

As a feminist\*, my enemies are the sexist\*\* & the feministist\*\*\*. This Thinksheet attacks that second enemy, now ensconced in the national offices of my church, the United Church of Christ.

\* Anyone who recognizes, & opposes, unfairness to women as women. A current example is the Pope in his just-released letter: women "have often been relegated to the margins of society and even reduced to servitude....an urgent need to achieve real equality in every area: equal pay for equal work, protection for working mothers, fairness in career advancements, equality of spouses with regard to family rights and the recognition of everything that is part of the rights and duties of citizens in a democratic State." (Yes, still no abortion or women's ordination.) Ken Woodward concludes his piece on this (17 July 95 NW 65) with a brilliant quip: "Being Christian, it appears, is always having to say you're sorry." Of course in being pro-choice & pro-women's-ordination, I'm more feminist than the Pope. But he's one of us, not a sexist or a feministist.

\*\* Anyone who fails to recognize, or recognizes & fails to oppose, unfairness to women in any of the dimensions detailed in the above ¶.

\*\*\* A reverse sexist, i.e. anyone who proposes & promotes unfairness to men & the masculine in history & deity. A misandrist, the diametrical of the misogynist; & thus an enemy of both sexism & feminism....(The infix "-ist-" is intensive, indicating the hypertrophied, hubristic, exaggerated, cancerous form of.)

1 As a feminist, a few days ago I complained after hearing in worship the reading of a pre-feminist version of the Bible: "man" was used generically, a practice which now should be limited to the dyads "nature/man" & "God/man."

2 As an antifeministist, I complain against suppressing the masculine terms "Father" & "Son" in the naming of the Trinity. Beginning tomorrow, Craigville Theological Colloquy XII will wrestle with this issue under the title "The Baptismal Formula: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit?" The "questions for reflection" on this "colloquy exploring how we speak of God" are these: "What are the theological issues in changing, modifying, or using alternatives to the baptismal formula? What are the ecumenical implications of changing, modifying, or using alternatives to the baptismal formula? Is a question of justice involved in the use of the baptismal formula? If so, how? What are the roles of scripture, tradition, memory, community, experience, and imagination in forming faithful language? How does language shape belief? How does belief shape language?" The 1980 UCC language-censorship code (euphemized as "Inclusive-Language Guidelines") continues to be enforced in publication & employment. In it, the masculine-divine is strictly forbidden: God is never to be addressed as "he"; & "Father," "Son," "Lord," etc., are sniffed at.

3 It would be impossible for a feminist to be hired to head the UCC's national office on women: the job is strictly for feministists. I support this conviction with some evidence vis-a-vis the present incumbent, whose identity is irrelevant to my point. In a recent UNITED CHURCH NEWS, she asserted that the Bible frequently "addresses" God in the feminine. My counter-letter asserting that the Bible *never* does so (though occasionally it uses feminine similes) was, of course, unpublished. The fact that she thus abuses the Bible does not impress the authorities as much as that she defends feminism. Remember Goebbels: a falsehood repeated often enough becomes a truth.

In a subsequent issue, she attacks the "Our Father" as the only way to pray the Lord's Prayer by presenting us with some father-sexually-abused boys whose supervisor had presented her with the problem. Instead of advising him to teach the boys (1) that God is not "a father" but "Father" & (2) what Jesus meant in addressing God as "Father," she assumed the boys should find some other form of address. The supervisor said that the boys found both "grandfather" & "grandmother" friendly terms: which would she suggest? You guessed it: "grandmother"! She suggested feministizing boys who've a radical need for a positive addressing of the masculine. What was good for the feministist cause took priority over the immediate human situation--which is a good definition of dogma....Feminism is a curse, a disease, in the body of my church.