Feminism Past and Present: Ideology, Action, and Reform

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Feminism is back in the news. After a long period when feminist debate has been mainly confined to Web sites and to books that, however well reviewed, did not find a readership beyond that of other feminists, the current presidential campaign has restored gender war to the center ring. There has been an explosion of international publicity and acrimony over the candidacy of Hillary Clinton. Hillary is not, as is too often alleged, the first woman to run for president: she has a long line of strong-willed precursors beginning with Victoria Woodhull in 1872 and Belva Lockwood in 1884 and extending to Margaret Chase Smith, Patsy Mink, Bella Abzug, Shirley Chisholm, Patricia Schroeder, Leonora Fulani, and Elizabeth Dole. However, Hillary, as she collects state primaries like trophies, has progressed much farther than any woman candidate before her, and, win or lose, she is blazing a trail for ambitious women who come after her.

Controversy will continue for many years over the degree to which sexism has or has not hindered Hillary's campaign. Has she been treated more severely by the media than her male opponents? Has she herself opportunistically played the gender card? There can be no doubt that Hillary, for complex reasons, has attracted archaic, mythic stereotypes—the witch, the crone, the bitch, the shrew, the ball-busting nutcracker. The National Organization for Women, which has languished in relative obscurity for almost a decade, recently seized the mo-

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ment to proclaim, in a press release about Hillary entitled "Ignorance and Venom: The Media's Deeply Ingrained Sexism," that "Media misogyny has reached an all-time high"—a statement that, as a professor of humanities and media studies, I quite frankly find ridiculous.

Earlier this year, there was a major intervention by Gloria Steinem, the doyenne of American feminism for nearly four decades, who in an incendiary *New York Times* op-ed defending Hillary declared that "gender is probably the most restricting force in American life"—another highly questionable generalization. Steinem portrayed Hillary as a noble victim of sexism and in effect lobbied for all women to vote for her merely because she is a woman. In the blogosphere and in reader letters on news sites, women Democrats like me who are supporting Barack Obama have been called "traitors" who are undermining feminism. My defense would be that women have been advancing so rapidly in politics—we have female mayors, senators, governors, and even a woman Speaker of the House—that there is no longer a need, if there ever was one, for lockstep gender solidarity. Women are rational creatures who can vote in each election on the merits.

In any case, it can be argued that Hillary is an imperfect feminist candidate insofar as her entire public life has been tied to her husband's career; her past professional performance, furthermore, notably in regard to healthcare reform, has been uneven. The us has embarrassingly lagged behind other nations in never having had a woman leader, but this is partly due to the special demands of the presidency. It has been much easier for women to become prime minister, the leader of a party who assumes office when her party wins an election. The us president symbolizes and unifies a vast nation and must also serve as commander-in-chief of the armed forces, which puts special pressure on women seeking that role. Education, fractured by identity politics, has inadequately prepared women for seeking the presidency—which is why for nearly twenty years I have been calling for young feminists to study military history.

Hillary Clinton's candidacy has done more to awake and re-energize feminism than anything since the enormous controversy over Anita Hill, who testified against Clarence Thomas' nomination for the Supreme Court in 1991. Hence, it's time to reassess. Where has feminism been, and where is it going? And why did feminism recede after its high visibility during the culture wars of the 1980s and early '90s—when feminist leaders were routinely consulted by the media on every issue facing women? Ironically, it was during the two Clinton presidencies that feminists began to lose ground as key players in the public arena. Throughout the 1990s, news stories regularly reported how few young women were then willing to identify themselves as feminists.

