

### **WILD GEESE**

*You do not have to be good, you do not have to crawl on your knees for a hundred miles through the dessert repenting, you only have to let the soft animal of your body love what it loves.*

*Tell me about despair, yours and I will tell you mine. Meanwhile the world goes on, meanwhile the sun and the clear pebbles of rain are moving across the landscape, the mountains and the deep trees, the prairies and the rivers. Meanwhile in the clear blue air the wild geese are heading for home again.*

*No matter who you are, no matter how lonely, the world offers itself to your imagination, calls to you like the wild geese, harsh and exciting, over and over again, announcing your place in the family of things.*

Mary Oliver

*This Zine has been a production of  
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*Contributions for future issues  
are also welcome!*

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*I'm having a long sequence of*

# ***De Ja Vu***

*Issue #1 August 2001*

So why this zine? Why all this talk about sexism and violation? Because I know it and feel it and don't think enough people are paying attention or realizing how fucked-up things are. I know I wasn't a year ago. I want people to start talking about these things more, start acknowledging them more, and start to take action.

If I were to write all I have learned about sexism and oppression and self-respect in the past year this zine would never be done. I needed to start somewhere so I did and this is what has evolved. I guess issues of violation are what are most present for me right now.

Sometimes I feel like it is the more subtle things that are the most, pervasive and insidious and most difficult to address and therefore the most detrimental to liberation. There were laws made against segregation, but it didn't make racism go away, just made it less overtly obvious. I may not have ever been "brutally raped" but I am still being oppressed. I am still being violated. It still sucks.

I have been inspired to write this zine by all the women I have talked to all over the country who are dealing with the same shit. Trying to confront sexism in every activist gathering/group wherever I go, sad for groups calling themselves anarchist and who claim to be fighting for liberation.

I am also writing this zine for the boys who have violated me and do or don't know it. I can express myself here and not have to explain or defend myself or fight for respect. I hope that you will hear me this time and do better with yourselves in the future. You know who you are.

Those reasons are also for my self-empowerment; to connect with sisters and confront my oppressors and to generally express myself to the world and not be ashamed of it and myself.

Particular thanks to Allana for being angry for me and demanding that I demand more respect for myself; to Leigh for listening and letting it be okay to hurt; Emily for all your words of wisdom and understanding; Nicole for sharing boy craziness; Vanessa for believing in me; Waffle for letting me blow my nose on your shirt; Roger for showing me how things could be different and Nir for all the time I spent on your computer (though maybe you don't know it yet.)

**I AM WRITING THIS ZINE BECAUSE I WANT PEOPLE TO PAY ATTENTION TO THESE THINGS AND TAKE ACTION TO CHANGE THEM.**

Elana

# "ACT LIKE A MAN"

## BOX

Verbal Abuse  
↓

Wimp

Girl

Sissy

Mama's

Boy

Nerd

Fag

Punk

Mark

Btch

Tough

Aggressive

Competitive

In Control

No Feelings

Don't Cry

Take Charge

Don't Make

Mistakes

Succeed

Have money

Never ask

for help

Angry

Yell

Intimidate

Responsible

Take It

Don't Back

Down

Have sex

w/ women

Anger. Sadness. Love.

Connection. Confusion

Low Self-Esteem

Resentment

Curiosity Excitement

Isolation

Physical Abuse  
↓

Hit

Beat up

Teased

Isolated

Rejected

Forced to

play sports

Sexual

assault

from Boys Will Be Men by Paul Kivel

# Out of Self Respect

Sometimes it seems like the word Feminist is equaled to Man Hater or Bitch. I don't think I'd generally be described as a bitch and non-oppressive relationships with men are something that is very important to me. However, I am not willing to compromise my feminism, which to me is a lot about self respect and not tolerating treatment that is disrespectful of myself as an individual or as a women (and this coming from being disrespected for so long and putting up with it). It seems like as soon as women stand up for themselves and demand respect, they lose male friends and get classified as "the bitch". Maybe I have lost some male friends in the last year, but I have also gained a great deal of self-respect. I want there to be room for both. I want to be able to speak up for myself and for women and to be fully supported in that. I want to be able to talk about sexism and oppression with men with out being "the bitch" and in a way that we can be allies to fight for our greater liberation from the System of Patriarchy that is oppressing us all. - Elana

