

*** ALL THE PHILO LADIES ***

**EFFRACTION English 1 : THE DECLARATION OF THE RIGHT OF WOMEN
(1791) d'Olympe de Gouges**

Woman, awake ! The tocsin of reason is sounding across the universe ; acknowledge your right. Nature's powerful empire is no longer hemmed in by prejudice, fanaticism, superstition, and lies. The torch of truth has dispersed all the clouds of folly and usurpation. Enslaved man has multiplied his strength and has needed yours to break his chains. But once free, he has become unjust to his companion.

Oh, women, women ! When will you cease to be blind ? What advantages has the Revolution brought you ? Steal greater contempt, still more overt disdain. In the centuries of corruption you ruled only over the weakness of men. Your empire has been destroyed ; what remains to you now ? A firm belief in the injustices of man. It is for you to reclaim your patrimony, founded on the wise decrees of nature ; what have you to fear from such a magnificent undertaking ? Are you afraid that our French legislators, correctors of that morality long entangled in political practices that are now outdated, will say to you too ; « Woman, what is there in common between us ? » « Everything », you must reply. Should they, in their weakness, persist in this non sequitur that contradicts their very principles, you must courageously counter these vain pretensions of superiority with the power of reason ; you must unit under the banner of philosophy, deploy all your energy of character and you will soon see this arrogant men not groveling at your feet in servile adoration, but proud to share with you the treasures of the Supreme Being. Whatever barriers are placed before you, it is in your power to overcome them ; all you need is the will.