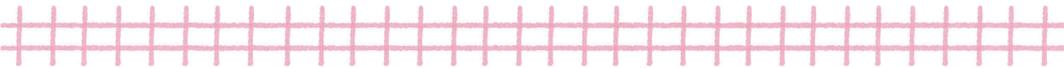


# MORE FEMINIST THAN YOU THINK!



Table de concertation féministe  
GASPÉSIE · ÎLES-DE-LA-MADELEINE



**ON MARCH 8TH 2026, THE MOBILISATION COMMITTEE OF THE TABLE DE CONCERTATION FÉMINISTE GASPÉSIE-ÎLES-DE-LA-MADELEINE LAUNCHES THIS ZINE TO DEMYSTIFY FEMINISM AND HOW IT IS EXPERIENCED HERE IN OUR REGION.**

**WORLDWIDE, LIVING IN A RURAL AREA REMAINS ONE OF THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DRIVERS OF INEQUALITY FOR WOMEN. WOMEN IN RURAL AREAS EXPERIENCE DIFFICULTIES IN ENGAGING IN ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES, SHOULD A DISPROPORTIONATE BURDEN OF UNPAID CARE AND HOUSEHOLD WORK, AND ARE AT HIGH RISK OF EXPERIENCING DIFFERENT FORMS OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE.[1]**

- STATISTICS CANADA, 2021



[1] <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/fr/pub/45-20-0002/452000022021001-fra.pdf?st=loOKP2E8>

# ACQUIRED RIGHTS AND ONGOING STRUGGLES

- DO YOU BELIEVE THAT PEOPLE SHOULD HAVE THE CHOICE TO CONTINUE OR TERMINATE A PREGNANCY WITHOUT RESTRICTIONS?
- DO YOU VOTE IN ELECTIONS?
- DO YOU BELIEVE THAT YOU ARE IN THE BEST POSITION TO MAKE DECISIONS ABOUT YOUR OWN LIFE?
- DO YOU BELIEVE THAT YOU ARE IN THE BEST POSITION TO CHOOSE YOUR FAMILY SITUATION?
- DO YOU WANT A SOCIETY WHERE EVERYONE HAS THE SAME RIGHTS?
- DO YOU THINK THAT EVERY PERSON, REGARDLESS OF THEIR GENDER, SEX, VULNERABILITIES, ORIGIN, HISTORY, ETC., SHOULD HAVE THE SAME RIGHTS?
- DO YOU THINK THAT VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND SEXUAL AND GENDER MINORITIES IS UNACCEPTABLE?
- WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE TASKS RELATED TO CHILDREN AND DOMESTIC LIFE SHARED MORE EQUITABLY?
- DO YOU UNDERSTAND WHAT IT IS TO BE OPPRESSED, AND DO YOU THINK IT IS UNFAIR?
- DO YOU FEEL A SENSE OF INJUSTICE WHEN YOU ARE LABELED, JUDGED OR BELITTLED BECAUSE OF YOUR GENDER?

**SPOILER ALERT: YOU ARE A FEMINIST!!!**

JUST BECAUSE WE HAVE FOUGHT HARD TO ACQUIRE CERTAIN RIGHTS DOES NOT MEAN THAT FEMINISM IS NO LONGER NECESSARY. ON THE CONTRARY! JUST THINK OF THE RIGHT TO ABORTION, WHICH IS CONSTANTLY BEING CHALLENGED. THE STRUGGLES HAVE CHANGED, BUT EQUALITY HAS NOT BEEN ACHIEVED.