Secure yourself to heaven, hold on tight  
the night has come, fasten up your earthly  
burdens you have just begun -Indigo Girls

## BE MY ALLY NOT MY OPPRESSOR

\* Don't assume \* Put yourself out \* Take Risks \* Expand comfort zone \* ASK, get permission to be an ally \* "What can I do? Is there something you could use from me, what do you want from me?" \* Don't Assume answers \* Be human, smile \* Be real/honest \* Step out of your "culture" \* Work in partnership \* Play with kids, teach the future \* Never forget your privilege or my oppression \* Step beyond your fear \* See the human \* Educate yourself, educate others \* Don't try to be a savior \* Fight oppression in your group/community \* Follow leadership of marginalized groups \* support and contribute to other groups instead of having to start your own \* Humility "what can I learn?" \* Listen, don't be defensive \* Figure yourself and your prejudice out, self reflect \* Seek equality in participation/leadership/power, not just warm bodies \* Get to know me as a person \* - Elana

## An Honest Mistake

*Waiter: Would you like some coffee?*

Women: Yes, Please

*Waiter: Just say when. (Starts to pour)*

Women: There. (He keeps pouring) That's fine. (he pours.) STOP! (she grabs the pot; there is coffee everywhere) What are you doing? I said stop!

*Waiter: Yes Ma'am*

Women: Well, why didn't you stop pouring?

*Waiter: Oh, I wasn't sure you meant it.*

Women: Look of course I meant it! I have coffee all over my lap! You nearly burned me!

*Waiter: Forgive me ma'am, but you certainly looked thirsty. I thought you wanted more.*

Women: But...

*Waiter: And you must admit, you did let me START to pour.*

Women: Well, of course I did. I wanted some coffee.

*Waiter: See, there you go, a Perfectly Honest Mistake.*

## Violation

I want to talk about violation. It is something I have intimate experience with yet find severe lack of language to talk about. When I try to articulate what I mean by violation so many arguments come into my head. All the words I use never describe the feelings I have. The words feel insufficient and easy to argue against or write off as "there wasn't force involved and she didn't resist or say anything at the time..." I still keep blaming myself for having been violated so often, even though I know it was wrong. And what am I talking about when I say violation? I guess it is a subjective experience. It is not a feeling I can explain yet one that haunts me all the time. A boundary of mine is crossed and I feel violated. First, I am being touched in a way that feels comfortable, or at least not uncomfortable, though of course there are a thousand things running through my head and I am telling myself to relax and not be afraid. Then there is the point where a boundary of mine is crossed and I am no longer comfortable and I feel violated. It happens all the time. And I tell myself this isn't that bad... because I don't feel safe and because of the power exerted over me I don't say anything. I shouldn't have to. I shouldn't be violated in the first place.



THE ONES WHO STRIKE THE BLOWS  
FORGET, THE ONES WHO BEAR  
THE SCARS REMEMBER

sexuality is complex and difficult, but absolutely critical- and liberating

9. Be aware of how often you ask people to do something as opposed to asking other people "what needs to be done."

10. Think about and struggle with the saying "you will be needed in the movement when you realize that you are not needed in the movement."

11. Struggle with and work with the model of group leadership that says that the responsibility of leaders is to help develop more leaders and think about what this means to you.

12. Remember that social change is a process and that our individual transformation individual liberation is intimately interconnected with social transformation and social liberation. Life is profoundly complex and there are many contradictions. Remember that the path we travel is guided by love, dignity and respect, even when it is bumpy and difficult to navigate.

