1996

Equity Verses Gender Feminism: Trends in the American Feminist Reseacher

Jennifer A. Muryn
Loyola University Chicago

Follow this and additional works at: https://ecommons.luc.edu/luc_theses

Part of the Counseling Psychology Commons

Recommended Citation
https://ecommons.luc.edu/luc_theses/4199

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Theses and Dissertations at Loyola eCommons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Master's Theses by an authorized administrator of Loyola eCommons. For more information, please contact ecommons@luc.edu.

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-No Derivative Works 3.0 License.
Copyright © 1996 Jennifer A. Muryn
Copyright by Jennifer A. Muryn, 1996
All rights reserved.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES........................................ iv

Chapter

1. INTRODUCTION...................................... 1
2. LIBERAL FEMINISM.................................. 3
3. MARXIST FEMINISM.................................. 13
4. RADICAL FEMINISM.................................. 22
5. METHOD............................................. 28
6. RESULTS............................................. 33
7. DISCUSSION......................................... 36

REFERENCE LIST...................................... 39

VITA................................................ 41
LIST OF TABLES

Table

1. Four Instances of Attacking Gender Feminism Within an Equity Feminist Article .................... 33

2. Subject Content Compared to All Time Periods..... 34
CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Most Americans associate the 1970s with the beginning of the feminist movement. However, feminist thought has been traced back to the 1700s. Different countries, with different economic systems, have generated quite different values and ideas. As a result there are three main types of feminism in present day America: liberal (also called equity feminism), marxist (also called socialist feminism), and radical (also called gender feminism). These three groups differ in their belief on what causes women's oppression.

Liberal feminism emphasizes the equal rights tradition; marxist feminism emphasizes the economic and class system; radical feminism emphasizes patriarchy and woman centeredness (Storkey, p. 57). Historically American feminists who have achieved the most within the women's movement have been liberal feminists (Gatlin, p. 115, 128-132).

Marxist feminists have also made important contributions to the movement. However, the premise of marxist feminism operates in a socialist society as described by Karl Marx. Since America's economic system is capitalism, the feminists belonging to this group have concentrated their efforts on overthrowing the entire system
rather than focussing on advances within the system.

Radical feminism emerged in the late 1960s and the number of groups supporting this type of feminism "began to multiply rapidly [however] many quickly disappeared," (Gatlin, p. 128). Radicals attack the notion of patriarchy and male dominance. They advocate women centered groups where everyone is equal and no one is leader or dominator. These groups have been criticized by other feminists: "'Unstructured groups...may be very effective in getting women to talk about their lives; they aren't very good for getting things done'," (Gatlin, p. 132). These three branches of feminism will be analyzed in further detail from the perspective of modern America.
CHAPTER 2
LIBERAL FEMINISM

Liberal feminists seem more optimistic than the other two types of feminism; they believe it is possible to achieve equality between the sexes under the existing capitalist system. Unlike Marxist feminists, liberals do not challenge the fundamental system. They are very much in favor of individual freedom of choice. "Liberal feminism has been the most popular type [of feminism] in the U.S. because it seeks to extend already accepted American values and practices to women," (Gatlin, p. 120).

John Stuart Mill is one of the first male liberals concerned with feminist issues who fought for women's suffrage in 1865 (Storkey, p. 62). He wrote against sexism in his 1869 publication titled The Subjection of Women which concentrated on the "legal subordination of one sex to the other," (Cooper & Cooper, p. 149). Mill also attacked the notion of equating the musculature of a female to her psychological inferiority. Mill condemned medicine for making the biological differences psychological differences (Cooper & Cooper, p. 149-175). Ironically this is still an issue in present day America.

The Subjection of Women also critiques the quality of
education for women by stating that men have "wanted more than simple obedience [from women] and they have turned the whole force of education to effect their purpose," (Cooper & Cooper, p. 149-176). Education for females had three goals in mind: to make women more attractive to men, to properly socialize women, and to prepare them to teach their own children.

Liberal and radical feminists have a strong belief in having options and opportunities available to women. Mill was in favor of the freedom of choice for women. Marxist feminists, because of their theoretical base, limit women's (as well as men's) options. Choices of childbirth, marriage, and career are a mark of modern America and are available to this extent only under a capitalist system. Mill is truly, in the tradition of liberal feminism, advocating what is "most advantageous to humanity in general without distinction of sex," (Cooper & Cooper, p. 154).

Another distinction between liberal and radical feminism is that the former emphasizes women's liberation while the latter emphasizes sexual liberation. Women's liberation concentrates on equality and freedom for the woman as a whole. Sexual liberation focuses on the right of women to make choices that concern her sexuality independent of men (Storkey, p. 92). Though sexual liberation is important if this one aspect of the women's movement is
overvalued the risk of equating women with their sexuality is present. That is exactly what men have been condemned of doing to women since the beginning of patriarchy.

