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Denison University



WOMEN'S STUDIES NEWSLETTER

March 1987

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Co-editors: Elizabeth McCarthy, Christine Cherney, and Mary Schilling

INTRODUCTION

LAURA JOSLYN, senior major in speech communication, discusses the "double day" of American working women and the public and personal aspects of that issue.

Poems by KAREN HALL are distributed throughout the issue. Karen is a senior, majoring in English.

NANCY ANN CLAYTON is a community scholar and holds a degree in engineering. In her piece, she addresses homophobia and heterosexism in our society.

Senior KENDALL CAMERON, a sociology/anthropology major, examines stereotypes of the role of women in Iran.

Having studied in Japan last year, LAURA KRISKA writes on the economic role of Japanese women. She will be graduated this May with a Japanese Studies major.

In the final article, JENNIE BENFORD, a junior English major discusses the patriarchal theory of literature with its angels and demons.

All of the articles in this issue represent edited versions of lengthy papers written for courses. While editing for length has been a frustrating process, we are pleased with the results. The major thrust of each research project has been preserved. References are provided for those interested in further exploration of the issues discussed.

THE "DOUBLE DAY": A PERSONAL AND PUBLIC ISSUE

by Laura Joslyn

Today, women are participating in the U.S. work force in growing numbers and varying occupations. "Dual-earner families (families in which husband and wife are employed outside the home) increased from 9 percent in 1920 to more than 50 percent (almost 25 million families) in 1980 and are expected to increase to 80 percent by 1990" (Benokraitis 1985:244). As well, the women in these families are primarily responsible for the domestic duties involved in maintaining a household and a family. H. Hartmann found in 1981 that "although wives who work for wages spend less time on housework than unemployed wives, husbands of working wives spend no more time on housework than husbands of wives who do not work" (Andersen 1983:119).

Further, by 1980, 51.7% of all married women with children were working (Hayes and Kamerman 1982:14); it is estimated that at least one-third of all children under six years of age have a mother who works (Andersen 1983:118). Yet, in these dual-earner families, the woman also assumes the primary responsibility for the child care. Nijole Benokraitis discusses one study which concludes that regardless of the professional training of both a husband and wife, evidence suggests that the allocation of responsibility of child care appears to be based on traditional sex roles. Thus, she concludes: "In effect, fathers in dual-earner families have little responsibility for the functioning of the family, perform peripheral--rather than primary--domestic tasks, and engage in minimal domestic activities without affecting their work or career schedules" (1985:255).

While one cannot deny that there must be some overlap of working men's and women's domestic responsibilities (Benokraitis 1985; Rogan 1984; and Rubin 1983), one must also recognize that there exists an unequal distribution of gender roles in our society, and the burden of the "double-day" falls almost exclusively on the women in dual-earner families.

In 1971, 81% of college women aspired to have a career as well as to be a wife and mother (Andersen 1983:118). Today, the labor market is highly competitive and more women are now employed in traditionally "male" occupations. Just so, many more women are choosing to balance a family life and job. As I was raised in a dual-earner family and plan to develop one of my own, I am particularly interested in this form of sexual inequality. I have known many families, including my own, in which the woman takes on multiple roles: mother, wife, cook,

cleaning lady, dishwasher, laundress, etc. While her husband or children may assist her, they are doing just that: assisting the woman in her responsibilities, "helping her out" in her "double-day." In assuming and expecting such behavior, this problem appears to be personal -- an individual woman's burden. However, as the limited studies on dual-earner families have revealed and as one simply talks to women involved in such families, it is apparant that the "double-day" also exists as a public issue.

The "double day" operates as overt sex discrimination but continues to be easily dismissed as "expected" behavior, accepted as the duty of a woman who is capable of managing many roles. While the consequences of the "double-day" may not seem as potentially threatening as those of other forms of sex discrimination, such as rape or even unequal wages, the very nature and principle of this problem is of equal importance in our struggle for sexual equality.

Many women have surely suffered the consequences of the "double-day." Today, a working woman, with or without children, struggles to maintain a job and a household virtually on her own. She must strain herself physically, mentally, and emotionally to perform all the "roles" expected of her. Further, the ideology of women in the home extends into the workplace; that is, women who work are treated as mothers, as dependent on men, and they hold traditionally "feminine," nurturing occupations (Sokoloff 1978). As she is likely to get tired or "burned out" in trying to be a "superwoman," she may eventually pressure her husband to revise the distribution of domestic duties. This may result in dissatisfaction in her domestic life, conflict, and perhaps in the more severe cases, divorce. When judged against such great sex role stereotypes, the working wife (and perhaps mother, too) may be made to feel inadequate or a failure. If women continue to struggle to manage "double-days," they will also continue to perpetuate an overt but widely unrecognized form of sexual inequality.

Much of the research on dual-earner families has overlooked the woman. That is, many studies have concentrated on the effects of a woman's employment on her home and family, on the effects of this life-style on the male's performance at work or his satisfaction at home, on the development of the children, or on the economics of these families. Further, these studies generally assume that the child care and domestic work are the primary responsibility of the woman in the dual-earner family; the researchers tend to refer to "the working mother," but very rarely "the working father." Thus, very few researchers have examined the consequences of the woman's "double-day" on women themselves.