13. This is not limited to white guys, nor is it intended to reduce all white guys into a category.

This list is intended to disrupt patterns of domination, which hurt our movement and hurt each other. White guys have a lot of work to do, but it is the kind of work that makes life worth living.

14. Day to day patterns of domination are the glue that maintain a system of domination. The struggle against capitalism, white supremacy, patriarchy, heterosexism, and the state, is also the struggle toward collective liberation.

15. No one is free until all of us are free

There are two kinds of leadership, people who make decisions and people who make things happen.

## **Tools for White Guys Who are Working for Social Change** and Other People Socialized in a Society Based on Domination *From Chris Crass- I think*

1. Practice noting who's in the room at meetings- how many men, how many women, how many white people, how many people of color, Is it majority heterosexual, are there out queers, what are people's class backgrounds? Don't assume to know people, but also work at being more aware.

2a Count how many times you speak and keep track of how many times you speak

2b. Count how many times other people speak and keep track of how long they speak.

3. Be conscious of how often you are actively listening to what other people are saying as opposed to just waiting your turn and thinking about what you'll say next.

4. Practice going to meeting focused on listening and learning; go to some meeting and do not speak at all

5a. Count how many times you put your ideas out in a group .

5b. Count how many times you support other people's ideas for the group.

6. Practice supporting people by asking them to expand on ideas and go more in-depth, before you decide to support the idea or not.

7a. Think about whose work and contribution to the group gets recognized.

7b. Practice recognizing more people for the work they do and try to do it more often.

8. Practice asking more people what they think about meetings, ideas, actions, strategy and vision. White guys tend to talk amongst themselves and develop strong bonds that manifest in organizing. This creates an internal organizing culture that is alienating for most people. Developing respect and solidarity across race, class, gender and

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## **Sexual assault is...**

any sexual contact without consent.

### **Consent:**

- is an explicit verbal agreement
- is not coerced, and not just to be accommodating
- cannot be assumed
- is not static, but an active process of dialogue
- cannot be given under the influence.

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## **\*\* Sexual Assault is not tolerated at the Colmena Collective\*\***

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This sign hangs on the wall of the Colmena Collective. This definition of assault was written by men of the Colmena Collective and is in essence not only an agreement for men of the collective to act in accordance to the above conduct, but to tolerate no less from anyone who is in any way involved in the collective. *I'm inspired. This is some of the most proactive stuff I have seen from an activist group particularly coming from men. And this shouldn't be so unusual; it should be the norm!*

## **IS THIS FAMILIAR?**

... And then you stopped and asked me how I was doing or something to that effect and I said "It all happened kind of fast" and you said "I thought if it wasn't OK you would have said something" (a conversation I had with a boy after our first sexual interaction, which included him going down on me without any conversation...)

## *Some Questions For Boys about Sex*

- Have you ever gone down on a girl without asking?
- Have you ever had sex with a girl without asking?
- Do you think this matters? Do you think this is OK?
- Have you ever begged, Coerced or forced someone to have sex with you?
- Have you ever persuaded someone to have sex with you even though they didn't feel like it/want to?
- Would you consider this Rape/Sexual assault? Why or why not?
- How do you define rape? How do you define sexual assault?
- Do you think that your definition of Rape/assault is learned? Where did you learn it from?
- Do you think there are ways you could violate women not included in your definition? What are some of them?
- How do you define sex? does your definition include other things besides intercourse?
- During sex do you do most of/all the initiating? Why do you think this is?
- Do you pay attention to your partner's body language when you are being sexual?
- Have you ever considered that your partner is using body language to tell you something cuz they don't feel safe enough to talk about it?
- Do you talk with your partner about what pleases them, what feels safe and what doesn't?
- Do you talk about sex with other boys? with girls?
- How do you think talking about sex with boys and girls differs?
- Do you know anyone who has been sexually abused/raped?
- Have you ever been sexual with an abuse survivor?
- Did you say/do anything in attempt to make them feel safer?
- If you have been abused/raped have you ever talked about it?
- Where would you say most of your knowledge of sex comes from?
- What do you know about safer sex? Do you practice safer sex?
- How do you feel about sex?
- Have you ever considered that sex is sometimes/often painful for girls?



something won't help anything and will just make me more vulnerable, so I just deal with things within myself. I don't want to have to explain.

