

The Feminization of Society

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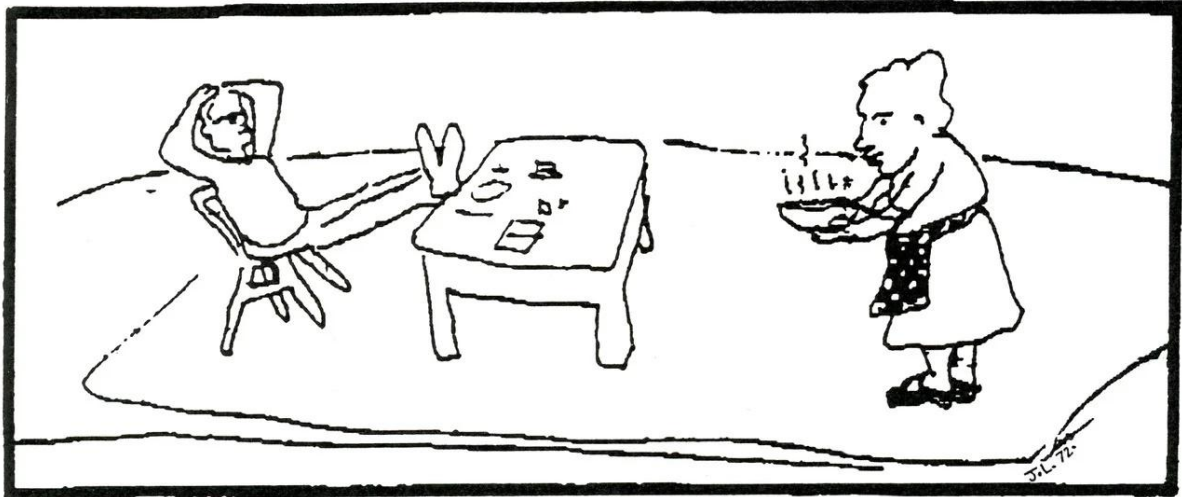


Illustration by John Lennon.

Female liberation has now become the talk of the world. Talk is welcome as long as it does not lead to dead-end cynicism. Public fuss over the issue is all right as long as it does not divert one's attention from the real effort to gain freedom.

The feminist movement faces this danger now. The majority of men greeted the movement with a condescending and receiving smile, while the newspapers picked up the issue as an ideal space filler. Unless women become more strongly aware of what is really happening and start to transform the issue into a serious revolution, the movement will fade away as another happening of the decade.

We must not let it die. We have to keep on going until the whole of the female race is freed.

The major change in the contemporary woman's revolution is the issue of lesbianism.

Lesbianism initially, had a positive influence on female liberation. It helped women realise that they didn't necessarily have to rely on men for relationships. They had an alternative to spending 90% of their lives waiting for, finding and living for men. But the alternative of building her life around another female or females, it wasn't very liberating. Some sisters have learned to love women more deeply through lesbianism, but others simply went after their sisters in the same manner that male chauvinists did.

The ultimate goal of female liberation is not just an escape from male oppression. How about liberating ourselves from our various mind trips such as ignorance, greed, masochism, fear of God and social conventions? Lesbianism, to many, is a means of expressing rebellion toward the existing society through sexual freedom. In that sense it worked. But we find our minds unfocused from lesbianism when we face the problem of procreation and child care. It's hard to dismiss the importance of paternal influence so easily. And since we face the reality that, in this global village, there is not very

much choice but to coexist with men, we might as well find a way to do it and do it well.

We definitely need more positive participation by men in the care of our children. But how are we going to do this? We have to demand it by force.

James Baldwin has said of this problem, "I can't give a performance all day in the office and come back and give a performance at home." He's right. How could you make men share the responsibility of child care in the present social conditions where his job in the office is, to him, a mere "performance" and where he cannot relate to the role of child care except as again a "performance"? Contemporary men must go through a major change in their thinking before they volunteer to look after children, before they even start to want to care. Their jobs must cease to be a "performance" before they can stop to think of taking care of children as a "performance".

Most of us women, hope that we can achieve our freedom within the existing social set-up, thinking that, somewhere, there must be a happy medium for men and women to share freedom and responsibility. But if we just took the time to observe the very function of our society, the greed-power-frustration syndrome, we would soon see that there is no happy medium to be achieved.

Women are going through a very early stage of revolution now, just as the blacks have in the past. We are now at a stage where we are eager to compete with men on all levels. Soon women will reach the next inevitably stage (which the blacks have already reached), and realise the futility of competing and trying to be like men. Women will realise themselves as they are, and not as beings comparative to or in response to men. As a result, the feminist revolution will take a more positive step in the society by offering a feminine direction. We are total beings with full and natural instincts and can offer a feminine direction to intellect.

In the last two thousand years, men have repeatedly shown us failure in their method of running the world. Instead of falling into the same trap that men fell into, women can offer something that the society never had before because of male dominance: that is the feminine direction. What we can do is to take the society which contains both masculine and feminine characteristics, and bring out the more feminine nature in the society, rather than the masculine one now at work as a negative force. We must make more positive usage of the feminine tendencies of the society which, up to now, has been either suppressed or dismissed as something harmful, impractical, irrelevant and ultimately shameful.

I am proposing the feminisation of society; the use of feminine tendencies as a positive force to change the world. We can change with feminine intelligence and awareness, into a basically organic, noncompetitive society that is based on love, rather than reasoning. The result will be a balance, peace and contentment. We can evolve rather than revolt, come together, rather than claim independence, and feel rather than think. These are characteristics that are considered feminine and which men despise in women. But have men done so well by avoiding the development of these characteristics within themselves?

Let's not kid ourselves and think of us as an old and matured civilisation. We are by no means mature. But that is alright. That is beautiful. Let's slow down, and try to grow as organically, and as healthy as a newborn infant. The aim of the female revolution will have to be a total one, eventually making it a revolution for the whole world since we can never separate ourselves from the world.

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