What can be done to address the adverse impact of the "double-day"? The problem is complex and calls for the development of new meaning systems simultaneously with a shift in the social balance of power. Further, these changes need to take place within major social institutions, single family units, and individual belief and behavior patterns.

In order for social change to occur, people must be dissatisfied with the present conditions. While many of the working women who perform "double-days" may be struggling to fulfill multiple roles, they may not recognize that these expectations are placed specifically on them by the strong social pressures and sex roles in our society. Only when women realize and experience their powerlessness against such greater social forces will they begin to criticize the existing order and conceive of the world as larger than just their individual problems. To those of us in higher education, this may be easier to recognize as we examine our own society in addition to other societies to discover such widespread sexual inequality. Yet, in order to reach all of the other oppressed women and to initiate criticism of the status quo, more widespread education is necessary.

Educating the masses may be done through the mass media by implementing more accurate representations of women in television programming and advertising - that is, depicting women as humans as opposed to "superwomen." This assumes, however, that people have access to media institutions. One must not lose sight of the individual here: the mass media are produced by people, and so again the beginnings of social change point to the individual who represents the subjective level of society. It must also be noted that many of the producers in the media institutions are men, who may only experience the "double-day" through their wives and friends.

What else will motivate people to become educated and to question the social system? Perhaps it is literature, such as pamphlets containing poll results on women doing "double-days" or books such as Lillian Rubin's Intimate Strangers and Marge Piercy's Woman on the Edge of Time. But the circulation of such literature does not ensure its consumption; people will not necessarily read and accept such materials. One may also examine the educational system in our society as a place to inform young people about sexual inequality, but this system, too, is a capitalist institution and may itself perpetuate discrimination.

Thus, education must occur on the subjective level first, and then be spread through interpersonal relationships of all sorts, from intimate partners to bosses and their workers. When a married working woman

recognizes a pattern of sexual oppression such as the "double-day," she must then understand how it works, that it is the product of a complex historical and social process, and then she must develop ways to combat it (Mainker 1981: 225). In doing so, she must talk to other women and men about this discrimination and its consequences. Forming such social networks may increase more people's awareness to such a problem; it may motivate people to challenge the existing social order, to develop new meanings of equality and new understandings of stereotypes, and to renegotiate expectations and to rethink old and restricting forms of intimacy. If the men and women in dual-earner families recognize the existence and effects of the woman's "double-day," they may agree to share the domestic work and the child care.

My research on the "double-day" has helped me to recognize that sex discrimination is not only a personal problem; it exists on a public level as well, across many cultures, classes, and races. Like so many issues in sexism, the married working woman's "double-day" is much more complex than it appears; it involves sex stereotypes and expectations which have been developed over a long period of time. The "double-day" is also an example of a form of sexual inequality that is frequently overlooked and thus is accepted as "second nature."

That I will encounter sexual discrimination in my further education and career seems inevitable. While it may be difficult to prevent, I am confident that I can use my knowledge to both recognize and contest it. For example, I am now aware that covert, subtle, and overt sexism operates on many levels in the business world, in such forms as tokenism and unequal wages. I know now to educate myself of a potential employer's policies regarding such areas as health and child care and salary, and to reject unequal treatment.

On a more personal level, I feel as though I have more control over sexual inequality, as it is my choice whether to marry and have children and a career. Yet, if I choose not to get married, I will most likely never have the choice not to work, for I will have to support myself on a "woman's wages." And if I do choose to marry and raise a family, I will undoubtedly have to negotiate the housework responsibilities with my husband, to put great efforts into shared parenting and toward a "new intimacy." Undoubtedly, because men of my age have also been raised and socialized in a sexist society, most likely hold gender stereotypes and expectations.

In my lifetime, I hope that working women and mothers can share the housework and child care with their husbands, and that someday that will be the norm rather than the exception. Perhaps if men are more nurturing to

their children, the next generation will hold less rigid gender expectations. Yet, one must recognize that our society is not made up of dual-earner families who are all willing to tackle sexism; we are a society of individuals, married, divorced, single, with and without children, of different socioeconomic classes and races, each with different attitudes and ideas. A pessimist may consider these vast differences as overwhelming, and thus may simply succumb to the status quo. I am more of an optimist, however, and feel somewhat sorry for those women who do not recognize their oppression, for they may continue to live in discontent or in the illusion that they are satisfying their proper roles. I do not blame men for the persistence of sexual inequality, nor women for their apparent acceptance of it, for I believe that most who are affected are unconscious of it.

In a short essay, Bella Abzug supports the idea that "you" must first recognize "internal change" before "you" initiate "external change." She encourages "you" to choose "yourself" as a leader. When reading her essay, I thought that perhaps I do not see myself as a leader at this point in my life because I have not yet experienced the "double-day" as a married working woman; I have been rather protected from many forms of sexual inequality.