I am realizing just how detrimental all this is. Just because this experience of violation has been my common experience, and perhaps the common experience makes it no less hideous and no less wrong. I am beginning to feel some of the pain of having been so violated as well as the sorrow and anger of having experienced something that is supposed to be intimate and enjoyable, as most often scary and violating.

I have tried to deal with some of the ghosts that have been haunting me for so long, trying to address people who have violated me or interacted with me in really fucked up ways. I am met with the usual defensiveness and ego, the typical sexist response of male privilege where "you have the power, so you don't have to listen". In not one of the situations that I have tried to address do I feel reconciled, let alone heard or acknowledged for my hurting.

I have blamed my violation on so many things... Society, the times we live in, miscommunication (more like total lack of), socialization, myself... but I do not want to make excuses anymore. I am finally accepting that I have been sexually violated and that that is wrong. Period.

I want every women to know what it has taken me so long to learn: That respect is your right not your privilege and if something feels wrong to you, it is wrong and it is not your fault for feeling the way you do. It doesn't matter if you are raped, or just touched in a way you don't like or don't feel comfortable with, if it is by your boyfriend or a total stranger, it is wrong and you deserve better. You deserve to feel totally loved, comfortable and safe and to know physical intimacy without fear. You deserve the utmost consideration and respect, however that looks to you. - Elana

## I NEVER CALLED IT RAPE

The way we define a given word, and more specifically, who does the defining, has an enormous impact on how we think about that word and what it represents. It also dictates the nature of our relationship to the thing or concept the word symbolizes. This could not be more true for the word rape.

The legal definition of rape (in Oregon) is sexual intercourse where "forcible compulsion" is involved. This is pretty basic, right? Someone uses force to have sex with someone else; this more or less mirrors most people's definition.

So what's wrong with this definition? First of all, the definition of sex is limited exclusively to "the insertion of the erect penis into the vagina" (Webster). By this definition gay and lesbian sex do not even exist, period. It takes a complex, multi-dimensional, and primarily subjective experience, and reduces it to a two-part mechanistic exchange. Then, if the element of "forcible compulsion" is introduced, it becomes rape.

In contrast, let's look at the definition of sexual assault taught by Sexual Assault Support Services. *"Sexual assault happens when one person abuses their power by acting in a sexual way by crossing another person's boundaries without their permission."* This fills in a lot of the gaps left by the legal definition. Rape happens when there is a power imbalance. Rape happens when boundaries are crossed. And rape happens without consent.

Boundaries are a much more subjective consent than, say, "sexual intercourse". A person gets to determine her or his boundaries, and furthermore, those boundaries can change from person to person, and from minute to minute. And the only way to tell that a person's boundaries have been crossed, is that they feel like they've been crossed.

Consent is much more complex than "yes" or "no". One cannot deny consent if, for instance, there are explicit or implicit threats against her or him. One cannot give meaningful consent if she or he is not fully informed. *And consent loses even more meaning when it's given by someone taught from birth to be submissive and to give consent (or at least not deny it) even against her own needs and wants. (Especially when giving consent to someone raised to be domineering, demand what he wants and not take "no" for an answer.)*

So how do these definitions affect the way we deal with rape?

Rape is an entirely subjective concept. It happens when someone feels violated. The standard definition, not coincidentally, standardized by the same patriarchy who have traditionally considered rape a crime against the man who "owns" the victim, takes this subjective experience, holds it up against mechanistic criteria: penis, vagina, force, resistance, and in the eyes of the law, effectively proves that the victim doesn't feel the way she or he feels. And we wonder why rape is the least prosecuted crime?

