

## OLOC Confronting Sexism Session January 16, 2024

### Sexism and the Impact on Women and Girls: Misogyny

*Misogyny: The heart of the dark heart of patriarchy.*

*Definition:* The hatred of, aversion to, or prejudice against women typically exhibited by men; a culture that promotes violence and *misogyny*. It is generally accepted that misogyny is a consequence of patriarchy. The term may be applied to certain individuals as well as larger systems, societies, or cultures.

Women hating is really horrifying. It was just as horrible to gather the materials for today and only touching on a minuscule amount of materials which were terrifying. Our last session, which was on violence against women, where we organized that topic specifically to be a prelude to misogyny. Violence against women in all its many monstrous forms, rape, wife battering, incest, emotional abuse are all derived from women hating, placing this topic within the history of women. It was only with the second wave in early seventies that violence against women and women hating became part of women's consciousness, and part of the collective consciousness. Until then, all of this was buried and not spoken about, with many cases not even acknowledging that it was going on. In fact, it was in 1974 that one of the geniuses of radical feminism, Andrea Dworkin who introduced the words and the concept of women hating into the feminist dictionary in her book *Women Hating*. In that book, she described women hating in terms of pornography and in terms of fairy tales. One of the most horrible chapters was on Chinese foot binding which she called gynecide. Chinese foot binding went on for 1,000 years until it was officially banned in 1829. But it continued right up into the Mao revolution of in the 1960s. This was this is hard to think about because it was mothers who did this to their daughters beginning at the age of four. The idea was to get the foot to be no more than three inches. Their feet were utterly mutilated. The procedure was to take the back of the foot and the front of the foot and squeeze them together. The foot will eventually have a big bumpy upturn and the girl will be balanced only on her big toe because the rest of the toes are pushed up under the foot. This was excruciatingly painful with puss constantly oozing out of the bandages. The bandages were always covered in bloody pus. This essentially crippled and mutilated the women for the rest of their lives, they could not walk. This was done so that they would be sexually appealing to men, that men were turned on by these crippled and mutilated feet. Mary Daley talks about this as sadomasochism which is at the heart of patriarchy. We might remember how consistent that women hating was during the last 10 years in India when there were those horrifying gang rapes. Then we still have the practices which women are still fighting, which is African genital mutilation, often done by mothers. Bringing this up to the present on that continent - A couple of young women were recently murdered, reading that gender-based violence is a major concern in Kenya. In 2022 at least 34% of women said they had experienced physical violence, and it goes on to say that the latest killing has shed light on the dark corner of social media in Kenya, which is described as a mansphere, where many comments had been shared blaming the women for their own deaths. Misogyny is planetary, it is on every continent, and it really does begin with the beginning of patriarchy which is a story in and of itself. Patriarchy was not always, roughly beginning between 5,000 506,000 years ago. But when we really begin to hear the voices of women hating is when writing begins, the weight of a record of a voice that can be continued through time. Certainly, one of the earliest voices of women hating is the bible, beginning with the old testament, which is the foundation of all the major patriarchal religions. With Eve it is a total reversal of now having god as a man after 30,000 years of the goddess ruling humanity, we suddenly get this idea that the earth was created by a man who lives in the sky and now Eve is the temptress, the evil one