Radicals condemn liberals for their lack of attention to women's sexuality. There is an "androgyne theory" within liberal feminism which downplays the importance of sexual differences (Castro, p. 3). This is often misinterpreted by radicals as saying there are no sexual differences between males and females. It is more accurate to say androgyne theory is an idea which is "based on the premise that both men and women are, above all, human beings, and which asserts the equality of the sexes in the mutual reciprocity, seeing each sex at this stage as the necessary complement of each other," (Castro, p. 3). Unlike radicals, liberal "feminism is the refusal to define all women, and therefore all human beings, solely in terms of sex," (Castro, p. 2).

The person who is probably most associated with the liberal feminist movement is Elizabeth Cady Stanton. She was not a philosopher and did not initiate the feminist movement. However, she is considered to be the "ablest exponent of equity [liberal] feminism" according to feminist philosopher, Christina Hoff Sommers (Sommers, p. 22).

Like many other feminists of the 1800s, Stanton started as an abolitionist fighting against slavery. In 1840, on her honeymoon to England, she witnessed the "fight over the
seating of the women delegates at the antislavery convention," (Riegel, p. 48). In 1854 Stanton addressed the New York State legislature with, "We ask no better laws than those which you have made for yourselves. We need no other protection than that which your present laws secure to you," (Sommers, p. 22).

One dream Stanton had for women concerned dress reform. She believed that for women to be able to enter male dominated fields the socially appropriate hoop dress needed to be replaced with slacks (Riegel, p. 51-53). For a young American it is hard to imagine a time when slacks for women were considered socially unacceptable and inappropriate.

Stanton, in the tradition of a true liberal feminist, was described as being "more pro woman than anti man. She felt no antagonism toward individual men and objected to men only in the general sense that they tyrannized over women," (Riegel, p. 55). This prohumanitarian view, which radical feminism lacks, is characteristic of liberal feminism. Radical feminists do object to men, in varying degrees of extremity as will be discussed in Chapter Four.

As with Mill and many other reformists, Stanton believed in improving the quality of education for females. She believed in similar training and rules for boys and girls and maintained that this all begins in the home. Her view was that "boys should be taught to cook and sew, so
that they could at least mend their own clothes and replace lost buttons," (Riegel, p. 57). Reforming male training, and not focusing only on the female, to achieve a state of equality is a distinguishing characteristic of liberal feminism.

Stanton met Susan Brownell Anthony in 1851 and these two women worked toward gaining the right to vote. In 1892 Anthony took over the office of President of the National American Woman Suffrage Association which Stanton formerly held (Riegel, p. 55).

Prior to holding this esteemed political office, Susan B. Anthony, along with several other women registered and voted in the election of 1872. She was arrested and indicted a few weeks later for illegal voting. The trial moved from Rochester to Canandaigua where Anthony made twenty-one speeches in twenty-two days. Just before being sentenced guilty the judge asked her if she had anything to say on her own behalf. "She responded immediately...and proceeded to say them in spite of frantic poundings of his gavel by the judge," (Riegel, p. 80). Anthony and each of the election inspectors were fined though she refused to pay and was eventually pardoned by President Grant. Ironically, none of the other illegal female voters were ever brought to trial (Riegel, p. 79-80).

In the optimistic liberal tradition Susan B. Anthony
was quoted as stating "the day will come when man will recognize woman as his peer, not only at the fireside, but in the councils of the nation. Then, and not until then, will there be perfect comradeship, the ideal union between the sexes, that shall result in the highest development of the human race," (Riegel, p. 81). To believe that equality is possible under the existing system is distinct to liberal feminism.

The work of Mill, Stanton, and Anthony was the result of feminists of the 1700s who laid the philosophic foundation for feminist theory. Mary Wollstonecraft wrote *Vindication of the rights of Woman* in 1792. She proposed the view, radical for the late 1700s, that there should be equality between the sexes (Cooper & Cooper, p. 25-50). She opposed the status quo by condemning the popular belief that biological differences between the sexes were considered psychological differences. This is the same concept Mill was credited for condemning in 1869, almost 100 years after Wollstonecraft made an issue of it.

These differences between the sexes, and thus justification for women's subordination to men, was seen as "essentially reasonable and consistent with the natural order" of things (Cooper & Cooper, p. 16). Wollstonecraft's contribution to feminism was her early philosophic analysis of women's lack of liberation. She maintained that humans
have the ability to reason and refuted the argument of the "natural order" of things as an excuse to keep women dependent on men. This early analysis probably laid the foundation for Mills' later views.