To put this into perspective, consider these statistics which concern our rape culture (from *I Never Called It Rape: The Ms. Report*).

- *1 in 4 women surveyed were victims of rape or attempted rape 84% of those raped knew their attacker*
- *Only 27% of women whose sexual assault met the legal definition of rape thought of themselves as rape victims*
- 2,971 college men reported that they had committed 187 rapes, 157 attempted rapes, 327 episodes of sexual coercion, 854 incidents of unwanted contact.
- *84 % of the men who committed rape said that what they did was definitely not rape.*
- 41 % of the raped women said they expect to be raped again.
- About 16% of rapes are reported. Of those, about 62% lead to an arrest.
- 98% of the victims of rape never see their attacker caught, tried, or imprisoned.
- Over half of all rape trials are either dismissed before trial or result in an acquittal.

The very least that we can do is believe wimmin (and men, and children) when they say they've been raped. No, we don't need to know "what happened", and no we don't need to know what the rapist thought he (or she) was doing. We don't need to prove or disprove anything. If someone feels violated, they were violated!

safe. It took me a long time to stop feeling used and dirty... and I didn't want to feel like that, so I started to detach myself to the point where now, when someone violates me it isn't so scary. I have learned to detach myself, to let go and say "this isn't that bad" and have put so many walls up to protect myself. So now when I am "assaulted" it doesn't have the face of fear or violence I associate it with, because I have so detached myself.

Recently I had an experience that was the closest I have ever come to feeling comfortable with someone, and partly because of that I have realized how wrong things have been for so long. I also realized what happens to me once a particular boundary of mine is crossed and just how much it has been affecting me. I detach myself and shut down. I make it not a big deal. I am so emotionally detached that it isn't one. I convince myself that it is okay. I don't feel the intense feelings I think I should, I just feel numb. And I have so many walls now. Physical intimacy that progresses too fast or crosses a boundary of mine causes me to completely shut down and bars any emotional intimacy or even ability to address the violation. I withdraw myself completely, every way but physically.

And now I am haunted. The recent experience I had was so different than anything I had known yet it was haunted by my past. At times I would be overwhelmed with feelings that had nothing to do with the present situation and it made it hard for me to connect to the actual reality, which was a positive one.

In that experience too, I discovered how I try to make things okay, partly not to make things a big deal, partly to appease the person who is violating me. Plus, to admit that he has hurt me is to give him that power over me and to make myself vulnerable to someone I am already not feeling safe with at all. Why would someone who doesn't really respect me care if they are violating me? And why risk the total invalidation of my feelings? For the first time I have felt safe enough to admit or at least not deny that something was wrong. Even then I tried to play it off as not a big deal, and to make things okay.

So often I have been hurt or violated and blamed myself, "I didn't say no, so then I must have let this happen, so it must be my fault that I feel this way and that I let my boundaries be crossed". If I haven't blamed myself I have at least made excuses for the other person. I have always found excuses for them and their fucked up, violating, behavior. A good portion of the time I feel that saying



## A Story I Need to Tell...

To all the men who have violated me and the wimmin who can relate

I just found out that a boy I dated is now a "know sex offender". I am trying to sort out how I feel about this and how it affects my relationship to all that happened to me. I was certainly violated by him and things were really fucked up in a lot of ways, but so have they been to some degree with every single boy I've been involved with. It is difficult to finally accept in some ways that I have been so mistreated and in some ways "assaulted" particularly when it is by people that I like and care about and with whom I have even enjoyed some level of physical intimacy.

Assault in my mind has always been something aggressive, perhaps violent, perpetrated by scary, creepy, people, so I have never thought of what has happened to me as such, but I know that my boundaries have been crossed way too many times. Starting to recognize these things and open up to some of this pain is very difficult and makes the thought of anything sexual repulsive.