who was responsible for sin and the loss of paradise, and for death, the very existence of death. So, beginning, the Bible is written down in about the ninth century which is relatively recent given history, but from there on in we have a slew, a virtual poisonous stream of misogyny. Beginning with one of the early Hebrew prophets/holy men who urged all men to beat their wives if they dared to refuse to wash their feet and hands. We then go into the church fathers who are prolific. Woman is the temple built upon the sewer; woman, you are the gate to hell; woman is a misbegotten man...and thus one must be with every woman as if she were a poisonous snake and the horned devil. Aristotle claimed that women was a misbegotten man and in the act of procreation, woman only provided the matter, the flesh, the soul and the potential of humans were in the semen provided by men. We were just a receptacle, we were inferior, and we were property. Up to the present, Alan Tate just in the last year has become the newest star on TikTok for his celebration of misogyny. One saying is "bring out the machete, put to her face, grip her by the neck and say shut up, BITCH. He has created an online university called Hustler (was a pornography magazine) and right now he has 130,000 members who pay 39 pounds a month which is about \$50 a month. Boys and men from the United States and United Kingdom watching his videos. He has had 11.6 billion views. There is another man, Elliot Rodgers of the Isla Vista Massacre/Santa Barbara CA in 2014 who said, "They are all spoiled, heartless, wicked bitches. They think they are superior to me, and if I ever tried to ask one on a date, they would reject me cruelly. I will sneak into their house at around 9:00 pm on the Day of Retribution, just before all the partying starts, and slaughter every single one of them with my guns and knives. If I have time, I will set their whole house on fire. Then we shall see who the superior one really is!" He killed seven people, and he planned on killing many more. The others were men whom he also hated because they got to have sex with women. In 1992, Pat Robinson made this statement, "The feminist movement is not about equal rights it's about socialism, an anti-family political movement which encourages women to leave their husbands, kill their children, practice witchcraft, destroy capitalism, and become lesbians." The point here is that this stuff leads to violence. In the late afternoon on December 6, 1989, a young man walked into Montreal's Polytechnique Engineering School with a semi-automatic rifle and killed 14 women, then killed himself. The killer's suicide note made his motivations clear: "Feminists have always enraged me, I have decided to send the feminists, who have always ruined my life, to their Maker." On March 16, 2021, eight people were killed at three different massage parlors in Atlanta. Authorities said six were of Asian descent and two were white. Seven of the eight were women. The shooter was a 21 year old white man who said he had a "sexual disorder" and that the spas were "an outlet for him, something that he shouldn't be doing." This was called an Asian hate crime, pointing out how women hating is denied; denied in words regarding women hating.

Then we have incel which emerged from a reddit group, where tens of thousands of users, mostly young men, commiserate about their lack of sexual activity with many of them placing the blame on women. In recent years the number of these men have identified as so-called incels short for involuntary celibates. An online culture of men who express rage at women for denying them sex and who frequently fantasize about violence and celebrate mass shootings in their online discussion groups.

### ***Comments/Statements:***

- Indiana does not have a hate crime, but do, do you know if any of the hate crime bills specify women as a group?
- England as of last year was still only in the process of considering putting misogyny as a hate crime. Women hating has still not come under hate speech and hate crime. There is no comparable word to misogyny for what we as women have experienced from men; the discrimination, the oppression, the subjugation, the violence, there is no comparable word of women doing this to

men. How do we think of such hatred, where does it come from? Then think of all the species, all the forms of life on earth and learn that we are the only species in which one half of our members hates the other half. Even some of the ancients like Cicero, spoke about misogyny as a disease. That is what we are looking at in patriarchy, what patriarchy rests upon. A very diseased consciousness. As Andrea Dworkin said, "Most women have no idea how much men hate them."

