

*September 23-25, 2022
Washington, DC*



Compilation

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Introduction

By Kara Dansky

This short volume contains written versions of several of the presentations that were given during the convention. All of the speakers were invited to submit written versions of their talks, though not all ultimately wished to do so.

The idea for an organizing convention for the U.S. chapter of Women's Declaration International (WDI USA) was born in the spring of 2022. At the time, we were pretty sure that we wanted to do it in Washington D.C., the nation's capital. We were not sure whether the focus should be on the core focus of the Declaration on Women's Sex-Based Rights (the Declaration), which is to stop the enshrinement of "gender identity" in the law, or whether we should broaden our focus and talk about women's liberation more generally.

We eventually settled on the latter. Eliminating the incoherent concept of "gender identity" from law and society is one component of women's liberation, but the Declaration does not stop there. The Declaration is, instead, a full-throated insistence on all aspects of women's liberation, including securing reproductive integrity for women and girls; speech, assembly, and political participation for women and girls; women's sports, eliminating male violence against women, and protecting children's rights. We wanted to talk about all of it. And we did just that during our 2022 WDI USA convention as you can see on the agenda [here](#).

We want to acknowledge the fast-growing support of our generous donors who, with a median gift of \$50.00, have helped us to reignite the U.S. women's liberation movement.

The convention was a resounding success. Our goal was to reignite the women's liberation movement, and we think we [met](#) that objective. [This](#) was the general mood throughout the convention and after we dispersed:



We also got some constructive feedback that we are taking to heart as we start to think about possible future conventions. For example, some attendees wanted more downtime (it was admittedly a packed agenda). Others wanted to hear from more women in order to get some different perspectives. Some have suggested that future conventions be held in other cities, like Chicago, Dallas, or Atlanta. We are taking all of this and more into consideration and nothing is off the table.

In the end, we are confident that the women’s liberation movement has been reignited. We are grateful to all of the women who worked to make it a success and to all of the women who participate in Women’s Declaration International globally. Together, we are going to make women’s liberation a reality.

This is a compilation of talks given by individuals at our convention.

WDI USA does not necessarily endorse the opinions expressed therein as an organization.

The Rebellion of the Anti-War Chicks, 1968-1972

By Bonnie Atwood, J.D.

I was born in the second year of the baby boom, which made me age 21 in that tumultuous year of 1968. I was a student at George Mason College (it had not become a university yet) which is located in the nearby suburbs of Washington D.C. The Vietnam War was taking American men my age and spraying napalm and agent orange on many others. Campus unrest was reaching the killing stage. On this part, I will be brief: As was not unusual, I was arrested (twice, actually) and



Photo by Don Hubbard
protesters are placed in a Fairfax police wagon while a third reads a statement.

convicted, along with a college friend named David Lusby. We appealed our case all the way up to the U.S. Supreme Court, but our petition was denied. For some reason (which is obvious), the case went down in history as *Lusby v. The Commonwealth of Virginia*. I was every bit as active as David, but my name (which starts with A) was not listed on the front page of the petition. I was always seen as “the brainless girlfriend.” That’s the way all things were. I resent that to this day.

The country was awash with independent newspapers, sometimes called underground newspapers. For a good discussion of that, read “*Independent Press in D.C. and Virginia*,” by Dale M. Brumfield. I remember the day, in the cafeteria at school, when I read one of our many independent newspapers, probably *Quicksilver Times* or the *Washington Free Press*, and saw a little ad in the classifieds. It stated there would be a meeting the next week of the Women’s Liberation Movement, at the *Institute for Policy Studies*, near Dupont Circle, in D.C., just a few steps from where we are right now. Dupont Circle, by the way, was ground zero for hippie gathering.



When I saw this ad, I raced to my best girlfriends, Pat and Geri, and we knew, like a bolt of lightning had come from the sky, that we would be there. All three of us felt like something within us had just been given voice. There was absolutely no hesitation.

We couldn't wait to get there, and that evening changed our lives. We walked up a long

set of stairs toward a group of women talking.

"Caroline, there are three more women here!"

That line threw us off for just a minute. *"Why would you call us 'women', we asked, and not 'girls'?"*

*"Because if you're over twelve years old, you're women," they said. We let that settle joyously into our heads: **WE ARE WOMEN.***

We sat around a large conference table. Just women. Mostly white, many Jewish, probably in their late 20's, highly educated, and probably with more money than we had. One, who was wearing a dress, sat with her knees drawn up above her chair seat, her underpants in full display, with no self-consciousness whatsoever. I had found my people. We talked about cultural things-- how men were always pushing us around, blatantly and subtly. Telling us what to do. Telling us we were not as smart or as strong as we were. Opening doors. Calling us "chicks." Accosting us on the streets. Taking up the whole sidewalk. Interrupting. Expecting us to do all housework and childcare. We were on fire. We were in this all the way. And we kept it up and stepped it up.

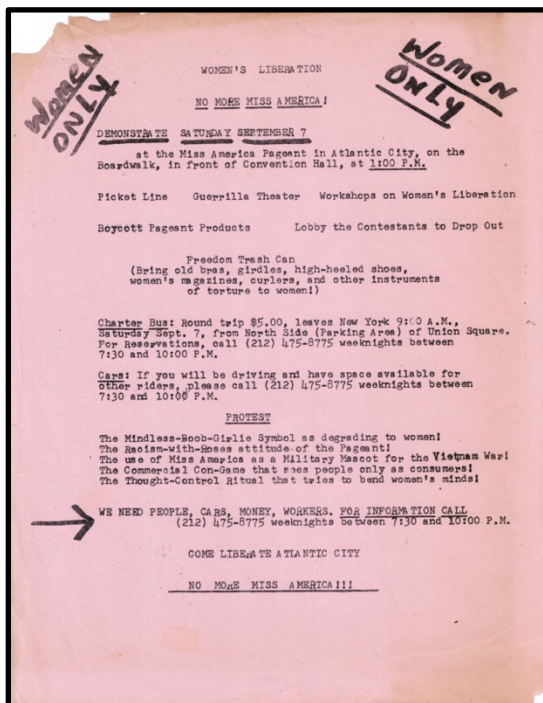
I should tell you a little bit about the Institute for Policy Studies. It was, and still is, a New Left think tank. The New Left was big in those days.

I should say that we were a class-conscious group, very different from National Organization for Women. I don't want to understate NOW's contribution to the women's movement, but their interests were not ours. Most of us were younger and unmarried. We were not focused on who

does the housework and we questioned marriage itself. We were not interested in breaking glass ceilings, or how to get a better job and better paycheck. We didn't care about who was running for political office. We were interested in cultural changes and huge economic systems changes. We overlapped with the hippies, caring more about creating a whole new way of living, sometimes communal living. We paid little attention to Gloria Steinem. We were less interested in Betty Friedan than in Robin Morgan. We didn't talk about "equality" at all because we sensed that we were better than men. We talked about revolution, and we talked about hating America. We didn't talk about "working" unless it was followed by "working for pay." We knew that as women, including single mothers, that we were always working.

Computer? They were in the research and development stage, certainly not available to us. We used telephone trees and mimeograph machines. When one girl got a job at Xerox, we celebrated. You could not access a Xerox machine unless you had an inside track.

We met with much hostility and cruel jokes. We were the so-called "bra burners," which phrase originated from a protest at the Miss America pageant. I still have the flyer for that socially dangerous event.



Another thing that was different then, was that abortion was illegal. We used to hide young women coming to Washington to get abortions. Women now compare these days to the underground railroad, but we had such a thing back then. Don't think that these were all coat hanger abortions. If you knew how to do it, and if you had a little money, you could get what was called a "therapeutic" abortion. We had meetings where women who had done that would tell us how. You had to go to the right psychiatrist and use the right words. You had to say that you will commit suicide if you can't get an abortion. Sound familiar? There

were these code words. The psychiatrist would have to word the letter just right. That letter got you a safe and legal abortion.

We read books--all the time, we were reading books. We had reading lists. We read underground newspapers and manifestos. We read everything from feminist books to black panther books and the S.C.U.M. Manifesto. I still have my collection of books. I have 103 books, starting in the 1800s, all the way to the 2000. I am currently look for a home for them, such as a library or museum, and I welcome your help with that.

One of the hottest publications at that time was "Our Bodies Ourselves," by the Boston Women's Health Book Collective. With that book, and plastic specula ordered in bulk, we sat in a circle. We studied our cervixes with mirrors, and we peered into each other's' cervixes. I don't know if young women do that today.

After a year or two of the heady joy of agreement, the group, as most groups do, started to splinter. The Witches did guerilla theater-type demonstrations. Off Our Backs was its own collective. There was a theater group. I can't remember what it was called. The most significant split was the formation of The Weathermen. I knew one woman who took that route.

There was also a splinter group called The Furies, which was mostly comprised of lesbians, although I participated many times. Our goal was to become completely self-supporting--a sovereign group of women who had no need for men or outside governance. It was a women's separatist philosophy, although I did hear that word. We taught ourselves electrical skills, how to fix cars, how to publish a newspaper, every skill we could think of. Rita Mae Brown, the novelist was there as she finished her first book. Part of the theory, and I know this only second hand, was that we would have no leadership, and the chink in the armor was that if a woman showed signs of leadership, she would be asked to leave. I think this is what ended the group. The house where we met, which is very near to where we now sit, is a registered national landmark.

I remember having discussions about crippling the fashion industry hard by buying bolts of cloth and sewing simple shifts for all to wear. This makes me laugh when I see those women

wearing prairie dresses in those cults. And I remember the night when we sort of gave in and decided that it's okay to wear a pretty blouse. Those were the exact words.

Consciousness raising was a big deal. I attended several of these groups, and I always enjoyed them. That's where we talked about very personal things--mostly sex.

The Stonewall Uprising occurred, of course, in 1969, and we were in great support of that. Many of us marched in the first Pride March, when it didn't even have a name. I was one of them. The march and the ideology were about gay men and lesbians. We rarely heard the term bisexual, and there was little mention of the terms transgender or queer. The word "queer" was still very much a slur. It had only just started to be flung around as a defiant word. This was the subculture in which I lived.

Meanwhile, the war in Vietnam raged on, and escalated. I was still active in that and was arrested in peaceful protests. When I tell younger people that the FBI had people following me, some do not believe me. But I have proof. I used the Freedom of Information Act to get a copy of my FBI file, which is thick and heavily redacted. How many think that when FBI agents call on you, you have to answer their questions? You do not. I was visited by the FBI. They went to the workplaces of my friends' parents. A lot of manpower and money was spent on peaceful people at that time. If you were in a protest group at all, you were flagged as an enemy of the government.

As my graduation from college grew near, I and my classmates and professors were advocating for women's studies. I have documents that show our conversation about setting up these programs that would focus on the history and accomplishments of women. A year or so after I left George Mason University, women's studies was added to the course offerings. I was delighted. However, on my trips back to campus, I felt like I was given the cold shoulder. They didn't want to hear my memories of how it started. They added gender and queer theory to the language. When I asked, *why was the word gender added*, I was told, *you wouldn't understand*.

This attitude was prevalent every time I attempted to mix with younger feminists, and I developed a deep resentment. They like I just fell off a turnip truck. That's why I want to end by saying how very happy I am to be involved with a strong, smart group of young women now.

I also want to say that I have organized and indexed my collection of over 100 feminist books that range from the year 1792 (Mary Wollstonecraft) all the way up to today's books on women's studies. They are looking for a good home in a library or museum, and I would like your help finding that. My other papers have been donated to Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond and can be found in the Cabell Library on the fourth floor "Special Collections." They are well worth a look.

Bonnie Atwood grew up in the Washington, D.C., area, and became active with Women's Liberation in the late 1960s. She has a B.A. Degree in Psychology from George Mason University and a law degree from the University of Richmond. She has been an award-winning writer for 50 years, and a lobbyist for over 20 years.

Lessons from the Second Wave

By Phyllis Chesler

We now face the total disappearance of womankind both linguistically and as a biological reality; sex-based rights have been trumped by gender identity rights; radical feminists who question the transgender phenomenon are shamed, censored, and dis-invited. This just happened to me. Women-only spaces are disappearing. Radical feminist positions on male violence, pornography, prostitution, and surrogacy are viewed as retrogressive. In the late 1960s, we helped women obtain “illegal” abortions—and, unbelievably, we may have to do so again.

Given this reality, these profound losses, I am almost ashamed to describe the optimistic days of the Second Wave. But here goes.

Perhaps the most important thing to tell you is that it was not hard for us to “come out,” as feminists, we had an opening in history. Almost everything we said and did was considered newsworthy. While this was a new experience—but it did not mean that we had real power. We sounded the alarm, but we did not manage to abolish rape, incest, sexual harassment, woman-battering, or trafficking. We were unable to prevent women from losing custody of children.

We pioneers emerged between 1963 and 1973 and took ideas very seriously. We did not all think alike. We were champion hairsplitters and disagreed with each other with searing passion.

The Second Wave consisted of three mighty bodies of water: In 1963-1964, we formed a civil rights organization for women: the National Organization for Women, which brought class-action lawsuits and demonstrated against women’s legal, reproductive, political, and economic inequality.

Then (in the late 1960s), we picketed, marched, protested, sat in, and famously took over offices and buildings; joined consciousness-raising groups; learned about orgasms; organized Speak-outs; founded crisis hotlines and shelters for battered women; and came out as lesbians.

Finally, (and this is usually underestimated), we implemented feminist ideas within our professions and so began a process of transformation that continues to this day.

These were the three mighty tributaries of the second wave. I swam in all three.

Without a feminist movement I would have had a career but not necessarily a calling; I still would have written my books, but they would have had much smaller audiences and far less impact.

It is crucial to understand that most of us knew nothing – absolutely nothing – about our feminist foremothers. In *Women of Ideas and What Men Have Done to Them* (1982), the divine Australian scholar Dale Spender documented how the most remarkable feminist work had been systematically disappeared again and again. Their writings were brilliant and fiery – but unknown to each successive generation.

Within ten to fifteen years, books by the best minds of my feminist generation were out of print. Within fifteen to twenty years, university professors and their students were largely unfamiliar with most of our work. They took for granted, or regarded as hopelessly old-fashioned, the grueling lawsuits we had brought, our academic writings, popular writings, and our brave activism – if, indeed, they remembered what we had done at all. In our own lifetimes we became our suffragist grandmothers and shared their dusty, forgotten fate. Each generation of feminists had to reinvent the wheel. Some neutralized, watered down, and disappeared our ideas—and wrote in incomprehensible, Mandarin language.

This was the first time in my life that I had ever experienced female solidarity based on ideas – and it was wondrous.

And yet: I had such an idealized view of feminist women that when I began to encounter incomprehensibly “Mean Girl” behavior among us, I (we all were) stunned, blindsided.

And, when we were slandered, shunned by everyone we knew, our history revised – we had no name for what was happening.

Eventually, we called some of this “trashing,” and it drove away many a good feminist. It never stopped me – nothing ever did – but it took its toll.

This means that my greatest comfort and strength came from doing the work itself – and from knowing that the work touched, changed, and even saved women’s lives.

I’ve been a soldier at war all my life, I carry scars; all warriors do.

It is inspiring that many of our Second Wave Western feminist ideas and ideals have been adopted, refined, and surpassed, globally by women’s groups. Today, there are women on every continent battling to abolish marital rape, woman battering, femicide, “eve teasing,” forced face-veiling, honor-based violence, honor killing, child marriage, polygamy, FGM, etc.

Most recently, for more than a year, I was part of a group of global activists who helped evacuate Afghan women and who organized food and medicine drops for those who still remain trapped behind Taliban lines. Doing so is a continuation of Second Wave style activism.

Despite everything, despite *anything*, I wouldn’t have missed this revolution, not for love or money. I remain forever loyal to that moment in time, that collective awakening that set me free from my former life as a girl. Allow me to paraphrase the most memorable speech Shakespeare gave King Henry V:

[She] that outlives this day, and comes safe home . . .

Then will [she] strip [her] sleeve and show [her] scars.

And say “These wounds I had. . . .”

This story shall the good [woman] teach [her children] . . .

From this day to the ending of the world,

But we in it shall be remember’d;

*We few, we happy few, we band of [sisters];
For [she] to-day that sheds [her] blood with me
Shall be my [sister]; be [she] ne'er so vile,
This day shall gentle [her] condition:
And [gentlewomen everywhere] now a-bed
Shall think themselves accursed they were not here,
And hold their [humanity] cheap whiles any speaks
That fought with us. . . .*

Three Rules:

The measure of your success is the resistance you encounter. Embrace it.

You can't be a bystander without being complicit.

We don't need a room of our own. We need a very large continent of our own.

Dr. Phyllis Chesler is the author of 20 books including classic feminist works such as “Women and Madness” (1972), “Mothers on Trial (1986), and “Woman’s Inhumanity to Woman” (2002). A co-founder of the Association for Women in Psychology (1969-70), and of the National Women’s Health Network (1974-5), she co-lead a team that spent the last year (2021-2022) rescuing women from Afghanistan.

Reframe Abortion Laws and Legal-Sex-Change Law as Targets for Abolition Not Reform

By Twiss Butler

In 1848 in Seneca Falls, New York, delegates to the first women's rights convention adopted a resolution highly relevant to today's abortion and trans laws. It says:

"Resolved, That the women of this country ought to be enlightened in regard to the laws under which they live, that they may no longer publish their degradation by declaring themselves satisfied with their present position, nor their ignorance, by asserting that they have all the rights they want."

To this day, the position on which women remain unenlightened is their exclusion as a class from the constitutional guarantee of equal protection of the law that is granted to all men as a birthright. As John Adams told his wife Abigail in 1776, "We know better than to repeal our masculine systems."

So how can members of WDI USA enlighten women about the "masculine systems" embodied in anti-abortion and pro-trans laws? First, it is about the framing of abortion law by abortion's liberal defenders. They defend the right to abortion as an issue of moral belief versus choice. For example, law professor Alan Dershowitz framed abortion this way and used it to threaten women supporting the Dworkin-MacKinnon anti-pornography civil rights ordinance. He wrote

"...the pornography issue is one of choice and freedom—much like the debate over abortion. On one side of the scale are practices that some believe are immoral and dangerous (pornography and abortion). On the other side is the right of individuals to choose to engage in such practices."

In other words, you take away our first amendment right to pornography and we'll take away your privacy right to abortion.

But framed accurately, abortion laws are in fact pure sex discrimination against women. No man is directly affected by such laws. Rather it's an inequality issue not a moral one. What does this sorry history of mis-framing of anti-abortion laws as a battle of beliefs say about the current framing of trans laws?

Its critics currently frame Trans as a belief system, which they generally term "gender identity ideology." Challenging something on the basis of belief relies on showing the belief is not well-founded in reality. But belief systems are usually resistant to such challenges because these systems are instrumental in nature—they accomplish something valuable for adherents.

Therefore, let's look at the instrumentality interests behind a belief in trans. Examination of what trans promises and what trans requires of society serves as a two-part definition of trans.

First, trans is the promise that legally identifying as the opposite sex will fix many different kinds of problems ranging from children's dysphorias to men trapped in the wrong body or the wrong prison. But second, the catch to this promised panacea is that in order for it to fix problems, all of society must be legally compelled to express a belief in the panacea and therefore to accept without complaint the entry of trans people into the single-sex spaces of the opposite sex, and all of society must refer to trans people by the pronouns and family titles of the opposite sex or by made-up pronouns and titles.

This two-part definition of trans—promise and compulsion—is consistent with Helen Joyce's definition of the term "legal-sex-change" which she uses throughout her book *TRANS: When Ideology Meets Reality*.

We know that when trans people say gender identity, they actually mean sex identity; they want to have the sex designations on their government documents changed from male to female and vice versa. Right now, predatory men are getting what they want with the help of law.

It's up to legal scholars to catalog the many laws, regulations, and court decisions that compel obedience to the demands of legal sex changers, but here are three examples.

- The US Department of Agriculture threatens to end its school lunch subsidies if a school refuses to teach children that they are free to choose an opposite sex identity.
- In New York City, anyone who openly objects to allowing legal sex to be changed is subject to fines for what local law defines as “harassment.”
- In many states, laws or court decisions require that the sex recorded on birth certificates be changed on request to the opposite sex including that evidence of the change be concealed from the public.

Unfortunately, framing the trans debate as one belief versus another belief muddles the issue. Therefore, we should consider reframing the debate as an issue of discrimination against women in which both sides can be easily understood. “Yes or no, should anyone be allowed to change the sex designated on their driver’s license?” Voters also must be made aware of the impact on the integrity of public records if random changes are allowed. Crime records are already reporting an increase in the number of convicted “female” rapists as men who identify as women seek incarceration in women’s prisons.

In talking to voters, we must avoid using confusing words like gender and present our case on the basis of sex. Our case is simply about repealing laws backing legal sex change and about reversing such changes already made on government documents. The words used by trans promoters are like the magician’s trick: while you’re looking at one hand presumably changing gender identity, you miss seeing the hand behind the back actually changing legal sex.

As is true with prostitution, legal sex change cannot be reformed. No matter how restrictive the reform might be, a law allowing any sex change on documents at all would attract the most determined predators. Therefore, legal sex change must be abolished. Abolition, however, would not affect the civil rights and civil liberties that cross-dressers and woman-face entertainers would continue to share with the rest of society. But it would eliminate legal compulsions on everyone to condone such misogynistic activities as a civil right for men. Instead of legal backing, predatory men would once again be punished for intruding into women’s spaces and activities. That would be a major victory for women!

*Twiss Butler became active in the women's liberation movement in the early 1970s while raising 5 children in Houston, Texas. Through phone and letter lobbying, she and another woman working independently in Florida got hurricane names changed from all female names—used because the storms like the stereotypes of women are vicious and unpredictable—to the current alternation between female and male names. Next, through a coalition of women's organizations led by Texas NOW, she worked to get sexist language removed from textbooks approved for adoption by all school districts in Texas. On moving to DC in 1981, she volunteered as “reference at NOW.org” and for three decades answered inquiries and wrote NOW testimony on insurance and pregnancy discrimination. Her publications include a law journal article about mis-framing the abortion issue titled *Abortion Law: “Unique Problem for Women” or Sex Discrimination?* Her current interest continues to be on the language used to oppose trans laws that validate legal sex change. Her writings on these and other issues of sex discrimination are posted on www.equality4women.org.*

Liberals, Radicals, and Why It Matters

By Lierre Keith



Liberals, Radicals, and Why It Matters
Reigniting the Women's Liberation
Movement

You've heard of Speed Dating? Well, this is Speed Revolution.

Liberals	Radicals
Individualism <ul style="list-style-type: none">• basic social unit is individual• person is distinct from social group	Group or Class <ul style="list-style-type: none">• basic social unit is group• active and critical embrace of group
Idealism <ul style="list-style-type: none">• attitudes are sources and solutions for oppression• <i>thinking</i> as prime mover of social life• rational argument/education is engine of social change	Materialism <ul style="list-style-type: none">• concrete systems of power as sources/solutions of oppression• thoughts are constituent participants in conditions• organized political resistance compels social change

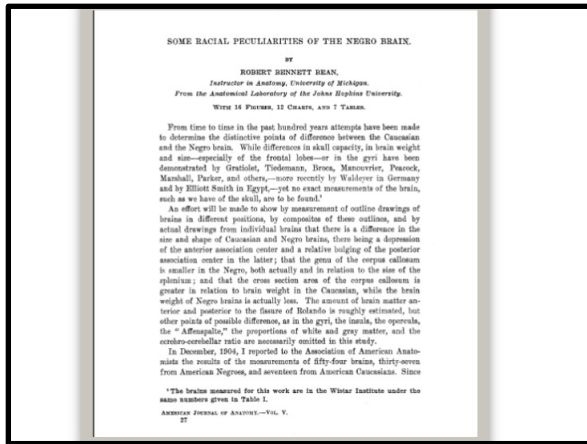
This is the debt that all radicals owe to Karl Marx. You certainly don't need to be a Marxist, but he's the one who chalked this out for us.

Liberals believe that a society is made up of individuals. Individualism is so sacrosanct that, in this view, being identified as a member of a group or class is the insult. That's what oppression is for liberals.

But for radicals, society is made up of classes (economic class in Marx's original version) or any group or caste. So it's groups of people and some of those groups have power over other groups. In the radical's understanding, being a member of a group is not an affront. Far from it: identifying with a group is the first step toward political consciousness and ultimately effective political action. You make common cause with people who share your condition.

The other big division is on the nature of social reality. Liberalism is idealist. That means that social reality is made of attitudes and ideas. So social change happens through rational argument and education.

Materialism, in contrast, means that society is organized by concrete systems of power, not by thoughts and ideas, but material institutions. The solution to oppression is to take those systems apart brick by brick. So, the liberals will say we have to educate, educate, educate and the radicals say, actually, we have to stop them.



If you remove power from the equation, oppression looks either natural or voluntary, which erases the fact that it's social subordination.

This is an infamous article by Robert Bennett Bean from 1906 but there are piles of others, were all desperate to prove that Black people are naturally inferior.

