



A publication of the Foothills Peace Center

Feminism: an introduction

by Sally Norman

One of the most potent features of patriarchy is its invisibility — its ability to masquerade as the “natural” form of social organization. Becoming aware of the pervasive effects of male dominance — not only within distant power structures but also within our own communities, relationships and souls — is a constant and revolutionary task. It requires us to question every institution in our society; to risk horror and anger; and above all, to lead the examined life.

We are all active citizens of a patriarchal, sexist world; therefore we must be both the changers and the changed. This issue of *Timepeace* is a forum of Fort Collins people exploring the perspective of feminism. It is offered in the belief that peace is not only the absence of war. It also requires the dismantling of those aspects of society — of our daily lives — which do violence to our persons and spirits.

The Uneasy Alliance Between Feminism & the Peace Movement: One Woman's Perspective

by Liza Daly

“Feminism is the freeing of all people from the restrictions of their culturally defined sex roles, and the focus of balancing out the centuries of negation of female energy by the positive assertion and development of it in the world today.”

Mander and Rush (1974)

My experience with peace activism closely parallels my experience with feminism. Both movements inspired a deep and lasting passion, both gave me intellectual frameworks with which to decode the craziness of life in the late twentieth century, both rescued me from sleepwalking through the 1980's, and

both helped me to begin the tremendous project of learning to define and express my own unique moral identity. However, in spite of the fact that I see peace activism and feminism as essentially the same — challenges to the premises and privileges of power — they are not always the harmonious compatriots that I wish them to be.

When I think of my first year in the peace movement, I am reminded of the poetry of W.B. Yeats — “All changed, changed utterly: A terrible beauty is born.” The premises I had built my life around, primarily my belief in the future, in eternity, in the fact that I too would one day be an ancestor, were suddenly called into question. The more I learned about the extravagant insanity of the arms race, the more desperate I felt. The realization that nuclear war is an actual possibility can be a powerful stimulus, but a dangerous one too. I became terribly impatient with people who disagreed that our very existence was in peril, or believed nothing could be done to change that. I divided the world into two ideological camps: those who were brainwashed by Pentagon propaganda and those who were not. I hoarded facts on the number of warheads in the U.S. arsenal, the billions of dollars spent daily on global militarism, the first strike

(see Uneasy Alliance on page 2)

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Uneasy Alliance (from page 1)

capability of Trident submarines, and the percentage of children who are afraid they will never grow up. I produced these facts whenever the occasion demanded, which was quite often, especially during phone calls with my father.

Gradually, the explosive emotions of peace fanaticism exhausted me, and I pulled back long enough to work through my ideas about political activism. The writings of Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr. helped me to see that fighting for peace is more than an exercise in political lobbying; it involves learning to articulate my convictions without diminishing the integrity of those I sought to convince. In retrospect, I think I deliberately simplified my critical analysis of the nature of militarism as a defense against the temptation to fall back asleep. Immersing myself in the rhetoric of the movement was like hooking myself to an I.V. of caffeine — it kept me wide-eyed and trembling.

In comparison, my feminist awakening was almost unintentional. As I studied the history of U.S. imperialism, I began to evaluate the complex psychology of oppression. How does oppression gradually assume the invisibility of normalcy? How are human beings made to feel powerless and complacent in the face of oppression, sometimes to the point of defending it? I remember reading about the Nicaraguan feminists' struggle against institutionalized machismo and recognizing some uncomfortable similarities between the reality of their lives and mine. Around the same time, some of the other women in the Poudre Nuclear Freeze Campaign began to articulate their dissatisfaction with the lack of women leadership in our organization by pointing out that while the men were organizing the citywide referendum for a nuclear freeze, the women were organizing bake sales.

I began my inquiry into the system of male dominance in our cultural framework cautiously. I read the eloquent writings of Adrienne Rich, Mary Daly, Alice Walker and Andrea Dworkin, and their words brought a startling clarity and sense of grief to my life. "No matter whether my probings made me happier or sadder, I kept on probing to know," wrote Zora Neale Hurston. Me too.