- This just happened a couple of days ago where a woman in New York City lost her dog. She had posted some flyers with a reward, and she gave her contact information. *The Gothamist* is a New York City sort of online newsroom thing, and they had posted some screenshots of the text messages that she got which were filled with misogynistic language. Some told her to kill herself, calling her lazy and ugly inviting her to sexual activities, questioning whether what she lost was even real. One message even included anti-Semitic language. It also called her a con artist and posted her home address and her monthly rent. All this because she lost her dog, talk about insanity.
- One of the things that I have read in a variety of places is the basis of hatred, the bottom line of hatred is jealousy that they are jealous of what another has and therefore, the way to punish them for not giving me everything that you. That is what I see in just about every hate experience I have either read or been told about. A lot of it forms the fact that men are jealous because they can't have babies.
- At last month's session it was said that Karen Hannah who was a very famous psychoanalyst and a member of the circle surrounding Freud wrote in one of her books that it amazed her that the hate dread of women that she discovered in her therapy sessions with men was not recognized and never commented on.
- A comment about how many women don't have any idea of how much men have this negativity and hatred towards women. I worked in a few jobs where I was the only woman and one experience that just came clear to me. I worked for a cable TV company in Minneapolis in the 1980s where I was the only woman in the service tech crew. They had a holiday party where they could invite their wives, girlfriends, mothers, whatever. The things that I heard from one of the men, which, was often a kind of joking that was hateful which we would call misogynist, and making fun was part of their banter. They would tell each other indirectly, I'm not a woman, no, I'm not a woman – their "culture" was doing that. I was used to this kind of attitude, such as the men not being willing to ride in a truck with me, that kind of things. But at the holiday party, I got introduced to their wives and girlfriends, and as I watched, I thought, these men are telling these women like their mother, their wife that they love them. These women are intimately living in the same place for years with these men and the women do not know what I know – the men's attitudes and what they are saying about women. There is some kind of big split in the way they operate.
- One of the themes that has been much discussed in feminist literature is the split between the virgin and the whore - the good woman. and the bad woman. Basically, the good woman is their mothers if they like their mothers and, the bad woman, especially any woman who rejects them or is powerful and threatens them. Our sexuality is bad too, it is filthy and evil.
- I wanted to add that in corporate America they don't use the word misogyny. Some of the things that they are doing now is making it mandatory every year to train their employees about sexual harassment in any form and everybody in the organization has a right to go to a supervisor or anybody in the supervisor capacity to report. So, in some ways, it's being addressed but of course, they're not going to use the word misogyny, but it falls under that theme. When the last corporation that I worked for, we had to train everybody, everybody had to go through this. It is

usually women who are being harassed and they could try and do something about it. But it's not nationwide, it's not every organization, but in some instances, it is being done.

- I was hired in the seventies. I was an electronic technician for a pipeline company and on my first day I had three different guys come up to me and tell me I didn't belong there and that they intended to do everything they could to see that I didn't stay. That was pretty much my experience for the two years that I lasted. But I think it's it was that women working in fields that were traditionally male, that we were invading their space. It was fine if we were their waitress at lunchtime or was their wife cooking their dinner, but we didn't belong in their workspace.
- I just wanted to offer one figure of language that I often use to show people how sanitized and accepted ideas about misogyny are. When you think about the term a rule of thumb, and people thinking that it's completely innocent. But the origin of the term rule of thumb had to do with the laws in England that said that it was legal for a man to beat his wife with a stick as that wasn't thicker than his thumb. If it was thicker than his thumb, he couldn't beat his wife. So, if it was the size of his thumb or smaller, it was completely acceptable for a husband to beat his wife with a stick that size. That is one of the ways in which these things come down to us and we don't even recognize them unless we know the history.
- You are so right to bring that up because we could find all kinds of other examples of what you are talking about and words that are hidden, that hide misogyny. You have opened a whole theme that we could fill a few volumes with if we had the time to do the research.
- So, in 1978, I started working at Honeywell as an electrical engineer. I was hired into what was called the advanced engineering program, sort of the cream of the crop. The guys really could not come down on me because I was sort of the elite of the new hires. We hired more people into the program each year. For Christmas, I was anonymously given a gift from Victoria Secrets. It is embarrassing to say that it was a pair of crotchless panties with a bell that the giver thought was okay. I knew who gave it to me, but it was not signed. I took him aside later and said, how dare you. He said, oh I didn't do it and was laughing. Another time one of the directors made a really stupid sexist joke and I threw one back at him and went to Human Resources this guy is saying this kind of crap. They responded (1980s), don't take it personally, they were just joking. I'm glad to hear now that there are real programs in place because they weren't back then.
- I'm just going say something that I hesitate a little bit to say, but I'm going to anyway. To bring this to the current day in addition to the kind of examples that have been given, that within the last ten years. One thing that I'm disturbed about is I see as misogyny is the reason for butch women, butch lesbians being told they are not a woman, that you have to be a man. If you display characteristics that are stereotypically masculine or whatever which is something that I think is ongoing and being really pushed to be a man. I think it's misogyny that women can't be who they are. But if they don't fit within the stereotypical feminine whatever's, then you must be a man. So that is going on currently, an ongoing thing that really disturbs me that I think is based in misogyny.
- I was just going to say that I always worked in a typical female profession as a librarian. In the 1970s I was working in a small branch library of the university's main library and sometimes I would be the only one there. We had this electrician that came and changed the light bulbs and things. He would stand and talk to me and tell me these dirty jokes. He was just so obnoxious. And one day I came in and there was a book on my desk called the *Naughty Librarian* and it was some pornography book. At that time, I was so innocent, and I didn't think of reporting him especially since he wasn't my supervisor or my professor. Nowadays I would have reported them to Human Resources.