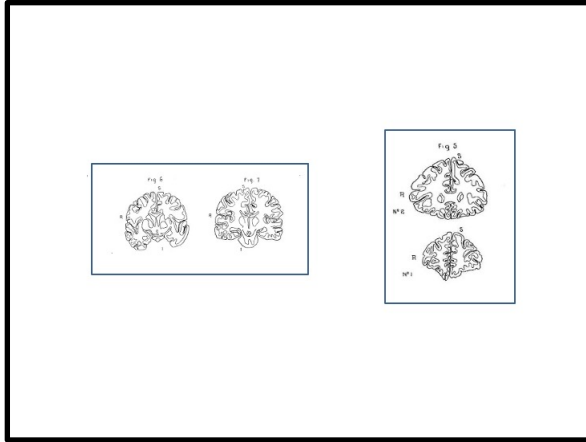
TABLE I.
RECORD OF MATERIAL TAKEN FROM RUTZSH AND SPITZKA.*

Number.	Sex.	Age.	Body weight.	Occupation.	Cause of death.	Brain weight.	Area of surface of cerebrum.	Insula.	Body.	Grams.	
1	Female	20	283	Charcoalman	Pul. tuberculosis	2084	8.08	110	501	1.70	8.20
2	Female	28	148	Workwoman	Carcinoma	1778	7.78	110	190	1.60	2.40
3	Male	24	184	Drayman	Septicæmia	1212	7.02	110	110	1.70	2.00
4	Female	23	279	Workwoman	Pul. tuberculosis	1816	8.16	100	100	1.10	2.00
5	Female	20	287	Labourer	Pul. tuberculosis	2082	8.20	100	100	1.80	2.40
6	Female	20	311	.....	Arteriosclerosis	1118	5.49	100	100	1.40	2.30
7	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
8	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
9	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
10	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
11	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
12	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
13	Male	44	197	Butcher	Pul. tuberculosis	1370	6.49	200	180	1.60	2.80
14	Male	27	270	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
15	Male	40	270	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
16	Male	28	200	Labourer	Carcinoma	1207	5.60	210	140	1.60	2.70
17	Male	27	277	Bookbinder	Pul. tuberculosis	1817	8.17	140	100	1.40	2.20
18	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
19	Male	30	190	Labourer	Tuberculosis	1214	7.20	100	100	1.40	2.80
20	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
21	Male	27	168	Bookbinder	Pul. tuberculosis	1248	6.48	100	100	1.10	2.70
22	Male	20	162	Welder	Septicæmia	1107	7.07	100	100	1.10	2.10
23	Male	20	162	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
24	Male	25	Medium	Astronomer	Arteriosclerosis	1420	6.40	160	170	1.70	2.60
25	Female	42	Medium	Mathematician	Septicæmia	1287	7.60	100	110	1.60	2.60
26	Male	16	.....	Polypus	Hæmorrhage	1420	6.00	170	100	1.10	2.00
27	Male	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
28	Male	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
29	Male	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
30	Male	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....

*Nos. 1 to 26 are from cuts by Rutzsh in *Zeitschrift für Anatomie*, Vol. 6, p. 16, and 27, 28, 29 and 30 are from cuts by Spitzka in *Zeitschrift für Anatomie*, 1905, and *Anat. Soc. Am.*, Vol. 4.

Group 1 contains brains that were removed from the body after it had been injected in the usual way with carbolio acid, alcohol, and glycerine through the femoral artery under five pounds' pressure, and afterwards

There're charts, there're pictures, it all looks very scientific.



This is the propaganda of power.

“Femaleness is a universal sex defined by self-negation... I’ll define as *female* any psychic operation in which the self is sacrificed to make room for the desires of another...The barest essentials of femaleness are an open mouth, an expectant asshole, blank, blank eyes.”

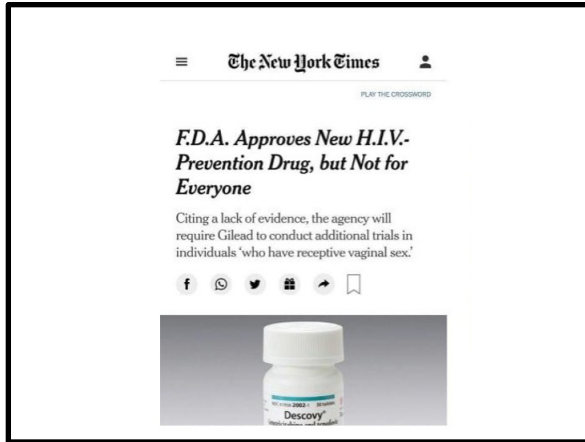
-Andrea Long Chu
Females: A Concern

For women, there’s the same propaganda of power. This is Mr. Andrea Long Chu. His book *Females: A Concern* was reviewed in none other than the New York Times.

“Femaleness is a universal sex defined by self-negation... I’ll define as female any psychic operation in which the self is sacrificed to make room for the desires of

another...The barest essentials of femaleness are an open mouth, an expectant asshole, blank, blank eyes.”

He’s saying that women’s sexual subordination is the definition of being female. It’s women’s nature. I’ve been canceled by all three of my publishers, but this utter garbage gets published in the New York Times.

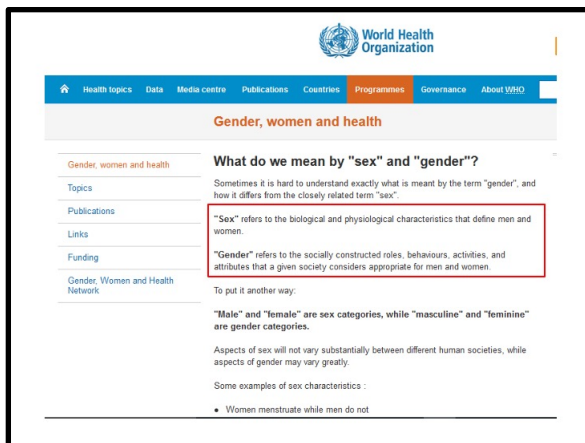


And in case you think Mr. Andrea is a one-off... because some men find the word “woman” offensive, the New York Times has decided

“Individuals who have receptive vaginal sex” is a reasonable replacement for the word “woman.”

Women are passive sexual receptacles for an active male agent. This matches rather precisely how Mr. Andrea defines “woman,” and it is of course the entire, endless point of pornography. Or as Catharine MacKinnon said once so succinctly, “Man fucks woman: subject-verb-object.”

You’re allowed to be angry at this. You don’t have to keep being nice.



So, before I use the word “gender”, I am going to define it. The UN says, gender is “the socially constructed roles, behaviours’, activities ... appropriate for men and women.” I think a lot of us are feeling that the word “gender” is irredeemable at this point. Maybe we should just say ‘sex stereotypes’ for clarity.

Regardless, race, class, caste, and gender are politically real. Brutally, viciously real. But it’s the ideology of the powerful that always makes claims for their immutable origin—nature or evolution or God. Something that conveniently can’t be questioned or changed.

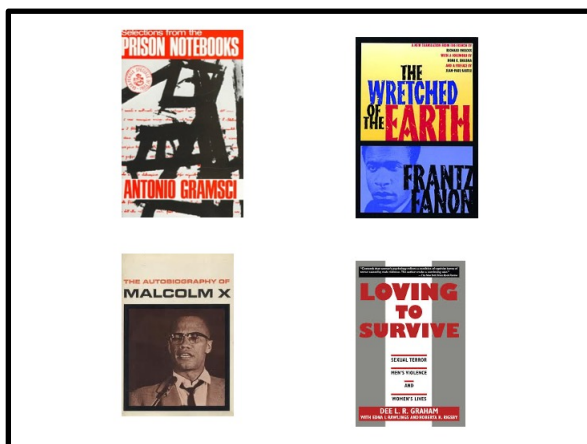
But from the vantage point of human rights, these are unjust systems that have to be dismantled until the categories—race, class, gender—no longer have any meaning because the material conditions that create them no longer exist.

“There can be no really pervasive system of oppression without the consent of the oppressed.”
-Florynce Kennedy

What liberalism misses is that 90 percent of oppression is consensual. As Florynce Kennedy wrote, “there can be no really pervasive system of oppression ... without the consent of the oppressed.” This does not mean that it is our fault, that the system will crumble if we withdraw personal consent, or that the oppressed are responsible for their oppression. All it means is that the

powerful can’t stand over vast numbers of people twenty-four hours a day with guns. Luckily for them and depressingly for the rest of us, they don’t have to.

People withstand oppression using three psychological methods: denial, accommodation, and consent. Anyone on the receiving end of domination learns to stay in line or risk the consequences. Those consequences only have to be applied once in a while to be effective: the traumatized psyche will then police itself.



There are entire bodies of discourse that ask the question of how the powerful get the oppressed to internalize the values of the oppressor. It’s why the word hegemony was invented.

Do not ever conflate consent with liberation.

Consent is accommodation to unjust conditions that we do not control.

Liberation is the complete overthrow of those conditions.

But the take home point: do not ever conflate consent with liberation. Consent is accommodation to unjust conditions that we do not control. Liberation is the complete overthrow of those conditions.

So, oppression.

“Oppression is a system of interrelated forces and barriers which reduce, immobilize and mold people who belong to a certain group, and effect their subordination to another group.”

—Marilyn Frye, *The Politics of Reality*

This is Marilyn Frye’s definition.

“Oppression is a system of interrelated forces and barriers which reduce, immobilize and mold people who belong to a certain group, and effect their subordination to another group.”

This is radicalism in one elegant sentence. Oppression is not an attitude, it’s not an internal feeling state, it’s about systems of power. Material reality. One of the harms of subordination is that it creates not only injustice, exploitation, and abuse but also consent.



She uses the image of a birdcage. One wire will not hold that bird. But oppression is like a cage—it's a system of interrelated forces. It's all the wires working together. If you don't see that it's a system of interlocking barriers, well, then the bird wants to be in that cage. The bird enjoys being in that cage. The bird is singing, eating, maybe even laying eggs. The bird is volunteering to be in the cage because it's the bird's nature to be in that cage.

So, the interrelated barriers create subordination, well, what is subordination?

**Andrea Dworkin's
Four Elements of Subordination**

HIERARCHY: one group ("bottom") has less power and fewer rights and resources than another ("top"), and is seen/treated as inferior to them

OBJECTIFICATION: members of bottom group are treated as thing-like, as mere instruments for others' use, often as commodities and/or property

SUBMISSION: bottom group typically complies with the wishes and self-defined "needs" of the top group—doing so is essential for their survival, and is then used as proof of their inferiority

VIOLENCE: committed by members of top group against members of bottom group; routine, systematic, seen as right, necessary, inevitable, and natural

Andrea Dworkin's

Four Elements of Subordination:

1. Hierarchy

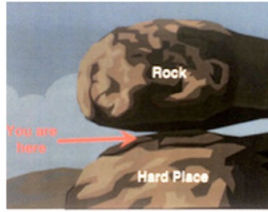
One group ("bottom") has less power and fewer rights and resources than another group ("top") and is seen and treated as inferior to the top group.

2. Objectification

Members of the bottom group are treated as thing-like, as mere instruments for other's use, often as commodities and/or property.

3. Submission

Bottom group typically complies with the wishes and self-defined "needs" of the top group—doing so is essential for their survival and is then used as proof of their inferiority.



DOUBLE BINDS: “situations in which options are reduced to a very few, and all of them expose one to penalty, censure, or deprivation” (Marilyn Frye)

This is the situation the oppressed always face. Rock, hard place. If you submit, then you are subordinated and that is the harm. If you resist, you are punished until you are either dead or until you submit and are subordinated. There’s no way out. Not as individuals. There are no personal solutions to social subordination. The only solution is organized political resistance.

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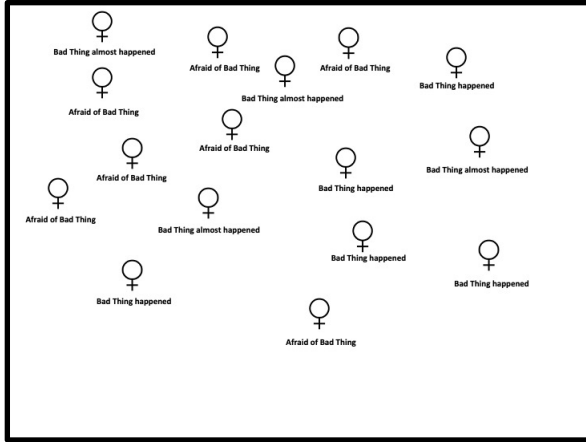
VIOLENCE: committed by members of top group against members of bottom group; routine, systematic, seen as right, necessary, inevitable, and natural

4. Violence

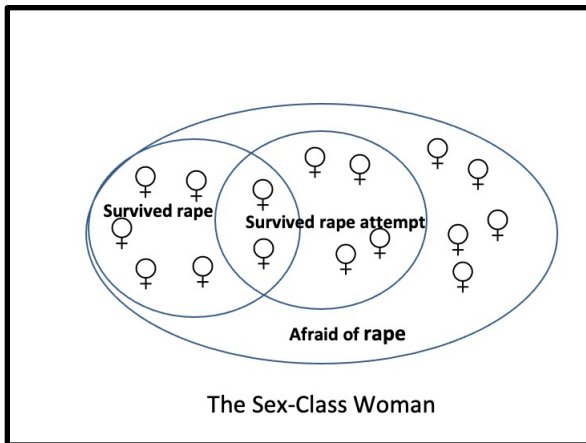
Committed by members of top group against members of bottom group: routine, systematic, seen as right, necessary, inevitable, and natural.

Now, you can take all this and apply it anywhere. Liberal, radical, oppression, resistance. This being a feminist event, I’m going to apply it to women. Which is how

radical feminism was created. Women took the tools of political analysis learned on the Left and applied them to our own lives. Teach slaves to read and eventually they revolt. Eventually they also write their own political theory.



Without feminism, each woman is cut adrift in a hostile, chaotic sea. Apply the word “sex-class,” and that chaos snaps into a sharp pattern of subordination, from the small, daily insults to body and soul to the shattering traumas of incest and rape. The crimes men commit against women aren’t done to women as random individuals; they’re done because women belong to a subordinate class, and they’re done to keep women a subordinate class.



This is what feminists began to see. The central elements of subordination—hierarchy, objectification, and violence—were happening to women, but mostly in the realm called private, done by men who claimed to love us, through actions that men experienced as sex. That’s the core insight of radical feminism.

Liberal feminists take the model of how men are oppressed and apply it to women. Liberal feminism tends to follow the Civil Rights Movement and other male struggles: what are all the ways that a given group is barred from full participation in public life--employment, education, law—and address those barriers. That needs to happen. I’m glad I have a checking account and a credit card. I’m glad I can own a house. I’m glad I can marry a woman if I want to. All of that needed to happen.

But putting women at the center of the analysis yielded something different. Women's oppression is not at heart about barriers to public life. It's about how the entire "private" realm is in fact political. Rape, battering, incest, prostitution, and murder create a barricade of sexual terrorism.

Keeping women out of civic life is really about keeping us dependent on our private owners. No leftist analysis has ever included the realities of women's lives. Indeed, the left has delivered us up to all men collectively. And that was one of Dworkin's major insights: that the only difference between left and right is that the left wants women to be public property instead of private property.

THE WAR AGAINST WOMEN

In the USA:

- A man beats a woman every nine seconds
- One-third of battering starts when a woman is pregnant
- Male violence is the number one cause of birth defects
- 80,000 American children are sexually abused every year
- 80 percent of the time, "a parent" is the perpetrator

Globally:

- There are 60 million child brides
- 200 million survivors of FGM
- 126 million girls are aborted for being female

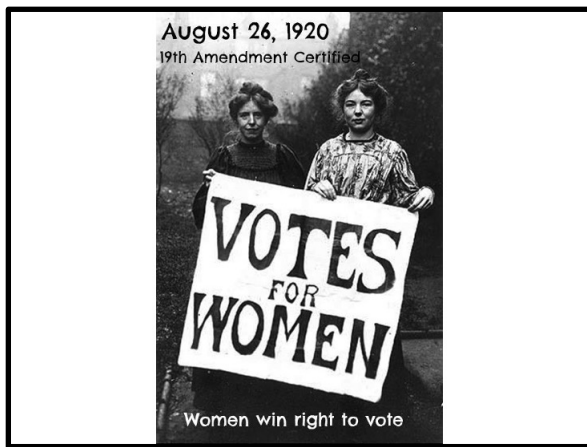
"If one woman told the truth about her life," wrote poet Muriel Rukeyser, "the world would split open." We did, by the hundreds and then the thousands. And then we started counting. The numbers are a trauma all their own. Battering, for instance: In the United States, a man beats up a woman every nine seconds. One-third of battering starts when a woman is pregnant and male violence—a man's willful fist or foot—is the

number one cause of birth defects.

Eighty thousand American children are sexually abused every year and eighty percent of the time, "a parent" is the perpetrator. Sisters, you know it's not their mothers. One by one, men do this to the most vulnerable. Children are so easy to control and even easier to hurt: the small bones break, the fragile tissues tear, the fledgling self splinters from its only body. Eighty-thousand times, the world should stop spinning and it doesn't, and I don't know why.

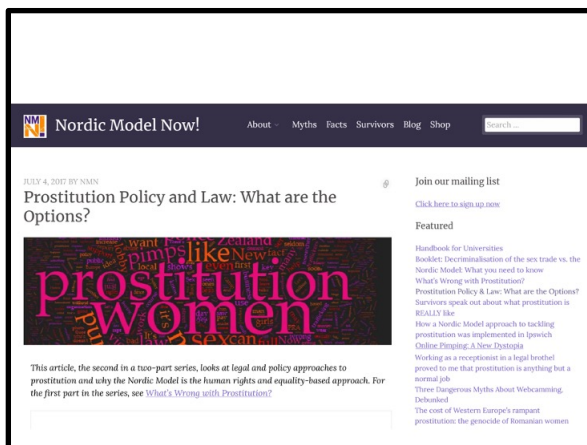
Globally, all of the above happens and more. There are 60 million child brides, 200 million survivors of FGM, and 126 million girls aborted for being female. This is why we called it a war. If these numbers aren't just background noise, the inevitable, unremarkable actions of every day men taking what is theirs, but actual crimes done to human beings—if women are political subjects with inalienable rights—then there is a word for harm at this scale. “War” fits but men scoff when we say it. Fine.

But I would like to know what else to call it. So where are we?



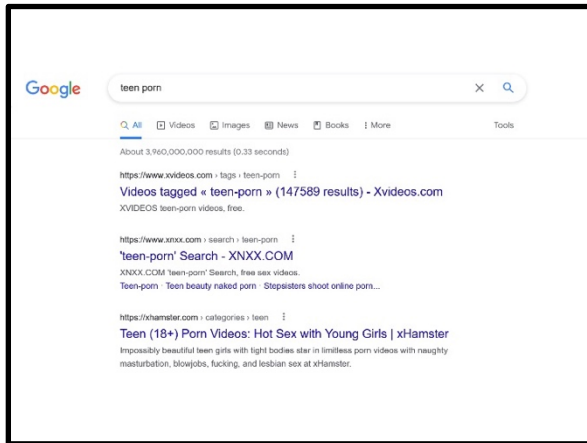
The first wave brought us the rights of basic citizenship, to vote, to gather and speak in public, to run for office, to own property, to get an education.

Throughout the 20th century women made advances in the professions, the trades, and in the law. In my lifetime, birth control and abortion were legalized, women made huge strides against employment discrimination, and the silence about male violence was shattered.

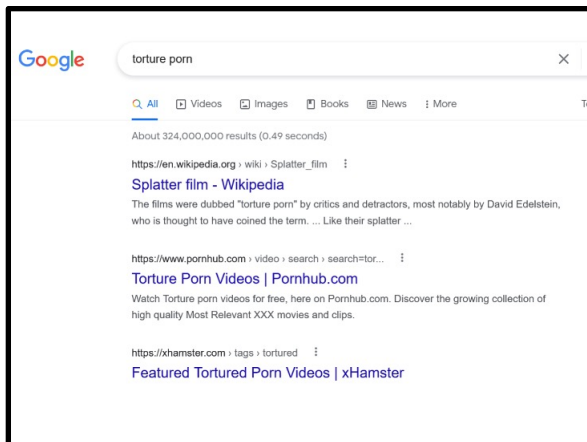


Feminists founded rape crisis hotlines and battered women's shelters, created rape shield laws out of nothing but sheer stubborn belief in women's human rights, invented the concept of “sexual harassment” and got it in front of the Supreme Court, and we tried to do something about prostitution. And then the internet happened.

I don't know if it's possible to overstate the damage it's done to our brains and our humanity. The Age of the Image is here--and the image of the age is the female body, objectified, stripped, bruised, starved, and even dead. The backlash to feminism was bound to come, only now the boys have a whole new arsenal with which to punish us, hard, fast, and publicly.



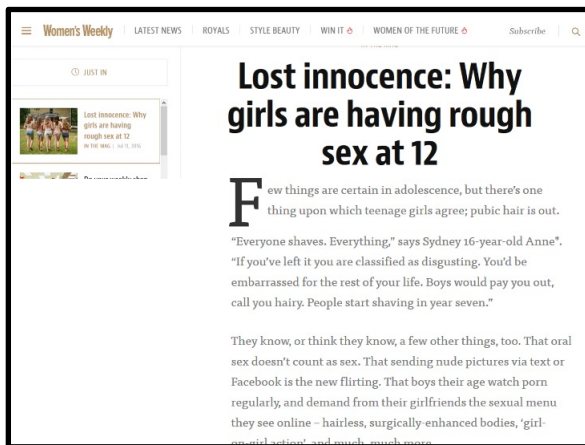
The number one internet search term?
Number one? Teen porn.



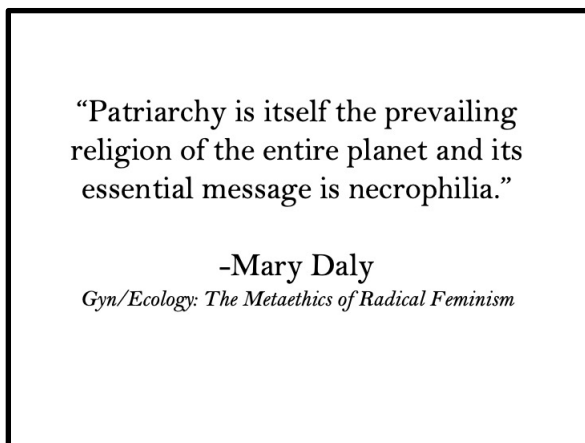
324 million hits. Their hunger for this is
bottomless.



I was born in 1964. I remember the world before pornography took over. Yeah, it was there, but it wasn't everywhere. In my lifetime I have watched as men have created a whole new regime of degrading and dangerous sex acts, enacted without remorse on the bodies of girls and women, and then normalized into just regular sex.



To the women who are younger than I—I am sorry. If it's any consolation some of us saw it coming and we tried, but it was like trying to stop a tsunami. I'm not giving up but we are facing a monster and he is legion. He is everyman and he is everywhere.



Sadism's only endgame is necrophilia and here we are. Both for women and for the planet. He's choking her out, too. He's fucking the planet to death.

Nearly 10 Million Acres of Land Are Burning in Siberia

Russia has seen an increasing severity of wildfires in recent years due to rising summer temperatures and a historic drought

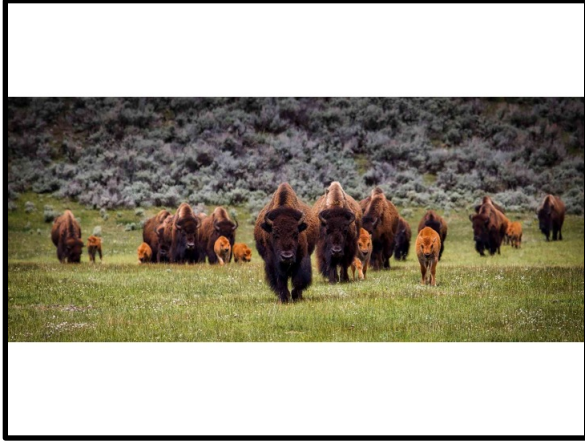


I've seen this. Not in Mongolia but where I live. It's a temperate rainforest. It doesn't burn. But the fires in California were so bad, the sky turned orange for two days. It was like fog—visibility of my hand was bad. It was a hellscape. Sadism ends at necrophilia. He won't stop until every living creature has been punished. We are going to have to take this system apart—his economics, his religion, his

psychology, and most of us all his sex. The feminist movement has managed to get women a whole bunch of options for getting away from violent men but what no one has been able to do is get men to stop. That barricade of sexual terrorism is what never changes and now it's getting worse. So, we are going to have to do it, somehow. Brick by brick. Not accommodate to it. Not make the best bargain we can inside it. But take it down.

"The male erotic trinity—sex, violence, and death—reigns supreme."
-Andrea Dworkin

This is what radical feminists know. No one wants to hear it, but it's true. "The male erotic trinity—sex, violence, and death—reigns supreme." Andrea Dworkin tried to tell the world what she had learned through the childhood molestation, the battering, and the rapes, all the rapes. Men tell us who they are: believe them.

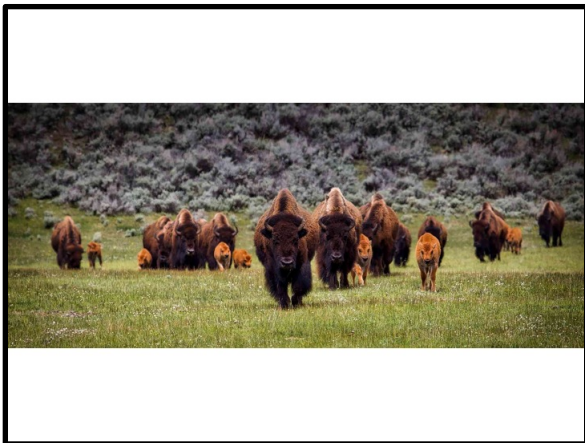


When bison are under attack, they pack into a tight circle. Protected at the center are the mothers and babies. Next are the older calves, weaned and vulnerable. A defensive ring of cows without young comes next. And finally, facing out, stand the bulls.



Mountain top removal for coal

We are under attack. Every last creature is under threat. He has leveled mountains: believe him when he tells you.



