

Ideas of feminism and free love



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Since clip immemorial adult females have been viewed as the weaker sex, and so, over the centuries they have had to contend for each and every right they deserved as worlds to take a happy and content life. Work forces have ever viewed themselves as superior to adult females and claim that even nature intended it to be that manner as they are of course physically more powerful. But they forget that it is a adult female who gives birth to a adult male and that is how nature intended it to be for infinity. Work forces have tried and have been able to non merely do adult females but besides their desires slaves over the centuries. Woman was seen as a trade good and to the horror of the civil society still is in many parts of the universe. She still has no complete right over her organic structure, head or psyche.

This paper intends to speak about the right of a adult female over both her organic structure and head through the Free Love Movement. Sexuality has been a forbidden subject in most of the societies around the universe and it is viewed as shameful to even convey up the idea that adult females can hold their ain desires related to gender. In many Orthodox societies, adult females even today are synonymous with the word award and the talk of rights for them is seen as folly. But over the centuries adult females all around the universe and many work forces besides, have realized that this patriarchal universe would ne'er manus over rights to adult females and so these women's rightists have to take up the battle for their rights whether societal, economic or political. In this argument over rights comes the right of a adult female over her organic structure and how and what she wants to

make with it which eventually gets attached to the bigger topic of feminism. This battle of the women's rightists is really much entwined with the Free Love Movement and has played a immense function in giving impulse to the motion over the old ages and around the universe.

Introduction:

Charles Fourier in this celebrated essay originally published in the 1800s negotiations about adult females and their debauched position: " Is there a shadow of justness to be seen in the destiny that has befallen adult females? Is non a immature adult female a mere piece of ware displayed for sale to the highest bidder as sole belongings? Is non the consent she gives to the connubial bond derisory and forced on her by the dictatorship of the bias that obsess her from childhood on? Peoples try to carry her that her ironss are woven merely of flowers ; but can she truly have any uncertainty about her debasement, even in those parts that are bloated by doctrine such as England, where a adult male has the right to take his married woman to market with a rope around her cervix, and sell her like a animal of load to anyone who will pay his inquiring monetary value? "[1]

He farther goes on to speak about the dual criterions of different states towards adult females though these states are seen as extremely moralistic but in world even they have treated their adult females as slaves harmonizing to him. He states that even the English statute law which is extremely respected and is seen as extremely moralistic is besides prejudiced against adult females. It had given rights to work forces but had degraded the adult females. Even the Gallic are no less different from their British opposite numbers and handle their adult females in the same colored

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manner. Finally, the bondage is the same for the adult females, no affair which state she belongs to. Hence, there is no justness for adult females anyplace.

Similarly, he points out that there was non much difference sing the position and rights of adult females in both the civilized and the barbarian (as the Oriental and African states were referred to by this term) states. He elaborates by adverting the different states like Japan and China. He was of the position that all the states which give their adult females the highest degree of freedom are the best in the universe. Nipponese harmonizing to him were the most hardworking and bravest but in contrast to other states were besides extremely indulgent towards their adult females. Their adult females enjoyed a respectful topographic point and even the Chinese went to Japan to bask the love that was forbidden in their ain state due to their hypocritical impost.

He farther elaborates by giving illustrations of states both civilized and barbarian which supported the fact that a state can merely develop if it respects its adult females. He argues that both the Tahitians and the Gallic are placed truly good off and are besides extremely developed due to the regard attached to adult females. Likewise, he besides believed that the states which subjugated their adult females turned out to be the most corrupt. Possibly, they faced a lack in their moralistic criterions as a state which can non esteem its adult females is ne'er able to derive any regard anyplace.

Ultimately, he reached the decision which came out “ as a general thesis: Social advancement and historic alterations occur by virtuousness of the advancement of adult females toward autonomy, and degeneracy of the societal order occurs as the consequence of a lessening in the autonomy of adult females. Other events act upon these political alterations, but there is no cause that produces societal advancement or diminution every bit quickly as alteration in the status of adult females. ”[2]

Feminism:

The construct of feminism is an merger of motions with the primary purpose of shaping, set uping and supporting equal political, economic and societal rights to adult females and finally ensuing in equal chances for adult females. Though the chief focal point of feminism is on adult females but many women’s rightists are of the position that as it aims at gender equality so, even work forces are a party to it, as many times due to sexism and due to fixed gender functions they besides suffer. Feminism aims to liberate both the genders off and out of the dramatis personae of their traditional functions. Persons who pattern feminism are known as women’s rightists and can belong to either sex.