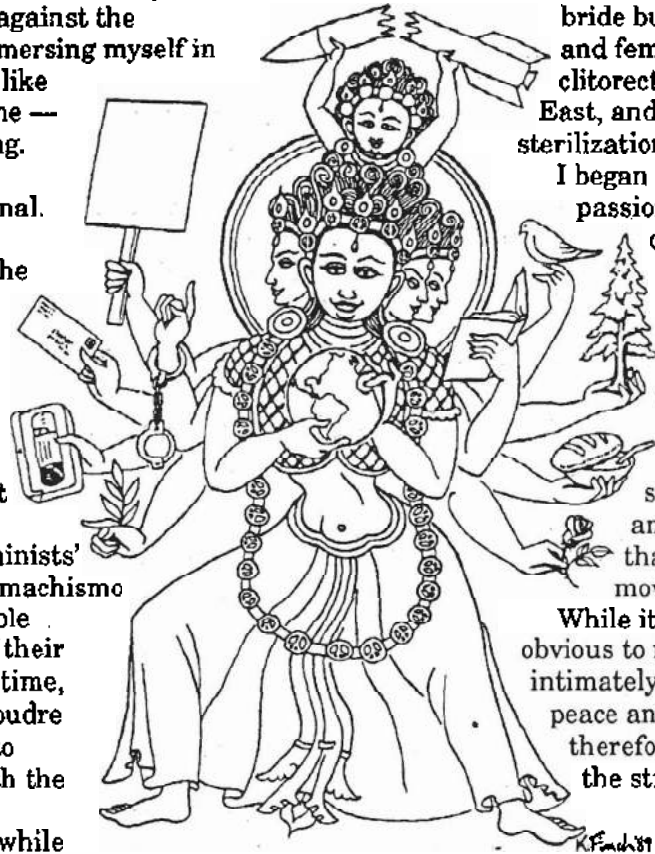
I enrolled in women's studies classes in literature, philosophy, international development and psychology at Colorado State University. I went to a Take Back the Night march. My fear of nuclear war was replaced by the more immediate fear that I would be the one in three victimized by rape. I noticed that, with the exception of

Dr. Helen Caldicott, virtually every speaker on peace and justice issues was a white man. I learned that democracy in this country didn't even begin for white women until 1920, the year the 19th amendment was ratified. I redefined rape and understood that I had already been the one in three. I learned that as a group, male high school dropouts earn more than female college graduates. I stopped referring to my friends and myself as "girls" and used the awkward sounding "women" instead. I volunteered at a battered women's shelter and got the shock of my life. I learned that more than fifty percent of women have been or will be battered by their husbands or partners at least once in their lives. I learned what "misogyny" meant. I discovered that the religious deities of the world have not always been conceptualized as male. I learned about bride burning in India, foot-binding and female infanticide in China, clitorrectomy in Africa and the Middle East, and anorexia and forced sterilization in the United States.

I began hoarding facts again. The passionate zeal that had previously distinguished my anti-militarism resurfaced, and once again I had to learn to temper my impatience and resist oversimplifying the terrible complexity of sexism. I don't think it will come as a surprise to anyone when I say I didn't always succeed, and nowhere was it harder than within the peace movement.

While it seemed excruciatingly obvious to me that feminism is intimately related to any movement for peace and justice, and should therefore be taken as seriously as the struggle for self-determination in Latin America, it was not that obvious to everyone. I

suppose Abbie Hoffman's declaration that "the only alliance I would make with the Women's Liberation movement is in bed" should have tipped me off. But that was then, this is now. The electric hostility of Hoffman's words does not characterize the prevalent male attitude towards feminism in today's peace movement, but neither does a jubilant acceptance of their essential relationship. I would describe it as a benevolent and tense tolerance, punctuated by the odious assumption that sexism is generally the responsibility of women. This was made especially clear to me one night after a sexist remark was made at a meeting, and one of my male friends "jokingly" responded with "Don't say that in front of Liza, she's a feminist," implying that the comment would have been tolerated had I not been present, and that sexism is only offensive to "feminists."



The conflicts I experienced between my peace activism and feminism were confusing and frustrating. In some respects, I valued this creative tension because, as Martin Luther King argued, it has the potential to free the mind "from the bondage of myths and half-truths to the unfettered realm of creative analysis and objective appraisal." However, I usually felt that my comrades in the peace movement considered the myths and half-truths of the patriarchal order to be uninteresting, unrelated to peace work, or maybe too close to home (we're talking not only about what country the coffee comes from, but who's serving it.) Whatever the reasons, I felt that, as a community, we were not moving beyond some of the most basic tenets of feminist thought. It is analogous to trying to achieve disarmament without ever having answered the question "what about the Russians?" I grew bored and defensive, and as a result of other pressing realities in my life, namely my daughter's impatience to be born, I took an extended leave of absence.

