

REACHING SIDEWAYS

AN EXCHANGE OF VIEWS AND IDEAS

Compiled by the Joseph Priestley District Women and Religion Committee

Volume I, No. 3

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AGENDA FOR ACTION

In front of the Archives building in Washington, D. C., there is a sign which states simply, THE PAST IS PROLOGUE. And so, instead of attempting to sum up our past year in the JPD Women and Religion Committee as an end, I would like to talk about our year in terms of a prologue, a beginning to other events. There are so many aspects of our work this year which bring me great joy. First of all, I think about our two conferences with a feeling of satisfaction. We had over 500 people, both women and men, attend our two conferences. That's a 50% increase over the number of people who attended one conference in Bethesda in 1981. That, in turn, was a 50% increase over the attendance at our first Women and Religion conference in 1980 at Wilmington, Delaware. Based on these figures, I can happily conclude that interest in examining the sexist nature of our religious heritage is growing. We, both women and men, wish to learn about the sexual stereotypes which prevent each sex from functioning as human beings in the fullest sense.

For me personally, there have been some other advantages in our two conferences.. Since we have brought UU's from many churches to work together, I have been delighted to work with and get to know people from First Unitarian Church in Philadelphia and Baltimore; from Buxmont and Wilmington and Reston, VA. (to name just a few of the churches involved in conference work.) I know that the others involved have felt the same delight about the opportunity to stretch beyond the confines of our own churches.

I have also been excited about the societies in our District which I know to have organized groups to study some of the sexist problems of women and men. I loved attending a meeting of such a group organized by Lois Goodwin in UCDC, Media, PA. I was absolutely thrilled at the Sunday service at that same church when Rev. Morris Hudgins and women of the congregation who had attended

our conference spoke about their observations on what had happened. (I was, in fact, so excited by this service, that, going into a restaurant afterwards with my head in the clouds, I fell and broke my knee cap and my right thumb.)

Other highlights for me this year have been the tremendously favorable response we have had on this journal, REACHING SIDEWAYS. Do you know that approximately 1200 people in our District are going to get this issue by mail? Those receiving copies are either attendees at our conferences or have requested to be put on our mailing list. Our numbers are growing!

There are other aspects of the Women and Religion prologue in our District which have to do with our coming year. The JPD Board has asked me to chair this committee for another year and I have accepted that responsibility. I will be meeting in the next few weeks with an executive committee, also named by the JPD Board, to plan our Women and Religion activities for the coming year, '82-'83. As of now, we plan to continue REACHING SIDEWAYS as a journal of opinion. If you have ideas for Women and Religion activities, or if you wish to serve on our committee, please do not hesitate to write or call me, Sara Best, 5211 Saratoga Ave. Chevy Chase MD, 20815, phone (301) 654-5345. Our Women and Religion work in this District is full of opportunities for accomplishment.

I am much less sure about the possibilities for accomplishment by the national Women and Religion Committee. Granted that they are a new committee and have had only one meeting this year in Chicago, (maybe they didn't know that Illinois is an anti-ERA state,) but I had heard nothing more than that, so I called Rev. Joyce Smith, who is the staff liaison for the committee at our denominational headquarters in Boston. She told me that the national Women and Religion Committee will hold an open meeting at the General Assembly to present a two year program plan. The past year seems to have been a dead loss. Maybe that was what the Board intended. As Chair of our JPD Women and Religion Committee, I have not been notified of this presentation at the GA, nor is it anywhere apparent in the description of the GA schedule being currently circulated. I can't help but wonder what a national committee can accomplish if officers of District counterpart committees don't know a thing about their plans or actions.

I am also not very sure about the possibilities for accomplishment by the Cummins Committee, that is, the Bylaw Revision Committee on Purposes and Principles. This national committee mailed out an

undated letter in mid-February which explained that they had been charged by the UUA General Assembly of 1981 by resolution to

"... obtain the widest possible discussion of possible Bylaw changes," and they invited each society or organization to submit in writing any opinions, proposed changes or re-statements by April 1, 1982.

