

Women hold up half the sky.

—Mao Tse-Tung



**Winnipeg
Women's Liberation
Newsletter**

February 1976

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The Monthly Newsletter is published by Winnipeg Women's Liberation office at a WOMAN'S PLACE, 143 Walnut Street, phone 786-4581.

If you have any letters, articles, announcements, poems, literary articles to submit, send them to the above address.

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Brought to you this month by : Pat, Pat, Ellen, Linda, Bridget, Julie, Cynthia, Sara
Heather

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WOMEN'S LIBERATION NEWSLETTER

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NELLIE MCCLUNG THEATRE GROUP
CELEBRATES 60 YEARS OF SUFFRAGE



THE NELLIE MCCLUNG THEATRE GROUP, UNDER THE DIRECTION OF MILLIE LAMB, PRESENTS AN EVENING OF THEATRE TO CELEBRATE THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ACHIEVEMENT OF WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE IN MANITOBA ON FRIDAY AND SATURDAY EVENINGS, JANUARY 30 and 31, at 8:00 P.M. AT THE DAKOTA COLLEGIATE THEATRE IN ST. VITAL. A MUSICAL, "VOTES FOR MEN," BASED ON THE PLAY BY NELLIE MCLUNG; A MELODRAMA, " THE INDEPENDENT FEMALE;" AND A MURDER MYSTERY, "TRIFLES," WILL BE FEATURED ON THE PROGRAMME.

DAKOTA COLLEGIATE, LOCATED JUST OFF ST. MARY'S ROAD NEAR THE DAKOTA VILLAGE SHOPPING CENTRE, MAY BE CONVENIENTLY REACHED BY A ST. MARY'S TRANSIT BUS. AMPLE FREE PARKING IS AVAILABLE.

NO ADMISSION CHARGE.

ON JANUARY 28, 1916, MANITOBA WOMEN BECAME THE FIRST IN CANADA TO WIN THE RIGHT TO VOTE. JOIN US TO CELEBRATE THAT EVENT IN THE SAME WAY THAT NELLIE MCCLUNG HELPED WIN THE VOTE FOR WOMEN -- WITH DRAMATIC FUN AND HUMOUR.

*For additional information call Martha Colquhoun,
Telephone: 257-0849 (evenings) or
256-4366 (days)*

POLITICAL ACTION FINALLY!

At a weekend gathering a group of women met and discussed the frustrations with political inaction and lack of direction in the Winnipeg Women's Movement. As a result we decided to hold a meeting open to all interested women at a Woman's Place.

TIME: 7:30 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.

DATE: Feb. 9, 1976, Monday

WHERE: 143 Walnut Street
(Day care available)

Some of the problems that were voiced concerning the movement included:

1. lack of a development of clear political theory;
2. lack of cohesion and community among feminists (e.g. lesbian alienation);
3. lack of commitment, communication between women's groups, structure, leadership.

These problems have lead to a failure to provide a strategy for action and focus for women who would like to work together for change.

The feeling from the weekend was that a group should definitely be formed to merge our feminism and our politics.

Many of the women felt that it was a contradiction for women to be liberated in an unliberated society. Some also felt that feminism could only be meaningful and effective in the framework of a socialist struggle.

What means a socialist struggle? That's why we're calling the meeting. The weekend involved much searching, inquiring, and defining terms. It is the beginning of an attempt to evolve a politics that applies both personally and societally, rather than simply adopting a narrow or traditional application of socialism.

If what we're saying strikes home, come to the meeting. Here is a proposed agenda --open to change.

AGENDA

A. Discussion of personal goals for coming to the meeting and changes people want to see made.

B. Clarification of definitions:
-liberal feminism
-radical feminism
-socialist feminism
-etc.

C. Function:

Priorities?

- a) self-education - what kind and to what end?
- b) leadership development - how to organize, write, speak....
- c) living our politics
- d) relation to community

For further information: phone

Ellen Kruger - 774-5080

Sara Berger - 772-2707



SUMMARY OF WEEKEND

Friday Night: People spent a couple of hours setting up an agenda for the weekend and socialized for the rest of the evening.