One of Wollstonecraft's goals included removing sex discrimination from women's education. She believed that any mental inferiority women displayed was due to lack of formal education, free from sexual discrimination. Another of her goals in feminism included altering the institution of marriage which "entrapped" her female friends and family. Ironically, she did marry, however, her and her radical husband renounced the idea of marriage by living in separate dwellings (Cooper & Cooper, p. 22-24). Mary Wollstonecraft was an important historical figure whose work was cited well into the 1840s (Cooper & Cooper, p. 22).

Another liberal feminist who fought for women's suffrage and higher education was Sarah Moore Grimke. Even as a child she was strongly in favor of education; she studied her brothers' preparatory lessons and joined them in debates. She saw education as a key to independence and on one occasion was punished for teaching a slave girl how to read. Grimke believed that her intellect was "repressed by the false idea that a girl need not have the education I coveted," (Cooper & Cooper, p. 51-64).

The result of her self motivation was the publication,
Letters on the Equality of the Sexes and the Condition of Woman. This 1837 publication "paid more attention to womans’ legal disabilities than any prior American feminist work," (Cooper & Cooper, p. 53). Sarah Moore Grimke and her sister Angelina worked toward changing the law which permitted slavery. In 1838 they were the first women in legislative history to be taken seriously (Cooper & Cooper, p. 51-64).

The Grimke sisters continued their political activity even into their elder years. At 78 years of age Sarah, along with Angelina, "led a group of suffragists and their escorts through driving snow" in order to vote, as a symbolic gesture (Cooper & Cooper, p. 62). Sarah Grimke at 79 years of age "peddled 150 copies of John Stuart Mill’s Subjection of Women door to door," (Cooper & Cooper, p. 62).

Through the tenacious efforts of liberal feminism women have achieved the right to vote, changes in laws affecting women, and the acceptability of higher education. As of the late 1980s and early 1990s, 55 percent of all college students were females. Females comprised 52 percent of all B.A.’s and 52 percent for all M.A.’s (Sommers, p. 160). Education for women has come a long way since the days of overtly denying females of a formal learning experience equal to that of males. Historically liberals are the only feminists who have been credited with these accomplishments.
The 1700s and 1800s was an era for much change in the women's movement. At that time the proposed changes asserted by liberal feminists were considered to be very radical. Those changes in view which were unthinkable in the 1700s are now indoctrinated into our thinking in the 1990s. This has often been misinterpreted as the end of liberal feminism: "The impression often given, now, is that liberal feminism has really petered out by the 1960s and has not emerged significantly since," (Storkey, p. 65).

This same author acknowledges that liberal feminism is responsible for women attaining their current status, which is much more favorable than in the 1700s, and how liberal feminist beliefs are so embedded in western ideology. Incorporating the liberal feminist ideology into the mainstream would make it seem like it has "petered out" when in fact it has become the status quo.

A disadvantage of liberal, as well as radical feminists, is that the majority of liberals have been middle to upper middle class. Their feminist theories and solutions have helped only those in their social class. Wollstonecraft advised women to leave their children in their servants care; this excludes the poor who don't have servants (Cooper & Cooper, p. 15-24). The Grimke sisters were aristocrats; this allowed Sarah more time for intellectual pursuits such as discussions and debates. John
Stuart Mill was an "able, educated, affluent man" whose audience was primarily of his own class (Storkey, p. 61-62). Stanton had the "physical advantages of a well-to-do home" with her father being a "prosperous" lawyer (Riegel, p. 45). Marxists condemn these same class advantages.
CHAPTER 3
MARXIST FEMINISM

Marxist feminists believe that to eliminate sexism and emancipate women the capitalist system needs to be replaced with a socialist system. Analyzing socialism is not an easy task since socialists range in their degree of how much the social order should be changed. "The terms socialism and communism were once used interchangeably," (Funk & Wagnalls). The term communism now is defined by the philosophy Marx and Engels proposed in their Communist Manifesto of 1848. Since 1917 "communism" has been reserved for those who "regard the Russian Revolution" as the model as Marxists act in accordance with.

The following will be concerned only with moderate socialism which believes in eliminating capitalism but lacks the authoritarian leadership associated with communism. According to Karl Marx, "the more productive the system became, the more difficult it would be to make it function; The more goods it accumulated, the less use it would have for these goods," (Funk & Wagnalls). The society would produce only what it needed and none of the excess which is prevalent under capitalism. Power would be removed from the elitist few and distributed equally among workers.
Socialism aims to eliminate the class system; there would be no rich or poor class. Workers would collectively control the means of production and this would end "poverty, injustice, exploitation and oppression," (Rees, p. 9).

Marxist feminists believe that sexism is an effect of capitalism and if class structure were to be eliminated women would be liberated. Ironically, most marxists were "uninterested in, if not directly opposed to, womens' suffrage" and this is often interpreted as sexism in Marxist theory (Storkey, p. 73). Other marxist leaders were "quite clear that socialism and feminism were not to be united," (Storkey, p. 73).

