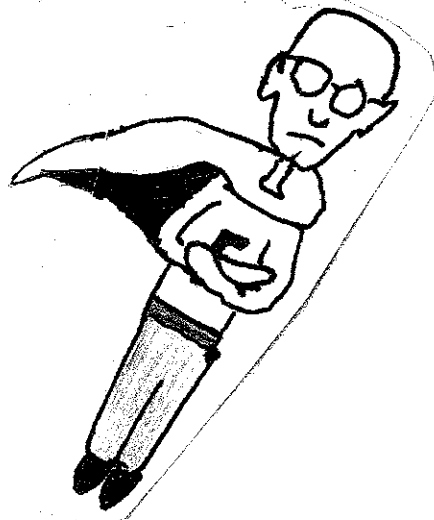


In a world of conformity, a world where The Oppressor / Oppressed model reigned supreme, only one man could unravel the intricacies of power...

Foucault

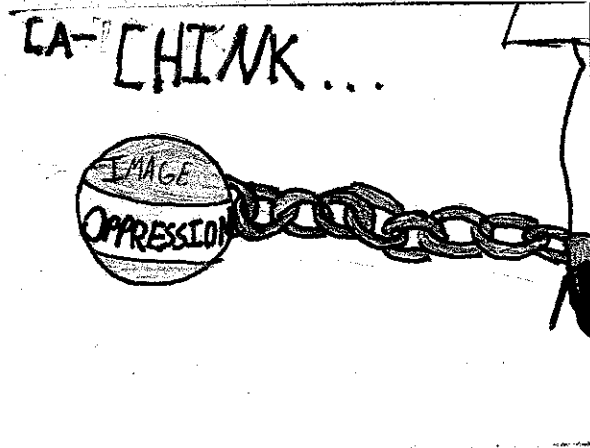
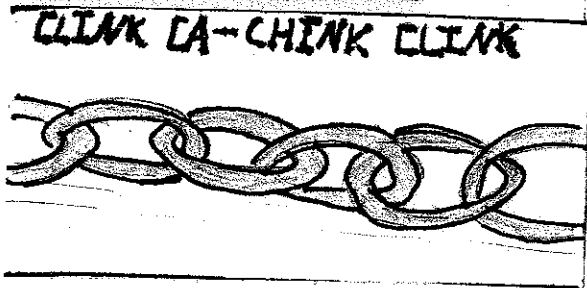


In this week's
episode:

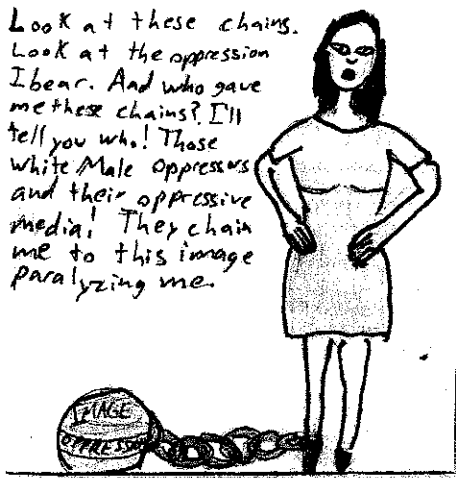
The multiplicities of
power and Body Politics*

* Adapted from Susan Bordo's "Feminism, Foucault, and the Politics of the Body."

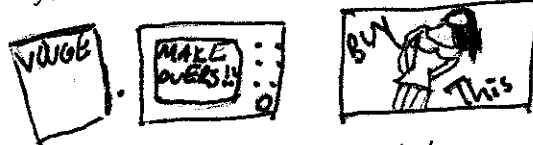
By Adrienne Shaw



Look at these chains.
Look at the oppression
I bear. And who gave
me these chains? I'll
tell you who! Those
white Male Oppressors
and their oppressive
media! They chain
me to this image
paralyzing me.

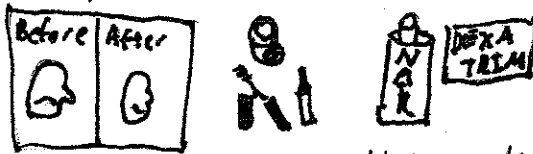


Magazines, television, advertisements of all sorts



telling me I need to lose more and show more

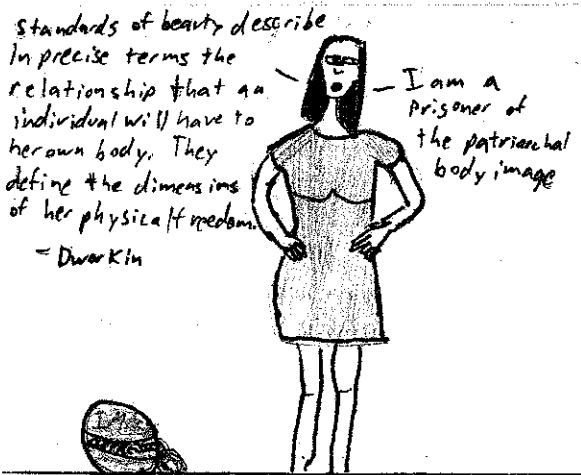
Surgery, Makeup, and all sorts of products



telling me how to lose and add things to be pretty.