Men and women progress through a "life cycle," passing through five socially constructed stages. In the first, "childhood," boys and girls are socialized differently from the moment of their birth, but are generally not treated as "different." In "adolescence," boys and girls are more likely to be perceived as males and females, aware of the sex roles which surround them. As these young men and women enter "young adulthood," they may leave their families and enter the work force, earning fairly comparable wages. When in "early adulthood," men and women experience the greatest degree of sexual inequality. It is at this stage when the woman in the dual-earner family finds herself doing the "double-day," when the frustration of feeling powerless against gender expectations that are so engrained in our society is at its strongest. In "late adulthood," family roles diminish as children have left home and the wife and husband retire. Again, like in "childhood," married elderly men and women lose their identity and gender-related issues converge.

I do anticipate the struggle of the "double-day," and I also anticipate further "inner change," and possibly becoming involved in social action. Until I reach that "middle adulthood" stage in my life cycle, I expect to feel somewhat removed from gender inequality, although I know I am living in the very midst of it. I am apparently a victim of exactly what I intend to one day fight against: learned helplessness.

This research has inspired me to question both people and society, as well as to consider the future. As time passes, I will make many decisions that are related to sex discrimination, including interpersonal relationships, employment, and reproduction, and I have greater confidence knowing that I am aware of the complexity of sexual inequality.

I conclude with a quote by Carol Tarvis and Carole Wade: "Although increasing numbers of women are taking their place alongside men in the working world, men are not taking their place alongside women in the nursery and the kitchen. Until they do, the hand that rocks the cradle will be too tired to rule the world."

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MY POETRY BORES HIM

i bring to Him,
this ivory tower god
creator of canon,
my poems
for advice, for criticism, for credit.
i bring to Him
a poem of the anger i feel
when i read of a woman battered
and He says it is trite.
i bring to Him
a poem of the betrayal of a daughter
by her mother,
and He says it is not finished.
i bring to Him
a poem of the strength created
by sisters coming together,
and He says it is not powerful.
i bring to Him
a poem of my love for a beautiful woman,
and He says it is poorly constructed.
i bring to Him
a poem of my disgust
of the portrayal of women by men in poetry,
and He says it is insignificant.

At last He informs me
that my talent must lie
in romantic poetry,
and He commands me to write
a poem about grass.
The next day
i bring to Him
a poem portraying a sea
of razor sharp blades
and pools of red, clotting blood,
and He asks me
if this is my idea of humor.

Karen J. Hall

ADDRESSING HOMOPHOBIA AND HETEROSEXISM

by Nancy Ann Clayton

What steps can be taken to eliminate homophobia? The answer lies in the elimination of the conditions which create and perpetuate this condition. The biggest obstacle to achieving sexual freedom for gays and straights lies in the rigid, oppressive roles our society perpetuates. As long as people are denied the freedom to be who and what they are, whether they are aggressive, passive, athletic, emotional, or enjoy working on the car, then homophobia will continue to exist and continue to be used to enforce particular behavior patterns.

The solution to homophobia can be implemented in a variety of ways. We should encourage children to pursue whatever activities and behaviors they enjoy, rather than enforcing stereotypical roles. Children should be made aware that some people prefer love and close association with people of the same sex, some prefer the opposite sex, and some have no strong preference either way. It should be made clear that all of these choices are normal and acceptable, and no particular preference is better than the others. Homophobic name-calling should be as strongly discouraged as any other hurtful activity.

Our laws need to be changed to permit gay people access to the same protection and rights as other citizens. Gay marriage should be legal (or all marriage abolished), and gay couples should have the same rights to child custody, insurance, and inheritance that (straight) married couples now enjoy.

On a personal level, the concerned individual can do a number of things toward reducing the harmful effects of heterosexism and homophobia: Challenge homophobic name-calling, comments, and jokes by pointing out the harm done by this behavior. Stop assuming that people around you are straight (some are not) and point out the heterosexism in this assumption to other people when they make it. Challenge your own assumptions about gay people. Can you factually justify your own beliefs, or are you generalizing from one or two examples? Learn about the place gay men and lesbians hold in history; many great people are probably or definitely gay, but this fact is usually omitted from historical accounts. Find out about today's gay leaders and what they have accomplished. Read poetry, novels, and plays by and about gay men and lesbians. Subscribe to a gay magazine. Be intentionally ambiguous about the sex of your lover. If people assume that you are gay and you are not, resist the urge to clarify their misconception. Find out more about gay concerns in your community. Participate in gay support activities. Join (or better yet, help organize) a gay rights parade.

Challenge your own homophobic conditioning by being affectionate with someone of the same sex. (If people then assume you are lovers, let them.) Imagine yourself making love with someone of the same sex. Learn about your own natural sexuality by avoiding stereotypical sexual behavior (such as the "need" to have intercourse) and instead explore new ways of enjoying your sexuality through sensuality and equal, non-dominating lovemaking. (See end note.)

Homophobia is a deeply ingrained and continuously reinforced bigotry. My research has made me aware of my own homophobia. I had thought myself free of it, but even something as innocuous as walking through the library with a book about homosexuality causes my heart to pound in fear. I am dismayed to discover how deep my own fear runs of being thought to be gay by a group of people I don't even know. What an oppressive fear homophobia is!

