

DEAR DR MARX
A LETTER FROM A SOCIALIST FEMINIST

Sheila Rowbotham

"12 John Street,
Toronto ,
Upper Canada.
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Dear Dr Marx,*

I am woefully behind the times. I **plead** revolution, **exile**, the laundry of the Wisconsin Phalanx, an American women's rights convention and two young children. Philosophy has been quite swept away and I have **only** just read your rousing Manifesto. I chanced upon it in the most extraordinary circumstances – you will, I am sure, agree that the '**frightful** hobgoblin" made its most unusual entry yet when I tell you my tale.

I would have read you and Mr **Engels** in Paris back in '48 if I had not been running from the barricades to the office of *Voix des Femmes* and then to the women's clubs. After the horror of the June days I was working so hard in our associated house and creche that I read very little apart from the women's newspapers we **kept** starting. You probably know the circumstances which forced me to flee from France in 1850 after the **police** raided us in the home of Mme Deroin at the end of May. She and Pauline Roland were held for trial with Femme Nicaud and imprisoned for their part in the federation

*The author of this imaginary letter, Annette Devereux, is a fictional character, along with her husband, Victor, the Chartist typographer and M and Mme Ducrocq. However all the other characters mentioned are historical figures and information about them is provided in the order in which they appear at the end of the letter. The arguments and demands **presented**, the **political** events described, the journals and the Fourierist Phalanx at Wisconsin are all based on historical reality.

of associations. My husband Victor had been in correspondence with the American Associationists for several years. It was thus that I arrived in Wisconsin.

The Wisconsin Phalanx was breaking up in squabbles and recriminations just as we arrived. You will be interested to hear however, that, unlike some of the Eastern communities, our Wisconsin Phalansterians were economically **successful**. Utopias you see come in differing shapes and forms. Our Wisconsin Associationists knew about farming and we had a surplus to take to market.

To be frank, though, I believe we could have been happier in the East. Among the farmers we were always to be outsiders. Victor and I would wander among the reeds by the lake nearby and conjure the cobbled streets of Saint Germain. Paris is not the place to prepare you for nature whatever M. Fourier says about the virtues of country air for passionnal harmony and well-being. I prefer on the whole to visit nature rather than to dwell in it.

Victor was able to pursue his trade – they enjoyed smoking the cigars he made in the evenings – but the conversation was mainly about agriculture. I was compelled to spend long hours in the laundry with the women who spoke only of domestic matters. My attempts to do more **fulfilling** work came to nothing. The Americans did not consider that my English was sufficiently fluent for school teaching. I have found a certain prejudice here against those whose mother tongue is not English, which I resent. I know I could have improved the school greatly. The children were still learning mainly by rote and the passionnal abilities so valued by Associationists were completely neglected. My pleas for music, dancing and painting were disregarded. There was democracy there of a sort, but if you were not a stockholder your voice counted for little.

But I am straying from my promise to tell you of the curious and amusing manner in which the Manifesto found its way to Wisconsin. One consequence of the Phalanx's success was viewed with a lack of enthusiasm by the women members; our prosperity attracted visitors and visitors resulted in more laundry. Before you condemn us I beg you to try the steam yourself for eight hours. Baskets and baskets of dirty linen do not incline you to welcome their wearers. Personally I was prepared to regard the philosophical and literary minded visitors

with *some* favour for they brought news of the world. But lecturers on such topics were not fond of going so far West, so sadly we were inclined to attract economists and I found their conversation too dry to compensate for the extra drudgery.

You must have guessed by now! I am proud to announce that I rescued your *Manifesto* from **drowning**. There it was in a shirt pocket covered with washing – a copy of *The Red Republican* all the way from London with Miss Macfarlane's translation of your work. I was concerned for its welfare amidst the steam and promptly sought out its absent-minded owner, a young **typographer** and former Chartist who was **shaking** off the disappointments of the old world. We engaged in the most animated conversation about the ideals and failures of '48. This brief interval was one of my happiest memories of Wisconsin, for there were few people who understood what that year had meant in Europe. The opportunity to communicate with one who had known similar defeat was a salve for the pent-up anguish I had brought unaware to America. In that chance meeting I felt fully alive again. He insisted I kept the journal as a gift when he continued his journey further West. I should really have given it to the Phalanx library, but it was such a treasured possession.