- Talking about the sexual harassment training. They had those trainings at the state level where I worked but some of the men would giggle or smirk and made fun of it after or said why do we have to sit through this? I brought it up to my manager and said, that they were discussing the -isms and cultural changes and I said is sexism going to be included? He responded loudly that it doesn't happen in my region. I said yes it does. He wanted names and I said I am not giving you names of the women because there would be retaliation. He just got all flustered and for the next few months after that he treated me differently, so I left that situation and resigned.
- To put this in the present day, look at what the Supreme Court and what it has done to women's health; look at what the ex-mafia boss from the White House who wants to get there again is saying, doing, getting away with, and not being in any way held responsible and publicly on national television We have not changed much. We still have a long way to go to in any way have it acknowledged, much less anything done about it.
- That fits in with what I've been thinking about, talking about work situations. I spent thirty-five years working as an attorney for the State of Wisconsin, a male-dominated field at the time when I started. It's not anymore, but the misogynistic viewpoint of least male judges and some female judges continues, the whole legal system persists. In 1990, a particular situation was blatant. I was the attorney for a trial and the judge was disrespectful, said you should be the court reporter. I just pretended to forget it when it was my turn, it was so blatant. Moving fast forward thirty years or so it is not blatant like that anymore. I just recently retired, so it's still quite fresh in my mind. Every time a female attorney goes into a courtroom where the judge is male, she is at a disadvantage; no matter how good she is, no matter how smart she is, no matter how prepared she is. The legal system is not any kind of protection. There are small things, there are some things that are and have been, but in the big picture, it's not a protection for us. I was thinking about what the Supreme Court has done and the person we won't name, about women's health and all of that. It seems like it's time for we women to go back to the knowledge and the underground systems that were in place in the 1960s and 1970s because we're not going to get it from the courts at least in the near future. Hard to acknowledge but true and so maybe we could have a discussion about the underground systems, both health and legal and otherwise that we were involved in or knew about back in the day. Be a resource for young women who need it now.
- One of the things that happened to me regarding this issue was when I was a union representative in my school. When we had union meetings, if I said something that was right on or smart this guy would go, isn't she great? She's so cute. That's why I'm so happy she's a union representative. It was so trivializing and that happens it lot.
- On thing that has not been mentioned is native culture in Turtle Island which encompasses Canada, the United States, and the turtle's tail goes into Mexico. The white man encountered matriarchal societies and rape did not exist anywhere in Turtle Island. What happened? They killed the natives, but it was more than that, to destroy the culture itself. Of course, the white man would not allow an expression of matriarchy. There were approximately 10 million people. There is a need to go back to the teachings of native people. They passed down history orally and they're some that has been lost and it's not the native's fault. There are still natives that have carried this on. Go back to learn; a premise was there was not one god; there were many "gods "and that included nature. Nature was treated with great reverence. And if you wanted to call it a god, not like we do god, like the buffalo that took care of them and they took care of the buffalo. And that's why the white man massacred 30 to 60 million buffaloes that were reduced to less than a thousand to wipe out the native's food supply, their clothing, and their shelter. But we still have an opportunity, it's not completely lost because there are sources to go back to and study; there are still people that have

that path. And it's not their fault that everybody doesn't have it - they call it colonialization. They have unfortunately lost it, particularly the language had to be destroyed. But there are still some; learn from the people directly. They didn't put it down in written form because it would have been destroyed; and they would be destroyed for writing it. But it's out there and that is one thing that maybe people could get the information and use it. Regarding the good and evil women- for that I look at the Blessed Virgin Mary versus Eve who was less than Virgin Mary. Mary was never made a saint and they honor her by saying she was a virgin; it was an immaculate conception, meaning she did not have sperm from Joseph her husband, but immaculately an angel came in and inserted the sperm. That written many hundreds of years after the event, that is the extreme case of the perfect female. Jesus was birthed from a woman that did have no sex and that is to be honored but she was never given sainthood because that would give her too much power. I lived in South America for four and a half years and that is not the way it is down there because they don't have the white supremacy that is here. There is a great reverence for that female thing and maybe there's some nature, but not like it is here. Patriarchy is more intense here because we have the power to carry off men and have the power to inflict it on the whole world.

