

Goodbye to All That

“...wild hair flying, wild eyes staring, wild voices...”

Robin Morgan

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from The Rat/UPS — Let's run it on down. White males are most responsible for the destruction of human life and environment on the planet today. Yet who is controlling the supposed revolution to change all that? White males (yes, yes, even with their pasty fingers back in black and brown pies again). It just could make one a bit uneasy. It seems obvious that a legitimate revolution must be led by, MADE by those who have been most oppressed: black, brown, and white WOMEN with men relating to that the best they can. A genuine Left doesn't consider anyone's suffering irrelevant or titillating; nor does it function as a microcosm of capitalist economy, with men competing for power and status at the top, and women doing all the work at the bottom (and functioning as objectified prizes or “coin” as well). Goodbye to all that.

Run it all the way down.

Goodbye to the male-dominated peace movement, where sweet old Uncle Dave can say with impunity to a woman on the staff of “Liberation”, “The trouble with you is you're an aggressive woman.”

Goodbye to the “straight” male-dominated Left: to PL who will allow that some workers are women, but won't see all women (say, housewives) as workers (just like the System itself); to all the old Leftover parties who offer their “Women's Liberation caucuses” to us as if that were not a contradiction in terms; to the individual anti-leadership leaders who hand-pick certain women to be leaders and then relate only to them, either in the male Left or in Women's Liberation—bringing their hang-ups about power-dominance and manipulation to everything they touch.

Goodbye the WeatherVain, with the Stanley Kowalski image and theory of free sexuality but practice of sex on demand for males. “Left Out!”—not Right On—to the Weather Sisters who, and they know better—they know, reject their own radical feminism for that last desperate grab at male approval that we all know so well, for claiming that the machismo style and the gratuitous violence is their own style by “free choice” and for believing that this is the way for a woman to make her revolution...all the while, oh my sister, not meeting my eyes because WeatherMen chose Manson as their—and your—Hero. (Honest, at least...since Manson is only the logical extreme of the normal American male's fantasy [whether he is Dick Nixon or Mark Rudd]: master of a harem, women to do all the shitwork, from raising babies and cooking and hustling to killing people on order.)

Goodbye to all that shit that sets women apart from women; shit that covers the face of any Weatherwoman which is the face of any Manson Slave which is the face of Sharon Tate which is the face of Mary Jo Kopechne which is the face of Beulah, Saunders which is the face of me which is the face of Pat Nixon which is the face of Pat Swinton. IN THE DARK WE ARE ALL THE SAME—and you better believe it: we're in the dark, baby. (Remember the old joke: Know what they call a black man with a Ph.D.? A nigger. Variation: Know what they call a Weatherwoman? A heavy cunt. Know what they call a Hip Revolutionary Woman? A groovy cunt. Know what they call a radical militant feminist? A crazy cunt.) Amerika is a land of free choice—take your pick of titles. Left Out, my sister—don't you see? Goodbye to the illusion of strength when you run hand in hand with your oppressors? goodbye to the dream that being in the leadership collective will get you anything but gonorrhoea.

Goodbye to the inaccurate blanket use of the phrase “male chauvinism.” Male chauvinism is an ATTITUDE—male supremacy is the OBJECTIVE REALITY, THE FACT. Goodbye to the Conspiracy who, when lunching with fellow sexist bastards Norman Mailer and Terry Southern in a bunny-type club in Chicago, found Judge Hoffman at the neighboring table—no surprise: IN THE LIGHT THEY ARE ALL THE SAME.

Goodbye to Hip Culture and the so-called Sexual Revolution, which has functioned toward women’s freedom as did the Reconstruction toward former slaves—reinstated oppression by another name. Goodbye to the assumption that Hugh Romney is safe in his “cultural revolution”, safe enough to refer to “our women, who make all our clothes” without somebody not forgiving that.

Goodbye to the idea that Hugh Hefner is groovy ‘cause he lets Conspirators come to parties at the Mansion—goodbye to Hefner’s dream of a ripe old age.

Goodbye to Tuli and the Fugs and all the boys in the front room—who always knew they hated the women they loved. Goodbye to the notion that good ol’ Abbie is any different from any other up and coming movie star (like, say Cliff Robertson) who ditches the first wife and kids, good enough for the old days but awkward once you’re Making It. Goodbye to his hypocritical double standard that reeks through all the tattered charm.

Goodbye to lovely pro-Women’s-Liberation Paul Krassner, with all his astonished anger that women have lost their sense of humor “on this issue” and don’t laugh anymore at little funnies that degrade and hurt them; farewell to the memory of his “Instant Pussy” aerosol-can poster, to his column for “Cavalier,” to his dream of a Rape-In against legislators’ wives, to his Scapegoats and Realist Nuns and cute anecdotes about the little daughter he sees as often as any proper divorced Scarsdale middle-aged (38) father; goodbye forever to the notion that he is my brother who, like Paul, buys a prostitute for the night as a birthday gift for a male friend, or who, like Paul, reels off the names in alphabetical order of people in the Women’s Movement he has fucked, reels off names in the best locker-room tradition—as proof that HE’S no sexist oppressor.