Mr Dana passed **through** later (he favoured us because of his passion for horticulture) and was **greatly** amused when I showed him *The Red Republican*. You are no doubt familiar with the newspaper he edits, the *New York Daily Tribune*. He said he had heard that it was Mrs **Marx** who encouraged you to collaborate with the working men of the Communist League. I can imagine her noticing the discomfort of workers amidst philosophers who can sometimes act with an unintended scholarly arrogance, assuming familiarity with terms and ideas alien to those who have had to educate themselves. Working people are then inclined to suspect that an aristocracy of scholars is to replace an aristocracy of money. I believe that we socialist women are similarly able to detect democratic dictators within our own ranks, so I can appreciate Mrs **Marx's** insight most heartfully.

We left the Phalanx amidst discord six months ago. It had become the victim of its own success, serving for some as a stepping stone to becoming capitalists. But it is an ill wind that blows nobody any good, after a brief spell in Akron we moved here at the suggestion of M. and Mme Ducrocq who have established a school based on

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associationist ideals of an integral education. I am able to teach once more and **delight** in how the children flourish through the exercise of the body and the senses as well as the intellect. We encourage them to learn from experience as well as from books, and our school, which is attended by the children of artisans and teachers alike, is a little palace of social harmony. Instead of rote learning and harsh punishments our pupils discover knowledge for themselves in a spirit of cooperation and democracy. I believe that education should be, as far as possible, a joyful affair. I have fond memories to this day of Mrs **Marx's** delightful recitations. Tell her the children are already able to give dramatic renderings of Goethe and Shelley. How I wish you could hear their voices across the Atlantic.

My husband is able to practise his trade independently – but I assure you my honest Victor is not at all the bourgeois. He is at present studying the conditions of working people in Toronto and talking with other men in his trade about association. Thus, while so many of our great hopes have been dashed, here we can still do something I continue to miss France and especially my beloved Paris but I am beginning to recognise a spirit of liberty and a readiness to break down the divisions which prevail in the old world which I value greatly. The real enemy of association here is greed rather than an aristocracy of birth.

So we have been busy, but at last this month, amidst heavy snow, I have had time for reflection in the evenings and could finally read your Manifesto. I went straight through in one rush with mounting excitement. My first impression was the drama and the vigour of the language – so different from the dry style of most political economy. I could see what efforts you had made to break with a purely philosophic style. This was not just a matter of words – the workers are there in the centre of the stage striving for their emancipation. It reminded me of the epics of old, as tremendous forces gather and engage in combat – but this was about the here and now – the harsh devouring system of society which has been breaking every custom, shattering all we had assumed and **making** the very earth seem to tremble under our feet. I marvelled at your ability to reach through to the very bedrock of society and to present such a broad vision of history with such admirable clarity.

As I read I was back in the Rue Vanneau. How you would pound the

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table! Mr Ruge would explain that it was necessary, as the socialist principle must be 'ruthless criticism of all that exists'.² Nonetheless Mrs Marx cast many an anxious eye at the crockery. Talk was all we knew of socialism in those days. So much has happened in the eight years since then that it seems like another era. How could we have imagined the barricades, the betrayals or the present despotism in France? Our political world has turned full circle and been shaken inside out. Was it some inner intimation which led you to write 'All that is solid melts into air'?³ I know you would reproach me, if we were back in Saint Germain, for entertaining notions of the fantastic. But you were writing as a revolution simmered beneath the surface and the Manifesto is prescient of some great conflagration. But what are we to make of it all now? If we knew the outcome of our endeavours, would we act with greater wisdom or freeze in dread before capricious circumstance? I cannot feel as certain as you about our inevitable triumph. Over here in the new world I can see few signs of any historical movement towards association – quite the reverse. It seems we have to proceed piecemeal.

I have now read the Manifesto several times in a more critical spirit and would be interested to know whether you have reconsidered some of the points you make in the light of the terrible defeats we have witnessed since 1848. And – though I would dearly love to hear your opinions in person – I suspect an epistle is going to favour me, for you are inclined to drown objections in a torrent of oratory. As you are a man of great power and considerable learning it is not easy to stand one's ground in opposition to your views face to face, so it is perhaps as well that we have the Atlantic between us.

