GLORIA STEINEM, "LIVING THE REVOLUTION" (31 MAY 1970)

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Abstract: In her commencement address at Vassar College, "Living the Revolution," Gloria Steinem violated the conventions of epideictic speaking by addressing controversial issues and adopting a polemical tone. At the same time, Steinem softened the political edge of her speech by grounding her vision of feminism in humanistic principles. Continuing her campaign for women's rights, Steinem used her speech at Vassar to define an inclusive, yet still "revolutionary" brand of feminism for the 1970s and beyond.

Key Words: Gloria Steinem, feminism, Women's Liberation Movement, epideictic rhetoric.

At the end of the Post-World War II Baby Boom, Betty Friedan—a virtually unknown writer and suburban mother—published a best-selling book that transformed the contemporary feminist movement and gave birth to Second Wave Feminism.[1] *The Feminine Mystique*, published in 1963, "reawakened millions of women to their lot *as women*," thus redefining feminism and inspiring a new generation of women's rights advocates.[2] Many suburban women identified with Friedan's "problem that has no name," and the book became an instant bestseller.[3] Three years later, in the fall of 1966, Friedan was elected president of the National Organization for Women (NOW) and helped write the "Statement of Purpose" which became the manifesto of the new movement. NOWs "Statement of Purpose" asserted boldly that "the time has come for a new movement toward true equality for all women in America, and toward a fully equal partnership of the sexes, as part of the world-wide revolution of human rights now taking place within and beyond our national borders."[4] Thus, the modern feminist movement was born, and men and women alike began to question "concepts such as femininity and motherhood and relationships previously taken for granted."[5]

In was within this context of a burgeoning feminist movement that a young journalist and women's rights activist named Gloria Steinem was asked to deliver the Commencement Address at Vassar College in the spring of 1970. Steinem had emerged as a powerful lecturer and feminist advocate after converting to the feminist cause at an abortion rally in 1969.[6] Three weeks before her commencement address, aptly entitled, "Living the Revolution," Steinem had delivered powerful testimony before a Senate Subcommittee in support of the Equal Rights Amendment.[7] In her testimony, Steinem critiqued several "sex based myths" that stifled women's ambition and led to

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discrimination in the workplace.[8]

Although an unlikely commencement speaker—she acknowledged that she disliked public speaking and lacked the worldly experience of most commencement speakers—Steinem took the opportunity at Vassar to debunk a number of myths and stereotypes about gender differences. She also critiqued educational and political policies that she believed disadvantaged women, and she even spoke out against the war in Vietnam. At one level, then, the speech violated the conventions of the commencement address. Unlike most commencement speakers, Steinem took on controversial issues, and the tone of the speech was more polemical than celebratory. At the same time, however, Steinem softened the political edge of her speech by grounding her vision of the feminist revolution in "humanistic" principles. Continuing the campaign she began in 1969 to redefine the women's liberation movement, Steinem used her speech at Vassar to describe a more inclusive yet still "revolutionary" feminism that she hoped would transform the world in the 1970s and beyond.

Steinem's Biography

Gloria Steinem was born on March 25, 1934, the second child of Leo and Ruth Steinem. Steinem's father was a restless entrepreneur whose money-making schemes often caused financial strain on the family. As a young child, Steinem's family owned a struggling summer resort in Michigan that rarely made enough income to support the family's most basic needs. Every winter Leo moved the family to Florida or California in a house trailer to escape the harsh northern winters, preventing Gloria from going to school more than a few months a year.[9] Steinem's upbringing lacked stability and routine and, out of sheer necessity, she became self-sufficient and independent at an early age. As she recalled five decades later, "I didn't go to school until I was 12, so I missed a little bit of social conditioning."[10]

Steinem's parents separated in 1944 when Gloria was only ten, and Gloria was left to take care of her emotionally unstable mother.[11] Steinem recalled that her mother was "someone to be worried about and cared for; an invalid who lay in bed with eyes closed and lips moving in occasional response to voices only she could hear."[12] After Leo left, Steinem and her mother lived in poverty, renting the basement of a rat-infested row house in West Toledo.[13] These were difficult times for Steinem, and without parental guidance, she learned to take care of herself. Although she had large gaps of knowledge from her sporadic schooling, Steinem was a curious student and an avid reader. Despite her average high school grades and SAT scores, Steinem's high school guidance counselor recognized her potential and encouraged her to apply to colleges. In 1952 Steinem was accepted to Smith College, a private all women's school in Northampton, Massachusetts. Although she was admitted in part because of her "legacy" status (her sister had attended Smith) and her disadvantaged background (Smith gave special attention to economically deprived applicants), Steinem thrived in the structured environment of the university. Steinem excelled in her major of political science and was elected to Phi Beta Kappa in 1955.[14]