My feminist sensibilities are in perpetual evolution. I am guided in part by Adrienne Rich's observation that "there is no 'the truth,' 'a truth'— truth is not one thing, or even a system. It is an increasing complexity." Feminism is about challenging the thick pattern of assumptions that obscure the search for truth and dictate what is "normal," "natural," and "inevitable" about the ways in which gender polarities have organized our society and imprisoned our psyches. I am also strongly influenced by the Eco-feminist axiom that everything is connected. Sexism, homophobia, racism, militarism, the wicked destruction of the natural world, ageism (practiced against the old and young), classism — all of these pernicious emblems of society can best be understood in relation to one another. For example, how does the belief that men are naturally aggressive or violent hinder draft resistance? And if men are naturally aggressive, does that mean that women are naturally passive, making rape inevitable? Why are the majority of U.S. National Guard units in Central America recruited from states with large Hispanic populations? How does homophobia interfere with nonsexist childrearing? Why do incidences of military aggression coincide with an increase in occupancy at battered women's shelters?

By taking on the challenge of demystifying the relationships these questions invoke, we can begin to deconstruct the social and political hierarchies of our world. Hierarchies are artificial justifications for absurd imbalances of power; they keep people, groups of people, and nations of people in "their" place. And the enforcement of these boundaries could not possibly be maintained without the consort of domination: Violence.

Feminism is only a threat when men (and women) covet the privileges of power intrinsic to patriarchy, just as peace threatens the privileges of power intrinsic to militarism. I know in my heart that the unique constellation of human beings that make up the peace

movement are doing the best they can in the contexts they have found themselves. But as long as feminism remains estranged from the peace movement, our work will always be unfinished. TP

Liza Daly is one of the founders of the Foothills Peace Center and former member of the Fort Collins Commission on the Status of Women and member of the political theater group Ladies Against Women. She is currently a masters candidate in literature at Colorado State University and is raising a daughter with John DeLand.

The Cycles of Life

by Leslie Botha

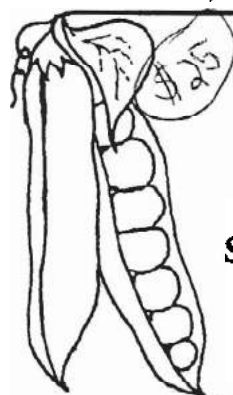
Once again, stones are being thrown over the issue of reproductive choice...Once again, women, men and children are being victimized by a country that is caught up in controlling people at all costs, rather than being concerned for the life and liberties of its citizens.

Anti-abortion activists call the procedure barbaric—and they are right. Current abortion techniques are violent, invasive and can leave women mentally, emotionally and physically scarred. As for the fetus on its short life continuum, it is virtually being sucked out of the womb and destroyed - yet it all fits into the norm of a destructive society. To isolate one instance of abuse is erroneous when we live in such an abusive world.

Pro-choice activists say that the right to an abortion is the very foundation of women's freedom. They will fight for that choice until the Supreme Court overturns its decision...and they are right. If a woman is not in control of her reproductive status - she will never be in control of any other area of her life. She will always remain dependent upon and depended on.

Yet, is not all this controversy over abortion being fabricated to hide an even greater issue? Isn't it being used as a political and social debate intended to pit women against each other in a era when women are making incredible gains in their social and economic status? The abortion issue is a successful tactic in diminishing the strength and fortitude of womankind.

(see Cycles on page 4)



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Cycles (from page 3)

The deeper issue is reproductive (not sex) education and the availability of that information. Women of all ages need to know about how their bodies interact physiologically and mentally with their hormone cycles and the affect that that interaction has on their lives and the lives of the other women, men and children around them. And that integral piece of education is the true foundation for women's emancipation.

Think back on the type of reproductive education we had as young women. Our initiation rite consisted of a Walt Disney film shown in junior high...and narrated by Jimminy Crickett! How seriously were we supposed to take ourselves with cartoon characters depicting what her-storically has been the essence of womankind; that cyclical power that instilled in women self-esteem, respect and trust in themselves and each other.

"Although generally unsung, indeed unmentioned, female monthly menstruation was the evolutionary adaptation that preserved the human species from extinction and ensured its survival and success."¹

"... that woman first awakened in humankind the ability to recognize abstracts. It was woman that taught men the principles of number, calendar organization and counting: 'Every woman had a body calendar - her own monthly menstrual cycle. She would be the first to notice the relationship between her own body cycle and the lunar cycle.'"²

As noted by recent historian, Desmond Wilson: "Ownership of the past is, in a sense, control of the future. And his-story upholds this statement. The past has been recorded to give men a foundation on which to stand, a fortress of certainty... History has provided the forum wherein men have safeguarded their political and religious power."³

But in this process, her-story has been virtually denied - or if allowed

to exist - deemed trivial in nature. And so women raised and educated in this male propaganda system, have now - and for hundreds of years - trivialized their own experiences in order to be accepted.

Her-story defined matriarchies through the value of blood power (menstruation) and its life-giving relation to the cycles of life. Patriarchies stole and distorted the value of blood by defining their power through the ability to induce blood (invasive medicine and war machines).