I concurred with your criticisms of 'reactionary conservative Socialists'.⁴ Many members of the Wisconsin Phalanx did indeed become more interested in their stock than in spreading Association. Still I thought you were over harsh in your dismissal of the Associationist cause. Communities varied greatly. Ours, as I said, was strong on economy and weak on conviviality, however I think a better mix might have been possible in other circumstances. When we moved on I felt regret that we were abandoning Association as a way of life and in looking back I have garnered my happier memories – shelling peas in the summer time or singing with the other women as we worked. I could not help but wonder whether your brief and unhappy attempt at associated living might have prejudiced your

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judgement somewhat. Mrs Ruge had many virtues but she and Mrs Marx had little in common. If a community is large and diverse it should be more **possible** to seek out those whose company is pleasing and rewarding.

Before you accuse me of **seeking** the ideal let me say that it has been a valuable – if sobering – experience to see the theories we debated so enthusiastically in Paris put into practice. My time at the Wisconsin Phalanx taught me how great the gap can be between an idea and its realisation. The best of concepts can become so messy and muddled when it is applied and this is true of revolutions and Phalanx laundries alike. The effort to live out our beliefs may, as you say, contain folly – but it is a great instructor. And surely what we have learned must contribute to the question of how we are to alter our habits, which will surely arise when we make the wider social revolution which you envisage. I know you would say that such circumstances will be entirely different, but the proletarians will have lived in the old ways before and this could cause obstacles to be placed in the way of the 'free **development**'⁵ of some – particularly I suspect if they are women.

I have, over the last decade or so, been so thoroughly immersed in women's debates about social regeneration that I speak with a profound conviction when I say that the section on women and the family was a great disappointment. It had the same abstract quality as M. Cabet's writing on the question, as if you were both content with second-hand opinions. I realise this will make you angry, as you abhor the Icarians, but the truth is that like him you ignore the ideas and the participation of women themselves. The richness and complexity of our thinking is not present at all in the manifesto of the proletarians. It is as if in your eyes there is no place for us amidst the striving and the struggles. You offer us the protection that you think fit and deny our own voices. Do we not have a world to win too?

I agree of course that women have indeed been regarded as 'instruments of **production**'⁶. I have been impressed by the way in which women in North America have flocked to the anti-slavery cause and I suspect that this is not only because of religious and democratic ideals about the equality of all souls, but because they have a capacity to imagine **being** used in body and spirit. But you and Mr Engels

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make no mention of the means by which we women might change our present circumstances. Are we really to wait for the 'abolition of the present system'? What of the mean time?

While I can understand that you were forced to compress your thoughts in the Manifesto, the exclusion of all reference to women's part in our own emancipation presents us as all weakness and working men as all strength. You thus deny the efforts women have made through association to put equality and democracy into practice in Europe, and by omission set back the cause for the abolition of all privileges of sex, race, birth, caste and wealth for which we too have sacrificed so much. While there is little enthusiasm over here for democratic socialism, the movement for women's emancipation is developing apace. The 'dissolution of the old *ideas*'⁸ and 'conditions of existence' are occurring among women and I am convinced that the consequences will be as **significant** as the emancipation of the slaves and the struggles of the proletariat.

You, who have such a suspicion of the ideal as opposed to the actual, might have been wary of assuming that in real politics women can afford to rely for their emancipation upon men. I do not mean to suggest that individuals cannot rise above the prejudices of their sex, but there are so many instances of men in general acting in protection of the narrow interests of the masculine sex that the weight of history is against the assumption that freedom will be easily given. Even among our proletarian brothers injustice and an anti-democratic spirit can prevail. Have they not refused to defend our claims to political equality, denied women equal pay and excluded women from their associations? M. Delbrouk even insisted that Mme Deroin should deny her part in devising the scheme for federation of our workers' associations in Paris, on the grounds that her connection with the cause of women's rights would **bring** disrepute to the Union of Associations and to socialism. In her trial she denied her right to speak for the associations in order not to reveal the bitter discord among us to our adversaries.