Standards of beauty describe
in precise terms the
relationship that an
individual will have to
her own body. They
define the dimensions
of her physical freedom.

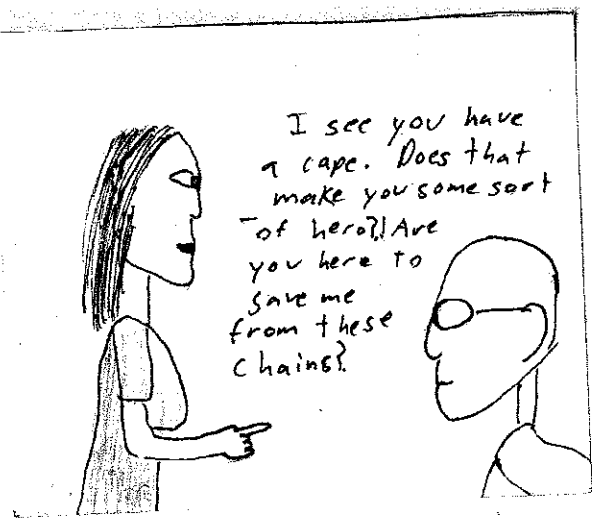
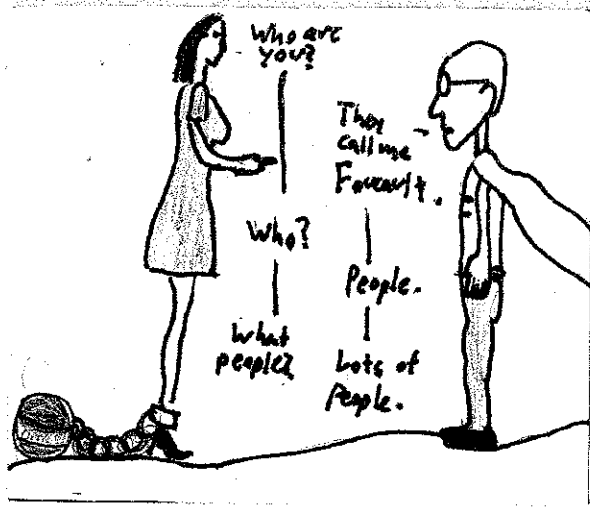
- Dworkin



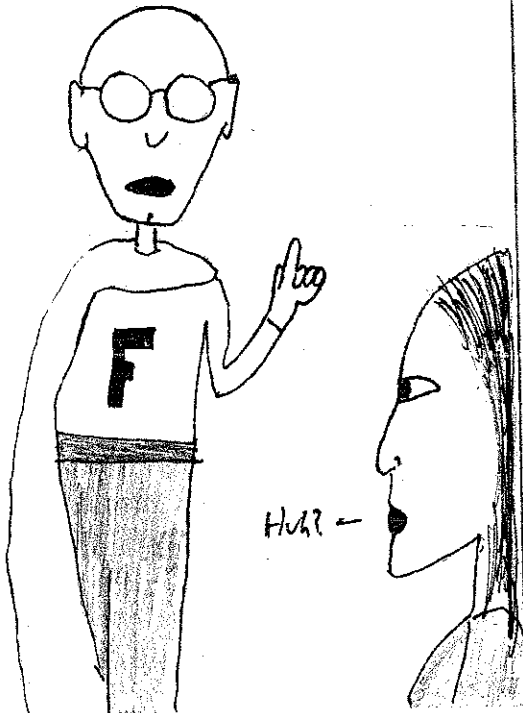
DAMN THE MAN!!



Hold -
it right
there!



No. Actually I am here to take you into custody for being in possession of structuralist concepts, use of an oppressor/oppressed model, and various other offenses involving repressive discourses.



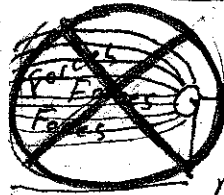
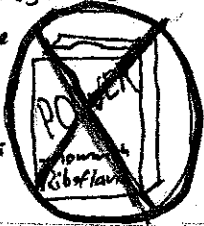
This "Man" that you speak of is no more than a illusion used to mask the inner workings of power. Modern power is non-authoritarian, non-conspiratorial, and indeed non-orchestrated, however it none the less produces and normalises bodies to serve prevailing relations of dominance.