I was never aware of any "wide, general discussion" on this issue, so that when I noted that a hearing was scheduled at this upcoming General Assembly, I called Rev. John Cummins, Chairman, to learn what I could about the process his committee was initiating. Rev. Cummins was extremely cordial in answering all of my questions and in volunteering other information. He stated that the letter from his committee, mailed on February 11, 1982, allowed ten(sic) weeks to respond by April 1, 1982, and that approximately 200 written responses were received by that deadline. He was concerned that the two-hour hearing scheduled at the '82 GA poses a logistical problem. Registration for this GA is running higher than ever before in our denomination's history and he expects more than 1000 to attend the hearing. His committee plans to use the first hour to summarize the responses received which have been divided into six categories. The largest group of responses prefers the model proposed by our JPD as a Business Resolution. During the second hour his committee plans small group discussion with moderators supplied by the UU Women's Federation. (As we all know, the UUWF is an organization relating to the UUA, but that does not imply any sponsorship of them by the UU's, nor does it mean that their operation necessarily reflects the policies of the UUA.) Each participant is, according to Rev. Cummins, to receive a sheet of paper to communicate ideas in written form if it is so desired.

Rev. Cummins emphasized that this hearing at the General Assembly is a beginning of what he sees as a minimum two-year process. Neither of us brought up the several years of sincere endeavor by eminent UU women to obtain implementation of existing GA Business Resolutions which deal with women's issues in the denomination; the process which those resolutions require to be implemented; and their clearly stated objectives. All of these had undergone due process prior to the '81 General Assembly.

Rev. Cummins stated very firmly several times that there would be no compromise on women's issues. What concerns me is that the best intentions of sincere people can somehow be lost in a disorganized and ineffective process. Then those persons who wish to keep the sexism in our religious heritage may again be successful in manipu-

lating procedures. We are all acutely alert to that possibility.

I should state here that I am well aware that absolutely no one can be found in our denomination who is willing to say that he or she wishes to keep sexism. But both ministers and lay persons who refuse to recognize that there is sexism in our Judeo-Christian heritage, or who discount language which excludes women or puts them into a subordinate role, or who resort to diversions instead of discussion, are favoring the continuation of sexism. Actions speak louder than words, and negative policy is made by deliberate inaction. It seems to me that we have had a plethora of that this past year.

We must, then, continue to be very watchful of the development of the process whereby our denomination deals with women's issues. Previous emphasis on parliamentary maneuver and legalistic politics prompt me to point out that our Association's Rules and Bylaws can insure that action takes place on women's issues. Both the Women and Religion and the Cummins Committees are products of General Assemblies. By searching through our UUA Bylaws, I found that under Article IV, Section C-4.2:

"General Assemblies shall make overall policy
for carrying out the purposes of the Association
and shall direct and control its affairs."

The Women and Religion Committee is the product of a Business Resolution. The Cummins Committee was formed as the result of the actions of the GA on a proposed Bylaw Amendment which did not reach the floor. Perhaps it could be called an Extraordinary or Exceptional Resolution. It is not, however, a General Resolution and I therefore assume that it is governed by the same rules as a Business Resolution.

Under Section 4.15 AGENDA RULES

"A Business resolution involves directly the business or administrative affairs of the association."

"A General resolution recommends study, records an opinion, or requests that action be taken by persons or organizations not controlled by the Association."

Both the Women and Religion and the Cummins Committees are committees of the Board of Trustees of the UUA. The Bylaws, Section C-6.1, state that,

"The Board of Trustees shall conduct the affairs of the Association and shall carry out the Association's policies and directives." (note above that GAs make overall policy and direct and control the affairs of the UUA)

The Board is, therefore, responsible for making sure that both the Women and Religion and the Cummins Committees carry out those

actions called for by business resolutions of past General Assemblies.

Those of us involved with Women and Religion, and concerned about the outcome of the Cummins committee activities or inactivity should have our interests protected by such legalities. However, we would be wise to continue to be involved in guiding the processes, criticizing when appropriate and aiding where we can.

See you at the General Assembly!

WHY ARE FEMINISTS OFFENDED WITH
THE PRESENT BYLAWS OF THE UUA?

By Jean Zoerheide, First Unitarian Church of Baltimore
(This material was originally prepared for presentation to a GWAUUP
-Religious Professionals-meeting at River Road Unitarian Church,
Bethesda, Md., January 20, 1982).