- I looked up the US Federal Bureau of Investigation's hate crime statistics that was from 2019 and there were fifty-two antifemale crimes. That tells me that that category is just not trapped under hate crime law.
- Some men came to cut down a tree in front of my house and I began questioning them, why are you cutting down the street? They began pushing back at me and I began pushing back. The more I pushed back the more agitated they became until eventually one of them started calling me a whore, this is what this guy had inside of himself. Another time a guy passed me on my street, which is a small street, so I followed him to the place that he went to up the street. I opened my window and I said, do you know how dangerous it was with what you did? He then unleashed the vilest words, and I will not even tell you the things that you said. It was so bad that I called the police. While I waited, he took off and then his son came out of the house and started screaming this stuff at me too, different stuff but just as vile. When the police arrived, I said these are some of the things that this man said to me, but they were even worse. They said they could not do anything about this that he is allowed to say these things.
- I know a lot of you from OLOC and other places and it's great to sit and listen to women particularly older women talk about misogyny, something we've all experienced in various levels on a daily basis as we've gone through decades of living and existing. It's a common experience and so it's good to hear that I'm not the only one that has these feelings and has experienced these things. They are horrendous. As I look at where I am and listen to your conversations, I think there's a couple of points to that. One is that someone mentioned that misogyny has a basis for what we're seeing what young butch lesbians experience these days and that they are fearful to be lesbians and to be butch lesbians, so they're transitioning to be men. I talk sometimes with young lesbians, and I always start off by saying, everybody knows you can't change your sex. That kind of sets some people back off a little bit, but I feel so bad for this younger generation in many ways that they are facing this. It is a peer group situation that they're in, they get support, and they transition, maybe in groups so they face a different thing than we faced as lesbians coming out in the 1970s or 1960s. I don't know if there's anything we can do about that for them, they have to fight their battles, choose their battles, choose their weapons and figure it out. I think we can be supportive and understanding, but I think it's up to them to figure out what they're going to do. I've talked with a lot of parents about this whose daughters are caught up in this and you know my response to them is well, when there are thousands of medical malpractice lawsuits and billions of dollars recovered,

we'll see some change in this, but not until then. I'm a retired lawyer so I look at that from a trial perspective. One thing young people are facing is a different kind of misogyny than we faced, we continue to face that as we age. I have had several, several situations where younger lesbians will express their misogyny to me as an older lesbian, their disdain. One example is that there's often disparagement about women's music, like it is an awful thing, and that hurts my feelings. They have this misogyny that they express. I think they hate themselves and hate us because we're just big old dykes and they are scared to see us maybe being. There's not much we can do for a younger generation, but as older women we have to protect ourselves. We have in many instances, I don't have anything to lose anymore, so I just don't hold back and that frightens men, because I can be mean, and they know it, but it is also dangerous to do too, so you have watch yourself. But I don't have a job that I can get fired from, they can't take my Medicare and Social Security away from me, so screw them. I think we have to be more active in more ways to be out there and maybe that's what we do for the next generation is just to be visible, just be there. That is what I do when I go places, I'm just visible. These kinds of discussions give people like me encouragement to keep going forward, keep speaking up. I also want to say that I am one of these news addicts and I follow the news and elections all the time, too much. But I will say when I look back, there has been great improvement over all of the status of women, particularly in the legal profession. When I started practicing law, I would often be the only woman in the courtroom. I suffered all kinds of hatred. They hated me being there and I was good. I think that's what really got to them to some extent. But I was also very butch and that I didn't care what they said, which got to them too. Now, when you look at the legal profession and you look what's happening; look at all the women who are in law who are just excellent lawyers, look at what they're doing. Look at Fani Willis in Georgia - does that take courage or what? Look at Letitia James in New York. Look at the women here on the federal bench, those women judges are fantastic, and it wasn't easy for them to get there. They walked a long hard road to get to where they are now, and I think it's fabulous. I have both hope and despair. In my house there's a roller coaster and my wife will say, what are we today and maybe today I'm feeling good. But we can't let this get us down and I think these groups help keep us up, help bring us up, lift us up. Each one of us does what we can do to move this forward and to help each other and to help younger women. Thank you for having this and I love the comments. I love seeing all of you. I love seeing older women as we age together. It's fabulous to see us together.

