

AFEAS. Since 1969, the women of all of Canada, in the context of a very official and very upright Royal Commission of Enquiry, took the measure of their suborganization and became aware of their problematic situation.

Young women twenty year old, those who thought feminism unnecessary, out of date, old politics, and so on, experienced a most acute oppression. In all the leftist political movements where they were active as people in their own rights, or so they believed, in the interests of all egalitarian, pacifist, national, socialist causes, they came up against a domination: the men in the movement dominated the women. This experience was to give rise to a more radical analysis of women's situation, an analysis which finally resulted in avoiding the pitfalls of equality.

The good old dichotomy method of the Nineteenth Century was back in fashion: this time, there were MODERATE feminists and RADICAL feminists. The very "darling" demands of the BAD feminists of the Nineteenth Century reappeared on the slates of the so-called MODERATES. And in a society which considered itself egalitarian, the demands of the RADICAL feminists turned everything upside down. The situation they were protesting was so intolerable...that they, the radical feminists, were judged intolerant.

But a strange phenomenon happened at the end of the 1970's. One by one, radical feminist analysis came to reinforce the demands of moderate women. It became more and more difficult to categorize the issues. So much so that at the end of that decade, the dividing line between the MODERATES and the RADICALS had become less and less obvious. Little by little, all of feminism came to be considered RADICAL. But in spite of everything, women's issues were documented, serious, level-headed, and politicized. It was no longer possible to brush them aside. It was no longer possible to laugh at them, as had happened in the House of Commons, when the problem of battered women caused members to burst out laughing, thus inciting women's general indignation.

Nothing is more disturbing than reading documents about the condition of women. And if reading these documents makes one ill at ease, one must inevitably ask oneself the reason for this situation that is intolerable. In ancient Egypt, the Pharaoh executed the bearers of bad news. Today, we choose to blame those who protest against them. A new dichotomy has become to separate feminists: those who can blame

talked to (REASONABLE WOMEN) and those who are scolds (FAULTFINDERS). It is no longer feminism that is being judged, but those who document and describe feminist demands, those who persist in keeping the issues before the public. For women's situation is far from being resolved; on this, everyone is agreed. Let us acknowledge that the REASONABLE WOMEN are those who claim to speak from masculine objectivity; they have only to give the impression of understanding it all and explaining it all. But what to do about those FAULTFINDERS, those women who put forward an interpretation which disrupts the beautifully masculine syllogisms (which incidentally, any women have taken up)? What to do about those who insist on bringing it up? You are hurting your own cause, people keep saying to them, that's enough now. Be quiet.

We can also easily make the statement that it is now FEMINISTS set up in opposition to FEMINISM. Now that women's analyses have been recognized as legitimate (even the bishops have taken a position on family violence!), it would be very much appreciated if the women would finally be quiet. The tragedy at the Polytechnique has provided us with a lovely example of censorship and self-censorship. Messes Dubuc, Leclerc and Bourgault were able to speak about it: they were applauded! But women ought to be quiet about it; what they have to say doesn't interest anyone. They are guilty of speaking out. They are even guilty of violence against men with fragile psyches, as Mr. Marcel Adam explained! But Messes Dubuc, Leclerc, and Bourgault hastened to speak of other things.

Be quiet-as if that doesn't just make you sick. It reminds me of that German film on domestic violence Women's Silence Makes Men Strong.

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This article I think says a lot about the controversy occurring now and how people are writing in letters to the editor stating their views about and trying to distinguish between Radical Feminism and Moderate Feminism. It makes me wonder that in 20 years from now how people are going to differentiate between the feminists/feminism of that time.