If we all make that tight circle—mothers and babies of every species at the center, protected until the last—and plant our feet firmly on our still living earth, we can face him down. He has the rancid thrills of sadism and the sterile dreams of machines. We have love and the miracle of our animal bodies and the stalwart light of every dawn. Don't let him win.

Five words to live by.

Remember, resist, do not comply.

-Andrea Dworkin

*Lierre Keith has been a radical feminist for 40 years. She is the author of seven books, including *The Vegetarian Myth: Food, Justice, and Sustainability*, which has been called “the most important ecological book of this generation.” She is coauthor, with Derrick Jensen and Max Wilbert, of *Bright Green Lies: How the Environmental Movement Lost Its Way and What We Can Do About It*. She lives in northern California with giant trees and giant dogs. She’s also been arrested six times for acts of political resistance.*

***Women's Health in Women's Hands:
Moving from Reproductive Rights to Reproductive Sovereignty
By Mary Lou Singleton***

I admit that I felt paralyzed while trying to prepare this presentation. Between the recent Supreme Court Dobbs decision repealing Roe vs. Wade and the continued onslaught of the transgender agenda, all I could think of saying was, “We are in a bad place. We are in a really, really bad place.”

So I did a witchy midwife thing. I brewed some mugwort tea and asked for inspiration in my dreams.

I dreamt I was here at the conference with you. We were under attack. We weren't safe staying where we were. So I led you down a small dark path I happened to know. We arrived at a graveyard. The graveyard was a little bit spooky, but also familiar and welcoming. In my dream, I realized it was Dios de los Muertos, the day of honoring the beloved and heroic dead. The dead were there with us, protecting us, guiding us.

I decided to use my time here invoking some ancestral mothers who took the fight for abortion rights into their own hands. May they guide us through the times ahead of us.

Women have always had abortions. Abortion is referenced in the Ramayana, the Assyrian law codicils from 1075 BC, and the Egyptian Ebers Papyrus from 1500 BC. Traditional medicine lineages around the world acknowledge abortifacient herbs and techniques.

When the United States was founded, there were no laws regarding abortion. By the 1820s states began passing laws regulating the practice. In 1830 several states had laws criminalizing abortion after “quickening,” the point in pregnancy when fetal movement can be detected.

In 1847, the American Medical Association was founded as a trade union for medical doctors. The AMA worked to criminalize all other healers, including midwives, herbalists, eclectic physicians, and homeopaths.

The midwives proved to be the toughest competition for the doctors to eliminate. In a time before antibiotics and blood transfusions, women and their families knew that midwives were safer birth attendants than physicians. Birth remained a female-centered, family event and women were loyal to their female attendants. In addition to attending births, midwives were the primary providers of abortion services. So the AMA embarked on a state-by-state campaign to criminalize abortion. Women and their families would fight for the reputation of their midwives when it came to birth, but the private and stigmatized nature of abortion meant that women were silent as their midwives were persecuted for providing this service. By the 1880s, every state had criminalized abortion or severely restricted abortion access. All remaining legal abortion was relegated to the realm of physicians.

Of course, women continued to need abortions. Abortion access became more difficult with the disappearance of the midwives. By the 1930s, most abortions were performed illegally by male providers, and the complication rates for the procedure skyrocketed. Women were placed in increasingly burdensome situations when they tried to obtain abortions.

The official fight for abortion rights began in 1959 when a Californian woman named Pat Maginnis got angry. Pat had been pregnant three times but did not want children. The first time she needed an abortion, she traveled to Mexico for the procedure. Enraged by the experience, she vowed to never leave the country again for an abortion. A few years later, her birth control failed, and she decided to self-induce an abortion. She placed a catheter in her uterus and proceeded to get very sick. The abortion was eventually successful, but she was hospitalized for a severe infection. While being treated for sepsis, she was interrogated by police officers asking who had helped her abort. The third time she became pregnant, she used a safer technique of self-abortion she had researched. She manually dilated her own cervix, and she successfully ended the pregnancy.

At this point Pat began organizing. There was no national abortion rights movement to join at the time. So Pat started talking to anyone who would listen about repealing abortion laws. She spoke on street corners. She spoke to groups. She organized the first known public opinion poll on abortion in the US.

In 1964, Rowena Gurner joined Pat in her efforts. Rowena had been living in New York the year before when she became pregnant. She flew to Puerto Rico for an abortion. Like Pat, she found the process enraging and became committed to fighting for abortion rights. She rode her bike across the country and ended up in Palo Alto, California. She joined a liberal activist group there called the Ethical Culture Fellowship, hoping to persuade the group to focus on abortion law repeal. While the group at large was not interested, one member knew of Pat's work in Southern California and encouraged Rowena to contact Pat Maginnis.

Rowena convinced Pat that they should begin an underground abortion referral service. The women were familiar with safe and ethical abortion providers and started providing these references to women seeking abortion. In order to receive a referral, women were required to donate two hours of time to help Pat and Rowena with the movement and to write and send pro-abortion letters to their legislators. Women were also asked for a five-dollar donation to help with the costs of the work.

By 1965, Pat was speaking across California promoting the repeal of all abortion laws. She and Rowena also distributed leaflets outside of liberal gatherings and conferences with information on abortion law repeal. Lana Clarke Phalen happened to grab one of these leaflets as she was leaving a conference on ending world hunger. When she read the flier, she immediately decided to join Rowena and Pat in their efforts.

Born into extreme poverty in 1920, Lana was encouraged by her family to marry at age 15. Still a child, she knew nothing about sex or reproduction. Nine months after her wedding she gave birth. She labored for days and nearly died. The doctor who attended her birth told her she would not survive another birth. He did not, however, give her any advice on how to avoid pregnancy.

Three months later Lana was pregnant again. She asked every woman she knew how to end a pregnancy. A co-worker eventually referred to a Cuban midwife. The midwife charged \$50 for the procedure. It took Lana some time to save up this large amount of money. She had a second trimester abortion which was painful and traumatic. She decided to do everything in her power to make it easier for other women to end unwanted pregnancies more easily.

Lana and Rowena and Pat became known as the Army of Three. They spoke and leafletted and agitated across California. They taught abortion classes where they instructed women on the method of cervical dilation self-abortion that Pat herself had used to induce abortion. In 1965, they organized the first pro-abortion conference in the United States. There were 485 attendees.

The goal of their activism was the repeal and elimination of all abortion laws. They did not fight for abortion law reform. When asked what would be the ideal abortion law, the women would respond with a blank piece of paper.

Pat Maginnis was known to say, "I am not out to legalize abortion. I am out to repeal abortion laws!" The Army of Three named their organization the Association for the Repeal of Abortion Laws. This eventually became the National Association for the Repeal of Abortion Laws, or NARAL. (After *Roe v. Wade*, NARAL became a reformist organization and changed its name to the National Abortion Rights Action League.)

In 1967, abortion law reform came to California. Doctors in the state were permitted to perform abortions in certain circumstances. Abortion became legal, but only when a hospital abortion committee gave permission. Women were forced to undergo degrading interviews where they had to convince a panel of male doctors why they should be allowed an abortion. A network of underground, illegal abortion clinics remained.

Carol Downer (not an ancestor, but a beloved elder) was working at one of these abortion clinics. She had attended a National Organization for Women conference in 1969 where she met Lana Clarke Phalen. Carol became Lana's assistant, traveling with her while Lana spoke and organized.

The two women became interested in starting their own abortion clinic, so Carol began working at an illegal clinic in Los Angeles. At the clinic she witnessed IUD insertions and early suction abortions. Despite having birthed five children and undergoing an abortion, Carol was uninformed about her own anatomy. When she first saw a woman's cervix, she had an epiphany. "I looked and here was this extremely simple, beautiful structure, the cervix, and ... it just clicked." The cervix is only three inches away and it has a hole in it for easy access. From this realization, the woman-controlled abortion movement was born.

Carol stole a speculum from the clinic and took it home in her purse. She called a meeting of local abortion activists, announcing she had very important information to share. At the meeting, Carol cleared and sat on top of a table. She inserted the speculum in herself and showed the room full of women her cervix. She explained that early abortion is a very simple procedure and suggested that the women begin practicing the procedure on one another while menstruating so they would have the skills to help women end early pregnancy.

Carol had seen doctors performing early abortions with a syringe attached to a thin tube, and she proposed that the women could use this same equipment. A woman at the meeting named Lorraine Rothman had concerns regarding the possibility of accidentally inserting air into a woman's uterus. Lorraine focused on engineering a device that women without medical training could use safely and easily on each other. She came to the next meeting with a mason jar sealed with a cork with two holes in it, two lengths of fish tank tubing, a syringe with a one-way valve on one piece of tubing and a catheter on the other. The women named this device the Del-Em, and the women's self-help movement began.

They encouraged women to form self-help groups and practice menstrual extraction. Menstrual extraction can be used simply to complete a menstrual period in a small amount of time or as a safe abortion method through the first few weeks of pregnancy. The women practiced menstrual extraction in California and became proficient with the technique.

Carol and Lorraine presented at the 1971 NOW conference, teaching cervical self-exam and menstrual extraction. They visited over 25 cities on a cross-country tour, helping women create

self-help and menstrual extraction groups. Carol estimates that up to ten thousand menstrual extractions were performed in the US between 1971 and 1973.

The radical woman-oriented abortion movement came to a halt in 1973 with the Roe v. Wade ruling. While we lament the overturning of Roe, it is important to remember that this ruling was a reformist effort that codified the right of physicians to perform abortions. Roe v. Wade did not establish a woman's right to control her own body. Our radical foremothers were not fighting for legal, regulated abortion. They were fighting for the repeal of all abortion laws. They were seizing the means of abortion and putting abortion into the hands of women. They were creating deprofessionalized networks of lay women who knew, cared for, and helped one another. This was obviously a threat to physicians who wanted to control abortion access. The practice of menstrual extraction was referenced by Justice Harry Blackman in the Roe vs. Wade decision. Justice Blackman acknowledged that women were learning to abort on their own and stated this as one reason the procedure should be legalized for physicians.

True reproductive sovereignty means not asking men for permission to control our own bodies. It's clearly time to re-radicalize the fight for abortion. Women need to learn our own anatomy and physiology and help one another learn the skills of safe, early abortion. We need to abandon the images of coat-hangers and the belief that we are only safe when under the authoritarian care of physicians. If we learn these skills and pass them on to our daughters, we have power over our reproduction that exists outside of the laws of men.

Our ancestors and our elders have already walked this path. They graciously left us a map. I want to close with these words from my mentor, Carol Downer:

“The only way that they can keep abortion illegal is to keep us in total ignorance of our bodies. Because once you see it you realize that abortion is so simple and so easy to do that any woman who has knitted and sewn and made pottery or done any of the multitude of things women constantly do—we realized that we could do this. This is nothing! Mystifying us about our body was absolutely central to any patriarchal plan of keeping us down.”

Mary Lou Singleton is a mother, midwife, nurse practitioner and women's liberation activist. Her clinic, Enchanted Family Medicine, provides primary health care services to over 2000 patients in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Mary Lou has served on the boards of directors of the Midwives Alliance of North America, the National Association of Certified Professional Midwives, the Stop Patriarchy Abortion Rights Freedom Ride, and the Women's Liberation Front. She has been speaking out against female erasure in midwifery since 2014 and is the author of an open letter to the Midwives Alliance of North America protesting the removal of the words "woman" and "mother" from the organization's core competencies for midwives documents.

Rising Up to Resist

By Merle Hoffman

My politics, passion, and lifelong commitment to Women’s Rights (and what I believe is the foundation of all others), came from the deep understanding that this moral, biological “embedded” right, and until recently a Constitutional one, must include the right to decide when and whether or not to be a mother—which by definition includes the right to legal safe abortion nationwide.

In 1971 (abortion was legalized in New York in 1970), two years before *Roe v. Wade*, I founded one of the first legal abortion clinics in the country. I helped midwife an era in which women came closer to sexual autonomy and freedom than ever before in history. My feminism did not come from books or theoretical discussions. It came in the shape of individual women presenting themselves for services each day. I began to understand this core principle of feminism as I held the hands of thousands of women during their most powerful and vulnerable moment: their abortions.

In the beginning, the salad days, there was a feminist saying “Feminism is the theory and abortion is the practice.” This was a totally new world. In New York after legalization in 1970, women were lining up around the corners of the big clinics in New York city, one of them doing almost three hundred procedures a day! (It does make one wonder about how many women truly wanted the pregnancies that they were carrying to come to term at that time? And then how many historically were burdened with having children they did not want).

I came to realize that one reason abortion is a positive moral good is because it increases the “wantedness” of each child.

The “issue” of Abortion has many faces — lifesaving, life giving, war, a sin, a choice of victims, a cruel necessity, murder, killing, freedom, power, just life, an act of love, population control.

The reality of abortion resides in the lived lives of women and girls.

THE ACT OF CHOOSING WHETHER OR NOT TO HAVE A CHILD IS OFTEN AN ACT OF LOVE AND ALWAYS AN ACT OF SURVIVAL.

“Choice” is sometimes not a choice at all. It is an outcome determined by the economic, physical, sociological, and political factors that surround women and move them toward the only action that allows them to survive at that point in their lives. Survival can sometimes be a woman’s act of staying alive, but it can also be her act of refusing to put what will become an impossible burden on her shoulders.

Indeed, how can one speak of a choice when currently in this country there is no general support for mothers, no pre-natal care, no economic security, no comprehensive pre-natal care especially for black and minority women, and millions of us are still without any health care coverage at all.

Historically, we had won the constitutional right to abortion, and if there were bumps in the road like the nascent demonstrations outside of clinics that grew into the harassment, the fire bombings, evictions, and invasions which ultimately escalated to the killing of doctors and clinic workers, “we always had Roe” and “they would never take that away”. Well, they could, and they did!

The “movement” made the cardinal mistake of consistently underestimating the power, determination, and relentlessness of the opposition.

The first lost opportunity to push back was in 1976 when Henry Hyde passed the Hyde Amendment which cut off Federal Medicaid Funds for poor women’s abortions. I found this egregious, and it inspired my first political act which was to write a one-page polemic, print out hundreds of copies and go into the halls of Queens College (my alma matter) to distribute them.

I spoke to classes declaring that “women’s rights are in a state of emergency.” I called it an emergency because “they have cut off Medicaid funding for poor women.” Students reacted with both metaphorical and physical shoulder shrugs.

This theme of a Women’s Rights Emergency and calling for people to wake up and do something was one I revisited in 1989 in front of St. Patrick’s Cathedral at the first Pro-Choice Civil Disobedience Action where 9 people were arrested. This was in direct response to the attacks and invasions by Operation Rescue in New York which then-Cardinal O’Connor had given his blessing to. I also reprised this theme again with Riseup4abortionRights.org on January 22, 2022, in front of the Supreme Court to bring attention to the upcoming Supreme Court decision on Dobbs. I knew this would be a catastrophe, and unlike many others, I could not sit back and plan a “post-roe” world. I knew I had to fight this.

Abortion on Demand and Without Apology!

Forced Motherhood is Female Enslavement!

Our Bodies are Our Countries, and We Must Protect and Defend Them!

The Power of the State Must Stop at Our Skins!

Your Dreams are Yours to Realize!

Lessons that I learned from 51 years of being on the front lines of the abortion wars:

Know and understand your enemy and embrace what you are fighting for and be very clear what you are fighting against.

The struggle over abortion is not a difference of opinion, nor a religious or theoretical debate. This is ultimately a power struggle.

Not one Republican or Christian Fascist would ever admit to saying that they wanted to have “control” over women’s bodies. But banning legal abortion and forcing women to bear children (and children to bear children) against their will is the ultimate means of control and a form of legal slavery. It is critical to understand that this cruel Indifference to women and children is not a byproduct of these laws—it is the reason for them.

You must practice courage. It does not come naturally and has to start with little steps. One becomes a feminist warrior; one is not born one.

The opposition has established outposts in our heads. These outposts are narratives that are written by the opposition—and define us and our sexuality—the ones that say you are a slut, not a “good girl,” how could you be so “stupid”, etc. We alone must dismantle them.

Our character and our honor do not live between our legs, but in our hearts and minds. Just because you may “win” something as a right does not mean it is forever. Social forces are dynamic, they ebb and flow. Winning something legally does not always translate into influencing hearts and minds.

Read history, read herstory—READ. Freedom is not free—you must be constantly vigilant.

We cannot continue to put our faith in institutions who DO NOT DELIVER for us—and in the end we may have to do it ourselves. Never underestimate your enemies.

LEARN TO LOVE THE STRUGGLE!

The right to Legal, Safe Abortion Nationwide is the front line and the bottom line of women’s freedom and liberty. Without the right for women to control that, women’s dreams will be deferred or denied, they will bear the children of their rapists, the horizons of their imaginations will be truncated, and their lives will be immensely diminished.

The time to Rise Up, the time to Resist is NOW. If not, YOU then WHO? If not NOW, then WHEN?

Merle Hoffman is a health-care pioneer, film maker, writer-publisher, and organizer. She once organized a pro-choice civil disobedience action where nine protesters were arrested at St. Patrick’s Cathedral in New York City.

The Importance of Nonviolent Action in Building a Culture of Resistance

By Lierre Keith

If you do not have a plan, if you do not have a strategy, how the hell are you going to win?

- Gene Sharp

Some conflicts do not yield to compromise and can be resolved only through struggle. Conflicts which, in one way or another, involve the fundamental principles of a society, of independence, of self-respect, or of people's capacity to determine their own future are such conflicts.

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Gene Sharp
The Politics of Nonviolent Action

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The Basic Nature of Political Power: Two Views

- People are dependent on the goodwill, decisions, and the support of their government
- Power emits from the few who stand at the pinnacle of command
- Power is self-perpetuating, durable, not easily changed or destroyed
- Gov't or hierarchical systems depend on the people's will and support
- Power continually arising from many parts of society
- Power is fragile, dependent on continued replenishment from many institutions and people

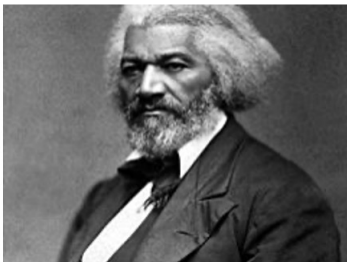
Highlighted organized political resistance compels social change. BINGO!
And that's where we are going to pick this up.

Power is not a mistake, it's not a misunderstanding, it's not a disagreement.

Justice is not won by argument, by individual transformation, or by spiritual epiphany.

It's won by taking power away from the powerful and dismantling their institutions.

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**Power concedes nothing without a demand.
It never has and it never will.
Frederick Douglass**

Here's Frederick Douglass saying the same thing: *Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never has and it never will.*

The Monolith Theory of Power

- Power possesses the durability of a stone pyramid
- Can only be controlled by voluntary self-restraint of rulers or changes in the “ownership” of the monolith (elections, coup)
- Can only be reduced or obstructed using destructive violence

In contrast, every time that people use nonviolence to overthrow a dictator or protect a legitimate government from a coup, we can see that this isn't true. That in fact the rules depend on the submission of the ruled.

The exercise of power depends on the consent of the ruled.

By withdrawing that consent, the oppressed can control and even destroy the power of the rulers.

Nonviolent action is a technique used to control, combat, and destroy the opponent's power by nonviolent means of wielding power.

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Why Do People Obey?

- **Habit:** Habit is the main reason people do not question the actions their “superiors” expect of them. Habitual obedience is embedded in all cultures. After all, isn't that what culture is—habitual behavior?
- **Fear of sanctions:** It is the *fear* of sanctions, rather than the sanctions themselves, that is most effective in enforcing obedience.
- **Moral obligation:** This “inner constraining power” is the product of cultural programming and deliberate indoctrination by the state, church and media.
- **Self interest:** The potential for financial gain and enhanced prestige can entice people to obey.
- **Psychological identification with the ruler:** People may feel an emotional tie with the leader or the system, experiencing its victories and defeats as their own.
- **Zones of indifference:** People often obey commands without consciously questioning their legitimacy.
- **Absence of self-confidence:** Some people prefer to hand control of their lives over to the ruling class. They may feel inadequate to make their own decisions.

Nonviolent action is a technique used to control, combat, and destroy the opponent's power by nonviolent means of wielding power.

“When analyzing human obedience the psychological factor is decisive. Domination and submission are psychological states of mind.”

Our job is to turn submission into courage.

The basic dichotomy of social and political behavior is between action and inaction, **not** between nonviolence and violence.

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Conciliation, verbal appeals to the opponent, compromise and negotiation are not nonviolent action.

These responses may or may not be used with nonviolent action, but they should not be identified with the nonviolent technique.

Conciliation and appeals are likely to consist of rational or emotional verbal efforts to bring about an opponent's agreement to something.

Nonviolent action is not verbal, it consists of social, economic and political activity of special types.

EXAMPLE:
Asking an employer for a wage increase is an act of attempted simple verbal persuasion.
Refusal to work until a wage increase is granted is a case of nonviolent action.

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Nonviolent action is not verbal, it consists of social, economic and political activity of special types, e.g.:

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Refusal to work until a wage increase is granted is a case of nonviolent action.

Nonviolent action is so different from these milder peaceful responses to conflicts that several writers have pointed to the general similarities of nonviolent action to military war.

Nonviolent action is a means of combat, as is war.

It involves the matching of forces and the waging of "battles," requires wise strategy and tactics, and demands of its "soldiers" courage, discipline, and sacrifice.

This view of nonviolent action as a technique of active combat is diametrically opposed to the popular assumption that, at its strongest, nonviolent action relies on rational persuasion of the opponent, and that more commonly it consists simply of passive submission.

Nonviolent action is just what it says: action, which is nonviolent, not inaction. This technique consists of active protest, non-cooperation, and intervention.

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NVDA can be used to achieve reforms or specific objectives.

NVDA can be used to achieve reforms or specific objectives. Here are the four young men—still teenagers, really—who kicked off the lunch counter sit-ins in Greensboro.



It can be used to destroy whole empires.

It can be used to destroy whole empires. Here's the Berlin Wall coming down. Those of you who weren't around for this, it was an amazing thing to witness.



It can be used to bring down dictators.

It can be used to bring down dictators. Marcos was a brutal dictator who ruled the Philippines for twenty years. His opponent was Senator Benigno Aquino. Aquino was murdered by Marcos. Everyone knew it was murder. His widow, Cory Aquino, stepped up to run against Marcos. The election was marked by massive fraud and violence. Aquino gave a great speech in Manila where

she laid out a seven-part program of nonviolent resistance. She clearly knew what she was doing. She urged everyone to be creative in resistance and “experiment with nonviolent forms of protest.” Eventually senior military officials defected from Marcos, and that’s when these struggles really tip toward the people. It’s an extremely important tactic called “fraternizing.” You want all the people with guns—military, police—to see you as human and to know that they are welcome to join the resistance. And some of them did. They holed up in the Department of Defense building and said they would rather die than continue to serve Marcos. Civilians were urged to surround the building to protect them, and they did. Thousands and thousands of people poured into the streets. Marcos sent in his marines with tanks. Then the priests and nuns stood between the tanks and the people. None of the marines could open fire. They couldn’t do it. Marcos’s power completely collapsed, and he had to flee the country.



Or it can be used to defend a legitimate government under attack.

It can be used to defend a legitimate government under attack. This is Prague Spring, 1968. One of the best examples of what’s called a “civilian-based defense.” Gene Sharp has a whole book with that title. The Soviets sent in half a million troops with some of the most modern military equipment they had. They thought it would take four days. It took eight months. The whole country used some incredible non-violent

resistance, including fraternization, sabotage, and defiance of all kinds. One of the problems was that they had no leadership and no overall plan. The resistance was mostly led by the radio stations and tended to be spontaneous actions with no overarching goals or strategy. So, in the end they were defeated. But in 1989, they finally won their independence during the so-called Velvet Revolution, which peacefully ended the communist regime.

Nonviolent action impinges upon an opponent's power more directly than would violence.

That's because nonviolent action is capable of striking at the sources of the ruler's political power (habit, fear of sanctions, moral obligation, self interest, psychological identification with the ruler, zones of indifference, absence of self-confidence).

Nonviolent action impinges upon an opponent's power more directly than would violence. That's because nonviolent action is capable of striking at the sources of the ruler's political power—that list from earlier--habit, fear of sanctions, self-interest. He only has power because we give it to him.

Political Violence

Political violence is present in any hierarchical society where status, wealth, and decision-making power are concentrated in an elite willing to use violence to maintain their dominance.

Political violence is expressed directly in assaulting and imprisoning people, but more importantly in the *threat* of prison, assault, torture, etc.

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assault, torture, etc. It doesn't have to happen all that often to enforce consent.

When a system characterized by structural violence is challenged, the basic nature of the system is clearly revealed.



When a system characterized by structural violence is challenged, the basic nature of the system is clearly revealed. This is the Children's Crusade launched in Birmingham Alabama, May 2, 1963. The movement had run out of adults who could afford to lose their jobs and the children stepped up. Not just high school students but junior high. The stated purpose of the march was to walk downtown to the mayor to talk to him about segregation.

But the strategic goal—and this is a quote: “The goal; get a reaction from the racist officials that would not only spotlight the injustice of the south but gain national attention and support.” The goal was not to get safely from point A to point B. The goal was not to stay safe. The goal was to get a reaction from racist officials that would make the structural violence visible.

Over a thousand students skipped school and started to march. Hundreds were arrested and jailed. More kids started to march the next day, and Bull Connor, hideous man, police commissioner, directed the local police and fire departments to use force. Images of children being blasted by fire hoses, being clubbed by police officers, and being attacked by police dogs appeared on television; the world was outraged. And not one of those kids broke their nonviolent discipline. Not one.

