

As a nonworrying watcher of the phenomena swarming within and around "the women's movement," I'm concerned in this thinksheet with a growing subswarm, viz., what I'm calling here "neosexism" (though doubtless others have used the term: I can't hear/read everything). Some notes thereon:

1. I'm "nonworrying" about the wo/man thing because each wants enough goodies from the other to be willing to work out tolerable arrangements if not glorious relationships. The battle of the sexes is, always and everywhere, essentially win/win though however win/lose it may superficially appear to be; and the more it becomes lose/lose, the more it moves toward win/win. Theologically put, fe/male reconciliation is "de rerum natura": it exists in the Source, whose "image" insists on it: cooperation is the cake, conflict is only the frosting (or maybe the cake fallen).
2. The doubtful feminist premise that men have dumped on women more than vice versa assumes that men are, in some sense(s), superior--else women would be the dumpers and men the dumpees.* I resent and reject this inherent assumption of male superiority, and claim that historically men and women have been equally bad news to each other. While being also bad news to God and to the good earth. I hold a high doctrine of sin: I'm a (though highly qualified!) Puritan.
3. No economic determinist, I nevertheless believe that the present feminist impulse comes chiefly from women's increasing participation in breadwinning: feminist rhetoric is a rationalization (in the good sense) of the social fact that most American women now have income independent of the man or men in their lives. One neosexist effect of this is the rising belief, in boys and men, that any self-respecting woman will provide not only emotionally but also economically for her brood: the new man does not want to "support" his woman, and can't respect her if she expects him to. (The children are, of course, much more profoundly "hers" than "his": in their production, no change has happened to his body, which also gets less satisfaction out of them--he's entirely "out of" the gestation-parturition-lactation process, and therewith he has no hope of "equality.")
4. As for God, so-called "inclusive language" excludes the old unity of strong and warm in the deity. Here, neosexism appears in a new male/female division, viz., sexual role assignment of affects. The feminine side of God is portrayed in the traditional (and essential?) nurturant-relational role (as though women are not as strong as men!), and the masculine side of God is portrayed in the traditional (essential?) powerful-dominant role (as though men are not as loving as women!). When clergy converted to a feminist-revisionist public reading of Scripture read Is.40, I count the added "God"s (substituting for the masculine pronouns). It's especially bad when there are pew Bibles: the people's attention is drawn from the message to the pastor's changes of the text, and derive therefrom the unwitting lesson that at least the clergy are free to make the Bible read as they please. (The number of added "God"s in RSV is--count them yourself, but there's a even dozen in just the two vv., 10 & 11! Not to mention all the other possible revisionisms--e.g., no "Lord.") The objective fact is that the Abraham religions (Judaism, Christianity, Islam) have a masculine deity who integrates masculine/feminine, which in humanity appear as split into separate skinbags and psyches. It's historically nonsensical and revisionistic, sociologically impossible, psychologically irresponsible, and esthetically gross to try to obscure this fact and convert the biblical God into an andro-gyn. And (the point of this thinksheet) it's a new form of sexism.

* Or, of course, dumping equality.