

Only a Tsunami Will Do: For a Post-Feminist Anarchy

Rita Katrina-Andrews

2005

“Are you ready to smash the reefs of the old world before they wreck your desires? Lovers should love their pleasure with more consequence and more poetry. Some of us have fallen in love with the pleasure of loving without reserve — passionately enough to offer our love to the magnificent bed of a revolution.”

— Guy Debord, *Society of the Spectacle*

Anarchists who cling to Leftist ideology as if it's a life raft are not worth the energy of a tirade. But, when another self-described post-left anarchist used an essentialist feminist scheme to explain away a much more complex situation, one of my peri-menopausal rants became inevitable. If it leaves you cold and uninspired — good; I'll have reflected the subject matter well. If you are already preparing your defense, gwan-get to a 'safe space' to vilify me as 'maleidentified', 'anarchist' or ... But look, I'm not dissing *you*, 'sister' or 'brother'; always do what pleases you most. It's just that the endless 60's reruns of "Men: Oppressors — Original Problem" and "Women: Nurture — Only Solution" are tiresome. Depressing. Frustrating. And the latest newsflashes, "Man Deviates From Essential Nature, Becomes More Feminine; Crochets Scarf" or "Woman Takes Male Privilege; Abuses Iraqi Prisoners" are just spinning attempts to aerate a stagnant pool liberally polluted with the flotsam and jetsam of feminism's (p)receding two Waves.

When feminists proclaimed "the personal *is* the political" they conveniently ignored the fact that politics require *de-personalization*; de-uniqueing and de-individualizing, massified roles with near verbatim scripts. I insist, the personal can only be the *anti-political* — ungoverned and ungovernable unique humans whose liberation can have no interceptors, interpreters, or redirectors. For those who need to identify the roles and scripts of my life to better position me on their revolting stage — here's some personal for you.

I'm a woman/female/girl. Mostly 'caucasian'. Omni-sexual. Enslaved by mother starting age five (ironing boards don't fold that low for the young maids?). Army brat raped by military intelligence father for six-plus years starting at age ten until I swore the 'masculine' vow to kill him if he touched me again. Battered for years, never fully broken. And no matter how hard They squeezed, an intractable rebel girl. I was also (and still am when it suits me) a damned good actress (or is it actor), which saved my ass more than once. I left 'home' as soon as I found a way

out — and oh, what a way! Mother, military wife — age 17. Prostitute in training, age 19. Single mother of two by 24. Sexy bartender, thieving comptroller by 29. Kick-ass electronics tech, ace network engineer — 33. With one final agonizing push from below, disgusted corporate executive — age 35. Throughout it all, scores of lovers, but damn few close and trusting relationships — male or female. Who do you trust in a world filled with used/users and ideologues who can rarely be ‘real’? All this Progress and Success in the ‘man’s world’ brought death too close by 40. I ignored the warnings for two more years while I searched for a gradual escape. Once I realized that route didn’t exist, I simply bailed. For 7 years I embraced life as a stinking desert rat and outlaw. My only aspiration then, as now, is to be a ‘wild thing’. By doing what I wanted, when I wanted — and mostly alone — I gained a level of health I’d not had at any age. Now I’m 50 and the long-forbidden tears of pain merge with those of rage when I hear anarchists spouting the same shit, thousands of different days later; “conform to appropriate behavior or else“. My health is waning again and I have real playing to get caught up with/in, but I can’t escape this reeling stage no matter how remotely I go! Everywhere life suffers and dies before its time, if my experience is any reflection and it’s us human ‘brothers’ *and* ‘sisters’ doing the murder while indignantly pointing the finger (some preferring the middle digit) at each other. Sibling rivalry has gone global and our quarrels, deadly.

“Separation is the alpha and omega of the spectacle.” — ibid

Look in the goddamn mirror — look all around you! No one is like you and no one can really know you — maybe not even yourself. But you think you’ve got everyone else figured out. Look for sacred, fleshy mounds. A dick? — Man, don’t trust him; patriarch, violent, oppressive, privileged, testosterone-poisoned, rapist-in-waiting, in need of punishment. Breasts? — Woman, nurturing, kind, earth-loving, safe, survivor, in-need-of-sisterly-support. Damn it! So many generals armed to the teeth with generalizations! Our allies can’t be distinguished/extinguished by appearance OR homogenized experience; neither can most of our enemies. *Believe it or Not* — Ripley.