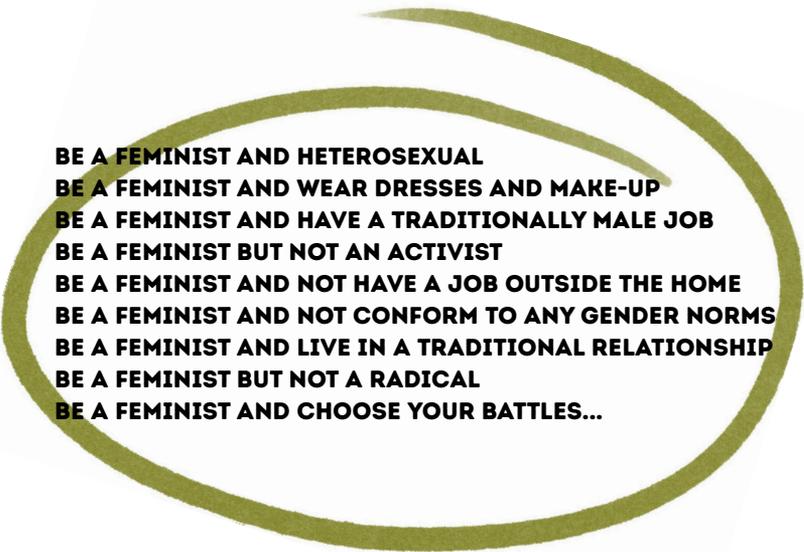
# EMBRACING OUR CONTRADICTIONS



FEMINISM DOES NOT TAKE A SINGLE FORM. IT IS EXPERIENCED DIFFERENTLY DEPENDING ON OUR REALITIES, OUR BACKGROUNDS, AND OUR GENERATIONS. DOES BEING A FEMINIST MEAN ACTING LIKE MEN? ARE WE MORE FEMINIST IN RURAL AREAS BECAUSE WE HUNT AND FISH? OR, ON THE CONTRARY, ARE WE LESS FEMINIST IF WE DECIDE TO START A TRADITIONAL FAMILY OR CONFORM TO TRADITIONAL CODES OF FEMININITY?

THE ANSWER IS COMPLEX AND ROOTED IN THIS FUNDAMENTAL QUESTION: WHAT IS A MAN, WHAT IS A WOMAN? OUR SOCIETY, BASED ON GENDER BINARY, IS QUICK TO GENERATE NUMEROUS PREJUDICES ABOUT WHAT THESE TWO GENDERS SHOULD BE.

SO, WHAT SHOULD WE BASE OUR BELIEFS ON, RATHER THAN SOCIAL CODES? OUR OWN VALUES? LAWS AND RIGHTS? WE BELIEVE THAT TWO OR MORE THINGS CAN BE TRUE AT THE SAME TIME. FOR EXAMPLE, YOU CAN...



- BE A FEMINIST AND HETEROSEXUAL**
- BE A FEMINIST AND WEAR DRESSES AND MAKE-UP**
- BE A FEMINIST AND HAVE A TRADITIONALLY MALE JOB**
- BE A FEMINIST BUT NOT AN ACTIVIST**
- BE A FEMINIST AND NOT HAVE A JOB OUTSIDE THE HOME**
- BE A FEMINIST AND NOT CONFORM TO ANY GENDER NORMS**
- BE A FEMINIST AND LIVE IN A TRADITIONAL RELATIONSHIP**
- BE A FEMINIST BUT NOT A RADICAL**
- BE A FEMINIST AND CHOOSE YOUR BATTLES...**

# MYTH: BEING A FEMINIST MEANS TAKING A STAND AGAINST MEN



IN REALITY, FEMINISM ALSO CONCERNS MEN BECAUSE IT AIMS FOR EQUALITY FOR ALL, AND THEREFORE ALSO SEEKS TO FREE MEN FROM RESTRICTIVE GENDER STEREOTYPES. FREEING MEN FROM THESE STEREOTYPES MEANS ALLOWING DIFFERENT MASCULINITIES TO EXIST, ALLOWING DIVERSITY TO EXIST FULLY.

FEMINISM CHALLENGES THE DOMINANT MODEL OF MASCULINITY, WHICH CAUSES MEN WHO DO NOT CONFORM TO GENDER STEREOTYPES TO BE THE TARGET OF INTIMIDATION, PREJUDICE AND JUDGEMENT IF THEY DO NOT OR CANNOT CONFORM. FOR EXAMPLE, A MAN WHO LOSES HIS JOB AND CANNOT FULFIL THE ROLE OF BREADWINNER, OR A MAN WHO QUESTIONS HIS SEXUAL ORIENTATION, WILL SUFFER, BUT TRADITIONAL AND DOMINANT MASCULINITY DICTATES THAT HE MUST DEAL WITH HIS PROBLEMS ALONE. THE OBLIGATION TO PERFORM FLAWLESS MASCULINITY IS THE SOURCE OF MUCH PSYCHOLOGICAL DISTRESS AMONG MEN. BY BREAKING THIS TOXIC MODEL, FEMINISM INVITES MEN TO BE WHO THEY REALLY ARE AND TO EXPRESS ALL THEIR EMOTIONS WITHOUT FEAR OF THEIR MASCULINITY BEING QUESTIONED.