After graduating *magna cum laude* from Smith, Steinem discovered that she

was pregnant. Convinced that motherhood would destroy her reputation and her future career ambitions, she procured an illegal abortion. This event, perhaps more than any other, would shape Steinem's emerging feminist consciousness. After graduation, Steinem accepted a two-year fellowship to study in India, where she met followers of the late Mahatma Gandhi and learned valuable lessons in grass-roots activism.[15]

Throughout the late 1950s and early 1960s, Steinem lived in New York City, working as a freelance journalist. Although she wrote for a variety of magazines, including *Esquire*, *Glamour*, and *Vogue*, she gained instant notoriety in 1963 when she published an article entitled, "A Bunny's Tale," in *Show* magazine. Based on her experiences working in the New York City Playboy Club, the article exposed the seemingly glamorous life of the Playboy Bunnies by revealing the exploitation, abuse, and day-to-day humiliations. For years Steinem regretted publishing the article, maintaining that it compromised her reputation as a serious journalist. Reflecting on the article in 1995, however, Steinem had a change of heart, recalling that "A Bunny's Tale" created connections "with women who might have not picked up a feminist book or magazine, but who responded to the rare sight of realistic working conditions and a group of women who supported each other."[16]

Throughout the 1960s Steinem dabbled in politics and social activism. She campaigned for George McGovern in 1968 and attended the Democratic National Convention that summer. In 1969, Steinem attended a meeting on abortion rights organized by the radical feminist group, the Redstockings. Steinem's participation in the rally marked her first exposure to the feminist movement, and she credited the event with her conversion to the women's rights cause.[17] As she recalled three decades later, "I didn't begin my life as an active feminist until I went to an abortion speak-out in a church basement in the Village in 1969, when I was already in my mid-thirties." Hearing women discuss their experiences with illegal abortion had a profound impact on her. As she explained, "It made some sense of my own experience—I had had an abortion and had never told anyone."[18]

In September of 1969 Steinem delivered the first major speech of her career to the Women's National Democratic Club in Washington, D.C.[19] Although audiences have described Steinem as eloquent and poised, she worked hard to overcome her fear of public speaking and once told a reporter from the *Washington Post* that public speaking put her in a "catatonic" state.[20] As she recalled in an interview several decades later: "I started out life as a writer, and writers write in part because they don't want to talk. It was an alarming departure to go out and speak in public."[21] Despite such fears, Steinem joined with civil rights and women's rights activist Dorothy Pitman on a speaking tour in 1970. Subsequently, she quickly became identified as a major voice of the feminist movement. Her testimony in support of the Equal Rights Amendment on May of 1970 brought her national fame, and Steinem soon emerged as a popular and well-respected lecturer on women's rights.

Contextualizing "Living the Revolution"

The late 1960s and early 1970s was a time of political and social upheaval in America. The escalating war in Vietnam inflamed the passions of Americans and ignited widespread protests, mostly among college students. In the fall of 1969, a Gallup Poll reported that 69 percent of college students were against the war and considered themselves "doves"—twice as many as in the spring of 1967.[22] Responding to the public outcry against the war, President Nixon delivered his controversial "Vietnamization" address on November 3, 1969. Announcing a plan to gradually withdraw from Vietnam, Nixon portrayed the anti-war protesters as a "vocal minority" whose dedication to a "fervent cause" had triumphed over the "reason and the will of the majority."[23] Implying that the "great silent majority" of Americans supported him, Nixon urged Americans to be patient through the long trials ahead.[24]

If Nixon's intent was to quell protests, his speech was not fully successful. Less than two weeks later, an estimated three-quarters of a million people protested the Vietnam War in Washington D.C., making it the "largest single protest in American history."[25] Indeed, 1970 marked the highpoint of protests against the war. The American Council on Education reported 9,408 protests that year alone—731 involving arrests, 410 involving damage to property, and 230 involving violence.[26] The killing of four Kent State students by the National Guard on May 4, 1970, further inflamed passions.