- One of the things that happened with the women's movement, the second wave is that the specter of women being powerful in public has really created a particularly virulent backlash against us after we gave the lie to all of the things that were said about how inferior an incapable women supposedly are and now through social media we're getting this incredible swamp of misogyny with a lot of it generated by the empowerment of women from the second wave. Another example is a guy, Andrew Anglin who runs a website called the Daily Stormer where he promotes misogynistic conspiracy theories such as feminist white women across the western world are pushing for liberal immigration polished policies to ensure an endless supply of Black and Arab men to satisfy their depraved sexual desires. He has summarized his misogynistic views saying, look, I hate women, I think they deserve to be beaten, raped, and locked in cages.
- I think part of the problem about younger lesbians is that when we were growing up, we didn't have the option or most of us didn't have the option; I had never heard of. being able to become a man, to transition, to change one's sex. If had been offered that at thirteen or fourteen I'm not sure if I wouldn't have chosen that because it was quite clear to me who had the power. I think that's a real problem for the for younger lesbians and thank god it wasn't a problem for me. The statistics

used to one female to ten males and then at a certain point it changed and exploded where female girls were wanting to transition and at a young age and in groups.

- The statistics show that the largest teenage group to be considering transitioning are teenage girls - self-hatred internalized sexism/misogyny.
- It is interesting to me how the interweaving of misogyny and racism was expressed, the fear that the white women aren't going to want white men they're going to want other kinds of men. The sort of racism, especially if that's a recent thing and with the rise of Islamophobia in our society. I had never heard one those hate talks about Arab men before, a new one for me.

Is misogyny/women hating ingrained in man?

- I think it is ingrained in men, they are born with a privilege and that privilege is reinforced from birth, everybody's happy when it's a boy and they're moderately okay if it's a girl. Boys have privileges that give them power that girls don't have. They have preference, they get to drive fast cars, they get to go out at night and girls don't. They get to be not afraid to be out at night and girls are taught to be afraid to be out at night. All these things we did in the 1970s like take back the night. What was that about - it was about taking power. I think what happens with younger women is they are afraid, they are fearful. They're not taking the power that's theirs. Some of us, powered through this. We took abuse, we took all kinds of crap and we just powered through it, lived through it and we are who we are. I think the younger generation thinks, I don't want to have to suffer anything. I don't have to give up anything. We can say, what do we do to get them to the point where they're not fearful - I don't know. You have to be a powerful woman and maybe they will look at you and say well she can do this so I can, this what I did. I had powerful women around me; my mother and my sister were powerful women. It wasn't that I followed their roles, but they had a power and I sensed that. I see that maybe these younger women don't have not come into contact with the power that they have. They just need to find it and unleash it. I think some of the times when some of these things that are said to us that are nasty, awful things, we just turn like good little girls and walk away and that gives men power. They've done that to us, and we've taken it and they've had no repercussions. I don't do that; I personally say something nasty back to them. I'm a southerner and I can cuss with the best of them. It doesn't bother me and that scares them. They are startled by that if I say fuck you. They are amazed that I would say that to them, that I would disrespect them in that way. I try to disrespect them every time I can and that belittles them and then they hate me more, but I don't care. The thing that really gets to men about lesbians and particularly dykes is that we are not mancentric. What they don't understand is that I don't hate men, I do not have any use for them, that's not my life. My life is not centered around: like me, love me. lust after me, want to fuck me - none of that. I don't need his money, I don't need his appreciation, I don't need his approval, I don't need a thing that a man has, and I can get whatever a man has gotten. It may take a little longer, but I can get it. I think that's what happens with a lot of young girls, they see themselves as being weak; they see themselves as not being able to be powerful and I just want to say to every one of them, you can be powerful bitches. They need to be not afraid to say words like bitch and not to be afraid to confront and to stand up. People are going to be mean to you and sometimes people are going to hurt your feelings. I've had my feelings for just about damn near every day in my life, you got to get up, over it, and through it. That is part of it, empowering girls and saying here are some role models. You can be a role model by showing up and being you and maybe they'll like old dykes but maybe they won't. And if they don't, that's their problem. I loved Alex Dobkin, she was just an old dyke until the end; I loved her and I miss her.



