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MAGAZINE COMMITTEE

Dorothy, Sherrill and Val.

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MANNEQUINN

Tangled and caught in ribbon and lace
Hidden away with veil-shrouded face
Corseted, laced and almost strangled
Hobbled and bustled in skirt to ankle
Crippled & pinched in high-heeled shoes
Bound & deformed, she could hardly move
Feathered, furred, powdered and curled
Weighted down with gold and pearls
Mysterious creature turned in a mold
Perched on a pedestal, frozen with cold

MURDER

Drowned in the Sea of Wasted Emotion
Paralyzed by endless devotion
Divided, conquered, beaten, enslaved
Hypnotized from age to age
Buried alive in mortar and brick
Smothered by myth centuries thick
Martyred by love, betrayed by religion
Oppressed by laws unjust and legion
Sentenced for life: solitary confinement
Exposed to torture of subtle refinement
Raped in body and left to die
Robbed of mind and poisoned by lie
Murdered because she gives us birth
Most treasured Possession here on earth.

Val Perkins

THE OPPRESSION OF WOMEN

by Virginia Simpson

The purpose of this essay is to demonstrate and analyse female oppression. It could be that all human beings are oppressed, but I wish to deal only with female oppression in this paper.

To begin with, it is necessary to distinguish between discrimination and oppression because it has been argued that many of the inequalities experienced by women are a result of discrimination rather than the result of oppression. The Oxford Universal Dictionary defines discrimination as "the action of discriminating or distinguishing; a distinction (made with mind or in action)." To oppress is "...to load or burden with cruel or unjust impositions or restraints..." and oppression is "the feeling of being oppressed or weighed down; bodily or mental distress or uneasiness."

Now, to discriminate is to treat differently, but there is a point at which, when one is being treated differently, one becomes oppressed because the process of being treated differently produces mental burdens or restraints. This is because the differential treatment is related to differences beyond the actual differences and this restrains a person from developing in certain ways or participating in certain actions that would not normally be precluded by the actual differences.

In this paper I will demonstrate that beyond the child bearing role, the female is restrained by our culture to fulfilling a child rearing role and its associated homemaking role, not genetically determined. If it can be demonstrated that the female is loaded or burdened "with cruel or unjust impositions or restraints" or receives differential treatment that is related to differences beyond the actual differences which restrain her from developing in certain ways or participating in certain actions that the actual differences would not preclude, then by the definition stated above, she is oppressed.

There is nothing that biologically equips a female to be better fit for the role of child rearing than a male. No instinctual "mothering" qualities have been found by scientists, which cannot be explained by learning theory alone. The qualities which are professed to make a female a good mother and homemaker, such as: passivity, patience, tolerance and unselfishness, are socially learned qualities and not innate in the female.

Philip Mason, in his book Patterns of Dominance, states that for a society to maintain the oppressed in a subservient position, the oppressed...

"must somehow be led to believe that the system is part of the natural order of nature and that things will always be like this-- that is to say, the very idea of revolution must seem remote or impossible."

The female is so directed from birth to fit the role of child rearing and homemaking, that even to question the assumption that it is a natural role is a remote possibility. At birth the sex differences are loudly proclaimed and the ever increasing gap between the sexes begin. A female is covered with a pink blanket and a boy with a blue blanket. Poignant essences of the attitudes the female must learn to consider as hers are: ¹.

"- being confined to the Doll corner in nursery school when you are really fascinated by Tinker Toys."

"- wanting to wear overalls instead of 'frocks'."

"- learning to detest the words 'dainty' and 'cute'."

"- being labelled a tomboy when all you wanted to do was climb the tree to look out and see a distance."

"- learning to sit with your legs crossed, even when your feet can't touch and floor yet."

"- hating boys- because they're allowed to do things you want to do but are forbidden to--and being told hating boys is a phase."

"- learning that something you do is 'naughty', but when your brother does the same thing it's 'spunky'."