It was within the context of the antiwar and Civil Rights Movements that many women found their political voices and discovered feminism. As Sara Evans has explained, "young women in the 1960s arrived at their feminist consciousness through an involvement in other causes."[27] By 1970, many women had become "politicized first through an awareness of their own oppression," and the media was taking notice.[28] Between January and March of 1970, "substantial stories of the women's liberation movement appeared in virtually every major journal and broadcast network."[29] As Evans asserted, "'women's lib' was on everyone's lips."[30] Yet not all of the publicity was positive. People were "fascinated, intrigued, and often angered," Evans recalled, "by the flamboyant tactics of feminist radicals."[31]

The emergence of the women's liberation movement in the 1960s and 1970s brought new issues to the political forefront, including economic rights for women, equal opportunity in education and the work force, the right to safe and legal abortions, and a renewed interest in the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA). First proposed in 1923 after the successful campaign for woman suffrage, the ERA stated simply that: "Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex."[32] On May 6, 1970, Steinem testified to the U.S. Senate Subcommittee on Constitutional Amendments on behalf of the ERA. Reading from a manuscript, Steinem refuted the "sex-based myths" that had been used for centuries to prove women's inferiority. Recalling her own experiences of discrimination, Steinem complained that without equal rights, women were not "allowed to think of themselves as first-class citizens and responsible human beings."[33]

Just three weeks after testifying before the Senate, Steinem delivered "Living the Revolution" to the graduating class of Vassar College. Vassar College was founded in 1865 in Poughkeepsie, New York as a private, highly-selective liberal arts college for

women.[34] Considered a pioneer in women's education in the nineteenth-century, Vassar is part of a highly selective group of women's colleges known as the "Seven Sisters." As Liva Baker explained, the Seven Sisters were "[b]orn in intellectual radicalism" and "overcame all manner of resistance in order to take women's education out of the female seminaries, where it had been essentially decorative, and endow it with academic respectability." In an era when higher education for women was rare, the Seven Sisters "led the way to women's intellectual emancipation." For more than 100 years, Vassar had been a leader in the advanced education of women. Ironically, the college became coeducational in 1969—the year before Steinem was invited to deliver the commencement address.

"Living the Revolution": Celebrating the New Feminism

Traditionally, epideictic discourse has been considered less substantive than deliberative or forensic speaking. As Walter Beale explained, the "earliest discussions of epideictic tend to focus upon either its status as ceremonial or non-pragmatic discourse."[35] Epideictic rhetoric has often been relegated to the literary realm of display, or even considered "trivial entertainment."[36] In this traditional view, as Richard Chase explained, there was "no burning issue" that demanded a decision. The listener, Chase maintained, was merely an observer, there to "appreciate the artistic efforts of the speaker."[37] In discussing the history of epideictic rhetoric, Dale Sullivan likewise emphasized that "epideictic does not aim at eliciting action; rather it aims at affecting the general attitude of the audience toward a particular person or behavior."[38] In this view of epideictic, listeners were mere "observers," evaluating the "skill of the orator."[39]

More recently, scholars have begun to appreciate that epideictic speaking is more than mere "entertainment" or "display." Ceremonial speaking can educate an audience, create a shared sense of community, offer comfort during times of crisis, or define issues and problems. Even in Aristotle's time, epideictic rhetoric was viewed as more than mere theatrical display. As Christine Oravec argued, "Aristotle himself conceived of epideictic not only as entertainment or display of the orator's powers but also as a genre which includes the functions of judgment and education."[40] As such, epideictic speaking can function as a "powerful persuasive tool."[41] Epideictic rhetoric has the unique ability to "to build community" and create a sense of shared heritage.[42] Celeste Michelle Condit has argued that through epideictic speaking "community is created, experienced and performed."[43] Most scholars recognize that by educating, inviting judgment, and building community, epideictic discourse has the potential not only to reinforce shared values and community identity, but also to bring about change.

Commencement speaking, perhaps more than any other type of epideictic speaking, is steeped in tradition and decorum. From the wearing of regalia to the playing of "Pomp and Circumstance," commencement ceremonies are ritualistic and predictable. Designed to celebrate the accomplishments of the graduating class and offer advice for the future (often referred to as the "charge" for the graduates), most

commencement addresses follow a familiar pattern. Although an important part of the graduation ceremony, few commencement speakers spark controversy or address divisive political issues. Instead, many commencement speakers offer little more than platitudes and vague congratulatory remarks.

