

Capr. 1970 News Syndicate Co. Inc.

New York, N.Y. 10017, Sunday, January 4, 1970

COMES THE WOMEN'S REVOLUTION...



NEWS photo by Richard Corker



Broad Spectrum The will of lady's majority is being expressed by such widely divergent exponents as Dr. and Mrs. Shepard Aronson, left, of reformist National Organization for Women (NOW) and the radical Women's International Terrorist Conspiracy from Hell (WITCH), above.

By **KATHY LARKIN**

ONE REVOLUTION has already started in this country.

Women now total 51% of the population; men are in a 49% minority. That bothers romantics, but it cheers members of the Women's Liberation Front. What bothers them is that women, despite their majority, make up only 1% of the engineers, 3% of the lawyers and 7% of the doctors. There is one woman senator, nine congresswomen. And while men earn an average \$7,800 yearly, women get only \$4,550.

Add that up, and it means a lot of angry women.

The umbrella term, Women's Liberation Front, covers socialites like Abby Rockefeller, executives, students, housewives, and a few women with their own personal hangups.

They belong to groups ranging from the National Organization for Women (NOW)—a reformist group dubbed by some "the NAACP of women's civil rights"—to radical outfits like the Women's International Terrorist Conspiracy from Hell (WITCH) or the Feminists, who say flatly: "Man is the enemy."

Across the country, men—amused, curious, maybe apprehensive—have been reading stories like this:

● In 1964, Congress passed Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, forbidding, among other things, sex discrimination in hiring. More than 50% of job complaints since have come from women.

● Members of the militant Red-stockings group invaded an abortion

hearing at New York's Cooper Union, drove the all-male panel from the stage and—despite management's withdrawal of microphones and lights, conducted their own meeting on "the right of women to their own bodies."

● In New York again, an eight-member cast of the New Feminist Theater presented a series of women's rights plays.

● In Boston, WITCH disrupted a money-raising event in which a college fraternity raffled off dates with pretty co-eds; said a WITCH: "We stormed the platform and set our sisters free."

● In the San Francisco Bay area, a group of 12 women—some with children—started a "female only" commune.

● In New York, the just-formed Congress to Unite Women pulled 500 delegates from 27 separate groups. The statement of goals included:

Congressional passage of the Equal Rights Amendment which would assure that "rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or any state on account of sex" (an amendment pending since 1923, when suffragettes introduced it); 24-hour free child-care centers for all parents regardless of marital status or income; establishment of a woman's power bloc; rewriting history to give a truer picture of women's achievements.

What are these women like?

To find out, we started two weeks of interviews ranging from East Village pads and loft offices to chic apartments and business offices. Those interviewed ranged from NOW members and radicals to anthropologist Dr. Margaret Mead, to women and men like Sen. Charles Goodell (R-N.Y.), who are responsible for changing the laws.

NOW president Betty Friedan, Smith graduate, mother of three, wrote "The Feminine Mystique," an explosive book dealing with the problems of women who "exist only as wives and mothers."

women who "exist only as wives and mothers."

"The response from women around the country on my book," said Mrs. Friedan, "made me see the need of NOW. And if I wrote my book again, I'd change only the last chapter—on a woman's answer to her own liberation as a human being. It's not an individual problem, it's social and political."

Betty Friedan is an intense, logical conversationalist. She talks at top speed in paragraphs, not sentences.

LIKE OTHER Liberation members, she sees a parallel between the struggle of blacks and women. "We are now where blacks were 50 years ago, but we benefit from their fight. With 51% of the population, we need just one in five women and a few men to create a power bloc that will make black power look pale."

NOW has already done much, she believes.

"We've served notice that women are half the population and are determined to get their rights. We've broken through in the employment area, providing money and lawyers to try Title VII sex discrimination cases in the courts—and won. In the Colgate-Palmolive case, the court said companies could not exclude women from jobs requiring the occasional lifting of 35 pounds or more."

Other achievements she listed included: "Desegregating want ads, raising stewardess' retirement age from 30 and, in the area of public accommodations, making restaurants like Miami's Jordan Marsh men's grill accept women customers on an equal basis."

NOW priorities for 1970 include passage of the Equal Rights Amendment, establishment of child care centers, re-

training of women who want to return to work, and setting up abortion-on-demand clinics.

All Liberation groups, even radical ones, are welcome to the fight. "The only women I object to," said Betty Friedan slowly, "are those who hate men, see men as enemy oppressors and even deny the reality of women as child-bearers. That's a pseudo-radical cop-out. It's sick."

Men, she feels, are victims, too. "There is a male mystique—or was. Today, we're growing away from that. Virile men wear long hair. A man can be tender, admit he's not superior to women, even cry."

When there is full equality between the sexes, what then?

"Man will benefit," she said. "He'll get a woman who is a self-fulfilled human being; a partner, not a burden."