A little girl's experiences are "mystified", in R.D. Laing's words, as she is taught to reject as wrong her feelings and desires and shaped to become a stereotyped female in order to play the role our culture has deemed hers. This mystifying of experience and shaping is carried on methodically through her adolescent years, and she is often directed away from her natural intellectual desires, as she is taught about sex, "the only pursuit, the only goal a woman is permitted in pursuit of a man." ² For it is a man that will give her security, and pleasing him that will make her fulfilled and happy.

"--- liking math or history a lot and getting hints that boys are turned off by smart girls."

"--- discovering that what seems like everything worthwhile doing in life isn't feminine and 'nice' and learning to just delight in being feminine and 'nice'---and feeling somehow guilty."

As an adult she must maintain her youthful appearance to get and keep her man. To fit society's ideal woman as projected by mass media she must be young, beautiful, not too intelligent, well-developed, a perfect lady in company, a good lover; she must enjoy cooking, cleaning and raising children. To not fit this role is to be maladjusted, for to be well adjusted is to basically conform to society's standards.

From where do these attitudes and standards come ? Why are they so easily accepted by males and females alike ? Why are they believed to be part of the natural order ? Historically we have a long progression of attitudes which restrained the female to a second-class position. The Bible, the Koran and many other ancient books, which have influenced us greatly, hold this view.

"Creator of heavens and the earth, He has given you wives from among yourselves to multiply you, and cattle male and female. Nothing can be compared with Him."

"Let the women learn in silence with all subjection...I suffer not woman to usurp authority over men, but to be in silence."

"How can he be clean that is born of a woman ?"

The Bible looks upon the female as a piece of property that can be valuable because of her ability to manage the household and keep things running smoothly for the husband. The Bible and the Koran are not the only old books, containing proverbs or philosophers' writings with the same view of the female. The list is long.

Poetry and literature from the 15th century to the present often depict the female as continuously seeking a man and providing pleasure for him. Her virtues such as beauty, docility and coquetry are extolled and her deficiencies of character such as inconsistency, deceptions and emotional outbursts are reproved. Only her superficial qualities are discussed. She is depicted as having no depth at all. E. Spenser's Epithalamion is a wedding song in praise of the passive, saintly beauty:

"So sweet, so lovely and so mild as she.
Adorned with beautyes grace and virtues store,
Her goodly eyes like Saphyres shining bright,
Her cheekes lyke apples which the sun hath rubbed,
Her lips-like cherries charming men to byte."

Shakespeare has written poetry as well that praises the femal's superficial attributes such as Sonnet 98:

"From you have I been absent in the spring
When proud-pied April, dressed in all his trim,
Hath put a spirit of youth in everything,
That heavy Saturn laughed and leaped with him.
Yet nor the lays of birds, nor the sweet smell
Of different flowers in odor and in hue,
Could make me any summer's story tell,
Or from their proud lap pluck them where they grew;
Nor did I wonder at the lily's white,
Nor praise the deep vermilion in the rose;
They were but sweet, but figures of delight,
Drawn after you, you pattern of all those.
Yet seemed it winter still, and, you away,
As with your shadow I with these did play."

John Donne's poetry, in the main, refers to women in their role as the provider of pleasure and comfort to men, extolling their virtues as lovers. "Hope not for mind in women".

John Milton in Areopagitica describes vice as female. "He that can apprehend and consider vice with all her baits and seeming pleasures...". He depicts the female as inferior in Paradise Lost; "Not equals their sex not equal seemed."

Alexander Pope's Rape of the Lock is a lengthy satirical poem that describes the superficialities of the social life that females were involved in.

William Wordsworth maintains that man is the master of the female. In his poem Three Years She Grew he describes a pretty young girl, age three; his plans to marry her when she grows up; and how he will shape her to his ideal "...such thoughts to Lucy I will give."

Although literature written during the last four hundred years has presented a picture of the female as a superficial creature interested in society and men, there is definitely some literature that presents the female in a truer light. It is the literature that presents the superficial view of the female, that tends to reinforce the attitude of the female as a secondary citizen with a specific, restrictive role in life.