The crusade ended after intervention from the Justice Department. President Kennedy finally had to express support for federal civil rights legislation—and he did give a very moving speech - and that led to the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

You put yourself in danger on purpose. You have to make the structural violence visible. It requires incredible courage and potential sacrifice so it's not for everybody. But you make the violence visible. The violence is already there—it's the actionist's task to let the public see it.

“Nonviolent action strips the sanctity from the law, and compels the application of sanctions, thus converting domination to naked force.”

—Leo Kuper

- The violence on which the system depends is revealed in unmistakable terms.
- The nonviolent challenge has not created but revealed the violence.

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POLITICAL JUIJITSU

By forcing the system to react with violence, the actionists:

- Alienate the regime from its supporters
- Promote greater solidarity and resistance within the subordinate group
- Arouse the opinion of third parties against the regime
- Demonstrate that not even violent repression can compel submission

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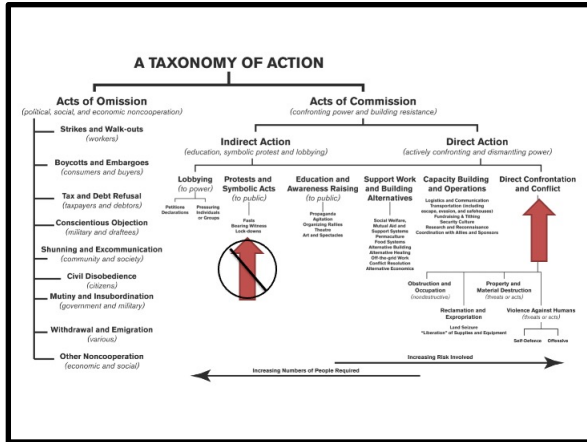
It works because it:

- exposes the violence and demystifies power
- breaks through the psychology of the oppressed
- ultimately removes the support on which the powerful depend

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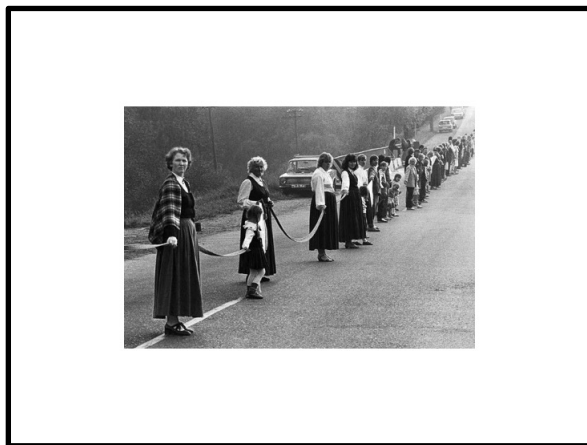
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But in fact, we are here. We are essentially doing civil disobedience when we gather in public, and we don't know that and aren't all trained for it. This is why I feel a great deal of urgency about the situation. I don't think we have enough collective understanding as a movement to even make a decision about whether to use this technique or not. So, I am trying my hardest to get this information out.

If I have learned anything over the last wretched decade, it's that we never should have taken any of this for granted. Basics like the 1st Amendment, every citizen's right to gather, to petition our government, and to speak in some way this is socially meaningful. Women have lost all of that to the genderists, to a men's rights movement.



There are people who have studied this technique and there are people around the world who have used it with great success. We need to learn from those people and then we need to be those people.

The Baltic Way or the Baltic Chain was August 23, 1989. Two million people joined hands to form a human chain that spanned 430 miles across the three Baltic states. They were brutally occupied by the Soviet Union. The Baltic Way drew global attention. It's been described as an emotionally captivating and visually stunning. In fact, it could be seen from outer space.

In the study that Sharp's institute did about the Latvian resistance, there's a wonderful anecdote. The resistance is building, people are joining, but none of them have any idea what to do, how to actual strategize a way to win their independence. And then one of their comrades comes running into their little office, waving a book around. There's a plan! Someone has a plan! He had found Gene Sharp's work. We can do this! So, everyone who spoke even a little bit of English was pressed into service. They translated as they typed—and they didn't have computers, only actual typewriters. And everyone else photocopied and collated. And then they went out into public, everywhere that people were gathered, and distributed their photocopies to anyone who would take one. Urging them to read and follow the plan, to understand the necessity of using nonviolent resistance, to spread the word across the entire Baltic region. And they did it. They won their independence back. Nineteen people died but it was done almost entirely without loss of life. There's a great film about the Estonian struggle called The Singing Revolution, which I highly recommend.

NVDA does not work because it's moral. It doesn't work by "niceness."
It doesn't work by converting the enemy.
It's a matching of forces, so it works by force.
It makes the structural violence visible.

Which means it won't work if we behave as badly as they do. If we behave as badly, nothing is made visible to anyone.

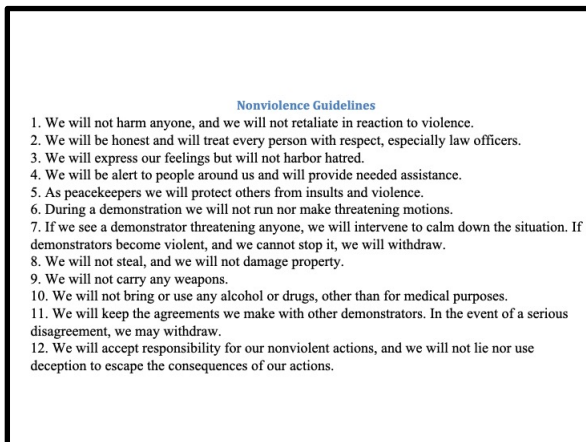
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Which means it won't work if we behave as badly as they do. If we behave as badly, nothing is made visible to anyone. The violence, the threats, the contempt, the insults, the screaming, the degrading imagery all of it has to come from their direction. Not ours. I'm not saying it's easy because it's not. But this technique is our only chance. We have no money, no power, no mass media, no internet giants, no political party, and NVDA was made for people in exactly our situation. It's our only chance.



If a six-year-old child can carry herself with this kind of courage and dignity, day after day, so can we. She and her parents knew what was likely to be required of her, and she got it done. This technique requires tremendous sacrifice, but freedom isn't free. This technique requires tremendous sacrifice because it's war. You have to go in armed—not with physical weapons but with emotional readiness and a strong determination to stay calm, respectful, and courageous no matter what they bring.



You can find lots of different versions of nonviolent statements and they are always very direct behavioral guidelines. That's for a reason—nonviolent discipline is not about niceness, not about politeness, not about some vague sense of being good. It's a very precise form of combat and it requires warriors.

I hope I have conveyed the general outline of this technique.

Our movement, too, needs a plan and this is my offering.

And so we end with Andrea.

Feminism requires precisely what
patriarchy destroys in women:
unimpeachable bravery in confronting
male power.

-Andrea Dworkin

*Lierre Keith has been a radical feminist for 40 years. She is the author of seven books, including *The Vegetarian Myth: Food, Justice, and Sustainability*, which has been called “the most important ecological book of this generation.” She is coauthor, with Derrick Jensen and Max Wilbert, of *Bright Green Lies: How the Environmental Movement Lost Its Way and What We Can Do About It*. She lives in northern California with giant trees and giant dogs. She’s also been arrested six times for acts of political resistance.*

Women's Writing

By Phyllis Chesler

Were I to tell you how hard it is for most writers to survive, get published, keep getting published, you might not believe me. And I want you to write—but only if you're a writer, if writing is the way you breathe. Otherwise, as the Ancient Mariner once said: Turn back before it's too late. But if you ARE a writer—then you must write because you cannot live without doing so.

Words matter. Language matters. They can enlighten, inspire, entertain, and support a feminist awakening. They did. They can also function as our legacy to the coming generations.

It is our enormous privilege to be literate and educated and for some of us to be able to publish books, articles, poems. Historically, most women were not taught to read and write and were frowned upon if they wanted to publish. Even the great George Elliott (Mary Lou Evans) published under a pseudonym.

But here's a necessary perspective.

Many (white, male) writers throughout history have also suffered from both poverty and plagiarism. If they were not born rich, they all had day jobs. Many were never paid for their published writing. Some had to PAY to be published. Writers—even the greats—also suffered scathing reviews. Some were censored, their books burned. Some were imprisoned, sent into exile, or murdered for their thought crimes either against religion or against the state.

In our time, our work, especially our best and most radically feminist work, simply goes out of print and stays there. It dies softly. It does not get translated into other languages. We are lucky if it is noted at all, even if only to be critically savaged. More often, it is simply not reviewed. The tree falls, no one hears the sound.

Even a radical feminist writer such as myself who was blessed to have published a bestseller—“Women and Madness”—never had such a best seller again. The large publishers hold this against you. Yes, I continued to write landmark feminist classics— (Mothers on Trial, Letters to a Young Feminist, Woman’s Inhumanity to Woman, An American Bride in Kabul, A Politically Incorrect Feminist, Requiem for a Female Serial Killer)—but increasingly, publishers were only interested in my—in every writer’s sales record and they’d decline to publish you or give you increasingly tiny advances if you did not have bestsellers.

I had a great run—and I’m still here, still writing and yet....

When people ask me how long it took to write my first book, [Women and Madness](#), I usually answer: my entire life. It also led to countless sorrows for me. My university colleagues feared, envied, and perhaps even hated me for my sudden prominence. They made my academic career a permanently uphill ordeal. Some feminists scorned the success; those who had demanded that I publish “anonymously” and donate the proceeds to the “revolution” stopped talking to me.

However, buoyed by a rising feminist movement—this was the late ‘60s and early ‘70s—I coasted my way through the many patriarchal assaults and university-based punishments launched against me.

But, despite publishing quite a lot after that—I also perished, institutionally speaking. It took me 22 years to become a full professor, my tenure was challenged again and again, as were my promotions (which determined one’s salary and one’s pension). I never received a serious (i.e., tenured) job offer at any other university.

Nevertheless, that first book of mine was embraced by many millions of women. It was reviewed prominently, positively, and often. However, it was also damned. Psychologists and psychiatrists were offended, enraged. I was certainly not invited to lecture to such groups, at least not until feminists had more senior roles within them.

And I'm a "successful" feminist writer. Just think about those who are not visibly "successful," whose work is excellent but has been forgotten, "borrowed," not cited, laid to rest before it could do its considerably good work in the world.

Today, a feminist cannot be "politically incorrect," not even in a book with that precise title. In this 2018 work, I was not allowed to write at length about my 21st-century preoccupations, which include the rise of antisemitism; the Stalinization of feminism, the ways in which anti-racism pre-empted anti-sexism, the renaming and demise of Women's Studies—subsequently titled Gender Studies and sexuality, or LGB—but especially Trans Studies; the significance of Jihad terrorism and Islamism for feminism; the dangers of identity politics; the nature of honor-based violence, including honor killing—I've published four pioneering studies on this subject which have allowed me to submit affidavits to judges in political asylum cases—all these subjects were deemed too politically incorrect and not part of the earlier, more acceptable, and more "positive" moments of the liberal and left Second Wave.

I don't think what happened to me was unique. I believe this was and still is happening to many other authors, too. It's just that nearly 60 years in the writing life did not spare me.

If you're white and not focusing on anti-black racism; if you're a straight white male and not trans; if you're a Westerner and not from Africa, Asia, or South America; and if you're a radical feminist focusing on women's sex-based rights—your work may not get published or reviewed.

Here's what happened to me in terms of one book. I had to do mortal combat with 4,000 editorial challenges and demands (yes, I counted them up) made by at least two, but probably by three different editors. No one editor had seen what the other two editors had to say. This felt like a prolonged assault. It did not improve the writing so much as provide the editors with an opportunity to knock the work down, not elevate it.

A chapter in which I critiqued identity politics was rejected outright. The publisher was afraid of legal, critical, and perhaps even violent repercussions. I questioned, no, I deplored identity

politics. I questioned the use of gender over sex. I viewed this as dangerous. I went through every one of my own “identities” to reject each one.

My work was not done after wrestling the 4,000 challenges to the ground. The manuscript was then submitted to two outside “sensitivity” readers, one for race, the other for gender. Had they only been as literate as I was, it might have been acceptable, but both lacked my knowledge base. These were terrifying and demoralizing experiences.

One of the two or three editors—I’m not sure which one—demanded that I attribute the song Embraceable You to Nat King Cole or I’d be seen as an ignorant racist. But the song was written by two white Jewish boys (George and Ira Gershwin); Ginger Rogers first sang it in a musical in 1930, and the divine Billie Holiday made it her own in 1944, all long before Nat King Cole’s mellow rendition ever appeared. No matter.

Bad things continued to happen. My editor was “let go” for corporate reasons. This orphaned my book. The editor who inherited the work barely read it. She was also too busy to meet or even talk to me. She had an option on my next book which she swiftly declined. My agent then refused to represent that work.

The editor who inherited me chose to rush it out with a lead time of about two or three months, and with a pub date of Aug. 28, a time of year when everyone is away. I could be wrong, but I doubt they sent out copies to the right potential reviewers. They probably did send them to all the precisely wrong reviewers, and to only a few of them.

Unbelievably, the printer managed to drop 40 pages of a science fiction novel right into the middle of my book. I only found out about this when a few readers who knew me reached out to me. The publisher shrugged it off. “This happens.” Although they paid me to read for the audiobook, they chose not to publish a paperback version of this title.

And then the publicist told me, with great disappointment, that it was too late to book readings at Barnes & Noble—and that only one bookstore was even willing to have me at the end of August.

“What bookstore is that?”

“The Rare Book Room at the Strand.”

Oh, I was in heaven. I may have spent a quarter of my life browsing there. The venue had sentimental value to me, and it represented a love of books that is missing from the chains.

At the last moment, I managed to fill the place with more than 100 people and I hope that a good time was had by all. It aired several times on [C-SPAN](#). I also read at a wonderful store, Book Culture, on the Upper West Side of Manhattan where a spirited Q-and-A took place.

That was it. No editor ever appeared to greet me, support me, see me in performance, take me out for a drink.

In these times, every author, not just me, faces such ordeals. It does not matter if you’ve been a bestselling author or a legendary pioneer. Nothing will spare a writer from such nervous scrutiny.

Look: Walt Whitman had to self-publish. Herman Melville was very negatively reviewed and had to work as a customs inspector. I could go on. You get my point.

I will close with a reading. I found some long-forgotten notes that I’d prepared for a writing workshop I gave in Assisi, Italy.

A READING. ABOUT WRITING.

"I write, because I can't not write, it's in my blood, it's how I breathe, feel alive, powerful, joyful, connected.

Long after I wrote this, I found that Pablo Neruda, in a [Paris Review](#) interview had said: "For me, writing is like breathing. I could not live without breathing and I could not live without writing."

I do not fear the empty page. I have never suffered from writer's block. I have been blessed: My subjects find me, claim me, I never have to look for them.

Thus, envy has been my lot.

It's as if the world of non-writers know that a writer loves to write, can't not write, so they'll be damned if they're going to pay someone to do what they love to do in a world in which people are paid, either too little or too much, to do what they hate to do.

I have been writing all my life, but I never took a class in writing. I read books: incessantly, intensely, from the time I was three or four years old. I read to escape my childhood and family life; I read to save my life. I started writing when I was eight years old. I've never stopped. I had no role models.

I used to say that I had to write every day, all day, so that in case Inspiration wanted to come by, she'd know exactly where to find me.

Most writers have fantasies about the Editor of Our Dreams. She or he is imagined to be our truest, kindest soul-mate, our secret therapist, Fairy Godmother (or Godfather), personal cheerleader, midwife, agent, companion, primary witness to our creation, our creativity. Friend, colleague, etc. I have never, ever had this. Which does not mean that I wouldn't like to. It does mean that a writer can actually survive without one.

Why do we write? Would we write even if we never got published, like the Buddhist monks who create elaborate, beautiful sand-mandalas, only to see them washed away by the sea? I might...But most writers, me too, have too much ego to knowingly, gravely, philosophically, send our words away, down to a watery sea-death.

RILKE:

"If one feels that one could live without writing; then one must not attempt it at all."

JOANNA RUSS "HOW TO SUPPRESS WOMEN'S WRITING WITHOUT REALLY TRYING"

"She didn't write it. But it's clear she did the deed... She wrote it, but she shouldn't have. It's political, sexual, masculine, feminist. She wrote it, but look what she wrote about. The bedroom, the kitchen, her family. Other women! She wrote it, but she wrote only one of it. "Jane Eyre. Poor Dear, that's all she ever." She wrote it, but she isn't really an artist, and it really isn't art. It's a thriller, a romance, a children's book. It's sci fi! She wrote it, but she had help. Robert Browning. Branwell Brontë. Her own "masculine side." She wrote it, but she's an anomaly. Woolf. With Leonard's help... She wrote it BUT..."

Russ could not get a publisher for this wonderful work. I know. I tried to help have it placed. Finally, an academic press took it. It ended up at the University of Texas Press (1983).

VIRGINIA WOOLF "Shakespeare's Sister" in A Room of One's Own

"What would have happened had Shakespeare had a wonderfully gifted sister, called Judith?
...She a gift like her brother's, for the tune of words. Like him, she had a taste for the theatre. She stood at, the stage door; she wanted to act, she said. Men laughed in her face. The manager - a fat loose-lipped man-guffawed. He bellowed something about poodles dancing and women acting - no woman, he said, could possibly be an actress. He hinted - you can imagine what. She could get no training in her craft. Could she, even seek her dinner in a tavern or roam the streets at midnight? Yet her genius was for fiction, and she lusted to feed abundantly upon the lives of men and women and the study of their ways. At last Nick Greene the actor-manager took pity on her; she found herself with child by that gentleman and so - who shall measure the heat and violence of the poet's heart when caught and tangled in a woman's body? - killed herself one winter's night and lies buried at some cross-roads where the omnibuses now stop outside the Elephant and Castle.

***Now my belief is that this poet who never wrote a word and was buried at the crossroads still lives. She lives in you and in me, and in many other women who are not here tonight, for they are washing up the dishes and putting the children to bed. But she lives; for great poets do not die; they are continuing presences; they need only the opportunity to walk among us in the flesh.

Dr. Phyllis Chesler is the author of 20 books including classic feminist works such as “Women and Madness” (1972), “Mothers on Trial (1986), and “Woman’s Inhumanity to Woman” (2002). A co-founder of the Association for Women in Psychology (1969-70), and of the National Women’s Health Network (1974-5), she co-led a team that spent the last year (2021-2022) rescuing women from Afghanistan.

Strategies for Effective Organizing

By Lierre Keith



To start on the shoulders of giants, Andrea Dworkin implored us to build an organized, political resistance.

ORGANIZED, POLITICAL RESISTANCE

Organized: you develop a goal, strategies, and then tactics, as well as stable groups of actionists with the capacity to pursue them

Political: you identify the institutions that create women's subordination and how they are structured

Resistance: you do direct confrontations with power, choosing targets wisely

Organized: you develop a goal, strategies, and then tactics as well as stable groups of actionists with the capacity to pursue them

Political: you identify the institutions that create women's subordination and how they are structured

Resistance: you do direct confrontations with power, choosing targets wisely



How? How do we do this? Well, other people have figured this out. They've studied successful movements and understood the lessons learned. We can apply those insights to the liberation of women.

If you do not have a plan, if you do not have a strategy, how the hell are you going to win?
 - Gene Sharp

Serious resistance movements have a goal. Because if you don't have a goal, you certainly aren't going to win it.



Then you decide on appropriate strategies, and then you choose tactics. Without a goal, and without real strategy, movements become random, truncated tactics that have no chance of being effective.

STRATEGIC NONVIOLENT CONFLICT

*The Dynamics of
People Power in the
Twentieth Century*

By PETER ACKERMAN &
CHRISTOPHER KRUEGLER

Peter Ackerman and Christopher Kruegler offer 12 strategic principles for movements based on their study of successful struggles.

- **Principles of Development**
- Principles of Engagement
- Principles of Conception

Those 12 are divided into these categories. I'm going to give a brief overview of the first category and hopefully pique your interest.

PRINCIPLES OF DEVELOPMENT

1. Formulate functional objectives
2. Develop organizational strength
3. Secure access to critical material resources
4. Cultivate external assistance
5. Expand the repertoire of sanctions

So, first is formulate functional objectives.

1. FORMULATE FUNCTIONAL OBJECTIVES

- All competent strategy derives from objectives that are well chosen, defined, and understood. Yet it is surprising how many groups in conflict fail to articulate their objectives in anything but the most abstract terms.
- Most people will struggle and sacrifice only for goals that are concrete enough to be reasonably attainable.
- The tendency to view the dominant power as omnipotent can best be undermined by a steady stream of modest, concrete achievements.

All competent strategy derives from objectives that are well chosen, defined, and understood. Yet it is surprising how many groups in conflict fail to articulate their objectives in anything but the most abstract terms.

Most people will struggle and sacrifice only for goals that are concrete enough to be reasonably attainable.

Concrete goals help the resistance movement to evaluate its own success, grow support and improve morale, and keep the movement on course in terms of its overall strategy. The tendency to view the dominant power as omnipotent can best be undermined by a steady stream of modest, concrete achievements.

2. DEVELOP ORGANIZATIONAL STRENGTH

- Create new groups or turn preexisting groups and institutions into efficient fighting organizations
- The operational corps have to organize themselves effectively to deal with threats to organizational strength, specifically ... misguided enthusiasts who break ranks with the dominant strategy, and would-be peacemakers who may press for premature accommodation

"To create new groups or turn preexisting groups and institutions into efficient fighting organizations" is a key task for strategists. They also note that the "operational corps" have to organize themselves effectively to deal with threats to organizational strength, specifically "misguided enthusiasts who break ranks with the dominant strategy, and would-be peacemakers who may press for premature

accommodation." These threats can seriously damage morale and undermine the effectiveness of the strategy.

3. SECURE ACCESS TO CRITICAL MATERIAL RESOURCES

Two main reasons for setting up effective logistical systems:

- for physical survival and operations of the resisters
- to enable the resistance movement to disentangle itself from the dominant culture so that noncooperation activities can be undertaken

They identify two main reasons for setting up effective logistical systems: for physical survival and operations of the resisters, and to enable the resistance movement to disentangle itself from the dominant culture so that various noncooperation activities can be undertaken.

4. CULTIVATE EXTERNAL ASSISTANCE

“Now is the time to do something. I don’t care if I have to defend this position 300 times or 300,000 times in the world’s press because porn is violence against women. It is not about free speech. It is not about Iceland becoming North Korea. It is about the rights of women and children to live with full equality.”

—Ögmundur Jónasson,
former interior minister of Iceland

The benefits should be obvious. We’re going to need as many allies and as much solidarity as possible. But this is a task that many radical feminists reject out of hand. For understandable reasons. We need to break our loyalty to men. But....

If we intend to be successful, we should do the things that successful movements do. If we could do it on our own, we would have.

5. Expand the repertoire of sanctions

Keep growing the amount of force you can apply against the power structure.

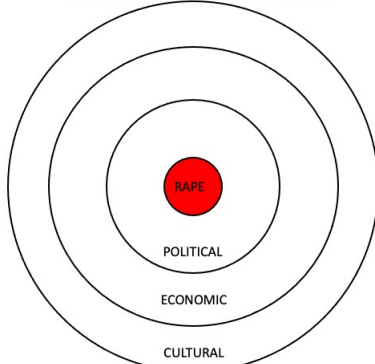
Expand the repertoire of sanctions—that’s self-evident. Keep growing the amount of force you can apply against the power structure.

IMPORTANCE OF LONG-TERM GOALS

- The failure to have a long-term operational plan with clear steps makes it impossible to measure success
- Lack of persistence, a major cause of failure in liberation struggles, is often the product of a short-term perspective

The failure to have a long-term operational plan with clear steps makes it impossible to measure success. How are you going to judge if you're getting anywhere if you don't know where you are going? "Lack of persistence, a major cause of failure in liberation movements, is often the product of a short-term perspective."

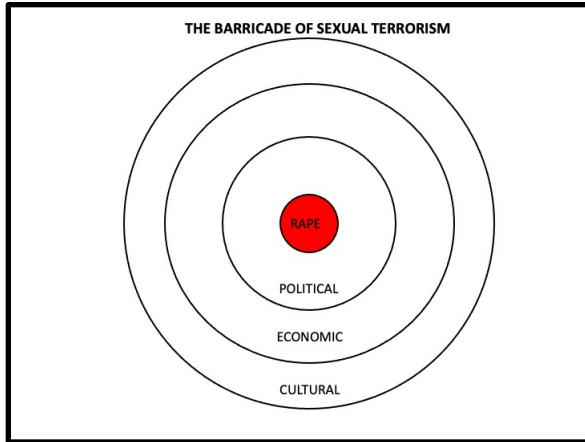
THE BARRICADE OF SEXUAL TERRORISM



Yeah, it's a bullseye. The reason I put it in that order is because of reports like this.



Global, women have made more progress economically than they have politically.



But at the end of the day, we haven't been able to stop men from raping us. We have been able to help women afterward—so everything from battered women's shelters to rape shield laws to restraining orders to having actual language to name male violence. These are things women fought for long and hard and I am not criticizing them. I am only pointing out the obvious: that all of our victories assume that yet another woman

has been profoundly hurt by another man. We haven't yet stopped men from raping us and in my lifetime, with an internet built on porn, it's only gotten worse. All the material systems of male supremacist society reinforce each other, so these are nested circles. I'll often hear a false dichotomy between revolution and reform. There is no one magic action that is going to make all of this crumble. Whichever layer you want to work on, great. Each layer has to be taken apart, and it's going to be brick by brick.