Marriage by partnership is a concept that wins approval from attractive Muriel Fox Aronson and her husband, endocrinologist Dr. Shepard Aronson. They and their two children occupy a chic apartment off Fifth Ave. In the yellow and white living room, there are oversized couches, a grand piano, a wooden coffee table that might have been sliced from the center of a giant redwood tree.

Both Aronsons work—he at his practice and Muriel as a vice president of Carl Byoir Associates. Both are active in NOW.

Dr. Aronson, one of NOW's male 10% membership, sees women's rights as "part of the whole civil rights movement." The answer, he feels, hinges on equal opportunity in employment. "Once women have that, they'll have power to change the rest," he says.

As a physician, he sees no basic mental or emotional differences between the sexes that should limit jobs they get. "Women are proving they can handle many fields—look at women jockeys."

"Women," Muriel added, "want no special privileges. They want justice."

"In 42 states," she continued, "there are still over 1,000 laws that discriminate against women, many of them so-called 'protective' laws. One Louisiana firm wouldn't hire women clerical workers at night—it was too dangerous. But they

(Continued on page 34)

IN THIS ISSUE

COLUMNS
 THEATER
 MOVIES
 FASHIONS
 GARDEN
 TRAVEL

Dream Street, Hollywood 2
 Last of the Red-Hot Playwrights 3
 "Airport" Due This Spring 7
 Accent on Femininity 11
 All-America Selection 14
 Where the Action Always Is 15

DRIVERS
 TV-RADIO
 BRIDGE
 YOU CAN DO IT
 CLASSIFIED

Facts & Fancy 21
 Program Listings 23
 Italians Win One 28
 Pitfalls to Avoid In 1970 32
 Help Wanted, Classified 35

Comes the Women's Revolution



NEWS photo by Bill Quinn

'Matrimony Is Slavery' The I-do's are no-no's to Feminists, shown above in leadership huddle. They have picketed marriage license bureau, charging "fraud with malicious intent" and, when asked what should replace marriage, answered: "What replaced slavery?"

(Continued from page 1)

had no objection to cleaning women working all night on hands and knees."

"Women," she added, "are passed over for jobs, hired for less money than a man, refused promotion or given a man's duties but a different job title—to keep their salaries down."

What of work and marriage combined, Aronson style?

"There is no boss," said Muriel. "We both work. We both spend time with the children. When two people pitch in that way, it relieves pressure on the man and makes a better marriage. It's been a wonderful 15 years."

If NOW is reformist, other groups are radical.

Members of the Women's International Terrorist Conspiracy from Hell (WITCH) hop on their broomsticks half seriously, half satirically. They have a sense of humor and they know the value of publicity.

Explaining the movement, one WITCH, who wanted her name withheld, sat in sweater and blue jeans at her desk in a downtown publishing firm. Young, married, she splits part-time jobs and baby-sitting chores with an understanding husband. Like many young radical women, she wears no cosmetics — products sold, she feels, to benefit industry and make women sex objects.

Why WITCH?

"In history," my informant said, "Witches were the first female guerrilla fighters. Our members believe in action. Witch is also a pejorative term used by men against strong, aggressive women. 'She's a witch,' they say. So we're making it a positive thing—using satire to make a point."

WITCH started, appropriately enough, on Halloween, 1968. The first action was a Wall Street picket line attacking the Establishment with themes like: "You have a fiend at Chase Manhattan."

She added, "Unlike NOW, we won't work within the system for a piece of the political pie. The pie is rotten. We want to replace the system."

With what?

"Most WITCHES want some form of socialism, but we don't salute that or communism either. Women under those systems are oppressed, too."

The best society, she added, would value individuals, stress cooperation, not competition. It would have no sex roles. "Now, it starts in the nursery when one baby gets a blue blanket, the other a pink one."

Like most radical women, she rules out a "nuclear family" (the one-family unit). Ideally, this will be replaced by "communes of men, women and children all living together."

"Women who want children, but can't or won't carry them, can become mothers by womb transplants. Abortion and birth control will be free, on demand. Marriage

will be replaced by something women devise—not necessarily free love. That's just another oppressive state for women."

WITCH has its own list of achievements.

"Publicizing women's hidden guerrilla history is one. The witch concept is important to women in the way Africa is important to blacks. We do things. We've picketed. We've infiltrated companies like AT&T, taken menial jobs to indoctrinate women. And we appeal to younger women. Many of our 30 covens (each with 25 or 30 members) scattered across the United States, England and Japan, have high school and college members."

Are men the enemy?
"Men benefit by the institutions. You can sympathize with the cop who blocks you when you go after the institutions, but he's still there, the enemy on the spot."

What is the worst thing men have done to women?

"Brainwashing them," said the WITCH firmly. "Making women believe they aren't oppressed at all. It's always the woman's fault, never the system. In a way, blacks were better off knowing they were slaves. There was nothing subtle about 'nigger do this.'"