I am very confused with where to go with all of this and how to address these things in a constructive way. There is a boy... I like him and think he is a good person, but every time his name comes up, I feel angry because of the way he has interacted with me in the past and his inability to hear what I had to say. I am also concerned about the way he is acting in similar ways with other women. And I don't know how to address this. When I see him I would much rather just chill with him instead of make a big "scene". If he doesn't get it when I say something, I don't have the energy anymore to explain to him his sexism or my oppression. And when I do bring these things up, they are so totally invalidated. I know how to deal. I'm tough, I won't let it hurt... He isn't some evil person that should be shunned and ostracized from our community, but he did violate me, and I am still unresolved with it and do not feel entirely comfortable with him.

Almost every sexual experience I have had, or at least the experience of every person I have been involved with sexually, has been one of violation. Because I have not known anything different it has taken a long time for me to realize how wrong this is or how it has affected me. I have never felt respected sexually. My first sexual experience was in some ways petrifying, especially since I was supposed to be in a safe environment, so I kept telling myself it was

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(This was taken from an editorial in *Insurgent*, a paper out of Eugene- I was so surprised to see that this was written by a man...I guess some men do get it.)

Why is it that only 27% of women, who by the legal definition have been raped thought of themselves as raped? Because they are apologizing for their oppressors, making excuses, or blaming themselves.

More about Consent...

To us, consent is the continual process of explicit, verbal discussion, a dialogue, brief or extended, taken one step at a time, to an expressed "yes" by both parties and shared acknowledgment that at this moment what we are doing together is safe and comfortable for each of us. Consent is what establishes that the interaction (including sex) is between equals in power. We feel safe enough to say anything we need to- without incapacitation of either party, coercion or threat, implied or actual- to protect ourselves from violation. Both parties are autonomous at each moment and can change their minds at any time. We share control of the situation with each other. Our responsibility is to be as sure as possible that what we are doing is not felt as violation

(This was taken from the book Transforming a Rape Culture. This is part of an essay written by Joseph Weinberge & Michael Biernbaum

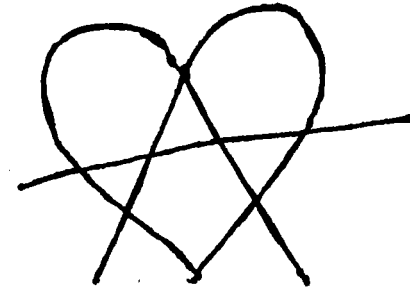


You don't have to listen to me ever. You don't have to understand my oppression or your privilege because you have the power. You have the power to hurt and not be hurt, to control and not be controlled. You are the oppressor and you never have to listen.

## *The Importance of Separation*

Some people don't get the need for all women's space, don't get why women need time to themselves. Some even call it discrimination. Wanting separation is not about hating men; it is about eliminating the threat of oppression present whenever men are present by virtue of male privilege.

If someone or something has the ability to exert immense power over you, Would you not want to escape for a short time the threat of that power being exerted or that power it's self? It doesn't matter how "Nice" of a man you are, by your male privilege you have an ability to exert some power over women and for some women even the threat of that power being exerted is oppressive. Therefore, It is imperative for women's liberation that there be a time and place where even the threat of that power does not exist.



### **Defeated**

My heart is so heavy right now and I don't think I can hold anymore of this world's pain. It is just too much for me to handle. I don't know where to put it all. So many women I know are carrying so much more pain than they can possibly handle and it is breaking my heart.

I am so angry myself, still hurting so much, so furious for being disrespected and disregarded for my pain and my feelings.

I just saw a friend I haven't seen in a long while, and I want to cry and scream for all the shit and all the pain she has been going through. Where do we put it all? Where? And why when we need someone the most do we find ourselves so alone?

