

Look at all these beautiful children who are female in the world.

And in addition to all the other outrages which I have referred to, in terms of children throughout the slums and shantytowns of the Third World, in addition to all the horrors that will be heaped on them—the actual living in garbage and human waste in the hundreds of millions as their fate, laid out before them, yes, even before they are born—there is, on top of this, for those children who are born female, the horror of everything that this will bring simply because they are female in a world of male domination. And this is true not only in the Third World. In “modern” countries like the U.S. as well, the statistics barely capture it: the millions who will be raped; the millions more who will be routinely demeaned, deceived, degraded, and all too often brutalized by those who are supposed to be their most intimate lovers; the way in which so many women will be shamed, hounded and harassed if they seek to exercise reproductive rights through abortion, or even birth control; the many who will be forced into prostitution and pornography; and all those who—if they do not have that particular fate, and even if they achieve some success in this “new world” where supposedly there are no barriers for women—will be surrounded on every side, and insulted at every moment, by a society and a culture which degrades women, on the streets, in the schools and workplaces, in the home, on a daily basis and in countless ways.

How long does it take before the carefree play of female children—yes, in countries like the U.S.—gets turned into cutting themselves, in response to an unbearable feeling of worthlessness and despair, and often as a result of abuse; or starving themselves in an attempt to conform to the dominant and incessantly propagated notions of female beauty, with which their worth as a human being is equated and to which it is reduced? How long does it take before many girls who show intellectual curiosity and the spark of wanting to know about the world, and of learning about the world, learn instead to stifle that, to “play dumb” and stop speaking up, because it becomes all too clear to them that boys and men feel “threatened” by strong, competent and intelligent women? Or girls who, once having been actively involved in the joy of playing sports, give that up in order to be perceived as more “feminine.” Girls in general who, whatever else may happen in their lives, will be insulted and assaulted by pornography and other degradation of women, soft core and hard core, from mainstream advertising to the most extreme and grotesque and perverse. Who will learn to accommodate themselves in various ways—or will be encouraged, and in many ways coerced, into accommodating themselves—to the oppressive relations that prevail and predominate in society, particularly as regards women; or, on the other hand, will be encouraged and will learn to become hardened and cynical, to treat everyone and everything, including themselves and their own bodies, as commodities, and will be further degraded and debased in the process; will learn to lower their sights and not to dream and think of fully taking part in every sphere of society nor dare to rise up and change society, including in the way that it treats women? All this too, is laid out for female children, including in countries like the U.S., even before they are born...

As our party's *Declaration** very rightly insists, in the world today and where humanity now stands, all of this should, and could, be swept from the earth—and the fact that it is perpetuated and enforced by outmoded systems, and above all the dominant system of capitalism-imperialism, makes it all more outrageous.

—Bob Avakian, Chairman of the Revolutionary Communist Party
From “Unresolved Contradictions, Driving Forces for Revolution,” available at revcom.us

* *A Declaration: For Women's Liberation and the Emancipation of All Humanity*, a special issue of *Revolution* newspaper available at revcom.us.



Sri Lanka after the 2004 tsunami



Photo: Fotolia

United States



Elementary school, Oakland, CA



Afghan refugees, Pakistan, 2009

Celebrate International Women's Day—March 8, 2011