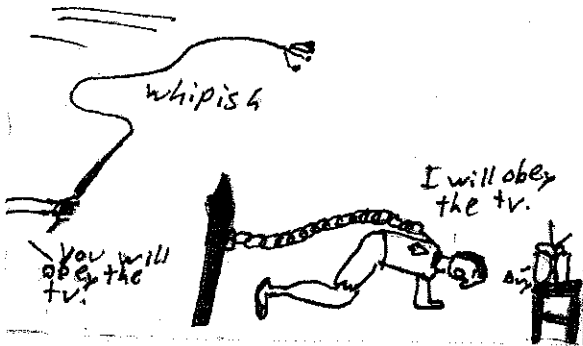
Not entirely. You are also in trouble for claiming to be at the mercy of a patriarchal media

You see you need to understand how modern power operates. First you must cease to imagine power as an object which can be possessed. Power is the result of networks of non-centralized forces.

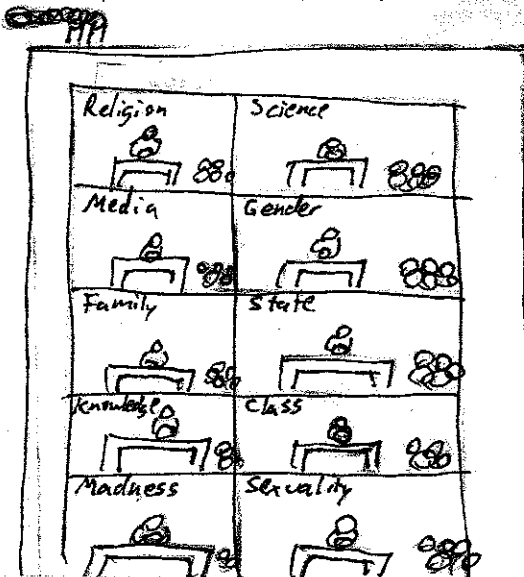


Secondly, these forces are not random. They are configured to assume particular historical forms. The dominance of these forms is achieved through multiple processes of different origin and scattered location regulating the most minute elements of the construction of time, space, desire embodiment.

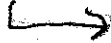
Thirdly, prevailing forms of selfhood and subjectivity are maintained not through physical restraint and coercion,



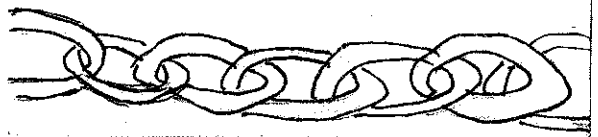
but through individual self-surveillance and self-correction to norms



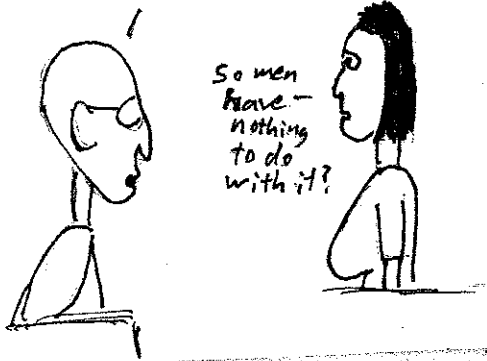
Each link in the chain you wear was forged separately. But when linked they create this sense of a power bearing down on you.



Power Chain

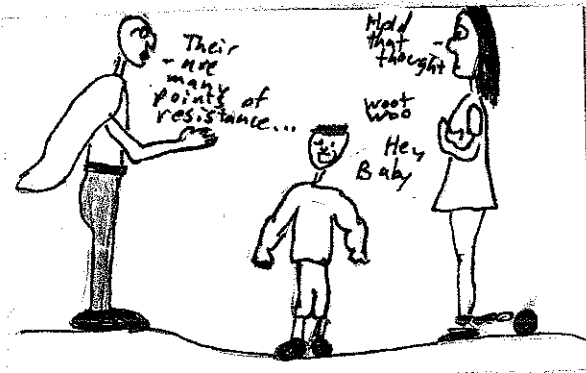
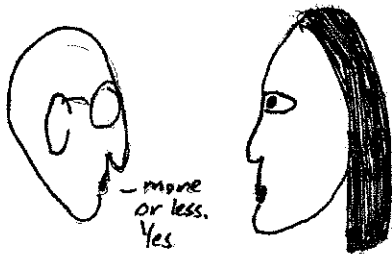


