

tionally, maternally—when they are not aggressive. To put it another way I think that when women are encouraged to be competitive too many of them become disagreeable.

—Dr. Benjamin M. Spock, *Decent and Indecent*

Women? I guess they ought to exercise Pussy Power.

—Eldridge Cleaver, 1968

AND

A woman's place is in the home/Housewives are such dull people/Women's talk is all chatter/Intelligent women are emasculating/If you're so smart why aren't you married/- Can you type?/If you want to make decisions in this family, go out and earn a paycheck yourself/Working women are unfeminine/A smart woman never shows her brains/It is a woman's duty to make herself attractive/All women think about are clothes/Women are always playing hard to get/No man likes an easy woman/Women should be struck regularly, like gongs/Women like to be raped/Women are always crying about something/Women don't understand the value of a dollar/Women executives are castrating bitches/Don't worry your pretty little head about it/Dumb broad/It is glorious to be the mother of all mankind/A woman's work is never done/All you do is cook and clean and sit around all day/Women are only interested in trapping some man/A woman who can't hold a man isn't much of a woman/Women hate to be with other women/Women are always off chattering with each other/Some of my best friends are women . . .

THE 51 PERCENT MINORITY GROUP: A STATISTICAL ESSAY

Joreen

Women are 51 percent of the population. That is the only category in which they constitute 51 percent. In virtually every other, their share is grossly disproportionate.

Women's position in the labor market is outlined with a few statistics from the Women's Bureau of the Labor Department: 37 percent of all women of working age are in the labor force and they constitute 35 percent of all workers. But they are highly concentrated in the underpaid and menial jobs. Women are 70 percent of all clerical workers, 99 percent of all private household workers, 55 percent of all other service workers, and 27 percent of all factory workers. Only 14 percent of all working women are employed as professional or technical workers.

The result of this pattern is that the median income of white women, employed full time, is lower than that of Negro men, employed full time. The median income of black women, victims of both race *and* sex discrimination, is lower still. This is despite the fact that the median education of both groups of women is higher than that of their male counterparts.

Their unemployment rate is also higher, although the only people counted in these figures are those actively seeking work. According to the Women's Bureau, "Since no account is taken of the many who have given up job hunting because it seemed hopeless, these figures may be deceptively low." The over-all unemployment rate for women is 6.2 percent, compared with 4.7 percent for men. The highest unemployment rate of all is found in non-white women between 18 and 20 years of age. Over 31 percent cannot find work.

Income differences are not accounted for solely by differences in occupations because even within the same occupations the median income of women employees runs considerably lower than that of men. For example, among sales workers, full-time women workers earn 40.4 percent the salaries of men. Among clerical workers they earn 66.2 percent, and among professional workers they earn 64.2 percent. Only twenty-five states have equal pay for equal work laws, and these are not vigorously enforced. They are also frequently circumvented by giving the woman's job a lesser title than that of the man.

It is generally assumed that with increased skills and increased education the income differentials between women and men disappear. Yet an examination of some highly skilled professions shows the contrary. *Chemical and Engineering News* did a study of chemists' salaries in the fall of 1968, which showed that, with seniority held constant, women with Ph.D.'s made less than men with only B.A.'s. James J. White recently conducted an analysis of every woman graduate from a law school in the last ten years compared with a similar male group. With every variable he could think of controlled for, the figures still showed that a year after graduation the average man earned 20 percent more than the woman lawyer, and ten years later he earned 200 percent more.

In 1964, the National Education Association collected data on the salaries of the teaching staff of all colleges and universities. Women represented 13 percent of the faculties that year. But their median income, for 9 full months of teaching, ran \$1,500 below that of men. This is partially accounted for by the fact that women constitute 25 percent of all untenured positions and only 12 percent of the tenured ones. But a breakdown by position shows that the median income of women is lower than that of men at all positions from instructor to professor. In fact, the differential is greatest at the level of full professors.

These figures do not necessarily mean that individual

institutions or companies maintain separate salary schedules for women and men of comparable experience and ability. Rather, the differences are most often due to the fact that the higher paying, generally more prestigious organizations, prefer not to hire women at all. Therefore, women must seek employment elsewhere, at whatever salaries they can get.

The general belief, used to justify the lower pay given to women, is that theirs is a luxury income, which supplements that of their husbands. Yet 35 percent of all women of marriageable age are not married and study after study has shown that most women, married or not, work out of economic necessity. In fact, more than one-fifth of the sixty-five million women in this country aged sixteen and over live in poverty. Ten percent of the nation's families are headed only by a woman, but 40 percent of the families classified as poor have female heads.