Many old dykes of our age were role models for me, and they gave me power and strength. If younger lesbians don't see us as powerful, that's their problem, they're missing out on what we know, they're missing out on the knowledge we have. If they don't want that wisdom from us, we can't force it on them. We're here and if they want to hear from us, we're available. If they see us as powerful, then good. If they see us, that we are the old fuddy duddies, that's their problem because we know the power we have.

- I am responding to do we think that men innately hate women. I don't think so. I don't think boy babies are born hating women; I think it's a learned behavior. I have a son who was conceived when I was in a relationship with one of my woman lovers and he was born into a lesbian family and a lesbian community. His comfort level was being around lesbians, that it what was to him safe, secure, and nurtured, being in a group of lesbians was safe for him. But because of the society we live in, any male grows up and become socialized, they get misogyny by osmosis that exists in the world. It penetrates even if they know better or even if they didn't have that growing up. I think some men I know, actually straight men that have managed to keep that understanding and I trust them. There are not many but a couple of them, it is easier with gay men, the straight men that really have some trust in. I think that misogyny is so permeated in this culture and that it is really difficult for males not to get into it, it gets in their pores.
- I can only speak about what I know, which is in this society here on Turtle Island. It's not that I haven't visited other places, but I certainly wouldn't claim to know those cultures. What I really know are white based cultures. I grew up at the very poor end of working class so that's what I know then and try to make it my business to know about other things. I don't think the people born with male genitalia. Are born to be misogynistic any more than I as a white woman was born to be racist. But I surely learned racism early on even in a family that claimed we were taught to sing that Jesus loved all the children of the world, red, yellow, black, and white. We thought that meant something. This session started off with the dark heart versus the calamitous heart or the catastrophic heart. Then it went from there to talking about Chinese and African cultures, not European cultures where there were also horribly misogynistic things going on. I'm not going to say we can't help ourselves because I believe we can, like I believe males can help themselves. But I think society is so strong that we don't even, even those of us, and I'm going to talk about white supremacy here, even those of us in OLOC who have made a commitment to change/undo an overdue reckoning on racism. I'm much less interested in hearing about or focusing on what those men are doing. I am more interested in a conversation that is not a whoa whoa, whoa, whoa session, but what are we, where do we see it and what is my little part that I'm trying to do to interrupt it?
- I was just going to echo what Linette was saying - it has to come from within, if you're comfortable with yourself, if you know yourself, then you can speak up. I think it's important for us as older lesbians or dykes, however you feel comfortable identifying yourself, that you be a model. We have another generation coming up and they are faced with a lot of different things that perhaps we weren't faced with, but we have to model. We have to see that we have survived, and we have struggled, and we still continue to survive. I just want to echo that what we can do in this stage of our lives.
- In Kenya, the man who's working to oppose this has said that men have been socialized to believe that their place is above women. But the rise of feminism has left many men feeling emasculated or displaced. Many men were not taught or educated on how to coexist with women as equal human beings, and they're struggling with reality. The man's mansphere is in a sense a way to fight

for the promise of patriarchy. Of course, no one is born racist, no one is born sexist, but it's almost impossible in this country to get away from that.