Redefining *the root* of oppression as *the patriarchy* is not a well-thought out critique, it’s a well-marketed cliché designed for a captured audience (and another buck-oh-five bumper sticker). Of course, the *obvious* rulers on the world stage are *mostly* men whose power and glory comes *primarily* through the Institutionalized hierarchy of violence. And yes, many homes are the domain of god-the-father with woman and child beaten into supporting roles. But to reconstruct the entire world on a patriarchal foundation, radfems had to ignore women’s roles in the design and enforcement stage. Women also rule (there are few who who don’t dominate someone/thing; hierarchy is ubiquitous because of its success/access/-ibility to everyone). If women’s power has come *primarily* from the institutionalized hierarchy of manipulation, matriarchy is supposed to be desirable? Fuck that! My liberation *cannot* be measured in the incremental subtleties of physical pain relieved. And no amount of revisionism can disguise the shifty-shifting roles we *all* play in this CO-creation: heroes and heroines, saviors and damsels-in-distress, villains and innocents and...

Alert! Alert! Most every frightened fear-monger was raised by a mother. Do you think she might have *some* role in creating the monsters their offspring become? Or are the domineering, child-beating, Abu Ghraib, star-quality commandeers of the global-stage-sans-cock simply patriarchs with pussies? What do you call women who urge — if not order — *their* men to war to

return as heroes protecting the oh-so-sweet and suddenly available booty? From ancient Helen of Troy to the re-released Lysistrata, the cunt is no stranger to the imperial battlefield. Tell me, is it gender, class, or race privilege that keeps the blood off the hands of the Albrights, Elizabeths, Thatchers, Rices...? Is it sexism that keeps women 'behind the lines' stuck with the 'inferior' roles of director, coordinator, or yellow-ribbonier of the men who slaughter for 'freedom'?

"It is easy to see why bourgeois thought, strung up as it is on a rope of radicalism of its own manufacture, clings with the energy of desperation to every reformist solution, to anything that can prolong its life, even though its own weight must inevitably drag it down to its doom." — Raoul Vaneigem

Women's Studies (Institutionalized *Herstory*) produce new leaders who mimic the strategies of their *historic* predecessors, who succeeded in defining nationalism as a unifying birth identity. But, feminists are way behind in marketing their massified set of values: a common (politically correct) language, generalized shared experience as victim/survivor, loyalty to The Cause, and an "incredible commonality of vision". And as do patriots, these feminists often treat me as a traitor because I refuse to join their "Liberation" Party.

Stars of the new-age feminist stage hawk their wares in honor to the goddesses — deities worshiped by the earliest domesticaters of field and home. Some point to these matrilineal and matriarchal societies of old as models for a postpatriarchy future. I can't help but wonder; if early civilized women's rule was so fucking excellent, why was it ended? Is it possible *their* subjects objected to being controlled; consequently genderizing their oppressive experience? Roles couldn't have been exchanged after a masculinist revolution, correct?

But let's get real. We don't know *shit* about the distant past with ANY certainty so let's stick with today. Teachers are mostly female, and along with the mommy dearests — and aides de camp Mattel, Disney, and countless other spectacular brands seared onto our overly large brains — have primary responsibility for schooling/punishing the wildness (as in the spontaneous self-exploration of the curious delights and even pains of life) right the fuck on out of us. "Be good girls and boys — the Machine needs you to behave in order to use (then kill) you efficiently later." Or am I still blaming the big-V, glossing over an innate female naiveté, ignoring a forced ignore-ance of woman's subjugation and oppression?

Bullshit! Women are intelligent, aware, and more than innocent bystanders or collateral damage in the brutal war on life; far more than empty vessels to be filled by Man's cock and ideals. Women are as capable of greedy, destructive, bitchin' behavior of our own accord as we are of submissive (eventually self-destructive) acceptance of another's brutality. And here has always been resistant women fighting — often *alongside* men — against the imposition of another's order. All humans have a wide range of traits and tendencies that can't be reliably tied to her 'blood' or his 'nature'. Some men are brutes and some women are, too. Some women nurture, others don't — but that doesn't make them brutes (or masculine). Some men nurture — which doesn't make them wusses (or more feminine!). And when does violent self-defense become offensive aggression; compassionate nurturing force compliant pacification — both tools of the Masters? Do we want to demolish gender roles or redefine them?