Feminists over the centuries have fought around the universe and campaigned for adult females ‘ s rights such as in contract, belongings and vote while besides advancing a adult female ‘ s right to bodily unity, liberty and generative rights. They have taken a really strong base against sexual torment, domestic force and sexual assault. For illustration, feminists groups in India have been for long raising their voice for alteration in the Torahs related to ravish under the Indian Penal Code. Feminists have besides

advocated for equal rights for adult females in the economic domain besides as they demand equal wage and chances for callings and to get down concerns which some fundamental laws like the Indian fundamental law have made a portion of their cardinal rights. Feminism over the clip period has been divided into three moving ridges by the women's rightists and bookmans:

First Wave: It chiefly refers to the motions fought all around the universe for the right of right to vote in the 19th and early 20th centuries which were fundamentally concerned with adult females ' s right to vote.

Second Wave: This stage started in the sixtiess and lasted upto the 1980s. It was fundamentally concerned with the motion for legal and societal equality for adult females as campaigned by the women's rightists in the adult females release motion.

Third Wave: It is a continuance of and a reaction to the so called sensed failures of the 2nd moving ridge feminism and began in the 1990s.

THE FREE LOVE MOVEMENT:

Wendy McElroy in her article on free love really clearly has defined the purpose of the motion. Harmonizing to her the free love motion of the nineteenth century fundamentally aimed at dividing the province from affairs related to gender like matrimony, birth control and criminal conversation.

The persons involved were the 1s who should hold a say on these affairs and non the province as it concerns their personal lives and the province has no right as to order to people how to populate. Many of the free love advocators were of the position that sexual Torahs were fundamentally meant to know

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apart against adult females and their freedom specially the matrimony and birth control Torahs. They viewed sexual freedom specially the protagonists of Josiah Warren and experimental communities as a “ clear, direct look of an person ‘ s self ownership. ”[3]

On the other manus Taylor Stohr and other radical authors talk about the motion in regard to America: “ What was free love? The 19th century free love motion was a distinguishable reform tradition, running from the Utopian socialist minds of the 1820s and 1830s through the centre of American anarchism to the anti Comstock sex groups of the 1890s and 1900s and from at that place into the birth control motion of the 20th century. ”[4]The times of the outgrowth of this motion were full of upheaval and alteration in the centuries old sexual conventions. The sexual dealings between work forces and adult females were undergoing immense alterations. The figure of adult females populating off from their households and holding their ain single lives had increased dramatically. “ Things were altering for adult females within matrimony every bit good ”[5]and they were now exercising their will to hold their ain single lives every bit good.

The altering scenario sing the alteration in attitude of adult females towards their gender in America and to exceed it all there was observed an averment of sexual freedom by adult females. The alteration in the form of sexual activity told the narrative really clearly during those times. Womans in America had started holding fewer gestations and child birth and that showed a control over their sexual activities. The free love motion was at that place to back up these alterations and convey about a reform and overhaul these ages old emotional and sexual conventions which had made

stiff regulations of behavior for both the sexes. Free love was more of an individualistic based motion. It emphasized on the felicity of the person and non on societal public assistance. It viewed matrimony as a brotherhood of love and grasp between two persons and non as an establishment for reproduction. It was a reform which was conveying about ego consciousness and it was both related to and still different from adult females right motions.

Over the centuries, this motion has been merely viewed by many as an anti-marriage motion. But on farther survey one realizes that the motion covered a much wider facet. It was fundamentally in resistance to marriage as a legal institute which made the advocators of this motion see the legalisation of matrimony as an effort by the province to modulate the private personal businesss of persons. The nature of the motion can besides be defined as that of civil libertarian as it aimed to support persons ' rights in affairs of sex and love. The motion aimed at promoting healthy democratic public arguments about gender, love and reproduction. It protested against any type of control over any of these affairs by the province through experts. That is the ground why all the protagonists of the free love motion stood together against the Constock Torahs which restricted the persons from larning and speaking about sexual affairs to some select experts merely.