As the passage of time perpetuates what is, it is the balance of the universe that allows the pendulum to swing the other way. And as women's oppression reaches

its limits, her-story is being resurrected, researched, documented and taught to all ages of women in hopes of reviving the female experience.

As the greatest story ever told comes to light, the value of women's roles in pre — Christian communities was held in high esteem because of the undeniable relationship between the menstrual cycle and the lunar cycle. "All the prehistoric evidence confirms women's special status as women within the tribe." Matriarchies, therefore, were not communities controlled by women, but in fact, were governed by nature's cycles of

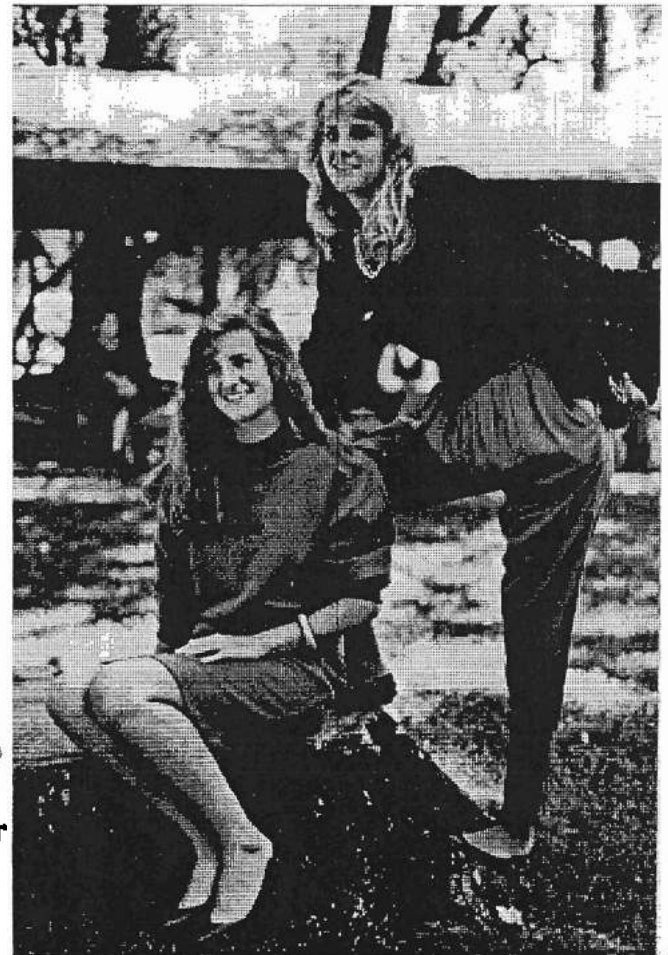
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which women's menstrual cycles were interrelated.

This sounds incredibly far removed from the phenomenon we have come to know as "the curse". What better way to victimize women by robbing the importance of their being. Most women live totally unaware of the influence of their hormone cycle on their lives. And because of this lack of awareness, many lives are in conflict with our hormones — leading to mental, emotional and physical diseases. We are constantly trying to survive in a society devoid of the importance of the rhythm of cycles. Research indicates that all life forms on this planet are influenced by a 28 day life cycle...and yet, it is women and men who are living without this awareness, subsequently killing ourselves and taking the planet with us.

Contemporary history has purposely distorted the value the hormone cycle has on 51% of the population directly, and the other indirectly. Reading between the lines of medical textbooks, it soon becomes apparent that gynecology has little to do with women's well-being and everything to do with the manipulation, intervention and ultimate control over the hormone cycle, depleting women's self-worth and foundation for being. We are taught that our hormones are irrelevant to our behavior, and that pin-pointing ovulation is beyond our means. Women are only fertile 12 hours out of each cycle, yet we have been duped into using pills, chemicals, unidentified flying objects in our uterus and the latest AMA approved gimmicks — all in the name of reproductive control. The manipulation of the hormone cycle is the biggest reason why women have stopped trusting themselves.

"For woman, with her inexplicable moon rhythms

and power of creating new life, was the most sacred mystery of the tribe. So miraculous, so powerful, she had to be more than man — more than human. As primitive man began to think symbolically, there was only one explanation. Woman was the primary symbol, the greatest entity of all — a goddess, no less."⁴

So even though the forefront of our consciousness is blasted by the abortion issue, the roots of women's freedom go a lot deeper. We will always remain victimized by men and other women if we do not tap into this knowledge and understanding. The beautiful ebb and flow of our hormone cycles' interaction with the other natural cycles of the universe is a lost paradise of knowledge and understanding. Knowing when we are fertile is an easily comprehensible by-product of that knowledge and should be used in trust by partners — not something with which to dominate one over the other.

