

June 27, 1969

Resistances to Consciousness

Thinking that our man is the exception and, therefore, we are the exception among women.

Thinking that individual solutions are possible, that we don't need solidarity and a revolution for our liberation.

Thinking that women's liberation is therapy. This, whether or not you belong to the organization, implies that you and others can find individual solutions to problems, for this is the function of therapy. Furthermore the statement expresses anti-woman sentiment by implying that when women get together to study and analyze their own experience it means they are sick but when Chinese peasants or Guatemalan guerillas get together and use the identical method they are revolutionary.

Thinking that some women are smart and some women are dumb. This prevents those women who think they're smart and those women who think they're dumb from talking to each other and uniting against a common oppressor.

Thinking that because we have an education privilege and can talk in abstracts we are somehow exempt from feeling oppression directly and talking about it honestly and, therefore think of personal experience as something low on the ladder of values (class values).

Thinking that women consent to their own oppression (or anyone for that matter). This is a statement which puts the blame on the oppressed group rather than on the oppressor class which ultimately uses brute force to keep the oppressed where they are. It is an anti-women and anti-people statement.

Thinking that only institutions oppress women as opposed to other people. This implies that you have not identified your enemy, for institutions are only a tool of the oppressor. When the oppressor is stopped he can no longer maintain his tools and they are rendered useless. Present institutions and our feelings about them should be analyzed in order to understand what it is we want or don't want to use in the new society.

Thinking in terms of them and us. This implies that you are setting yourself off or apart from women (the people). In doing this you neglect to recognize your own oppression and your common interests with other people, as well as your stake in revolution.

Thinking that male supremacy is only a psychological privilege with "ego" benefits as opposed to a class privilege with sexual and economic benefits. The former implies a considerable amount of individual variation among men therefore permitting you to find an individual solution to the problem.

Thinking that the relationships among men and women are already equal and thus immersing yourself in utopian fantasies of free love in spite of the fact that the objective conditions deny it. Love between men and women, free or unfree, is millennial not real and if we want it we will have to struggle for it.

Thinking you can educate the people. This implies that you are educated and you will get a revolution going by teaching other people what you know. Education does not bring on revolutions; but consciousness of our own oppression and struggle might. Unfortunately formal education and political consciousness do not usually coincide. Even formal education in Marxism-Leninism tends to make people think that they know more than they really know. When we think of what it is that politicizes people it is not so much books or ideas but experience.

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