means so rigidly employed. (Oppression is social and not male) Firestone does also avoid Greer's romantic illusion that woman is closer to nature - the Noble Savage! - and is, therefore, destined to be the saviour of human kind. Greer's total loss of faith in modern civilization and the attendant anti-technology is opposed by the view that far from acting as a fetter upon revolution, the present level of technology provides an objective precondition of social revolution (including its sexual facets) and the building of a world of material and spiritual abundance. The understanding of this (all be it one expressed in terms of the primacy of sexual liberation). is one of the true merits of "the Dialectic of Sex". But her ideas still in their essentials, represent a feminist conception of history, where the socialist revolution <sup>is</sup> reduced to a mere part (moment) of a sexual revolution. And in following Simone de Beauvoir's (to whom the book is dedicated) material origins thesis of women's oppression - i.e. the first division of labour (into sex classes) and role allocation as nature's oppression due to women's physical inferiority - she is perhaps intruding upon the grounds of the vulgar materialists. Bourgeois and "Marxists" alike.

In her refusal to reject Freud as a sexist (which of course he was), Shulamith shows herself again to be in advance of mainstream feminism. By extracting the revolutionary kernel of Freud and developing it (ii), we can begin to understand phenomena at both an individual and a social level, that up until now have eluded us. Whether our author, with her own theory of the Oedipus complex and racism as a psychological extension of sexism! e.g. does this is a quite different matter. It is, I think her concern to stress the qualitative aspects of revolution, or in Marcuse's works the "definite" negation" of capitalism, which allows her to take Freud seriously.



With the knowledge that the revolution in the infrastructure of society does not ipso facto revolutionise the superstructures - in our present context; there is no mechanical certainly of emotional internal emancipation - the need arises to emphasize the multi-dimensional nature of the socialist revolution.

For Scholarith Firestone the new society means disalienation, unrepressed polymorphous perversity, the disappearance of adult/child, work/play antinomies, etc, including the private/public distinction.


Amongst other things this means that the integration of our personal and public "politics" begins here and now. "Most revolutionary movements are unable to practice amongst themselves what they preach.. The woman's movement, in its short history, has a somewhat better record than most in this area". The point can be read as Shulamith present feminism as an example to socialists. Revolutionary praxis includes "body politic" as a logical elaboration of "Marx's principal of self-emancipation. "One learns to revolutionize society even as one revolutionizes oneself; one learns to revolutionize oneself by trying to revolutionise society". (Hal Draper). This involves challenging in every pore of society, theoretically and practically, the internalised bourgeois ideology and (culture). "The Dialectic of Sex" adds weight to such a challenge and helps lay the foundation stands for a socialist culture. By laying these stones, women children and men live out a transition from fettered, hierarchic and competitive interaction to free, equal and co-operative human encounter.

(i) For an excellent review covering a far wider scope and taking up more issues raised by Scholarith Firestone, than has here been attempted see "From Tribel Kitchen Sink to Dishwasher" by Micheline Vander in "Red Rag" No.3. See also Juliet Mitchell " "Womens Estate" Penguin pp 87-96

(ii) The first three essays in Marcuse's "Five Lectures" (Allen Lane The Penguin Press) provide a useful introduction to one such attempt. Also "Eros and Civilization" (sphere paperback)

Graham Bell





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