Our voices, silenced and reviled in Europe, have reached across the Atlantic. While in Akron I was privileged to attend the women's rights convention and helped Mrs Mott in securing and translating the inspiring letter composed **by** my dear sisters and fellow associationists, Jeanne Deroin and Pauline Roland, from their French

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prison. They regard this new movement for women's rights in America as hope burgeoning from despair, and consider that the denial of democracy to one half of humanity helped stifle liberty: "The darkness of reaction has obscured the sun of 1848, which seemed to rise so radiantly. Why? Because the revolutionary tempest in overturning at the same time the throne and the scaffold, in breaking the chain of the black slave, forgot to break the chain of the most oppressed of all the pariahs of **humanity**."¹⁰

There are certainly some differences between our approach as socialist women and the American women's movement for emancipation. They stress their rights to equality and liberty on the basis of their revolution's constitution, though I have heard that the working women are forming their own associations to improve their conditions of labour. And there was also a most singular address at the Akron convention by a former slave who goes by the name of Sojourner Truth. She pointed out that she had 'plowed and sowed and chopped and mowed'" as well as any man.

Such claims for equality and emancipation, rooted as they are in experience, are surely 'actual relations springing from an existing class struggle, from a historical movement going on under our very **eyes**.'¹² Women's expression of the relations you describe frequently differs from men's, for the circumstances of our subjugation are not entirely the same. For this reason **Désirée Gay** argued that women workers in the national workshops should have their own meetings and also attend meetings with the men. I believe a combination of autonomy and solidarity is necessary if real democracy is to be achieved.

At the Akron convention the American women agreed the following resolution:

'We deny the right of any portion of the species to decide for another portion . . . what is and what is not their "proper **sphere**"'.¹³

I am not in complete agreement with this declaration in all circumstances, as I fear it may undermine the genuine bonds of solidarity that I have known through association. On the other hand surely this idea that women must act for their own emancipation is in accord with your insistence that 'the proletarians have nothing to lose but their **chains**'.¹⁴ We socialist women in France believed that the cause of women and the cause of the workers would march in union despite cases of prejudice and hostility. But we knew also that if we

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were to overcome scorn and injustice we must combine as women and act autonomously from men. I consider that the social emancipation of all will be based on the self-emancipation of all the pariahs of society.

At Akron I was disturbed to find that such connections are not assumed in this new women's movement and I find **myself** stranded. Between the Americans who stress women's independence rather than the union of the working classes, and you and Mr **Engels**, who follow the course of democratic movements so closely, yet have somehow contrived to eradicate our thought and action, where are we socialist women to place ourselves? I was reminded of the words of Louise Otto: 'The history of all ages, especially that of the present, teaches us that those who forget to think of themselves will be forgotten . . . In the midst of the great revolutions in which we find ourselves, women will find themselves forgotten, if they **forget** to think of **themselves**.'¹⁵

As I am assailed on all sides and the only weapon I have is my pen I intend to give you my account of our ideas and debates, for the revolution we lived through was a great teacher and I am concerned that so much thought should not 'melt into air'. It may enable you to consider a wider span of opinion and action in your **future** work.

We were greatly inspired **by** the women of the early '30s. Pauline Roland, Desiree Veret, Suzanne Voilquin and Claire Demar (to name but a few) showed us that women must indeed search within themselves if they are to achieve emancipation. From these brave women, and from Flora Tristan, we learned that the woman who does not become her own woman owns nothing. However having established the need to act on our own behalf we did not forget that our cause was connected to that of the working class. Indeed I was surprised to see no mention in your Manifesto of Flora Tristan's proposal for a Workers' Union in **1843** and her recognition that the emancipation of the **working** man was impossible when women remained oppressed in the family.

We certainly did not 'oppose all political action.'" In the dedication of her London Journey to the 'Men and women of the working classes', Flora Tristan said ' . . . do not lose sight of your political *rights*'¹⁷, adding that these were the 'means' of challenging 'abuses . .

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in the social **order**'.¹⁸ She warned however that 'It is the social system, the base of the structure, which must concern you, not political power, which is but an illusion, supreme one day and overthrown the next, restored in a new form only to be overturned the next.'¹⁹ I think you and Mr **Engels** might have acknowledged this great woman.