Another belief of Marxist feminists is that social structures are more significant than independence of the individual. This is unique only to this type of feminism; liberal and radical feminists both emphasize the importance of womans' freedom of choice.

Charlotte Perkins Gilman, an American social evolutionist, wrote Women and Economics: A study of the Economic Relation Between Men and Women as a Factor in Social Evolution (1898) which promoted the idea of physical fitness for both sexes. Gilman maintained that women should be as physically fit and as agile as men. This publication drew heavily from Darwin and was very popular; by 1911 Women and Economics was available in eight languages.

Gilman was known as a social theorist and campaigned
for socialism as well as the right to vote for women. As a social evolutionist she believed that "male domination seriously limited the physical and social progress of the whole human race," (Cooper & Cooper, p. 185). Therefore women's liberation was seen as affecting the macrocosm and not just to better this society during this time in history.

Lester Frank Ward was sympathetic to feminist concerns and was a friend of Gilmans'. Ward acknowledged that there is a possible difference between male and female minds but believed that "intellect is one and the same everywhere," (Cooper & Cooper, p. 185). This belief would later have an impact on reforms for women's education. As far as social changes go, Ward maintained that "the way to civilize the race is to civilize woman" and thus promoted many of the same issues Gilman stood for.

Another American feminist, Margaret Higgins Sanger, was a member of the socialist party, though she is more accurately described as an anarchist. Her cause was birth control and she worked with expectant mothers in the poor areas of New York City.

Sanger's commitment to birth control directly opposes Marxism which maintains that to limit the population via birth control restricts the number of proletariats necessary to overthrow capitalism. Sanger wanted to end the problems associated with unwanted pregnancies in the industrial working class, such as the dangerous, self-inflicted
abortions and poor quality of life. She was one of the first few feminists to draw a connection between reproduction and workers' standard of living (Cooper & Cooper, p. 224-234).

Sanger believed in the hidden agenda of government to control women's reproductive functions and she fought against it. The 1873 Comstock Law prohibited "the mailing, transporting, or importing of obscene, lewd, or lascivious articles, including all contraceptive devices and information," (Cooper & Cooper, p. 226-227). She fought against this law by writing for two underground publications: Woman Rebel and an anarchist friend's paper Family Limitation (Cooper & Cooper, p. 225-227). These papers were written for working class females and included methods for birth control. Family Limitation "was ultimately translated into thirteen languages and reprinted in more than ten million copies," (Cooper & Cooper, p. 227).

Sanger was eventually indicted on nine counts of violating Comstock Law and fled to England to avoid trial. Almost a year later Sanger returned to America to face trial. She gained public support via lecture tours and even opened up a birth control clinic with her sister, Ethel Byrne, in an immigrant section of Brooklyn (Cooper & Cooper, p. 231). Both sisters were imprisoned for thirty days; Ethel fasted as protest and there was so much public outrage that the governor ordered her release. Sanger's
conviction was upheld but as a result of the sisters' work law was redefined to legalize physician operated birth control clinics.

The empowerment of women to make decisions concerning their reproductive functions is a major feminist accomplishment. Years later the New York Tribune wrote that, "It will be hard to make the youth of 1967 believe that in 1917 a woman was imprisoned for doing what Mrs. Byrne did," (Cooper & Cooper, p. 232). The women's movement has come a long way.

Despite these accomplishments Marxist feminism still has not accomplished its goal of replacing America's capitalist system with socialism. In terms of women's liberation this may be a good thing, for socialism has not historically emancipated women. Frances Wright, a Scottish-American, set up a colony in 1828 which brought men, women, children, and freed slaves together. "The colony was to stand for abolition of slavery, for women's emancipation, for atheism, and for socialism. It was a very radical utopia, but one which turned sour as it became discredited through permissive sexual relations and new forms of exploitation replacing the old. The humanistic vision proved too optimistic about the inherent goodness of human beings," (Storkey, p. 72).

This is not the only failure to liberate women under socialism; the problem is more complex than simply changing
the means of production. "But even after removal of productive properties from the once ruling classes, women's oppression has continued in socialist countries," (Weinbaum, p. 14).

The idea of production for the collective good of a society is better in theory than in practice. The American industrial revolution of the early 1900s was characterized by individuals who pooled labor and resources within their families. Females would hand their pay envelopes over to their father. So women went from being unpaid, exploited workers to being paid exploited workers who still did not reap any reward, such as independence, for their labor (Weinbaum, p. 40-42). This is a patriarchal component of socialism that, on the microlevel of family, would not disappear on the macrolevel of society. The idea of collective good in these early 1900s families still gave men the power to exploit women.