Six feminist issues in the bylaws are these:

UNIVERSAL TRUTHS - - history is full of martyrs to the efforts to uphold universal truth. Is there such a thing as a universal truth? Isn't truth-seeking an elusive search? We go from truth to truth. That shouldn't be hard for UU's to understand. Feminists go further, however. One exercise among feminists is exploring our own religious experiences and validating them. Our experiences are individual, not universal. Furthermore, the so-called universal truths are man-created, - **and here I mean male-created** - and are not inclusive of women's experiences in general.

PATRIARCHY - derives from the Genesis myth which places God at the top, man just below, and woman owing obedience to man. Patriarchy has given form to our western institutions and to our way of thinking and is based on a chain of command, a series of relationships that are above or below one another. The image is not one of equality and egalitarianism. Egalitarianism is a feminist principle, particularly in religious matters, for we are equal in our relationship to creation and the source of our being.

FOUNDATION - the word has a hierarchical connotation. One builds on a limited base and generally in one direction - upward. Center of community is the suggested change and connotes heart and growth to include all.

EXCLUSION BY BLANKETING - when our nation was founded on the equality of all men, you now know that the men it included did not include black men, nor white women, nor black women. We call such a use of men a blanket term. It is confusing, and it includes only what is visible to the ruling clan, the dominant culture. Feminists abhor the use of blanket terms. When you say women and men, we know that you see women in your own head. We know we are known.

DEMOCRATIC METHOD - if you have faced a business session of the UUA General Assembly without careful coaching and experience in parliamentary procedure, you will understand that the democratic method is subject to manipulation. It can denigrate its own participants, and manipulation leads to winners and losers. The wounds do not heal easily. The proposed bylaw amendment could have been forced at the General Assembly in 1981 had the wheels been greased properly and democratic methods been used to that end. I think we used democratic process - although not all women would agree with me - when we allowed the issue to be referred to committee to enable us to reach a concensus before the next session to amend. (I would amend that statement: We used democratic methods - but the goal was to achieve a process.)

DOMINATION OF THE EARTH - Cherish the earth is the phrase we would use in a new section of the principles. Elizabeth Dodson Gray, who spoke at the two Women and Religion conferences this year, has written a brilliant analysis of the way we equate the earth and women in "WHY THE GREEN NIGGER?", renamed "GREEN PARADISE LOST". The new bylaw statement recognizes the limits on our abuse of the environment. This is a feminist concern/issue because we see the threat to our species in both the abuse of women and earth and their resources. Our Western attitudes are based on Genesis - God gave man dominion over the earth.

WORLD COMMUNITY FOUNDED ON BROTHERHOOD - the suggested rewriting of this phrase clarified the statement and bases community on love, rather than brotherhood. Feminists do not feel included in a brotherhood any more than men would feel included in a sisterhood. Some of us think we should try for sisterhood - we think it can be based on less competition and more affirmation of one another. Brotherhood has traditionally stood for unity against a common enemy; women have never united to wage war. Whether you are a

feminist or not, I think you would agree that love, justice, and peace are elements of world community we could and should pursue.

Now you will realize that I have said nothing about the term GOD. For any person who visualizes God as in any way male, and who claims to be a feminist, there are obvious problems. UU feminists would criticize religious systems with such a base as depriving half of creation as an equal relation with the source of being. There are women, no doubt, within UU churches, who are uncomfortable using the word God, just as there are men who would rather not use it. However, the omission of God from the bylaws was not a subversive act - it was assumed that our Judeo-Christian heritage, as well as other traditions are based on some kind of definition of God.

The Religious Futures Committee has a version that probably would satisfy all of us. "We affirm a reality beyond our individual creation and control which has been called variously, God, Ultimate Reality, the Holy, Life Force, or the Transcendant." At least this would be worth discussing.

However, I want to point out that the diversion of a discussion on feminists' critiques of church life, word usage, and practices, into an argument - debate - about theology is not what feminists had in mind in proposing a look at the bylaws. We feminists want us to look at every facet of our religious lives. We want us to look at what is taught in theological schools; what images we use to chant together; we want an ongoing sensitizing of our members to the needs of women for religious affirmation, for discovering new ways of being. We do not think the accretions of thousands of years of patriarchy can be changed overnight - no one among us can possibly be culture free, and yet that is what we are asking us to attempt.

What is going on within our denomination is something new. In the past, theological argumentation has taken place among the learned clergy preaching from pulpits or writing tracts. One after another of our orthodoxies has been challenged and revised in this way.