The pro-choice activists must fight to protect our constitutional rights. The pro-life activists, although I disagree with their means, are also protecting our civil rights. I put it to the peacemakers amongst us to realize that there is ground common to both sides and that is to demand the availability of non-sexist reproductive education. It is up to the peacemakers to initiate change at the grass-roots level to include this education for girls and boys, women and men in the health and educational fields. When women have access to positive information about their bodies, their selves, then and only then will we stop being victims, terrorized by legislation and morals that threaten our human dignity.


1. The Women's History of the World, Rosalind Miles, Harper & Row, p. 9.
2. Miles, p. 10.
3. An End to Silence, Desmond Wilson, Mecier Press, p. 8.
4. Miles, p. 17.

Leslie Botha is publisher of Changing Woman magazine, a woman's health educator and mother of three who lives and works in Fort Collins.

"The world taught woman nothing skillful and then said her work was valueless. It permitted her no opinions and said she did not know how to think. It forbade her to speak in public, and said the sex had no orators. It denied her schools, and said the sex had no genius. It robbed her of every vestige of responsibility and then called her weak. It taught her that every pleasure must come as a favor from men, and when to gain it she decked herself in paint and fine feathers, as she had been taught to do, it called her vain."

Carrie Chapman Catt, 1902

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Man?

by Barbara Snider
adapted by Beth Knees

A legal document asserts, "All men are created equal..." A science textbook includes a chapter titled, "Man in His Laboratory." A newspaper headline reads, "Man Continues to Pollute His Environment." In each case the author expects that the reader will understand that females are recognized and included in the adjoining text. A reader needs only to look to The American Heritage Dictionary for clarification of the word *man* to realize that a man is indeed "any human being, regardless of sex or age." However, readers might wonder if a published dictionary definition is the only indication of the meaning of a word. Thinking persons might wonder if people translate the words *man* and *he* in a sexually — inclusive manner and in turn conjure up mental images of females as well as males when they hear or see those words. Concerned authors might want to know if they are effectively communicating the message they intend to when they use *man* or *he* to refer to people of both sexes.

In reality, females are being ignored in such discourse and, in turn, may be discouraged from seeking full involvement, enjoyment, and responsibility in the communities in which they live. When masculine pronouns are used in an effort to refer to people of both genders, the effects are far more negative than most people might suspect. Consider a study conducted at Drake University. A group of 300 university students was asked to choose a variety of magazine pictures to help illustrate a sociology textbook that was being prepared for publication. Half of the students were assigned the chapter titles "Industrial Man," "Social Man," "Political Man," and "Economic Man." The

remainder of the students were asked to find pictures to illustrate chapters titled, "Industrial Life," "Society," "Political Life," and "Economic Life." Researchers found that students who were assigned chapter titles that included the word *man* filtered out recognition of females in these areas of social life. They contributed photographs with thirty to forty percent less pictures of females than the group of students who worked with chapter titles that did not include the word *man*. In turn, the researchers concluded, "This is rather convincing evidence that when you use the word *man* generically, people do tend to think male, and tend not to think female" (Miller and Swift, 21).

Consider also a 1984 study conducted at Dennison University. Grade school students were asked to write stories based on the sentences, "If a kid likes candy, _____ might eat too much" and "When a kid goes to school _____ often feels excited on the first day." The young students, divided into three groups, were provided with the words *he*, *he/she*, or *they* filling the blank space. Elementary students who read the sentences with the pronoun *he* in the blank went on to write only twelve percent of their stories about females. The young authors who were supplied with a sentence that read *he/she* wrote eighteen percent of their stories about females. When the word *they* was included in the sentence, forty-two percent of the stories written by the students were about females. Again, researchers concluded that the word *he*, even when used in an otherwise sexually generic sentence, brings thoughts and pictures of males to children's minds (Shibley Hyde, 705). In other words, the working psychological definition of the word *he* is not the sexually generic one included in the dictionary.

In spite of the well-documented evidence that either *he* nor *man* can be used in a truly sexually generic or inclusive manner, many misinformed authors and speakers still attempt to use them in such a way. It is estimated that a highly educated American is exposed to the falsely generic *he* over one million times in a lifetime (Henley, 5). The over-exposure to words that refer to females means that females are not truly talked about or thought of nearly as often as males. Some psychologists contend that, in turn, people old and young, female and male, are often left with the subconscious conviction that

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normal and typical characters and actors in our world are males. Although it may be an unpleasant and difficult admission for some to reach, that fact means that females are most often subconsciously recognized only as deviations from the normalcy of males. Their existence and full involvement in life is often seen as an exception to the usual rule of male existence and involvement in our world (Shibley Hyde, 705).