Another problem when historically analyzing socialism as a means to liberate women is in considering the male's role. For example, socialist literature reports that prior to the Chinese Revolution of 1911 women were committing suicide to escape the slave-like conditions of arrange marriages. Socialist literature emphasizes how women were saved from these horrors via national liberation. However, it ignores how men were liberated as well. Men in China were also formerly "sold into slavery, shipped around to
work on wage-labor farms, or brought up as cheap labor to be exported to other countries" (Weinbaum, p. 137). It is true that women were formerly feudal slaves, but the men's situation was no different. To exclude men in this historical analysis leaves the impression that socialism is an all encompassing solution to ending sexism.

Some marxist feminists leave the impression that housewives in no way contribute to capitalism. Mariarosa Dalla Costa argued against the notion of housewife as an innocent bystander in a 1960s Italian pamphlet titled, *The Power of Women and the Subversion of the Community* (Weinbaum, p. 24). Dalla Costa argued that housewives added to the wealth of the husband by performing tasks in the home which, if not done, would be financially detrimental to the family. Child care, housekeeping, transportation, and the organization of finances are traditionally associated with housewife duties. To pay for a full time babysitter, in house maid, accountant, and chauffeur would financially hurt the traditional nuclear family.

Housewives even contribute to capitalism with their influence on decisions concerning purchases. Housewives may influence which kitchen appliances will be used, which house will be lived in, or which automobile will be driven. In *East of Eden* Steinbeck comments on the influence of a woman concerning a purchase of a car at the turn of the century: it's "the women who put the pressure on...social status is
involved," (Steinbeck, p. 370). To assert that housewives are innocent bystanders in the capitalist system is naive.

Socialist feminists believe the only way to liberate women is under socialism. Wives were seen as valuable for producing heirs and marxists maintain that abolishment of private property would "remove the economic basis for marriage" (Weinbaum, p. 153). This would lead to good relations between partners and everyones' attitudes and valuables would be changed for the better. This reduces the problems of womens' liberation to simple socioeconomic disturbances.

Aside from the fact that socialism has not historically emancipated women, there are problems with this logic. The jump from 'no economic need for marriage' to 'good relations between partners' lacks solid connection. The whole argument ignores single women and deals only with one age group, adult males and adult females. It doesn’t deal with the "why" of the change in attitudes and it ignores economic relationships between fathers and daughters, mothers and sons, sisters and brothers, etc. The argument treats males as having interactions only as adults, with adult females (Weinbaum, p. 152-153).

Feminists are proud of the accomplishment that we are now free to choose. American women of the 1990's have options women have not previously had. Somehow socialists believe we would have more freedom because capitalists
impose their order on our "personal, emotional, and sexual lives to suit the needs of the system, not to suit our own needs," (Rees, p. 49). The truth is that all of our options are eliminated when capitalism is overthrown. An American female may choose to have a child, select her own partner (be it male or female), and continue education at any point throughout her life. If anything, socialism imposes its order and needs of the community to override an individuals' choice. The worker population must be maintained therefore the option of childbirth is already decided. Along with that is the marriage partner, a lesbian who may choose not to procreate does not exist in socialism. Yet somehow marxists believe that it's capitalism that restricts our choices.

In Marxist theory, differences based on sex and age were minimized in order to "analyze the position of the adult male," (Weinbaum, p. 150). It's ironic that Marx wasn't even concerned about women's liberation and there is an entire group of feminists who are referred to as marxist feminists.
Radical Feminism was started in the late 1960s and was an offshoot of liberal feminism. After 1967 the radical feminist groups "began to multiply rapidly. Many quickly disappeared while others split over political differences," (Gatlin, p. 128). This type of feminism "belongs uniquely to the late twentieth century," (Storkey, p. 91). This group came together as a result of a feeling of unrest and anger.

As with liberal and marxist feminists, radical feminists have made contributions to the women's movement. One of which is consciousness raising; this is a process by which one is made acutely aware of the cultural stereotype of what it means to be female (Gatlin, p. 129). American women's "political consciousness and everyday circumstances" as well as their occupational choices are said to have been changed due to this radical feminist effort (Gatlin, p. 167). Another contribution of radical feminists is making the personal the political. This means that women should see their "personal suffering as a political condition" of being oppressed (Gatlin, p. 129). Unlike liberal feminists who minimize the differences between the sexes, radical
feminists maximize and sharpen those differences.

Radical feminists are also distinguished by their woman centered ideology which believes in the "'eternal feminine'" concept (Castro, p. 53). This promotes the idea of "attributes of the eternal woman" which is in effect promoting a female stereotype (Castro, p. 53). Radicals who encourage this stereotype of women are minimizing individual abilities and thereby promoting sex discrimination.