The present dialogue has been opened by women in the pews, speaking out of our experiencing of sexism within our religious culture. The most careful, thoughtful statement of sexism in our particular Unitarian history was done by Lucile Schuck for the Michigan conference.

As religious leaders, you have been coopted - because you have not experienced the oppression we are talking about. (Neither have you been educated in feminism.) The women among you have experienced discrimination and the barriers to getting jobs - good jobs -

but once in the ministry you are handicapped in undertaking the task at hand.

One minister in New England has asked what he could do, caught between women whose consciousness had not been raised and the feminists. He was told: Give women the space in which to work this out. Give us space, and do not belittle our task.

(Since presenting this statement, I am dissatisfied with my own use of the term Principles, in referring to feminism, for what women are doing is experimenting with new ways of being human - these ways involve the helix of discovery, egalitarianism, peaceful processes, and cherishing. Openness is essential, and when I use the word principle, I freeze something - I kill its spirit.)

A QUESTION OF THEOLOGY?

By Rev. Sydney Wilde-Nugent, Cedar Lane Unitarian Church
(This material was originally prepared as a Minister's column in the church newsletter.)

It is a question of theology! Of course, I think that all of life (and death) is a question of theology. Nonetheless, the Women and Religion Conference which met last year proposed a specific change in our UUA Bylaws, a change arising out of a theological perspective. At the General Assembly (81), where their proposal was to be considered, the W&R amendment was referred to committee so that we might begin a denomination-wide discussion of our theological biases. I was dismayed that discussion on the floor was denied.

The "problem" was the phrase Judeo-Christian heritage and the deletion of the word GOD. Immediately some members of our denomination felt threatened. Those who identify themselves as Unitarian Christians, (UUs who see Jesus as a man whose life and teachings should be followed and who adhere to a more orthodox Christian liturgy than do many of us), saw their traditions being challenged. Some Universalists who identify with a more Christian perspective were insulted. Some UUs of Jewish heritage felt denied. Theists (those who believe in God but may define It in a variety of ways) felt excluded and detected a "Humanist plot." Some Humanists were offended by the deletion of the word "brotherhood." Sometimes you just can't please anybody!

It fascinates me that in the resultant debate, which is beginning to dribble out through the UU World and scattered sermons, our denomination is described as consisting of Christians, Theists and Humanists. Little mention has been made of the Feminists' perspective as a theological position. Such is the way women are overlooked and is the very essence behind the W&R proposal to begin with.

The God of the Judeo/Christian tradition is Male. No matter how we try to deny it, mention the word "God" to any of us and nine times out of ten the image of a white bearded monarch appears before our eyes before we can banish it for some more intellectual concept. And, in the Judeo/Christian tradition, as God is to his Son, so Jesus is to his Apostles (read...Pope, Bishop, Priest, Minister) as the Clergy, (usually male) are to the Man of the house, so he is to the woman and she to the child, and he to the animals and all the rest of nature. It is this subconscious point of view which defeats the ERA, denies women the right to choose the use of their own bodies, continues to pay women less for equal work done, and encourages the ecological rape of our land. It is this metaphor which the W&R wished to replace with inclusive images in the UU Bylaws. Alas, the women themselves were never seen. And their concept was viewed as an attempt at exclusion by another theological perspective all together!

I think it is time that we all discussed some theology! UUs today do not hold the same views as Servetus, as Channing, as Ballou or Starr King. Our views have changed even since 1961 when Universalists and Unitarians merged. Perhaps we should search deep within our own personal religious structures and seek out the broader images which bind Women and Men and Children and the Earth, Unitarians and Universalists of all varieties together as a cohesive religious movement.

The Discussion begins....

ANNUAL SPRING ENERGY-BOOST

By Helen Popenoe River Road Unitarian Church

As I was entering the Women and Religion Conference for '82 my inner self said "Here we go, ole light-for-creative-living, your'e soon to be rekindled!" I counted on it happening 'cause it had at the '81 Women and Religion Conference... a full, beneficial dose, (...bolstered self-esteem, identification of my deepening value system, renewed vigor and practical ideas for working back out of

the mazes that had ended up in traps I didn't want to be in...)