Saturday Morning: We started out by each person giving their view on how they saw the problems of the Women's Liberation movement in Winnipeg. We felt a need to come to some common understanding of general terms so we discussed the meaning of the following:

Radical feminist; Liberal feminism;
Cultural feminism; Socialist feminism;
Women's movement; Women's Liberation
Working women's movement; Liberalism;
Social Democracy; Socialism (Communism);
State Capitalism; Welfarism. (see
Definitions, page of newsletter)

We then talked about what our goals would be for the kind of world we'd like to see:

basic necessities for life for all;
better relationships between human
beings — respect, honesty;
feeling of personal value and a sense
of community of which individual feels
a part, e.g., community imposes sense
of responsibility, individual gets
satisfaction through knowing she is
making a real contribution; small,
decentralized communities;
no bosses: equal say in work and
distribution of wealth; structure
developed by group; sharing of required
work; extended family (non-blood); no
age differentiation (ageism).

Saturday Afternoon: Our next discussion involved giving personal reasons why we became a part of the women's movement:

Accidentally, initially involvement
social - stimulated by people and
ideas, now ready to plan strategies
with women, it's time for re-evaluation

Accidentally at first - radicalized
through political events, changes must
be political, develop sisterhood; grow-
ing now through personal relationships
with women, must find mechanism to con-
tinue changes

Involvement with women lead to politi-
cal understanding of situation

Knew to be oppressed - sought out women

System is oppression

Came from politics into women's move-
ment - good women

Women were always a priority, always
a feminist, need for new strategies.

Sunday Morning: Strategies —

Not be a group that just simply responds
to events.

Not get carried away by single issues
that can be easily adopted by capitalism.

Working with other women's groups.

Planning strategy for change for our-
selves with the knowledge that oppression
among all women is shared and can only be
alleviated by collective action.

Planning a meeting.



The Women's Movement

Cultural - Liberal - Socialist Feminism

-adapted from *Women, A Journal of Liberation*

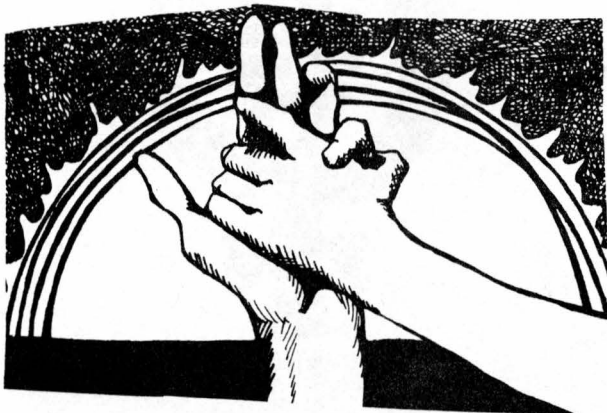
LIBERAL FEMINISM is a feminist theory that seeks to liberate women through reform. It maintains that women must be liberated from the role and work categories imposed on us by a sexist society, and that the society can be reformed from within by the organized pressure of feminists and their supporters.

Liberal feminism identifies the enemy--the source of women's oppression--as sexist ideas, habits, prejudices, and laws that are part of our society. In *The Feminine Mystique*, Betty Friedan discusses these in some detail, and specifically identified Freudian psychology, functionalist social science, especially as championed by Margaret Mead, consumerism, and sexist education as theories and practices that have been particularly harmful to women. These four problems are understood to be part of "the enemy" by virtually all feminists.

The political objectives of liberal feminism are full equality for women within our democratic capitalist society. Equality of course means equal to men. The idea of self-realization and fulfillment is part of this vision. The important thing about these objectives is their emphasis on individual identity and therefore

the acceptance of the idea that there need be no basic change in the structure of society in order for women to be liberated. Ideas, prejudices, habits, and laws have to be changed, but not the basic social, political or economic institutions. It is assumed that the necessary changes can be brought about by "educators, ministers, magazine editors, manipulators, guidance counselors" who are already part of the system, an idea strongly rejected by both cultural and socialist feminism.

The political strategy and tactics that follow from liberal feminist objectives are aimed at putting pressure on the system from within. Government lobbies and legal suits to change discriminatory hiring and pay practices, to open up more jobs at better pay to women; repealing anti-abortion laws; winning government supported child-care.



CULTURAL FEMINISM is the term I have used for the second political tendency in the women's movement. Radical feminism could also be used, but it might be confused with actual organizations that use that name.

Cultural feminism defines the enemy, or the cause of women's oppression in two ways: psychologically, as sex roles, and politically as any authoritarian and hierarchical structure or institution.

Any idea or institution that supports a division according to sex roles is the enemy. Any institution that helps maintain sex roles is also defined as the enemy, including marriage and the family, the church, schools, the government. The Feminists include heterosexual sex and love as institutions that must be destroyed, but not all cultural feminists would go that far.

The other aspect of the enemy is authoritarian, hierarchical structures in any form. The original split between liberal feminism and cultural feminism occurred on October 17, 1968 over the issue of hierarchy.

