

WOMEN! Join Our Celebration of Independence

WE MARCH ON INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY ON OUR OWN FREEDOM TRAIL THROUGH BOSTON. AT FANEUIL HALL WE WILL PROCLAIM OUR "DECLARATION OF WOMEN'S INDEPENDENCE". (SEE OTHER SIDE)

OUR DEMANDS

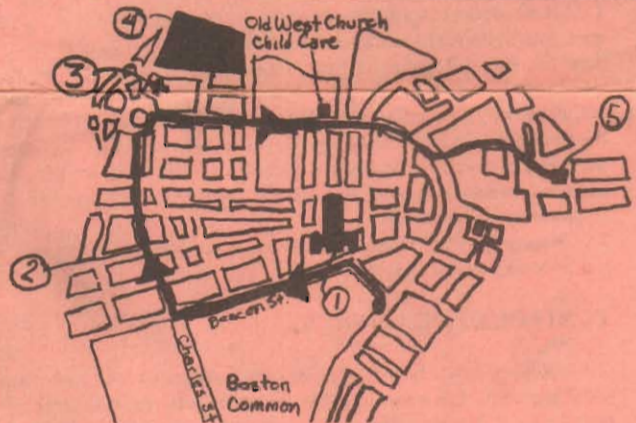
- * Free medical care including abortion and birth control
- * Economic equality - equal pay and equal work for men and women.
- * An end to degrading images of women in schools, news media, advertisements, and entertainment.
- * Free community controlled child-care centers.

WHAT IS INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY?

In 1908, socialist women in New York organized a mass demonstration of working women for suffrage on March 8. After that, March 8 was celebrated annually by socialist women throughout the world. In Russia in 1917, thousands of working women marched for bread. They fought with the police and began the struggle which eventually overthrew the Czar. We thus join our sisters everywhere in honor of International Women's Day.

OUR ROUTE OF MARCH:

The trail of abuses



1. STATE HOUSE: the place where 236 men (but only 4 women) make the laws which deny us our freedom. The birth control and abortion hearings are the most recent examples of the processes by which men legislate to rob us of control of our bodies and of our lives.
2. CHARLES STREET STORES: where women are fashioned into sex objects. These boutiques turn us out as "groovy chicks" trying to convince us that our feelings of inadequacy and self-hate will disappear when we buy their image to hide behind.
3. CHARLES STREET JAIL: a symbol of rampant political repression which now reigns: the systematic imprisonment of our black sisters (and brothers) throughout the country; and here in Boston, the jailing of Bill Baird for giving women birth control information and devices which are their unalienable rights; and the imprisonment of several female students from B.U. for protesting against male supremacist employer G.E. Thirty women are now serving time in this jail for "idle and disorderly" charges, mostly related to prostitution, a "crime" forced upon them by a society which denies them any other means of survival.
4. MASSACHUSETTS GENERAL HOSPITAL: the most dominant health institution in the state, where rich patients get much better care than poor patients even though they pay the same. The medical hierarchy of doctors and administrators enforces male supremacy on nurses and patients by patronizing, intimidating and ignoring them. One of the largest employers in Massachusetts, with a staff which is three-fourths female, it has prevented workers from unionizing and pays men more than women for the same jobs.
5. FANEUIL HALL: the "cradle of liberty", headquarters for the rabble rousers who started the American Revolution. In their tradition, we meet here to spread the work of OUR revolution. At this Hall, the last stop on our trail of "abuses" (from the original Declaration of Independence), we will declare our independence as women and will post our proclamation of women's rights.

BREAD AND ROSES -- A Socialist Women's Liberation Organization, 595 Massachusetts Ave. Cambridge 492-4130

Child care will be available at the Old West Church, 131 Cambridge St. Boston



Declaration of Women's Independence

WHEN IN THE COURSE OF HUMAN EVENTS, it becomes necessary for one sex to dissolve the political bonds which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and of nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of woman and mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

WE HOLD THESE TRUTHS TO BE SELF-EVIDENT: that all women and men are created equal and made unequal only by socialization;

that they are endowed by their creators with certain unalienable rights, which can be stolen from one group by another, but never given away;

that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness;

that to secure these rights governments are instituted between men and women, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed and their unjust powers from the oppression of the governed;

that whenever any form of government becomes destructive to the liberty of a sufficiently large group of people, be they a race, class, political group, or sex, it is the right of these people to alter or abolish it, and to institute new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness.