Well, this year it did happen. (I knew it would.) My rekindled flame has sparked fires in a number of fulfilling directions:

1. ERA and Pro-choice work - Thanks, Sonia Johnson - "Pedestals are the pits!"
2. The fight against our School Board's racist decisions and belonging to the Network of Neighbors to help victims cope with hate/violence incidents - Thanks, Joan Harris - for the lesson in black women's history that teaches you the attitude of: "How am I going to help myself?" not: "Help me! Take care of me!"
3. As an author of children's books - Thanks, Elizabeth Dodson Gray - "Language holds in place a social construction of reality. WE construct our reality."
4. My work to establish the Metro Bike-On-Rail program - Thanks, Warren Salinger - "Break the mold; don't fit it!"
5. My part in the partnership of creating a mutually satisfying marriage - Thanks, Joyce Jennings - for your description of sex as a "flowing together rather than being performance-oriented."
6. My church personship - Thanks, Carolyn McDade - for leading our closing gathering of reflection, celebration and commitment. "Rise up, oh flame, in our hearts glowing. Kindle compassion, vision and joy!" THANKS FOR REKINDLING MY FIRE! SEE YOU IN '83!

THE SUPPORT OF AUTHORITY?

The May 15 UU WORLD Supplement, "An Introduction to Unitarianism" contains the Bylaw Article II Purposes, (the ones which are supposedly to be under discussion at present) in the center of the page flanked by a picture of our Moderator and our President.

What is the message? This is the second time this year that the same general layout has appeared. Are our Moderator and our President telling us that their authority stands by the present Bylaw Article II Purposes version? That's what the graphic design of the page tells us. Are our elected leaders also predicting that the work of the feminists and the Cummins Committee cannot possibly change the text of the present Bylaw II Purposes through due process?

Or can it be that nobody did any thinking at all about the layout of the page or how it might appear to feminists interested in deleting the sexism? The lack of sensitivity to women's issues simply goes on and on and on.

WOMEN AND MEN CHANGING TOGETHER DEPARTMENT

The following excerpts from a sermon delivered on February 7, 1982 by Rev. Richard W. Kelley, Minister, Paint Branch Unitarian Church, Adelphi, Md., remind us all, women and men, of our mutual interest in men's liberation.

MALE RAGE AND THE SEARCH FOR WHOLENESS

By Richard W. Kelley

The "Women's Movement" - sometimes referred to as "Women's Lib" or Women's Liberation" or by even less complimentary terms - the contemporary Women's Movement has been around in its current form for at least a dozen years or more. Despite the fact that the Equal Rights Amendment seems to be foundering at the last moment and may have to be sent back through the whole process again, for another decade, ...despite all that, I think no one can challenge the reality that the Women's Movement has had a tremendous impact upon the lives of American women - a genuinely positive and constructive impact upon the lives of American women. In a very positive and creative sense, things will never be the same again for women - there is no going back, despite momentary reversals. Things have been changed irrevocably for women!

And if that be true - as I believe it is - then one must ask:
"Where are the men in all this?"

Given the deep interlocking of the two genders which is biologically "irrevocable" too, whatever effects one part of the whole must hold an impact for the other.

"Things will never be the same again for men".

So how is it with the male half of the citizenry in America today? The full answer to that question would obviously fill volumes and take a year of Sunday mornings to explore adequately. Today, though, I'd like to focus on only a single small part of that broad, and very important question - a small part as seen from my own perspective!!

RAGE...Rage is a very strong word, I know; no matter what the context. Yet, I think it appropriate here. "Rage" is one of several possible responses we make to being subjected to pain and injury, ... to being threatened or abused, ..to being frustrated or subjected to extreme stress.

And when I use the term "MALE RAGE", I'm referring to two seemingly different and unrelated types of behavior. I say "seemingly

different" because I believe that in truth they find their genesis in the same underlying realities. The differences in expression,... the differences in behavior,... arise from differences in the degree of awareness one possesses,... awareness of the true causes of one's pain.