- I just wanted to agree that we start learning all those things at home and, for me it wasn't television and stuff like the kids are experiencing now before they leave home. You get this foundation at home and then you go to school, that's when the world really starts reinforcing racism, sexism, all these things. I don't think any of it is innately in any of us, we learn it and learn it in a lot of different ways. My mother gave birth to five children and the first was a boy and the next four were girls. I think my younger sister and I are here only because they were attempts for another boy. My mother related several things to me one, she would say, I don't trust a woman further than I could throw her. But she also talked about my younger sister's birth and the way she learned that she had another girl was the doctor said to my father, well, Matt, for of a kind beats a full house anytime. Comments like that are reinforced and it seems hateful, sexism, racism, and all the other isms.
- There was a writer and I unfortunately cannot come up with her name who had a theory about, at least in our society, that men came to have the feelings, maybe ambivalent feelings about women having to do with child rearing and that in order for a boy to grow up where their mother was the authority and source of their sustenance, had to reject that mother, they had to overcome that mother. I don't know what happens, why is it that you know how that works for women who also have to do the same thing, but at least for the boys that the rejection of the power and authority of their mother was a way that they came into manhood. Her theory was that if child rearing was more egalitarian, perhaps the boys when they were growing up wouldn't have to go through that process and there might be less rejection and hatred and fear of women. I see it happening now, in the group of people that I know now that are in their thirties and forties, having kids where the fathers are taking as much or more responsibility for raising their kids, being there for them. I have a lot of hope in seeing the kids that are being raised in this new way having fewer preconceived notions about sex role stereotypes. With this change in the way kids are raised will result in more reasonable attitudes towards women.
- That individual solution only goes so far. Yes, we can be role models and encourage girls to be empowered but right now, a lot of what we are seeing is the result of institutionalized push back against women. When I look at what young women are going through, I see a lot of this is a result of institutionalization. I see it as a tragedy, a tragedy for the women's movement and for our ability as women to make change. Young women have become alienated and estranged from us, not on their own but because of what has happened in our institutions. For example, in higher education which has destroyed women's studies. They have substituted women's studies with postmodernism and gender identity which has really undone the possibility of young women learning about all of the empowerment of second wave feminism. Because that discussion about young women, for example, lesbians calling themselves queer which needs to be put within the context of lesbian identity for young women. It's not just individual choice that young women have suddenly come up with, there is a there is motivation behind it and it's not good for women. What we really need is a women's movement. As important it is in what we do as individuals, nothing will be as important as women coming back together and confronting male power.

The February session topic will be internalized misogyny/women hating, how women have internalized misogyny.

## CHAT

- I am extremely concerned about the tone this has begun with, "dark" heart vs, say, disastrous, calamitous, or catastrophic. Then begins with history based in China and Africa vs say Europe....
- Indeed, there are so many examples, equally brutal from Western European and American societies. It was a weakness of Dworkin, despite her important insights, that she did not rise above the racism and ethnocentrism of her society.
- Apparently, we today haven't either.
- Rhode Island has "gender" law passed in 1981 with Andrea Dworkin's help.
- I agree with the starting tone of the session. While it is disturbing, and I am saying this as an African American, I think they are presenting in the manner they were trained or conditioned in. This is not offered as an excuse, but as a reference for understanding.
- Yes. I totally understand mine and other white womxn's training - No excuses.
- The biggest joke (by male coworkers), we all have to go to four hours of sexual harassment training – Yay let's get trained in sexual harassment.
- I believe that with patriarchy came the institutionalization of a scheme of "power over". Men over women. One racial or ethnic group over another. Those with more resources over those with fewer resources. Misogyny is one of systems of oppression, racism, ageism, classism, ableism, etc.
- Oh yes they can - and they are trying very hard to do that. Especially since, more women than men get Social Security and Medicare.
- Good topic
- Major right-wing site
- There is so much misinformation about what went on during the second wave. I often hear from younger women who have heard about the "fiercely monogamous 70s." I always have fun disabusing them of these notions.
- I've seen "detransitioners" say they did not have dykey women to ever meet or see.
- Thank you for hosting a thoughtful topic and the excellent discussion that followed.
- Think about the Johns Hopkins definition of women as "non-men who are attracted to other non-men.
- Thanks for this conversation.
- The young women equated 'queer' with 'gay' as an umbrella term.
- Thank you for having this!!