

In my opinion . . .



By STEVE BAREHAM
Staff Writer

Women's Lib is little more than a vehicle for members of the fair sex who cannot cope with the pressures of society. Strong women can and do make their mark in life and don't need to derive false comfort by associating with other females content to complain about male chauvinism.

Any thinking woman who takes an earnest look at society can see that there are no real walls thrown up to prevent her from participating in our system actively and on equal terms with men.

But how many women want to become really involved and how many women are truly career minded?

Employers can testify that a good percentage of female employees do not work because they want to, but rather to assist with financial obligations. Such women do little to further a business and chances are that as soon as the husband's salary is sufficient to maintain a desired standard of living, the wife will cease working.

Still other women work only until they are ready to raise a family and have no intentions of pursuing a career.

Obviously, neither of the aforementioned make good executive material.

And then there are women who are content to be women (in the old fashioned sense of the word) and do not feel the need to compete with men. The business world has been accurately described as 'dog eat dog' and some ladies don't wish to eat or be eaten.

But for you women who are career minded and feel dedication to an occupation, more power to you. Just don't whimper about discrimination when some 'male chauvinist' comes out on top because he's more aggressive or capable.

And it is nonsense to think that progressive businessmen will choose men for a job if there are women with better qualifications.

Speaking from personal experience, I have worked under female supervision and neither resented nor felt inferior in my position. These women were competent, conscientious and competitive and if they had been unable to meet the terms of employment better than men in the office they wouldn't have held the jobs.

The Daily News has women in positions of responsibility and authority. They are diligent, ambitious and resourceful. Their sex is of no consequence in terms of salary or promotion potential.

Occupational progress in our society is, for the most part, based on meritorious service and it is possible that some of the people (both men and women) who complain of discrimination and oppression do so because they feel they are not able to cope with the demands of the business world. They may harbor inferiority complexes and having failed in past attempts to get ahead, find it easier to blame their failure on society, or in the case of women libbers, on the object of their frustration - men.

In summation, it is nothing short of ludicrous for the government of this country to spend taxpayers' money on any project associated with a facade such as women's lib.

The recent granting of \$7,600 to the Nelson Women's Centre (defined purpose: To educate women in their rights as individuals) is incredulous and does little to instill confidence in the Trudeau government.

Women's Lib

Re: In My Opinion
Steve Bareham
Feb. 9, 1973

Sir: In my opinion Peggy Pawelko's story on women's rights in Feb. 9 issue was written in a very objective way.

She interviewed varied people presenting both sides which I feel presents an open unbiased article. Very well done Peggy! It's too bad with this so called free press you don't add your own titles, the title being very biased and anti-women's lib, changed the content of the whole article and I feel if Steve Bareham should have the right to change the article by adding his title then the readers should be made aware of the fact that it isn't Peggy's work. Mr. Bareham is very narrow minded and misinformed in the struggle women do have.

Gail Haws

Sir: Re: Steve Bareham — In My Opinion — 9.2.73

Steve Bareham's opinions on the subject of Women's Liberation are laughable. He seems to be over-reacting to the issue in a defensive and poorly thought out fashion.

Peggy Pawelko's article on the same page is a good example of what can be done. The headline on that story, "lib not necessary" was written by Steve Bareham. It is in the same vein as his opinions and, I must add, completely extraneous to the content of the story.

Face up to Steve, women are here to stay. But they won't be the sweet passive things you seem to want. And as far as the thought that equality already exists I refer you to Peggy Pawelko who's article you so kindly butchered.

I am married to one of those Women's Libbers and, contrary to expectation, don't find that life has become unbearable or even that marriage is incompatible with Women's liberation. Quite to the contrary, I heartily recommend that you might mention the Women's Centre (meets every Wednesday evening) to your life. If she gets into it, it could prove to be a rewarding experience. But it's silly to suggest

it. You have already closed the door without having the faintest idea of what is really going on, haven't you.

P. Les Storey
(Editor's note: Miss Pawelko's article contained statements and policy procedures collected from seven separate references contacted to determine whether or not women are discriminated against. Five of the seven references contained in the story indicated discrimination is not evident. Five of seven is a majority and constitutes the basis for a head: Female oppression lacking. No need of women's lib. Miss Pawelko collected all the data used in the story and her article was carried in its entirety — nothing was added or cut.)

Sir: In response to an editorial submitted by Steve Bareham on the subject of women's liberation, I wish to comment on some of his statements. Mr. Bareham speaks totally from personal emotional prejudices rather than from a true factual analyses of the status of women in our country. The statements which he cites as facts are nothing more than pat rationalizations to help him cope with something he must find very threatening.

Any woman knows that indeed there are "real walls thrown up to prevent her from participating in our system actively and on an equal terms with men."

Some women can make it in a man's world, but she has to be twice as good as a man. She has to prove herself doubly to counter-act those, age-old definitions of the "fair sex" to be weak, emotional, prone to nervous disorders, fit only for motherhood and housework. Psychological walls are just as effective as stone ones.