We '48-ers (as the Americans call us) have surely done much that would make you modify some of the assertions in the Manifesto. For example in the women's club of the *Voix des Femmes* we claimed that as the people were sovereign we too constituted 'the people'. Jeanne Deroin presented herself as a candidate in 1849 but the only group to treat her with respect were the Democratic Socialists. We turned to association not because of any disregard for politics but out of necessity. How else were we to secure employment or raise our pay? Believing that 'to associate is to prevail' we set about linking associations with the aim of overcoming isolation. **After** Jeanne Deroin proposed the Association Solidaire et Fraternelle de Toutes les Associations Reunis in *L'Opinion des Femmes*, the delegates of a hundred and four associations united without distinction of sex. When the police raided our meeting and took us away to jail they accused us of conspiring to overthrow the government by force, but violence was not our intention.

The idea of a federation of associations came about through the experience we gained in '48 and '49, when seamstresses, midwives, silk workers and laundry workers were all forming associations. Because we had direct experience of the problems they faced in obtaining capital, determining needs and marketing their produce, we were able to envisage the advantages and foresee the likely difficulties in a more extensive form of cooperative production. Untrained in abstract political economy, many of us nonetheless understood the economies of our own households. The result was a most developed plan for a cooperative system of production, distribution and exchange, which did not spring from the head of a theorist who knew nothing of workers' **lives**. **Concerned** always with what was possible, our aim was a Federation balancing the needs of producers and consumers and fixing a just price for commodities. We also considered creating financial institutions which would be sympathetic to poor women and be run on the lines of mutuality and democracy. Such aspirations were to be crushed by the tyranny which

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drove us into exile or destroyed us in prison. All the more reason for remembering what we accomplished. For surely the better **organisation** of society which we all desire will require some thought and preparation.

Otherwise I wonder what are we to draw upon as we move from one system of social organisation to another? You write of the elements of a new society within the old. But how are we to sort out what to keep and what to throw away? I see myself sitting in a kind of **political** lumber room, salvaging objects which carry precious memories. You are inclined to use broad brush strokes and not trouble yourself with details. But it is the details that we live amidst and which constitute a commodious life. Philosophers, you see, can benefit from the skills of housewifery!

In America, as I said, the claim for women's rights is usually made on the grounds of an inalienable right to equality but Jeanne Deroin believes that women's experience of mothering gives us a special understanding of cooperation and love. She argues that women would **bring** such **qualities** into the social sphere. I am aware of your suspicion of **feeling** in discussions of social change, yet I am sure you will concede that human feeling has a part to play. Is it not possible then to see in the valuing of the capacities developed by women as mothers a form of resistance to **being** reduced to 'mere instruments of production'? I can see that in demanding our **rights** as mothers we might box ourselves in and lose our foothold in the terrain of equals. On the other hand a **purely** abstract equality conceived according to masculine reasoning can eclipse the experiences unique to women as a sex. This dilemma has been hotly debated now by socialist women for two decades and yet you make no mention of it. It has a bearing too on the more **general** question of how the oppressed are to **prevail**. If they have no understandings to bring to the great project of social regeneration, how will **they** prevent people in possession of privilege, opportunities and knowledge from once more gaining the ascendancy?

Are you familiar with Claire **Démar's** little book, *Ma Loi d'Avenir*, published by Suzanne **Voilquin** in 1834, the year after Claire's tragic suicide? Claire's was a lonely voice. Distrustful of fixed ideas of woman's nature, while claiming freedom of expression for women's needs, inclinations and desires, she was impatient with M. **Enfantin's**

decrees which gave the Saint-Simonian woman the emotions and man the world. I was too young then to understand her conflict with Suzanne **Voilquin** and the other Saint Simonian women, but now I can appreciate her rebellion against their conception of 'woman' as moral redeemer, which she believed would impose a new set of regulations on women. Instead she believed that even as we define '... our own nature, our own desire, we proclaim that each nature, each desire is sacred and demands **satisfaction**.'²⁰

Her life remains the subject of scandal because she defended '... a physical trial of flesh by **flesh**'²¹ but there is considerable hypocrisy in the outcry because young men do as much with a nod and a wink from their elders. How can we say there is to be one morality for man and another for woman? She questioned fidelity based on fear and she and her young lover paid a terrible price in taking their own lives.