In "Living the Revolution," Gloria Steinem violated many of the traditional conventions of commencement speaking. Addressing controversial issues, attacking the President of the United States, and celebrating a "revolution" in gender roles, Steinem used the occasion to advocate far-reaching social change. Clearly designed to provoke thought and action, Steinem's speech violated a cardinal rule of commencement speaking—focus on "non-controversial" or "universal" (i.e., broad and abstract) themes. As Condit argued, the traditional view has been that the ceremonial speaker "must avoid dividing the community as far as possible."[44] By choosing to denounce sexist myths and by offering her views on controversial issues like the war in Vietnam, Steinem challenged those traditional expectations.

Yet Steinem softened the polemical edge of her speech by couching her opinions in humanistic principles. Transcending the narrow confines of "women's issues," Steinem appealed to the universal ideals of justice and fairness and fostered a shared sense of community and good will. In so doing, she broadened the definition of "—feminism" to include both men and women, as well as people from all races and classes. With her vision of a humanistic feminism, Stanton fulfilled some of the traditional purposes of the commencement address—reinforcing shared values—while also making a powerful political statement.

Steinem began "Living the Revolution" by noting that even she was "surprised" to be invited to deliver a commencement address.[45] Commencement speakers were typically "gray-haired, respected creatures;" in other words, they were older and "almost always men." Noting that she not only was a woman but a "devout non-speaker," (4) Steinem expressed her gratitude for the invitation, attributing her presence to the fact that she had been part of a "major revolution in consciousness" (3). That "revolution," of course, was "Women's Liberation," or what Steinem preferred to call the new "humanist" movement.

Steinem used her status as an outsider to her advantage, criticizing the "theoreticians of the status quo" (6) and asking her audience to question many of their own beliefs, values, and expectations. "Whether it's woman's secondary role in society or the paternalistic role of the United States in the world," she declared, "the old assumptions just don't work anymore" (8). Steinem's very presence on the platform, of course, became something of a feminist statement, as she embodied the very social revolution that she described in the speech.

After a lengthy introduction, Steinem's address was loosely divided into four sections, defined by the four "myths" she refuted. These myths, all of which she discussed at length in her congressional testimony in support of the ERA three weeks earlier, were as follows: 1) Women are biologically inferior to men; 2)Women already are being treated equally in society; 3) Women hold great economic power in America; and 4) Children need full time mothers. Steinem refuted each myth with statistics, detailed case studies, and extended analogies. Unlike most ceremonial addresses, then,

Steinem's speech was, at least in part, a refutational argument. In refuting the four myths that held back women, she marshaled solid evidence to challenge what she called "Popular Wisdom" (5).

In refuting the "myth of the economic matriarchy," for example, Steinem pointed out that only 5 percent of women in 1970 earned $10,000 a year or more. She also foresaw what later critics would call the femininization of poverty. In refuting the myth of women's biological inferiority, Steinem likewise argued that, contrary to popular opinion, women were in fact biologically superior to men. Using life expectancy statistics, Stanton documented that women were not weak and fragile creatures, but actually were stronger and more physically resilient than men.

Celebrating what she called a "revolution in consciousness," (3) Steinem also challenged the conventions of commencement speaking by addressing controversial issues. Rejecting traditional ways of thinking, she critiqued conventional gender roles, supported unpopular ideas, and offered a substantive critique of the modern feminist movement. Ignoring many of the rituals associated with the commencement speech, Steinem instead advocated support for the Equal Rights Amendment, attacked President Nixon, and critiqued the Vietnam War as an "unconstitutional, racist, body-count" war (30). She also complained about forty-seven years of a "male-chauvinist Congress" (14). In parts, the speech sounded more like a polemic than a ceremonial address.

Steinem did not celebrate the academic experience and the life-long love of learning, like the typical commencement speaker. Instead, she advocated fundamental changes in thinking. The "first problem for all of us, men and women," she argued, "is not to learn, but to un-learn." Challenging her audience to examine their own beliefs and values, she argued that all Americans—including herself—had racist and sexist "preconceptions" that were "imbedded so deeply in our thinking that we honestly may not even know that they are there" (5).

