

Quote/Unquote

Revolutionary struggles, indeed, create “new women” who transgress prescribed gender roles, but these women remain disadvantaged in terms of the gendered division of power and resources when the revolution is over. A spokesperson for the Omani Women’s Organization, which was active in the People’s Front for the Liberation of Oman in the mid-1970s, put it this way: “Many men had received education and political experience... before they joined the Front, while women had their first education and political experience when as young girls they joined the Revolution.” Because women had less formal training than men before the revolution, they were again left out of the picture when military demobilization proceeded. In sum, women are more easily demobilized and sent back home, whereas men assume positions of power in new regimes when revolutions are successful. (*Global Gender Issues: Dilemmas in World Politics*, p. 131)

It is in women’s practical gender interests to have the presence of women as state resources exposed and in women’s strategic gender interests to increase the presence of women in decision-making bodies that control resource use and allocation. However, in order for women to cease being used as resources and to avoid abusing resources that come into their hands, the human community – perhaps led by individuals with ecofeminist analyses and sensibilities – will have to develop a different relationship with “nature.” That is, we must undermine the global gendered dichotomy of culture (or man) versus nature that leads to the growth imperative (at any cost) in the world economy. (*Global Gender Issues: Dilemmas in World Politics*, p. 164)

My mother is not a fighter; all [the other members of] my family are fighters, so my mother lets us do as we want. But when my brother got married, she restricted his wife [for example, from going out to the city with her]. She said, “Now she is my daughter and your brother also said she should not go out, so I won’t let her go out now that she is married.” We argued, but she did not agree. She knows that we are outside her authority and says we can do as we want, but not our brother’s wife. (*The Aftermath: Women in Post-Conflict Transformation*, p. 129)

...women used their entry into public life through that “most honorable door,” the nationalist struggle, to push at the boundaries that confined them and to begin to challenge cultural, social, and political norms. By acting at

all, they transgressed these norms; as one observer put it, nationalism had a “releasing effect” on women. Through their involvement in nationalism, they developed over time an internal critique of gender relations that was sometimes muted but often implicit. This involvement could only bring to the fore the contradictions of their multiple identities as women and national subjects or citizens, not to mention other sources of identity such as religion, class, and kin relations. ...A feminist consciousness or “awareness,” however, was not necessarily a pre-existing condition in many women who became politically active in the women’s movements. Consciousness is developed through experience. The experiences of women – their very act of organizing – constituted feminism, despite a lack of explicit feminist consciousness, which sometimes did or did not develop, depending upon the specific historical circumstances.” (*A Social History of Women and Gender in the Modern Middle East*, p. 92)

I am a feminist because rape victims shouldn't be put on trial, made to defend themselves, or be blamed because of what they wore, what they drank, or where they were. I am a feminist because I want control over my life to decide what is best for me and my family, not what someone tells me my role as a mother should be. I am a feminist because I want access to birth control. I am a feminist because women come in all shapes and sizes and are beautiful even if they do not meet the criteria that society has bestowed upon them. I am a feminist because I want equal representation in institutions that make decisions that affect my life. I am a feminist because I want to be paid equally for the hard work I do whether it be in the home or in the workplace. ... I am a feminist because I want children to have access to health care and adequate child care and parents to have work schedules that allow families to spend time with one another. ... I am a feminist because without equal opportunity legislation and affirmative action, I would not be protected from losing my job because I am pregnant, have as many opportunities for education, and legally be protected from being discriminated against by a company because of my sex. I am a feminist because I have a special needs child, a daughter, who deserves to be treated equally despite her disability. I am a feminist because I have two daughters who deserve better than what women have now. I am a feminist because if I do not teach my son that women are equal, who will? (<http://home.earthlink.net/~rubberjoel/id21.html>)