

*Should "wo-man" go also, as dependent on "man"?
5. Change, yes; revisionism (such as USSR and China are now blushing about), no.

"He died like a man" said his lawyer of the monster-murderer Stephen Judy. It makes me ashamed to be a man. Almost as bad as being a woman. Probably worse. ...This thinksheet is a pearl scratched into existence by my months-long irritation over daffy proposals from an NCC taskforce (and other nutty fashionable pseudo-feminist voices) to desexize Scripture. Anyway, it's a pearl to me in the same sense a pearl is to an oyster: a relief to have been produced.

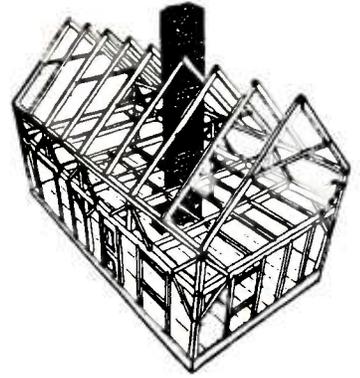
1. Our Lord pushed farther, in the same humanizing direction, the Deuteronomic reform. While rabbinic scholars can dredge up from immediate post-dominical Judaism quotes to match virtually all the Gospels give us of the teachings of Jesus, the latter is distinctive at least in a few emphases. Of these, none is more important than his shift, in metaphors of the divine, from the political ("Lord," "King") to the domestic ("Father") sociomodel. Yet according to these antisexism fanatics, "Father" has got to go. Some pastors have even persuaded their congregations, at cost of considerable alienation, to wash this dirty word out of the Lord's Prayer --much to the mirth of a rabbi friend of mine, who commented "Keep going and you will so fade out Jesus as to have no remaining reason against conversion to Judaism!" When I confronted one of these fanatic pastors with the fact that his substituting "God" for "Father" in the L.P., saying "God" is as masculine as "Father," he replied: "But my congregation wouldn't think so, because 'Goddess' is hardly used at all in comparison with 'Mother'." Such speciousness is one of the irrationalities in Oyster Willis.

2. For years at NYTS, I desexized the hymns we sang at Commencement; and yesterday (15Mar81) I returned from giving an Albany NY retreat for which I did the same. In preaching, I frequently ask the people to pray the L.P. with me as "Our Father-~~and~~-Mother God,..."--preserving the domestic metaphor. I have written twenty-some thinksheets on sexism, and have no doubt that the Movement will, when the dust settles, be found to have done (slightly, but really) more good than harm. It would be both superficial and unjust to say, "Willis is a sexist." Willis has been pro-Movements for a half century, but also pro-reason and pro-fairness. And I have observed that unless one speaks out for reason and fair play, movements go hubridic and develop IFD disease (overblown idealism, verpufft on the rocks of reality [so, frustration], winding up in cynical disappointment--which, without adequate creative intervention, becomes either other-destruct or self-destruct [depression, in the introjective form], despair, some form[s] of death).

3. Such troubles roil up out of not knowing one's place, and not staying in it. In reference to, in comparison with, *whom-what?* In the case of our species, our place vis-a-vis God and vis-a-vis nonhuman nature. Now, in English, only one word serves this locus-function of our species relative to God and nature--the word, "man" (e.g., Ps.8). But when we become amnesiac about God (as our culture has), "man" deteriorates into "male"--as it does also when we lose our proper sense of place vis-a-vis nature (and so rape and pollute the good earth, which is not so slowly becoming an uninhabitable planet). Now, when "man" degenerates into "male," we can either (1) revive "God" and "nature" as the historic linguistic analogs-antonyms, or (2) surrender the generic use of "man." To put one's hope in the latter, as do so many of us feminists, is pitiful and pathogenic (fostering alienation from the great English classics, from our powerful-simple-resonant Anglo-Saxon speech, and from most religious talk in our own time; and spreading IFD disease, as well as promoting a self-righteousness that rejects all, even "man"--using feminists like me, who do not knuckle under the "guidelines" of feminist fanaticism).

4. Under the patriarchal paradigm, in the overall the Bible's central picture of the divine, the primal response-dynamic to the "Father" is obedience, and the primal category of evil is betrayal (for to disobey the Patriarch is to betray him). In order to provide support for other religions--e.g., "Human Potential" and/or "Equality"), one may, like a fundamentalist, proof-text inauthentic support for one's new religion(s). A dismal scene, prostituting Scripture to humanism(s).

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17 Mar 81

PRESIDENT
UCC

Dear Avery--

It's time to blow the whistle on
the daffy antisexist revisionism--
vis-a-vis both the Bible and our Statement
of Faith--now in pell-mell "progress."

NCC and UCC are about to make asses of
themselves in (1) Biblical perversion and
(2) linguistic naivete.

Both China and the USSR are beginning to
blush over their revisionisms. May we, the
UCC, not have to! Please see that my
#1503 falls into the appropriate hands,
and all will be well. (More naivete.)

Grace and peace,