



Positive Liberty and Feminism

Betty Friedan

Liberty

- What is liberty?
- Two traditional conceptions:
 - Negative Liberty
 - Positive Liberty

Negative Liberty

- Freedom from interference
- “I am slave to no man.”

Negative Liberty

- This tradition is rooted in Hobbes, Locke

“LIBERTY is absence of impediments to motion.”

-Thomas Hobbes, *The Leviathan*

"The free man is the man who is not in irons, nor imprisoned in a gaol, nor terrorized like a slave by the fear of punishment ... it is not lack of freedom, not to fly like an eagle or swim like a whale."

-Helvetius

“I am normally said to be free to the degree to which no man or body of men interferes with my activity.”

-Isaiah Berlin, “Two Concepts of Liberty”

Positive Liberty

- Having the power to fulfill one's potential
 - To have the ability to accomplish one's goals
 - To be free from inhibitions produced by the structure of society
 - To be fully human
- “I am my own master”

Jean-Jacques Rousseau

- “Man is born free, and everywhere he is in chains....How did this change come about?”
- “The stronger is never strong enough to be forever master, unless he transforms his force into right, and obedience into duty.”

-Rousseau, *The Social Contract*

From whence these chains?

- Poverty
- Racism
- Sexism
- Ignorance
- False-consciousness

- “The real motive forces impelling him remain unknown to him; otherwise it simply would not be an ideological process. Hence he imagines false or apparent motives.”

-Friedrich Engels

Perhaps Self-Hatred?

- "And in hating our features, and our skin, and our blood, we had to end up hating ourselves, and we hated ourselves."

-Malcolm X

Free to choose?

- Women are not *forced* to choose the life of a housewife, but how free is their choice to do so?
- Perhaps people may sometimes need to be “forced to be free”?
 - How might this work?
 - Education?

Forced to be free?

- "Surely, it is no assault on my dignity as a person if you take my car keys, against my will, when I have had too much to drink. There is nothing paradoxical about making an agreement beforehand providing for paternalistic supervision in circumstances when our competence is open to doubt."

-Ron Replogle, "Recovering the Social Contract"

What should be done?

- It is sometimes said that a government should aim actively to create the conditions necessary for individuals to be self-sufficient or to achieve self-realization.
- What do you think?
 - How might this work?

First Wave of Feminism

- 1848~1915
- Seneca Falls Convention
- Focused on *de jure* inequalities
- Seeking formal equality before the law:
 - Vote
 - Contract
 - Property
 - Legal Recognition
- Culmination is the 19th Amendment

Seneca Falls Convention



- July 19-20, 1848 at Seneca Falls, NY
- Begun by women excluded from anti-slavery convention
- Foundational moment in movement for women's suffrage

The Declaration of Sentiments

- “When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one portion of the family of man to assume among the people of the earth a position different from that which they have hitherto occupied, but one to which the laws of nature and of nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes that impel them to such a course.”

The Declaration of Sentiments

- “We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men and women are created equal;...”
- “Such has been the patient sufferance of the women under this government, and such is now the necessity which constrains them to demand the equal station to which they are entitled. The history of mankind is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations on the part of man toward woman, having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over her. To prove this, let facts be submitted to a candid world. ”

Grievances

- He has never permitted her to exercise her inalienable right to the elective franchise.
- He has compelled her to submit to laws, in the formation of which she had no voice
- Having deprived her of this first right as a citizen, the elective franchise, thereby leaving her without representation in the halls of legislation, he has oppressed her on all sides.
- He has made her, if married, in the eye of the law, civilly dead.
- He has taken from her all right in property, even to the wages she earns.

Grievances

- He has made her morally, an irresponsible being, as she can commit many crimes with impunity, provided they be done in the presence of her husband. In the covenant of marriage, she is compelled to promise obedience to her husband, he becoming, to all intents and purposes, her master - the law giving him power to deprive her of her liberty, and to administer chastisement.
- After depriving her of all rights as a married woman, if single and the owner of property, he has taxed her to support a government which recognizes her only when her property can be made profitable to it.

Grievances

- He has usurped the prerogative of Jehovah himself, claiming it as his right to assign for her a sphere of action, when that belongs to her conscience and her God.
- He has endeavored, in every way that he could to destroy her confidence in her own powers, to lessen her self-respect, and to make her willing to lead a dependent and abject life.

19th Amendment

- “The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex. Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.”

