

Lesbian /Gay Health

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during the war, and the Congressional Record holds the following information. Without the women, most of the men would have worn their clothing till it rotted on their backs. Without the women, they would have eaten unwisely and would have been sick. Without the women, many of the wounded simply would have been left to die. However, women pulled through it by sheer tenacity, often with rifles in their hands, and surprisingly, many of them were excellent shots.

Naturally, thousands of women came out of the war much tougher than when they went in. Tough enough to break into the "male only" legislature in every state to demand that the new Emancipation Proclamation be obeyed. They required that the church laws of serfdom for wives be thrown out, and civil laws be passed to create a societal system. This system must ensure that no wife would ever be dragged into a war again, and that no wife would ever have to support a husband again. It took till 1874, but they won it.

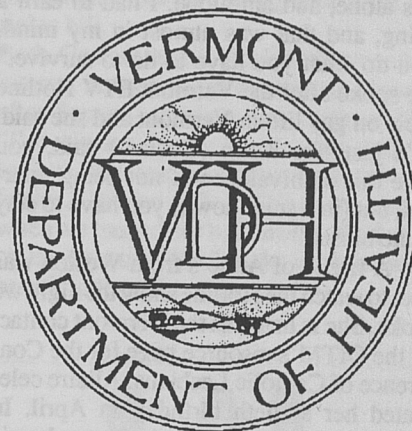
Contractual law had been perfected for more than a thousand years in order to make it workable for two parties, but the new system violated all national laws on agree-

ments. It was never intended to be workable, but it was the best that the women could get when they weren't allowed to sign legal documents. It was an experiment - and still is.

When the gay community presses for "legal" marriage, what they are pressing for is far from legal. It is required to meet every state's laws on male "sole support", till death do you part - which is illegal - but being a gold mine for lawyers is quite enough to keep it as "legal" marriage. Feminist lawyers have tried for years to crack that nut, but the membership is still shouting them down. Gays who want marriage should go to the laws on contracts and do it legally. Then they can chuckle at all the straight sad-sacks who go blundering on, wondering why their dreams crumble, and who snarl at gays for complicating the burlesque that passes for marriage. Let the lawyers feast on the straights, on the straight husbands who aren't sole supports, on the straight wives who can legally refuse to work, or who can work and legally withhold their earnings from the family. That's the legal burlesque that feeds lawyers.

Good luck,
Edgar de Santos

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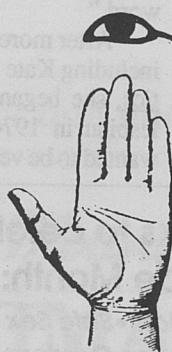
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