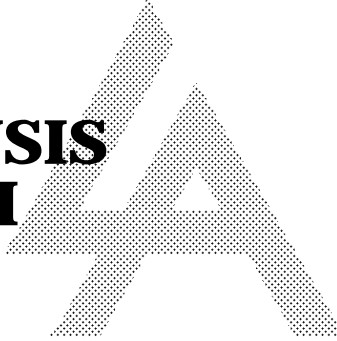


FROM CREATIVE, DEVIANT MOVEMENTS TO CONVENTIONAL OPPRESSORS:

A LOOK AT PSYCHOANALYSIS AND FEMINISM

RUSSELL EISENMAN



As a clinical psychologist who has done psychotherapy, I look to help clients achieve growth. This often involves overcoming the old, inhibited ways of doing things, and coming up with new, original (at least for the client) approaches. An exception to being less inhibited is criminals, who often need to be more inhibited (Eisenman, 1991a, 1991b). Social movements are like clients in some ways, and what is interesting is that social movements that were once creative often become stale and oppressive. Thus, the movement was for change and reform, but eventually becomes part of the repressive establishment. I recall a politician who said about the reform group that ousted him "They said we were crooks, and that it was time for a change. Now they are as big a crooks as we were." I see two movements that started out as creative, innovative approaches, and which now show some signs of being less creative and more repressive. Creativity may be defined as originality plus usefulness. I believe a discussion of this change from creativity to repressiveness is instructive, in that deviant (nonconforming; see Eisenman, 1991a) behavior may change and become repressively nondeviant, and possibly even worse than what the movement was trying to correct (e.g., the excesses of the French Revolution: "Off with their heads."). I discuss two important social movements, psychoanalysis and women's liberation/feminism as examples. It is worthwhile to analyze social movements, both to understand them better and for implications which the analysis may have for the behavior of individuals, who also often fear freedom and retreat from it.

PSYCHOANALYSIS

Psychoanalysis may have been creative at one time, but has become less creative, at least to an extent. Part of this is no doubt due to flaws inherent in psychoanalytic assumptions (Eysenck, 1992), while part seems due to the general phenomenon discussed here of movements diminishing in creativity and tolerance.

Freud's invention of Psychoanalysis was a major accomplishment. Growing up in the Victorian era, when people thought that behavior was rationally governed, Freud advanced the idea that motivation is primarily unconscious, often due to dark urges of sex and aggression. Freud was, therefore, an anti-rationalist, not in the sense that he did not use reason, but in the sense that he said reason does not form the major basis of human behavior. From Freud's ideas grew a theory; a new kind of psychotherapy (Psychoanalysis); and a method of investigation, such as dream analysis and free association. Freud was no doubt wrong on many of his ideas, but his new kind of thinking was liberating, from seeing that sex was more important than people gave it credit for to seeing that people may have hidden motives in everyday behaviors, such as in the telling of a joke. For example, the joke may reveal hostility which the person could not otherwise express. Also, I believe that he was right to say that symbols, especially in dreams, are important and this was another important advance. However, his belief in universal symbols (symbol X always means Y) seems to me to be incorrect.

Freud helped overcome some of the Victorian repressiveness with his new ideas. Much of what he thought has been incorporated into our culture, so that laymen are Freudians, even if they do not know it. The Freudian ideas permeate everything from mass culture to serious writing, and most people who have not studied psychology know no other approach. Even professional advertisers know many of Freud's ideas, assume they are true, and try to incorporate them into the advertisements they produce. Thus, a product may be depicted in such a way as to appear upright and be a phallic symbol, or round and be a vagina symbol. Whether or not people truly see these things as symbols and thus are influenced to buy them is another issue. But, at least many advertisers believe they do, and create advertisements based on Freudian symbolism.

This once liberating, anti-Victorian ideology is, however, often used for repressive purposes. Here are some of the things I have actually heard psychoanalysts saying, based on their theory.