Two technological innovations—cable TV and the World Wide Web—broke the hold that American feminist leaders had had on media discourse about gender for twenty years. Suddenly, there was a riot of alternative points of view. Most unexpectedly, a new crop of outspoken conservative women arrived on the scene in the '90s—Laura Ingraham, Barbara Olsen, Monica Crowley, Ann Coulter, Michelle Malkin—who blurred conventional expectations about female self-assertion. These women, who had attended elite colleges and in some cases had worked in the Republican administrations of Richard Nixon and Ronald Reagan, were aggressive, articulate, funny, and startlingly sexier and more glamorous than their dour feminist adversaries. The old Pat Nixon stereotype of conservative women as dowdy, repressed, soft-spoken, and deferential was annihilated. Old Guard feminists, who came across as humorless and dogmatic, were losing the TV wars to a spunky new breed of issues-oriented women. Barbara Olson, who died in the attack on the Pentagon on 9/11, was a co-founder of the Independent Women's Forum, an association of conservative and libertarian women that was first formed as a response to liberal media bias in reporting during the Anita Hill case, in which Northeastern women journalists were directly and perhaps inappropriately involved.

After 9/11 and the invasion of Iraq, gender issues were even further sidelined by questions of life and death and the clash of civilizations in an era of terrorism. There was a resurgence of popular interest in military regalia and history and in traditional masculinity, showing up even in children's toys. Feminist commentary on this development—which was predictably labeled "reactionary"—has seemed out of touch with the times. Perhaps whenever survival is at stake, we need to unite as human beings rather than as quarreling genders. The legacy of 9/11 has certainly presented a problem for Hillary Clinton in her political aspirations. The necessity at this time for a woman candidate to look strong and to show command of military issues certainly led Hillary to vote for the fateful war resolution authorizing President Bush to use military force in Iraq—a decision that has come back to haunt her and that has made her a constant target of that audacious and ingenious female guerrilla group, Code Pink.

What precisely *is* feminism? Is it a theory, an ideology, or a praxis (that is, a program for action)? Is feminism perhaps so Western in its premises that it cannot be exported to other cultures without distorting them? When we find feminism in medieval or Renaissance writers, are we exporting modern ideas backwards? Who is or is not a feminist, and who defines it? Who confers legitimacy or authenticity? Must a feminist be a member of a group or conform to a dominant ideology or its subsets? Who declares, and on what authority, what is or is not permissible to think or say about gender issues? And is feminism intrinsically a movement of the left, or can there be a feminism based on conservative or religious principles?

While there are scattered texts, in both prose and poetry, which protest women's lack of rights and social status, from Christine de Pisan to Anne Bradstreet and Mary Wollstonecraft, feminism as an organized movement began in the mid-nineteenth century, inspired by the movement to abolish slavery—just as the resurgence of feminism in the 1960s was stimulated by the civil rights movement, which targeted segregation and the disenfranchisement of African-Americans in

the Jim Crow South. Feminism was therefore keyed to the expansion of liberty to an oppressed group. And feminism was always linked to democracy: it is no coincidence that feminism was born in America and that that became the early model for British feminism.

In general, feminist theory has failed to acknowledge how much it owes to the Western tradition of civil liberties grounded in ancient Greece, not simply in the flawed democracy of classical Athens, with its slave economy and its severe circumscription of women's lives, but much earlier in the first appearance of the individual voice in Archaic poetry, one of whose finest practitioners was the world's first major woman writer, Sappho of Lesbos. Second, feminist theory has failed to acknowledge how much the emergence of modern feminism owes to capitalism and the industrial revolution, which transformed the economy, expanded the professions, and gave women for the first time in history the opportunity to earn their own livings and to escape dependency on father or husband. Capitalism's emancipation of women is nowhere clearer than in those magical laborsaving appliances such as automatic washers and dryers that most middle-class Westerners now take for granted.