Whether intentional or not, many authors and publishers also express the belief that female characters are less typical by under-representing them in literature. The fact that females are often left out of published educational materials is evident even in the first books that we share with our youngest readers. In children's picture books a mere twenty to thirty percent of all characters (including people, animals, fantasy creatures, and personification of the inanimate — boats, trains, automobiles, etc.) are females (Fisher, 121). When *he* appears in print in children's books, it is intended to refer to both genders only 3% of the time. Appearance of male pronouns outnumbers that of female pronouns by a ratio of four to one in children's books. In addition, children's authors write about only one woman for every seven men that they mention in their work (Henley, 5).

It is not only the imbalance of female to male characters in children's literature that is of concern. It is also the personality characteristics possessed and roles played by the female characters that do appear in the pages of children's books. Females are often portrayed as inactive, incapable, or unthinking characters. Females are most often shown in relation to males rather than as independent beings. For example, Richard Scarry's Best Word Book Ever has been described by one concerned researcher as "truly scarifying". Not only does the book include the usual over-representation of male characters at the expense of female characters, but the males really do get to do everything. Toys are defined by picturing thirteen male animals playing with a tricycle, blocks, castle, scooter, rocking horse, toy soldiers, and electric trains. The only two female animals that appear in this section of the book are playing with a tea set and a doll. Scarry's book goes on to show children about "Things We Do." On this page he shows young readers that male characters dig, build, break, push, pull and do fifteen other activities. The only two females included in this page sit and watch (Fisher, 121).

Once it is recognized that the power of females is often overlooked in the spoken and written language of our world, the next logical question is, what long term effect does this sexual bias have on the female citizenry of our country? One can only speculate. Certainly all the well-documented sex-biased pressures and problems that females struggle with as adults, such as the fear of success, the lack of assertive expression, the burden of most domestic duties even in two-income families, and

the lack of significant economic reward in jobs traditionally held by females, cannot be blamed entirely on the sexism so often expressed in our language. Still, it cannot be denied that children learn sex-typed behaviors at least in part from the models they listen to and read about. Dr. Edward Hall, in The Silent Language, reports that children are, without consciously thinking about it, assimilating the values and attitudes of the adults with whom they spend their time. Too many girls restrict the expression of who they are or who they can be to fit into the sexual roles unwittingly prescribed for them by society. It is at that point that our male-dominated language, literature, and social behavior reflects and perpetuates our sexually biased world.

However, we do not need to be powerless pawns of our sexually-biased society. An important place to begin is with an informed awareness of our own language habits and patterns. It is time that we recognize that *man* and *he* do not embrace *woman* and *she* and replace

(see *Man?* on page 8)

"Feminism as a movement to end sexist oppression directs our attention to systems of domination and the inter-relatedness of sex, race, and class oppression."

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Man? (continued from page 7)

these words with ones that do not exclude females. In this way we will make females and males more equally visible in spoken language. We can also enlighten friends, producers of television and radio programs, and authors and editors of the printed word about the damages of using sexually-exclusive language. Parents can also encourage school districts to purchase textbooks that are not blatantly sexually biased. They can make it clear to school administrators that they want books in their children's classrooms that are not only tools to help students learn content, but also are tools that help children learn that women and men share the responsibility and credit for the events that happen in our world.

Perhaps the distinguished authors of our country need to reexamine their long-standing attempt to use sexually-specific nouns and pronouns in a gender-inclusive manner. To insure that the remarks they intend to make about all people refer to females as well as males, they may need to assert that "All people are created equal..." Publishers of science textbooks may need to include a chapter titled "People in the Laboratory." Newspaper reporters may need to call attention to the fact that "Humans Continue to Pollute the Environment." Responsible authors and active readers will not look just to a dictionary definition to understand the words they share. They will look beyond the simple printed word to the more complex working definition of our sometimes elusive language.

"It's exhilarating to be alive in a time of awakening consciousness; it can also be confusing, disorienting, and painful. This awakening of dead or sleeping consciousness has already affected the lives of millions of women, even those who don't know it yet ... The sleepwalkers are coming awake, and for the first time this awakening has a collective reality; it is no longer such a lonely thing to open ones eyes."

Adrienne Rich

Barbara Snider is currently student teaching in kindergarten; she is enrolled in the University of Northern Colorado's M.A. program in elementary education.

Beth Knees is currently taking time off from the University of Northern Colorado's M.A. Program in elementary education to raise her daughter, born on June 12 of this year.

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The Far Side



"Well, you can just rebuild the fort later, Harold. ... Phyllis and Shirley are coming over and I'll need the cushions."