1. A man has several sexual partners. This, they often conclude, shows repressed homosexuality, and is thus, by definition, deviant in the negative sense of "deviant" (Eisenman, 1991a). The psychoanalytic concept here is that the man is engaged in a

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www.libertarian.co.uk email: admin@libertarian.co.uk

Dr. Russell Eisenman is Associate Professor of Psychology at McNeese State University in Louisiana. He is author of *Political Issues and Social Problems: A Social Psychological Perspective*, *From Crime to Creativity: Psychological and Social Factors in Deviance*, *Studies in Personality, Social and Clinical Psychology: Nonobvious Findings*, and *Contemporary Social Issues: Drugs, Crime, Creativity and Education*, and co-author of *The New Families: Youth, Communes and the Politics of Drugs*.

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homosexual panic, defined as realizing, at some level, that he has homosexual tendencies. This induces a panic because he is opposed to homosexuality, so he engages in frequent heterosexual behaviors, with many partners, to reassure himself that he is not a homosexual. I once saw an example of this in a patient in a state mental hospital where I did my psychology internship. But, psychoanalysts, and those who follow the doctrine, make the mistake of applying, what is probably something like a one in a thousand occurrence, across the board to all men.

2. A woman is capable of multiple orgasms. We now know this to be a physiological reality. Whereas a man, after orgasm, undergoes a period of time known as the refractory stage, wherein he cannot become sexually aroused, a woman is capable of continual sexual arousal, and thus continual orgasms. Let us say that the woman induces multiple orgasms by allowing the water from the faucet of her tub to fall onto her clitoris and vaginal area. This shows penis envy, according to what some psychoanalysts have said, and indicates there is something wrong with her. Again, the person who is different in any way is put down as disturbed, even though in this example the person is functioning in what is a physiologically normal way, to give herself pleasure.
3. Students protest the policies of their university administration. According to some psychoanalysts, these students have failed to resolve the Oedipus complex adequately. The university is the father, and they are rebelling against it because they unconsciously want to overthrow their father and sexually possess their mother. This far-fetched analysis fails to consider that there may be policies which are harmful and are worth protesting against. Is all protest to be explained in terms of some unconscious problem? This is reductionism at its worst: reducing whatever is observed to some other process, in this instance a negative one. So, there is a built in conservatism to this kind of psychoanalytic doctrine. Anyone who works to achieve change is condemned.
4. A person strongly disagrees with a psychoanalyst about something. The analyst concludes that the strength of the disagreement shows that the person truly (though perhaps unconsciously) agrees, and is threatened by what the psychoanalyst has said. In this instance, you either agree with the psychoanalyst or your disagreement will be interpreted to his benefit. Either way, his position is unassailable, under the rules he has constructed.
5. A woman has sex with more than one man, and is said by the psychoanalyst to be engaging in sexual acting out. "Sexual acting out" is a somewhat vague concept, as I have pointed out (Eisenman, 1987b, 1994), but it tends to refer to the person dealing with a problem by not facing that problem, but by engaging in sexual behavior instead. I found that the concept was applied more to women than to men, which is in accord with our sexual double standard which prohibits behaviors in women which are allowable for men (Eisenman, 1987b, 1991a, 1994). This cultural standard has its effects, since females, on the average, engage in less sexual behavior than do males (Eisenman, 1982), no doubt in part because society makes them feel like they are bad if they do certain things which are, however, not prohibited, or less prohibited for males (Eisenman, 1991a).

The above examples all show psychoanalysis at its worse. One might defend the movement by saying that everyone makes errors, and that these are just some negative examples. But, the issue is, how likely are these kind of errors? I think they are very frequent, and show that psychoanalysis, at least as practiced by real-life psychoanalysts, often has a repressive, anti-creativity spirit. Instead of allowing the person to grow, the person is put into some category which serves a repressive function. The person is labeled as some kind of deviant, in the bad sense of the word (which is, unfortunately, how most people think of "deviance"), and their behavior is thus explained away as being based on some underlying pathology. Eysenck (1992) has shown that many of the assumptions of psychoanalysis are flawed and its conclusions can be better explained by other interpretations.