Third, feminist history has insufficiently acknowledged the degree to which the founders of the woman suffrage movement—that is, the drive to win votes for women—were formed or influenced by religion. It is no coincidence that so many early American feminists were Quakers: Susan B. Anthony, for example, was the daughter of a Quaker farmer, and Lucretia Mott was a Quaker minister. It was in Quaker meetings, where men and women were treated as equals, that women first learned the art of public speaking. The quest for suffrage, motivated by religious idealism and paradigms, cannot therefore automatically be defined as a movement of the left. Indeed, the social conservatism of most of the suffrage leaders was shown in their attraction to the Temperance movement, whose goal of banning alcohol in the us finally led to the fourteen socially disruptive years of Prohibition af-

ter World War One. In the nineteenth century, alcohol was seen as a woman's problem: that is, working-class men were alleged to waste the meager family income on alcohol, which led in turn to the neglect or physical abuse of wives and children. Temperance, flaring into public view in the 1870s, was called the "Women's Crusade" or "Women's Holy War." Temperance women gathered in groups outside saloons, where they prayed, sang hymns, obstructed entry, and generally made nuisances of themselves. Many saloons had to move or close. It was one of the first examples in history of women mobilizing for social action.

However, the impulse to regulate private behavior that can be seen here was a persistent element in feminism that would resurface in the virulent anti-pornography crusade of the 1970s and '80s. The nineteenth-century suffrage leaders reacted punitively to Victoria Woodhull, who espoused free love—an issue that Susan B. Anthony and others felt would tar the entire movement and doom it politically. They were motivated by a contrary goal to rescue women from "vice," that is, the clutches of prostitution. Sexuality outside of traditional marriage was seen as a danger that had to be curtailed by moral norms. The preeminence of ideology over the personal can also be seen in Anthony's nun-like devotion to the cause and in her prickly resentment of the way her colleagues were pulled in another direction by the needs of family and children. By the end of her life, Anthony was revered and universally honored, but her obsessive focus on a single issue was perhaps not a model for the balanced life.

There are other omissions or elisions in the standard feminist narrative: Margaret Sanger, who was the foster mother of Planned Parenthood and a bold pioneer of reproductive rights and who was jailed in 1916 for opening a birth control clinic in New York, was a public adherent of eugenics, the philosophy of selective breeding that was adopted by the Nazis as part of their brutal campaign to purify the human race of undesirables.

Huge sacrifices were made by the First Wave feminists, who showed enormous courage and daring in their demand not just for the vote but for reform of laws preventing women from entering contracts or owning property. Nineteenth-century satirical cartoons portrayed suffrage leaders as mutant pseudo-males, flaunting male trousers and cigars and threatening to dethrone men from their positions at home and in the public sphere. When women suffragists first gave speeches in the streets, it was considered a scandalous affront to propriety. It is intriguing that the first states to give American women the right to vote after the Civil War were in the Western territories. But the Northeast, the nation's intellectual and cultural capital, held out. Even in 1915, the state governments of Massachusetts, New York, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey rejected the woman suffrage amendment. It was the frontier states, where men and women worked side by side doing manual labor, that first viewed women as equals, whereas the East was still ruled by the genteel persona of the "lady," with her code of delicacy and decorum. Ladies and gentlemen in the East and Deep South seemed not to belong to the same species.

The nineteenth amendment to the Constitution granting women the right to vote was finally passed in 1920 after a series of increasingly intense protests: beginning in 1907, there were massive parades in New York and Washington with horses, banners, and floats, a lavish pageantry that American feminists had borrowed from their British counterparts. British feminists, led by Emmeline Pankhurst, were paradoxically more aggressive, more drawn to militant confrontation and direct action. Feminists in London broke windows and barged into government meetings. In 1910, they tried to force their way into the House of Commons. There was a six-hour fracas, followed by mass arrests and imprisonment. Barbaric methods of forced feeding were later employed against jailed feminists in both England and the us.

