

Fragments from my commonplace book--

"these pleasures which we lightly call physical"

Colette, The Ripening Seed.

"love, which, sexual or non-sexual, is hard work"

George Orwell, "Reflections on Gandhi."

--Quandra Prettyman Stadler

The Scholar and the Feminist IX planning committee met steadily from September 1981 to April 1982, during which time we reaffirmed that the most important sexual organ in humans is located between the ears.

Carole S. Vance

Dear Barbara,

I just came back from a planning committee for the Barnard Conference. They are doing sexuality this year. You'll love it. It should be a very exciting event: a coming out party for feminists who have been appalled by the intellectual dishonesty and dreariness of the anti-pornography movement. I am the conservative on the committee. I mean, I understand the advanced position on porn, on s and m, but I can't understand the argument for pederasty! Ellen says its because I am a mother.

Love,
Judy

For me the planning committee meetings had a compelling, politically urgent quality, I hadn't experienced in a long time - maybe not since the early years of the women's liberation movement. I believe that as the sexuality debate goes, so goes feminism. The tendency of some feminists to regard women purely as sexual victims rather than sexual subjects, and to define the movement's goal as controlling male sexuality rather than demanding women's freedom to lead active sexual lives, reinforces women's oppression and plays into the hands of the new right. It is a dead end, a politics of despair. Feminism is a vision of active freedom, of fulfilled desires, or it is nothing. In these meetings we have been concerned with preserving and extending such a vision. Given the current social atmosphere, this is a radical act! Ellen Willis

Ode to an Herbivore

Orange and grave,
Trembling beneath
Chicory and queen's lace
I smile for
Your mild embrace.
My grassy top
Splits in the wind,
Flicking fragrance
To rabbits and
Flirting with
Herds of brown
Cows. Will I flower
At death?
Come then, gnaw me
Toward heaven.

Patsy Yaeger