IN SHORT, WE LOVE MEN, ESPECIALLY WHEN THEY UNDERSTAND OUR STRUGGLE, DON'T FEEL THREATENED BY FEMINISM, AND ACT AS FEMINIST ALLIES. AND FEMINISM IS FOR YOU GUYS TOO, BY THE WAY.



## ALLIES

**MEN OR ORGANIZATIONS WHO STAND ALONGSIDE FEMINISTS IN THE FIGHT AGAINST SEXISM ARE GENERALLY REFERRED TO AS ALLIES.**

**"THIS REQUIRES A POSTURE OF LISTENING, HUMILITY AND INTROSPECTION, ATTENTION TO THE MECHANISMS THAT REPRODUCE OPPRESSION [...] A POSTURE OF OPENNESS TO DIFFERENCE AND DIVERSITY OF REALITIES AND NEEDS, BUT ABOVE ALL, THE ACCEPTANCE THAT LEADERSHIP BELONGS TO THE PEOPLE WHO ARE AT THE VERY HEART OF THE STRUGGLES."**

- MARIE-ÈVE SURPRENANT, 2015

## **MYTH: FEMINISTS IN THE REGION ARE NEWCOMERS WHO BRING URBAN ISSUES TO THE TABLE**



OF COURSE, THERE ARE PLENTY OF NEWCOMERS WHO ARE FEMINISTS, BUT THEY DON'T HAVE A MONOPOLY ON FEMINISM! WOMEN FROM THE GASPÉ AND MAGDALEN ISLANDS HAVE THEIR OWN BRAND OF FEMINISM BUILT ON THE NEEDS OF THEIR COMMUNITIES. HERE, IN THE REGION AS ELSEWHERE, WE HAVE WOMEN'S CENTRES, WOMEN'S SHELTERS, CALACS... PROUDLY FEMINIST, BORN OUT OF THE NEEDS OF WOMEN IN THE REGION. WE FIGHT TOGETHER FOR EQUALITY AND FOR GREATER ACCESS TO SERVICES.

DIVERSITY ALSO EXISTS THE GASPÉ AND THE MAGDALEN ISLANDS! THINK OF PEOPLE OF DIVERSE SEXUAL AND GENDER IDENTITIES, IMMIGRANT WOMEN, ETC., WHO FACE CHALLENGES AND HAVE SPECIFIC NEEDS THAT CAN BE DIFFICULT TO MEET IN RURAL AREAS.

IN SHORT, FEMINISTS IN RURAL AREAS OFTEN WORK WITH FEWER RESOURCES AND MORE SOCIAL CONSTRAINTS, WHICH REQUIRES DIFFERENT STRATEGIES— BUT NO LESS COMMITMENT.

# MYTH: WE DON'T NEED FEMINISM IN THE REGION

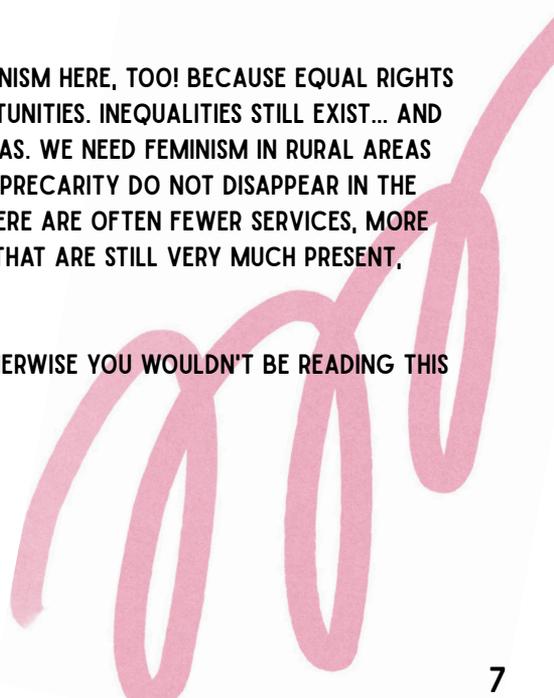


THERE IS A PERSISTENT MYTH THAT HISTORICALLY, THE GASPÉ PENINSULA AND THE MAGDALEN ISLANDS BECAME A MATRIARCHAL SOCIETY WHEN THE MEN WERE OUT FISHING OR WORKING IN THE WOODS. IN FACT, IT WOULD BE MORE ACCURATE TO SAY THAT SOCIETY FUNCTIONED AT THAT TIME THANKS TO COMMUNITIES OF WOMEN WHO HAD TO MANAGE EVERYTHING, FROM THE HOME TO THE FIELDS (NOT BY CHOICE; THEY COULD NOT HAVE CHANGED ROLES) ! WHEN THE MEN RETURNED FROM FISHING, PATRIARCHAL SOCIETY RESUMED ITS RIGHTS WITH ALL THAT THIS ENTAILED FOR WOMEN IN TERMS OF CARE WORK, SEXUAL AVAILABILITY, ETC.

