Dear Feminist Review

I am perturbed at AnnMarie's reading of one section of my article and hence the interpretation of the whole. In reply I would like to make several short points. AnnMarie ascribes to me the dubious aim of imposing proscriptive limits on heterosexual sexual enjoyment. While I may be critical of aspects of heterosexual sex and behaviour, I am firmly of the opinion that it is up to heterosexual women and men to deal with those issues.

I attempted in the article to raise issues to do with lesbianism and its relationship to feminism. What individual women can create for themselves is not the issue. The issue is the effect of power relations and the attitudes and ideas that go with them. The dynamics of sexual practice are a consequence of the power relations between those involved; and the power relations and hence the dynamics are different in lesbian sex to those in female/male sex. Therefore the active/passive dynamic too is different. AnneMarie seems to assume that active equals powerful and passive equals powerless and that this is translated directly into sexual practices. But as I have tried to argue in my article, this is not necessarily the case. It is ironic to be criticised by some for being against political lesbianism and by others for being a political lesbian.

The implied view in AnnMarie's last paragraph is that all of this has a touch of trivia and cannot be prioritised alongside the other great issues of unemployment, nuclear warfare and underdevelopment which effect both men and women. Whilst not wishing to under-rate these issues I feel that such an attitude may be precisely the reason why some feminists feel relations between women and men still have such a long way to go.

In sisterhood

Wendy Clark