CARVER Target Assessment Tool

[C] Criticality is the value of the target to the opponent's operations.

[A] Accessibility gauges how easy the target is to reach.

[R] Recuperability is measured in time--how long will it take for the system to recuperate from attack?

[V] Vulnerability is the knowledge and resources required to attack the target.

[E] Effect is a measure of the possible military, political, economic, psychological, and sociological impacts if successful.

[R] Recognizability refers to the degree to which a target can be recognized: weather, light, distance and season, etc.

Last but not least, I want to introduce you to CARVER analysis. CARVER is a tool for target selection.

Originally developed during World War II to decide the targets for bomber pilots. But it has long left the air force and spread everywhere. Companies use it, personal security firms use it, I would be shocked if

the water treatment plant in DC hasn't run a CARVER analysis. And it can be used by activists of any stripe. You pick a potential target for your action and answer these questions, assigning a point value of one to `10 for each category.

[C] **Criticality** is the value of the target to the opponent's operations. This is the **primary** consideration in targeting. A target is deemed critical when its compromise or destruction has a highly significant impact in the overall organization.

[A] **Accessibility** gauges how easy the target is to reach. Are the resources needed to do it readily available? What are the defenses? Is insider assistance required?

[R] **Recuperability** is measured in time, e.g., how long will it take to replace, repair, or bypass whatever damage to the target? In other words, how long will it take for the system to recuperate?

[V] **Vulnerability** concerns the knowledge and resources required to attack the target and assesses how well defended or exposed it may be.

[E] **Effect** is a measure of all the possible impacts at the target and beyond.

[R] **Recognizability** is the degree to which a target can be recognized by the actionists. This includes factors such as weather, light, distance, and season and also the size and complexity of the target.

	GROOMER COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOL	SENATOR SELLOUT	HELLREALM PRISON FOR WOMEN
CRITICALITY	5	10	10
ACCESSIBILITY	10	9	9
RECUERABILITY	1	1	1
VULNERABILITY	9	10	8
EFFECT	10	10	10
RECOGNIZABILITY	10	10	10
TOTAL	45	59	48

So, let's say you have a group of 30 women, and you have decided you want to do a sit-in or a blockade in defense of women against male pretenders. You could brainstorm a list of targets: a school board meeting, a state legislator's office, a women's prison where men are being bussed in—then you'd run a CARVER analysis. It's very effective. Everyone else around the world is using this tool, there's no reason we shouldn't. Because this is a war.

We're going to have to match their contempt with our courage. We're going to have to match their brute power with our fierce and fragile dreams. We're going to have to match their endless sadism with a determination that will not bend and will not break and will not stop.



And if we can't do it for ourselves, we have to do it for her.

Whatever you love, it is under assault. Love is a verb. We have to let that love call us to action.

I found it was better to fight, always, no matter what.
--Andrea Dworkin

*Lierre Keith has been a radical feminist for 40 years. She is the author of seven books, including *The Vegetarian Myth: Food, Justice, and Sustainability*, which has been called “the most important ecological book of this generation.” She is coauthor, with Derrick Jensen and Max Wilbert, of *Bright Green Lies: How the Environmental Movement Lost Its Way and What We Can Do About It*. She lives in northern California with giant trees and giant dogs. She’s also been arrested six times for acts of political resistance.*

Lesbian-Only Spaces

By Lauren Levey

Lesbians were naturally in the forefront of the second wave of the Women's Liberation Movement. It was simply natural, because it was lesbians who were best situated to see men and their structures realistically; and it was lesbians who had the least to lose by describing men and structures accurately. There was some short-lived resistance to visible lesbian leadership by National Organization for Women and some other early feminist groups; but lesbians won pretty quickly.

The main reason lesbians won was that we simply had better ideas. We just saw stuff more clearly. In fact, lesbians won so good, and had such good ideas, that we got fashionable -- for better or for worse. That's hard to imagine now, right? But we got fashionable. We were on magazine covers and talk shows and in movies where the plots no longer framed us as losers who died sad and alone; or evil or crazy. Lesbian comics regularly played to mixed crowds in Provincetown, MA. Straight couples paid money to have lesbian comics mock them and make them squirm, while most of the audience was lesbians who laughed at their straightness and maleness and smugness and badly concealed homophobia. Lea DeLaria starred as her out and loud lesbian self in multiple movies. Even I, Lauren Levey, played a significant non-speaking part in one of those movies. (I played the part of a biker in an extended scene where I was directed to flirt with actor Epatha Merkerson, twirling her around on a carousel horse on wheels.) So lesbians had the stature of cultural heroes, or anti-heroes; or maybe folk heroes, like David fighting Goliath; or maybe more like outlaw Robin Hood and his merry band fighting the corrupt Sheriff of Nottingham. Lesbians had captured the imagination and the admiration of a significant segment of the public. They loved us. Many apparently straight women's liberationists wanted to be lesbians, and many of them tried it out; and some did come out as lesbians. And many other women who had been living as bisexual gave up men. And many lesbians already living as lesbians came out of the closet as lesbians. Lesbianing simply became not only easier, but very, very fun, and way sexier than being straight.

So, how did that happen? How was it even allowed to happen? Is it a good thing for a reignited Women's Liberation Movement? If it is at all a good thing, how can we create that cultural condition again, this time better and more permanently?

At the beginning of the Second Wave, there were existing conditions that favored the development of lesbian political power: Lesbians already had some community. We had some spaces away from men and away from women who prioritized men. In those separated spaces, lesbians were able to create better community, an integrated cultural identity, a structural analysis of our situation, a devastating and convincing critique of both patriarchy and the institution of heterosexuality, and admiration for each other's brilliance and dedication and goodness.

That critique of patriarchy and heterosexuality was so good that it had straight feminists asking themselves how they could justify giving their primary love and emotional support to their class enemies.

Without supervision by those having hostile interests, lesbians were able to see men more clearly than any other demographic could, because not loving men can lead to analytical clarity. Clarity not just with respect to our feelings, but with respect to the structures of society at large. We came to understand who and what we were, and we understood the threat that *our very existence* posed for men and their systems and mechanisms of domination. (If this language about "our very existence" sounds a little like current trans hyperbole, it's because they stole it from lesbians. *Our very existence* **was** a systemic threat to men and their dominance. They had tried mightily in the 1950s to erase every visible trace of lesbian existence. The erasure held remarkably well, until the very angry children of the 1950s came of age; and then the erasure failed; and suddenly, in the second wave, we became not only a potent revolutionary force, but a popular one.

Without hostile supervision, lesbians who were radical feminists were able to develop a critique of heterosexuality that rang true even to straight people. That critique went something like this:

The institution of heterosexuality has the following characteristics:

1. Heterosexuality relies on gender to maintain itself.

2. Gender is the polarity of masculinity and femininity.
3. Masculinity means domination and femininity means submission.
4. To paraphrase Lierre Keith, gender -- or dom-sub -- is normalized, institutionalized, and eroticized, so that we can barely imagine any other ways of relating.

So, lesbians who were radical feminists (and in the early 1970s virtually all the New York City lesbians under 40 were radical feminists) came up with a vision that opposed heteropatriarchal norms. It looked like this:

- Gender is unethical because it is power based, oppressive, and antifeminist.
- Gender is fake, exaggerated posturing; it is inauthentic.
- Gender is esthetically ugly costuming and posturing. It is not sexy because what is sexy is authenticity. Butch-fem is of course gender and is in fact a turnoff.
- Lesbian relationships, unlike heterosexual ones, hold out the possibility of equality between the partners. This is because (a) our sex organs are the same; and (b) since lesbians were all outlaws anyway, no institutional power or privilege was given to lesbians who performed masculinity.
- Because of all the above, gender goes against the interests of all lesbians as well as all women.
- The 1950s butch-fem stereotypes are gender; and not in our interests, either personally or politically.

So, lesbian radical feminists in the late 1960s and 1970s and even into the 1980s had a kind of dress code. We didn't see it as restrictive; we saw it as liberation from gender. It was basically men's casual clothing – jeans, tees, work shirts, flannel shirts, overalls, work boots, sneakers. It was clothing designed for movement and function and protection; and the dress code also avoided feminine beauty practices such as long enameled fingernails, elaborate hairstyles, plucked eyebrows, and removal of body hair. And by the way, don't sit with your knees together, it signals submissiveness; and it's less protective than just wearing pants.

Straight radical feminists noticed and got it immediately; and some of them adopted parts of that lesbian vision and style. In the straight world, androgynous style had been favored by men on

the left since the early 1960s. Lefty men sported long hair, work clothes, and a distinct absence of bulky bodies or muscular development. They didn't much like it when women also adopted androgynous presentations, but there was no principled way they could oppose it. Straight people started adopting lesbian terminology about their relationships: "Life partner", for instance, was invented by lesbian radical feminists. "Life partner" comes out of an equality ethic, unlike "the wife", "my lady", or "my better half." So lesbians not only critiqued heterosexuality, but did so with some success. Fashionable young straight people wanted to be like lesbians.

The clarity of lesbian analysis developed despite the fact that many lesbians were emotionally a mess. It just didn't matter when we were out to make a revolution. Working for a Women's Liberation Movement led to courageous acts of resistance, which led to community, which led to more analysis and even greater clarity. An individual's emotional state or emotional "health" was beside the point. And focusing on an individual woman's "mental health" would be criticized for seeking an individual solution to a class problem. Just as there's no point in pursuing equality for women within patriarchy, there's no point in pursuing individual mental health solutions in an unhealthy society. So, the point was community, the point was class analysis and collective acts of resistance, and the point was revolutionary change that would produce liberation for us all.

Lesbians, away from anyone who was not a lesbian, talked endlessly about feminist ethics and lesbian ethics and an ethical basis for a community and a culture based on female solidarity and principles of behavior that had been arrived at, and agreed to, collectively. Feminists including lesbians developed a scathing critique of the Institution of Psychotherapy. We understood that it had systematically subjected women to involuntary lobotomies, involuntary institutionalization in loony bins, powerful psychotropic drugs, and the torture and disorientation of electric shock. Along with religion, compulsory heterosexuality, gender, the nuclear family, and all the other institutions of patriarchy, it was understood that Big Psych and its pathetic, individualized, phony, feel-good solutions to patriarchal oppression needed abolition.

Sadly, all of those institutions – Big Psych, religion, compulsory heterosexuality, gender, nuclear family, etc. -- have made a big, successful comeback. And lesbians are no longer in

fashion. In fact, we are not only widely held in contempt, but we are also being systematically erased in law and in culture and even in words.

Lesbians need lesbian-only spaces to get our facts sorted out; and to forge lesbian identity (not the fake identity of wearing the costume of something you are not; but collectively figuring out who we really are), lesbian community, lesbian analysis, lesbian ethics, lesbian culture, and a revolutionary lesbian politic that captures the hearts and minds of all women. Straight women simply are not in a position to do this as well as lesbians. Whether or not they know it, they need our separateness from them as well as our collaboration with them. They need our clear thinking, our creativity, our leadership, our relative emotional detachment from men, and our unconflicted love for women. And lesbians must understand that we need to throw in our political lot with all women, and not with gay men who, after all, are men who benefit from the exploitation of women.

For lesbians to take the lead in a new Women's Liberation Movement, I suggest we do the following (some parts of this list are deliberately repetitive, for emphasis of what I suggest may be most important):

1. Be the most courageous people on the planet
2. *Model* courage, as well as honesty and wit and intelligence and rationality and good ethics. By "good ethics" I mean don't lie, don't argue dishonestly or unfairly, and don't either manipulate or bully women.
3. Compared to straight women: Be more courageous, more dedicated, have a more uncompromising analysis of patriarchy, be more ethical, be more authentic, be more consistently supportive of the sex class called women. Have more fun. Be charismatic.
4. Be welcoming to newbies -- to women who have left men behind and want to join us in centering women and overthrowing the rule of men. Be welcoming to women who are thinking they want to be or might already be lesbians. Don't make it difficult to join us; make it irresistible.
5. Understand that we are coming for men's wives and sisters and daughters and mothers. We aim for lesbians to be -- and to be seen as -- *the* default human females, the natural human females, the free human females, the revolutionaries. And women will join us, again, because we will not only appear to be, but we will actually be courageous,

ethical, rational, loving, beautiful, charismatic freedom fighters, and women will want to be *like* us and to be *with* us, and *we* will *want* them to, because it is clear that that's how all women will win.

Lauren Levey's (Vice President) feminist roots date from 1965, when students at Bennington College helped those who needed them get illegal but medically safe abortions. During the 1970s Lauren was on the Dartmouth faculty as the college struggled with coeducation; she chaired its Women's Caucus, which was instrumental in shaping co-educational policies. She also engaged in non-college related activism through the Women's Center in town. In 1983, Lauren helped found the Sirens Women's Motorcycle Club in New York City, which was soon leading the NYC Pride March each year. In the 1990s, Lauren was on the Board of a large LGB center in White Plains, New York, when gay men wanted to add not only T, but also SM and P. With other lesbians, she fought to exclude all the additional letters; they won on SM and P, but T was incorporated. Lauren and others left and formed a radical feminist group called Women First, which organized Consciousness Raising groups, among other things. During this time, she also operated a lesbian guest house in Provincetown, Massachusetts. Lauren is a lawyer and currently serves as Vice President of WDI USA.

Women in Leadership

By Marian Rutigliano

I was asked to talk about what it takes to lead an organization. Including earning the trust of members, handling personality clashes among members, and understanding what leadership is. I have experienced leadership and been a leader in several settings: as a physician directing ER/ICU/administration, in the military, and in my current scientific work.

I. ***Leadership is Service.*** You serve the people you lead. You serve the mission – the liberation of all women. Whatever it is that motivates you to this service, you emerge into leadership when you know it is your duty to serve your people/organization and the mission. It is a commitment.

II. There are **3 Concepts** that are ***Associated with Leadership.*** Though they are sometimes used interchangeably, they are not the same.

A. Responsibility

Your organization/team needs to know you accept responsibility if things fall apart or your group/group actions are subject to criticism. If you are the leader, you are always responsible – this may not seem fair. Yet, when your group is successful and accomplishes something good/significant – as leader you make it clear “I have a great team”.

B. Power

The ability to compel/punish/apply consequences. This is a feature of leadership in most formal settings. This use of power is built into the structure/setting and leaders are bound by how they may exercise power over followers/subordinates.

- Military – regulations, traditions, principles
- Employers – firing. More difficult now, constrained by laws

But power is also exercised when there is an informal power grab.

“The Tyranny of Structure lessness” (by Jo Freeman) – if there is no formally instituted leadership structure, an informal structure will arise and install itself.

Power is then exercised with:

- Personalities over principles
- Arbitrary, no recourse

C. Authority

On whose authority? Yours, if you earn it. People follow your authority if they trust you, even if you have no power to compel them.

Over time you earn trust in your

- Competence – technically and as a leader who makes good decisions and is dedicated to the mission
- Care for the people you lead. The degree to which you get to know the people you lead can vary (type of work, circumstances, etc.). But they should know that you value their contributions and understand any sacrifices they make for the work they do.

III. *Handling Personality Clashes*

A. Communication Styles

- very underestimated in importance
- particularly important when there seems to be ill-will associated with disagreements

<i>Short, direct</i>	<u>vs</u>	<i>telling a story</i>
<i>logical, dispassionate</i>	<u>vs</u>	<i>emotional content very important</i>
<i>long uninterrupted brain dump</i>	<u>vs</u>	<i>short bursts, give-and-take</i>

B. What People Want to Do and/or Think They are Good at

vs What the Group Needs Done, and Individuals' Actual Talents

People can often fill many roles, so let them gravitate to, and do, what they like.

Exceptions:

- Someone really doesn't have the needed skill. E.g.: wants to do graphic design but can only draw stick figures (technical skills)
- Doesn't have the personal resources for a role. E.g.: wants to be in charge but doesn't play well with others

C. Psychological

- People are the sum of everything that has happened to them – childhood, family, school, etc. Actions/beliefs are often tied up with maintaining self-esteem.
- You won't know all this stuff about your people and you are not a therapist, but there is a history behind actions, behaviors, attitudes that don't seem to make sense. May affect what people can be trusted to do and be responsible for.

The most difficult – people who think they know better about everything than the leaders and think you should follow all their suggestions. As difficult as these people can be

- they may have some good suggestions
- give them something to work on independently – they find it intolerable to not be in charge, so give them their own fiefdom in the form of a project they can handle themselves

Mostly you will be working with women who want very much to help however they can and will work things out and generally get along. Be interested in the work people are doing and ask them about their accomplishments. Thank people for all they do.

IV. Getting People to Trust You – in Addition to All Said so far

A. Be Competent and Focused on the Mission

- technically
- as a leader
- be honest with yourself re if you've got the goods to be a leader

B. Be Fair.

You don't have to explain all the details of all decisions, but it should be clear to most observers that you are fair/consistent. And you should let people know if a departure from the usual (courses of action, etc) will affect them, and why.

If you are not perceived to be fair, much of whatever else you do will fall apart because many people will quit, and you will be left with few people to lead.

C. Work Hard.

A team/organization should never see its leader as a slacker. Your efforts are a living demonstration that you care about the mission.

D. Trust your People. DON'T Micromanage.

E. We Never Leave our People Behind.

This is the encapsulation of

- building/maintaining trust
- the mission – prioritizing women

“Feminism is a political practice of fighting male supremacy on behalf of women as a class, including all the women you don't like” (Andrea Dworkin)

The women you lead need to know – by your actions/example – that the liberation of women leaves no woman behind. You don't lead for yourself. You lead for them.

Marian Rutigliano (Secretary) serves as Secretary on the Board of Directors of WDI USA and is a contributor to WDI International's Radical Feminist Perspectives webinars. As a biological scientist professionally, she reviews the validity of scientific studies on the human health risks of toxic chemicals. She has been out as a lesbian since 1969 and developed as a radical feminist in those early days of the Second Wave.

Women in Leadership

By Kara Dansky

I will be talking this morning about having a willingness to learn from others. This is crucially important because we all have things we can learn from others. None of us has a monopoly on the perfect leadership style.

Some people are more naturally suited to lead than others, and that's fine, but it's not as though everyone in a position of leadership belongs there or that anyone is born knowing what it means to lead effectively. Leadership comes naturally to some, but everyone has something to learn from others.

I first became interested in studying leadership as a discipline in and of itself several years ago, when I was working at the Stanford Criminal Justice Center as its executive director. "Executive director" is a pretty fancy job title, and I was honored to hold the position. But I realized at some point during my time there that it really was not a position of leadership, despite the fancy title, and that I wanted to be able to grow in ways that that position would not allow me to.

So I started thinking about what it means to be an actual leader. Not someone with a fancy job title, but someone who had actually cultivated the skills to really lead a group, an organization, or a movement.

At some point along the way, I encountered a book called *The Fifth Discipline: The Art & Practice of the Learning Organization* by Peter Senge and studied it. And when I say I studied it, I *studied* it. I took it down from the shelf to prepare for this talk and found located within it a batch of cards on which I had scrupulously taken notes.

- I had written, for example: "Learning organization" is defined as "organizations where people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective

aspiration is set free, and where people are continually learning how to learn together.” P. 3.

- I listed the “disciplines” of a learning organization: “systems thinking, personal mastery, mental models, building shared vision, and team learning.” Pp. 6-11.
- I learned the distinctions between “detail complexity” and “dynamic complexity.” Pp. 71-72.

There are many more examples of my very scrupulous note-taking. I’m making fun of myself a little bit here because this might be one of the nerdiest ways possible of studying something like leadership. But I learned a lot from studying that entire book, and I would recommend it to anyone who is curious to learn and think creatively about how organizations and systems work.

But no one source tells us everything we need to know about leadership. Senge’s work is a bit dry, and I felt like something was missing from his analysis. So I sought out other sources from other thinkers to get more ideas. One thing I learned a lot about was empathetic leadership. I don’t recall exactly what works I studied, but I do remember coming away from that time of study and reflection thinking that effective leadership requires *both* a clear understanding of the dynamics of systems and structures *and also* an ability to lead from a place of empathy. I learned both of these things by reading the works of others who had thought a lot about this topic.

I don’t want to focus too much on the pitfalls of leadership, but I’ll mention one, because I am very guilty of it and because I have learned a lot from watching others - some of whom are also very guilty of it and others who actually handle it much more effectively. I am referring here to the challenge of delegation. So many people (probably mostly women) in positions of leadership too often make the mistake of thinking “It’s easier for me to just do it myself than to delegate it to someone else.” This can be a piece of writing, taking on a meeting facilitation role, contacting a coalition partner, or anything, really. So many women in positions of leadership find it challenging

to delegate effectively - I know I do - and the failure to delegate effectively can be disastrous to the functioning of an organization. None of us is indispensable, and by that I mean that if any one of us were to fly off on a plane to Mexico to spend the rest of our life drinking margaritas on the beach, the work of women's liberation must go on. The work has to be shared and skills have to be nurtured throughout the movement. All of this is just a brief word of advice to anyone here thinking that she might want to take on a leadership position within the movement. I hope you all do, and I just want you to know that this aspect of leadership can be extremely challenging for some of us. None of it is easy. But on we go.

I have learned a few other things along the way, especially from the women in the movement, many from women in this room, that I want to share with you because they are crucial to the success of our movement.

The first is to have patience with each other. We are all human beings, sometimes we'll get it right and sometimes we won't. That should never stop us from jumping in and trying, and making a mistake is never a cause for derision. Gentle correction, sure. Radical feminists often say that all women are traumatized in patriarchy, and we often get push-back about that from people who say that we have a victim mentality. I don't think it's a victim mentality to acknowledge that we *are* in fact traumatized by patriarchy *and also that* we are all capable of working effectively with that trauma in a way that can help us succeed. But it is because of that trauma that we need to be patient with ourselves and with each other. That does not mean making excuses for our own bad behavior, or course. We have to hold ourselves to account for mistakes that we make. I once exhibited a complete lack of patience with one of the women in the movement and I immediately felt terrible about it. I found her and apologized sincerely and without excuse. She graciously accepted my apology, we hugged, held hands, cried, and worked it out between ourselves. I think we can learn from moments like that about what it takes to really work directly, patiently, and compassionately with each other.

I will end with what I have learned to be one the most crucial and indispensable leadership qualities that we have in our arsenal - a sense of humor. This is important for any resistance struggle, but it is absolutely critical to the movement to liberate women. We are in a fight for our

lives, and we have to take it seriously, and every single woman present today has worked very hard over the years. This is deadly serious work, and we have to treat it with the gravity that it demands. And then, sometimes, we just need to laugh. I'll tell a quick story to highlight an example of how this can be done effectively and then I'll close.

I'm going to tell a story about a woman in the movement and I'm telling this particular story about her because she is not here to correct me if I get it wrong. Just kidding - I'm sure she would not mind me telling you this story. Women's Declaration International meets weekly via Zoom. Regular attendees include our international coordinator Jo Brew, various country contacts including our own country contact Kerri Bruss, and other phenomenal women like the women who run tech for the weekly Feminist Question Time webinars. I used to attend those meetings and I don't anymore, but one time when I did, a woman was having a very difficult time emotionally. She was feeling stressed out and overwhelmed, as so many of us often feel. She was crying and she said, "If anyone has any tips, I would really appreciate it because I am just having ..."

And before she could go any further, Jo Brew jumped in and said, with so much empathy, "Okay, I have a tip." Now, I can't do this justice because if I attempt to explain what followed using a British accent, I will mess it up terribly, so you just have to imagine Jo Brew saying the following in British English. She said this: "I have a tip. If you want somebody else to do something, do it first, and do it very badly. Then they'll be frustrated with you, take it over from you, and do it better, and you won't have to worry about it anymore." We all burst out laughing, including the woman who had been crying just a moment before.

Having a good sense of humor can make or break a leader. It's okay to laugh at ourselves and it's even okay to laugh at others sometimes, as long as it's only meant in the spirit of good-natured fun.

I'll close with a word of warning. Although it's critically important to learn from the leadership of others, it is also important never to put any of our leaders on a pedestal. All of our leaders are fallible. I have learned the hard way that if we have a woman on a pedestal and she falls off it by demonstrating some aspect of her fallibility, the result can be devastating. Instead,

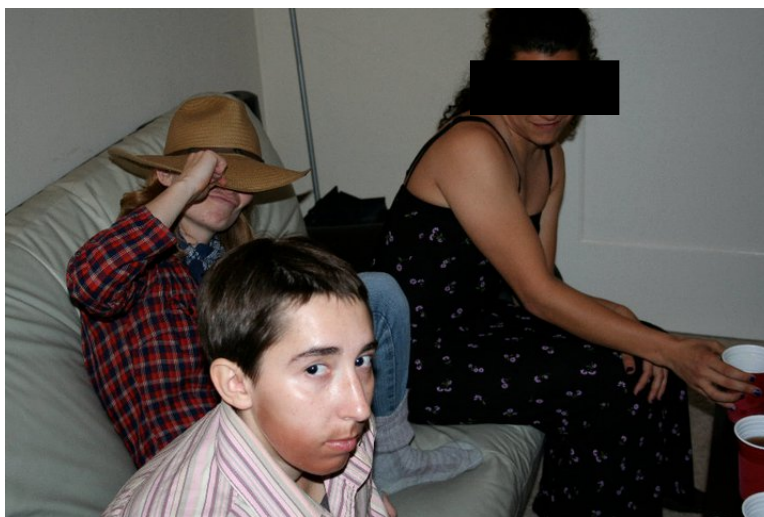
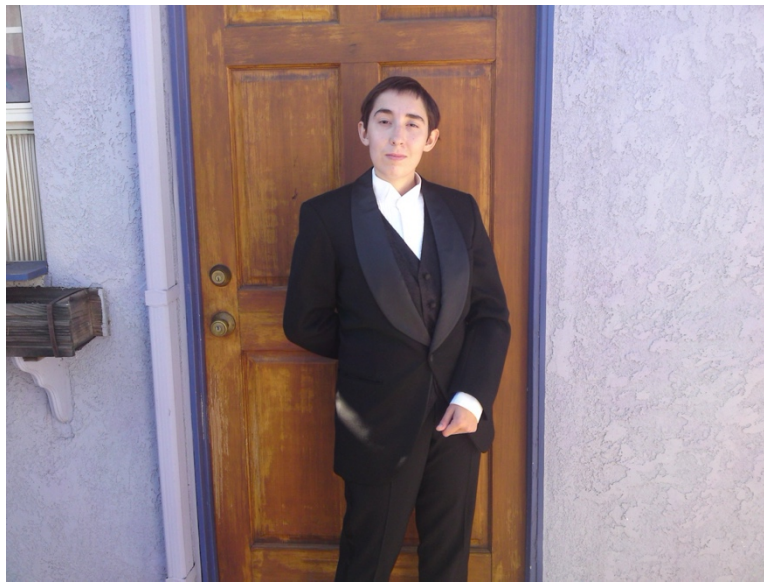
we must learn from others without idolizing them. We can watch how our leaders behave with an eye toward emulating them, and we can learn how we ourselves might do something differently to how they do it. We are all teachers, and we are all students.