Advertising in the mass media is definitely a part of our society today that reinforces the image of the female as a child rearer, homemaker, and wife. Lucy Komisar in a well-written document about the image of women in advertising states that advertising:

"...legitimizes the idealized, stereotyped roles of women as temptress, wife, mother, and sex object, and portrays women as less intelligent and more dependent than men. It makes women believe their chief role is to please men and that their fulfillment will be as wives, mothers and homemakers. It makes women feel unfeminine if they are not pretty enough and guilty if they do not spend most of their time in desperate attempts to imitate gourmet cooks and eighteenth century scullery maids. It makes women believe that their own lives, talents and interests ought to be secondary to the needs of their husbands and families and that they are almost totally defined by these relationships."

This last statement seems rather exaggerated but it is exactly what directed Betty Frieda towards Feminism. In interviewing women over and over again, she found that they weren't happy even though they should have been, for they had everything that was supposed to make them feel happy and fulfilled. They even felt guilty about saying that they weren't happy. Betty Frieda feels that these women's growth potential has been semi-anaesthetized in placing their families' needs above theirs. Advertising feeds on the culturally produced differences between males and females. Taking into consideration Rosenthal's experiments in unspoken expectations producing the expected expectations in others, the female has a real problem trying to break out of this restrictive role, for everywhere the media shows verbally and non-verbally the expectations of the female.

Psychology has demonstrated that there are real differences between males and females that can be reliably shown on tests that reinforce the media image of the female. All these differences can be accounted for by learning and cannot be demonstrated as determined by genetics. For both sexes there is a tendency for the more passive dependent children to perform poorly on a variety of intellectual tasks, and for the more independent to excel...and females learn to be more socially dependent than men.

But as John Stuart Mill says in his essay "On Liberty":

"Human nature is not a machine to be built after a model and set to do exactly the work prescribed for it, but a tree, which requires to grow and develop itself on all sides, according to the tendency of the inward forces which make it a living thing."

The attitude towards the female has become so ingrained in each and every one of us that it appears to be part of the natural order and therefore quite unnatural to question. It is known that the female is not genetically determined to fit the role society has deemed hers. It is also known that the picture of the female that has been painted by society through history is true in most cases though it has been produced by cultural pressures. What is now being learned again is that the female is unhappy trying to live up to society's ideal for her. Her potential has not been completely anaesthetized. She has been burdened with unjust restraints by society to fulfill a role, both physically and psychologically, that is not genetically hers. She has received differential treatment related to differences that have been culturally developed, that are not innately hers. This differential treatment has prevented her from reaching her full potential.

NOTES:

1. Sisterhood is Powerful, ed. Robin Morgan, New York: Random House, 1970.
2. Sanity, Madness and the Family, A. Esterson, R.D. Laing, Harmondsworth Middlesex, England; Penguin Books Ltd., 1969.

QUOTES

"Human institutions grow from deep and primal male sexual anxieties and are based on irrational psychological mechanisms." H.R. Hays.

From: The Dangerous Sex.

"Women illustrate the most vicious effect of any slave system; not that it is oppressive and unjust, but that it degrades slaves to the level where they positively revel in their servitude."

Chikita Abdullah.

A GAME OF CHANCE

by Val Perkins

The deck is stacked and the game is crooked.
The cards are marked and the dice are loaded.
You must play this game and you dare not mention
that these facts have come to your attention.
It isn't cricket. Just isn't done.
You smile and laugh and join in the fun.

He chooses the game and he makes up the rules.
He picks the ones who can play and the ones to refuse.
You bet all you have and he pays off the winners
and those who object are called misfits or sinners.
But if you should muster the guts to complain
you'll find you're no longer part of the game.

When life treats you well and you're content with your lot
it is easy to laugh and to be a good sport.
And when people are laughing and happy and gay
they don't like unhappy people spoiling their day.
So on with the game, but think once or twice
as you deal out the cards - the stakes are your life.