Interdependent Crises and Third World Women

(a book review)

by Julie Raulli

In their book Development, Crises, and Alternative Visions, the Development Alternatives for Women with a New Era (DAWN) collective describes the world's interrelated crises of development, debt, energy, population, militarization, and the environment.¹ The collective defines a "crisis" as the point at which a system either undergoes radical structural changes or suffers a severe breakdown in operations. "Systemic crises" are the result of numerous interrelated systems which have reached crisis proportions. How does the collective understand this interdependency of systems?

The DAWN group begins their systemic analysis from the perspective of the most oppressed—that is, poor women—most of whom live and work in the Third World. The collective analyzes how development strategies have

actually worked to alleviate the suffering of the world's poor. Poor women are linked to, and affected by, several aspects of many global systems, from development projects in their immediate communities to international economic policies. How do these global crises look from a poor woman's perspective?

In the past several years, people in industrial nations have come to recognize that our global environment has suffered from decades of degradation. Poor women in southern countries, however, have directly felt the effects of that degradation for centuries. Since they are the fuel gatherers in their communities, they are naturally the first to recognize that forests from which they gather their fuel, fodder, and food are disappearing at rapid rates. Poor women are also the first to realize the onset of desertification because as the primary water suppliers for their families, their daily search for water becomes increasingly more difficult. Thus, when an environmental protection or governmental agency wishes to change the deforestation trend, they would be wise to seek the counsel of poor women whose livelihood depends upon the resources acquired

from forests. Poor women have a wealth of knowledge which results from the daily management of scarce resources.

Too often, however, it is the case that these poor women are not consulted regarding development projects. Thus, national and international policies which are intended to satisfy basic human needs oftentimes work against poor women and exacerbate problems in other areas. For example, when the international community sought to increase agricultural yields so that there would be an increase in basic grains in the world's poorest countries, the "green revolution" had the reverse effect; new technologies exacerbated food shortages and inequalities. This was because the "green revolution" emphasized expensive inputs and foreign grain varieties, rather than local inputs and indigenous crops. Women, who make up a majority of farmers on the African continent and who grow a significant amount of food consumed locally in southern countries, were bypassed or ignored in the implementation of the new policy.

When basic needs go unmet, the response is an increase in population growth. Women are unsure how

(see *Third World Women*
on page 10)



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"Most women do have a much greater sense of the emotional components of all human activity than most men. This is, in part, a result of their training as subordinates; for everyone in a subordinate position must learn to be attuned to the vicissitudes of mood, pleasure and displeasure of the dominant group. Black writers have made this point very clear."

psychoanalyst
Jean Baker Miller

Third World Women (from page 9)

many of their children will survive infancy, and children are the only form of social security that poor parents have in Southern countries. With little control over the use of their environment and with little income, children are the only resources over which poor women can maintain control. Children, especially daughters, are of tremendous value to poor women who, without them, would have to search for fuel and water alone.

The DAWN collective claims that the problems listed above result from a lack of integrated policies regarding agriculture, forestry, and water management:

The crises of food, water, and rural energy are linked together through environmental and demographic processes, themselves the result of shortsighted policies and existing power structure.

From DAWN's feminist perspective, the exclusion and invisibility of poor women throughout development planning helps to perpetuate these global crises, especially regarding population and the environment. Poor women have a wealth of knowledge about their environments which could be used to promote sustainable development practices. While the exclusion of women from decision making processes is an extension of male dominated global structures which cause extreme suffering, the male militarization of the planet takes the exportation of violence to its extreme. Exporting means of violence and destruction has a great deal to do with the gap between rich and poor nations as well as the economic gap between rich and poor within southern countries. The collective notes that:

Two-thirds of the arms trade is now conducted between developed and developing countries, and virtually every developing country has had armed forces trained by major powers.

There is, of course, a direct link between the extraction of natural resources from poor countries for weapons production and environmental degradation. But the arms industry is big business for many industrial nations. They sell back the natural resources obtained from poor countries in the form of guns, tanks, and bombers — none of which can be eaten by the starving millions found in these southern countries. Moreover, the money that developing nations spend procuring weapons — many of which are intended to quell domestic unrest — is diverted away from goods and services which could have gone to the nation's poorest, namely, women. A vicious cycle of poverty that keeps poor people hungry and in need of meaningful employment feeds the social unrest which is then used to justify excessive military expenditures by Third World regimes. But here, too, as with the environment, poor women are most drastically affected by a lack of attention and sensitivity to their real needs and security.

The collective points out the "inherent irrationality

in a situation where nuclear missiles can go from Western Europe to Moscow in 6 minutes while the average rural woman in Africa must walk several hours a day to fetch water for her family."