-The Constitution of the United States

- Ratified on August 18th, 1920

Views of the 1st Wave

- Women have “a higher and holier mission” in the home.
 - And outside of politics & economy
- “man-hating, embittered, sex-starved spinsters... castrating, unsexed non-women who burned with such envy for the male organ that they wanted to take it away from all men, or destroy them, demanding rights only because they lacked the power to love as women.”

A False Choice

- Later generations of women abandoned the first wave of feminism, “But what choice were they offered? In that corner, the fiery, man-eating feminist, the career woman—loveless, alone. In this corner, the gentle wife and mother—loved and protected by her husband, surrounded by her adoring children.”

Identity and Fulfillment

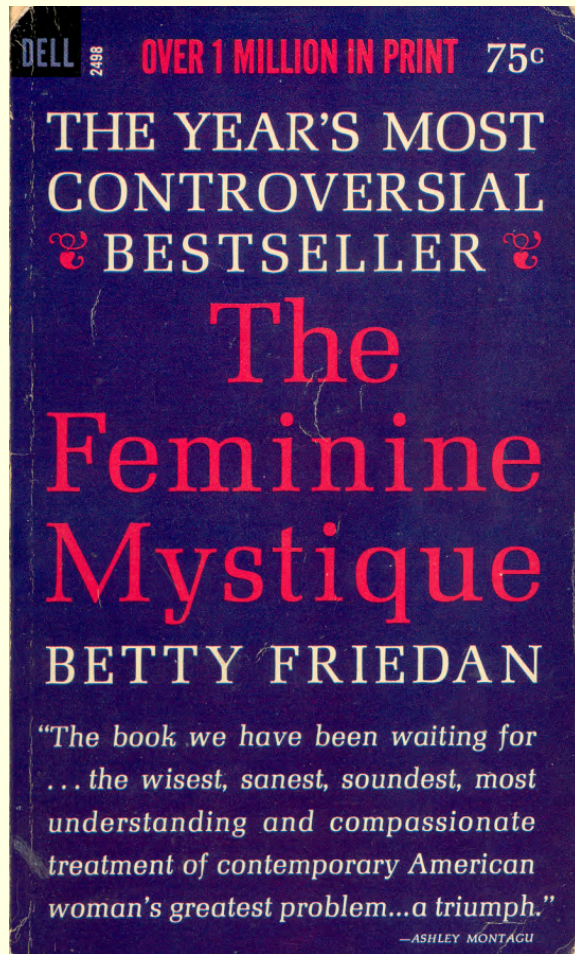
- In the society which Friedan describes, the career woman is seen as “that fatal error that feminism propagated”, inherently unhappy, perhaps even neurotic
 - The ideal of an outmoded past
- Women may have the right to vote, but their fulfillment will be in the home as wife and mother.

Betty Friedan



- 1921-2006
- Born in Peoria, Illinois
- Leading figure of the Women's rights movement.
- Published *The Feminine Mystique* in 1963.
- Co-founded NOW in 1966.

The Feminine Mystique



- Published in 1963
- Began as a project to interview fellow Smith College classmates about life since school.
- She found that many were unhappy, bored with lives as suburban housewives.
- Sparked the “Second-Wave” of feminism.

Second Wave of Feminism

- 1960s~1990s
- Focused on *de facto* inequalities
- Broader range of issues including economy, society, & politics.
 - Sexuality
 - Family
 - The workplace
 - Jobs and pay
 - Reproductive rights

The National Organization for Women

- Lobbied for the enforcement of:
 - Title VII of the Civil Rights Act.
 - Equal Pay Act of 1963
- Advocated for:
 - Extension of Affirmative Action to Women
 - Legalization of Abortion
 - National Day-Care
 - Equal Rights Amendment

Equal Rights Amendment

- **“Section 1.** Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.
- **Section 2.** The Congress shall have the power to enforce, by appropriate legislation, the provisions of this article.”
- Ratified in the House and Senate, but only ratified in 35 states (38 needed). Did not become law.

The Feminine Mystique

- Key Concepts:
 - The Problem that has no Name
 - The feminine mystique

The Problem that has no Name

- “Remember when we were all children, how we all planned to ‘be something?’” Boasting that she has worn out six copies of Dr. Spock’s baby-care book in seven years, she cries, “I’m lucky! Lucky! I’M SO GLAD TO BE A WOMAN!”
- Shirley Jackson: “After making the bed of a twelve-year-old boy week after week, climbing Mt. Everest would seem a laughable anticlimax”
- Is that all there is?