Our perceptual experiences sing the advocators of the free love motion may see them as pro sex but in world it was non the instance. The advocators of this motion wholly denied that they were promoting or back uping any sort of sexual promiscuousness or a licence to indulge. " Indeed free lovers frequently claimed that they were working for a relaxation of external

controls in order to bring forth a greater sense of sexual duty and personal control, a Utopia of lasting, harmonious, monogamous true love. "[6]

Still sex harmonizing to the advocates of this motion did not fall in the same class as sexual intercourse and it is neither on the same plane as sexual climax. Appreciation and encouragement of sexual look not merely for the work forces but besides for the adult females was the basic purpose of the free love motion to the surprise of many people. The motion protagonists were of the position that sex not merely had an of import function in reproduction but it could be viewed otherwise besides. " The ownership of strong sexual powers is not to be deprecated, Victoria Woodhull insisted, in the face of cultural norms to the contrary. If high quality of any sort is desirable at all, allow it be in the animate being, since with this right, all others may be cultivated to its criterion. "[7]

There has been an immense argument since the motion being dominated by work forces or adult females. The motion seems to be an apogee of both. It was at the same time male every bit good as feminist dominated. Many of the male leaders of the motion were unsuccessful in understanding the sexual demands and wants of the adult females though the free lovers claimed that adult females ' s basic gender and their freedom was indispensable to convey about a sexual revolution in the society. The most ill-famed illustration of male haughtiness in regard of sexual affairs in the free love tradition was the Utopian free love community in Oneida, New York, where an highly extremist, radical and a promiscuous sexual pattern had originated — monogamousness was perfectly prohibited and twosomes were broken up by the community itself- and all control was vested with the

laminitis, John Humphrey Noyes. The male domination carries on in the history of this motion excessively every bit good cause most of the histories of the motion were written by work forces and the sarcasm is that these histories have non treated the adult females authors with equal regard and earnestness as the work forces authors such as Victoria Woodhull, and they made male concerns - cardinal to their Hagiographas and female sexual concerns such as contraceptive method were put at the fringe.

“ Alternatively of matrimony based on external moral systems like organized faith and societal convention, free lovers preached fidelity to one ‘ s ego, or single sovereignty. ”[8]“ Individual sovereignty, literally self ownership, was the cardinal philosophy of early 19th century American anarchism. The utmost political orientation of single rights which this represented was used as an economic theory and a political philosophy, but for free lovers, it besides functioned as a theory of single psychological science, which had deductions for sexual behavior. As an option to societal codifications and moral systems, free lovers argued for the importance of each person ‘ s coming to understand his or her ain personal Torahs, and recognized that these might vary from individual to individual. ‘ No two lances of grass, no two foliages are precisely similar, Mary Nichols wrote. I have wants of gustatory sensation, of appetency, of being that are non yours. If I am true to the spirit, the informing life, I shall populate really otherwise from you and your thought, your right ‘ . ”[9]

Since centuries adult females had been considered work forces ‘ s belongings and so the thoughts of sexual ego ownership and self definition were radical in nature. Mary Nichols used the “ construct of single

sovereignty in an explicitly sexual manner, to intend adult females' s right to be sexually self determining, but she used it chiefly in the negative — the right to reject the sexual demands of work forces, including their hubbies, unless the adult females themselves wanted to hold sex. Nichols linked her free love thoughts to the emerging adult females' s rights motion of the 1850s ; she was peculiarly impressed with Elizabeth Cady Stanton. "[10]"

Yet she grasped that her accent on sex distinguished her from them. The thought of self ownership has come to few adult females in different ages, to more in this than in any old age, " she wrote, still the figure is really limited at nowadays who recognize no authorization but their ain. "[11]

FEMINISM AND FREE LOVE:

