

Opinion

Change the *image* of women not the spelling

by Alicia Hartman
Co-editor

We've all heard the facts about sexual assault, dating and domestic violence and child sexual assault, all of which place primary focus on *female* victims.

Last I knew, there are also males (mostly children) who are sexually assaulted, but they are often neglected.

We're all familiar with Take Back the Night and the events that occurred here on campus. TBTN has sparked recent interest in women's rights and their status in society. However, there are a few things I just don't quite understand.

The word "woman" once meant "the wife of man." Now these radicals who insist on spelling "woman/women" WOMYN better settle down and think for a minute. Changing the spelling of "woman" is not going to change the image of women or what is being done to them. Besides, changing the spelling will only be effective in print. When you say "womyn", you still hear a "man" or "men" on the end.

"Womyn" is not in the dictionary, (possible someday) and the rest of the population is going to continue to use "woman" and "women."

What about these professions that end in "-man" like mailman and milkman? We just substitute "-person" in place of "-man." Mail person, milk person. But this limits these jobs to human beings. We don't want to give favoritism to Homo Sapiens. Maybe it should be "mail carrier" and "milk deliverer" so we treat each and every life form fairly, from the mice to the elephants.

There are those who also wish to change "he/she" to "she/he." What's the big deal? We used to write "he" and "his" to represent a man or a woman. Then it became "he/she" and "his/her." The problem is that "he/she" and "his/her" are hard to read, and the English language is confusing enough as it is.

"He/she" is somewhat difficult to understand, yet it is politically correct. We'll keep the male gender first because "he" comes before "she" in the dictionary. Although "her" comes before "his", we'll keep it

"his/her" because we use "he/she" more often. Is anyone else out there as thoroughly confused as I? See the horrendousness this causes?

Heck, since we're rewriting the dictionary, we may as well rewrite history too. Some Biblical historians believe that woman was created from the rib of man. Well, there are some women who claim that woman was on earth first and man came from woMAN. See the connection?

I have a friend (Debbie) who attends University Park and she participated in Take Back the Night. Debbie sent me information about the TBTN activities at U.P., and along with it was a flyer. It reads:

Women Unite!
Take back the night
March 31, 1993
Rally & March
7 p.m. Old Main
While everyone is
invited to the rally,
the march is for
WOMYN only

Now what's wrong with this sign? We have "women" at the top and "womyn" at the bottom. Silly me, it must be that only

the feminist and liberal "womyn" of the '90s can participate in the march, and the barefoot, pregnant and in the kitchen "women" have to stay home.

Here's something else that kills me. These women are fighting for equal rights, yet they don't want men marching with them. Is there a contradiction here or is it just me? And how can you prevent males from participating in a march if it is a public event?

Believe it or not, there are some males out there who want to help women, and they are being, yes, DISCRIMINATED against. Nothing like setting a double standard.

Is this movement's purpose to improve women's place in society or just to promote male-bashing? Although there are men out there who cannot control their behavior, that doesn't mean the entire male population should be labeled "evil."

I have never been raped or assaulted, but just because one, or even several men hurt a woman, that does not give her the right to hate the entire male

species.

This parallels the hatred some blacks have for whites. I am white and I feel terrible for how my ancestors treated blacks generations ago, but I was not alive at that time and I cannot change the past. We must move forward and continue to improve relations between blacks and whites.

Women do not have it as rough as they think considering the progress they've made since the Women's Suffrage Movement of the mid 1800s, and the fight for the ERA in the 1960s. Since time began with Adam and Eve (or is it Eve and Adam?), and even during the prehistoric period, woman has been subservient to man, and women haven't spoken out until 19th century.

The points is, change doesn't happen overnight, and yes, the process does take a long time.

Women should focus their energy toward advancing their status in society, instead of attempting to alter the English language.

Remember, it's not the spelling of women or the order of third persons that need changed. What needs changed is the *image* of women.

The rules of helicopter piloting

by Dave Barry
Syndicated Columnist

TODAY'S AVIATION TOPIC IS: How to fly a helicopter. Although flying a helicopter may seem very difficult, the truth is that if you can drive a car, you can, with just a few minutes of instruction, take the controls of one of these amazing machines. Of course you would immediately crash and die. This is why you need to remember:

RULE ONE OF HELICOPTER PILOTING: Always have somebody sitting right next to you who actually knows how to fly the helicopter and can snatch the controls away from you.