WOMEN'S LIBERATION/FEMINISM

Originally, the feminist movement was called women's liberation. The name change is very interesting. "Women's liberation" was a radical movement, suggesting major changes in the way women are viewed and live their lives. In 1972-73, I was a visiting associate professor at the University of California at Santa Cruz. The woman's liberation movement, sometimes also referred to as feminism back then, was a powerful, creative movement which suggested that women were being kept down in their role as housewives, and that life should entail more than taking care of a house and raising children. Women should have equality in the workplace, in the bedroom, and in general. Sexual freedom was a major part of the women's movement as I observed it then, and women opposed the game-playing which goes on in male-female relationships. Sex roles can, of course, be very confining (Cyrus, 1993). Proponents of the movement said that women's liberation would liberate men, too, and this seemed like an accurate statement. Greater sexual freedom for women and less conventional role playing would mean greater freedom for men. To demonstrate their freedom, many women's liberation advocates in California would go topless at rock music concerts, showing their freedom from oppressive rules and laws.

In later years, the term "women's liberation" was heard less and less, and was replaced by "feminism". It is less clear what feminism means per se. "Liberation" implies a radical change, while "feminism" seems to imply less. "Feminism" seems to imply the rights of women, without suggesting any need to be liberated from conventional standards.

EMPHASIS ON PORNOGRAPHY AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Pornography

In recent times, not only have many feminists seemed to drop their interest in liberation and sexual freedom, but they have become sexually repressive. Two major examples are (1) the feminist condemnation of pornography and the attempt to show that it is a major cause of rape, and (2) the feminist emphasis on sexual harassment.

With regard to the pornography issue, the feminists seem to be thinking in shallow terms. Rapists are not primarily motivated by pornography, if at all. There may be individual case histories where rapists read pornography before committing a crime, but that does not mean that if there had been no pornography there would be no rape. Just because something follows something else, we cannot attribute the basis of the second thing to the first thing. If we do, we are committing the logical fallacy of *post hoc, ergo propter hoc*. In fact, from working with rapists and reading the research literature, many rapists come from repressive, harsh backgrounds where learning about sex, or reading about it, or looking at pictures is taboo. The best research on this was the comprehensive investigation by the Committee on Obscenity and Pornography (1970), which had vast resources, and concluded that pornography had little or no effect on behavior. In fact, one study by the commission found that rapists reported less exposure in their youth to pornography than nonrapists. While we have to exercise caution due to the self-report nature of the data, they are certainly not consistent with the feminist association of pornography with rape, and, in fact, are in the opposite direction.

Also, the issue of what is pornography is vague. Feminists usually include the relatively sanitized nudity of *Playboy* magazine within their definition of pornography, which is dubious. Gloria Steinem, a major feminist leader (with whom I usually agree), said that pornography is bad, but that erotica is good. The trouble is, without a clear definition, pornography is the erotica she does not like, and erotica is the pornography she does like. American society is more puritanical and sexually repressed than many think (Eisenman, 1991a). Many countries around the world have less taboos than we do about the naked body. A case could be made that we would be a more healthy society if we had more freedom

regarding nudity and sexually explicit material. In the Scandinavian countries, legalizing pornography has been associated with less child abuse, not more. I might exclude from this position pornography which combines female nudity with violence. This combination, which links in one's mind female sexuality and violence, may be harmful, while I believe most other pornography to be mostly benign. The whole idea that nudity or sexuality is bad is a part of American values which needs to be overcome so that people would be liberated. If this were the case, then what we call pornography (including *Playboy*) would be no big deal, and would merely be seen as just another form of entertainment. Instead, today, with all our sexual inhibitions, we see pornography (or erotica; I use the terms interchangeably because I doubt that they can be differentiated) as Satanic.

Sexual Harassment

Instead of pursuing sexual freedom, feminists seem out to get men, and take away some of their freedom. The concept of "sexual harassment" has been a way to prosecute and persecute men who fail to conform to some conservative standard of sexual behavior. Of course, it is important to note that true sexual harassment is horrible and has a devastating effect on the victims. But feminists have cast their nets very wide, so that telling a dirty joke or having pin-up pictures on one's wall is seen as sexual harassment. Women claim they want men to be more honest and open, but if a man is honest with a woman about his sexual interest in her, he leaves himself open to an accusation of sexual harassment, because he can be accused of making an unwanted sexual advance. Since it is often impossible to know if an advance is wanted or unwanted, this puts the man in the position of inhibiting his behavior if he wants to avoid possible charges. The result reminds me of a cartoon I once saw. A man and a woman pass each other on the street. You see what they are thinking. Each would like to approach the other, but fears being thought of negatively, so they pass by without speaking. On a network television news program, feminist Robin Morgan said that men can avoid harassing women by adhering to the following rule of thumb: "If you are not sure, don't do it." While this would certainly work to cut out offensive behavior, it would also work to eliminate any kind of risk taking or creative behavior. It is the advice of repression.