I feel so drained and crushed and defeated and angry and tied like I can't stop this pain, can't stop my friends from being violated and hurt, can't stop being angry and can't win. Ejan~



... You don't have to look deep into her eyes to see she's saying something don't blame her just because her lips aren't moving. You fucked up her image in your fucked up rendition. Just because she couldn't speak doesn't mean you couldn't listen ... ~ Eldrich Anisette

## ARANT

I have had so many fucked up sexual experiences with boys. I have been violated by every boy I have ever been involved with, but I wasn't resisting so that makes it OK Right? And when something happens without my permission and I am OK with it is it then OK? How would you know that this would be an OK line to cross, cause maybe it was a different line and maybe it wasn't OK. How can I escape you hitting me if I didn't know it was coming? I've had lines crossed too often, been violated too many times. If you really respect me, you will talk to me and find out what I am comfortable with.

Don't ask? Well then don't fucking touch, because if you don't ask, then you don't know what boundaries of mine have been crossed. And just because I am confused and can't give you a straight answer, doesn't mean you should stop asking and stop communicating. I don't want to be sexual with people anymore unless there is that much communication and my boundaries aren't being crossed.

Even you, who I have more respect for than a lot of boys, even you have crossed a line that had you asked I wouldn't have let you cross. Consent is so much more than yes or no, so different than that. How can I say no if you don't ask? How can I say no when I have been this oppressed, when I don't feel safe and never have?

And when we don't talk about our physicality, I am scared, scared for the moves you might put on me that I don't want. If you're not asking and just acting, who's to say that that won't turn to rape? We have to talk about it, or I don't want it, cause it doesn't feel safe.

And just because I said yes initially doesn't mean green light. You boys go at me like animals, getting your pleasure fix without considering how I feel or what I want. That is so fucked up.

I want your touch, I want your sex, and at the same time I don't. I want it in safety and I want it with respect and I don't want this to be just some girl you fucked. Your sex is so FUCKED UP! You don't get it at all. You can act how you want, do what you want, but do you get how much it can hurt? Will you ever get the meaning of RESPECT? - Elana

"Hold on, hold on to yourself for this  
is gonna hurt like hell"

Sarah McLaughlin

# TRAITS OF SEXISM AND OF OPPRESSION

## THE OPPRESSED

- Oppressed people end up explaining themselves and having to justify their oppression, often times having to fight for recognition or to find some external justification for the way they feel. Stating their feelings is not enough. In affect oppressed people are being told they can't or don't feel the way they feel.
- Oppressed people don't have a choice of when to deal with their oppression and face it constantly; they can't just escape it. As a white person, I can choose when I want to think about racism, just as man can choose when to think about sexism. Maybe I choose when to actively think about sexism, but it is something that pervades every aspect of my life and is calculated into everything I do, weather it be going to the store, what to wear, etc. etc. etc. It is not something I can ever escape.
- Oppressed people become teachers- educate and explain to their oppressor about how they are being oppressed. I am so tired of explaining to boys how their behavior is oppressive. It is like, "If you don't get it then I'm not going to tell you". I just want them to get it sometimes.
- Oppressed people are most often the ones to point out or bring up how they are being oppressed. They get marked as hard-noses for bringing up things that the oppressor doesn't want to hear. Typical response: "ho... that again, sigh..."
- Oppressed people become the rehabilitators and supporters to those who oppress them (especially with sexism)
- Don't have the time to *wait* until the oppressor is "*ready to deal*" with these things. Oppression has been around for a long time. We are tired of waiting for our oppressors to get it and stop oppressing us.
- Oppressed people don't have the power in the situation and therefore have less power to change it.
- Oppressed people apologize for the people miss-treating them (especially with sexism) ... I even watched my friend do this with

think that feminist issues, women's groups and projects exist both to pacify and occupy and distract me. Just shut the fuck up a little. Once in a while. I'm so fed up with the games and bullshit that I'm ready to work with mainstream groups or alone or somewhere else or not at all. Its like you think that calling yourself an anarchist makes you clean and pure and no longer subject to self examination or criticism. You've made the term Anarchist repulsive to me.