After traveling through what does feminism and free love base for one comes to admit that both these motions are intermingled and to speak of one without adverting the other would amount to blasphemy. Both the footings adult females release and sexual freedom carry with themselves immense intensions but it has been felt that though both project the manner to a extremely desirable manner of life for adult females there has been much confusion sing the interconnectedness between the two. " Surely any simple equation between the two — adult females' s release and sexual freedom — ceased being possible some old ages ago, when modern women's rightists exposed the sexual revolution of the sixtiess for what it was, a new set of jussive moods on adult females' s behaviour, a irresistible impulse to state yes that was every bit inhibiting as the injunction to state no. Since so, modern feminism has contributed its ain premises to the political relations of gender. The two most of import of these are foremost,

acknowledging the grade to which gender and force have converged in the heterosexual civilization of our society ; and 2nd, asseverating the possibility of sex between adult females and placing "[12]and knocking what Adrienne Rich calls ' compulsory heterosexualism ' . "[13]

The arguments sing sexual freedom and sexual felicity though have asked the inquiries and tried to happen replies as to what sexual felicity is and how it can be achieved but ever from a male point of position. It is high clip that these inquiries were looked into from the point of position of adult females. As Linda Gordon has written " Sex detesting adult females were non merely misinformed, or prim or neurotic. They were frequently rationally reacting to their stuff world. Denied even the cognition of sexual possibilities other than those dictated by the beat of male climax, they had merely two picks ; inactive and normally pleasance less entry, with high hazard of unwanted effects ; or rebellious refusal. "[14]With the transition of clip adult females realized that it is really much normal to hold different desires from their male spouses and their desires should besides be respected in the same mode.

" On the degree of political history, this feminist sexual revisionism has meant rediscovering the societal pureness and moral reform motions and re-explaining them as adult females ' s corporate attempts at sexual ego defence. "[15]" There is a demand for seeking for other facets of the history of feminist sexual political relations, in peculiar to detect if there is another tradition, running aboard moral reform and societal pureness, in which adult females tried to asseverate the possibilities of a different sort of sexual life for adult females, one that did n't affect their systematic subordination. "[16

]The free love motion presents itself as the right motion to be studied in order to understand these facets.

Feminism itself was a aggregation of many things as pointed out by Ann Corthoys. She says that “ Twentieth-century feminism was many things: a set of thoughts, a political and societal motion, a cultural Renaissance. It was a force for alteration and a usher for life. Feminism was the site of the reinvention of the class adult female in the 1970s, and so of its deconstruction in the 1980s and 1990s. Now, at the bend of the century, after many old ages of engagement in feminism in all these facets, one ponders at the significance and hereafter of the feminism that has helped determine our lives. In feminism ‘ s much-noticed episodic history, giving rise to the metaphor of moving ridges, we seem to be at an ebb-tide. Something, the feminism of the last 30 old ages, has ended, and something else seems about to take its topographic point. We live in an obscurely revelatory minute. ”[17]

There has been a impression in the olden times and specially when the church played a really of import portion in the lives of the common adult male that adult female ‘ s primary duty was non to her hubby or to her kids, but to God, as all psyches were finally equal before God, though for their ain benefit work forces have altered this impression wholly. While it was true that St. Paul had said that married womans should be capable to their hubbies in this life, he had besides said that there is neither male nor female in the Lord. “ And so, a new sort of adult female emerges from the ungratified namelessness of the crowds, aloof from the sullen adrift

exhilaration of the 1000s that drift along the pavings and rush through the squares, a figure whose enigma and danger is that she is entirely. "[18]

" Feminist theory emphasizes its review in so far as it focuses on the subordination, failing, and invisibleness of adult females as portion of a gender-based society. Feminism argues that a review of gender socialisation must get down from the position of adult females because general analyses of the human status have tended to overlook adult females ' s conditions.

"[19]

The free love motion had a immense impact in America and though it was really much nowadays in Europe besides the American motion was much more aggressive and extremely supported " Marriage assumed a cardinal topographic point in the societal vision of this new in-between category. Writers and lectors like William Alcott and Sylvester Graham offered a comprehensive position of gender and matrimony, emphasizing personal pureness and the quality of dealingss both during wooing and in marriage. By the 1840s an ideal of true matrimony had been formed that viewed the voluntary determination to come in matrimony as the most basic of all societal dealingss. The warrant that a matrimony was sound, and hence a certain foundation for society, was both the character of those come ining it and their love for one another. True love ne'er varied, but bound two people together entirely and for life. Mediums, who appeared at the terminal even gave love recognition for adhering people together everlastingly. "[20]