Because the truth is that helicopters are nothing at all like cars. Cars work because of basic scientific principles that everybody understands, such as internal combustion and parallel parking. Whereas scientists still have no idea what holds helicopters up. "Whatever it is, it could stop at any moment," is their current feeling. This leads to:

RULE TWO OF HELICOPTER PILOTING: Maybe you should forget the entire thing.

This was what I was thinking on a recent Saturday morning as

I stood outside a small airport in South Florida, where I was about to take my first helicopter lesson. This was not my idea. This was the idea of Pam Gallina-Raissiguier, a pilot who flies radio reporters over Miami during rush hour so they can alert drivers to traffic problems ("Bob, we have a three-mile backup on the interstate due to an international cocaine truck").

Pam is active in an international organization of women helicopter pilots called--Gloria Steinem, avert your eyes--the "Whirly Girls." She thought it would be a great idea for me to take a helicopter lesson.

I began having severe doubts when I saw Pam's helicopter. This was a small helicopter. It looked like it should have a little slot where you insert quarters to make it go up and down. I knew that if we got airborne in a helicopter this size in South Florida, some of our larger tropical flying insects could very well attempt to mate with us.

Also, this helicopter had no doors. As a Frequent Flyer, I know for a fact that all your leading U.S. airlines, despite being bankrupt, maintain a strict safety policy of having doors on their aircraft.

"Don't we need a larger helicopter?" I asked Pam.

"With doors?"

"Get in," said Pam.

You don't defy a direct order from a Whirly Girl.

Now we're in the helicopter, and Pam is explaining the controls to me over the headset, but there's static and the engine is making a lot of noise.

"....your throttle (something)," she is saying. "This is your cyclic and (something) your collective."

"(Something) give you the controls when we reach 500 feet," Pam says.

"What?" I say.

But Pam is not listening. She is moving a control thing and WHOAAA we are off the ground, hovering, and now WHOOOAAAAAAA we are shooting up in the air, and there are still no doors on this particular helicopter.

Now Pam is giving me the main control thing.

RULE THREE OF HELICOPTER PILOTING: If anybody tries to give you the main control thing, refuse to take it.

Pam says: "You don't need hardly any pressure to..."

AIEEEEEEEEEEE

"That was too much pressure," Pam says.

Now I am flying the helicopter. I AM FLYING THE HELICOPTER. I am flying it

by not moving a single body part, for fear of jiggling the control thing. I look like the Lincoln Memorial statue of Abraham Lincoln, only more rigid.

"Make a right turn," Pam is saying.

I gingerly move the control thing one zillionth of an inch to the right and the helicopter LEANS OVER TOWARD MY SIDE AND THERE IS STILL NO DOOR HERE. I instantly move the thing one zillionth of an inch back.

"I'm not turning right," I inform Pam.

"What?" she says.

"Only left turns," I tell her. When you've been flying helicopters as long as I have, you know your limits.

After a while it becomes clear to Pam that if she continues to allow the Lincoln statue to pilot the helicopter, we are going to wind up flying in a straight line until we run out of fuel, possibly over Antarctica, so she takes the control thing back. That is the good news. The bad news is, she's now saying something about demonstrating an "emergency procedure."

"It's for when your engine dies," Pam says. "It's called 'auto-rotation.' Do you like amusement park rides?"

I say: No, I DOOOOOOOO.."

RULE FOUR OF HELICOPTER PILOTING: "Auto-rotation" means "coming down out of the sky at about the same speed and aerodynamic stability as that of a forklift dropped from a bomber."

Now we're close to the ground (although my stomach is still at 500 feet), and Pam is completing my training by having me hover the helicopter.

RULE FIVE OF HELICOPTER PILOTING: You can't hover the helicopter. The idea is to hang over one spot on the ground. I am hovering over an area approximately the size of Australia. I am swooping around sideways and backwards like a crazed bumblebee. If I were trying to rescue a person from the roof of a 100-story burning building, the person would realize that it would be safer to simply jump. At times I think I am hovering upside-down. Even Pam looks nervous.

So I am very happy when we finally get back on the ground. Pam tells me I did great, and she'd be glad to take me up again. I tell her that sounds like a fun idea.

RULE SIX OF HELICOPTER PILOTING: Sometimes you have to lie.