The feminine mystique

- “The suburban housewife--she was the dream image of the young American women and the envy, it was said, of women all over the world.”
- Real women cherish ‘their differentness’, their ‘unique femininity’, the ‘receptivity and passivity implicit in their sexual nature’.
 - Devoted to beauty and family, they are “feminine women, with truly feminine attitudes, admired by men for their miraculous, God-given, sensationally unique ability to wear skirts, with all the implications of that fact.”

The feminine mystique

- “The highest value and the only commitment for women is the fulfillment of their own femininity.”
 - Historically, this femininity has been undervalued.
 - Women are special and different, not inferior to men; perhaps in some ways superior
 - Innocent, helpless, childlike
 - These special qualities are expressed in terms of beauty, sex, and caretaking.
- “To be a woman is to act like so”
 - Functionalist definition

Roots of the mystique

- “A mystique does not compel its own acceptance.”
- “Brainwashing”
 - Recall Malcolm X
- Must fill real needs
 - Scientific: Freudian & functionalist
 - Cultural/Social: Insecurity caused by the War
 - Economic: Replacing wartime consumption

Happiness through skin-cream

"I DIDN'T KNOW I COULD BE SO HAPPY"

Romance comes to the girl who guards against COSMETIC SKIN

You can use cosmetics all you wish yet guard against this danger . . .

IT'S SO THRILLING to win romance—so important to keep it! And yet some women let Cosmetic Skin steal away their greatest treasure—soft, smooth skin!

Cosmetics Harmless if removed this way

It is when cosmetics are allowed to *choke the pores* that they cause Cosmetic Skin. Enlarged pores—tiny blemishes—a dull, lifeless look—these are warning signals that you are not removing cosmetics properly.

Lux Toilet Soap is made to remove cosmetics thoroughly. Its ACTIVE lather sinks deep into the pores, carries away every vestige of dust, dirt, stale cosmetics. Before you put on fresh make-up during the day—**ALWAYS** before you go to bed at night—protect your skin with the gentle soap 9 out of 10 screen stars use!

LIKE MOST GIRLS, I USE ROUGE AND POWDER, —BUT NEVER DO I RISK COSMETIC SKIN! I USE **LUX TOILET SOAP** REGULARLY. IT DOES LEAVE YOUR SKIN LIKE VELVET!

LUX
TOILET SOAP

LORETTA YOUNG
20TH CENTURY STAR

- Products fulfill you.
- Better buy some.
- Are you not fulfilled?
- What is wrong with you?
- Better buy some more.



DO give the woman announcer a "prop", if possible, to open her commercial. Woman talk that way, for one thing, and a "prop" increases opening interest in the commercial and diverts attention from her own personality until she can establish herself and win her audience.



DON'T cast for beauty. The pretty girl does not have the place in a TV spot she has in the magazine ad. The magazine reader can leisurely transfer his attention to the copy—but the TV viewer may never get his mind off the pretty girl.



DON'T let your woman announcer be too aggressive. She will antagonize all men, and many women. She must, however, speak with authority, either from experience or special knowledge of the product. A woman announcer is always a hazardous risk and few can please all viewers.

ALL ASSES WERE NOT CREATED EQUAL

New custom fits for women. It's about shape, not size.

JEANS TOO TIGHT IN
THE WAIST? TRY:

*Slight
Curve*

CELEBRATES
STRAIGHT FIGURES

DEFINES YOUR WAIST

ENHANCES YOUR CURVES

THE WAIST FITS BUT
DOESN'T FLATTER? TRY:

*Demi
Curve*

FRAMES PERFECT
PROPORTIONS

FLATTERS YOUR WAIST

SMOOTHS YOUR SHAPE

THE WAIST TENDS TO
GAP IN THE BACK? TRY:

*Bold
Curve*

HONORS REAL
CURVES

HUGS YOUR WAIST

NO GAPING OR PULLING



Who taught you to hate yourself?



The Goal

- The goal of feminism is, for Friedan, the freedom to make “the decision as to what one is going to be,” which has traditionally been reserved for men.
- The struggle is “simply to become fully human.”
 - Positive liberty
- “forbidden to join man in the world, can women be people?”
- The goal is fulfilling work.
 - A common sentiment

The End (for now)