Cultural feminists are the most militant in insisting that women should not work with men and should have their own organizations. The Feminists allow only a third of their members to be married or living with a man.

Cultural feminism takes a stand against hierarchy, against the "oppression" of one woman by another, and they therefore effectively reject the direct use of power or the application of force to achieve their ends. They maintain that it is male, sexist, anti-woman, counter-revolutionary, unliberated, manipulative, to use any of the standard methods of confronting the power-structure, or achieving personal reward. Consequently groups work "collectively", articles are unsigned, leadership is anathema, and everyone is encouraged to develop herself in all skills so that no one will be better than another at speaking, writing, or planning, and no one will do more typing, filing, or cleaning than anyone else.

Articles and books expressing aspects of cultural feminist ideology include *The Dialectic of Sex* by Shulamith Firestone, publications of *The Feminists* and the *New York Radical Feminists*, and *The Fourth World Manifesto*.

*A woman without a man
Is like a fish without a bicycle*



SOCIALIST FEMINISM includes a feminist ideology that asserts a fundamental correlation between capitalism and the oppression of women, and that assumes a socialist or communist system as a necessary precondition for the liberation of women. Virtually all socialist feminists maintain that socialism is a necessary but not a sufficient requirement for the liberation of women.

One premise of socialist feminism is that women are oppressed in two ways: economically, and psychologically or culturally.

The economic and psychological manifestations of women's oppression under capitalism cannot be separated, according to socialist feminism; they reinforce each other. Women are made to feel psychologically inferior by the culture, and this feeling of inferiority is supported and verified by the economic facts of lower pay and less important jobs than men. Similarly, a woman may internalize the objective conditions of her work, concluding that her lower status is proof of her inferiority. Her economic and psychological oppression thus becomes a self-fulfilling and mutually-reinforcing prophecy.

Marx and Engels described the position of woman as "domestic slavery" and identified the monogamous family as the institution that sustained that slavery. The question of the family is fundamental to a socialist analysis of women's oppression. The family is essential to capitalism because it is through the family that men inherit power and wealth and then pass it on to their sons. Women serve capitalism as the proprietors of the family, and as consumers.

A socialist society is based on the idea of self-fulfillment through meaningful work rather than on the creation of surplus capital. When women demand meaningful work rather than more goods, the entire system is threatened. Capitalism is a system based on competition and on the necessity of exploitation:

The strategy and tactics of socialist feminists call for emphasizing the connection between class oppression and women's oppression, between economic and psychological oppression of women under capitalism. A demand by women in a neighborhood group for free child-care provided by the city or state for all children, recognizes that poor women are the ones who need child-care most, but that poor children

bourgeoisie exploits proletariat, boss exploits worker, man exploits woman, white exploits black. Socialism is based on exactly the opposite idea; that exploitation is both unnatural (i. e. not inherent in "human nature") and unnecessary.

The isolation of the individual, the cult of competitiveness, aggression and egotism, is essential to capitalism. Capitalism encourages people to define their differences from each other, not their similarities, and therefore all groups based on communal ties and mutual support are an ideological threat. The factory boss uses competition, racism and sexism to keep workers from uniting against their common oppression. Housewives are encouraged to compete with each other rather than unite to help themselves.

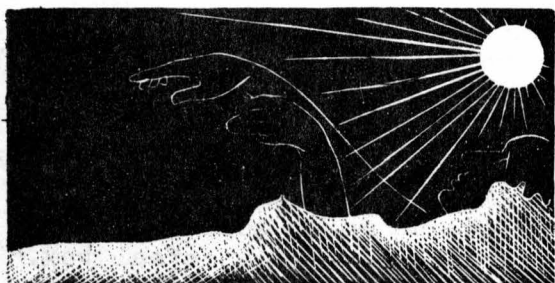
Whatever encourages individuality, isolation, and separation from other people is safe for capitalism; and whatever encourages community and unity is a potential threat. In this very real sense, sisterhood is a threat and in it lies our strength.

Important documents of socialist feminism include No More Fun and Games, a periodical edited by feminists, "Bread and Roses" by Kathy McAfee and Myrna Wood; "The Longest Revolution" by Juliet Mitchell and "The Political Economy of Women's Liberation" by Margaret Henson.

Conclusion

The coming years will determine how and in what way these emerging differences will be resolved. The essential problem with the analyses that now exist is that they offer no defined strategy for the seizure of power, for taking over the institutions of society and transforming them into instruments that will liberate women.