*Kara Dansky (President) is a public speaker, writer, and consultant who is committed to protecting the rights, privacy, and safety of women and girls on the basis of sex in law and throughout society. In November 2021, she published the ground-breaking work *The Abolition of Sex: How the 'Transgender' Agenda Harms Women and Girls*. She currently serves as president of the U.S. chapter of Women's Declaration International, which seeks to promote the Declaration on Women's Sex-Based Rights. She served on the board of the Women's Liberation Front from 2016 to 2020. Kara is also an attorney with a J.D. from the University of Pennsylvania Law School and a B.A. from the Johns Hopkins University, and has an extensive background in criminal justice law and policy. She served as senior counsel at the ACLU's Center for Justice between 2012 and 2014.*

Why Gender Threatens Women's Liberation

By Exulansic

I identified for several years as a trans man, and for less than one additional year as a Nonbinitarian member of the Discipleship of the Disaffected branch of the Church of the Nonbinaries. Here are two photos of me when I was identifying as transmasculine.



“Detransitioners” are typically defined as individuals who have undergone some degree of medical transition with the intent of changing or altering a sex-signifier.

Due to the permanence of these transitions, reversing the transition itself, or going off the supportive hormone therapy, may not be possible or medically advisable for all detransitioners.

“Desisters” are typically defined as individuals who underwent some sort of social transition, and later left trans identification, without undergoing medicalization.

This distinction does not exist for church applicants because people have “valid” (their word for kosher, halal, or godly) reasons for not undergoing medical procedures that are none of your business. Low bar to enter, and a high bar to leave, to say you were “really” trans.

Dander Dysphoria is a pervasive sense of negative emotion surrounding skin or hair. I cope with prosthetic “dander identities” until I can get my dander-affirming scalp strandsplant. Insurance will not approve it, saying it is “cosmetic.” I am regularly misdandered. On days I am medusadander, people will still ignore the snakes and misdander me as a brunette. Some would call my dander expression prosthetics “wigs” but that is strandsphobic. My dander orientation is “dander flux” because my dander identities change but there is no continuity between them.

When I have wet hair, I am dander fluid. When I have no wig, I’m a cis-head. Prejudice towards people with dander dysphoria is called “strandsphobia.” Such people are called

“wigots.” Our version of TERF is SCALP - Strandsphobia-Colluding Angry Loser People. An example of dander-affirming surgery currently available for trans people but not for people with dander dysphoria is a beard strandsplant. This person’s dander dysphoria goes unacknowledged, and has been instead misattributed to gender dysphoria:



Definitions are very important. The definition of a woman is an “adult human female:” A fully grown member of the female sex class of the species *Homo sapiens*.

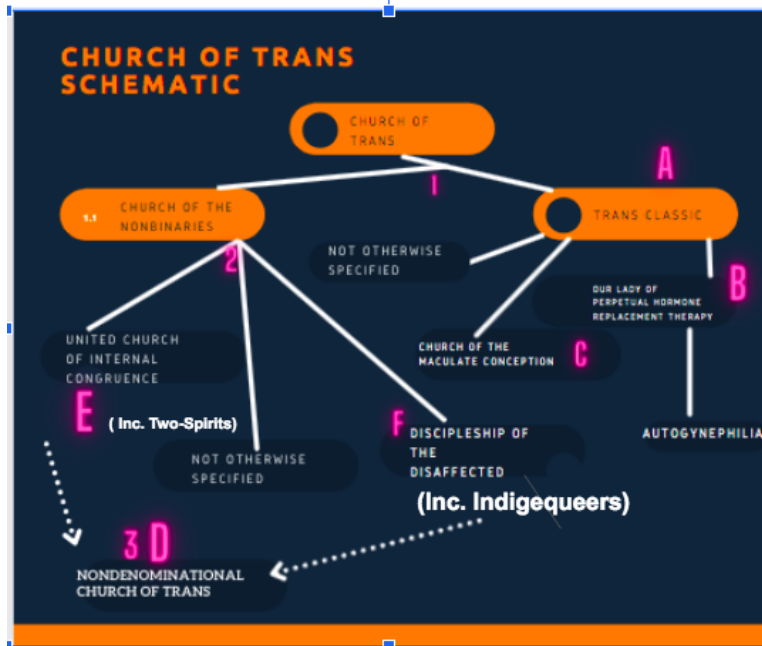
Female: of or denoting the sex that can bear offspring or produce eggs, distinguished biologically by the production of gametes (ova) which can be fertilized by male gametes.

Femaleness, the capacity to bear offspring, therefore existed prior to the evolutionary invention of maleness. Maleness is the biological Johnny-come-lately, and it evolved for a specific purpose: inseminate females, who already existed. Maleness generally began as part of the female life cycle. Individual specialization as one or the other sex across the lifespan also came later. Even when located within the same individual, the male sex came after the female sex within any given lineage. There is no situation where the inseminator sex class exists apart from the offspring-bearing sex class.

What is Sex?

Sex is a developmental circumstance set early in pregnancy, due to the fact that sex class divisions are extremely old. We humans evolved over billions of years to follow one of the two developmental paths, and all paths are a variation on one of these two paths, defined by the first stone in the pathway the individual steps on as they develop across time. Too much deviation leads to infertility, and therefore is not passed on to the next generation. That is how the developmental pathways are conserved. There is no unringing the time-sensitive developmental bell. While sex is determined mostly by genetics, genetics of sex varies across species, and therefore is best understood as part of the humanness trait, and not the developmental sex class the human individual belongs to (similar to how age is independent of both sex and humanness while remaining core to the definition of woman).

Sex is a whole-body developmental plan. Every aspect of women must be medically considered to be categorically sex specific in medicine, or women suffer the consequences! Even organs like the pancreas which look very similar on the surface have dramatically different responses to testosterone depending on which sex class the pancreas developed within. The 19th Amendment guarantees our right as American women, American adult human females, to vote on the basis of sex. Without sex-based rights and protections, menstruators, chestfeeders, uterus-havers, bodies with vaginas, birth-givers, and ovulators do not have a guaranteed right to vote in the US! Discrimination on the basis of female traits is not protected without a legal recognition of the existence of the category of female, or without some caselaw establishing that female biology is a disability, a race, religion, a national origin, etc., or some other protected category, and no such case law exists as females are in fact a kind of normal and not a deviation from normal or a constructed social category.



Doctrinal Split Key

1. How many gender identities are there? Can they move around? When do they form? Can they change? Does everyone have one?
2. What is the goal of any level of transition as a nonbinary person who does not believe in a medical need for cross-sex hormones? Does my “identity” (personal icon/idol/fetish avatar) need to relate to my appearance?
3. Can we all just get along and respect each other’s’ incoherent identities?

A. Trans Classic:

This group is defined by the belief that there are two genders, that these relate to male and female/man and woman, that these genders form by age 3, and that everyone has a gender.

B. Our Lady of the Perpetual Hormone Replacement Therapy:

This group is defined by the belief that there is a biological need to transition for some people, which may mean they need the hormones or the body patterning feedback only phalloplasty can provide.

C. Church of the Maculate Conception:

This group is defined by a belief that a desire to transition and sense of gender dysphoria indicate the patient has an occult disorder of sexual development (their ‘maculate conception.’) They believe they are already in some sense, the opposite sex. There is less of a mandate to transition than in Our Lady of the Perpetual Hormone Replacement Therapy, but they make the same demands regarding preferred pronoun use, the right to change legal sex markers, and the right to be in the facilities and athletics belonging to the sex they believe they should have been, versus the sex they verifiably are.

D. Non-Denominational Church of Trans:

This group believes in the importance of respecting identities and pronouns to go along/get along.

E. United Church of the Internal Congruence:

This sect believes in the transformative power of seeking internal-external congruence via any means necessary. They believe in many genders that can move around, occupying different individuals at different times, that people can be without a gender, and gender is not fixed by age 3 but is something that merits exploration at whatever age you are when you discover gender ideology. Their goal is to align their mental sense of gender identity with their appearance, and by doing that also align society’s expectations with their behavior, and their understanding of the true nature of the gender soul with other nonbinaries. “Two spirit” falls

under this category due to the emphasis on resonance with two spirits regardless of culture or tribe.

F. Discipleship of the Disaffected:

This sect believes it is rude to make assumptions about other people, including that they have a gender identity (agender is valid). They feel very embarrassed by other people assuming they are physically a certain way, have any gendered preferences, or have a particular sexual orientation or desire. They do not want you to make assumptions about whether or to what extent they will transition. Unlike two spirits, which seek congruence across cultures, indigequeers want you to know they have a very specific culturally constrained gender that one understands. Their nonbinitarianism may have nothing to do with sex or gender and everything to do with dissociative identity symptoms. This would include your woman who identifies as a woman but prefers they/them due to mental “alters.” “Indigequeer” and “neuroqueer” fall under this heading as their only specification is that they are different from you and different from other people you might want to group with them.

A Note on Two Spirit versus Indigequeers

Two-spirit is a term from 1990 that refers to people with a male and a female spirit. This term came to a woman in a dream sequence. This phenomenon allegedly exists in all tribes and therefore two spirits are encouraged to go on pilgrimages to meet two spirits in other tribes, whom they will find internal congruence with. They can then unite.

Two-spirit was created to replace berdache, a Francized Arabic term referring to a slave or kept boy. The Iroquois aka Haudenosaunee famously never had berdache and were documented historically as being suspicious of the practice, in line with their matriarchal understanding of the relationship between your sex and your social role.

Indigequeer is a term from 2004 that refers to people who identify with a racially constrained gender, but want you to know it's definitely very different from two-spirit, and also very different from anything you have ever contemplated, you white colonizer.

What I Got out of my Involvement in Trans Ideology

A connection to a community, a sense of identity, and a relief from a perception that I was out of place and wrong.

The role therapy and medication played in stopping the trans train for me: I received many years of talk therapy and also received medication support for chronic pain and post-traumatic stress I had been experiencing. These conditions impacted my sensory processing and comfort in my body, which I had been encouraged to misattribute to 'gender.' The combination of these two interventions led my sense of "gender identity" to steadily fade into irrelevance. Now, I do not feel that most people have a sense of "gender identity" unless they have unresolved trauma.

The role gender therapy and a lack of medication played in accelerating the trans train for my girlfriend: my girlfriend sustained a head injury not long before her mastectomy, and she was eager to use her entire settlement to pay for this unnecessary surgery that her injured brain believed was the key to her unhappiness. Her gender therapist never seemed to consider alternative explanations, including the anorexia nervosa she had an acknowledged history of suffering.

When did trans jump the shark? I.e., when did I see through it? I finally saw through it when I realized that it was a placebo and a crutch. I saw that the people who could not recognize that were also very incapable of reasoning rationally about the subject. I was very disillusioned by what I perceived as a lack of consideration to whether a brain injured person can give consent for a radical placebo mastectomy. I also was disappointed in the attacks on homogeneity of treatment/control groups in medical research. I could not believe some of my friends wanted to start mixing male and female research participants in the name of validation of the gender soul. The homophobia of seeing my ex-girlfriend attempt to convince me she had become a gay man,

while dating another woman, and that this is why we broke up, also was a wakeup call that this was a toxic ideology attempting to convert gay and lesbian people.

Why is “Gender Identity” a Soul or Personal Deity Concept?

It is poorly defined, varying from sect to sect. Sometimes it is permanent. Sometimes it changes. Sometimes there’s more than one. It is known only to the devotee and is immeasurable. It is defined as independent of sex, yet it is used in place of sex.

Despite its immateriality, the gender deity will ache and/or punish the adherent if I do not acknowledge belief in it through audible prayer (“using the gender pronouns”). Some sects believe gender identity is entirely absent from some individuals (agender), raising the question of what pronouns they should use, and what functional impact this will have on them. If gender is what you do, presumably, these agender individuals cannot do gender, and this should be measurable. Is it?

Who is Reasonably Protected by a Concept of “Gender Identity?”

Females in female-only spaces who believe they are males are still entitled to protection as females. Masculine women and trans-identifying females in female-only spaces are potentially and reasonably protected by the concept of “gender expression” and “gender identity.” A trans-identifying male being excluded from a female-only space is being excluded on the basis of sex, not gender identity. Gender identity protections should never logically force sex integration. A female sent to a male facility for having a “male gender identity” is being discriminated against relative to other females on the basis of gender identity. Sex is not gender!

The Sects if They Had Names:

(Trans Classic) Our Lady of the Perpetual Hormone Replacement Therapy

- This sect believes that there is a metabolic or neurological basis for desiring to transition
- Your “gender identity” is which gender - man or woman - you want to be.
- They believe gender identity forms by age 18 months to 3 years - as soon as the child can articulate “I’m a ____” - and is fixed across the lifespan.
- Because “gender identity” is fixed, if a person’s gender identity is “on the opposite side of” their sex, the only solution is to physically change the sex to match the gender identity. Changing the brain is never explored, even though we are told that we know where gender identity resides in the brain.
- They will invoke brain patterning and phantom limbs as well as varying hormone levels affecting the mood of “cis people” as evidence they physically need cross-sex hormones and surgeries.
- They believe the effects of the drugs, including the effect on mood, is proof of the truth of their ideology. They passed the test of faith and are being rewarded by gender Jesus.
- They believe there are two sexes and two genders and sometimes they are flipped.
- Generally, they reject “agender” as a configuration, believing and grounding their policy demands in the theory that we all have gender identities that are equally important to us, creating an injustice the state can correct.

(Trans Classic) Church of the Maculate Conception

- Specifically defined by a belief that gender dysphoria aka a sense of gender “incongruence” is a sign of an occult disorder of sexual development (DSD). People “questioning their gender” are encouraged to consider the possibility and pursue testing for it, which I did at one time (spoiler alert: 46XX with normal female anatomy/function). Disorder of sexual development, or DSD, is the modern

preferred term for what was previously termed “intersex.” However, intersex is still commonly in use by individuals with DSDs and their providers.

- CotMC’s understanding of gender is that it is what you look like to other people and how you feel about yourself, regardless of the shape of your body or its sexual development history. The theory is that we all have some deep internal knowingness regarding how our body ought to have developed regardless of how it did develop, and this knowingness drives our sense of gender.
- Like the other group in trans classic, they believe that changing the body to align with the gender soul-perception more closely and otherwise affirming our faith in the gender soul-perception of the individual is the only way to resolve feelings of gender dysphoria that arise from some physical state of gender incongruence.
- They insist science has already identified, described, and proven the physical, material basis of this incongruence, though their evidence is lacking. Often, they will point to androgens as the source of maleness, masculinity, and man-gender identity, often believing that testosterone is what causes testicles to form. This is due to propaganda from this branch of the Church of Trans.
- Gender identity is seen as a natural outgrowth of sex development, and therefore some people with DSDs are said to have a gender identity that does not match their sex due to this difference in sexual development. Gender identity policy is framed as reasonable disability accommodation.
- This group generally believes gender identity forms by age 3 and will insist some disorders “always” produce this or that “gender identity,” even if this is verifiably false.
- Generally, rejects “agender” as a concept, believing and grounding their policy demands in the theory that we all have gender identities that are equally important to us.

(Church of the Nonbinaries) United Church of the Internal Congruence (UCIC):

- This sect believes that gender identity is a state of mind.
- UCIC is not committed to a biological model of gender identity, though adherents will still often use the “always been this way” reasoning and will offer photographs of their childhood haircuts as proof they were “always nonbinary.” They also will point to the “nonbinary people in history” based on clothes, make-up, hair, and general vibe.
- No commitment to any specific interventions and in fact, they are mining new medical interventions all the time. A recent discovery was “non-flat top surgery,” which was previously called a breast reduction. This group will also remove their nipples or otherwise seek disfigurement as a way to solidify their non-binary status.
- UCIC believes in gender resonance between people of the same gender identities (“nonbinary resonance”)
(<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/queer-counselor/202011/how-do-i-know-if-im-trans-nonbinary>)
- UCIC believes the purpose of transition is not to look like “the other sex” - what does a ‘man’ ‘look like’? - but to “look more like yourself.”
- Typically rejects “agender” and requires people to embrace he, she, they, or some location on that spectrum (he/they).

(Church of the Nonbinaries) Discipleship of the Disaffected

- This group is using the term nonbinary and neopronouns or they/them pronouns to communicate they are different from you, and that they are different from other nonbinary people. Do not make assumptions about them, because you will be wrong, and they will make sure you feel as embarrassed as your assumptions made them feel.

- Gender identities can change over time through mystical processes we do not understand. Sometimes this change can happen in history class, according to a TikTok meme.
- “They/them” may refer to the number of “alters” in a person’s head (dissociative identity disorder) and have nothing to do with a desire to conceal a person’s physical sex or achieve a sense of resonance with another they/them.
- Individuals who seek to announce genital abnormalities may sort themselves into this category, especially if they find their genitalia to be very irrelevant to their identity. Eunuchgender would be here.
- Embraces “agender” as a possible configuration that is knowable to the adherent.
Non-denominational Church of Trans
- “Big tent” solution to the problem of schismatic understandings of the gender soul.
- The goal of this sect is to maximize the trans-nonbinary political bloc without resolving doctrinal disputes.
- Emphasis placed on “respecting everyone’s identities and pronouns.”
- New discoveries such as “pronouns don’t equal gender” to encourage everyone to pick special pronouns to advance pronoun policy hegemony.
- Specific identifying beliefs include: “Mispronouncing is different from misgendering” - failing to perform the pronoun prayers (“mispronouncing”) is still a thought crime even if you do not imply the person is not the sex they are or that they think they are. In other words, if a person’s gender identity and pronouns conflict, we are to use language which both affirms their gender and uses their correct pronouns at all times, even where their pronouns don’t equal their gender. So a trans identifying woman can still use they/them pronouns, and in that case, calling that person a female/woman would be misgendering, and referring to them with she/her would be mispronouncing. Outside of this denomination, misgendering is mispronouncing.
- No clear position on when gender identity forms or how many forms. Everyone’s identities are valid as long as you put your money in the hat when it goes around.
- Embraces the concept of socially functional “agender” people as a way to “respect everyone’s identities.”

Whose Rights do Pronoun Policies Violate

Disability rights: Pronouns are a learned, neurological function, and therefore an individual's capacity to use "preferred pronouns" can be affected by any disability that affects the ability to use language, attend, speak, or think.

Civil Rights: Accent and second language discrimination is a major mechanism of discrimination on the basis of national origin and race - protected classes of people. Pronoun policies prioritize people with greater command of the language being spoken in the workplace, even if command of English is not an essential job function.

Rights of Older Workers: Speech and cognition discrimination, that is unreasonable and unrelated to essential job functions, are a mechanism of discrimination against older employees. These older employees are more expensive to employers, and this may be the true reason for terminating an employee pretextually who fails to say the pronoun prayers.

Rights of Religious Workers: Gender atheists have a civil right to not be compelled to profess belief in mystical, invisible, unverifiable, immeasurable, and improbable entities that have not been demonstrated to have any sort of material existence (gods), but which are said to have great power and wrath should we not worship them.

Any religion with a belief in the separateness of maleness and femaleness has a right to discuss that belief and to have single-sex transitional spaces to accommodate beliefs surrounding intermingling of the sexes, which is considered sacred as it may create new life. Sex segregation, which can prevent pregnancy, is fundamentally unlike ethnic segregation, which cannot prevent pregnancy. Religions that have prohibitions on bearing false witness also have the right to not use pronouns which are lies. Non-religious gender atheists also have a right to say what is true and not be compelled to pretend to believe in gender souls we lack faith in. We have the right to say true things which contradict the sincerely held, and unverifiable, religious beliefs of coworkers.

High Human Cost of Transition

Now I will discuss the high human cost of transition with various case studies. We will touch on the price, side effects, social impact, short and long-term disability, pain and suffering, and other factors that make these case studies so horrifying.

Complications typically include:

Fistula - a healed abnormal pathway between two bodily cavities that should NOT be connected.

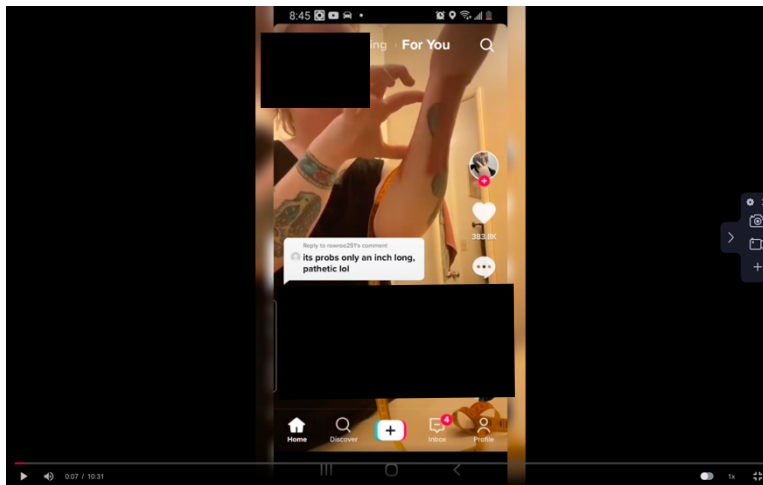
Stricture - a narrowing of a channel between two cavities that SHOULD be connected

Sepsis - a blood infection that can start from a local infection in a rotting skin tube.

Diverticulum: A cul-de-sac shaped area in the skin tube where bacteria can become trapped and begin multiplying.

Adhesion: Scar tissue causing two tissue-based structures which should slide across each other to become stuck together.

Case study 1: A.



A. is depicted here measuring her forearm phalloplasty scar with a tape measure, to make the point that she is now well-endowed because the scar is 6 inches long. In fact, the skin on her arm was on a frame called her bones, and so once it was transferred to her groin, it underwent shrinkage. Based on photos she has posted to Reddit, she is no longer 6 inches in length.

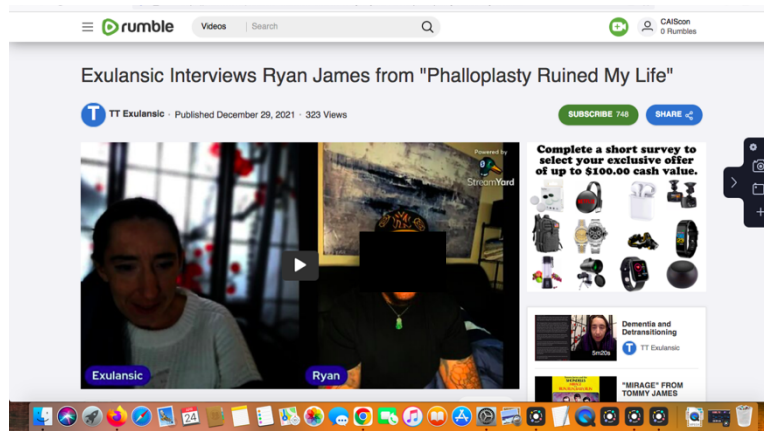
A. is a “female to male” trans identifying woman. A. reportedly began transitioning at 13 and may have undergone puberty suppression. She reportedly began testosterone and mastectomy followed by RFF phalloplasty in April 2021 during the COVID 19 pandemic.

As a result, she developed sepsis, bladder stones, stricture, diverticuli, and fistula.

She spent weeks hospitalized and in the ICU on a ventilator. She had at least 10 blood clots and nearly lost her leg from one of the clots. She had two bladder stone removal surgeries and a surgery to construct a new urethra from her cheek skin.

Total cost: high seven figures (appx 700,000 + per her report) not counting more recent operations.

Case study 2: B.



B. began taking testosterone at 17 and then double mastectomy.

B. underwent radial forearm free-flap phalloplasty at age 26. This phalloplasty involved a vaginectomy to create tissue for the urethra and to otherwise “close up” the vaginal area. This vaginectomy was so botched that B. developed a recto-vaginal-urethral fistula, leading to chronic urinary tract infections, any of which may become septic.

To reduce these chronic infections, B.’s doctors at Boston Children’s Hospital cut a hole in her side, severed her intestines from her rectum, and rerouted the feces through this created hole, called a stoma (Latin for “mouth”). A colostomy bag is now attached to this stoma.

B. reported that recently, two years after the surgery, the doctors are in the process of attempting to remove the colostomy bag to see if the fistula has healed.

Case Study 3: C.