The real danger for the free woman, in my opinion, is the extreme difficulty in challenging prejudice on so many fronts. This can be destructive and lead to great **suffering**. For this reason I can **sympathise** with your and Mrs **Marx's** dislike of the abuses which can result from some versions of 'free love'. I am sure there were excesses in the early '30s, for people felt that the known world was collapsing all around them. There are always certain socialist men too (I remember Mr **Herwegh's** insult to Mrs **Marx**) who will interpret freedom as licence. Then there is the question of children of course. I do not like Claire **Démar's** proposal to deny the biological parents the right to rear their children and I think Pauline Roland's contention that paternity is of no importance places too great a responsibility upon the woman. Pauline Roland and Jeanne Deroin have advocated celibacy, but neither of them stood by this for long. And why should women sacrifice love and maternity for an idea of freedom? For what is left of freedom when life passes us by and we are alone?

I was no more satisfied, however, with your pronouncement that we must wait for the abolition of the present system for the resolution of these questions. I fear we will all be too old and grey to care much by then. I am sure you are right – the ideas and forms of the present day will change with the future organisation of society. But how are we to go on in the mean time? And once we become aware of oppression, how can we continue to live in a condition of unhappiness and subordination? What of the woman defended by Claire Demar in the loveless marriage bed? Surely as democrats we can agree with

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Jeanne Deroin that motherhood should be voluntary and respect Pauline Roland's rejection of marriage because of the inferior position of the wife? As for Communism, did not Flora Tristan argue most convincingly that inequality in the families of the working classes was the cause of much violence and cruelty? Your account of the family does not consider the question that has greatly concerned socialist women – the link between men's mastery in the home and their assumption of superiority in politics and in the workplace. We have sought since the early '30s to challenge inequality and despotism in all spheres of existence and many of us have suffered most severely as a result. You have not done us **justice**. You have given the Communists' cause a Manifesto in which it is as if all this had never been.

I know you are sceptical of 'castles in the air' so I am concluding with a list of the proposals we have developed **through** action:–

- * Women's equal civil and political rights.
- Equal participation of women on workers' committees.
- Equal pay, an end to women's low pay, long hours and exclusion from certain trades.
- Payment of homeworkers at the same rate as workers in the **workshops**.
- The sharing of work in times of unemployment.
- Alternative employment for prostitutes.
- Restaurants and creches in all workplaces.
- Training centres for women, including midwives.
- Centres for domestic servants to meet and organise.
- The development of associations among women and men workers through the power of union in order to provide capital.
- Good conditions of employment.
- The means of exchanging labour for produce and protection in times of need – including a literary and artistic association to help women workers in these fields and to spread interest in art, and an association also for unemployed women.
- Large airy houses with gardens providing cheap communal meals and living quarters for families with children and single parents.
- Public restaurants, wash houses, meeting rooms, libraries and creches. Public space for recreation.
- Free public education and training for all children including girls.
- A system of social welfare which would not insult poor mothers to be.

- Free medical service and the payment of midwives by the state.
- A social fund to provide for women so they do not have to be dependent on men.
- Voluntary motherhood.

My experience of phalanx life has convinced me that these reforms are best secured not by withdrawing, but by agitating in working class neighbourhoods. I intend to raise the cry for women's rights in Toronto and to set about securing the social rights which I believe would enable the women of the working classes to make their own choices about their lives. Our defeats have been hard to bear but we have the courage to confront them and ideas and proposals to contribute to **future** generations. Our cause truly is international. I take heart from the letter of Pauline Roland and Jeanne Deroin to the American women's convention last summer: 'Sisters of America! your socialist sisters of France are united with you in the vindication of the right of women to civil and political equality. We have, moreover, the profound conviction that only by the power of association based on solidarity – by the union of the working-classes of both sexes to organise labor – can be acquired, completely and pacifically, the civil and **political** equality of women, and the social **right** of **all**.'¹²³

Yours truly in the struggle for Freedom,
Annette Devereux."

