

予習課題：次の英文を読んで、内容を理解しなさい。

Feminists are made, not born. One does not become an advocate of feminist politics simply by having the privilege of having been born female. Like all political positions one becomes a believer in feminist politics through choice and action. When women first organized in groups to talk together about the issue of sexism and male domination, they were clear that females were socialized to believe sexist thinking and values as males, the difference being simply that males benefited from sexism more than females and were as a consequence less likely to want to surrender patriarchal privilege. Before women could change patriarchy, we had to change ourselves; we had to raise our consciousness.

Revolutionary feminist consciousness-raising emphasized the importance of learning about patriarchy as a system of domination, how it became institutionalized and how it is perpetuated and maintained. Understanding the way male domination and sexism was expressed in everyday life created awareness in women of the ways we were victimized, exploited, and, in worse case scenarios, oppressed. Early on in contemporary feminist movement, consciousness-raising groups often became settings where women simply unleashed pent-up hostility and rage about being victimized, with little or no focus on strategies of intervention and transformation. On a basic level, many hurt and exploited women used the consciousness-raising group therapeutically. It was the site where they uncovered and openly revealed the depths of their intimate wounds. This confessional aspect served as a healing ritual. Through consciousness-raising, women gained the strength to challenge patriarchal forces at work and at home.

Importantly though, the foundation of this work began with women examining sexist thinking and creating strategies where we would change our attitudes and belief via a conversion to feminist thinking and a commitment to feminist politics. Fundamentally, the consciousness-raising (CR) group was a site for conversion. To build a mass-based feminist movement, women needed to organize. The consciousness-raising session, which usually took place in someone's home (rather than public space that had to be rented or donated), was the meeting place. It was the place where seasoned feminist thinkers and activists could recruit new converts.

Importantly, communication and dialogue was a central agenda at the consciousness-raising sessions. In many groups, a policy was in place which honored everyone's voice. Women took turns speaking to make sure everyone would be heard. This attempt to create a non-hierarchical model for discussion positively gave every woman a chance to speak out but often did not create a context for engaged dialogue. However, in most instances, discussion and debate occurred, usually after everyone had spoken at least once. Argumentative discussion was common in CR groups as it was the way we sought to clarify our collective understanding of the nature of male domination. Only through discussion and disagreement, could we begin to find a realistic standpoint on gender exploitation and oppression.

(注) sexism : 性差別、patriarchal privilege : 父権制的特権、consciousness-raising : 意識向上 (特に差別問題に対して意識を高めること)、victimized : 犠牲になる、exploited : 利用される、oppressed : 抑圧される、unleash : 解放する、pent-up : 鬱積した、therapeutically : 治療的に、via : ~を経て、conversion : 回心、commitment : 参加、seasoned : 訓練の積んだ、agenda : 行動指針、take turns : 交替で~をする、non-hierarchical : 非階層的な、