Consciousness raising, promoting the personal as the political, and maintaining a woman centered ideology are ideas held by all radical feminists. There are many different levels of radicalism within this group. The most extreme view advocates lesbianism as the only way a female can be involved in a romantic relationship as an equal partner. These extremists speak of the "naturalness of lesbianism" and suggest that true feminism means lesbianism (Castro, p. 106; Kader, p. 181-194; Taylor, p. 32-61).

Lesbianism is seen not only as a sexual option but as an act of "self assertion [and] primary identification" with other women (Castro, p. 106). One radical feminist group stated that "the lesbian in each of one of us is the part of us, or the whole of us, that puts women first - the part of us that is working for a better world for all women...every heterosexual woman is a latent lesbian who does not know it," (Castro, p. 106). It is ironic that feminists have
condemned men for equating women with sex when now radical feminists are doing the same thing. According to these radical feminists, a heterosexual woman cannot believe in feminism, thus discriminating and dividing women on the basis of their sexual orientation. These statements equate ones' orientation with the right to take a political stance, with heterosexual sexism as a byproduct.

The radical feminists also assume that one must be female to believe in feminism, thus automatically excluding all men. A radical feminist responded to one man's self description of being a "male feminist" by stating that the label was an "oxymoron". She continued by stating that men "have no place in woman-centered spheres" and that he was a "womb envier and a feminist wannabe - a poseur," (Sommers, p. 37). This type of radical feminism "takes the biological difference between the woman and man and makes it an essential difference," (Simons, p. 342). Radical feminists seem oblivious to the contradicting assertion that there is a systematic discrimination in our society against women but that it is acceptable to exclude men and heterosexual women from the feminist cause.

Another belief that radical feminists have created and fostered suggests that women are superior to men. They believe that men are a "genetically inferior animal, resulting from a 'biological accident,' [and] said to be an 'incomplete female','" (Castro, p. 72). According to gender
feminists, as a direct result of being oppressed, women feel "more deeply, they see more clearly and understand reality better. They have an 'epistemic' advantage over men," (Sommers, p. 74). Radical feminists naively claim that oppressed groups of people "make better biologists, physicists, and philosophers than their oppressors," (Sommers, p. 74). However, they don't have an explanation for why, in reality, the most disadvantaged, oppressed people do not excel in science and other analytic fields.

By promoting women as "feelers" and not "rational thinkers" they are encouraging "insecure men once again to patronize and denigrate women as the naive sex that thinks with their heart and not with its head," (Sommers, p. 77). Fostering this belief also hinders women's chances of entering any field where rational, analytic thought is required: mathematics, science, etc.

Radical feminists are also responsible for altering history in order to present women more favorably. This is presumably done to empower women. Certain radical feminists have taken it upon themselves to change the English language in the name of "consciousness raising". "History" is changed to "herstory" and "seminar" is changed to "ovular" just to name a couple of examples (Sommers, p. 18, p. 50).

One radical feminist writes about a feminist social science that would oppose subjects being objectified for the purpose of "scrutiny and manipulation...the 'illusion' of a
sharp separation of researcher from the objects of study should be abandoned," (Wylie, p. 613). The author fails to acknowledge that inherent to an experimental laboratory setting is manipulation of variables for the purpose of testing the hypothesis and increasing internal validity. This new feminist research methodology also advocates "no intimacy without reciprocity" between researcher and subject (Wylie, p. 613). The author fails to acknowledge the potential biases that could be incurred by this type of research. This begs for clarification on the true purpose of objective social science research.

Radical feminism, on a mission to prove their place in society as victims of male oppressors, has led to much well funded, biased, and published research. This research is often used as a basis for policy decisions and changes. The emergence of radical feminism in scholarly matters is disturbing when it is replacing one type of sexism with another type of restrictive, dogmatic "groupthink". Instilling women with anger based on false information heightens unnecessary tension and misunderstanding between the sexes. As an example, The Feminist Classroom depicts the teachings of radical feminism as the norm and not the exception to the rule in womens' studies departments (Sommers, p. 87-117).

To test the idea that there has been a trend toward radical (gender) feminism within American society, a content
analysis of one feminist journal has been conducted. The American produced journal spans twenty years, from 1972 to 1992, and is still being published. The twenty year period was divided into four 5 year periods and through systematic random sampling 125 articles, 25 from each time period, were selected for analysis. The articles were coded for: (1) subject matter and (2) equity (liberal) or gender (radical) feminism. Subject matter was chosen to allow for comparisons in trends among equity and gender feminism. The latter code was subjected to chi square analysis. It was hypothesized that equity feminism would be prevalent in the early articles but that there would be a trend toward gender feminism in later articles.
CHAPTER 5

METHOD

The total number of articles analyzed was 125. Twenty-five articles from each of the following time periods were selected: 1972-1975; 1976-1980; 1981-1985; 1986-1990; 1991-1992. However, the following journal years were not available: 1973 and 1977. They were physically removed from the library; either for binding or possibly taken home by a student. There is no evidence to lead one to believe that the exclusion of these two years, from different time frames, would have altered the results of this study. It is chance that these journals were missing.

