

#6! I confess to fear not of being sex-crazed but of being backlashy when at most I'm guilty of premature expostulation, a jittery verbal early-warning-system, in biblical monitory style. My Sexism Thinksheets mean well--are antisexist--even when they don't feel good, which is whenever they caveat against the Movement's hubris. (Nothing special here, related to sex: I perform the same vis-a-vis any Movement.)

1. WM [the Women's Movement] and diction: On its way into the future of the English language, the word "man" has come upon rough terrain. In the country of Secularism it feasted on the dead God and bloated into "Man." Then, in the country of Feminism, famished, it shriveled into "male," then died as "mankind" even before publishers began proscribing, for their editors, its generic use. Since both its history and its phomene are too impressive to remain dead, what of the word's resurrection and future?

2. Or to approach the matter another way, what polar word does "man" imply? "God," of course; and, only secondarily, "woman." But what if "God" is, as is the case for the millions and the media, dead? Then only "woman," an impoverishment that narrows "man" down to "male," depriving it of its genericity/creatureliness vis-a-vis God...of a piece with the shrinking of "heaven" down to mere "sky" and then "space," earth's cooptation of the empyrean [in contrast to Chinese Ti-"Heaven" and the Jews and therefore Jesus' "Kingdom of Heaven" (i.e., God)]. In the WM's outrage against generic "man," the stronger component is not consciousness-raising about women but rather consciousness-lowering, in the general culture, about God. [My Syncon report on "Is there a future for the word 'God'?" could be expanded to "...and for the generic use of the word 'man'?"] To bring this complexity to visual simplicity and to exhibit the current switch to "human" (and "humanity" and "human being"):

A	B	C
1 GOD		[suprahuman, divine (super-human; supra-/super-natural)]
2 creature		
3 "man"	MAN/"man"	"human"
4	male	
5	female	
6 "nature"		(natural subhuman)
7 demonic		moral subhuman

Situation "A" exhibits the primordial context of the word "man" (as, e.g., in Wm. Temple's NATURE, MAN, AND GOD). Situation B is our current God-amnesia, being ratified by refusal to use generic "man"--and resistable if we use generic "man" as a prayer for the return of "God"? Of course the sexual "man" [differentiated as 4 and 5] existed in Situation A but was subordinate--and therefore not printed, just as 1 and 2 (the GOD/creature polarity) are not printed in Situation B even though they are subterranean in most of the Movements. Situation C is the current WM effort to shift from the ambiguous, hairy word "man" to the word "human" used with transexual and moral force [as in the phrase "human liberation," now in a booktitle of Letty Russell's]. Because the emphasis is moral (quality and equality of life), no brackets on 7, which is the eristic pole of "human" thus used; but round brackets on 6 because the polarity is not ontological in choice, and square brackets on 1 because the polarity is even less cosmological in choice....Of the three options, only generic "man" (Situation A) freely opened on the 1-7 range, which theologies West and East are seeking to restore--a sad irony, and a liability for the WM Christians, female and male (of whom I count myself one).

3. I have a blissful marriage, my wife a happy slave and a free woman and an independent human being--all three. This fact (a) illumines and (b) distorts everything I have to say about (a) sex and (b) sexism and (c) homosexuality (e.g., Thinksheet #500) and (d) the WM.

4. If women are = to men, they should not be kept down: that would be unfair. But if they are superior, keeping them down would be fair, to maintain the dynamic sexual balance.