"Male Rage" expressed at a low level of awareness comes out as hostility toward women,... sometimes as hostility directed at the "women's movement" as a cause of all one's troubles,... sometimes as hostility directed at the women who share the more intimate parts of one's life. And you know, there is a great deal of the latter around at all levels of our society from the highest to the lowest social levels! There's a great deal of this kind of male rage directed at the significant others in our lives -- verbal abuse and actual physical violence directed at wives and lovers,... even at one's own children! I mentioned the latter because often children function quite well as "surrogate women." If you think about it, their status and role is not unlike that assigned to women, physically they are smaller and weaker than men,... they are helpless and dependent upon men,... they are expected to be subservient and obedient to men. As "surrogate women", children have the added value of being not as articulate and clever as grown women. They're a less formidable adversary upon whom to vent one's rage and spleen!

"Wife abuse"... "Child abuse"... by men - this is a well-documented reality in our latter 20th century, American society. Its reality is not to be doubted -- if anything is out-of-line, it is the extent of that abuse,... because so few women are willing to acknowledge its existence, even to the closest of their friends. But, it's there! -- everywhere,... from the crudest of households to the most educated and genteel of mansions,... it's there -- and in this congregation!!

Sometimes this low-level-of-awareness kind of male rage finds expression in the intensification of "macho" patterns of behavior. You know, we often possess a kind of crazy, irrational faith that, "If a little bit of something does not work, then maybe a whole lot of it will." But it seldom does! Yet this is one instance where we are all slow learners! And so, for many men, male rage simply leads to an escalation of extreme and offensive "macho" patterns - - in a blind effort to extinguish the "pain".

I've referred to this as based on a "low level of awareness" because, not for a minute, do I believe that the underlying pain and frustration arises from "women" -- or from the supposed

"liberation of women" and the resultant changes in the life styles and attitudes of women. "Women" are not the genesis of men's problems. And to believe that is to reveal how little one is aware of where the trouble lies -- or so I believe!

Which leads me to the second kind of "male rage" I see present in our society. This male rage is built upon a greater level of awareness -- awareness of what has been happening to oneself and to one's fellows. This male rage is often directed toward a cultural world that it perceives as failing to deliver the satisfactions and fulfillments it promised -- if one were "really a man! "

It rests, I believe, upon a realization of just how destructive have been the traditional "male values" encouraged by the society. I mean the "male values" which promote extreme competitiveness,... which stress power and dominance,...which demand the stifling of emotions and encourage the exploitation of others,...which see violence as an acceptable solution to problems! These are some of the values which "real men" in our society are taught to embrace, ...are told constitute being a "successful male."

But more and more one senses the presence of a growing "male rage" -- a rage generated by a sense of being "deceived" and "misled" by our social system. It's a sense of being deceived about the automatic "benefits" which were supposed to flow from embracing "male values"...of being "duped" into expecting satisfactions which then were never delivered.

Also, there is a sense of being "misled" by the male society -- "misled" into ever-increasing "brokenness,"...into alienation from oneself! There's a sense of being "misled" into submitting to vast amounts of psychic pain...misled by the promise of benefits that, in the end, can never make up for the deprivations suffered!

Whatever may have been the truth for past generations of men, I believe that today's system of male dominance offers fewer and fewer satisfactions for men, and more and more fragmentation of their lives. The social system built around so-called "male values" can no longer deliver on the promises it makes. Those who lack insight into their situation may misdirect their rage toward women...and the changes women are experiencing. But those with greater awareness are coming to realize the true source of their pain.

I can remember, a few years ago, talking with a man who was speaking rather derogatorily about "women's rights" and the struggle of women to achieve equality with men. And he said, "Well, you can't expect men to give up their privileged status and their advantaged situation -- voluntarily!! "

The implication was that women would have to force men to treat them as equals! which in itself is a terrifically "macho" attitude -- you know, "let's see if you're man enough to take it away from me!!"

But afterward, I had to wonder what were the great privileges and advantages of being a male?? The privilege of killing and being killed in a war? Of being isolated from one's fellows, ...deprived of feeling relations with one's children? Of being forced to continually compete and dominate, ...to conceal one's feelings and live behind a protective mask in most of one's business and social dealings? To be systematically dehumanized? Are these the wonderful privileges and advantages of being a man... that every woman is going to have to fight to possess?? Of course not! Most liberated women know better than that!! Now more and more men are beginning to realize it also!

In fact, I believe it is at this point that men and women, together, find a common ground! It lies in this profound dissatisfaction with what the social system now offers them both. It lies in a determination to search for greater wholeness. It seems to me that this search for wholeness is very central to what is happening today.