Feminist Studies was the American produced journal chosen for analysis. Only American contributors' articles were retained for analysis. The guidelines for why this journal was chosen are as follows:

(1) The journal is published in America with most of its contributors being American scholars. (2) The nature of the journal is that of gender feminist studies. Its focus is not limited to one field or branch of study. (3) The journal was consistently in print from 1972 to the present and is currently still being published. Since Feminist Studies was the only in its field which met the
above criteria, it was retained for analysis.

The journals were divided into the following time periods: 1972-1975; 1976-1980; 1981-1985; 1986-1990; 1990-1992. The journal years 1973 and 1977 were not available; they were either in binding or were taken home by a student. As previously stated, it is believed to be a chance occurrence that these two years were not available and would not have significantly altered the findings. Due to the variation in the number of articles per year, the sampling was based on the time periods and not individual years. It was assumed that there would be no significant difference within the time periods.

Systematic random sampling was conducted in the following manner: For each of the time periods all possible journal articles were listed. After an arbitrary starting point was selected every fifth article was retained for analysis. The sampling was conducted within each of the time periods to control for the variation in the number of available articles between years (and thus time periods). Since issues from all available seasons were selected with this method, it is believed that potential periodicity problems have been avoided. Articles that were contributed by visiting scholars who are external to American society were not used due to the problems of assessing the scholar's familiarity with specifically unique feminist issues in
American society. Poetry and contributed photography were also not used because of the difficulty of objectively assessing equity or gender feminism issues within the coding scheme described below. There were approximately 25 cases in which an article was randomly selected and not used because it was either: not written by an American, or was photography or poetry.

The articles were coded for: (1) subject content and (2) equity or gender feminism. Eight areas were identified, inductively a priori, on the basis of what is usually present in a diversified, scholarly feminist journal. These included: (1) History (which included any historical analysis internal or external to American society), (2) Politics (which included any current issues for the time the article was published as well as any political or societal analysis), (3) Art (which included any critiques on art and music but excluded literature), (4) Psychology (which included psychoanalyses of issues that were not political as well as articles on archetypes and mythology), (5) Philosophy (which included critiques on philosophy theories as well as philosophical analyses of issues which are not considered current or political issues), (6) Literary (which included biographies and interviews with authors and any literature research), (7) Theological (which included
analyses of different religious issues), and (8) Anthropology (which included any anthropological research). The information coded in each subject category was mutually exclusive and exhaustive.

Equity and gender feminism was coded using the following procedure: Equity was the code used if the article: (1) was objective (and lacked subjective terms such as "seemed like" or "womens' intuition" and lacked unjustified statements which were inconsistent with the rules of logic), (2) aimed for equality between the sexes (which includes allowing males and heterosexual persons to work toward feminism), (3) was free from stereotypes (whether it be stereotypes of males or females, homosexual or heterosexual persons, etc.), (4) lacked dogmatic analyses and made assertions that were supported and followed the rules of logic, or (5) asserted that both sexes are able to work toward equality rather than only women.

Gender feminism was the code used if the article: (1) lacked objectivity or opposed the rules of logic because it is considered masculine thought, (2) did not aim for equality between the sexes but instead asserted an inherent superiority of women in relation to men, (3) perpetuated stereotypes which may have been socially accepted in the past, or asserted that all men or all women are inherently different, (4) utilized dogmatic analyses, (5) asserted that
only women are able to work toward equality, thereby excluding men, or (6) equated lesbianism with true feminism thereby excluding heterosexual females from identifying with being feminist.

All articles were coded as either equity or gender feminism but did not need to meet all of the criteria in either code. For example, an article was coded gender feminism if it asserted the superiority of women but did not equate lesbianism with feminism.

After coding each article for subject matter and equity or gender feminism a (2) x (2) chi square analysis was completed in the following matter: Time period 1972-1975 (#1) was compared to time period 1976-1980 (#2), then to time period 1981-1985 (#3), then to time period 1986-1990 (#4), then to time period 1991-1992 (#5). Time period (#2) was then compared to (#3), (#4), then to (#5), and so on until all time periods were compared. Equity and gender feminism for each time frame were then compared to subject matter. This was done to check for any potential third variable influence of subject matter on type of feminism.
CHAPTER 6

RESULTS

There were 125 cases of equity feminism and 0 cases of gender feminism. However, there were 6 cases of an equity feminism article which mentioned gender feminism. The degree to which gender feminism was mentioned and/or attacked varied. A chi square analysis comparing these cases with other time frames is shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Four Instances of Attacking Gender Feminism Within an Equity Feminism Article