It isn't enough that you smile and agree;
you build-up and support the powers-that-be
while these very same powers are putting you down
and you're the dependent and therefore the pawn.
If you think about this you will have to confess
that it requires much strength and causes much stress.

And if you should buckle under the strain
there's no one to help you in this kind of game.
No person. No place. Nothing at all,
for people, all over, are playing a role
and think it just terribly, awfully bad form
to even suggest that you might not conform.

Once your vision has cleared and you see what you see
there's no going back and no room to be free.
Fatigued by the game and seeking an out
many players resort to the psychiatrist's couch.
You tell him your story and give him your trust
but he calmly advises that you try to adjust.

You have pictures this game clearly and well
and he does not deny the facts that you tell.
He suggests you keep busy, do volunteer work,
read some good books, get involved in the church.
He says you are privileged and a little bit spoiled
and that Man is more comfortable playing a role.

... cont'd next page

No one suggests that you right what is wrong:
old myths and traditions are allowed to go on
though they damage and hurt and cause deep distress.
How can you live on and give of your best,
or be a sound person, honest and just,
when the game is so crooked, but you are forced to adjust.

DEFAULT

Great artists and poets, musicians, explorers
Scientists and writers, athletes and statesmen
Historians, philosophers, professors and warriors
Entertainers, economists, and doctors of medicine
The men of the media, and the men of the cloth
The judge and the jury, and the Word of the law
The Saviour of man, the God in His heaven
The sun in the sky and the message of myths
It is all male control and they know the best leaven
To make their cause rise, keep their god in their heaven
Centuries were stacked to make woman a mouse
So cleverly done she wants to stay in the house.

This parade of great men with genius and talent
Minds that run deep, men of great pride
With the scope to explore and to land on far planets
Expect us to stand back and do naught but exalt.
How can they build on the backs of their loved ones
How can they jail half the minds of the earth
How can they know they're the best of the humans
When half of the world has been taught to default

Val Perkins

TO THOSE WHO WAIT

by G. Matheson.

What to do with your rage ?
When the intolerable
must once more be tolerated.
When they push you back
into your age-old niche,
and your tongue has lost its words,
which, even if spoken,
would be useless.

Swallow it.

Say nothing.

Let your teeth grow sharp
behind closed lips.
Sometime you will spit it out again,
ten times more bitter,
for having mixed with your bile.

Push back the reflex of your rage,
like a tightly coiled spring,
to lie waiting for the second leap,
gathering tension and power.

Let them add fuel to your inner fire.
Let them enjoy themselves.
Smile, and nod, and acquiesce.

But note it all down
in the secret book of your brain,
to be brought out
when the record is made straight.

It will be paid for.

For this reason,
let the heat of your anger,
harden into a solid core of steel,
so that you may endure and endure,

Smiling and waiting.

RECENT RESEARCH ON WOMEN

Recent studies by the Johnson O'Connor Research Foundation Human Engineering Laboratory looked for differences in level of measured ability between men and women. Twenty-two aptitude and knowledge areas were measured. In fourteen there was found to be no sex difference. In the remaining eight which showed a sex difference: women excelled in six and men in two.

No discernible sex difference was shown in the following:

1. Analytical Reasoning
2. Eyedness
3. Foresight
4. Inductive Reasoning
5. Memory for Design
6. Number Memory
7. Objective Personality
8. Subjective Personality
9. Pitch Discrimination
10. Rhythm Memory
11. Timbre Discrimination
12. Tonal Memory
13. Tweezer Dexterity
14. Acquired Knowledge of English Vocabulary

Women excelled in the following:

1. Finger Dexterity
2. Graphoria
3. Ideaphoria
4. Observation
5. Silograms
6. Abstract Visualization

Men excelled in the following:

1. Grip
2. Structural Visualization

Jon J. Durkin has written an article based on these findings which is available by writing to:

Human Engineering Laboratory
1349 West Fifth Street
Los Angeles, California 90017

Jon J. Durkin states that the Johnson O'Connor Research Foundation respects facts whatever they may be. "Since in the course of virtually fifty years of research it has found no facts which substantiate the great discrepancy between women's potential and their actual accomplishment it feels bound to present these facts to the world. If it leads to a greater development of ability on the part of all people, then our job will be done."

