

God' as His priests? And her answer is the same as Pope Paul's: it is impossible.

As a result of the feminist movement, Goldenberg perceives that society will no longer be willing to allow men exclusive access to key positions within the church. Protestant seminaries are graduating increasing numbers of women who will be visible and powerful within their denominations. Eventually, Catholics too will ordain women as priests. But Pope Paul, using 'an impressive knowledge of how image and symbol operate in the human mind,' argued that the priest is a sign to the faithful, and a sacramental sign must bear a 'natural resemblance' to that which it signifies, according to St. Thomas.

Christ was a man; therefore His minister must be a man. It may be easy for Protestants to pooh-pooh this logic, but once the male prerogative to exclusive spiritual authority falls, what happens to God the Father?

The nature of Judaism, the tradition from which Christianity is derived, 'lies in the interplay between a father-god and His sons.' And, according to Goldenberg, 'When Jewish women take a central place in their religion, they will no longer be practicing Judaism.'

Traditional Western religions have changed over the centuries, but not on the fundamental point of equality for women. Religions do not spring out of the air. Scriptures are written by a hand belonging to a human being living in a given society at a given point in time. A patriarchal society like ours must have a male god. Conversely, a society with a father-god and male prophets, with a son-god and male disciples is not predisposed to like women in high places. Every age has interpreted biblical texts in the light of its own needs and perceptions. In the Sixties' search for 'relevance,' all authority was subjected to the scrutiny of individuals who used their experience as the measure of its legitimacy. When we leave the church it is often because nothing in it resonates with our own personal experience. As experience becomes the measure of things religion becomes increasingly akin to psychology.

When father-gods die and we look to psychology for an account of our inner nature, we run up against Freud and Jung. Carl Jung wanted to make psychology into a living religion, to replace the dead ones of Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Goldenberg sees that even Jung, however, could not simply allow individuals to create their own patterns and myths. He had to theorize that a set of archetypes, out there in the beyond (where God used

to be), are the transcendent, unchanging forms that our own minds can only approximate or participate in. Since these archetypes are derived from history and myth, all that can be imagined has in some sense been imagined before. Therefore what woman has not done in the past she cannot do in the future because it is against her nature. We know it is against her nature because she has not done it in the past and there is no mythological figure who has done it, etc. Any woman who does go against the feminine is doing herself psychic damage. Basically, although Jung adds history and non-Christian myth to the scriptures against which we are judged, he insists that individual imaginal processes be sanctioned by something in the great beyond, the collective unconscious or whatever.

This is where Goldenberg goes a step beyond Jung. Jung suggested that modern man could find spiritual insight in his dreams and fantasies. Goldenberg believes that through the exploration of these processes an individual can find the meaning for her or his own life. The process of myth and symbol-making is a human activity we are all engaged in. It is this *process*, not its content, which is universal. Through several suggested techniques we could individually or in dream-study groups learn to understand our spiritual life without recourse to distant, prescribed archetypes.

Another alternative to traditional religions at the moment is feminist witchcraft, a religion that does not divide body from soul, 'man' from nature, time from eternity, good from evil, and play from 'serious' worship. Since the Goddess is not a supernatural deity outside the self, there is no substitution of one idolatry for another. (Feminist witches are encouraged to use a mirror on their altar to represent the Goddess.) Rather 'women control their own inner space by seeing themselves as divine and rejecting the notion of a male god'; by exercising their will they transform themselves and the world around them. There is much strength to be gained from the practice of a religion that advocates self-creation, the constructive exercise of the will and a primary place for women in worship.

This book is highly recommended to any feminist who believes that religion is just a peripheral issue for the movement and to anyone who believes that feminist goals can be reached by means of cosmetic changes to society and society's beliefs. Our challenge to male authority in patriarchy must not stop until we have challenged the top-god Himself.

*Women's Creation: Sexual Evolution and the Shaping of Society*, by Elizabeth Fisher, Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1979, 484 pp.

### Meg Luxton

This book poses the fundamental feminist question:

How did civilized man come to be dominant over women?

How did it get to be the way it is between the sexes? (p. 4).

Fisher draws together evidence from a wide range of sources and presents us with an answer. The result is a compelling book, provocative and bold in its scope.

The main contribution of this book lies in Fisher's understanding of the importance of sexuality as a crucial material force in human existence. She has amassed extensive empirical data demonstrating an active sexuality for women and a free sexuality for humans. She has also integrated this data into a general reconstruction of human history.

Fisher's main argument is that male dominance/female subordination is not a universal fact of human existence, is not rooted genetically in our biology. Instead it is an historical development that occurred relatively recently in human history. The book begins with a careful reconstruction of the slow process by which hominids evolved into humans and argues that for the first two hundred thousand years of human life, the relations between the sexes were non-oppressive. Along the way she develops a biting critique of those theorists who argue that human nature is innately aggressive and that male dominance is a biological universal. Instead she demonstrates that a complementarity between the sexes prompted human development and shows the ways in which women have made a special contribution.

That being so, how did modern day inequalities develop? Fisher believes that the transition from gathering and hunting to agriculture and animal husbandry established the conditions that led to women's oppression. Essentially she argues that two factors became relevant for the first time. The economics of farming required more labour so there emerged a social need for women to have more children. At the same time, the changed relationship with animals led to the 'discovery of fatherhood.' These were eventually combined and resulted in the repression of female sexuality, male control over women's ability to have children and ultimately male dominance over women.