Steinem did not praise the graduates for all they had learned. Instead, she criticized the college curriculum, even at prestigious women's colleges. "I don't know about Vassar," she said, "but at Smith we learned almost nothing about women" (11). Giving the audience a short history lesson, Steinem recalled how women of her generation came to believe certain myths that minimized the achievements of early feminists. "We believed that the vote had been 'given' to women in some whimsical, benevolent fashion," she noted, never recognizing "the long desperation of women's struggle" nor appreciating the "wisdom of the women who led it" (12). Steinem deplored the lack of role models for women and insisted that the inclusion of women's history in the college curriculum would be a step in the right direction. Like African-Americans, Steinem argued, women never had "role models in history: models of individuals who have been honored in authority outside of the home" (14).

At one level, then, "Living the Revolution" was a persuasive speech, refuting certain myths that relegated women to second-class status, challenging her listeners to question their own beliefs and values, and advocating educational and social reform. At another level, however, it was a typical commencement address, celebrating such universal values as fairness, justice, and equality. By couching her feminist advocacy in

humanistic principles, Steinem was able to soften some of her more controversial ideas and to counter criticisms of feminism as exclusionary or divisive. Envisioning a feminist movement that included both women and men, she predicted a new, more inclusive feminism that would change the lives of all Americans, not just women.

Steinem explained that her brand of feminism "should more accurately be called humanist"; it was a movement that was part of a larger movement devoted to "rescuing this country from its old, expensive patterns of elitism, racism and even violence" (4). By defining the women's movement in these broader humanistic terms, Steinem expanded the feminist agenda to include much more than just *women's* rights. In Steinem's view, the women's liberation movement of the 1970s was not just about politics or even the rights of women. Instead, feminism encompassed larger cultural issues that affected the lives of all men and women, and it even had implications for foreign policy.

As Norm Allen, Jr., has explained, the philosophy of "humanism" entails "a belief in reason, science, democracy, openness to new ideas, the cultivation of moral excellence, a commitment to justice and fairness, and a belief in the inherent worth of humanity."[46] Embracing community activism and social reform, humanists "believe strongly that since we live together in communities, we must participate in the life of community." Humanists advocate a society that is "open, democratic, just, participatory and free."[47] This was precisely the sort of humanism that informed Steinem's speech at Vassar. Giving everyone an equal opportunity to succeed and to live life to its fullest, Steinem's humanistic feminism was a liberating vision, perhaps summarized best by the most quoted line from the speech: "Women's Liberation is Man's Liberation too" (17).

Even when addressing contentious issues like the Equal Rights Amendment, Steinem softened the polemical tone of "Living the Revolution" by invoking humanistic values. Reminding her audience of the inequities that women faced in their day-to-day lives, Steinem rallied them behind the principles of fairness and justice. Lamenting women's unequal treatment in the workforce, for example, she urged the graduates to support economic reforms that would guarantee equal pay for equal work. "The truth is," she said, "that a woman with a college education working full-time makes less than a black man with a high school degree" (22).

Steinem insisted that inequality hurt men as well as women. By giving women an "equal chance for advancement," men would be freer to pursue their own ambitions, she argued, including careers not traditionally considered "masculine." "We want to liberate men from those inhuman roles as well," she explained (31). Attributing violence and war to a "Masculine Mystique," she even blamed the Vietnam War on "the idea that manhood somehow depends on the subjugation of other people" (40). Championing "peace" as a feminist value, Steinem maintained that "there has been too much killing, and the weapons are far too terrible" (41).

Simply stated, Steinem argued for a "new social justice" where men and women were treated equally and allowed to fulfill their potential—even if their choices violated traditional gender roles (41). Her goal was to "build a human, compassionate alternative" to male-dominated society of the time, and she believed that this could be

achieved only when all marginalized groups in American society were truly liberated (35). "Women's Liberation," she argued, "is a bridge between black and white women, but also between the construction workers and the suburbanites, between Nixon's Silent Majority and the young people they hate and fear" (42). In Steinem's vision of a humanistic feminism, all people, regardless of their background or lot in life, would be treated equally and be given a fair chance to live a peaceful and prosperous life.

In her final charge to the graduates, Steinem acknowledged that she had not fulfilled all the expectations of the ceremonial occasion. "[I]t's traditional on such an occasion" she admitted, "to talk about 'entering the world'" (44). Instead of offering the sort of advice typical of such speeches, however, Steinem admitted that she didn't know what the future held; she only hoped that "we will be working together" (45). Invoking the feminist metaphor of sisterhood, Steinem addressed the female graduates directly, urging them to do "anything you want to do" (47).