The aptitudes in which women excel indicate that women are more suited than are men for jobs which require handling, demonstrating, assembling, accounting, sales, teaching, writing, advertising, insurance adjusting, police work, inspection, chemistry, medicine, law, banking, management, politics, writing. The aptitudes in which men excel indicate that men are more suited than are women for jobs which require physical strength, engineering, architecture, surgery. These are, of course, averages. For example if the human beings with the greatest aptitude for a job requiring abstract visualization were chosen, one would expect to find three women for every two men.

The experience of the Foundation is that most women are timid in their search for a vocation, aiming at law clerk instead of lawyer, secretary instead of executive etc. The early socialization of children and the subsequent reinforcement for sex-role stereotyping is based on bias and false information and prevents self-development and personal growth in women.

CLEARINGHOUSE FOR FEMINIST MEDIA

This is an organization for women interested in finding out who is writing and publishing feminist literature or working for other media in that field in Canada.

Anyone on the list below may be contacted directly for help, information or discussion. If you know anyone who may be interested anywhere in Canada, send her a copy of this list.

A quarterly list of persons and their publications and related interests will be issued by the group and mailed to anyone who supplies an envelope as described below.

To have your own name added and/or to receive new lists, send stamped self-addresses envelopes to:

Clearinghouse for Feminist Media,
P.O. Box 207,
Ancaster, Ontario

You will receive as many quarterly issues as envelopes supplied. To list yourself, send information such as: your name and address, all your publications on feminism in full, areas in which you are presently working and areas in which you would like to work.

Contacts:

- Lorna Marsden
41 Spadina Road,
#7, Toronto 4
923-1506
- "The Socialization of Women to Work" (published)
Interested in women and work. Would like to write brief
biographies of Canadian women in cooperation with
others.
- Children's Liberation
Workshop
P.O. Box 207
- The group writes non-sexist children's picture books;
has a general goal of writing, illustrating, publishing
and distributing in that area.
- Jean Hellmuth
177 Sterling Street,
Hamilton, 16, Ontario
- Interested in the distribution of feminist literature.
- Linda Fischer,
128 Hwy. 2
Ancaster, Ontario
648-2629
- Systematically studying sex stereotypes in children's
picture books using a sample from an urban Public
Library in Ontario; Teaching Sociology of Sex Roles
and Sexism at University of Waterloo.
- Cynthia Harrison
1928 Main Street W.
#113, Hamilton, Ont.
- Member, Children's Liberation Workshop
- Margaret Slaght
106 A Madison Avenue
Toronto 5.
- Wishes to compile bibliographies and analyse existing
feminist literature.
- Margaret O'Toole
400 Avenue Road
#208, Toronto.
- "The Sex Differential in Higher Education"
(thesis in progress), has bibliographies.
- Gwen Matheson
153 Spadina Road,
Toronto.
921-8667
- Editing a book on the problems of women in Canada;
teaches women's course at the University of Toronto.
- Lesbia Smith
11 Nanton Avenue
#20, Toronto 5.
- Interested in compiling data on the status of women
in medicine and related professions.
- Margrit Eichler
Dept. of Sociology
and Anthropology
University of Waterloo
- Has written a non-sexist children's book:
Martin's Father, which is being distributed by Lollipop
Power, P.O. Box 1171; Chapel Hill North Carolina 27514,
U.S.A.; is editor of Canadian Journal of Sociology and
Anthropology about women and is soliciting manuscripts.
Those interested should get in touch with her.

NEWS AND NOTES

The Women's Festival held on the U. of T. campus, March 10, 11 and 12 was a great beginning for such festivals in Toronto. May there be many more! The photography exhibit was truly a celebration of women's art. The Chicago Women's Liberation Rock Group was joyful as well as damned good rock and proved beyond a doubt that music with a message is just beginning for women. The ugly machismo of the cock rock stars may soon be a thing of the past.