<p>When women and men discovered that sex was connected with reproduction, things changed for both of them. Once it became connected with children, it took a different dimension. Woman became a producer of children, not automatically but through her capacity for intercourse, and children themselves, in a settled agricultural community, became a source of wealth (p. 259).</p>	<p>The real test for this book will be if it helps us debate these issues from a more informed and hence stronger position. I think it will.</p>	<p>are not a class and men are not the enemy although they benefit from institutional sexism). In short, the collection would be excellent for use by a study group, especially one including some women who already have a clear theoretical analysis.</p>
<p>Fisher is positively dazzling in her ability to make clear highly complex processes without simplifying them. Having made her general point, she then concentrates on an integrated look at the specific cultures which are the historical antecedents of our society. She provides excellent historical material on the development of civilization in the Middle East and later in Greece and Rome, showing how sexual repression plays a central role in the development of private property, war and class society.</p>	<p><i>Women in Class Struggle</i>, by Marlene Dixon, Synthesis Publications, 1978, pp. 83, paperback, \$3.00.</p> <p><i>Capitalist Patriarchy and the Case for Socialist Feminism</i>, edited by Zillah Eisenstein, Monthly Review Press, 1979, pp. 394, paperback, \$7.45.</p> <p><i>Feminism and Materialism</i>, edited by Annette Kuhn and AnnMarie Wolpe, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978, pp. 328, paperback, \$14.95.</p>	<p>Let me be more specific about this material and its problems. The mix of abstract theory and political polemic results in a failure to distinguish what is real about women's position and what is mystification. For example, discussing the relationship between husband and wife, Dixon argues that the woman is paid for her household work out of the husband's wage and thus is not the unpaid dependent she appears to be. Dixon is revealing here a reality not clearly apparent. Later, however, she maintains that the domestic labourer is 'a non-productive dependent' (50). This appearance, which she previously penetrated, now becomes reality for her. Similarly, early in the book Dixon argues that the relation between husband and wife is a class relation: she the proletarian, he the bourgeois. As a statement about reality this is clearly problematic. However, when she later refutes 'wages for housework' arguments, she correctly points out that the domestic labourer is not in an employee-employer relationship with her husband.</p>
<p>Integral to the success of the first organized bureaucracies was the distortion of human sexuality into actual and symbolic production, the repression of female sexuality, and the linkage of war and sex for men (p. 331).</p> <p>The book raises numerous questions but for me the most important is the one she ends with. The assumption of her argument is that women's oppression is centrally linked to all other social oppressions. She also assumes that oppression, sexual repression, dominance hierarchies and warfare are locked together in an ongoing cycle, which if it continues, threatens the very survival of the world. She asserts that we can only know how to break the cycle if we understand how it began:</p> <p>There will be no solutions, only increasing hierarchy and lack of freedom if we do not get at the causes, the oppressive principle growing out of the relation between man and woman which has mushroomed to be the greatest danger to the world's survival. As I see it, the dominance hierarchy is the underlying problem (p. 404).</p> <p>Knowing how it began is important but what we really need is to develop strategies to change the present. How does an understanding of the central importance of sexual repression translate into political action? What are the implications of this for the Women's and Lesbian Movements?</p>	<p><b>Bonnie Fox</b></p> <p>Although the late 1960s and early 1970s generated an impressive number of serious analyses of the position of women, these were typically (and not surprisingly) crude. Those of us desiring a more complex analysis of the specific ways women are exploited and oppressed under capitalism were left without a book that elaborated a satisfactory framework for understanding woman's position—one beginning with a class analysis of women's work but giving sexuality and childbearing equivalent consideration. Therefore, several Marxist feminist books that have recently appeared merit serious attention.</p> <p>Marlene Dixon's book consists of seven essays, the first five involving a mix of theoretical analysis of woman's position under capitalism and a consideration of strategies for change, and the last two consisting of political analyses of the changing Women's Movement. This joint consideration of theory and strategy is essential for the future of women's struggles for liberation. Unfortunately, Dixon's theoretical attempts suffer from what appears to be the construction of theory according to the strategic conclusions to which it leads. Nevertheless, Dixon's critique of the Women's Movement and her class analysis of its failure in the United States are both serious and authoritative—and demand that even those who disagree with their content consider them carefully. On the whole, the political analysis in this book raises the key issues confronting women activists. The theoretical analysis, though often weak and sometimes contradictory, nevertheless makes some crucial points (e.g., she argues: the root of women's subjugation is the family as <i>organized under capitalism</i>—as a privatized sphere of personal service; women</p>	<p>Dixon's discussion of bourgeois morality is her key theoretical contribution: it indicates a framework with which to analyze woman's position. Arguing that the issue of sexuality must be central in any analysis of woman's position, she describes the importance to capital of control over the supply of future labour, in part through a husband's control over his wife's labour power and her reproductive power.</p> <p>While this issue of control over woman's reproductive power (and thus over future labour) extends the boundaries of class analysis towards development of a full understanding of woman's position, some theorists have preferred to abandon further elaboration of a class analysis and take up instead a formulation of the concept of 'patriarchy.' There are problems with this concept, however. First, because it springs from the assumption of the <i>universal</i> subordination of women to men, 'patriarchy' tends to be an historically unspecific concept. Moreover, in turning attention away from historical and cross-cultural variations in woman's position, its use usually excludes the obvious methodology for determining factors causally related to woman's status—namely, the examination of variations in woman's status and their relation to variations in other</p>