What we are in this for is power; power to control our own lives, determine our own needs, find fulfilling work, and build rewarding relationships in a society that serves the needs of all its people. And that power will never be given to us; it must be taken. ■



WHO SAYS WE DON'T HAVE A SENSE OF HUMOUR!

RULES (unspoken) of Women's Liberation

If you belong to Women's Liberation you don't:

- go into business for yourself as a private entrepreneur
- wear bras or dresses
- say your boyfriend's picking you up after a meeting
- wear an engagement ring, let alone FLAUNT It!
- wear anything but old cords or jeans and logo tee shirts
- wear cats-eyed glasses
- set your hair, make up
- shave your legs or armpits
- talk about compliments from men
- talk about the "girls" at the office
- ask 'stupid' questions like "what does women's liberation have to do with socialism?"
- wear coloured contact lenses
- dye your hair
- wear perfume
- use the postal code
- be catty about other women
- tell that you went to a jewellery, tupperware or shower party
- have an Avon lady
- bring Kraft cheese to a woman's party
- say you're in business school or management training school
- curl your eyelashes
- worry about being fat
- have a permanent job with a life insurance policy

QUOTE OF THE DAY: (A comment from someone wanting to know how a person finds out about socialism)
" Well it's not on the back of a cereal box."

OUR NEW SLOGANS
Women Against God Industry Nuclear Family & Aggression
Together Women Against Tyranny & Slavery

FEATURES

Women in Literature

by Millie Lamb

INSTALLMENT FOUR

In the last half of INSTALLMENT THREE the author begins an indepth look at Shakespeare's MACBETH. Installment Four is a continuation of Millie Lamb's analysis of this famous play.

♀ ♀ ♀ ♀ ♀ ♀ ♀ ♀ ♀

Early in the play, Lady Macbeth calls on the spirits of murder to unsex her, for in spite of the evidence of her own unbreakable will, and her low estimation of her husband's, she accepts the traditional belief that ruthlessness and cruelty are essentially male. She prays for a physical transformation. She forces Macbeth to play what she considers the male role. Limited in experience and imaginative scope, she tends to oversimplify. For all her drive, practicality, and attention to detail, her rigidity makes her unable to bend with each crisis, so that inevitably she breaks down.

How can we account for her success in persuading Macbeth to murder Duncan, though he had decided against it? Here was a man who had

covered himself with glory in hand to hand combat in which his "steel ...smoked with bloody executions." ¹ Why was he not able to dismiss her charge of cowardice? His tribute to her indicates his belief that males inherit their masculinity, yet at the same time, ironically, this quality is to come from her "undaunted mettle,"

Bring forth men-children
only!

For thy undaunted mettle
should compose

Nothing but males. ²

If aggressiveness, ruthlessness, and violence are intrinsically male traits, why would Macbeth, a battle-hardened veteran, not be immune to accusations of being less than a man?

He needs continual assurance, for in a male-dominated society, nothing is as precious to a man as the masculinity which proclaims his superiority. That is why old Siward's sole concern on learning of his son's death is that he has died "like a man" ³ with his "hurts before." ⁴ That is why Macbeth is so vulnerable, and Lady Macbeth's appeal to his masculinity is so irresistible. Macbeth tries to defend his decision not to murder as a more valid test, arguing that to be a man is to be human,--humane.

I dare do all that may
become a man;
Who dares do more is none.⁵

But Lady Macbeth's definition of manhood as the ruthless pursuit of power triumphs, for it has the potent force of patriarchal tradition on its side.

Act IV examines various other aspects of male supremacy. Ross arrives at Fife to inform his cousin Lady Macduff that her husband has fled to England. She realizes immediately that his flight jeopardizes her life and the lives of her children, an idea which seems not to have occurred to Macduff in spite of Ross's advice to Lady Macduff that she trust her husband's wisdom. Ross is ready to defend Macduff's reputation from his wife's criticism, but not her and her children from the danger she fears. He tells her that he is so sorry for them that he must rush off lest his tears disgrace his manhood. The scene forms a subtle commentary on the myth of chivalry and the male protective role. But it is Lady Macduff's anguished appeal before the entrance of her murderers that constitutes the most scathing indictment of male-dominated society:

Whither should I fly?
I have done no harm.
But I remember now
I am in this earthly world,
where to do harm
Is often laudable,
to do good sometime
Accounted dangerous folly.
Why then, alas,
Do I put up that womanly defence,
To say I have done no harm? ⁶

Lady Macduff's plea of goodness is a womanly defence, accounted foolish and subversive in a patriarchal society which honours the perpetrators of mass slaughter.