In 1917, the public image of American feminism was damaged by the tactics of women protestors outside the White

House. Holding placards demanding votes for women, they kept a silent, dignified vigil for months. But male passersby turned abusive and then violent when the messages, in that time of war, became more provocative. One sign called then-president Woodrow Wilson "Kaiser Wilson." Hostile crowds began to gather daily; the signs were immediately ripped to pieces and the women themselves buffeted. The demonstrations were finally banned by the police as a threat to public safety and order. Dismayingly, feminists had begun to seem like unpatriotic subversives. Hence it can be argued that the upsurge of anti-feminist rhetoric before, during, and after World War One in both England and the us was not necessarily anti-woman per se but in some cases may have been a comprehensible response to what had become an ideological extremism and fanaticism in some suffragists.

Many of the lively, sexually adventurous women of the Roaring Twenties who drank, smoke, cursed, and did wild dances like the Charleston disassociated themselves from the feminist label. And indeed, the suffrage movement was only partly responsible for the revolutionary change in women of that decade. The disillusionment following the cataclysmic First World War produced a flood of anti-authority sentiment, which weakened the prestige of father figures in government, religion, and the family. Second, there was a mammoth cultural impact from African-American jazz as well as from Hollywood movies, a new medium that so transformed sexual expectations and behavior that demands for the regulation of the industry came from ministers, teachers, journalists, city officials, and women's civic groups. Out of that protest movement would come the infamous studio production code, which ruled Hollywood with an iron hand until the early 1960s.

The 1920s and '30s were a glory period for exceptional, accomplished women, such as Dorothy Parker, Dorothy Thompson, Clare Booth Luce, Amelia Earhart, Babe Didrickson, and Katharine Hepburn. Feminism may have dissipated as a political movement, but women's achievement and public visibility

were very strong. It is depressing that Second Wave feminism would initially dismiss those enterprising, path-breaking women as "male-identified" and allegedly indifferent to the needs of women as a group. I would maintain that inspiring female role models are always crucial to demonstrate what personal ambition and initiative can accomplish and to model an attitude of pride and self-respect that may be invaluable to other, less outspoken women struggling to establish their independence from domineering parents or spouses as well as from capricious or dictatorial bosses and co-workers.

The beckoning promise of that period in women's history was cancelled by the Great Depression, the rise of fascism in Europe, and the outbreak of World War Two. While men were at the front, women had to take over their factory jobs: this was the heyday of Rosie the Riveter, flexing her biceps. But when the veterans returned, women were expected to step aside. That pressure was unjust, but after World War Two, there was a deep longing shared by both men and women for the normalcy of family life. Domestic issues came to the fore, and gender roles re-polarized. With so many weddings, there was an avalanche of births—the baby-boomers who are now sliding downhill toward retirement. In the late 1940s and '50s, movies, television, and advertisements promoted motherhood and homemaking as women's highest goals. It was this homogeneity against which Second Wave feminism correctly and admirably rebelled. But too many Second Wave feminists extrapolated their discontent to condemn all men everywhere and throughout history. In other words, the ideology of Second Wave feminism was or should have been time- and place-specific. Postwar domesticity was a relatively local phenomenon. The problem was not just sexism; it was the postindustrial social evolution from the working-class extended family to the middle-class nuclear family, which left women painfully isolated in their comfortable homes. They had lost the companionship, instruction, and shared labor of the joyous, centuries-old, multi-generational community of women.

Second Wave feminism was launched by Betty Friedan's book, *The Feminine Mystique*, published in 1963. Its analysis of the anomie felt by suburban housewives struck a chord with a broad audience. Three years later, Friedan co-founded the National Organization for Women, the first political group devoted to women's issues since suffrage had been won nearly fifty years before. Two major points were missing in early assessments of Friedan: she was not simply a housewife, as she had portrayed herself, but had been a leftist labor activist in the 1950s. Second, Friedan's debt to Simone de Beauvoir's magisterial 1949 book, *The Second Sex*, was obscured by herself and others. When Friedan died two years ago, the outpouring of testimonials in the American and British media rightly acknowledged her importance but exaggerated the role she had played in women's lives. It is categorically untrue that Friedan single-handedly opened the door for my baby-boom generation of professional women, who were already heading with determination toward college and careers when she arrived on the scene. We had been animated from childhood by the can-do spirit inherited from our parents who had lived through the Depression and war. For example, Friedan did not produce Germaine Greer, who was already a firebrand in her native Australia. Nor did Friedan produce me in the snow belt of upstate New York: in the early 1960s, before Friedan's book was published, I was an adolescent absorbed in an eccentric, three-year research project on my feminist idol, Amelia Earhart. The organized women's movement of the late 1960s was only one important strain among many other elements that characterized my feisty generation.