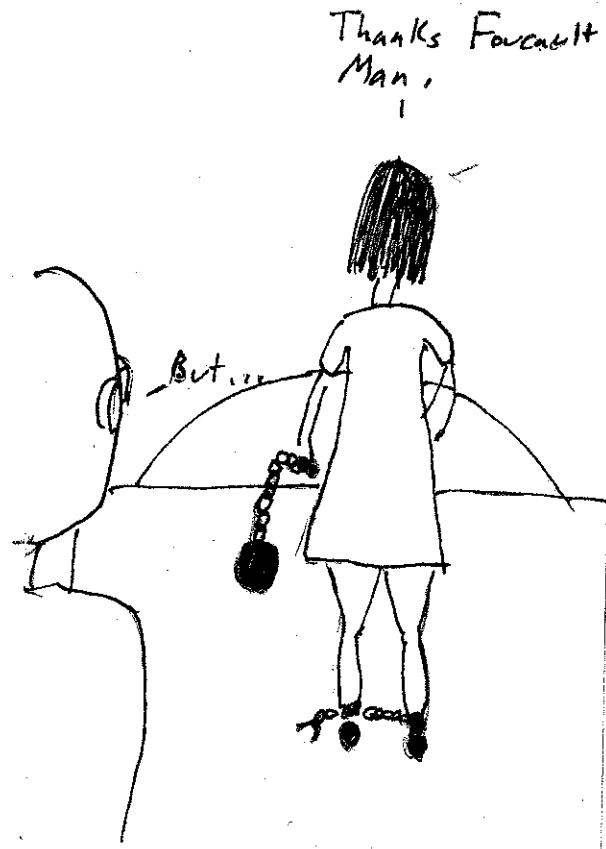
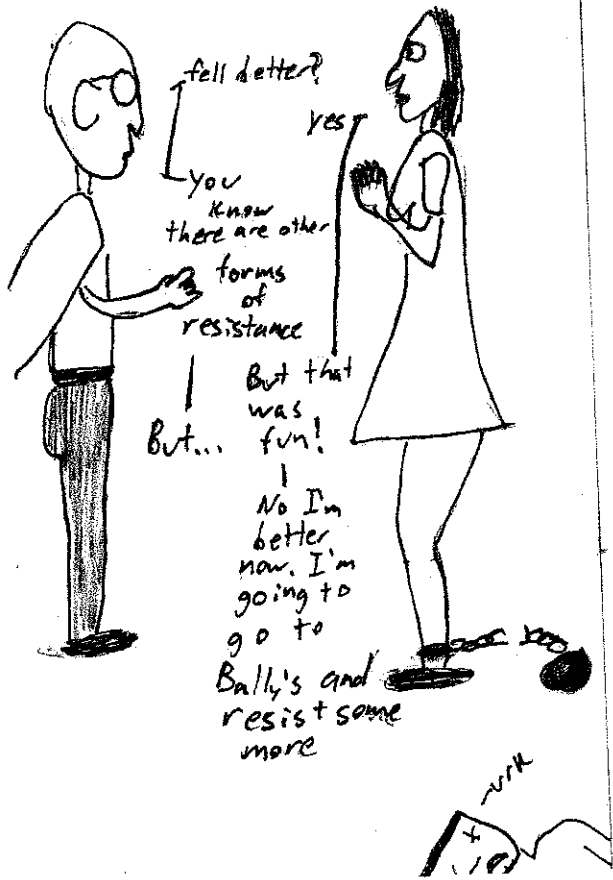
So you see, there is no "man" trying to hold you down. Rather it is an interplay of discourses and norms and relationships which make you feel compelled to conform to a particular image.



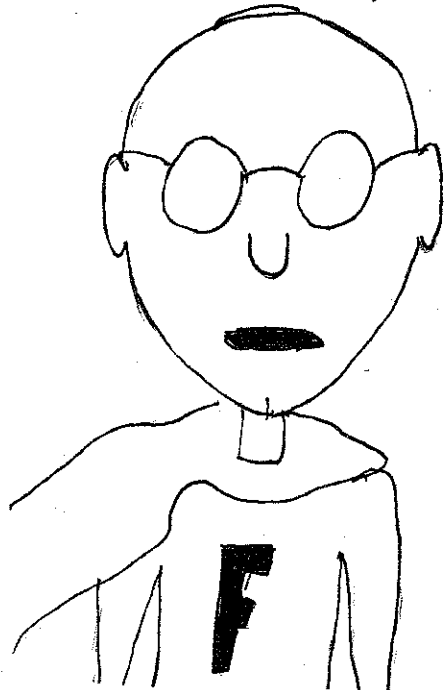
Well, while men cease to be 'the enemy' and their often helpless enmeshment in patriarchal culture can be acknowledged by a Foucauldian model, this does not mitigate the fact that they often may have a higher stake in maintaining institutions within which they have historically dominant positions. That is why they have often felt (and behaved) like 'the enemy' to women struggling to change these institutions.

OK, F-Man. So there is no conspiracy of men trying to make me feel bad about my body, but the men and women who continue to engage in a discourse which encourages a surveillance of women's bodies continually reinforce the effects of power on individual women?





Ah well, I guess my job is done here. Until next time kids. Remember Resistance is Everything!



Because power is EVERYWHERE!