Let it all hang out. Let it seem bitchy, catty, dykey, frustrated, crazy, Solanisesque, nutty, frigid, ridiculous, bitter, embarrassing, man-hating, libelous, pure, unfair, envious, intuitive, low-down, stupid, petty, liberating. We are the women that men have warned us about.

And let’s put one lie to rest for all time: the lie that men are oppressed, too, by sexism—the lie that there can be such a thing as “men’s liberation groups.” Oppression is something that one group of people commits against another group specifically because of a “threatening” characteristic shared by the latter group—skin color or sex or age, etc. The oppressors are indeed FUCKED UP by being masters (racism hurts whites, sexual stereotypes are harmful to men) but those masters are not OPPRESSED. Any master has the alternative of divesting himself of sexism or racism—the oppressed have no alternative—for they have no power—but to fight. In the long run, Women’s Liberation will of course free men—but in the short run it’s going to COST men a lot of privilege, which no one gives up willingly or easily. Sexism is NOT the fault of women—kill your fathers, not your mothers.

Run it down. Goodbye to a beautiful new ecology movement that could fight to save us all if it would stop tripping off women as earth-mother types or frontier chicks, if it would RIGHT NOW cede leadership to those who have NOT polluted the planet because that action implies power and women haven’t had any power in about 5,000 years, cede leadership to those whose brains are as tough and clear as any man’s but whose bodies are also unavoidably aware of the locked-in relationship between humans and their biosphere—the earth, the tides, the atmosphere, the moon. Ecology is no big shtick if you’re a woman—it’s always been there.

Goodbye to the complicity inherent in the Berkeley Tribesmen being part publishers of Trashman Comics; goodbye, for that matter, to the reasoning that finds whoremaster Trashman a fitting model, however comic-strip far out, for a revolutionary man—somehow related to the same Supermale reasoning that permits the first statement on Women’s Liberation and male chauvinism that came out of the Black Panther Party to be made BY A MAN, talkin’ a whole lot ‘bout how the Sisters should speak up for themselves. Such ignorance and arrogance ill befits a revolutionary.

We know how racism is worked deep into the unconscious by our System—the same way sexism is, as it appears in the very name of The Young Lords. What are you if you’re a “macho woman”—a female Lord? Or, god forbid, a Young Lady? Change it, change it to The Young Gentry if you must, or never assume that the name itself is innocent of pain, of oppression.

Theory and practice—and the light-years between them. “Do it!” says Jerry Rubin—but he doesn’t, or every reader would have known the pictured face next to his article as well as they know his own much-photographed face: it was Nancy Kurshan, the power behind the clown.

Two evils pre-date capitalism and have been clearly able to survive and post-date socialism: sexism and racism. Women were the first property when the Primary Contradiction occurred: when one half of the human species decided to subjugate the other half, because it was “different,” alien, the Other. From there it was an easy step to extend the Other to someone of different skin shade, different height or weight or language—or strength to resist. Goodbye to those simple-minded optimistic dreams of socialist equality all our good socialist brothers want us to believe. How liberal a politics that is! How much further we will have to go to create those profound changes that would give birth to a genderless society. PROFOUND, Sister. Beyond what is men, announced by merit, led by men—doomed before its birth by the rotting seeds of male supremacy which are to be transplanted in fresh soil. Was it my brother who listed human beings among the OBJECTS which would be easily available after the Revolution: “Free grass, free food, free woman, free acid, free clothes, etc.”?

Was it my brother who wrote “Fuck your women till they can’t stand up” and said that groupies were liberated chicks ‘cause they dug a tit-shake instead of a hand-shake?

The epitome of female exclusionism—“men will make the Revolution—and their chicks.” Not my brother, no. Not my revolution.

Not one breath of my support for the new counterleft Christ—John Sinclair. Just one less to worry about for ten years. I do not choose my enemy for my brother.

Goodbye, goodbye. The hell with the simplistic notion that automatic freedom for women—or non-white peoples—will come about ZAP! with the advent of a socialist revolution. Bullshit.

I once said, “I’m a revolutionary, not just a woman and knew my own lie even as I said the words. The pity of that statement’s eagerness to be acceptable to those whose revolutionary zeal no one would question, i.e. any male supremacist in the counterleft. But to become a true revolutionary one must first become one of the oppressed (not organize or educate or manipulate them, but become one of them)—or realize that you ARE one of them already. No woman wants that. Because that realization is humiliating, it hurts. It hurts to understand that at Woodstock or Altamont a woman could be declared uptight or a poor sport if she didn’t want to be raped. It hurts to learn that the Sisters still in male-Left captivity are putting down the crazy feminists to make themselves look okay and unthreatening to our mutual oppressors. It hurts to be pawns in those games. It hurts to try and change EACH DAY OF YOUR LIFE RIGHT NOW—not in talk, not “in your head,” and not only conveniently “out there” in the Third World (half of which is women) or the black and brown communities (half of which are women) but in your own home, kitchen, bed. No getting away, no matter how else you are oppressed, from the primary oppression of being female in a patriarchal world.