" As middle- category work forces and adult females came to see matrimony as the root of all societal dealingss, they besides began to fear that its

corruption potentially destroyed all of society. If something was incorrect with matrimony, as many Jacksonians believed, so all of society was at hazard. By following the displacement in perceptual experience during the late 1840s that led some members of the in-between category to disown matrimony we can derive a clearer penetration into the societal vision of early middle-class reformists and groups. Those who doubted the legitimacy of matrimony shared many of the premises of middle-class reformists of the period. Premises that derived from widely held middle-class ideals. These work forces and adult females looked upon individualism as an irreducible status and feared establishments that limited single liberty, whether churches or authorities. As we reconstruct the free love web that was formed to advance these beliefs we will see the connexions between free love and other ante-bellum reforms, every bit good as free love 's dependance on middle-class premises and values. "[21]

The Free love motion had a positive influence and brought approximately reforms related to other facets of life excessively. Many women's rightists and free lovers compared African bondage to slavery by matrimony and raised their voice for abolishment of both. They were of the position point that a adult female can merely derive equal position to a adult male after she is treated as an equal spouse in matrimony. Free lovers besides supported vegetarianism and teetotaling. " Free lovers believed that sexual intercourse would be less frequent within a free relationship because both spouses would be free of the lecherousnesss engendered by the artificiality of matrimony. "[22]

The American motion finally did hold to the ideas of Woodhull and other free lovers before her. Frankincense, her idea did turn winning. " From the mid-1870s on, the adult females ' s motion began to unify in resistance to the sexual ownership of adult females by work forces in matrimony, and in defence of the rule of single sovereignty, adult females ' s right to state no to sexual intercourse that they did n't desire. "[23]

By 1894, the conservative Christian moralist Elizabeth Blackwell, took the same base as that of Mary Nichols 40 old ages before, said, " In healthy, loving adult females, uninjured by the excessively frequent lesions which result from childbearing, increasing physical satisfaction attaches to the ultimate physical look of love... . The prevailing false belief that sexual passion is the about sole property of work forces, and attached entirely to the act of sexual intercourse... arises from ignorance of the typical character of human sex, viz. its powerful mental component. "[24]

Though Victoria Woodhull was one of the biggest protagonists of the free love motion but most of the respectable women's rightists were dead against her base sing the inutility of matrimony. The women's rightists besides were unable to understand the willingness of the free lovers in sing sex and reproduction individually refering to adult females. Though they agreed to and believe it necessary for adult females to hold a say in " pick and consent to intercourse, but they were every bit committed to the parturiency of sex within matrimony. "[25]" Closely-related to this was a fear for maternity and the power it could confer on adult females, a belief which we have seen even Nichols and Woodhull shared. Many more conservative women's rightists hoped that one time work forces ceased to destruct matrimony with

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their inordinate sexual demands, adult females should one time once more welcome intercourse with them, not for the sheer sexual pleasure of it, but as the fulfilment of their higher maternal responsibilities. Few, even among women's rightists, could see that the equation between female gender and reproduction was a historically specific accomplishment, and that the release of adult females' s gender was a procedure that would not be reversed.

"[26]

Therefore, we can see that the histories of both free love and feminism are entwined. From the late eighteenth century, taking women's rightists such as Mary Wollstonecraft have challenged the so called sacred institute of matrimony and some of them have even gone farther by demanding its abolishment. The advocates of free love never viewed sex as a agency of reproduction and so entree to deliver control was considered as a means to adult females' s independency. The free love motion was even embraced by taking birth control activist like Margaret Sanger.

" Many of the leaders of first-wave feminism attacked free love. To them, adult females' s agony could be traced to the moral debasement of work forces, and by contrast, adult females were portrayed as virtuous and in control of their passions, and they should function as a theoretical account for work forces' s behaviour. "[27]The free love moralss of the sixties and 1970s can today possibly seen as a manipulative scheme against a adult female' s right to state no to sex. Issues sing contraceptive method, matrimonial emotional and physical sexual maltreatment and sexual instruction are the countries really much emphasized upon by the sex groups and the right of the adult females to command her organic structure. The

groups were of the point of view that speaking about female gender would finally assist in authorising adult females around the universe.