It is tremendously useful to gain some understanding of the underlying reasons for the existence and continuation of homophobia. It is very difficult to eliminate an evil without understanding what spawns it. My increasing awareness of gays and gayness brings to me an increasing desire to know more and to do more.

My research and interest in gay rights began long before the semester, and it continues. What I will do with the knowledge and information I amass, I do not know. Certainly, it shapes my attitudes and beliefs. How, or if, it shapes my actions on other than a personal level remains to be seen.

I see the way homophobia cripples the lives and emotional health of my friends. I can feel the restraints placed on my own affections, and I resent this restriction. Is anyone free of the warping effects of homophobia? I doubt it. The rights of all of us to free affection are tied to the rights of gay men and lesbians to love without condemnation. Until homophobia and the conditions causing it are completely eradicated, none of us is truly free.

Author's Note: Many of the ideas in this and the previous paragraph are found in No Turning Back: Lesbian and Gay Liberation for the 80's (by Gerre Goodman, George Lakey, Judy Lashof, and Erika Thorne, Philadelphia: New Society Publishers, 1983). I highly recommend the book.

CREATING

After loving when I want her weight
on top of me, she invariably
gets up to go for a moist towel.
After loving as she slides into sleep
and wants my warmth beside her,
I invariably take pen and paper
into the bathroom, turn on
the light and record the images
that have been swimming in
and out of my imagination.

In the morning these images
will be gone, the words left behind
like a residue, but the towel
will still lie on the floor, damp
and the warmth between us will remain
until we make our bed and, dressed for work,
descend to breakfast and a new day.

Karen J. Hall

WESTERN BIASES AND STEREOTYPES IN
ANALYSIS OF IRANIAN WOMEN
by Kendall R. Cameron

Women throughout the world and throughout time have been struggling for progressive changes in their social, cultural, political and economic positions. Yet, generalizations across the globe should not, indeed cannot, be made about the different women's struggles in different nations. Nor can these generalizations be made within one country either. As is witnessed here in the United States, the women's movement is quite fragmented. The breakdowns fall along class, racial, theoretical and political lines. The same is true for Iran in terms of internal diversity. Yet, as implied, western notions of feminism, women's "proper" roles, and change cannot be adequately applied to the Iranian case. Iran, due to its own history, its own internal dynamics, and its own participation within the global society, must be considered individually. Then, and only then can similarities and differences between western and Iranian feminist models be assessed.

The west tends to focus primarily on the veil, harem, and Islamic faith as the primary generative mechanisms for oppression of women in Iran. This focus is divorced from the important influence of political, economic and sociocultural dynamics due again, to western biases. And because the stereotypes are constructed with these issues as their concern and the notion that there is uniformity throughout the Middle East generally and Iran specifically, they are hard to detect and therefore dispell.

Western patriarchal and capitalist biases are two kinds of stereotyping of which one must be aware. Take the harem for example. Western analysis tends to view the harem as an institution that "permits males sexual access to more than one female . . . [and a place of] sexual laxity and immorality" between the women themselves (Ahmed, 1982:524). Western patriarchal bias leads to a belief that women, segregated from the rest of their society, confined for sexual convenience to men, is oppressive. In other words, women confined to what western literature refers to as the "private" sphere are devoid from any participation at all in "public" processes. Yet I would like to argue that this, from a western perspective is quite pessimistic and hence, serves western women and the west in general in several ways: Because women in Iran are viewed as terrible victims of oppression, western women's own subordination seems relatively minor in comparison. Similarly, western women's achievements in the "public" sphere become more significant than reality, in comparison. These stereotypes also serve

as an excuse for intellectual, political, militaristic and economic imperialism in Iran. From the other side of this, the harem can be seen as a system that allows women who are related through one male to share their living space and a lot of time together. This structural arrangement then further allows women to have frequent and effortless access to other women across class divisions. Also, this women's space is inviolable. Men must pre-warn women that they are approaching and wish admittance. This empowers women in several ways. Women can have private conversations amongst themselves without the worry of being overheard by men. Also, women have the power to choose whether or not to allow men admittance to the harem. So, not only does the harem instill a strong sense of community between women across class divisions, henceforth, promoting greater awareness of common concerns of Iranian women, it is also a great empowering institution in that women can control men's actions in regard to the harem. Viewed in this regard, the harem represents something western feminists in general have long been struggling for in their fight for equality and liberation.

Capitalist as well as patriarchal biases have infiltrated western perceptions of not only the harem, but the veil as well. Capitalism is premised upon the ideological foundations of freedom of expression individuality among others. The veil, to the western mind (influenced by capitalism, to be sure) contradicts these ever-important values. Obviously, the veil subtracts from a woman's individuality in that many women wear it and hence, all "look the same." The veil, therefore, allows for no freedom of expression. My interpretation is somewhat different. The veil offers women in Iran and throughout the Middle East privacy, and in fact, facilitates freedom of expression much more so than a bare face ever could. The veil enables women to make facial expressions indiscernable by others. Also, because it serves to symbolically make women "invisible," women can enter a room full of men and overhear their conversations, therefore, letting women into the minds of men. Remember that a women's space is not as easily accessible to men. Hence, the veil taken from this perspective is actually an agent of empowerment and not subjugation. It indeed does allow for freedom of expression and individuality.