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time periods:</th>
<th>Chi Square With 1 Degree of Freedom</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1 vs #2</td>
<td>.3546</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2 vs #3</td>
<td>.3546</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2 vs #4</td>
<td>.3546</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2 vs #5</td>
<td>.3546</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in Table 1, time periods (#1) versus (#2), (#2) versus (#3), (#2) versus (#4), and (#2) versus (#5) all revealed a chi square equal to .3526 which is not
significant at the .05 level. Time periods (#1) verses (#3), (#1) verses (#4), (#1) verses (#5), (#3) verses (#4), (#3) verses (#5), and (#4) verses (#5) revealed chi square with 1 degree of freedom equal to 0 which is not significant at the .05 level. Table 2 shows the subject content compared to all time periods with their coded equity and gender feminism.

Table 2: Subject Content Compared to All Time Periods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>#1</th>
<th>#2</th>
<th>#3</th>
<th>#4</th>
<th>#5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Politics</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6*</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10*</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art</td>
<td>1*</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychology</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philosophy</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literary</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7*</td>
<td>7*</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theology</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anthropology</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* means one gender feminism case was mentioned within the respective subject

As shown in Table 2, cases of gender feminism were
dispersed across subjects. There was mention of gender feminism in history (one case), politics (two cases), art (one case), and literary (two cases). In most cases, these were the subjects which had more contributors. Table (3) shows the total number or each subject and number of gender feminism cases within each time period.

The mention of gender feminism varied from simply referring to the second wave of feminism and comparing women in the equity verses gender spheres to adamantly defending equity while attacking gender feminism. One article attacked the "twentieth century radical feminists who proclaim that womens' moral superiority will save the world from nuclear destruction," (Auerbach, p. 150). Another author spoke of the second wave of feminism as the "death of the womens' movement" and continued by stating that it "troubles many feminists," (Rosenfelt, p. 341). In the cases of gender feminism being mentioned or critiques, equity feminism was always defended.
CHAPTER 7

DISCUSSION

The hypothesis that there would be a trend toward gender feminism within research was not supported. None of the time periods were significantly different in their mention of gender feminism. There are several possible reasons for this finding.

The first requires accounting for the entire history of feminism with all its cultural changes. Historically, extremists will always receive attention simply for having a radical view. They detract attention from the mainstream whether it is feminism or any other area of political or social controversy. This is especially true in this society where media images are so integrated in American life.

However, as much attention as extremists receive, their causes are always short lived. There have been many radical gender feminist groups that have been started, but are short lived, typically two to three years (Gatlin, p. 128-169). The strongest and longest running womens' organizations have had purpose statements that promote "truly equal partnership with men" and do allow male members (Gatlin, p. 115-116). These organizations have always outlived extremist organizations but will rarely attract political attention.
Perhaps equality between the sexes is more enculturated into American society than gender feminists would like to acknowledge. The mainstream gets used to an extremist organization and eventually the organization receives less and less attention until their emotional fuel runs out taking the political agenda with them. This would explain the number of cases defending against gender feminism as spread out evenly over time. Possibly, the extremists have always been in existence but continually detract, albeit temporarily, attention from the equity feminists.

Another possible reason for the lack of gender feminist cases lies within the nature of research and scholarly papers. Research, especially in the social sciences, has become more objective over time. Special attention to biases has made it into the forefront of most researchers' minds. Perhaps this objectivity has become inherent to scholarly analysis of any sort. This would explain why the gender feminist cases that were found were not limited to one area but spread out across subjects. The subjects that had no gender feminist cases were the ones which weren't commonly written about.

A limitation of this study was that only one journal was used for analysis. However, it was the only available American journal which was consistently in print from 1972 through the present. There were many other journals,
however, they were short lived or did not conform to the other criteria. This could have possibly been evidence that the other journals may have been gender feminist journals. As discussed previously, the extremist groups historically don’t last long, just long enough until their popularity runs out.
REFERENCES


VITA

Jennifer A. Muryn has received her B.A. in psychology from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (May 1994). She is currently working on her M.A. in Research Methodology at Loyola University-Chicago and anticipates May 1996 graduation.
THESIS APPROVAL SHEET

The thesis submitted by Jennifer A. Muryn has been read and approved by the following committee:

Jack Kavanagh, Ph.D., Director
Professor, Counseling Psychology
Loyola University Chicago

Steven Miller, Ph.D.
Professor, Education, Leadership & Policy Studies
Loyola University Chicago

The final copies have been examined by the director of the thesis and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated and that the thesis is now given final approval by the committee with reference to content and form.

The thesis is, therefore, accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts-Research Methodology.

3/29/96
Date

Director's Signature