Guide to historical figures

Jeanne Deroin was a dressmaker who became a self-educated teacher. A republican, influenced by Saint-Simonian ideas, she was involved in the women's newspapers *Voix des Femmes* and then in *Politique des Femmes*. She married an engineer and had three children. After her arrest she went into exile in Britain and published an *Almanach des femmes* in French and English. **Towards** the end of her life she was in contact with William Morris' Socialist League. Pauline Roland was a teacher and lived among the Saint Simonians in Paris in the early 1830s. In 1848 she organised the Fraternal Association of Socialist Male and Female Teachers and Professors. She had a child from an early relationship and three more in a free union with another man. By

1848 she regretted the responsibilities and lack of security which single parenting involved. However she refused to deny her views on marriage after her arrest in 1850. In December 1851, after Louis Napoleon's coup d'etat, she was arrested again and sent to a penal colony in Algeria. She died while returning to France. **Femme Nicaud** was the leader of the Laundresses' Association. Charles Fourier was an early theorist of socialism who advocated small cooperative communities which he called '**phalanxes**'. His ideas were taken to America in the 1830s by Albert Brisbane and several communities were established there. Helen Macfarlane translated the *Communist Manifesto* in the *Red Republican*. Charles Anderson **Dana** was an American theorist of Fourierism and editor of the *New York Daily Tribune*. He visited Marx in Cologne with Brisbane in the summer of 1848 and in 1852 was to invite Marx to write a regular column in the paper. Jenny ~~Marx~~ was living in Paris with her new husband in 1843, where they moved into a communal house with Arnold Ruge and his wife, but Jenny did not get on with Mrs Ruge. She preferred Emma **Herwegh**, whose husband, the poet **Georg Herwegh**, was a friend of Marx's. Jenny Marx disapproved of the bohemian poet's affairs, rejected his attempt to seduce her and was appalled by the discussion of free unions in Paris. In 1847 Jenny Marx encouraged Marx to work with the Communist League and copied out the *Communist Manifesto* while preparing for a Christmas party of the German Workers Union in Brussels, where she gave one of her dramatic recitations. In 1845 when the Marxes were in exile in Brussels, Helene Demuth a young woman of 25, had joined them as a servant. In 1851 she became pregnant with Karl **Marx's** son, who was to be called Freddy Demuth. He was brought up by a working class couple in Hackney, London. Etienne Cabet was the author of *Voyage en Icarie* and a well known advocate of communism in France during the 1840s. His followers were known as 'Icarians'. In 1841 in *La Femme dans la société actuelle et dans la communauté* he refuted the idea that socialism meant the end of marriage and the family. He later formed a utopian community in Texas. Lucretia **Mott** was an anti-slavery campaigner and supporter of women's rights who made links with the French socialist women. Sojourner Truth, a former slave and itinerant preacher, joined the Northampton (Massachusetts) Association in 1843-44 where she was influenced by William Lloyd Garrison and Frederick Douglass. She dictated a narrative of her life in 1850 and attended the women's rights convention in Akron, Ohio in 1851. Louise Otto advocated women's education in Germany (including science and gymnastics) in 1847.

She founded a women's newspaper during the German revolution of 1848, *Frauen-Zeitung*, which continued until 1852. She believed in **woman's** special mission in politics and wanted poor working women to contribute to her paper. **Désirée** Veret (later Gay), a milliner influenced by the Saint Simonians, was involved in *La Femme Libre* in 1832. She went to London, **making** contact with the Owenites and marrying Jules Gay, an Owenite, in 1837. She was particularly interested in the democratisation of the workplace and in 1848 led the protest against **women's** inequality in the National Workshops. She also helped **organise** an association of linen seamstresses. After Louis Napoleon took power she went into exile in Switzerland and then in Belgium. Suzanne Voilquin was involved in the Saint Simonian movement and believed that women had essentially different qualities to men. She thought socialists had to introduce a new **morality**. In 1848 she organised the United Midwives, an association which demanded equal pay and training with male obstetricians. She went to live in a community in the United States. Claire **Démar** wrote *A Woman's Call to the People for the Enfranchisement of Women* in 1832. Her *Ma Loi d' Avenir* was published posthumously by Suzanne Voilquin despite their intense disagreements. Isolated from the Saint-Simonian women, Claire **Démar** committed suicide with her lover, a younger man. Flora **Tristan** worked as a colourist in a lithographic shop and was pressurised into an unhappy marriage with her employer. She fled four years later, pregnant and with two sons. Unable to look **after** her children she worked as a maid and travelling companion. She was active in socialist circles in France in the **1830s**, made contact with Owenites and Chartists, and, in the **1840s**, wrote and lectured extensively on workers' conditions, advocating the creation of the Workers' Union in 1843. She died on a discouraging organising tour in 1844. Prosper Enfantin, a Saint Simonian leader and theorist who argued for the need of a Woman Messiah, challenged conventional morality but sought to impose his own authoritarian views on the women in the Saint Simonian circle.