The DAWN group argues that achieving world peace cannot be separated from authentic development because the conditions that perpetuate violence and war are identical to those which have resulted from inappropriate development strategies. Women in industrialized and developing nations have not, however, stood idly by and witnessed the destruction of their planet. From the women's peace encampment at Greenham Common in Great Britain to the Chipko Movement in India, women have resisted these "anti-development" strategies with their very lives. Yet when women organize to change these destructive structures, their efforts are often met with ideological resistance which attempts to keep them in their "proper" place.

The DAWN collective does not, however, present its understanding of our global crises without hope. They maintain that, although the conditions of poor women's lives have not improved since the UN Decade for Women, what the decade did give all women was "respect for the many voices of our movement, for their cross-fertilizing potential, for the power of dialogue, for the humility to learn from the experiences of others..." The DAWN women hope their book will initiate more consciousness-raising among women and men in all cultures and countries so that the alternative vision for a sustainable environment which arises from "women's perspectives" will inevitably come into being.

1. All quotations and references are taken from Gita Sen and Caren Grown, Development, Crises, and Alternative Visions: Third World Women's Perspectives, (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1987)

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Stop the Violence

by Wendy Poppen-Chambers

One woman abducted and raped and another robbed (of her underwear) and later raped and strangled to death, right here in our Choice City. According to statistics only one-tenth of all rapes make it to the news. Why is this violent crime happening? As a woman I feel hurt, scared and cheated. Just because I was born a woman I must live in fear knowing that 6 out of every 10 women will be raped in their lifetime. Why do some men feel they have the right to violate us? I feel the problem begins when a woman is considered a man's property. The father gives his daughter away to her new husband, creating man and wife (a wife needing a husband and a man needing no one). Little girls being raised to be pretty and cute. But when the time comes to work outside the home, find themselves with no marketable skills and end up working at a topless donut shop. Or perhaps she does get educated only to find that her wage is 73 cents to a man's dollar.

The use and abuse of women in our society has become so commonplace that the general public sees it as normal. For one minute pretend that you are from another land and come to visit Earth. You first look at a calendar to see a nude woman propped up on the head of a Buick and a sign that says "for sale". Watching TV you notice over and over again how the helpless barefoot woman always needs to be rescued by the man in shining armor. Then while following a truck down the street you notice the chrome nude women on the mud flaps. A stop is needed only to find a half nude woman

serving coffee and donuts. Overheard is a man calling the woman "babe" and then "girl" — a grown woman being put into the category of a child, a helpless child. Would that same grown man call his peer "boy"?

After this experience what would your perception of a woman be? Probably that they are objects used to sell things and to look at and to use (abuse). Clearly they don't seem to be equal to men and seem to be more valuable nude.

A few will say "they chose that lifestyle"— but did they really? When you've been raised to be cute and pretty or realize that your skills can't pay the rent, what are your options?

I blame society for this mess. I blame men for taking advantage of the situation and women for accepting it. But blaming will help no one. What we need is positive and active change, starting with the children. We as adults should be raising our children to value and respect each other's differences. But children learn by watching, so it must begin with us — treating each other with respect and not tolerating sexist and racist comments.

It's not funny anymore.
(but was it ever?)

Wendy Poppen-Chambers is a concerned feminist, new mother, and owner of The Bakery on Laurel Street in Fort Collins.


Friday Night Conversations in November 7PM at the Foothills Peace Center, 222 Pine Street, Ft. Collins, Colorado

November 3 - Inner Peace: option or necessity?
Doug Nettles (MA) speaking on world peace and its ties to individual responsibility.

November 10 - Recent trends in Economic Conversion. Richard Williams (PhD) founder and past president of the Economic Analysis Corporation

November 17 - Larimer County Habitat for Humanity. Tom Creede & Chuck Cox who work for Habitat for Humanity - an organization building homes for people in need.

November 24 - No meeting - Thanksgiving break



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"As incorporated into the capitalist democracies, feminism (in the 1980s) came to mean a narrowly defined form of social change, most notably, the recruitment of women into some of the areas of power and privilege from which they had been previously excluded ... The structures oppressing women, especially the nuclear family, were not dismantled. The changes that took place appeared to accommodate and co-opt feminist demands in the familiar pattern of American liberalism without making any basic changes in the structures of political, economic or social life."

Hester Eisenstein

Columbine Market has generously offered to partake in a fundraising effort for the Foothills Peace Center. You may purchase certificates of \$10.00 or \$25.00 redeemable at Columbine Market for face value. 10% of all certificates sold will be given to the Foothills Peace Center.

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