This situation is exacerbated not only by low wages but by the fact that forty-three states limit the number of hours a woman can work—generally to eight per day. Passed at the turn of the century in an attempt to curb sweat-shop exploitation, this “protective” legislation prevents women from earning overtime pay and promotions to jobs requiring overtime. Other states limit the amount of weight a woman can carry on the job. The limits run from ten to thirty-five pounds (the weight of a small child) and for some reason factories tend to have weight requirements more often for supervisory jobs than for menial ones. These laws, also, are more often protective of men. Many of them are now being challenged in the courts.¹

1. In *Menckelkoch et al. v. the Industrial Welfare Commission of California and North American Aviation Inc.*, the defending corporation admitted that women were denied overtime and promotions to positions requiring overtime and justified their actions by the California maximum hours law. In *Roig v. Southern Bell Telephone and Telegraph Co.*, the plaintiffs are protesting that their current job is exempt from the Louisiana maximum hours law but that the higher paying job to which they were denied promotion is not. *Weeks v. Southern Bell Telephone and Telegraph* is challenging the Georgia weightlifting law. In *Bowe v. Colgate Palmolive Co.*, a lower court ruled that a company could establish maximum weightlifting restrictions on higher paying jobs even though its plant and the plaintiffs were located

Women with degrees don't fare much better. Although 70 percent of all women with degrees work, only 2 percent are executives. Forty percent teach and over 20 percent are employed in clerical, sales, or factory jobs. The median income of working women with degrees is 51 percent that of men with degrees.

These economic facts of life have always been shrouded by the belief that "things are getting better." But in reality, while the percentage of women in the labor force increases steadily, the gap between the incomes of full-time men and women workers has been widening at the rate of 1/2 percent a year for at least the last fifteen years. According to Mary Keyserling, Director of the Women's Bureau, "Occupationally women are relatively more disadvantaged today than they were twenty-five years ago. . . This deterioration has occurred despite the increase in women's share of total employment over the same period and the rising number of women who enroll in and graduate from institutions of higher education."

For fifteen to twenty years after women were given the vote, their participation in every field expanded rapidly. A higher percentage of the major jobs in every field, and of every degree from B.A. to Ph.D. were granted to women in 1930 than in 1960. Then, in the late 1930's and 1940's the reaction set in and the era of the "feminine mystique" began. This course parallels that of the black man after the passage of the 13th and 14th Amendments. Negroes also experienced a wide expansion of opportunities during Reconstruction until the advent of the Jim Crow laws created a new form of slavery.

And like the Negro, women have once again begun to revolt. Consciousness that women are still second-class citizens has been growing at least since the establishment in 1961 of the Commission on the Status of Women by President Kennedy. Created at the urging of Esther Peterson of the Women's Bureau, and Eleanor Roosevelt, in its short life in a state (Indiana) which did not have such laws. Plaintiffs are appealing.

time the Commission came out with several reports documenting just how thoroughly women are still denied many rights and opportunities. A Citizen's Advisory Council and fifty state commissions have continued this information gathering. But the best single source of information on women is the Women's Bureau of the Labor Department. Set up after the passage of the 19th Amendment, it has quietly been putting out voluminous reports and pamphlets for years, and will give single copies free on request. The *Handbook on Women Workers* is the only book of graphs and statistics guaranteed to raise a woman reader's blood pressure.

The Commission's reports came out in 1963. But they had little effect on federal legislation. The inclusion of the word "sex" in Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act was put there as a joke by octogenarian representative Howard W. Smith of Virginia. As documented in the first chapter of Caroline Bird's book *Born Female: The High Cost of Keeping Women Down* (David McKay Co., New York, 1968), it was opposed by all the liberals on the ground that it would make the whole Civil Rights Act more difficult to pass—but it stayed in, anyway.

Since then, that little word has gone on to plague the Equal Employment Opportunities Commission. Set up to handle complaints of race discrimination, the EEOC was totally unprepared to deal with the complaints of sex discrimination that flooded the agency. Forty percent of all complaints are about sex discrimination. According to Rep. Martha W. Griffiths of Michigan, the EEOC "started out by casting disrespect and ridicule on the law." She later decided that their "wholly negative attitude toward the sex provisions of Title VII" had changed—for the worse. The Executive Director of the Commission stated that the sex provision was a "fluke" and "conceived out of wedlock."