Now men as well as women are becoming aware of just how fragmenting, how alienating, is the world in which they were "programmed" to live. Now men, too, can appreciate some of the anger women have felt for so long. It's an anger at being deprived of a rich, harmonious life together -- because of the alienating patterns that have defined - and limited - the sex roles of both men and women.

What can be done then to seek for greater wholeness in our living? Obviously, for those men whose rage is misdirected toward women, something must be done to achieve a greater awareness of the source of their pain and anger. For some, greater self-awareness may be possible. For others, perhaps nothing is possible, ...except that those closest to them seek to protect themselves from the violence and abuse that threatens them.

For those who possess greater insight, however, it is possible to initiate change, ...change on an individual level, regardless of the "system". In the book, Men's Liberation: A New Definition of Masculinity, Jack Nichols suggests that such changes can come through personal liberation on the part of men. He insists,

"The concerns of today's male must be brought closer to home: to what he wants himself, as opposed to what he wants for the system at large... Thus, the liberation of

each man from power complexes begins as a personal liberation. It originates with individuals rather than in the structures around them..."

And he goes on to observe that:

"A change in any society is not first apparent in its over-arching framework. It occurs much nearer the center - in the aspirations and attitudes of those who have created its framework..." (pg. 319)

Jack Nichols is optimistic that such changes are possible,... that they are in fact underway, and offer new and more satisfying ways of living together. He says:

"New alternatives to old ways will bring their own satisfactions and rewards. Men who once derived compensation from power manipulation will be helped to see how foul their exercise of "manliness" has been and may actually enjoy the discovery of who they are through honest feed-back from their associates, enhancing their feelings, learning how to relax, to play, and to experience new heights of sensual awareness, finding themselves made newly aware through the immediacy of intuitive insight. As these occurrences take place in ever-widening circles, the system will be forced to adjust itself accordingly in such a way as to supply demands. The demands will be those of producers and consumers alike." (pg. 318)

Perhaps he is too optimistic,...too hopeful that such will arise from a percolate-up-from-the-bottom process. But, I too, think I see changes in men...changes in the values and attitudes of men, ...changes in what they demand and expect from their living. Often, they are changes in the direction of asking for a more open, relaxed sharing of life,...for a less pressured existence,...for more opportunities to experience those close to them (their spouses and their children and their friends) in a total feeling way. For others, it's an asking for more opportunities to discover who they are...and how they can relate to other men as open, non-competitive, caring human beings (something that has long been forbidden men!).

But for men - even more than for women - this is going to be a long, laborious process,...this generation of new and more constructive attitudes and values and expectations. And those men who are determined to find a new and better way...will need to support each other all the way. While such changes in men may indeed have to come through "personal liberation", they can never come in total isolation. And the finding of "mutually supportive" ways for men is itself a vital part of that liberation!

A MAN'S THOUGHTS ON THE GERMAN FILM "DAS BOOT"
Guy Best, Captain, USN(Retired)

I've seen many WW II submarine movies, but this is one of the most gripping and believable of them all. I know that the U boat force lost 3,000 of the 4,000 who served in them. The people portrayed in "Das Boot" are real. Officers and men are just like those in the submarine squadron I served in in World War II. The risks are real and the remedies to hazardous situations are the logical actions for a highly skilled team to take. I admit that I focussed on the technical excellence of the new film to divert my mind from empathy with the human beings. My deliberate detachment from the individual human experience served to distance me from their suffering as the German Captain distances himself from the physical and mental casualties in his crew.

Lots of luck enabled the crew to survive even the stupidity of the nameless imbeciles on the General Staff who assigned impossible tasks to "Das Boot". Pure luck and their indomitable will to survive put their remarkable knowledge of their submarine to work at improvising damage control at depths more than double the depth of its design.

Why do men put themselves in a situation like that? Well, the usual things, honor; hope for glory; altruism(yes, even in the Third Reich); and loyalty to Captain, Officers, Shipmates, and the Submarine Service. Don't forget the rigorous training. If one knows what to do, one will do it until the heart beats no more.