Almost immediately, a split opened within now which would force Betty Friedan out of the group she had cofounded. Younger, more militant women, alienated by the sexism of their male fellow radicals in the antiwar movement, clashed with the older, married women of Friedan's generation, who were often uncomfortable with homosexuality. Like the nineteenth-century suffragists who feared that sexual issues would derail the movement, Friedan felt that mili-

tant lesbians ("the lavender menace," in her words) would drive mainstream women away from feminism. Friedan herself was pitifully marginalized when Gloria Steinem, a journalist whom she had brought into the movement, stole the media spotlight because of her telegenic good looks. Steinem, who had made her name through infiltrating a *Playboy* Bunny club for an exposé for *New York* magazine, played a crucial early role in normalizing the image of feminists. With her flowing blonde tresses, hip aviator glasses, and soothing voice and manner, she made feminism seem reasonable and unthreatening. In 1972, Steinem founded *Ms.*, the first glossy, mass-market magazine devoted to feminist issues. Its name would enter the language and transform how women are addressed to this day.

Despite her Smith College education, however, Steinem was neither an intellectual nor a theorist. She was a tireless, peripatetic activist, but virtually from the start, she played the role of stern guardian of a victim-centered ideology that did not permit alternate viewpoints. *Playboy*, for example, which Steinem excoriated, had laid the groundwork for the sexual revolution; Hugh Hefner, a descendant of New England Puritans, had been progressively forward-thinking in refining the postwar macho image of the American male toward a more sophisticated European model of pleasure-loving connoisseur of food, wine, sex, and jazz. Steinem's male-bashing was overt: she famously said, "A woman needs a man like a fish needs a bicycle." Meanwhile, she kept from public view how vital a role men played in her private life in Manhattan. Steinem also unapologetically aligned feminism with partisan Democratic politics, thus limiting its reach over time.

In the first ferment over the revived feminism, women athletes such as Billie Jean King played a central role. Like Martina Navratilova after her, the blunt, hot-tempered King adopted a startlingly aggressive style on the tennis court that inspired a generation of women to play competitive sports. The passage by the us Congress in 1972 of Title IX, a section of the Educational Amendments, radically expanded campus

sports programs for women but sometimes at the expense of men's programs like wrestling, which were too often cut by ruthless college administrators.

In the 1970s, women's studies courses and programs were created in profusion. There has been no honest study of the institutionalization of women's studies and of the effects it has had on feminism. Women's studies was assembled haphazardly and piecemeal, without due consideration of what the scholarly study of gender ought to entail. The victim-centered agenda of the current women's movement was adopted wholesale, an ideological bias that neither women's studies nor its successor, gender studies, has been able to shed. Furthermore because so many of the first women's studies professors came from literature departments, science was completely excluded. But without a grounding in basic biology, neither students nor teachers can negotiate the tangle of nature and culture that produces human sex differences.

As a new field, eager to gain a reputation for seriousness, women's studies, like the equally new film studies, was woefully vulnerable to European poststructuralism, which began to infiltrate American humanities departments via Johns Hopkins and Yale universities in the early 1970s. Poststructuralism is uniformly social constructionist, denying that gender has any basis in biology and bizarrely attributing all sex differences to language alone. Academic feminists at the elite schools soon devoted volumes of labyrinthine theory to their interrogation of gender assumptions—a project that they mistook for revolutionary action which would have utopian social results.