NOTES

Apart from the books and articles in the endnotes I have also drawn on Werner Blumenberg, *Karl Marx* NLB, London 1972. Maire Cross and Tim Gray, *The Feminism of Flora Tristan*, Berg, Oxford, 1992. Carl J. Guarneri, *The Utopian Alternative. Fourierism in Nineteenth-Century America*, Cornell University press, Ithaca, 1991. Claire Goldberg Moses, *French Feminism in the 19th Century*, State University of New York, Albany, 1984. H.F. Peters, *Red Jenny. A Life with Karl Marx*, Allen and

Unwin, London, 1986. Joan Wallach Scott, *Gender and the Politics of History*, Columbia University Press, New York, 1988.

1. Helen Macfarlane translated 'spectre' as 'frightful hobgoblin' in the shortened version of the *Manifesto of the Communist Party* which was serialised in *The Red Republican*, November 9, 1850. A reprint was issued with an introduction by John Saville and published by Merlin Press, London, 1966. The 'frightful hobgoblin' appears on p. 161. All subsequent references are to Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, Lawrence and Wishart, London, 1968.
2. Karl Marx to Arnold Ruge, September 1843, *Marx/Engels Collected Works*, Volume 3, Lawrence and Wishart, London, 1975, p. 142
3. Marx and Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, p. 38
4. *Ibid* p. 61
5. *Ibid* p. 53
6. *Ibid* p. 50
7. *Ibid*
8. *Ibid* p. 51
9. *Ibid*
10. Jeanne Deroin and Pauline Roland, Letter to the Convention of the Women of America, 15 June, 1851, in eds. Susan Groag Bell and Karen M. Offen, *Women, the Family and Freedom. The Debate in Documents*, Volume One, 1750–1880, Stanford University Press, Stanford, California, 1983, pp. 287–8
11. Sojourner Truth quoted in Nell Irvin Painter, Sojourner Truth's Defense of the Rights of Women (as reported in 1851; rewritten in 1863) in ed Linda K. Kerber, Jane Sherron De Hart, *Women? America* Fourth Edition, Oxford University Press, New York, 1995
12. Marx and Engels, *The Manifesto of the Communist Party*, pp. 46–47
13. Quoted in Ellen DuBois, *Feminism and Suffrage: The Emergence of an Independent Women? Movement in America, 1848–1869*, p. 36
14. Marx and Engels, *The Manifesto of the Communist Party*, p. 63
15. Louise Otto, Program, *Frauen-Zeitung*, Ein Organ für die höheren weiblichen Interessen, no 1 (21 April 1849) in eds Bell and Offen, *Women, the Family and Freedom*, p. 263
16. Marx and Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, p. 61
17. Flora Tristan, *The London journal of Flora Tristan*, 1842, Translated, annotated and introduced by Jean Hawkes, Virago, London, 1982
18. *Ibid* p. 3
19. *Ibid*
20. Claire Demar quoted in Eleni Varikas, 'A Supremely Rebellious Word'. Claire Demar: A Saint-Simonian Heretic, *Argument Sonderband*, AS 185, p. 98
21. *Ibid* p. 99
22. Marx and Engels, *The Manifesto of the Communist Party*, p. 61
23. Deroin and Roland in, eds. Bell and Offen, *Women the Family, and Freedom*, p. 289