But what was behind the motivation? Why do motivational devices work? Tradition, experience and conventional wisdom say that men will do foolhardy, vainglorious and admirable acts if properly motivated. Reams of theory and philosophy have been written on how to motivate and how to exploit that motivation. What is it all predicated on? I think two factors operate. Human beings are capable of deferring rewards to themselves and of continuing to function for long periods at high performance levels under extreme stress on the promise of ultimate reward. Second, human beings need love, and a promise of love is one of the most extraordinary motivational forces. Men seem to be especially deprived of love and especially susceptible to blandishments.

Men can be exploited by anyone who tells them that, if they do just as they are told, then gratitude from boss, national leader, nation, and all women will be expressed in endless love.

WHAT SHOULD UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST WOMEN BE ABLE TO
EXPECT FROM THEIR UU SOCIETIES AND FROM THE UUA AND
ITS AFFILIATED ORGANIZATIONS?

If you attended one of our Women and Religion conferences this year, you received a yellow sheet with the above heading and an invitation to attend a workshop at the annual meeting of the JP District and to combine your thinking with others so that we could have a joint statement from women representing our district. That was an optimistic thought. We found that in a two hour workshop we could only make a tiny beginning in speaking about "our spiritual needs, our expectations, our values and our dreams." And so we need to give ourselves more time. What Unitarian Universalist women should be able to expect from their UU societies, from the UUA and its affiliated organizations is an important question. We need to be able to articulate in words our yearning to be included in our worship services, our wish to have our denomination and affiliated organizations speak in terms of our experiences as women. We also need to be able to listen to each other, to know what other women are experiencing in other societies, and in other denominations.

It seems right that we should continue asking this question and listening to each other's answers through "REACHING SIDEWAYS." If you belong to any kind of a women's group, perhaps you could devote a session or part of a session to discussing this question and sending us either individual or your combined written answers. (If there is no women's group in your society, perhaps you might be interested in starting one. We'll help with material, put you in touch with people who have run a successful group, and perhaps even be able to give you the names of people in your own society who are concerned about women's issues...) If you are at a point in your life where you have neither time nor energy for a group, write to us as an individual. We want to hear from you and to publish your response if you will give us permission.

Meanwhile, to start us off, we have a few written comments which we were given permission to publish.

"I would like to see every UU minister, (for starters,) pray for an open mind, and then sit down and do some home work---namely, read:

BEYOND GOD THE FATHER - Mary Daly

GREEN PARADISE LOST - Elizabeth Dodson Gray

WHEN GOD WAS A WOMAN - Merlin Stone

Then call me, and I'll recommend some more homework."

- Shirley Josephson, Buxmont

"Since our church (UCDC) is not, in itself, sexist, my major objection is to the Blue Hymnal. I would like to see its publication discontinued! Denominationally, I would like to see women in more equal roles, up to and including, president." - Arlene Sternfeld, UCDC

"The UUA has made strides in achieving civil rights for women. Sexist language is being reconsidered. We have our first woman moderator. The effort needs to continue. As the "black" churches have often led the movement for civil rights for blacks, our churches should also stand for ending violations of women's equality as persons. Women with individual civil rights problems should be able to find women and men in their churches with whom to brainstorm about solving these problems, either politically, legally or through supportive counsel."

- Evelyn Falkowski, UC of Arlington

"I would like to see the denomination have workshops for ministers and ministerial students about the effect of genderized language upon attitudes perceived."

- Katherin Cox, UCDC

We do have several other statements by women who did not wish to be published because they were afraid they had not written well enough. (Yes, they had!) One woman found our hymns highly offensive because they are so steeped in gender references. Another said, (and here I'm just dying to quote) that her church was not verbal enough in support of women's rights and never addressed women's crises, although male crises of various kinds were frequently discussed.

It's your turn now. Have courage in articulating what you think on paper and never mind if you think someone else might have said the same thing. We all say the same things---but in our own unique way. Please send your material to Sara Best, Chair, JPD Women and Religion

5211 Saratoga Ave., Chevy Chase MD 20815

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HAVE YOU REGISTERED YET

for the JPD Unitarian Universalist Mid-Atlantic Community week at Lafayette College in Easton, PA? Registration before June 15 will save a late fee of \$10.00 each. Registration deadline is one month before it begins, July 25th. Make checks payable to UU-MAC, and mail to Jean Davis, 1909 Kenmore Ave., Bethlehem, PA 18018. For info, call Petronella Cochnar, Director at (301) 384 5219.

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