In the real world, however, two major events marked 1970s feminism. First was the Supreme Court's Roe v. Wade ruling in 1973, which legalized abortion in all fifty states. This was an epochal expansion of women's reproductive rights, which I support without qualification. Unfortunately, abortion would come to dominate American feminism and eventually, I submit, would distort and weaken it. The second event was the creation by Phyllis Schlafly, a lawyer, Republi-

can activist, and mother of six, of STOP ERA, a group devoted to defeating the Equal Rights Amendment, which was slowly wending its way through state legislatures. This was a watershed moment in American politics, because Schlafly's grassroots organizing would lay the foundation for the future revival of conservatism. Feminist leaders, trapped by their own ideology, which was becoming increasingly dogmatic, demonized Schlafly without adequately responding to the concerns that she had raised—which included basic questions about whether women would be drafted or whether unisex toilets would be mandated. After a ten-year struggle, the Equal Rights Amendment failed in 1982 to pass the requisite number of states, and it died. But this defeat did not stimulate self-analysis among feminist leaders; on the contrary, it hardened their oppositional attitudes. They now saw the world simplistically divided between feminist and anti-feminist.

By the 1980s, a chasm had opened up between academic feminism, then under the fashionable spell of Jacques Lacan, and mainstream feminism, which was geared to action. Central to the women's studies curriculum were the polemical writings of Catharine MacKinnon and Andrea Dworkin, who asserted that pornography causes rape and that it should therefore be banned. Here is a typical sample of their pronouncements: "The pornographers rank with Nazis and Klansmen in promoting hatred and violence." What hysterical agitprop, unworthy of modern women thinkers. MacKinnon and Dworkin's activism led to the passage of anti-pornography ordinances in Indianapolis and Minneapolis that were later declared unconstitutional. MacKinnon's cultural dominance was shown by the way she was virtually canonized in a 1991 cover story of the *New York Times* Sunday Magazine. A parallel phenomenon in the late '80s and early '90s was an increasing campus focus on rape, and specifically date rape. News magazines and TV talk shows took up the theme up with a vengeance. This was an important social issue, yet the way it was promoted on campus and off was turning women once again into helpless victims.

But a sea change was coming in feminism. In the mid-'80s, the explicit sexual imagery and semi-nudity used by Madonna in her pioneering music videos, broadcast to the world through the new medium of cable TV, electrified a younger generation of women. Madonna started the process of liberalization that led to what many commentators, on both the left and the right, have been recently lamenting as the "pornification" of America. Within feminism, a revolt against the MacKinnon-Dworkin tyranny began in the 1980s in San Francisco, where there were pitched battles over lesbian sadomasochism and butch-femme role-playing. By the early '90s, "lipstick" lesbianism had gained national attention—a drastic switch from the image of the lesbian feminist as a drab, granola-eating, earth-shoe-wearing political ideologue. The Third Wave feminists of the '90s—a term first used by Rebecca Walker—took different stances on these issues. Despite her early puritanism about beauty, Naomi Wolf eventually espoused a pro-sex position close to my own, while Susan Faludi adopted the Steinem party line about the systemic anti-feminism of popular culture.

While both academic and mainstream feminists have always claimed to foster a diversity of viewpoints, the reality was far from that. I came close to fistfights with other feminists in the early 1970s over hard rock music, which was then dubbed sexist, and over the question of hormones, which I saw as a factor in sex differences. In the late 1980s, Christina Hoff Sommers, then a philosophy professor at Clark University, hit a wall at academic conferences when she tried to initiate debate with other feminists on fundamental issues. When my first book, *Sexual Personae*, was published by Yale University Press in 1990, that 700-page tome on art and culture was compared by Gloria Steinem, who clearly had not bothered to read it, to Hitler's *Mein Kampf*. When an op-ed I wrote on date-rape for *New York Newsday* in January 1991 was reprinted via syndication across the us, there was a huge reaction, including what was clearly an organized campaign of vilification: the president of my university in