The National Convention of Women in Canada, "Strategy for Change" will take place April 7, 8, and 9 at the King Edward Hotel, Toronto. It has been arranged by the National Action Committee on the Status of Women. The following workshops have been arranged: Political Action, Mass Media Impact, Day Care and Education, Economic Status, Direct Action Techniques, and Community Organization. Women from across Canada will be attending. If you can billet one or more women at your home, please get in touch with Val Perkins, 239-4441.

Women for Political Action is a new organization interested in raising important issues in the next federal election as well as encouraging women candidates to run. For information write: Box 1213, Station "Q", Toronto 7.

Pat Sykes of the Toronto Star wrote a good exposé of justice in this Canadian democracy (for men only) when she assailed the jury system as it relates to women. Philip Ambrose, York County sheriff told Pat that he used to include a letter to women urging them to serve on juries, when he sent out jury duty notices. HE WAS INSTRUCTED BY THE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT SEVERAL YEARS AGO TO STOP SENDING THESE LETTERS !!! The present Attorney General, Dalton Bales' first quoted comment was: "In some cases women aren't called, and I am sure you can appreciate the reasons. The feeling was that there were some cases that it just wasn't suitable for a woman. On certain types of cases a woman might be biased." (He quickly added that men might also be biased in dealing with certain types of cases) AND, Crown Attorney, Frank Armstrong said that the only reason he would reject a woman is on the grounds there might be something in the case "offensive to a woman and embarrassing to other members of the jury because of her presence." It would all be unbelievable if it were not true. Those cases which Armstrong decides might be offensive to women or embarrassing to men are probably the very cases which women should have a voice in. I suspect these cases are those which involve prostitution, rape and violence. These are the very cases in which women should be involved !! If men are embarrassed THAT IS THEIR PROBLEM. Maybe it would be a good idea if the whole system of justice were taken over by women, if the men in charge are so unaware of what democracy and justice are all about.

And men still control our bodies - Do you need Abortion Information?
In Toronto, call 533-9006.

READING

Canadian Books Worth Reading:

Fiction:

Atwood, Margaret The Edible Woman

Blais, Marie Claire The Manuscripts of Pauline Archange

Engles, Marion The Honey Man Festival

Laurence Margaret A Jest of God

Ross, Sinclair As For Me and My House

Roy Gabrielle The Tin Flute

Non-fiction:

Moodie, Susanna Roughing It In the Bush

Feminist Magazines, Journals, etc. (U.S.):

Ms, 370 Lexington Ave., New York, N.Y. 10017, \$9. per year

Everywoman, 2083 Westwood Blvd., Los Angeles, Ca. 90025, \$6.75 per year

The Spokeswoman, 5464 South Drive, Chicago, Ill. 60615, \$7. per year
(newsletter)

The Second Wave, Box 303, Kenmore Square Station, Boston, Mass. 02215,
\$3. per year.

The Ladder, Box 5025, Washington Station, Reno, Nevada 89503, \$8.50
(lesbian)

Sources of Feminist Literature:

KNOW, INC., P.O. Box 10197, Pittsburg, Pa. 15232 (reprints at reasonable prices)

Feminist Book Club, 2083 Westwood Blvd., Los Angeles, Ca. 90025

Dick and Jane as Victims an excellent extensive study of sex-role stereo-typing
in school texts, \$2.50; order from: Women on Words and Images,
P.O. Box 2163, Princeton, N.J. 08540

Images of the Growing Girl, bibliography of children's books, 45¢ + postage:
NOW, 45 Newbury St., Boston, Mass. 02116

Socialization in Children's Picture Books, a comprehensive study of pre-readers, \$3.
to: Lenore Weizman, Institute of Governmental Studies, U. of Calif., Davis, Ca.

Bias in Public Schools, \$2.50 to: NOW, 28 E. 56th St., New York, N.Y. 10022