His views of the business world as "dog eat dog" are correct, and he says that "some ladies don't wish to eat or be eaten." Well, we "ladies" want to partake of the pie without killing each other through greed or poisoning the pie with chemicals. Remember, we all, men, women and children, partake of the same air, water, food, earth. However, I don't see women, creators of future

generations, poisoning our environment for the sake of a wider margin of profit. Yes, the "dog eat dog" world is a pretty awful place all right.

Mr. Bareham also implies that Women's libbers "harbor inferiority complexes" and "blame their failure on the object of their frustration — men." I find this more to be true of chauvinistic men who are so insecure about their own "masculinity" that they have to prove something by putting down the object of their frustrations — women's libbers. What's so threatening, boys? After all it's women who have been the object of men's frustrations (sexual and emotional) for centuries.

As for the small grant given to the Women's Centre, I would like to remind Mr. Bareham that many of the taxpayers in this country are women, and they are women who support us and endorse that we are trying to do wholeheartedly. I only wish that more women's groups had been funded but, women's rights have always been pushed by the wayside as a low priority because of the attitudes and prejudices of people such as Mr. Bareham.

Mr. Bareham is welcome to come up to the Women's Centre anytime to partake of a little consciousness-raising and to meet us frustrated and insecure "women's libbers."

Wita Storey

Sir: Male chauvinism is little more than a vehicle for members of the "stronger" sex who cannot cope with pressures of dealing with women as people. Any thinking person who takes an earnest look at society can see that there are very real barriers thrown up to prevent numerous people from women to blacks to Indians from participating in our system actively and on equal terms with men.

Employers will certainly testify that a good percentage of workers work not because they want to but rather because of financial obligations. Many studies have been carried out (notably the Royal Commission on the Status of Women in Canada) that prove that women are indeed discriminated against.

Mr. Bareham, men in North

America are chauvinists because of the culture we are brought up in. To ignore the cries of chauvinism directed at us by the fairer sex is to refuse to grow, and we must grow — as people.

All of your arguments are based on the assumption that men are right in what they are doing in this society. It is a false assumption and makes the rest of your statements weak to the point of collapse.

James Watt

Sir:

Mr. Bareham says "Women's Lib is little more than a vehicle for members of the fair sex who cannot cope with the pressures of society." How come there are statistically more men who commit suicide, turn to drugs and alcohol, and fill up our mental institutions?

Strong blacks and Indians can and do make their mark in life. Therefore, one can surmise there is no discrimination against these groups either.

The "walls" preventing women from participating in our system on equal terms with men are "thrown up" as soon as the doctor says "It's a girl". From that moment on she is trained to be a housewife. She is not encouraged to be ambitious or aggressive, or even intelligent, lest her intelligence frighten away some insecure male.

It is fact, and not nonsense, that many employers discriminate against women employees when it comes to advancement. It is also a fact that many employers still pay women less than men for the same work in spite of legislation against this practice, and that most professionally trained women still learn less than a man with the same qualifications.

Girls are steered into lower paying, traditionally female vocations by parents and school counsellors. Many of the text books in use in our schools reinforce the stereotypes of girls being timid and submissive, while boys are aggressive and adventurous.

There are many things the federal government is doing, and not doing, that I find alarming, and that shake my confidence in the Trudeau administration. A little \$7,000 grant

doesn't begin to rate in importance if one is looking for something to criticize this government for.

(Mrs.) Barbara Douglas

Sir:

I do not customarily write letters to the editor because they tend to involve one in lengthy and futile controversy. However, since my name was referred to in connection with an article on page 2 of the Feb. 9, 1973 issue of your newspaper, under the by-line of Peggy Pawelko and since there was a very opinionated and un factual column under the by-line of Steve Bareham on page 4 of the same issue, I feel that I must make some comment.

To begin with, I would like to point out that I was not interviewed personally by Peggy Pawelko. Instead, I was fed questions over the telephone by a young man who did not identify himself. These questions had been left by Peggy Pawelko. The information she got was therefore second hand. She did not consider it necessary to talk to me personally later although she knew how to contact me.

Secondly, I think it's time both of these persons took time to get some facts about the women's movement. It no longer is something people can refer to flippantly or comment upon "off the top of their head" as your reporters have done. There is a rapidly growing resource of factual information available to anyone really interested in learning about woman's present role in society, rather than complacently believing an repeating the rubbish that has been accepted as fact for years.

I suggest that as a start, your employees should read: (1) The Royal Commission on the Status of Women, (2) The report of the women faculty members on their status at the University of B.C., (3) Dominion Bureau of Statistics figures on the status of women in the federal Civil service, (4) Canada and the World, January 1973 issue, article entitled Long road to equality. If they care to pursue the matter further I would be happy to supply them with clippings and lengthy bibliographies.

Elizabeth E. Wallach