Why am I the only one who knows how to nurture? You prob'ly think this song is about you, don't you? Don't you? Don't you? I get the feeling that you are threatened. And scared. Good. When the women in our group decide to get together you hafta know why and how and what gets said. None of you beeswax. You complain that you feel left out when the women get together. So. I feel surrounded in a "mixed" group right now. I just don't wanna tolerate this shit anymore. Why, when you confront sexism, is it cause for celebration?

It is time for me to be with women. I've spent my life in a world defined by men, learning from men, relating to men, reading men, trying to write and talk like men, being around men. If you feel threatened 'cuz me and my sistahs are pissed off and together maybe you got a good reason to run. That's right.

*(and I can echo almost every one of these sentiments as I have experienced/felt them all. -me.)*

If it doesn't brush my shoulder  
and it doesn't beat my heart,  
That's not what I want, no  
That's not where I will start,  
I never Kissed somebody  
So that they would break  
my heart ... - Lisa Loeb

## What it is to be a Girl in an Anarchist Boys Club

from Alphabet Threat

You act as if you think nothing will get done if you don't do it. I don't trust physicality that you initiate BUT at the same time I want all of us to be more physical-playful-affectionate with each other. I can and do defend myself against all sorts of verbal attacks until it is something sexual from someone I know and like and trust and then sometimes I pretend I'm amused or like it or don't mind or something. I'm confused by my inability to deal when I've practiced and want to, and by your inability to recognize your behavior as sexual oppression.

O.K. I'm way intimidated by lots of loud boys in a group. Everything I say out loud in a group is pre-planned, composed. I'm not spontaneous 'cuz yeah I'm shy but mostly I don't trust you to listen without interrupting or treat what I say as valued if I'm not rehearsed. I don't want to be squashed. I'm outnumbered. My allies are silent around you. You are approached to answer questions for our group, make decisions and announcements. You even think it is okay to define our group to visitors, strangers. Somehow, you aren't ever questioned by the group for this behavior.

I've stopped believing that you are "sorry" or are "working on it." I'm putting less and less energy, at age 25, into heated discussions and reacting to/educating people with stupid behavior. I'm tired of correcting sexism. There are other things I need to put my energy into --my creativity, my search for meaning, personal relationships. Men (and all people with a sub/consciousness who say women are less able) need to feel how sexism limits them. Men need to stop feeling self righteous and defensive (classic reactions to even a third person comment about gender inequity) and look honestly at their ways.

How does sexism limit a man? Why do I hafta be the bitch? Yeah. I'm pissed off. Maybe a "group" discussion dominated by two or three people ISN'T. D.I.Y. or do it all by yourself? Why don't you wonder about girls not getting involved, or leaving, or sitting in silence? A body count is not gender balance. I don't fucking want the responsibility of policing for sexism. Get over it because it sucks, not just because I'm in the room right now. Feminist perspective is not just for women or special occasions. You are not the boss. Get over yourself.

When I assert myself you get to think that it is as easy for me as for you, as easy for all women as for me. Wrong. Prob'ly you think that THIS group (yeah this one) doesn't have any gender issues or sexism. Sometimes I

a boy. "I know he really cares... maybe it is just really hard for him... maybe he's going through a lot right now..."

- Oppressed people become spokes persons for their oppressed group, i.e., "You are black so you must be able to speak for black people... she didn't have a problem with it and she's a girl so it must be okay with girls..."

## THE OPPRESSOR

- Oppressors have a choice of when to deal with things and can choose not to. They can choose to deal with things when it is convenient for them and if it is not, just walk away since they are not the ones being oppressed or hurt in the situation.
- Oppressors have the power to change the dynamics.
- Oppressors choose when to listen and what they want to hear. If they don't want to listen, they don't have too. So often I have felt like I am screaming and being completely ignored. Like my voice, no matter how loud, is a silent one.
- Oppressors become defensive when confronted by the group they are oppressing. They try to justify their behavior or make excuses rather than listen or acknowledge what the oppressed person is saying