After several years of pressure by feminist groups, the EEOC decided the women were serious and even entitled to some of the same rights as Negroes under the law. Al-

though Title VII had clearly prohibited discrimination in employment on the basis of an "individual's race, color, religion, sex or national origin," the EEOC had maintained that this meant newspapers could not segregate want-ads by race but could do so by sex. This supported the traditional practice of listing the better jobs under the "men wanted" section where women were unlikely to look, and made it difficult to discover that dually listed jobs offer salaries to women about 20 percent below those offered to men.

In August of 1968, they changed their ruling and ordered the newspapers to desegregate their want-ads by December 1, 1968. The American Newspaper Publishers Association and the *Washington Star* promptly filed suit. ANPA claimed that compliance would hurt job seekers, employers and newspapers and that "newspapers and their advertisers are unwilling to depart so radically from a successful system." The newspaper publishers lost, but have not complied with the ruling while they are appealing the decision.

By now it should be evident that with 51 percent of the population, women are the nation's largest minority group. The mythology that women are inferior and need to be protected by men went out with the mythology about the superiority of the Aryan race. But the *Kinder, Kuche, and Kirche* philosophy that it supported has not entirely receded with it. It has only been transformed into a more sophisticated version.

With increased prosperity, increased education, and increased freedom from unplanned pregnancies, women have been moving out of the home and into the world in greater and greater numbers. Men have welcomed them, but only if they maintain their place as auxiliaries to men. The current attitude is that of what Caroline Bird calls "the New Masculinists." They are all "for updating women's traditional role, providing their jobs don't change the lives of men." That is, women are welcome at work as long as they are in supplementary positions, assisting men, not competing with them.

This attitude is reflected in an occupational structure which refuses to admit more than a token number of women to any major positions and virtually none at all to those where they would have authority over men. While doing the research for her book, Bird interviewed several hundred "successful" women and discovered that virtually every one had either made it through a loophole or was significantly better qualified than a man in a comparable position. *Harvard Business Review* once decided to do a survey of opportunities for women as business executives. They concluded that there were hardly any. Scan the masthead of any magazine or the faculty listings of any university catalog. The higher you look, the fewer women there are.

The general attitude toward women is also solidly enshrined in law² which reflects the English common law tradition that "the husband and wife are as one and that one is the husband." In many states, a woman's income and property are under the control of her husband. In most states she cannot use her maiden name if he should object or maintain a separate domicile for tax and voting purposes. Even the prostitution laws discriminate. Soliciting is an offense in 34 states, but customers are subject to prosecution in only 14 states. Nonetheless, prostitutes are jailed in every state, and customers (i.e. men) are prosecuted virtually not at all. It might also be added that brothels are prohibited in all states except Arizona and Nevada, and in those states cannot be established near a main street, church, or school.

Nor does the law permit a woman control of her own body for non-pecuniary purposes. Many states continue to restrict the dispersal of birth-control information and devices and despite recent liberalizations in some states, hospital abortions are still for the rich. Few people pay much attention to the fact that more American women die each year from medically unsafe abortions than the number of American soldiers who die annually in Vietnam.

2. See "Does the Law Oppress Women?" by Diane Schuller, p. 139—Ed.

Study after study has shown that the children of working women are not harmed by the fact that their mothers work—and frequently benefit from it—but employed mothers are still harrassed with guilt that they are shirking their maternal responsibilities. Because this is the only industrialized nation in the world which does not provide public child-care services, working women, whose over-all median income is less than \$1,500 per year, must pay out most of it in babysitting fees.

The egregious situation of American women has gone unheralded by all but a few for so long because our culture has never been particularly interested in what happened to women. As Gunnar Myrdal once commented, our values and concerns are those of the white male. In a little noted Appendix to his monumental study of the American Negro, he wrote that when a legal status had to be found for Negro slaves in the seventeenth century, “the nearest and most natural analogy was the status of women.” Both groups “were placed under the jurisdiction of paternal power,” and their main function was defined as freeing the white male from menial concerns.

To maintain them in their place, both groups were also rigidly stereotyped. Factual support for these stereotypes has begun to break down, but the attitudes and social structures behind them has not yet gone. The Masters and Johnson milestone study, *Human Sexual Response* (Little, Brown, Boston, 1966), shattered the foundation for the myth that women are sexually passive. But passivity, in mind as well as body, is still deemed a feminine characteristic. Sex roles differ with each culture, but all cultures carefully shape children from birth to fit accepted concepts of masculine and feminine behavior and to believe that these concepts have some eternal validity.