Macduff sincerely mourns the loss of his wife and children, and blames himself for their deaths. Yet these were caused not so much by his flight, but by shutting out his wife from knowledge of public concerns. The conversation with Ross makes clear that she knew nothing of her husband's politics and plans, and so little indeed of the state of Scotland that she thinks of her husband's flight from the rule of the murderous usurper Macbeth as treason. Though Macduff had returned home immediately after Duncan's murder, and kept himself at rife, he said nothing about his fears to his wife. In his desire to shelter her from the harsh realities of political life, he had succeeded only in rendering her helpless to save herself and her children.

In Scene 3, the play affords another interesting commentary on patriarchal values. In Malcolm's testing of Macduff, Macduff is not only quite willing to excuse Malcolm's unappeasable sexual appetite, but to encourage it,

But fear not yet
To take upon you what is yours.⁷

According to Macduff he can ravish Scotland's women without concern, not because they are chattels, but because they are whores, "We have willing dames enough." It's the familiar male argument that women invite their rape.

An examination of the role of women in Macbeth would be incomplete without some discussion of the witches. Both in Holinshed's account of the history of Macbeth and in the play based on it, they serve as the catalysts of Macbeth's temptation and downfall. In Christian thought the association of women with temptation and evil goes back to Eve. The belief in witches as women who had relations with the devil in return for magic and prophetic powers served a double-edged purpose in

patriarchal politics. It was used by the church to harry and destroy the old religion of paganism in which women played an important part. To deny the charge of witchcraft was regarded as the manifestation of the devil; it was, therefore the most effective instrument in terrorizing women who dared to speak their mind, or question their inferior position.

Shakespeare's witches call themselves the Weird sisters, and weird is derived from the Anglo-Saxon word for fate. They are called task not by the devil but Hecate, in Greek mythology, the bestower of fortune, and later goddess of the underworld. In Holinshed's account they are also called the weird sisters, and suggest the classical tradition of the three fates who decide each individual's destiny. But Shakespeare invests them with the repulsive features and loathsome practices ascribed to witches by the ruling powers. This may have been a showman's device, or an effort to flatter James I, before whom the play was performed in 1606, and who is shown in Shakespeare's play as the descendant of Banquo--a much nobler character in the play than in Holinshed's history. Now seven years before James had published his Daemonologie, a prose treatise denouncing witchcraft, and demanding the harshest measures for its suppression. He had written the book to answer the arguments of a courageous scholar who maintained that witches were deluded or innocent victims. Shakespeare may have thought it expedient to depict the witches as the king would wish. Whatever his motive in presenting the witches as foul hags instead of Holinshed's "goddess of destinie, nymphs or faeries" ⁸ they do serve to remind students of a grim and horrifying chapter in the persecution and oppression of women. In all Macbeth offers penetrating insights into the predatory nature of patriarchal institutions, and their destructive effects on men and women.

A useful tool I've used in the teaching of Macbeth, is a study

guide designed for small group, workshop or seminar study, followed by class discussion, which examines the role of women in Macbeth, along with such topics as Dramatic Purpose, Language Imagery and Symbolism, Themes, and Irony.

.....to be continued.

Watch for your next issue of the Newsletter for INSTALLMENT FIVE.

References:

- 1 Macbeth, (Riverside Liberation Series, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1964)
Act I, Sc. 2, ll. 17-18
- 2 Ibid., Act I, Sc. 7, ll. 73-75
- 4 Ibid., Act V, Sc. 9, l. 8
- 5 Ibid., Act I, Sc. 7, ll. 46-47
- 6 Ibid., Act IV, Sc. 2, ll. 70-76
- 7 Ibid., Act IV, Sc. 3, ll. 69-70
- 8 Ibid., p. 93

WANTED

Women wishing to plan for "khamwanistic Delight." March 15
A program of satire and awarding of male khamwanistic pig.
Honorariums for participants.

Call Julie 4753463

Nominations for M.C. Pig wanted.

Ph. Julie 4753463

**Appointment
Calendar**

February

1976

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1	2	3	4 Women for *! Nonsexist Ed.	5	6	7
8	9 7:30 Political Action meeting *	10	11	12	13	14 Womens Place Clean-up 11:30 A.M. Help!! Valentine's Day
15	16	17	18 Women for Nonsexist Ed.	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29						
			Jan. 30, 31 - Theatre - Dakota Collegiate			

* Further meetings info: Phone Sara 7722707
or Ellen 7745080

*! Proposed date: Check Linda 4754777

