

Johnson offers perspective of feminist world, beliefs

By Alice Thornton
Emerald Reporter

Author and feminist Sonia Johnson offered interpretation of the feminist dream and inspiration for creation of a women's world in a speech sponsored by the Cultural Forum in the EMU Monday night.

Johnson was excommunicated from the Mormon Church in the 1970s for expressing her views of feminism. Before her excommunication, she was a housewife, mother and school-teacher.

During her last few years with the church, she became aware of feminism and the oppression of women.

"I began worrying about the ERA," Johnson said. "I became very curious. What was this thing that was changing the church?"

After her excommunication, Johnson became increasingly involved in the women's movement. She said she gained a lot of clarity of the movement after fasting for 37 days in support of the ERA.

Johnson said she realized the new direction the movement has taken in the past 15 years. The early women's movement focused on internal oppression. Women blamed themselves for problems faced by their sex.

"The oppressed have their oppression internalized," she said. "We internalize it because we have to in order to live."

Johnson said the recent women's movement has abandoned oppression and replaced it with deprogramming.

She said feminism now focuses on taking the bad out of women's lives and starting over, adding that the structure of the world does not provide a good place for women to thrive.

"The world is in a state where it really can't be fixed," Johnson said. "I think it's time to start over from scratch. People are waking up and finding freedom because half the world is becoming free."

"We have never seen a woman act free in this world," she said. "We need to get ourselves as free as we can."

Johnson said she would like



Sonia Johnson

to have a new world created by pioneering women. Her world would offer infinite variety and freedom for everyone.

"We are the pioneers of some sort of new political, social, economic, new world," Johnson said. "Pioneers walk forward into the darkness. That's the true pioneer spirit when you can walk into the unknown."

In order to offer complete freedom, there is only one rule Johnson would accept in the feminist world. Her rule allows people to do whatever they want.

"I want to live with women who do what they want to do all the time," Johnson said. "We need freedom to figure out what it means to be ourselves."

To support the feminist world, Johnson said the natural law of abundance would provide enough for all. Each person contributes a share which creates more than enough for the community.

"When you put everything together, it does not just add up. It does not just expand exponentially. It explodes," Johnson said.

"If we do this together, there will not be just enough. There will be an abundance," she said.

Johnson said living in freedom will allow women to discover more about themselves.

"We need freedom to figure out what it means to be ourselves," she said. "We can make a place on this planet for a women's world."

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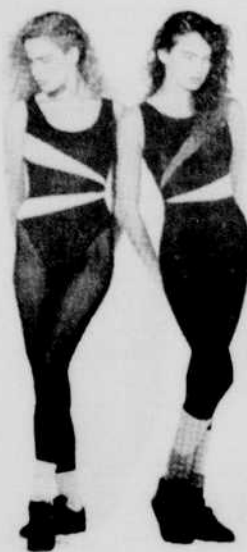
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