The social sciences claim to study people. But in fact they spend very little time studying the female half of the population except to discern the ways in which it differs from the male. In the multitude of “sex-difference” studies all that has

been discovered is that: 1) individual differences are greater than sex differences, i.e., sex is just one of the multitude of characteristics which define a human being and 2) virtually all ability differences do not appear until a child enters school, and increase with age. Even these seem to be more strongly correlated with child-rearing practices and social expectations than sex.

Nonetheless, the hazy myths about women and the traditional beliefs of the proper sex-roles continue to prevail. A woman’s only important function, for which she is “naturally” made, is held to be that of wife and mother. If she wants a career she is told to choose between that and motherhood, because she cannot do both well and society refuses to provide her with the structural means of handling both roles. Men are never asked to choose between their career and fatherhood; it is assumed that they can do both and the two roles are defined as complementary.

In this sphere as all others, the social structures are set up to benefit men, and women are judged by male standards. Our values require a woman to succeed in “a man’s world,” but do not provide such minimal compensations as day-care centers or tax relief to hire babysitters. Time off for vacations, sick-leave, or the draft is allowed for without loss of job or seniority, but pregnancy or child-care needs will often cost a woman both. Underlying these problems is a family structure in which the responsibilities and pleasures of home and work are not shared equitably.

Reinforcing these social structures are conceptions of women and social attitudes about their capabilities so pervasive that we rarely think about them. They are reflected in our movies, our fiction, our advertising, and our opinions. They act as invisible bonds which are greater than chains because they are not understood to exist.

It is these attitudes and these structures which must be changed if women are to be liberated. And it is only by organizing that this can be done. Men will not liberate women; women must free themselves. They have waited

too long as it is. Now the largest minority group is getting angry. Women are tired of working for everyone's liberation except their own.

THE DYNAMICS OF MARRIAGE AND MOTHERHOOD

Beverly Jones

No one would think of judging a marriage by its first hundred days. To be sure there are cases of sexual trauma, of sudden and violent misunderstandings, but in general all is happiness; the girl has finally made it; the past is but a bad dream. All good things are about to come to her. And then reality sets in. It can be held off a little as long as they are both students and particularly if they have money, but sooner or later it becomes entrenched. The man moves to ensure his position of power and dominance.

There are several more or less standard pieces of armament used in this assault upon wives, but the biggest gun is generally the threat of divorce or abandonment. With a plucky woman a man may actually feel it necessary to openly and repeatedly toy with this weapon, but usually it is sufficient simply to keep it in the house undercover somewhere. We all know the bit, we have heard it and all the others I am about to mention on television marital comedies and in night-club jokes; it is supposed to be funny.

The husband says to the wife who is about to go somewhere that doesn't meet with his approval, "If you do, you need never come back." Or later, when the process is more complete and she is reduced to frequent outbreaks of begging, he slams his way out of the house claiming that she is trying to destroy him, that he can no longer take these endless, senseless scenes, that "This isn't a marriage, it's a meat grinder." Or he may simply lay down the law that

goddamn it, her first responsibility is to her family and he will not permit or tolerate something or other. If she wants to maintain the marriage she is simply going to have to accommodate herself.

There are thousands of variations on this theme and it is really very clever the way male society creates for women this premarital hell so that some man can save her from it and control her ever after by the threat of throwing her back. Degrading her further, the final crisis is usually averted or postponed by a tearful reconciliation in which the wife apologizes for her shortcomings, namely the sparks of initiative still left to her.

The other crude and often open weapon that a man uses to control his wife is the threat of force or force itself. Though this weapon is not necessarily used in conjunction with the one described above, it presupposes that a woman is more frightened of returning to an unmarried state than she is of being beaten about one way or another. How can one elaborate on such a threat? At a minimum it begins by a man's paling or flushing, clenching his fists at his sides or gritting his teeth, perhaps making lurching but controlled motions, or wild threatening ones while he states his case. In this circumstance it is difficult for a woman to pursue the argument which is bringing about the reaction, usually an argument for more freedom, respect, or equality in the marital situation. And, of course, the conciliation of this scene, even if he has beaten her, may require his apology, but also hers for provoking him. After a while the conditioning becomes so strong that a slight change of color on his part, or a slight stiffening of stance (nothing observable to an outsider) suffices to quiet her or keep her in line. She turns off or detours mechanically, like a robot, not even herself aware of the change, or only momentarily and almost subliminally.

But these are gross and vulgar techniques. There are many more, subtle and intricate, which in the long run are even more devastating. Take, for instance, the ploy of keep-