Western stereotypes and biases permeate western perceptions of Iranian women. Following from this, western liberal and socialist feminist models are inadequate for interpreting women's roles and positions in Iran as well. A brief historical overview of political processes in Iran is necessary in order to substantiate this claim.

In 1925, Reza Shah (the father of Mohammad Reza Shah, the monarch with whom we are most familiar) came to power. Under him, unveiling became compulsory. When his son took

control in the 1950's, many legislative reforms were enacted, which at first glance from a western feminist's perspective seem progressive for women. In 1963 women were granted the legal right to vote. Both of the above mentioned changes are indeed positive strides for women, to be sure, but their main intent was not progressive change for women. Instead, these were attempts at modernization western-style by the regime. 1966 saw the formation of the Women's Organization of Iran (WOI). WOI's goals included education, defense of women's rights through legislation, extension of networking, and the formation of family welfare centers. These goals appear positive, but again were only attempts by the government to westernize Iran. WOI was an arm of the Shah's government. Hence, the organization primarily supported what the establishment wanted. Indeed, the president of this organization was the Shah's sister and the vice-president was the queen's mother! And one more item of note -- WOI was financially dependent upon the government so, of course, it would not promote anything that might jeopardize that relationship.

In 1967, the Family Protection Laws were passed. These were appended in 1975. "According to the new law men could no longer unilaterally divorce their wives . . . guardianship of children . . . was now to be awarded according to the merits of the case by the courts [and] no man could take an additional wife or wives without permission of the previous one(s)" (Keddie, 1981:180). At about the same time, job laws were enacted due to increased participation of women in the work force. Injury insurance for men and women was made equal, women were forbidden to work at night, women had rights to maternity leave with pay, and factories employing over 10 women were required to provide nursery facilities. Again, it would be hard to argue that these do not represent positive changes for women, yet they were primarily attempts to westernize. Statistics also show that these laws were fairly ineffective.

In 1979 the Pahlavi regime came to its end. The Shah was ousted and a new religious leader who favored Iranian autonomy, the Ayatollah Khomeini, took power. His first move was to eliminate sections of the Family Protection Laws that were anti-Islamic. Following, in March of 1979, he declared that all federally employed women were required to wear the traditional dress (hejab) to work. Later that same year, the constitution of 1906 was reviewed and drafted. It established a National Conservative Assembly that could not pass laws contrary to Islamic Law. Yet, women retained the right to vote.

It would appear, from a western liberal feminist perspective, that the kinds of legislative reforms during the Pahlavi regime (both Shah's time of rule) should be applauded. Liberal feminists indeed call for legislative

reforms as the foundations upon which women's equality can be realized. Yet this model does not explain the reality of the Iranian condition. The job legislation enacted under Mohammad Reza Shah appears to have promoted equality. Yet, oftentimes, because women were forbidden to work at night, because they were granted maternity leave, etc., their jobs got lumped together into a special category. This pigeon-holing legitimized lower wages. Another provision of these laws was that a factory with over 10 women on its payroll was required to provide nursery facilities. The tendency was then to hire just ten women and no more, hence, cutting down employment opportunity for women. These laws to western liberal feminists would be applauded while on the other hand, when analyzed from a more entrenched position, they afforded no true emancipation.

Another legislative change that appears to have been positive for Iranian women was the Family Protection legislation. This gave women certain divorce rights, among others. Yet, when statistics are analyzed, the reality becomes clearer. The divorce rate trend was downward after 1967 (the year the laws were enacted) and continued this way into the 1970s. This could mean several things. Perhaps the law was not enforced. Along with this, courts may have attempted to overcompensate for a discrepancy between tradition and new social legislation and, henceforth, granted fewer divorces.

Likewise, western socialist feminists would applaud the increased participation of women in the work force. They would argue that earning a wage better women's economic and, therefore, political and social viability. Yet data shows that in 1971, only 9% of women aged 15-65 worked. This is compared to the statistic for men which was 75%. As was mentioned, due to legislation, the wages women earned were poor in comparison to the already horribly low wages men received. 1971 survey data illustrates that a woman's average daily wage was Rls.48 (\$.70) compared to a man's Rls.89 (\$1.27) average daily wage. Hence, here again we see the inability of a western feminist analysis to adequately explain the reality of Iranian women under the Shah.

The changes spoken of, it cannot be disputed, were positively directed strides. Yet, western analysis and the biases that permeate this analysis tend to discolor the complex reality. Only through cooperative efforts with all being sensitive to and understanding of the specific problems and needs of the others -- that is, attempting to reach past biases and stereotyping -- will progress for any women be realized.

