

Uterus

by Ann Bogle

Menopause was considered to have occurred—if it was naturally timed—after an eccentric white suburban woman gynecologist had entered my uterus to remove a polyp. She did not quell my concern, related to my status as a diagnosed white mental case on Disability, that Jasmin with the Jamaican-sounding woman's name, a physician's assistant in the even further west suburbs, who exhibited a dirty look during a long-ago exam, dropping the speculum an unbelievable seven times, might have managed to insert an I.U.D. without my knowledge or permission, possibility only verifiable by x-ray or ultrasound, proofs not offered. My suspicion was delayed and unfounded, except that women on welfare not due to mental diagnosis had received Depo-Provera shots at the doctor's office unawares, as reported in the newspaper.

My fears ought to have been assuaged by the gynecologist, rather than opened up to grow. I mention that the gynecologist was eccentric, partly because I liked that about her, but also because she might have believed she didn't show it. She might have hoped to pass for normal. I mention her whiteness because as a liberal she might seek to privilege her unmet black colleague in the health field rather than her patient in her body. Pregnancy is covered as disease.

One's reproductivity seems essential to human life and rights. Ironically, it was in the same town where the P.A. had penetrated me where our group of girls had learned about sexual health at a teen clinic. The speculum fired from my loins and each time fell to the tile floor, as if the P.A. were intently “seeing fucking” as well as poking sneakily to sterilize me. Jah-B, the steel drum player I had met described in “Oh, baby,” and who had asked me to bear his baby, lived in a small artist enclave on nearby Christmas Lake.

My test scores and grades placed me in the top one hundred or so eleventh graders in the U.S. in 1979, my math aptitude slightly higher in a verbally-weighted test.

I choose not to relate all the real bad that passed in longer-ago abstinent Madison in this account of the maybe bad that happened in nearer-to-now inland Excelsior. When I give up the right to spare the city and its readers in my writing, it will go as forgotten time.

I describe mine as uterine-based hysteria or Sex Test. Misogyny is the rotten part of a fruit, trim it and spare the fruit or discard the fruit. Girls hot now for misogyny forget women's parts in it. Women would do well to lust after feminism as a valley in human rights, a fecund valley there, the assertive one amid anti-human -isms.