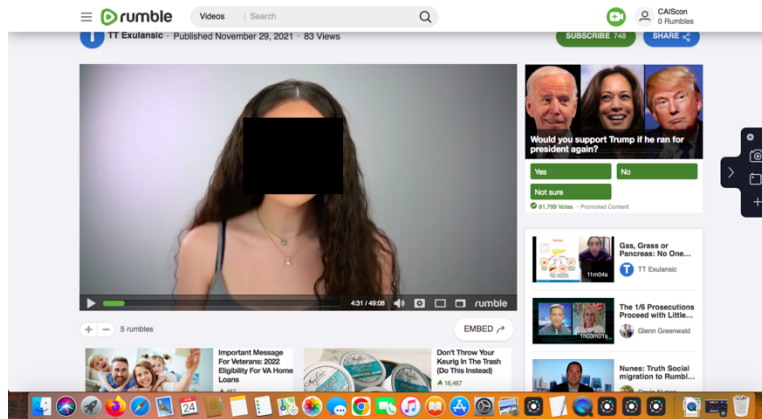
C. underwent a colon vaginoplasty as an adult following years on estrogen.

His penis was flayed, sewn to the repurposed external urethra, inverted, and tied to the back of his pelvic floor. He then took a long car ride, and the extended vibrations and pressure led to dehiscence of the inverted penis, resulting in loss of depth.

The stricture that developed prevented dilation. His doctor attempted to dilate him under anesthesia, which created a fistula. He discovered this fistula when he farted through it. They attempted to replace this with an 8-inch section of colon. Colon vaginoplasties lubricate when the person eats, according to his report. This is his life now.

UPDATE 2022: He has detransitioned and credits me (Exulansic) for inspiring him to go back on male hormones and start speaking against the medical brutality he experienced as a gay man receiving trans conversion therapy.

Case Study 4: D.



Among other surgeries, D. underwent tracheal shave, a surgery aiming to reduce the masculine appearance of his trachea. He developed an adhesion which then impaired his swallow. This required a second surgery, which has not fully corrected the problem.

He reports that he lost the ability to sing in the upper part of his range. This may be due to the fact that the tracheal cartilage provides resistance to the vocal cords and may collapse under that tension if it is not strong enough. By thinning the trachea, the doctor likely made it less strong, creating a functional deficit when in use.

Case Study 6: F.

F. underwent double mastectomy as an adult to fit in with a social group and achieve “nonbinary boychest.”

Her doctor talked her into allowing her nipples to be fully removed and discarded, leaving these two scars, on the logic that she threw up easily and would be too disgusted by their post-surgical appearance to cope for 6 weeks while they healed.

As a result, she experiences phantom nipple pain, which she describes as feeling that her nipples are being pinched 24/7. This is likely a result of the brain expecting nipple sensation that never arrives. It is unlikely this will go away, and highly likely the chronic pain will affect other aspects of her health over time. Absent false nipples and a mirror box, there may be little doctors can do.

Case Study 7:

This woman is undergoing a multistage phalloplasty that involves “releasing” the phallus (Kraken) from her abdomen. This scar is from an earlier stage.



The next photo shows the later stage of this surgery, with unconfirmed reports it is the same person.



The underside does not look any better and she is nowhere near completion.

***Exulansic** is a California-based, licensed speech language pathologist serving a diverse caseload in private practice. Exulansic also has a degree in Gender and Women's Studies and Linguistics from UC Berkeley, as well as a Master's in Education (Speech Pathology). She writes essays and produces video content about topics related to sex and gender, with a special interest in the history of colonization and the intentional imposition of patriarchy onto the matriarchal societies in New France. She is a former transgender and nonbinary identifying person who now believes that a woman is an adult human female.*

Misogynoir and Radical Feminism

By Lorraine Nowlin

Misogynoir is the hatred of Black women. It is a hatred possessed obviously by many men and even some women. This hatred is not based on anything Black women did. We are hated for existing. We are the scapegoat for everyone else's insecurity. We are often used as punchlines, and the butt of jokes. People seem to delight in tearing us down and watching our misfortune.

I grew up thinking it was all about blackness and being a girl or woman was irrelevant, maybe even a distraction. I believed that any injustice I faced was due to being Black. Women's issues were secondary or not important at all. In fact, I was led to believe that for Black people, being a Black woman made your life easier than being a Black man. I can remember the late 80's growing up in NY, it seemed like every summer, a Black man was killed in one of the five boroughs by a gang of White males. No, I hadn't heard of Black women attacked. In hindsight I wondered if Black women were attacked but I just didn't *hear* about it. Maybe the Black collective didn't care enough to be angry. During my teens and early 20's, maybe even my 30's, I still didn't hear of many Black women as victims of police violence or hate crimes, etc. Then I learned that Black women are not experiencing less racism at all, it's just different but no less dangerous. Black women also experience sexism from both within and outside the Black collective. A black man may have white and other nonblack people clutching their purses or moving from a seat next to him, but I had people touching my hair or men often invading my space. Now I am hearing of more Black women dying in police custody and killed in their homes or other places.

Contrary to the belief of some in modern times that Black women are viewed to be just as much of a threat as Black men. I disagree. I noticed that we don't have to do as much as Black men in order to be victims of police violence. Think of Sandra Bland as an example. Our words are or at any rate, OUR WILLINGNESS to speak out are enough to get us beaten or killed by police. It seems to me that sassing is a crime punishable by death for Black women in the United States. Not only that, but you've also often heard that Black people are more likely to be killed by police while unarmed. But did you know that it is Black women's deaths raise that statistic?

Black people are more likely to be killed while unarmed because Black women are largely unarmed... But our deaths are considered less tragic or not tragic at all.

No, I don't agree with calls to abolish police, prisons, etc. But I must also admit that being a Black woman does not exempt me from police violence...especially if "said police officer" is Black but that's another story. As a Black woman, I have no automatic allies. I accept that and I keep moving forward.

Speaking of violence, we must face another brutal and uncomfortable truth. Our greatest foes are not White boys in blue. They're boys with Black skin. Not one person in my circle ever admitted this awful truth to me. I had to find out *for myself* that most of the perpetrators of hate and violence against Black women were and are Black men.

Strong Black Woman Redefined

The strong Black woman is one who can take a punch and keep on moving. She exerts herself in service to her community without expecting anything in return. I don't want to be a strong Black woman...I am an autonomous Black woman. I don't live my life in service to the Black collective. I am neither afraid nor ashamed to admit that I prioritize being a woman over being Black. That means, I am unwilling to sacrifice my needs as a woman, Black women in general, for the needs of the Black race.

The Black Church

I attended a church where it was implied that a woman's afro-textured hair and box braids were unGodly. I must emphasize that we were made to feel that ***what grew out of our heads*** was an abomination. Our hair was unacceptable at work, at church, and even unacceptable before God??? A woman was told in front of our congregation that her afro made her look "*like an African and she needed to straighten out her kinks and go on with the Lord.*" This was a Black church! A teenage girl was told in front of our congregation that her braids made her look like a

scarecrow. A woman had to have straightened hair like white women in order to be Godly. Let me emphasize again, what grew from a Black woman's head was unacceptable before God!

Recently, a well-known Bishop, *no name no blame*, scolded the Black women in his congregation claiming they were applauded for being nasty, oppressive, tough, rough, possessive, etc. All the misogynoirist stereotypical insults he could muster up. He also said,

“Women should not leave men behind or replace them.”

“Our careers were destroying the family.”

You should see the anger and vitriol in his demeanor when he said those things. According to the CDC, Black women are murdered more than any other race of women. The last thing Black women need to be told is not to replace men. I can only hope and pray that many of the women took their “nasty, oppressive, rough and tough tithes and offerings” that probably funded his mansion and left that church. Did you watch Aretha Franklin's funeral? If so, you likely saw a preacher that decided to go on a rant against single mothers raising sons than properly eulogizing a highly accomplished woman like Aretha Franklin. Are there churches that have been wonderful towards women, yes. But *wherever* men *are* is a risky place for Black women. That's why the fight to maintain separate spaces for Black women, ALL women, is such an emergency.

Patriarchy Has a Black Face Too

I've spoken with Black women who admit to feeling the hate and tension that many Black men have for us, that *all* men have for us. I too sense this tension at times. As I said before, you might hear a black woman say that she refuses to march or advocate for Black men beaten or killed by police. Instead of second guessing or criticizing her, ask her why she feels the way she does. I'm sure many of you heard Black women say this as well. I was shocked when YouTuber Kelli Jay Keen, a White English Woman, spoke about this in one of her videos. I guess some white women *are* listening. A white woman I consider to be a true ally is one that puts Black women, ALL women first. I remember a comment from a White radical feminist about police killings of Black people. She said, “I will not lift a finger in protest unless the victim is a Black WOMAN.”

She and White women like her are my true allies. But for those who wince when you hear Black women admit they will not march on Black men's behalf, ask yourself why on earth you would expect Black women to put on their capes for men they feel hate them. Ask yourself why you would expect Black women to fight for Black men when they generally do not fight for us. Ask yourself why you would expect Black women to march for a group largely responsible for their rapes, harassment, and murders. Finally, ask yourself why you are unaware that patriarchy also has a black or brown face. It's not just white men! Please, it's not just White men! Just look at the chaos in Iran for an example of Patriarchy in a light brown or "off-white" face.

Another example: I've learned that many white women are offended using "Karen" to describe them. When I look at the Karen memes and videos, I find that more and more, it resembles insults directed at racial minorities. I don't use "Karen" to describe racist or bigoted white women. Also, I am beginning to question some of the historical information I have always believed about white women. When we think of lynching, it's *always a white woman* that was the cause of a Black man being lynched. We hear more about the white women than we do the white men that killed them. Also, I cannot escape the possibility that a white woman at times did **NOT lie** about being raped by a Black man. Was lynching, while horrible first and foremost to Black people, also a statement against white women's sexual autonomy? Again, this is not to take away from the horrors of racist violence. It is to say that blame should be laid at the feet of those that murdered Black PEOPLE, White Men.

Lynching was used to shape my perception of White women as liars not to be trusted. I am stretching my thinking about White women; will you stretch your thinking about me and other Black women? Consider that Black women were victims of sexual terrorism by White men while working as maids in White homes during Jim Crow. It makes me wonder if White women were taught not to see Black women as victims of White male sexual aggression but as loose women. It is likely that we were both given carefully crafted exaggerations about each other by our "grandparents" which in turn influences how we perceive each other. Again, we must stretch our thinking beyond what we were taught in order to *Reignite the Women's Liberation Movement*.

Lorraine Nowlin always saw the world through a radical feminist lens. As a tween, she questioned the theological teachings about women in her church community. It was during her teen years that she noticed how the experiences of Black men and boys were prioritized over those of Black women and girls. As an adult, she explored the writings of Ayaan Hirsi Ali which only confirmed her belief that oppressive patriarchies exist within all races, cultures, and religions. In other words, sexism and the need for radical feminism were not just “white women’s issues.” Having grown up an ADOS Black Woman in the US, she is keenly aware of colorism, hair politics, and the need for self-love and affirmation. It is that awareness that informs and strengthens her belief that if we are not born with the wrong skin color or hair texture, we are not born in the wrong body. She got involved in WDI because it is one of the few organizations that focuses solely on Women and girls. Currently, she facilitates the WDI Black Women’s Discussion Group.

Reigniting Community: Women's Stories, Land, and Future

By Jennifer Murnan

Singing- twice -

Put your roots down

Put your feet on the ground

You can hear what she says if you listen

Put you roots down

Put your feet on the ground

You can hear what she says if you listen

Because the sound of the water

As it moves across the stone

Is the same sound as the blood in your body

As it moves across your bones

Are you listening?

Are you listening?

Good afternoon! My name is Jennifer Murnan, and I am a radical environmental social and feminist activist. I inhabit a small family therapy farm on the occupied lands of the Cheyenne and Arapahoe peoples in the foothills of the Colorado Rockies. I'm a mother and a grandmother with a passionate love of community and community building. Every bit of what I bring today comes on the wings of women's circles and listening to and reading my sister's analyses and stories. There are so many of you and so many whose names I will never know. I thank them all, and I thank you for being here in service of Community and Reigniting the Women's Liberation Movement.

I will be asking questions throughout this address and then when my part is complete, listening to any woman here who wishes to speak to expand on what I have shared, provide insights and your own responses to these questions, and in this process perhaps a future for women's land and community will weave itself into our discussion and our collective vision for the future.

Wanda Hensen, co-producer of the Gulf Coast Women's Festival said on opening night, 1992, "We must come together to understand what our strengths are, then we must share our differences so we can accept each other and each other's truths. My sister's truths will then become part of my truths." From Bonnie J. Morris, *Eden Built by Eves* (Morris, 1999).

I want to make it clear that I am not an expert in any of the areas or studies of the women I am quoting. I am especially not even remotely qualified to tell the stories of my indigenous sisters. I will be clear in attributing the many women whose words I have brought into this address for your consideration. I will try my utmost to honor their voices by quoting their words accurately. I may shorten the name of the book from which the quote was taken but will state the title in full the first time it is referenced. I also want to underline that these words come from bodies of knowledge and that the full bounty these words have to offer can only be gleaned from reading them in their original context. Finding discord as well as harmony is also a gift to our work. You have all received a bibliography for this keynote with your packet at the beginning of the convention.

Researching this keynote has left me dazzled by the brilliance and diversity of our sisterhood.

Audre Lorde gives me the courage to share the words which are not my own. She wrote "And where the words of women are crying to be heard we must each one of us recognize our responsibility to seek those words out to read them and share them and examine them in their pertinence to our lives. That we not hide behind the mockeries of separations that have been imposed upon us and which so often we accept as our own." From *Sister Outsider: Collected Essays the Transformation of Silence into Language and Action* (Lorde, 1984).

Let's Begin!

What was the spark that ignited the first wave of feminism in the United States?

Many early radical feminists were abolitionists.

Andrea Dworkin says that “the work of Angelina and Sarah Grimke, so profound in its political analysis of tyranny, so unyielding in its hatred of human bondage, so radical in its perception of the common oppression of all women and black men, was the fiber from which the cloth of the first feminist movement was woven.”

In *Sisters in Spirit: Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) Influence on Early American Feminists*, Sally Roesch Wagner, feminist pioneer, speaker, activist, and author pursues the answer to a question similar to mine; “How did the radical suffragists come to their vision, a vision not of a Band-Aid reform but of a reconstituted world completely transformed?”

“For twenty years I had immersed myself in the writings of early United States women’s-rights activists Matilda Joslyn Gage (1826-1898) and Elizabeth Cady Stanton (1815-1902), yet I could not fathom how they dared to dream their revolutionary dream. Living under the ideological hegemony of nineteenth-century United States, these women had no say in government, religion, economics, or social life. Whatever made them think that human harmony, respect for women’s lives, and equal rights for women were achievable? Surely these white women, living under conditions they likened to slavery, did not receive their vision in a vacuum.”

“Then it dawned on me. I had been skimming over the source of their vision without even noticing it. My own stunningly deep-seated presumption of white supremacy had kept me from recognizing what these prototypical feminists kept insisting in their writings. They believed women’s liberation was possible because they knew liberated women, women who possessed rights beyond their wildest imagination: Haudenosaunee women.”

How Well Did These Culturally Different Women Know Each other?

“Even though they lived in very different cultural, economic, spiritual, and political worlds during the early 1800s, Euro American settlers in Central/Western New York were, at most, one person away from direct familiarity with Iroquois people.”

Radical suffragists encountered the women of the Six Nations Confederacy possessing freedom of decisive political authority, control of their bodies and a societal structure of matrilineality and matrilocality. Iroquois women had the freedom to initiate divorce. Haudenosaunee women were living in a society in which rape is considered one of the three major crimes, the other two being theft and murder.

In contrast to the patriarchal world of male, white and human supremacy the radical suffragists fought to liberate themselves from, the Haudenosaunee women Lucretia Mott, Matilda Joslyn Gage and Elizabeth Cady Stanton met in upstate New York lived in and maintained a co-created political, social, economic, and spiritual society predicated on balance within their communal relationships and with their land and the larger biological community they inhabited.

Who created the Constitution of the Haudenosaunee and the laws by which these liberated women lived? If the United States Constitution is modeled after the Constitution of the Iroquois Confederacy, why do we have subjugated women under the US constitution in contrast to the liberated women of the Iroquois Confederacy?

Barbara Alice Mann is a teacher, researcher, and writer, living in the homeland of her Seneca ancestors who have been there for the last 1,500 years. From “They are the Soul of the Councils” *The Iroquoian Model of Woman-Power*, Mann’s contribution to the book *Societies of Peace* matriarchies past present and future:

“The Constitution of the Haudenosaunee, or People of the Longhouse, was ratified by popular vote by the Seneca, Cayuga, Onondaga, Oneida, and Mohawk in the year 1142 - 63 years before the Magna Carta was signed. The Great Law represented a hard-fought victory for the forces of peace and justice, settling a civil war that had been raging for over a century. Women generally, and their head Clan Mother, particularly, were instrumental in all phases of the struggle. Various known in tradition as the Jigonsaseh, the Great Woman, the Mother of Nations and the Peace Queen, the Jigonsaseh was key at every stage, from the war of liberation to the constitutional peace that followed.”

“This civil war was a struggle over whether corn cropping democracy or Mound-Builder Priesthood would prevail.”

“The priesthood was a male elite enjoying a stranglehold on power, maintained largely through terror and brutality.”

Clan mothers took their people and fled the oppression and reign of terror of the priesthood and developed the corn way and an egalitarian form of government.

Haudenosaunee women farmed.

Matilda Joslyn Gage marveled:

“Their method of farming was entirely different from our own. In olden Iroquois tillage there was no turning the sod with a plow to which were harnessed a cow and a woman, as seen today in Christian Germany: but the ground was literally ‘tickled with a hoe’ and it ‘laughed with a harvest.’”

In “Matriarchal Societies: Studies of Indigenous Cultures Across the Globe”, Heide Goettner-Abendroth writes regarding the Creation of the Iroquois Confederation:

“These clan mothers introduced their people to a new kind of farming - the expansive planting of corn beans and squash: this perfectly complementary trio of plants became the subsistence food for these peoples. The success of this practice allowed clan mothers to build up an agrarian, egalitarian society, one in which the will of the people was sacred.” (Reference to Mann Societies of Peace)

The Jigonsaseh negotiated sweeping powers for women into the Confederation’s constitution (Mann, 2016), including:

Women as the sole keepers of peace and war.

Women as the sole counselors at the local or “grassroots” level of government.

Women as the sole keepers of mother earth.

Women having the sole right of naming.

Barbara Alice Mann *Societies of Peace* (2009):

“I do not have time to go into the full range of women’s economic rights to Mother Earth. Although it is one of the Jigonsaseh’s provisions in the constitution, it is an entire talk, all by itself. Suffice it here to say that women owned not only all the earth, but also all the fruits garnered from Mother Earth. This means that women, alone, controlled and distributed the goods and services necessary to life. No one went without, while anyone had anything. Sharing not hoarding was the law.”

I do not have time to read to you the full account of the story behind the creation of the Iroquois Confederation or dive deeply into the accounts I have read of Matriarchal Societal structure or in just a few minutes offer a synopsis of a world view outside of our colonized minds. I am still in a years-long and likely a lifelong process of trying to wrap my head and heart around all there is to glean from this knowledge.

Sally Roesch Wagner, in “Sisters in Spirit” (2001):

“I remembered that in the early 1970’s some feminists flirted with the idea of prehistoric matriarchies on which to pin women’s egalitarian hopes. Anthropologists soon set us straight about such nonsense. The evidence just wasn’t there, they said. But Paula Gunn Allen, a Laguna Pueblo/Sioux author and scholar, believed otherwise: “Beliefs, attitudes, and laws such as [the Iroquois Confederation] became part of the vision of American feminists and of other human liberation movements around the world. Yet feminists too often believe that no one has ever experienced the kind of society that empowered women and made that empowerment the basis of its rules and civilization. The price the feminist community must pay because it is not aware of the

recent presence of gynarchial societies on this continent is unnecessary confusion, division, and much lost time.”

The first chapter of Matilda Joslyn Gage’s classic, “Woman Church and State” is titled THE MATRIARCHATE.

“Every part of the world today gives evidence of the system. Reminiscences of the Matriarchate everywhere abound. Livingstone found African tribes swearing by the mother and tracing descent through her. Marco Polo discovered similar customs in his Asiatic voyages, and the same customs are extant among the Indians of our own continent. Bachofen and numerous investigators agree in the statement that in the earliest forms of society the family, government and religion were all under the woman’s control: that in fact, society started under woman’s absolute authority and power.”

The lands we are occupying at this moment, do not belong to us. They belong to those peoples who accepted responsibility for maintaining a balanced relationship with these lands.

What happened to this history of connection between first wave feminism and indigenous women?

In the Afterword to “Woman, Church and State: Anniversary Edition of the Feminist Classic”, Wagner writes: “

“When Susan B. Anthony led a successful conservative takeover of the movement (under the guise of merging the two national suffrage organizations) in 1889, Gage exposed, denounced, and fought it. She lost. The religious conservatives of the new organization wanted to vote in order to put God in the constitution and prayer in the public schools, thereby merging church and state. Gage formed an organization to fight the religious right and protect religious liberty. Anthony ordered her followers not to attend. The losers in history are at the mercy of the winners, and Anthony wrote Gage out of the official history of the movement.”

“Woman, Church, and State” stayed in print until 1917 and then was lost to history, as was its author.... until they were rediscovered by the second wave.

What was the fire that sustained the second wave of feminism in the United States?

Marilyn Frye, from “The Politics of Reality: Essays in Feminist Theory: Some Reflections on Separatism and Power”:

“In my life, and within feminism as I understand it, separatism is not a theory or a doctrine, nor a demand for certain specific behaviors on the part of feminists, though it is undeniably connected with lesbianism. Feminism seems to me to be kaleidoscopic—something whose shapes, structures and patterns alter with every turn of feminist creativity; and one element which is present through all the changes is an element of separation. This element has different roles and relations in different turns of the glass—it assumes different meanings, is variously conspicuous, variously determined or determining, depending on how the pieces fall and who is the beholder. The theme of separation, in its multitude variations, is there in everything from divorce to exclusive lesbian separatist communities, from shelters for battered women to witch covens, from women’s studies programs to women’s bars, from expansion of daycare to abortion on demand. The presence of this theme is vigorously obscured, trivialized, mystified, and outright denied by many feminist apologists, who seem to find it embarrassing, while it is embraced, explored, expanded, and ramified by most of the more inspiring theorists and activists.”

“When women separate (withdraw, break out, regroup, transcend, shove aside, step outside, migrate, say no), we are simultaneously controlling access and defining. We are doubly insubordinate since neither of these is permitted. And access and definition are fundamental ingredients in the alchemy of power, so we are doubly, and radically, insubordinate.”

Of course, whether or not to practice separatism and the degree to which women engage in this practice varies with our needs and the needs of our communities.

Land - based forms of separatism arose during the explosion of activism in the second wave. Women in the US who were inspired by or had experienced Greenham Common in the UK formed the Puget Sound and Seneca peace camps.

These women's protests of militarism in defense of human life and life on earth were also a creative exercise in the formation of a women's community.

“You are afraid that our struggle is not a nonviolent struggle. Afraid that we are willing to destroy the patriarchy as individuals.... Do I really have to assure you that we don't contemplate trying to kill off men?... We don't hate men, we hate the clearly hateful things that men have done to us, are still doing to us: hate it that they rape us, batter us, exploit us, impoverish us, silence us... when we come together in our women- only circles it is not to try to deny our bond with men; it is to try to affirm our bond with one another.... Our gathering together as we do now amounts to civil disobedience ---whether or not we decide, while together, to climb some military fence, block some entrance, commit some act for which we can be sent to jail.” Barbara Deming, *Prisons that Could Not Hold* 1985

“Each peace camp maintained a similar subculture and structure to the Greenham model: nonviolent protest, civil disobedience, and a willingness to submit to arrest. Like Greenham, they also featured education workshops and dialogue with local residents, and a feminist politics of engagement with anti-patriarchal ideals.”

“Participants came to the peace camp encampments from all walks of life: as Buddhist nuns, Hiroshima survivors, grandmothers, and students.” (“Bonnie J Morris, “The Feminist Revolution the Struggle for Women's Liberation”.)

The list of Women's Music Festivals, temporary women's lands, and communities that arose out of the second wave is long and was nationwide. Bonnie J Morris writes in “Eden Built by Eves”:

“In its first decade (1974-1984), festival culture exploded like popcorn in all directions. Lesbians freshened their camping gear and loaded their car trunks at the start of

summer because now June meant the National festival, August, the Michigan festival, Labor Day weekend, Robin Tyler's West Coast festival, the Sisterspace Pocono Weekend or Woman Harvest"

In "The Disappearing L", Morris writes:

"As successful festivals put down roots and became annually recurring events, with popular artists stage hopping around the country and around the calendar to headline as many festivals as possible, the participants formed a new subculture within lesbian subculture."

Some of the women who participated in temporary women's peace encampments and the lesbian women's music festival subculture were inspired to create permanent women's lands. Women's lands of the second wave also arose out of women's spirituality. Many but by no means all women's lands were white. Some allowed males. Somehow evolved to allow "trans". There are women here today that have direct experience of these protests and festivals and have lived on second wave women's lands. Please share your stories with us!

Sasha Archibald in her the Places Journal article On Wimmin's Lands in Oregon writes:

"Yet each (Wimmin's) community was born from the same conviction: Patriarchy had created a destructive, unjust society that needed to be junked. The aim was a mode of living that respected the earth, eradicated class oppression, rejected paradigms of dominance, and regarded female biology as noble, even sublime. From casual nudity to consensus decision-making, the land-dykes overturned assumptions they'd inherited. They built their own houses, invented practices of worship, modified language, and attempted wealth redistribution. They loved each other fiercely and insisted on a politics that began and ended with that love.