A dominant and dominating *force* fixing us in our proper place is the elevation of a mass — identifiable, controllable, and homo-non-genius — above all. Well... not above our overlords and ladies of course. Class IS one of the deep and suck-ulent roots maintaining the divided and

conquerer and we ALL give aid and comfort to this enemy. But most feminists *have* to diminish the class — and race — factor or risk exposing their own bourgeois white roots and concomitant goal of wresting power from their male classmates. And they NEED our help to get it/up.

Feminist consciousness-raising focused a magnifying glass on men's oppression of women. A useful beginning perhaps, but the scope was never expanded to explore the greater duality we share as both possessor and dispossessed. Women *still* don't talk about the shit we ought to be talking about if we are going to spend so damn many words and trees on our liberation. Feminists *talk* about taking back the night (I'll take a whole lot more day, thank you!) while the fucking pigs guard their flanks. Does it matter if the swine are women? Men are *relegated* to the back of the line if they're *permitted* at all (as though the night is safe for men and as if these women have shit to say about who is or is not allowed in the streets!). Hey mamas, guess what? Your ass-end is one of the most vulnerable points in your rigid formation — you can't see what's coming! You send the 'brothers' to the back (sound familiar), elevating the 'sisterhood' to its proper place of leadership, prominence, and self-protection. In reality, those men have got *your* back while you still play the fool.

There's also a lot of woman-talk about female objectification and male privilege, of the necessity for a step-by-step consensual intimacy and of an ever-expanding definition of rape. Objectified? Damned right! I am one of trillions of (barely) living beings redefined as Capital's objects — things of usefulness until we're useless and then we're nothing. Was my raped-pussy-object damaged more than my brother's smashed-face-object? Is the old Anglo man's labored dying breath — black-lunged from years as miner-object — more privileged than the African girlchild's starving-belly-object of colonial-diamond/gold annihilation for all those pretty rings on the all those pretty fingers, sold to the highest bidder for the legally-objective right for both actors to get what they want when they want it? Fuck that shit! You want to measure and rank our tangible pain along with abstracted privilege!?! What coldhearted measurement device do you have, feminist woman? And when will you stop sacrificing — and I mean sacred-fixing — our (w)hole to be used against us while we prop up the Masters' limp, yet somehow still-potent play for the *Accumulation of Everything*?

And don't tell me that you — astute and clever woman — don't know how to wield the weapon of your 'femininity'. You want Power? Control? Domination? Women wrote their own book, it's just not in print. We rarely even talk with each other about the ways we can and do manipulate; taunt and tease, offer and withdraw affection (or sex), flatter and ridicule — men (and women and children) into doing our bidding. This is *not* the unfortunate yet righteous feminine *response* to the masculine power trip. It is the interactive, tightly-scripted *Play For More Power and Control* men and women act out together. We know how much men want and need and love to get up all next to us; to feel us, to feel us feeling them. Stroking bodies, nurturing love, licking wounds, and ... oh damn! You know what? I love it too! I love her smooth breasts and soft pussy; his hard cock and rough chest. A man's sweet whispers and a woman's ardent bites. When we're uninhibited and unmediated by rigid con-sensuality; certain we're lovers not abusers and rapists — we're ALL there. If we fumble in our desire and unfamiliar passions, why the surprise that anarchists are not perfect in their every gesture and word? Our fluid, wild, and lusty dance has long been reduced to lock-step marches: a puritan morality by the Right and gender, sexual, and reproductive rights by the Left. As we tear down our habituated facades, we may still be 'inappropriate' at times. Repressed (and who isn't in some significant way) — do we oppress? Shattered and afraid — do

we attack those we're closest to? But our *necessary* attack is (un)bound to explode somewhere! Can we help each other with our aim?

And, the eco-feminist's (and is every feminist really an eco-feminist?) reified Earth is not my Mother! My mother raped me as sure as my father, whether she turned away in silence or handed him the lotion. The 'earth' is symbiotically-conflicted, wildly-simple, amazingly-complex, violent-nurturing, male/ female/hermie/ungendered, multi-colored, undefinable beings living alone, together. Humans included, once for FREE! Why anthropomorphize, genderize, then parentalize — always spectacularizing — it's uniquely individual- wholeness? If 'Earth' is 'Mother' — we are ALL motherfuckers! Raping her with our death machine-beauty aids-tofu-packages thrust into too-shallow graves unlubricated with recycled-sustainable lies. Oh, but those clear-cut mountains DO remind me of a shaved pussy — I'll grant you that. Still lovely living mounds, but scraped raw for what? And please don't distill your reasoning to "for the Man's wood". Distillation doesn't make for purity, it merely relocates unwanted elements to where you can't see or smell or taste them anymore. And it will not help your cause if it is indeed one of a healing nature.