It hurts to hear that the Sisters in the Gay Liberation Front, too, have to struggle continually against the male chauvinism of their gay brothers. It hurts that Jane Alpert was cheered when rapping about imperialism, racism, the Third World, and All Those Safe Topics but hissed and booed by a Movement crowd of men who wanted none of it when she began to talk about Women’s Liberation. The backlash is upon us.

They tell us the alternative is to hang in there and “struggle,” to confront male domination in the counterleft, to fight beside or behind or beneath our brothers—to show ‘em we’re just as tough, just as revolushenerry, just as whatever-image-they-now-want-of-us-as-once-they-wanted-us-to-be-feminine-and-keep-the-home-fire-burning. They will bestow titular leadership on our grateful shoulders, whether it’s being a token woman on the Movement Speakers Bureau Advisory Board, or being a Conspiracy groupie or one of the “respectable” chain-swinging Motor City nine, Sisters all, with only one real alternative: to seize our own power into our own hands, all woman, separate and together, and make the Revolution the way it must be made—no priorities this time, no suffering group told to wait until after.

It is the job of revolutionary feminists to build an ever stronger independent Women’s Liberation Movement, so that the Sisters in counterleft captivity will have somewhere to turn, to use their power and rage and beauty and coolness in their own behalf for once, on their own terms, on their own issues, in their own style—whatever that may be. Not for us in Women’s Liberation to hassle them and confront them the way their men do, nor to blame them—or ourselves—for what any of us are: an oppressed people, but a people raising our consciousness

toward something that is the other side of anger, something bright and smooth and cool, like action unlike anything yet contemplated or carried out. It is for us to survive (something the white male radical has the luxury of never really worrying about, what with all his options), to talk, to plan, to be patient, to welcome new fugitives from the counterfeit Left with no arrogance but only humility and delight, to plan, to push—to strike.

There is something every woman wears around her neck on a thin chain of fear—an amulet of madness. For each of us, there exists somewhere a moment of insult so intense that she will reach up and rip the amulet off, even if the chain tears at the flesh of her neck. And the last protection from seeing the truth will be gone. Do you think, tugging furtively every day at the chain and going nicely insane as I am, that I can be concerned with the puerile squabbles of a counterfeit Left that laughs at my pain? Do you think such a concern is noticeable when set alongside the suffering of more than half the human species for the past 5,000 years—due to a whim of the other half? No, no, no, goodbye to all that.

Women are Something Else. This time, we're going to kick out all the jams, and the boys will just have to hustle to keep up, or else drop out and openly join the power structure of which they are already the illegitimate sons.

Any man who claims he is serious about wanting to divest himself of cock privilege should trip on this: all male leadership out of the Left is the only way; and it's going to happen, whether through men stepping down or through women seizing the helm. It's up to the "brothers"—after all sexism is their concern, not ours; we're too busy getting ourselves together to have to deal with their bigotry. So they'll have to make up their own minds as to whether they will be divested of just cock privilege or—what the hell, why not say it, SAY it?—divested of cocks. How deep the fear of that loss must be, that it can be suppressed only by the building of empires and the waging of genocidal wars!

Goodbye, goodbye, forever, counterfeit Left, counterleft, male-dominated cracked-glass-mirror reflection of the Amerikan Nightmare. Women are the real Left. We are rising, powerful in our unclean bodies; bright glowing mad in our inferior brains; wild hair flying, wild eyes staring, wild voices keening; undaunted by blood we who hemorrhage every twenty-eight days; laughing at our own beauty we who have lost our sense of humor; mourning for all each precious one of us might have been in this one living time-place had she not been born a woman; stuffing fingers into our mouths to stop the screams of fear and hate and pity for men we have loved and love still; tears in our eyes and bitterness in our mouths for children we couldn't have, or couldn't NOT have, or didn't want, or didn't want YET, or wanted and had in this place and this time of horror.

We are rising with a fury older and potentially greater than any force in history, and this time we will be free or no one will survive. POWER TO ALL THE PEOPLE OR TO NONE. All the way down, this time.

Free Kathleen Cleaver!
Free Anita Hoffman!
Free Bernadine Dohrn!
Free Donna Malone!
Free Leni Sinclair!
Free Jane Alpert!
Free Gumbo!
Free Judy Lampe!
FREE OUR SISTERS!
Free Kim Agnew!
Free Holly Krassner!
Free Alice Embree!
Free Nancy Kurshan!
Free Dinky Forman!
Free Sharon Krebs!
Free Robin Morgan!
Free Valerie Solanis!
FREE OURSELVES!

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