Feminists have largely won in the sexual harassment arena. Their position has become the law of the land, and it is easy to bring charges of sexual harassment and put the man on the defensive. Many organizations, fearing law suits, will side with the woman and punish the man, often with no hearing or with a kangaroo court type hearing, wherein the man is sure to be "convicted" so that the organization can say "See, we oppose sexual harassment".

At other times, though, women who bring charges are, themselves, persecuted, and the organization fails to deal with real, ongoing harassment. Rape in the military is an example of this, according to a 1992 network newsmagazine broadcast. Many female soldiers are raped by the male soldiers, but often they are not believed and further harassed by the military, if they complain.

Few people have looked at the sexual harassment of males by females. This is not what feminists want, since their movement seems designed to help women and persecute men when wrong doing is alleged. It is interesting to see the knee-jerk fashion in which many (most?) feminists side with the alleged victim (female), when she makes a complaint against an alleged perpetrator (male). The feminists, without much factual knowledge, assume that the woman is telling the truth and that the man is guilty. Our study of sexual harassment proclivities in both men and women found that the same variables which related to sexual harassment proclivities by men also related to sexual harassment proclivities by women: acceptance of traditional sex roles and belief in rape myths, and other beliefs which seem to indicate lack of empathy for others (Bartling and Eisenman, 1993). One conceptual problem is that while a female recipient of some behavior might regard it as sexual harassment, the male recipient of the same behavior would often not consider what was done to him to be sexual ha-

arrassment. Thus, females object to more behaviors than males object to. In this sense, females are more conservative than males.

The assault on sexually explicit material and on male sexual behavior is an attempt to turn back the clock, and make men as inhibited as women used to be and perhaps still are. So, instead of trying to liberate themselves, feminists are, in part, trying to unliberate men. It is thus a repressive, puritanical movement.

WHY THE CHANGE?

Why has all of the above occurred? I do not know, although it seems to be the way things often occur: a movement starts out creative and risk taking and ends up repressive. However, I have come across an explanation of why it occurs, and although this explanation has some disturbing implications for those who believe in equality of males and females, it does provide an answer. In addition, this largely biological approach may be true, despite many beliefs in social learning explanations. We should be open-minded, especially when a theory we do not subscribe to explains something better than our own, preferred theory. Although I often lean to a social learning explanation of things, the explanation to be discussed seems to explain better the change in the feminist movement than does social learning viewpoints.

Glenn Wilson's Sociobiology Viewpoint

This explanation is the socio-biological explanation of Wilson (1992). He says that evolution has made men and women very different. Some of the differences, which he believes to be innate are that women, relative to men, are more submissive, less skilled in spatial or mathematical skills, less risk taking, but higher in empathy, verbal skills, and social skills. Wilson believes these are biological truths, not really subject to great change by culture. Thus, from this perspective, women's liberation made a mistake in trying to achieve sexual freedom and all the other kinds of freedom for women, because women do not really want this, as it goes against their nature. So, it is no surprise that the freedom of the women's liberation movement has been toppled for the puritanical repressiveness of the feminist movement. This, in a nutshell, is the Wilson (1992) perspective on the feminist movement. In some ways I am bothered by this biological determinism and its implication that things cannot change as much as one might like. But, he does provide an explanation which explains the change from the temporary radicalism of women's liberation/feminism and to the current puritanism of feminism. In fact, it is the only explanation I know of which specifically addresses that freedom-to-repression change.