Anarcha-feminists, I thought you might be accomplices in my genderless, raceless, classless, open-armed eternal struggle for immeasurable freedom. The double female identifier surely hinted at your narrowed perspective, little changed from before you became an 'anarchist'. Your battle of the sexes continues while all around you extinction gives a shit about identity — gendered or other Otherness. I'm a fucking anarchist — opposed to ALL hierarchy, which presents itself in ways both gross and subtle, Institutional and institutional Focusing on one of its forms is useful at times, but why would any anarchist extract then isolate — even equating or elevating — one type of domination over another? Hierarchy does not equal patriarchy. Individual women who call themselves feminists (WHY?) DO have relevant ideas, critiques, and experiences for anarchists to consider. But feminism cannot be re-formed into an image of anarchy and anarchy has no need of reformation in the image of Woman.

"When will you stop identifying with what defines you?" — ibid

None of my rant denies the reality of female subjugation (or of the male's), of sexism (or racism or classism...) or of a temporary usefulness of segregated safe-spaces. Breaking free of our chains is difficult, possibly embarrassing. At times even painful and dangerous. But how can self-imposed confinement ever be liberatory? How will we create new worlds devoid of separatism when we use it as The Strategy? This tirade IS a dismissal of the one-sided, non-selfreflecting, and non-self-critical discourse and massified divisiveness that dominates all political theory and practice, including feminism. The roots of our subjugation are deep and tangled; each strand feeds and supports itself and the structure it is inseparable from. Clipping one will not destroy the whole; roots are both regenerative and cooperative. This is why some anarchists and other radicals declare the whole-tangled-mess our enemy. It is civilization (patriarchy does not equal civilization) rooted in an all-encompassing domination over the land and over every entity sustaining and sustained by it. It is life as war whose strategies include aggressive, violent attacks AND subtle, destructive manipulations.

Men, women, ...fighting for the elusive Happily-Ever-After-Plus-\$'More. This powerful enemy includes a mindset requiring controlled, predictable (despite acknowledging its impossibility), identifiable order according to a Mass-ter plan. But it is perhaps, first and foremost, the loss of the unique individual, alienated from self and others, masked in a divisive pseudo-libertarian-unity.

We are unified only in our misery, guilt, and blame — wasting away in our too often self-selected, segregated, readily-identified roles — in reality, easily monitored cells. Male, female, black, white, straight, gay...And no kinder and gentler feminine warden will release us; if we want out we need to break out and burn the prison down. And our opportunities are rapidly disappearing. There's no Womanhood to exalt, no Manhood to destroy. If *anyone* treats you in a way you don't want — deal with *them as individuals*. Don't tag them as proof of a misbehaving aggregation; anarchists neither accept nor impose representation. Missteps amongst comrades — even with strangers — are opportunities to explore our roles and (usually unspoken) expectations. If a John is abusive, a Kat dangerous, take them out [of that position] in whatever way you see fit. When we directly and consistently refuse and resist *every* imposition of another's will/leadership/order/coercion and remain open to insurrectionary inspiration in any form, we embrace a means never-ending.

Find yourself, man/woman/.../child — let me find myself. If we've got a groove let's dance it into the streets where we'll get it on. Watching *each others'* back as we explore the unfamiliar night where strangers are unique, but really not so strange. Can we learn to trust our intuition/instincts/senses, our *comadres Y compadres* who live in their *own* skin, instead of on ideologies built on the irrationally rationalized fears of others?

FUCK! We've got to destroy this stage/platform before it gets kicked out from under nearly dangling feet and noosed and hoodied heads. And I want to lay my naked and wounded being on the newly exposed dirt alongside the sensual, raging, gentleness of a tribe of free lovers of life while I still can. With my tears of pain and rage unabated, I ask you most urgently — why do you *wave* away potential accomplices while playing *The Droll Revolutionary* instead of embracing us in the infinite ecstasy of revolutionary play?

The Anarchist Library
Anti-Copyright



Rita Katrina-Andrews
Only a Tsunami Will Do: For a Post-Feminist Anarchy
2005

Retrieved on August 9, 2009 from www.greenanarchy.org
Published in *Green Anarchy* issue #21 — Fall/Winter 2005–06

theanarchistlibrary.org