For the most part, then, Steinem challenged the conventions of the commencement address, refusing to give the graduates advice, and stating her positions on controversial topics like the Vietnam War, the ERA, and presidential politics. Unlike many commencement speakers, Steinem did not celebrate the status quo; rather, she advocated social, cultural, and political changes that many considered "radical." Yet grounding her speech in humanistic principles and universal values, Steinem softened the presentation of those "radical" ideas. As Condit has explained, epideictic speeches can perform important political work, and Steinem's speech at Vassar did just that. By envisioning a future where women and men were given equal opportunities in the economic, political and social arenas, she advocated social reform based on shared values and common concerns. In the process, she helped redefine the modern feminist movement and broaden its political agenda.

Steinem's Legacy

When Steinem delivered her commencement speech to Vassar in 1970, only 8 percent of medical school graduates and 5.4 percent of law graduates were women. The year 1970 also marked the period when women's studies classes were first offered on university campuses and women's studies programs and departments quickly followed.[48] New interdisciplinary journals like *Feminist Studies*, *Women's Studies*, and *Signs* were founded in the 1970s to address the emerging interest in scholarship on women.[49]

Steinem would go on to deliver more than a dozen more commencement speeches, publish four books, help found *Ms* Magazine, and write countless articles in support of the feminist cause. In 1971, she delivered a controversial commencement speech at her alma mater, Smith College, where she defined illegal abortion as "our number one health problem." Many parents and alumnae thought her comments were inappropriate, prompting some to walk out during her speech. Others wrote angry letters to the school newspaper.[50]

Steinem did not shun controversy, however, and instead seemed to embrace it. In 1972 she was invited to speak to a skeptical audience at the U.S. Navy Academy.

Challenging the history that the cadets had learned in their classes, Steinem offered a feminist interpretation of the past. As in her Vassar speech, Steinem advocated pacifism, criticized the country's involvement in the Vietnam War, and attacked President Nixon. Not surprisingly, the audience response was hostile. Steinem later recalled the whole experience as "grueling."[51]

By the mid-1980s Steinem could point to a number of positive changes that feminism had brought about over the past decade. In a commencement speech at Wheaton College in 1986, for example, Steinem celebrated the economic and social changes that created more opportunities for women. "It is understandable," she acknowledged, "if young women are optimistic." Women now, she explained, have not had their "dreams taken away, and that is vital." Even so, she recognized that there was still much to do and pointed to many social problems, including "unequal parenthood, the feminization of poverty, the masculinization of wealth, violence in the streets," and "violence in many homes." As in her Vassar speech, Steinem continued to promote humanistic ideals, urging men and women to work together to ensure "legal and social equality" for all "human beings." Men, she insisted, were "allies" in the feminist movement, and she even added, "we call them brothers too."[52]

Throughout the 1980s, Steinem would repeat these sentiments at colleges throughout the United States, advocating equal opportunity for men and women, unconstrained by gender roles. In a speech at Tufts University in 1987, for example, Steinem responded to concerns that feminism would make women just like men. Invoking humanistic principles, she argued that feminism was a " humanization of both roles." The goal for both women and men, she concluded, should be a balanced life—"becoming a whole human being."[53] In a commencement speech at Bryn Mawr in 1988, Steinem echoed those sentiments, celebrating the "humanity of people." Sounding more philosophical than her earlier days, Steinem encouraged her audience to have a balanced life for "life is time, and time is all there is."[54]

In the 1990s and beyond, Steinem has become even more reflective and philosophical, but she continues to support social reforms to better the lives of all people. Her agenda, like feminism generally, tends to reflect more global concerns, yet she still fights for reproductive freedom and equal parenting—issues that characterized her work in the 1970s. In an interview with *Time* magazine in 2004, for example, Steinem addressed some of the issues first raised in her Vassar speech. "Achieving a society in which men raise children as much as women do," she argued "is crucial."[55] Speaking at Hobart and William Smith Colleges in 1998, Steinem sounded like a transcendental philosopher, as she marveled at the "laws of connectedness" that united women of all races, ages, and backgrounds.