The Redstockings group — "first names only, please" trooped into THE NEWS six strong. The group included a teacher, an editor and a physicist. All were under 30.

With them, the Redstockings brought a typewritten manifesto. It said in part: "Women are oppressed, class-exploited as sex objects, breeders, domestic servants and cheap labor." The oppressors—"all men."

For Redstockings members, the view of society is simple. Anything tried so far has been "male-oriented and male-dominated" and they want no more of it, thank you.

"We don't ask what is revolutionary or reformist — only what is good for women."

To make sure other women ask the same question, they stress the "consciousness-raising" technique in sessions where groups of women share experiences and thoughts "to expose the sexist foundations of all our institutions."

Individual contacts between the sexes are up to each member.

"We have," said the six, "no formal policy on it."

The Feminists, a group which once picketed New York's marriage license bureau charging "fraud with malicious intent," do have a definite policy. "Marriage," they insist, "is slavery. The husband sets the rules. The wife is cheap labor, unpaid except for bed and board."

What will replace matrimony?
"What replaced slavery?" countered Ti-Grace Atkinson dryly.

Ti-Grace, along with Pam Kearon and Josephine Cleary, was one of three feminist spokeswomen chosen by lot—"We split work into privileged or routine jobs," they explained, "then draw lots to eliminate the leadership idea."

"What we want," said Ti-Grace, "is a reparations program modeled after the GI bill—money to retrain women, give them cars, housing."

Women can already point to some break throughs.

New York University, for the first time in its history, offers a course on legal discrimination against women. Taught by miniskirted, attractive Diane Schuler—a practicing lawyer—it backs up her contention that "women under the law have been treated like children or mentally deficient people."

It started, she said, with English common law. "When the wife married, she lost identity. She could not inherit, control her own property, sue or be sued in court. Many of today's discriminatory laws stem from that. In 1966, for example, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld a Texas law that a 'married woman did not have the capacity to enter into a binding contract' — so a Texas bank could not collect the \$4,000 one woman owed it."

According to Diane, the law works against women.

"New York prostitutes are jailed; their clients are set free . . . In New Mexico, Texas and Utah, the husband who kills his wife's lover in the act is not penalized; when the wife takes a pot shot, it's murder . . . a wife must live where her husband decides. If he leaves and she doesn't follow, it's desertion on her part."

Too often, Diane said, the statement made by Supreme Court Justice Black holds true. Under the law, husband and wife are one—but that one is the husband.

What says the Establishment?

Three elected officials we checked—Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm (a NOW member), Sen. Jacob Javits (R-N.Y.) and Sen. Goodell—all agree that women have been discriminated against legally. Said Mrs. Chisholm: "I have been more discriminated against as a woman than as a black person."

All three support the Equal Rights Amendment.

Mrs. Chisholm added that woman's position parallels that of black citizens in three areas that are "hard to deal with legally" — managerial levels in politics, business and the academic world. But black women discriminated against on the lowest economic level are her special priority.

Goodell wants more teeth put into existing laws. "The Equal Employment Opportunities Commission, which handles complaints of sex discrimination in hiring, should have power to issue a 'cease and desist' order. Now," he said, "they can only mediate and, as a last resort, go to the Justice Department. In the EEOC, there should also be a special division with extra funds and a full staff to handle sex discrimination cases."

He agrees that some discrimination is hard to pinpoint. "Women can be passed over for promotion. Some professions usually staffed by women, like nursing, are underpaid."



NEWS photo by Mel Finkelstein

Writer Betty Friedan, author of "The Feminine Mystique," believes women are now "where blacks were 50 years ago" but have potential of forming power bloc "that will make black power look pale."

In other areas, Goodell would revise laws "to allow abortion in specified cases only and make divorce easier." He is favorably inclined toward programs for retraining women.

In the area of personal relations? For that, we checked with anthropologist Dr. Margaret Mead, who does not always agree with the Women's Liberation movement.

"There are two tendencies in society now," she said. "Women are trying to become as much like men as possible . . . underrating gestation and lactation, advocating test tube babies, making men share in domestic tasks and, in many cases, wearing similar dress." There is another tendency, she feels, simply to let individuals do what they will without making the sexes similar.

Communal child raising is not for her. "Children will have fewer neuroses, perhaps, but they will be much less individual." She prefers the atmosphere of a large family group that blends with all ages.

What of marriage?

Dr. Mead was impatient. "I get so weary when people say something that merely needs reforming is on the way out. Marriage is not going out. You can divorce a spouse, but nothing can break the co-parent tie between a man and woman who have had a child together."



NEWS photo by John Pedin

Drama "If women went on strike, society would be paralyzed," warns Anselma dell'Olio, shown with Renee Mandis at New Feminist Repertory Theater which she founded and directs.