An Attempted Explanation

Is there any other explanation of the change from deviant and creative to conventional and oppressive for much of both feminism and psychoanalysis? I think at least part of the answer may be found in Goldwert's (1992) statement that all great creativity is, in part, oppositional and destructive: to create one must destroy. Perhaps movements which begin by being creative have a desire, at least eventually, not to be oppositional but to "fit in" with the rest of society. Some fitting in make sense. A person or movement totally oppositional to society is in bad shape. But, the early fervor of the creative person or movement might tend to give way to a desire for acceptance, and a loss of the vision which first led to creative insights. Also, it may be that as the early leaders age they tend to become more conservative and less challenging to the status quo. In fact, as they win power and acceptance in society, they become part of the status quo. Thus, they are now the repressive establishment. Although they have the same name as the movement which once challenged society, they are now part of the informal enforcement of society's rules and mores. They have gone from deviant and creative to becoming society's cops.

Not All Feminists Agree

Some feminists do not support the assault on pornography, the simple-minded view that it is a main cause of rape, or the constant

attempt to nail men on sexual harassment charges, or to verbally put them down when they do something such as telling an off color joke. Thus, some feminists have not been taken in by what appears to be the majority part, and there is hope that things could change.

Is Biology Destiny?

Biological views tend to have the implication that things really cannot change, and that the way things are is, more or less, the way things should be. However, change is still possible. If women are truly low in risk taking, for example, then there will always be a sex difference with men, on the average, being more creative than women, since risk taking is often part of being creative (Davis, 1992; Eisenman, 1969, 1987a, 1991a; Merrifield, Guilford, Christensen, and Frick, 1961; Pankove and Kogan, 1968). On the other hand, there is still room for change within cultural standards of what gender means. For example, if women are partially non-risk takers because they are taught to avoid risks, then they can be taught to take risks, and the sex difference in creativity can be reduced. Also, a biological tendency does not necessarily mean an inevitability. Even if women have an inherent tendency, relative to men, to avoid risks, they can still learn to be more risk-taking than their inherent tendency predisposes them to be. Thus, biology is destiny only in part, if this perspective is correct.

Benefits of Feminism

The feminist movement has had a powerful effect in helping women see that their potential is much more than what they have traditionally been taught. One need only to look at the letters-to-the-editor section of women's magazines to see that even fairly simple articles, about personal growth or job opportunities for women, result in letters saying things like: "I never before realized that I had options in my life. This article was an incredible, eye-opening experience." Much credit for the expanded horizons for women goes to the women's liberation/feminist movement. The movement has also helped women to be more assertive and stand up for their rights, as opposed to being overly passive and being "walked on". Both men and women can often profit from assertiveness training, and it is to the feminists' credit that they recognized the nonassertive behavior of many women and sought to correct it via assertiveness training groups. And, feminists have fought for women's rights and protection in such areas as health, treatment by the criminal justice system, etc. It is tragic that the movement now seems to be headed in a puritanical, repressive direction.

A FINAL WARNING

People are often strongly attached to their way of thinking. Thus, psychoanalysts or feminists may see my critique as so damaging to their beliefs that they will not tolerate it, and instead see me as the enemy. In fact, one person who read this manuscript said that I was trying to say that women cannot be creative. I am not saying that, nor trying to put down women. I believe strongly in the liberation of women. I am not criticizing psychoanalysts or feminists who avoid the errors described in this paper. I am trying to critique oppressive acts of what once were creative, liberating movements.

There is the possibility that what I am criticizing represents only part of psychoanalysis or feminism, and that the majority of those who identify with these movements do not do what I critique. While I suspect that I am on target, there may be many psychoanalysts and feminists whose voices are seldom heard, but who seldom or never do the kinds of things I criticized. If that is the case, the oppressors may seem to be a more dominant part of these movements than is actually the case, perhaps due to greater media publicity for their ideas.

Any strong social/political movement tends to see itself as above criticism and reacts strongly to deviation from group doctrine (Eisenman, 1991a). Thus, feminists who believe the current posi-

tions on pornography causing rape and on sexual harassment may not tolerate any criticism or deviation from perceived truth. For example, when one female professor, Christina Hoff Sommers, presented a paper at the American Philosophical Association criticizing some feminist positions, she reported that "... the feminists in the audience just went crazy. They had never been criticized before." (Ridgley, 1993, p. 9; see also Sommers, in press).

It seems that both psychoanalysis and feminism began as movements which strongly criticized existing social standards, but have turned into movements which, in some ways, have become as oppressive as the things they were opposing. It would be interesting to see if this is typical of social movements, or merely true of some.

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