Clearly much has changed in the thirty-plus years since Steinem delivered "Living the Revolution." Today there are more than 525 women's studies programs in the country, offering more than 30,000 courses to more than a million students.[56] The most dramatic changes, however, are reflected in college enrollment. In 2006, 58 percent of first-year college students were female. Males are also more likely to drop out of college, making women 60 percent of all college graduates. Such statistics are alarming to many critics who have complained of the impending "boy crisis" and have

advocated sweeping changes in pedagogical practices to make the classroom more boy friendly.[57]

Despite such changes, Steinem continues to voice the concerns of liberal feminism. Now in her 70s, Steinem remains a highly respected and sought after speaker, garnering as much as $12,000 per speaking engagement.[58] As Carolyn Heilburn explained, "Steinem never deserted feminism, never betrayed it, never suggested it needed to backpedal, never let anyone in the media get away with jeering at her." In 1970 Steinem broke down barriers to become a powerful voice for the feminist movement. Today, she remains an "outspoken, uncompromising, boundary-crossing feminist."[59]

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Notes

1 Betty Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique* (New York: Dell Publishing, 1983; repr., 1963). The term "feminism" was coined in the nineteenth century but it was not until the turn of the twentieth century that the term assumed its current meaning. See, Karlyn Kohrs Campbell, ed., *Man Cannot Speak for Her: A Critical Study of Early Feminist Rhetoric*, Vol. 1 (New York: Praeger, 1989), 3.

2 Miriam Schneir, ed., *Feminism in Our Time: The Essential Writings, World War II to the Present* (New York: Vintage Books, 1994), 48.

3 Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique,* 15-32.

4 "Now Statement of Purpose," in *Feminism of Our Time*, 96.

5 Sara M. Evans, *Born for Liberty: A History of Women in American* (New York: The Free Press, 1989), 289.

6 Gloria Steinem, "Living the Revolution" in *Vassar Quarterly* (Fall 1970): 12. Patricia Cronin Marcello, *Gloria Steinem: A Biography* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2004), 203.

7 Carolyn Heilburn, *The Education of a Woman: The Life of Gloria Steinem* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1995), 207-208.

8 History Matters, "Statement of Gloria Steinem," http://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/7025 (accessed January 18, 2006).

9 Heilburn, *The Education of a Woman,* 18.

10 Susan Dominus, "30th Anniversary Issue/Gloria Steinem: First Feminist," *New York* 6 April 1998, http://newyorkmetro.com/nymetro/news/people/features/2438/index.html.

11 Cronin Marcello, *Gloria Steinem*, 19.

12 Gloria Steinem, *Outrageous Acts of Everyday Rebellions*, 2d ed., (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1995), 140.

13 Cronin Marcello, *Gloria Steinem,* 20-21.

14 Heilbrun, *The Education of a Woman*, 43.

15 Cronin Marcello, *Gloria Steinem,* 35-61.

16 Steinem, *Outrageous Acts*, 75.

17 Heilburn, *The Education of a* Woman, 170.

18 Susan Dominus, "30th Anniversary Issue/Gloria Steinem: First Feminist," *New York* 6 April 1998.

19 Cronin Marcello, *Gloria Steinem*, 108.

20 Synden Ladensohn Stern, *Gloria Steinem: Her Passions, Politics, and Mystique* (Secaucus, NJ: Birch Lane, 1997), 210.

21 Susan Dominus interview of Gloria Steinem, "30th Anniversary Issue/Gloria Steinem: First Feminist," *New York Magazine* 6 April 1998.

22 Todd Gitlin, *The Sixties: Years of Hope, Days of Rage*, rev. ed. (New York: Bantam Books, 1993, rev. ed), 404.

23 Richard Nixon, "Address to the Nation on the War in Vietnam," in *The Practice of Rhetorical Criticism,* 2nd, ed. James R. Andrews (New York: Longman, 1990), 98.

24 Nixon, "Address to the Nation," 99.

25 Gitlin, *The Sixties,* 409.

26 Gitlin, *The Sixties*, 409.

27 Sara M. Evans, *Personal Politics: The Roots of Women's Liberation in the Civil Rights Movement and the New Left* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979), 232.

28 Evans, *Personal Politics*, 232.

29 Evans, *Born for Liberty*, 287.

30 Evans, *Born for Liberty*, 287.

31 Evans, *Born for Liberty*, 287.

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