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THE ECONOMIC ROLE OF WOMEN
IN CONTEMPORARY JAPANESE SOCIETY
by Laura Kriska

Japan is a unique country. It is also a great paradox in contemporary society. The old and the new are represented in extremes not found in other cultures. This is characteristic of many aspects of Japanese culture. One of the most important areas is the economic role of Japanese women in contemporary Japanese society.

Japanese women, in many ways, represent a culturally traditional role in a technologically advanced society. Japan is one of the economic superpowers and has a higher GNP per capita than the United States. It is clear that Japan is economically one of the most progressive countries in the world. The role of women, however, has not progressed at the same rate or to the same extent. Women in Japan today maintain a position that is much the same of that forty years ago. One major reason for this is women's participation in the work force. In this paper I examine areas of work to exemplify how the Japanese industrial capitalist economy creates and perpetuates sexual inequality in the work force and in Japanese society.

Two examples are seen in women as reserve labor and women in the entertainment industry. Reserve labor is a good way to define the 50+% women who make up the labor force in Japan. It is common knowledge that most Japanese women who are employed are not committed to lifelong employment. Even if they go to college, most do not plan to be employed outside the home for the majority of their lifetimes. Most women stay in the labor force only until they marry or give birth (Livingston:1973:479). Women are not expected to provide material goods for others; in fact, they are culturally conditioned not to be providers. Japanese women have never been expected to seek innovative and personal rewards by striving for economic and political power (Peritz:1986:166).

The reserve labor force is one of the economic strategies employed by Japanese business and industry. The reserves are called out on a temporary basis to serve the fluctuating needs of the market. In Japan, this role has been played more effectively than in most advanced capitalist societies and is a major reason for the relatively smooth reproduction of capitalist relations in that country (Steven:1980:45). When industry has a flood of demand, reserves are hired as necessary. When supply is high and demand low, the reserves are laid off. As a cushion for uneven development in Japan, the reserve force has so far functioned close to the ideal (Steven:1980:45).

Replacement of employees is generated by early "retirement" of women. As workers get older and more tenured in a particular job, they become more costly to the company. To alleviate this cost, the companies practically force women to "retire." Far from being an opportunity for working women, early retirement provides capital to replace older and more highly paid workers with cheap new recruits. The widespread practice of retiring women when they marry and have children simultaneously reproduces the latent reserve and uses it to keep wage costs down (Steven:1980:46). This practice does not occur with men who have been with a company for an extended period of time. Of course, a man who has been with a specific company has most likely made greater contributions to the company because he was trained. When he no longer serves his purpose in his original job, he is often "put out to pasture" in a lesser job within the company until his full retirement age is reached and full benefits can be received. Companies do not treat men and women equally.

Inequities are also seen in income practices. The assumption underlying income policies is that a man is working not only for himself but also for his family. For this reason, men receive raises when they get married or when they have a child. Women do not generally support their families, so their incomes remain low. One could look at it another way: women have such low salaries that they cannot be expected to support a family. Japanese cultural patterns reflect the paternalistic attitude of the Japanese: the paternal figure is the one to take care of the needs of his family. Manifestations of this attitude can be observed not only in income practices but also in daily behavior and relationships.

Women in the reserve force who are married have a back-up for situations such as early retirement. Even when they are laid-off and cannot find jobs, they secure through their husbands a subsistence independent of their own wages (Steven:1980:40). This is a significant factor in possible explanations for why women have not achieved a greater margin of equality considering the legal rights available to them. For example, the equivalent of the Equal Rights Amendment has been passed in Japan. There is also significant legislation securing women's rights in areas ranging from child care to wage earning.

Women consistently earn less than men. According to the Japan Institute for Social and Economic Affairs (Keizai Koho), in 1983 women from age 19 to 60 on the average earned 1.97 million yen while men earned 3.99 million. The greatest gap was at the 45 year point where women made 1.99 million yen and men 4.88 million. Whether they are working reserve labor or not, women are earning less.

Examining an occupational breakdown of Japanese women provides a more concrete view of occupational segregation.

JOB	PERCENTAGE
Clerical workers	32.7%
Craft and production-process workers	23.2%
Professional and technical workers	13.0%
Service workers	12.9%
Sales workers	11.6%
Manual laborers	4.0%
Transport and communications workers	1.0%
Managers and officials	0.8%
Full-time farmers, lumbermen, fishermen	0.7%
	<hr/>
	100.0%

Data from Kodansha, 1985, p. 265

The data show that women make up approximately 68% of the clerical and service related jobs. In jobs that require training or entail authority women represent less than 14% of the work force. Women in Japan earn 53.8% that of men (Kodansha:1985:265). From a Marxist/materialist perspective, women in the work force do not render any great sources of power. The underlying assumption is that the increasing economic influence of women will eventually gain equality in political and other realms outside the family.

Women who are either widowed or divorced have a particularly hard time since they, more so than women who have never been married, are more likely not to have worked to support themselves. It is extremely difficult for middle-aged and older women to support themselves. Japanese law makes no provisions for alimony. Public assistance is available for divorced women, but the amounts of aid are extremely small, and divorcees in Japan typically face extreme hardship as well as social criticism in a society that places a high value on family harmony (Richardson and Ueda:1981:274).