THIS SEASONAL DIVISION OF LABOUR AND POWER STILL HOLDS TRUE TODAY, AND GOES HAND IN HAND WITH WOMEN'S INVOLVEMENT IN CERTAIN MUNICIPAL COUNCILS, FOR EXAMPLE. THIS SITUATION IS FAIRLY TYPICAL IN ENVIRONMENTS WHERE PROFESSIONS ARE SEGREGATED BY GENDER (WHEN MEN GO FISHING OR WORK IN THE NORTH, FOR EXAMPLE), BUT THIS DOES NOT MEAN A REVERSAL OF POWER.

IN OTHER WORDS, WE STILL NEED FEMINISM HERE, TOO! BECAUSE EQUAL RIGHTS DO NOT ALWAYS MEAN EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES. INEQUALITIES STILL EXIST... AND ARE OFTEN LESS VISIBLE IN RURAL AREAS. WE NEED FEMINISM IN RURAL AREAS BECAUSE INEQUALITY, VIOLENCE AND PRECARITY DO NOT DISAPPEAR IN THE COUNTRYSIDE. ON THE CONTRARY, THERE ARE OFTEN FEWER SERVICES, MORE ISOLATION AND TRADITIONAL NORMS THAT ARE STILL VERY MUCH PRESENT, MAKING WOMEN MORE VULNERABLE.

FEMINISM EXISTS IN RURAL AREAS, OTHERWISE YOU WOULDN'T BE READING THIS GUIDE!



# CHALLENGES

BEING A FEMINIST IN THE GASPÉ AND THE MAGDALEN ISLANDS COMES WITH ADDITIONAL CHALLENGES:

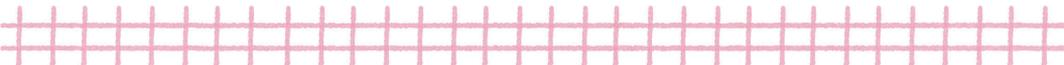
## ● THERE IS LITTLE OR NO ANONYMITY :

SPEAKING OUT MEANS EXPOSING YOURSELF TO BECOMING A FIGUREHEAD; IT CAN RAISE CONCERNS ABOUT OUR SAFETY AND THAT OF OUR CHILDREN, OR ISOLATE US PROFESSIONALLY OR SOCIALLY. ALL OF THIS CAN UNDERMINE THE WILLINGNESS TO COME FORWARD AND SPEAK OUT PUBLICLY.

## ● WE LIVE IN SMALL COMMUNITIES :

- THIS MAKES IT MORE DIFFICULT TO REPORT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE; WE MAY LIVE IN FEAR OF BEING OSTRACIZED OURSELVES IF THE OTHER PERSON HAS MORE SOCIAL POWER, FEAR OF DISRUPTING COMMUNITY HARMONY, ETC.
- WE RUB SHOULDERS WITH PEOPLE WHO HAVE BEEN REPORTED BECAUSE WE HAVE NO CHOICE. IT IS DIFFICULT IN A SMALL VILLAGE NOT TO RUN INTO THEM, AND WE HAVE TO DEAL WITH FRIENDS WHO PROTECT THE ABUSERS AND INVITE THEM TO POTLUCKS.

DEALING WITH THESE CHALLENGES THEREFORE REQUIRES A GREAT DEAL OF COURAGE, BUT WE HAVE LOTS OF COURAGE!



THIS ZINE IS JUST AN OVERVIEW OF WHAT FEMINISM CAN BE, HOW IT IS EXPERIENCED IN RURAL AREAS, AND THE CURRENT STRUGGLES FOR OUR RIGHTS.

WE COULD HAVE ADDRESSED THE CULTURE OF CONSENT, INVISIBLE LABOUR, ECOFEMINISM, POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT, THE GENDER DIVISION OF LABOUR, THE VALORISATION OF TRADITIONALLY FEMALE PROFESSIONS, REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH... BUT WE'LL HAVE TIME TO CHAT ABOUT THAT ON THE STREET, IN THE TRAILS, OR OVER A COFFEE.



**SO, DO YOU CONSIDER YOURSELF A FEMINIST?**



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