

WHAT IS WOMEN'S LIBERATION ABOUT ?

IT'S A MAN'S WORLD

DESPITE Universal Suffrage (granted after a struggle only 50 years ago)

DESPITE the Equal Pay Bill (not yet in force)

DESPITE the Pill (which comes with sermons and unpredictable side effects)

Even under the equal pay bill women will still occupy the lower paid, more trivial jobs such as shop assistants, waitresses, clerks and cleaners. Only 27% of people receiving higher education are women (women are as capable of high intellectual achievements as men).

Marriage, supposed to rescue her from the curse of her inadequacy, leaves her only with the agonising choice between family and career. Very few work places provide creches, and the number of nursery places has actually declined since 1934. When a woman gets married she also loses her name and often finds she needs her husband's signature rather than her own (a husband's signature is even needed before a woman can be fitted with an IUD).

Also there is housework. 60% of female graduates are housewives; in any terms this represents an appalling waste. There are those who say women should be satisfied with the power they have in influencing their husbands, but would a man be happy doing everything via his wife ?

As well as all this there are countless psychological disadvantages in being a woman. Women are patronised - they are expected not to understand things. In advertising women are portrayed as sex objects or servant figures, housework as a richly satisfying activity. The intellectual woman is treated as an emotional cripple and the female tycoon is a boardroom joke. You'll not find (especially among men) that women's liberation movements have a very good image - mad or ridiculous, lesbian or virago, take your pick.

However we exist. We exist because women are female people who can, and will, discover their own identity and work out their own values.

Although many of us are revolutionary socialists - because we believe that the oppression of women is due to the structure of society rather than to men (some of whom, after all, resent the ethic of masculinity as much as we resent that of femininity), and that therefore that structure must be changed in order for there to be a substantial change in the state of women - I should like to stress that we are not aligned with any political group, and welcome socialists, non-socialists and the completely apolitical. We are as interested in what can be done now, in the way of reforms, as in any distant social revolution.

WHAT CAN YOU DO ?

Help us form a Women's Liberation Group here. Help us to educate ourselves and others into a better understanding of what it is to be female. Help us to start to feel our strength as active contributing members of society by supporting the national campaigns for

1. Equal educational opportunities for girls.
2. More nursery education.
3. National Health contraception and abortion for all who need it.

Subscribe to Socialist Woman, 16, Ella Rd., West Bridgeford, Nottingham. (1/- per issue + p&p). The Nottingham Socialist Women's Committee at that address will help you contact groups or find speakers.

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