Sexual inequality is also reflected in women's participation in the entertainment occupations of the geisha and Willow World. Generally speaking, this is not outright prostitution although such does exist. It is a source of enjoyment that can only be provided for by women and caters exclusively to men.

Women of the Willow World have been a long-standing tradition in Japan. Yoshino (1607-1631) was an early seventeenth century Kyoto courtesan, trained from the age

of fifteen in the geisha system to employ the fine arts of calligraphy, painting, dancing, music, the tea ritual and the ceremonial burning of incense as aesthetic entertainment for men who were responsive to and could pay for that expensive pleasure (Beard:1953:112). The tradition has evolved into a system which caters to businessmen and their business activities.

The Willow World is utilized by men with money as a part of the business environment. The male-dominated business structure creates and perpetuates this phenomenon. Women cannot be any part of this system other than as a subordinate entertainer. There are now in Japan about five hundred thousand hostesses, staffing the countless places where Japanese men come to drink with their friends and business associates (Gibney:1979:134).

Not only does this phenomenon degrade women by associating them with pleasure purposes, it prohibits women from operating in the normative fashion in the business world. A Japanese woman who graduated from a top-ranked university in economics, then went on to get her master's degree in business administration from Harvard Business School in 1981, found out how important this entertainment aspect of business is in Japan. She reports, "When I applied for my first job here (Japan) after Harvard, the interviewer asked, 'Can you play 18 holes of golf, are you any good at mah-jong, can you drink right along with the men?'" (Graves:1986:629). In order to launch a career, women must be able to function within the male-oriented social and entertainment life. Few professional or executive careers are available for women (Peritz:1986:162).

Clearly, women in Japan have not been allowed to develop into a viable economic resource. They continue to be used as low-cost, temporary labor, and they continue to work for expandable income. Women are also incorporated as pleasure sources within the business community. For these reasons, women have not gained respect in the market economy. Understandably, the lack of women's full and legitimate participation in the work force has come to define and limit their position elsewhere in society.

One way this change might take place is through increased economic contribution by women. As women improve their economic status, according to a materialist perspective, their economic power will increase. This power will not be limited to economics but will extend into other areas such as politics and family life. In this way women challenge and change inequality.

Another way to change discrimination is simply to enforce the laws that currently exist. Many inequalities such as wage differentiation and hiring practices would be extinguished if the laws were followed. The problem resides in those who do not enforce the laws. From their perspective it is not to their advantage to enforce the laws.

Changing the gender ideology takes a less direct approach. Understanding various cultural influences is important to understanding how Japanese culture has emphasized male dominance and female subordination.

One good example of this is Confucian ideology which traditionally viewed men as superior and women inferior. This type of belief perpetuates gender stratification in Japanese culture.

The traditional Japanese customs and gender roles are powerful deterrents to the full realization of women's potential contribution to the labor force. Within a culture which reflects both the old and the new, women will play very restricted and somewhat traditional occupational roles in a highly advanced technological economy until both the ideas and the economic participation patterns change.

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MEL'S PLACE

I still can't believe this,
but I was asked to sing
in this bar, a women's bar.
And they were paying
so I said, yes,
I'd sing, and I'm thinking
it's cool, a women's bar
kind of like ladies' night every night.
So I go to this bar.
Takes me two damn hours to find it.
You wouldn't believe where they're
hiding this place.
So when I finally get there
I set up and I play.
And of course, I'm playing to all
these women, only women.
And they're dancing,
with each other.
But I'm cool, I'm cool until
this woman starts winking at me!
And on my break
she asks me to dance with her.
I still can't believe this,
but I did, I danced with this woman
in this women's bar.
But it's cool.
I'm still cool.
I had a good time and
you know what?
She's calling me tonight,
and we're going back to that bar,
now that I know the way,
but tonight I don't have to sing.

Karen J. Hall

THE PATRIARCHAL THEORY OF LITERATURE:
A SUMMARY OF IDEAS FROM THE MADWOMAN IN THE ATTIC

by Jennie Benford

For generations, the dominion of men in all areas of society was accepted as an unwritten law of nature. A distinct frame of mind developed from this assumption -- a frame of mind that has shaped European and American society into patriarchal societies -- that is, societies that give men exclusive access to power and expression. To see how this frame of mind functions, it is logical to turn for evidence to the art of that society in question. The art of literature, in its dual role as an expression of opinions and a shaper of opinions, provides both a reflection and an explanation of the patriarchal mind and society.

The literature of the West is indisputably the product of a patriarchal society. It is a tragic fact that generations of women were kept from writing through ignorance, coercion, law or force. Thus, the literary tradition of Europe and America, with its history of over a thousand years, has evolved from the minds and for the purposes of men. In their book, The Madwoman in the Attic, Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar traced the partnership between the patriarchal frame of mind and the western literary tradition. What Gilbert and Gubar discovered is that the literature of western society bases its values in a set of assumptions that are inherent in the patriarchal social structure of the West. This hierarchical set of assumptions forms itself into a theory, of systematically basing each step of its logic firmly on a previous assumption. The formation of this theory has been charted by Gilbert and Gubar, who regard it as the Patriarchal Theory of Literature.

