

People in Power

By Anonymous¹

People in positions of power have a responsibility to those without. We, living lavishly, have a responsibility to those who live in destitution. Politicians have a responsibility to constituents, as do parents to children and men to women.

It's a "man's world." A world where education leads you to economic prosperity and success. Yet universities are brimming with intelligent women who get stuck with lower pay. (Seventy six cents for every dollar a man makes for the same job).

It's a world where money is power so women who choose to stay home and rear families have none – money or power.

It's a world where Muslims sit on their behinds and regurgitate the usual, "Islam has liberated the woman," and "Islam puts women on a pedestal" but don't seem to care about working cohesively with women to create a better society.

It's not that the majority of Muslims don't care; they just don't know what working cohesively means. And they don't know because they don't care to know. Okay, I guess they don't care.

Sometimes it's the men holding the women back. Working towards a more cohesive society could mean that mothers, wives and/or sisters are out working in their communities instead of busying themselves in the kitchen. The idea of sacrifice by an individual family for the greater community doesn't sound so bad when the man leaving the wife at home with three kids to feed, clothe, wash, nurture and stimulate. But to think that there are some issues in the community that only women could address? Or worse: women give their opinions and put their effort into general community issues and leadership? Never!

Muslim women can rant and rave about all the rights they are given in Islam but unfortunately since men have held power – and probably will for a long time coming – Muslim men need to support and aid women to build cohesive societies.

¹Aver, December 2006, p. 19.

But wait, I can't put all the blame on men. The mother is the first teacher of every generation. A mother who raises her kids thinking that a woman can have a satisfying existence just cooking and cleaning only perpetuates the problem. While every woman has the right to stay at home and without being belittled if she chooses to do so, she has the responsibility to help her community. Staying home to raise your kids is great: for your family and for society. But if you let your community rot while you shelter your kids, what will happen the day they step out of the house? We are all a part of the Canadian community so we all need to pitch in to make it better. Community problems, by their nature, don't come to your doorstep in neat little packages. It only follows that women need to get out there.

A part of the solution is to read more. Pick up a book/article about, by or for Muslim women (try *Aisha-A Paragon of Islamic Activism* by Ahmed Kutty) and find out about the contributions of Muslim women in the time of the Prophet on him be prayers and peace of Allah. Not only did women aspire beyond the domestic sphere, they interacted with the community as scholars, nurses, warriors, and beyond. Then try reading something on the struggles and efforts of contemporary Muslim women. Or better, go out and help women in your community that are trying to get their message and efforts out.

If you think I'm trying to start a revolution with my words, I'm not. That was already done with the revelation of the Qur'an and the example of the Prophet. If we claim to love these two things, we need to act on them, especially those who have the power to make things happen.