THE ECONOMY

Women must be enabled to participate in the economy on a basis of equality with men. We believe that the nature of work in our system is demeaning to human beings, and we do not want merely to upgrade women into the alienated jobs that men now hold. However, we refuse to do the low-grade, low-paid, and service work any more. Such jobs must be shared by men and women; as must housework be shared, and be recognized as legitimate work that deserves pay. We take it to be our right:

1. That all persons, including children, be assured a personal income commensurate with the cost of living and independent of their family status.
2. That all employers immediately be required to comply with the law of the land and pay equal wages for equal work.
3. An end to sex discrimination by job definition, which evades the law by defining all desirable jobs in such a way that only men can fill them. Secretarial and executive tasks should be shared between men and women; responsibility should be shared between doctor and nurse.
4. That all employers give priority to the hiring and promotion of women, with preferential hiring to women of races and classes that have been discriminated against. No men must be laid off to comply with this demand.
5. Childcare by men and women, during work hours, provided free by the employer, and controlled by workers and the community.
6. An end to discrimination against part-time or temporary workers, who are mostly female or minors; for example, equal fringe benefits and employment opportunities.
7. Maternity leave for both men and women, with guaranteed return and no loss of pay or seniority.

CONTROL OF OUR BODIES

Women should be able to control their own bodies, to have children if and when they want to, and to refrain from having children if they want to. This ultimately means an end to all laws governing birth control and abortion, with the exception of legal standards of health and safety. It also means that if proper health care is to be equally available to all women, we must have free medical care for all people. We consider these to be our rights:

1. Abortion, birth control devices, and pregnancy tests to be provided on demand to women of all ages, under safe conditions, at no cost.
2. Prenatal, maternity and postnatal care to be provided to all women at no cost. Women should be able to determine the manner and place in which they give birth.
3. Drastic increases in government funding of birth control research; research priorities to be determined by women, since it is their health which is at stake.
4. Higher safety standards for drug company research and regulation of their profits. An end to drug company imperialism in the form of testing unsafe drugs on third world women, and then charging exorbitant prices for them. No testing of dangerous drugs on mental patients, prisoners, or others whose lives are not their own.
5. Free, available and complete information about women's bodies, available to them as a right in all institutions.
6. An end to the double standard which puts prostitutes in jail and lets their clients go free.
7. An end to all forms of environmental abuses; particularly an immediate halt to those which have their most disastrous effects on women and children, such as Strontium 90 and DDT poisoning which poison mothers' milk.
8. While we think population control is essential, it must not be substituted for a sharing of the world's resources between rich and poor countries. Therefore, we want an end to the kind of population control, on the national and international levels, which concentrates on controlling the population of people of color.

THE FAMILY

The family unit should not be seen as the only economically and socially acceptable unit of society. Central to the liberation of women is the provision of alternatives to the present pattern of child-rearing and housekeeping, which results in each mother's bearing virtually the entire responsibility for her children and her home. Such alternatives would go far towards eliminating the untenable choice most women must make between bearing children and developing independent work. We therefore demand:

1. Free, community controlled 24 hour child-care centers, staffed equally by paid men and women, young and old.
2. Alternative forms of good, reasonably priced housing, including provisions for cooperative childcare, communal cooking, etc., for all people.
3. The establishment of a personal income for all persons, independent of familial status commensurate with the cost of living.

The state should not interfere in personal relationships. In this context we demand the abolition of all laws regulating marriage and divorce; the abolition of all laws regulating sexual behavior between consenting persons; the abolition of all laws regulating living arrangements, for instance, laws against cohabitation; and an end to the legal concept of illegitimacy. Children should have a choice of living arrangements with relatives, non-related adults, other children, and any combination of these possibilities. This means civil liberties for minors, they must not be legally penalized or prosecuted by their parents for choosing to live with other people, exercising their sexuality, or doing other things that offend their parents' sense of propriety. Any number of adults should be able to make legal contracts between themselves, other than marriage ceremonies, that will concern mutual responsibilities for each other and for children.

EDUCATION AND CULTURE

The educational system and the media in our country perpetuate undemocratic myths about the nature of women, working people, and black, brown, red and yellow people. They also deny these groups any knowledge of their own history. The media and educational system must be redesigned by the people whom they oppress, to express the past and to meet their needs for development in an atmosphere free from psychological oppression. With respect to women, these things are necessary:

1. An end to sexual tracking at all levels of the educational system. By this we mean not only courses specifically designed for each sex, but also the subtler forms of tracking, such as encouraging boys to be smart and girls to be ladylike.
2. That all courses be thoroughly revamped by women to end the perpetuation of male supremacist myths.
3. That the facts about sex inequality be added as a topic to all school curricula, and that new courses be developed by women in their culture and history.
4. That vocational counselling in high schools and colleges be totally redesigned so as not to channel women into low status, low potential occupations.
5. That trade schools, vocational schools, colleges and graduate school admit one-half women, with preferential treatment of women from races and classes that have been discriminated against.
6. An end to advertising which exploits women's bodies to sell products.
7. An end to sex-role stereotyping in the media.

Bread and Roses