The first in this set of assumptions is that the creation of literature is a sexual act. In societies where women who were allowed to paint were denied access to male nude models, it should not be surprising that literature, seen as sexual, was protected as an exclusively male pursuit. It seems safe to assume that the majority of American and European literature has been written by heterosexual men. This being the case, women must play some role other than writer in this creative literary process. The part given to women was that of the character. The fictional woman character, created by the male author, is a strange entity. John Irwen describes the relationship between author and character as "an autoerotic act...a kind of creative onanism in which through use of the phallic pen on the pure spaces of the virgin page...the self is continually spent and wasted." [1] The female characters created by these male

writers have thus been mental concubines; possessions whose worth lies in their pleasure-giving capabilities.

Gubar and Gilbert found that these female characters tend to fall into two distinct categories, both of which are defined by different forms of male pleasure: Monster and Angel. To look at literature with an historic eye, the number of Monster Women and Angel Girls is staggering. Many of literature's best known characters fall into these categories:

MONSTERS

Medusa
The Wierd Sisters
Lady Macbeth
Morgan La Fay
Salome
Any of a number of
 Evil Stepmothers and
 Stepsisters
Eve
Medea
Belle Dame Sans Merci
Faulkner's Caddy

ANGEL

Persephone
Juliet
Snow White
Ophelia
The Last Dutchess
Annabel Lee
The Virgin Mary
Little Eva
The Lady of Shalott
Dante's Beatrice
The Dutchess of Malfi
T. William's Laura

The sexual implications inherent in this form of classification are obvious. Women who are monsters -- prostitutes, fallen women, witches, vampires and seductresses--are sexual. Their pleasure-giving capabilities are clear. The virgins, children, fairies, sprites, victims, and saints that fall under the Angel heading are also judged sexually; not by what they have done but by what they have not done. Their "purity" gives pleasure to men--not only the pleasant honor owning an Angel can bestow upon one but by the excitement of potential sexuality that spices up many a literary innocent. Even women who, by definition, are not sexual are judged by virtue of the all important pleasure-giving capabilities looked for by men. Neither Monster nor Angel escapes this classification.

If the writing of literature is sexual then it is only logical that the act of writing is also an act of fatherhood. The notion of ownership inherent in the act of creation originates the idea of paternity. Paternity originates when the phallic pen creates characters; manifestations and children of the mind. The force of the author is the active force that is father, not the receiving force that is mother. Man is creator so the chief creation of Man is logically, Woman. As author, then, man is both Progenative Lover and Possessive Father. One need only remember King Lear to see not only the loyalty demanded of female characters as daughters but also to observe how Monster daughters and Angel daughters

are defined. Women must be not only pleasing sexually; they must also bow to please the father who created them. Women are property upon which both Lover and Father can justifiably lay claim.

The third step of the patriarchal theory of literature is logically supported by the patriarchal religion of the West. If the author is creator/father, then the author is like unto God the Father, also creator of a universe. The author, "like God the Father, is a paternalistic ruler of the fictive world he has created." [2] It is a patriarchal notion that the writer "fathers" his text as God "fathered" the world. As God, the power of the male author over the female character is totally encompassing. He makes her, animates her and--if he wishes--destroys her. The female character, while she is possibly a Jungian extension of the author himself, is treated as little more than an object to be moved in such a fashion as to give satisfaction to the men who, by virtue of their gender, have the right to watch.

The author--as lover, father and god--owns creative power that, in a biased society, is exclusively masculine. The biologically misinformed Rufus Griswold maintained that women have "no power to originate nor even, in any proper sense, reproduce." [3] Griswold is correct in a sense. Women had no power, for it had long ago been usurped by the ruling class of Men. Thus, although the patriarchal theory of literature seems only to concern fictive female characters, it concerns real live women as well. The patriarchal theory of literature is the product of a one-sided, male-dominated philosophy. This philosophy has resulted in a tradition of literature written in a similarly one-sided manner. The influence of this literature is immense; for generations it has given birth to and supported distorted images of women. The wishes embodied in the Angels and Monsters of fiction can easily be seen in the expectations society (men and women alike) hold for women even today. The necessity of women to be sexually attractive to men, the importance of virginity in women, the evilness of feminine sexuality, the bane of an intelligent woman, and--worst of all--the sins of disobedience, of falling short of any of these expectations--all of these are archaic remnants of the patriarchal frame of mind. It is no wonder that, in looking at the writings of women, Gubar and Gilbert found the common themes of insanity, imprisonment and starvation. [4] The women writers throughout history who have found the power to challenge the patriarchy remind us that during the reign of the Monsters and the Angels, generations of women were never allowed to exist. These writings are the voices of the unborn, of women who had to, or chose to, silence their potential along with their opinion.

Endnotes

1. The Madwomen in the Attic: The Women Writer and the Nineteenth-Century Literary Imagination. Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979, p. 6.
2. Ibid., p. 5.
3. Ibid., p. 9.
4. Ibid., p. xi.