Philadelphia was besieged with calls from around the country calling for me to be fired from my teaching job. Fortunately, the president took the enlightened line that faculty members have the right to express themselves freely on all public issues. I was also lucky enough to have tenure. Younger teachers, then and now, would be far more hesitant to express heterodox views. When, three years later, Katie Roiphe published her 1994 book, *The Morning After*, on campus rape ideology, the vicious attacks on her by the older women of the feminist establishment were outrageous and unconscionable. That, in my view, was one of the lowest, most amoral moments in contemporary feminism.

The stridency of old-guard feminism was intensifying even as feminism was losing the war. The Web, which became a near-universal tool by the mid-'90s, thrives on diversity. When pornography moved to the Web, feminists also lost the ability to track and stop it. While the Web is a spectacular resource for feminist networking and discussion, it may also be one reason that feminism has seemed to fall below the radar, because Web sites can become far-flung niches attracting only true believers.

There was one last grand act for mainstream feminist leaders in the '90s: their staunch defense of Bill Clinton, from the lawsuit filed by Paula Jones in 1994 through the Monica Lewinsky scandal in 1998. Suddenly, the arguments presented about sexual harassment during Anita Hill's testimony were dropped and reversed—even though Jones, a former Arkansas state employee, was making far more serious charges against Clinton than Hill ever did against Clarence Thomas. Although I had voted for him twice, I was appalled by President Clinton's exploitation of the young Monica Lewinsky, a furtive series of squalid encounters in taxpayer-funded office space in which there was a gross disparity of power, which feminists usually claim makes informed consent impossible. The openly partisan tactics and special pleading of feminist leaders during Clinton's impeachment crisis killed their credibility and damaged core feminist issues.

One thing is clear: the feminism of the future will be created by women who are young now. The doctrinal disputes and turf wars of the older generation (including me) must be set aside. I reject the term "postfeminism," which became a glib media tag line in the '90s and is often attached to me. There is no such animal. Feminism *lives* but goes through cycles of turmoil and retreat. At present, there is no one leading issue that can galvanize women across a broad spectrum. Feminism certainly has an obligation to protest and, if possible, to correct concrete abuses of women and children in Third World nations. But feminism might look very different in more traditional or religious societies, where motherhood and family are still valorized and where the independent career woman is less typical or admired.

In conclusion, my proposals for reform are as follows. First of all, science must be made a fundamental component of all women's or gender studies programs. Second, every such program must be assessed by qualified faculty (not administrators or politicians) for ideological bias. The writings of conservative opponents of feminism, as well as of dissident feminists, must be included. Without such diversity, students are getting indoctrination, not education. Certainly among current dissident points of view is the abstinence movement, as an evangelical Protestant phenomenon and also as an argument set forth in Wendy Shalit's first book, *A Return to Modesty*, which created a storm when it was published nine years ago but whose influence can be detected in today's campus chastity clubs, including here at Harvard. As a veteran of pro-sex feminism who still endorses pornography and prostitution, I say more power to all these chaste young women who are defending their individuality and defying groupthink and social convention. That is true feminism!

My final recommendation for reform is a massive rollback of the paternalistic system of grievance committees and other meddlesome bureaucratic contrivances which have turned American college campuses into womblike customer-service resorts. The feminists of my baby-boom generation fought to

tear down the intrusive in loco parentis rules that insultingly confined women in their dormitories at night. College administrators and academic committees have no competence whatever to investigate crimes, including sexual assault. If an offense has been committed, it should be reported to the police, so that the civil liberties of both the accuser and the accused can be protected. This is not to absolve young men from their duty to behave honorably. Hooliganism cannot be tolerated. But we must stop seeing everything in life through the narrow lens of gender. If women expect equal treatment in society, they must stop asking for infantilizing special protections. With freedom comes personal responsibility.