FEMINISM, FREE LOVE AND THE GLOBAL Scenario:

Ultimately, one has to hold to the fact that even as adult females all around the universe are contending for their rights in order to populate a dignified and happy life one can not differ to the fact that there is immense cultural distinction around the universe. What may look degrading to an American for a adult female may be wholly normal for a adult female of that portion of the universe. Though these motions fight for a merely cause but deficiency of planetary homogeneousness is one of the of import factors because of which adult females have not been able to derive every bit much out of these motions as they could hold.

But one can not differ to the fact that these motions have brought about chances for adult females all around the universe which were unobserved and unheard in the yesteryear. Women over the past have been seen as depositaries of cultural homogeneousness and it is high clip that this impression was done off with. It is sad in the really first topographic point that adult females have to contend for their rights though I am certain God intended both work forces and adult females to be equal and live a peaceable life together but in world the image is far off from this Utopian thought.

But though this motion has brought about alterations in the thought of the persons around the universe, the concentration is more in the United States of America and the United Kingdom. Other states of the universe have lacked

behind and even today the affairs related to female gender and freedom are taboo in conservative societies like that of India. Though the educated category has still benefited from these revolutions and are rather free in affairs related to caput, bosom or organic structure but most of the other adult females still suffer from inequality in most of the domains of their lives.

It is finally the combination of feminism with free love that has brought about a positive alteration in both work forces as to esteeming the wants of adult females and in adult females as to voicing their demands and eventually holding the backbones and assurance to walk out of the bonds and say no as and when they want to. But still, a batch of work demands to be done globally and it should be seen that cognition about such motions should be made available around the universe through the radical Hagiographas of the protagonists of free love. So adult females around the universe can convey about a alteration in their ain societies in order for a adult females to populate a dignified life and the work forces to esteem her as they respect themselves.

Decision:

After 1875, a batch of research still remains to be done on the engagement and function of adult females in the free love motion. A big figure of adult females had come frontward and supported the motion during and after 1875. But as the figure of adult females protagonists increased so did the differences among them. Nichols and Woodhull were two of the biggest names of the motion. There were many more adult females who were every bit passionate and protagonists of the motion but their names are non that familiar as Nichol ' s and Woodhull ' s. They are: Angela Heywood, Lillian

Harman, Ida Craddock, Lucinda Chandler, Louis Waisbrooker, Lillie D. White, Dr. Alice Stockham and Dora Foster.

The one thing that happened during the nineteenth century motion and binds the free love idea and agitation regardless of the differences that had started cropping up was the agitation by the free lovers against the Comstock Torahs. These Torahs were seen as the newest signifier of authorities intervention in the sexual affairs as the authorities through these Torahs made public address and composing about gender a offense.

But the sarcasm of the motion was that beyond anti- Comstockism there was no other adhering factor left among the protagonists. The motion had started falling apart. The increased figure of adult females take parting in the motion and the rise of a discourse on female gender all lead to many productive dissensions but it besides resulted in to much contention. There arose immense differences among the protagonists specially sing the sexual agreements that would finally free adult females from their ages old subordination to work forces.

After 1875, there came a clip when a figure of arguments started off among the free lovers. These arguments ranged from sex versus reproduction to monogamy versus varietism to sexual restraint versus indulgence. The ideas of the adult females protagonists were going radical in nature. They besides stood up against the intervention of the province in affairs sing birth control and abortion. Subsequently on, if one goes through the feminist history both these were countries where adult females once more came together and fought for their freedom in these domains excessively.

Ultimately, one can come to the decision that in the free love motion we find the seeds and beginnings of the modern epoch radicalism. The motion was the first of its sort and brought out in the unfastened the sexual quandary which were being faced by modern adult females all around the universe. Even today in many parts of the universe adult females can non still speak about gender openly. But in world these quandaries are the one which fueled the fire of the free love motion at that clip and will make it even today. They will convey about an outgrowth of a new sort of feminism - our really ain feminism and that will be the twenty-four hours when the adult females of this universe will stand emancipated in the truest sense of both feminism and free love.