The aim was a mode of living that respected the earth, eradicated class oppression, and regarded female biology as noble, even sublime."

Tragically, much of the land - based legacy of the second wave is being erased or maligned. The erasure of women's stories and legacy in every era of patriarchy was the hardest part to stomach in my research as I researched this keynote.

In “The Disappearing L”, Bonnie J Morris states:

“While lesbian spaces and events are quietly vanishing due to a trifecta of political, financial, and technological pressures, feminist scholars who historicize the meaning of lesbian eras are increasingly ambivalent about whether women-only spaces were ever appropriate or progressive. Many of our best radical theorists have shifted their focus from women’s history to queer studies, and the result is both disappearance and devaluing of things uniquely lesbian. If anything, a retroactive stigma now applies to lesbian events that excluded men or men transitioning to embodied femininity.”

Another cause for the disappearance of women’s lands is our neglect. Women’s lands are disappearing as the elders who founded and have maintained them are passing away or are no longer able to stay. We can ill afford to lose the threads of connection only their legacy, and their land’s legacy can offer our future. Where women have put their feet on the ground and are crying out for support in continuing their legacy of land and community connection, I believe we must meet their call.

As I look back on the feminist movement in the United States, on the first and the second waves, I thank all the strong women, all my amazon lesbian sisters and black sisters, brown sisters, indigenous sisters, and white sisters, those who are with us and those who are no longer with us. For all you have gifted, for all we have yet to learn from you and from your relationships to your communities and lands, in sisterhood, I thank you. We thank you.

As we endeavor to reignite the women’s liberation movement each of us has a story to tell about how we arrived. What I am certain of as I reflect on the second wave that drew its power from real physical and land-based separatism is that I would not have arrived here politically without everything that the tremendous kaleidoscopic effort gifted me. I became a political radical when the radical lesbian theatre group Vox Feminista staged a multimedia production, Civil Lies, based on Derrick Jensen’s Endgame. I began a practice of separatism in women’s circles and am thriving communally and intellectually within them. I hold this conviction – Industrial Civilization must be dismantled and replaced by thousands of cultures arising organically from and fully

integrated with their local land base, and I ask this question: “Where are the women in this?” within the heart of every social, political, and personal move I make.

I became land based directly through connection with the community of life at foothills of the Rocky Mountains in my childhood. I listened to the North St Vrain River (I still do not know her true name) singing every day and the mountain, the name means twin guides landmarked home to our family and community. We lived in their shadow. Still in the mountains' shadow, Lois Hickman, my mother, invested her entire inheritance in the purchase of a small farm on which to practice land and relationship based Occupational therapy. Four generations of our family's women (five if we include the ashes of my grandmother returning to earth) inhabit this land. If my mother had not purchased this land, the multinational cement company with a plant just across the highway could and likely would have obtained the land and constructed a conveyor belt from the strip mine to their plant through our farm. For 30 years our community has evolved with the wild and domesticated beings of this place and children and parents and therapists that have connected to JenLo.

Lois Hickman wrote this on April 22, Earth Day, 2010:

“Fitting INSide the box. Therapy in four walls can help children fit in, to become “productive members of society.”

Is this really what children need?” Is this what the Earth needs? More adults who fit in, and who become cogs in the destructive production line of our increasingly globalized culture of destruction? Is that our children's true heritage?

Children are born with an expectation in their DNA to connect with a natural, wild, beautiful world much different than the dirty, industrialized, poisoned world with which we ethnocentric human beings have cursed our progeny. They are bombarded with all the maladjusted unnatural environments that have erected a wall between themselves and their birthright.

How many diagnoses would just fall away if these environments that surround them would fall away?

Children deserve to respect who they are, to think creatively for themselves, and to focus their sense of responsibility and wellbeing not only toward themselves and on other humans, but on the wellbeing of Earth. Education, and therapy, must connect with the real world, the world that we have progressively divorced ourselves from. Mother Earth demands of us that children grow up connected with the Earth and all its beings, and who have the backbone to stand up for Her culture, unafraid to be different, strong in standing outside the box.

Our role is to acknowledge that our responsibility is in

Fitting OUTside the box.

In our own lives and in the way that we honor the lives of our children

This is no time to be hesitant. Our survival depends on this. Our responsibility is to the seventh generation, the seven before us and the seven beyond us.”

What are women’s lands?

In my dream for the future women’s lands exist where women are free from the war that is patriarchy. I envision landed communities that are inhabited by women whose cultures and laws hold women and their rights as sacred.

The paths by which women and our communities will put their roots down are as diverse as we are. There is no equivalency between the path of matriarchal Haudenosaunee women and the women practicing land-based separatism, or the unique path of my family and our extended community, and yet,

*We have a beautiful
mother
Her hills
are buffaloes
Her buffaloes
hills.*

*We have a beautiful
mother
Her oceans
are wombs
Her wombs
oceans.*

*We have a beautiful
mother
Her teeth
the white stones
at the edge
of the water
the summer
grasses
her plentiful
hair.*

*We have a beautiful
mother
Her green lap
immense
Her brown embrace
eternal
Her blue body
everything we know.*

Alice Walker

How will we reignite the women's liberation movement?

For me that question is inseparable from this one:

Where have women put their feet on the ground and how can our communities, our children, our future, become grounded?

All of you are invited to visit Jenlo. Just write, our door is open.

Put your roots down

Put your feet on the ground

You can hear what she says if you listen

Put you roots down

Put your feet on the ground

You can hear what she says if you listen

Because the sound of the water

As it moves across the stone

Is the same sound as the blood in your body

As it moves across your bones

Are you listening?

Are you listening?

“Root Down” Molly Hartwell

Jennifer Murnan is a radical environmental social and feminist activist who inhabits a small family therapy farm on the occupied lands of the Cheyenne and Arapahoe peoples in the foothills of the Colorado Rockies. She is a mother and a grandmother with a passionate love of community and community building. Her most current engagements as an activist include co-hosting the Deep Green Resistance DGR podcast the Green Flame and serving as a core organizer for Communities that Protect and Resist (CPR).

What Does Victory Look Like?

By Kara Dansky

I would like to start by noting where we are at this moment in time - the U.S. in the fall of 2022. So much has happened in the past 50 or 60 years and this weekend has been a great opportunity to explore all of it. So where, exactly, is the women's liberation movement in the U.S. today?

We would be remiss not to acknowledge the 2016 presidential election, the 2017 Women's March, and the MeToo movement. Whatever one thinks of Hillary Clinton (and I completely understand that reasonable women can disagree in our assessments of her), no one can deny that we were on the cusp of electing the first woman president of the U.S. That was significant and, whatever anyone's analysis of why she lost, I have heard enough people say that "America just isn't ready for a female president" that I cannot believe that sexism did not play some part. For many of us, the 2017 Women's March was an exhilarating experience. What many of us did not know (though some of us certainly did) was that the Women's March was *already* at that time platforming a man who claims to be a woman who had publicly admitted to rape. The Women's March has gone even further downhill from there and is now a complete disgrace from a radical feminist standpoint. Many of us were very excited when MeToo exploded in the fall of 2017. Many of us thought that the U.S. was *finally* going to reckon with the epidemic of male violence against women. That didn't happen. Why?

In preparing for this weekend, I revisited an essay by Alix Kates Shulman and Honor Moore called *A Brief History of Women's Liberation Movements in America*. This was a bit interesting to me personally because although I didn't recognize her name at first sight, I knew that I had heard of Alix Kates Shulman. A little digging reminded me that several years ago I had read a book that she wrote called *Drinking the Rain*. It was a personal narrative of traveling back and forth between New York City and Maine, and about her growing estrangement from her husband.

In the essay on the history of the women's liberation movement, Shulman and Moore note the following:

In some cities, umbrella organizations like The Chicago Women's Liberation Union or the Boston area's Bread and Roses gathered autonomous groups into loose coalitions. Frequently groups divided or split apart—resulting in the proliferation of new ideas and new organizations and sometimes in anger or heartbreak. Yet despite their many differences, radical feminists shared the overarching goal of creating a mass women's liberation movement to transform power relations between the sexes and thus revolutionize society.

We need this transformation of power desperately. They say that by August 1970 “the movement had entered the mainstream.” It's time for U.S. radical feminism to re-enter the mainstream.

When I think about victory, my mind always goes to the political. I have said on more than one occasion that I think that women need to be given a shot at running everything for 100 years. And by everything, I mean everything. All women-only run governments, schools at all levels, businesses, media outlets, etc. When I say something like this, the reaction is typically complete shock. What an outlandish statement! My reasoning is quite simple, really. Under male rule, human civilization is literally destroying the world. I don't know any other way to say it than that.

When I say outlandish things like this, I typically get two reactions: (1) That will never happen, and (2) Do you honestly think that women will do a better job of running things than men have done? And my responses are as follows:

- To the argument, “that will never happen,” my response is “You're almost certainly right, but can we even just conceive of the possibility that it might?” And if not, why not? The world has been run almost exclusively by men for thousands of years. Why is it so inconceivable that it might be run by women for just 100? Can we just have 100 years to clean up all the messes that men have made?” When asked how many women she would like to see on the Supreme Court, the late

Justice Ruth Bader Ginsberg responded, without flinching, “nine.” Her response was met with incredulity. “We can’t have an entire Supreme Court consisting solely of women,” they said. But why not? For centuries we had an entire Supreme Court consisting solely of men and that was utterly unremarkable. The point here is not that we actually *should* have an entire Supreme Court, or, in my formulation, all of governance and civil society that is run by women (though that would be nice). The point is that most people have no trouble envisioning a world run by men but cannot conceive of a world run by women. Why is that? So I think that victory, at least in part, looks like a society where exclusively female leadership is totally imaginable.

- To the question “Do you honestly think that women will do a better job of running things than men have done,” my honest response is that I don’t know. Maybe we would do an absolute shit job of it. But I cannot imagine that we would do a shittier job than men have done. Male rulership is fundamentally about necrophilia and sadism. Whatever shit job women might do of running the world, surely we are capable of coming up with a better system than the one we’ve got now. Our male overlords are literally destroying the world. Whatever shit job women might do of running the world, men have proven that they’re just not up to the task.

The thing that really astonishes me about all of this is that it all seems perfectly evident to me. It’s not a feminist talking point that men have been running the world for thousands of years, and it’s not a feminist talking point to say that under male rulership, we are destroying the planet. These are quantifiable, measurable facts. Yet when feminists say things we like, we are dismissed as mean old cranky misandrists.

*Kara Dansky (President) is a public speaker, writer, and consultant who is committed to protecting the rights, privacy, and safety of women and girls on the basis of sex in law and throughout society. In November 2021, she published the ground-breaking work *The Abolition of Sex: How the ‘Transgender’ Agenda Harms Women and Girls*. She currently serves as president of the U.S. chapter of Women’s Declaration International, which seeks to promote the Declaration on Women’s Sex-Based Rights. She served on the board of the Women’s Liberation Front from 2016 to 2020. Kara is also an attorney with a J.D. from the University of Pennsylvania Law School and a B.A. from the Johns Hopkins University, and has an extensive background in criminal justice law and policy. She served as senior counsel at the ACLU’s Center for Justice between 2012 and 2014.*

What Does Victory Look Like?

By Marian Rutigliano

It looks like liberation.

It sounds like “No”.

NO – newborn girl’s options in life should be constrained, at birth, because of her sex

NO – 8-year-old boys, rapey teenage boys, or creepy 50-year-old Uncle Floyd should be sexually objectifying and assaulting girls as they grow up

NO – women should be risking abuse and being essentially enslaved by marriage/relationships with men

NO – woman should ever be pregnant or have a child against her will

NO – lesbians should ever have to endure pressure to engage with men

NO – to the reality of our sex being decimated by men who say they are women

NO – to male violence against women and girls

NO – to patriarchy

Millions and millions and millions of – NO

Mary Daly knew what patriarchy was when she wrote:

“Males only are the originators, planners, controllers, and legitimators of patriarchy. Patriarchy is the homeland of males: it is Father Land; and men are its agents.”

So we tried and succeeded – for a while – in creating ways to allow women to walk away from men. From patriarchy.

- checking accounts and credit cards, without having to get permission from fathers or husbands
- more jobs open to women
- equal pay – OK, so that didn’t go so well and we are still trying
- childcare at work
- domestic violence refuges
- rape crisis counseling
- and more

Some of this has been lost and needs to be recaptured.

In the meantime, pornography and prostitution have become more widespread.

And now we fight for the boundaries of sex-specific spaces.

But we continue to say NO

Victory looks like prioritizing women – All women, only women, all the time

So that ultimately, we don’t have to say No anymore because we will have created a world where we have abandoned patriarchy. Where it is irrelevant because we have liberated ourselves in body and mind.

So when you leave here and go back to your homes, start a group and fight for liberation.

Keep the torch lit.

Marian Rutigliano (Secretary) serves as Secretary on the Board of Directors of WDI USA and is a contributor to WDI International's Radical Feminist Perspectives webinars. As a biological scientist professionally, she reviews the validity of scientific studies on the human health risks of toxic chemicals. She has been out as a lesbian since 1969 and developed as a radical feminist in those early days of the Second Wave.

What Does Victory Look Like?

By Katherine Kinney

What will our victory look like? This is a difficult question to answer with any specificity. We are all steeped in patriarchy, in ways explicit and subtle, from before we are born. How do we describe our liberation when we have never experienced it, when we have never been free?

I, for one, want to believe we'll know it when we see it. I'm reminded of that one inspirational saying about progress: that when you're driving in a dark night, you can only see as far as the beam of your car's headlights...but you can make the whole journey that way.

I don't think we have to know exactly where 'the endpoint of feminism' is or the precise details of what it looks like in order to get there. We don't have to work backwards. Rather, we can start right where we are, right here, right now, and work from there. Like driving at night, we can make the whole journey one step and one decision at a time. Each time our path forks, we can consider our options. Which of these choices leads to victory for women and girls, at this moment? Further down the road the path forks again, and again we ask: which of these choices is in the best interests of women and girls?

I, as an individual woman, don't have to decide what our collective ultimate utopia is. I, as an individual woman, am not solely responsible for the worldwide elimination of rape or anything else. I can't do that. None of us can. It's too large a task for any person alone. Even though I can't do everything, there are a lot of things, though, that I can do - too many options to list.

We make decisions all the time, many of which come so automatically they may not even register to us as decisions. Every time we have some spare money or time or are caught in a tense social situation - all the time, there are decisions to be made, some of which will benefit women and some of which won't. All we can do is take each decision that presents itself to us, and decide to choose women, over and over and over again. Each decision that benefits women is a step in the right direction - towards the ultimate victory - and each step is a victory of its own.

At the risk of sounding like I'm contradicting myself, I also want to talk about thinking big. (For the record, I don't think thinking big and acting small are at odds). We have to do it. Women all over the world deserve it, and so do we. We as feminists owe it to them and to ourselves not to limit our thinking. We must be willing to have difficult thoughts and difficult conversations.

A key principle of radical feminism observes that our oppression as women is based in our sex. This is true in any number of ways - our smaller statures and lower muscle density makes us vulnerable to brute violence. Bearing the burden of pregnancy, childbearing, and breastfeeding means we often can't move freely through the world. That inequality goes even deeper, to the difference in the size of an ovum versus a sperm. This is the very first disparity, and in my opinion, it makes patriarchy virtually inevitable - maybe not right away, but eventually. Therefore, it is apparent to me that we must consider the possibility that we will not escape male supremacy, at least not permanently, for as long as there still are males.

Certainly, we may be able to change men, with time and with great investment and sacrifice. But I for one would never feel secure in that future. Men already tore down matriarchy and installed the rule of the fathers once. Who's to say they wouldn't do it again? Who's to say they would stay changed? Eventually, I guarantee it, patriarchy would rear its ugly head again. A world without men is not one I'll ever see. None of us will. But imagine if the women of the future could?

Katherine Kinney discovered radical feminism by chance the summer before college and has been passionate about it ever since. She's been involved with WDI as a volunteer since the USA chapter first opened. With a minor in sociology, she's particularly interested in applying a sociological lens to feminism and a feminist lens to sociology, as well as in making their theory more accessible. She's also interested in the intersection of feminism with atheism and environmentalism. Hobbies include languages, reading, native plant gardening, and bees.

What Does Victory Look Like?

By Lauren Levey

Basically, women need to separate from the control of men and the company of men. Here are some ways we might get there.

First, we could collectively end the nuclear family. It was designed to isolate women from each other, with each woman under the control of a physically stronger man. Women could instead live in community with each other, and child rearing could be shared among women only.

Then, we can change how we have sex and how we think about having sex. Lierre Keith has suggested that women stop orgasming to our own oppression. Sheila Jeffreys suggests that we eroticize equality in place of dominance and submission (dom-sub).

Next, we can normalize lesbianism. In my opinion, it is lesbianism that should be the default sexuality. (Because Penis in Vagina sex is inherently dom-sub, because it is literally the invasion and control of the female body by the male body.) We can normalize lesbianism.

Then: Women can separate from men and enforce that separation with whatever degree of force is reasonably necessary. Force by women against men must be used intelligently and strategically; because men have greater resources when it comes to force. We are used to thinking that we are destined to lose if we dare to use force against a man; but here's an example of success: The first battered women's shelter in Hawaii developed spontaneously around 1970 when women on the Big Island began to seek shelter from their abusive men with a small lesbian commune in the rain forest. The lesbians would take the women in and protect them with guns when the wife beater would show up to demand the return of *his* woman. The guns never needed to be used. It turns out those men didn't want to risk getting even a small bullet hole in their bodies.

Finally (and this may be my most controversial suggestion), women must take control of reproduction. By this I don't just mean control of abortion or non-abortion, although that is crucial.

But in addition, I mean consciously and collectively controlling the demographics of the next generations. Here are three examples:

1. It is within our capability right now to take most early abortions out of the hands of the medical and legal establishment. All you need for an early abortion is a pump and a friend.
2. We could collectively agree to mate selectively with only small, docile males. That would likely increase the chances for any male children who survived pregnancy also to be small and docile.
3. We could greatly reduce male births. That's also within our control right now, providing we have the will to organize to do it collectively.

Lauren Levey's (Vice President) feminist roots date from 1965, when students at Bennington College helped those who needed them get illegal but medically safe abortions. During the 1970s Lauren was on the Dartmouth faculty as the college struggled with coeducation; she chaired its Women's Caucus, which was instrumental in shaping co-educational policies. She also engaged in non-college related activism through the Women's Center in town. In 1983, Lauren helped found the Sirens Women's Motorcycle Club in New York City, which was soon leading the NYC Pride March each year. In the 1990s, Lauren was on the Board of a large LGB center in White Plains, New York, when gay men wanted to add not only T, but also SM and P. With other lesbians, she fought to exclude all the additional letters; they won on SM and P, but T was incorporated. Lauren and others left and formed a radical feminist group called Women First, which organized Consciousness Raising groups, among other things. During this time, she also operated a lesbian guest house in Provincetown, Massachusetts. Lauren is a lawyer and currently serves as Vice President of WDI USA.

What Does Victory Look Like?

By Austin DeVille

Victory looks like killing patriarchy in self-defense.

Unless we can end patriarchy entirely, we are going to have the problem that it's swiftly killing the planet. Small victories for women won't make a difference on that scale. We have to put a stop to the murder of every living thing by the demented, pornsick monster that patriarchy has become. We need to aim for its heart, its root, with everything we've got. We need to stop having compassion for the monster and hoping it will change in time for the next generation of women to get better treatment. We have to realize profoundly that there is no salvaging it, as attached as we may be to its rewards. The violation of boundaries is what it gets off on, and what it is programmed to do. Patriarchal men will continue to violate every boundary they can, and patriarchal women will keep enabling them to do it.

There's no point envisioning a perfect future in a perfect world. If we don't stop patriarchy, it will kill the entire species and the planet itself, and soon. I don't feel like there's time to pretend that there will be happy ending to patriarchy and that there's hope for a bright industrial radical feminist future. An industrial culture that depends on violating boundaries to exist is not one that will ever work for women. Feminists and environmentalists are fighting the same enemy. To talk about a feminist future, we need to talk about the fact that animals, trees, and rivers are being violated and systematically abused by the dominant class just as much as women are, and it terrorizes and hurts those beings just as much. A violation imperative has been solidified in the dominant class by pornography, and they fully intend to keep it up.

Lierre says that the heavy lifting has already been done, but her books are some of the most important books ever written. For women's sake, read the vegetarian myth, even if you're vegetarian, not because I give a shit whether you're a vegetarian or not, but because the analysis of industrial civilization in which she spirals the book to an end will ignite a fire in your little activist heart that will never go out. Lierre had the vision of women's liberation handed down to her and has been fighting with all her might for decades, and she knows she can't stop the

patriarchy from abusing everything with a boundary. I'm afraid we are going to have to take the monster by the balls, and victory will depend on how many women have the balls to do this. We need to make our demands clear, give warning of what we intend to do if our demands are not met, and follow through like the adults in the room with a tantruming child. It's not a matter of how far we are willing to go to stop the dominant class from killing us all dead; it's a matter of what it will take. We need to do whatever it takes.

I'm not advocating for using violence, I'm making a case for self-defense. I'm certainly not ruling out using violence on someone who is using violence on me and appears to be close to killing me. Men have successfully used violence to keep women subordinate for millennia, and if we aren't able to undo patriarchy's death grip, we're all going to die of it. We don't have time to wait for men as a class to become gentler people, or to start caring about women and children more than their erections I said it. We need to take their power back from them. They have gotten completely out of control; they can't handle it. The truth is they never could. We've let them run amuck for far too long, and now to emancipate ourselves and the planet from their reign of terror, we need to take drastic measures. They will not let go of their deadly power easily. They will not hand over their privilege, even for the sake of life itself.

We are up against something that is so much bigger and stronger, and it's mean, and it's using violence, and we all live in terror of it. Social change won't help on this scale of emergency. Kara Danksy writes brilliantly that gender identity ideology is a narcissistic abuser. All the signs are there. And I would extend that analogy to the whole system of patriarchy. We are all being attacked by a pornsick abuser so massive. It's male against female and the male is winning by threatening and physically harming us. The male could not usurp the incredible power it enjoys without this violence. This is why they are putting men in women's sports. To bring attention to and remind us of the obvious fact that men overpower us physically and there's nothing we can do about it. If they want to, they will, regardless of what consequences we try to explain will happen. Small victories don't matter when the enemy is that much bigger and stupider than you. Following every win, it smacks us back down with another insulting backlash, and it always will until it's stopped, or until, as Andrea Dworkin wrote, it fucks every living thing to death. We have to stop trying to avoid the monster's lashing tentacles, and strike back at it with something as powerful and

deliberate and resolute as the violence it uses on us. How bad are we going to let it get? It's only getting worse. Upcoming generations of women will have it increasingly worse than we do if it's not effectively stopped. Who are we fighting for? Our daughters' and granddaughters' generations? Most of us have probably accepted that victory won't happen in our lifetime. How many generations do we think we have left if we don't stop patriarchy somehow?

We don't have time to dream of a happy ending. Being brilliant thinkers and having the correct analysis won't stop patriarchy in time. We are almost done here. In self-defense, and in defense of all the defenseless, we need to take effective, conclusive action to kill patriarchy like it will otherwise kill us.

I think we should give peace one last chance with a Rosa Parks-style act of civil disobedience. This could take the form of a group of women barring the women's restroom from use by a high-profile man who calls himself a woman. Or it might take the form of a group of women rushing onto the set of a live national television program. Or disrupting a sporting event. That's my best idea for attracting urgent attention to the matter. But how long do we wait before we kill the fucker in self-defense?

Patriarchy is a violent, deadly rape that is happening to all of us, and we are experiencing the end of it. If we are to survive, we will use any means necessary to defend ourselves and the living planet from it, or everything we have worked for won't matter.

We need to start talking about what forms this self-defense may take, and establish among ourselves what is fair, what is reasonable, and what is necessary. We need to formulate a plan of action in which violence is the last resort, and which gives our oppressors every chance to concede to our terms:

What Does Victory Look Like? is such an important question. We can't get there if we don't have a clear idea of where we want to be. Here are some signs that we will see when we are getting there.

We will see far less dissociation, and far less addiction. When people are embodied and treated with respect and fairness, there is no need for escape. Instead of always looking at screens or over-medicating to cope, people will be comfortable with themselves, and will be connecting with other humans and non-humans, honing and offering their gifts, pursuing their passions and dreams, and using their powers of reasoning to make life better for everyone.

Public accommodations will always include women-only facilities, which men will routinely honor and respect.

Women's history and political advocacy movements will be required learning in standard education.

The medical profession will be returned to the capable hands of caring, wise women, and all women will own complete control of all decisions with respect to our own bodies.

Half of all elected officials and judges will be women. Victims of violence will be rare, and will be heard, and violators will be effectively punished until the war against women is ended. (I think castration of rapists and pedophiles would expedite this tremendously, but that's another conversation).

The male imperative toward violating boundaries will generally have no luster as the eroticization of dominance and subordination is abandoned in favor of true love and mutual respect between relations.

Women and Children will be systematically protected from predation, physical harm, and all other avoidable danger and trauma. Like they are in wolf packs and elephant herds.

Austin DeVille (Volunteer Coordinator) encountered a radical feminist analysis while seeking to understand her husband's gender dysphoria. Attempting to validate and defend his delusion, she instead found out about the rampant harms of male violence globally, sex stereotyping, and body dissociation. She now advocates for women's sex-based rights and shares her story to help support other women.