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by Joshua Ledger

Socialism and Communism... Isn't it interesting that these have become 'unfashionable', both socially and historically, in Western civilisation?

They got a bad name... for good and bad reasons that are complex and, viewed through the lens of contemporary media cycles, including 'fake news'... understandable.

Similarly, **Feminism** has experienced a wave of serious backlashes, much of it from younger generations of women who see Feminism as dated, reactionary and out of touch with their lived lives.

But as a male Feminist, I uphold my right to support and speak for Feminism, be it through a male gaze with older eyes.

Everyone and everything has a history...



To understand the present, we can gain a lot from looking at our past:

Believe it or not, the recognition of International Women's Day (IWD) partly grew out of the Russian Revolution when in March 1917 Russian women gained suffrage and declared this day as a national holiday. It was mainly celebrated in socialist and communist countries until the one day of the year to *internationally celebrate women* was ratified by the United Nations in 1975.



History lesson over!

It's convenient...but risky... to bundle up contemporary social movements like Metoo, Feminism, Trade Unionism, LGBTIQ, Positive Action and Equal Gender Ratios, under a general banner. Nevertheless, we are now in a volatile moment in which interventionist/disruptive thinking has at last been recognised and for the most part, accepted.

What I mean is that such occurrences have always been operating, but dominant teachings have generally incorporated them and/or crushed them. In the rise and rise of IWD the cause and its effects are mutually and positively coercive in bringing awareness to all aspects of our lived lives. As a consequence, the social movements mentioned above are both the result of, and initiators of, positive change in societies.



I see and celebrate the recognition of a sparkling collective/community event like International Women's Day as being communally powerful and empowering, harking back to its social movement origins.

When one part of a culture progresses it brings along all parts of that culture with it, be they kicking and screaming right wing proponents or just ultra conservative establishment organisations.

We are seeing the benefits of old collective ideas in action through IWD!

One example that I'm aware of is that women of broad socio-economic and cultural identities are gathering together in cities and regions to do arts practice and projects on Friday 8 March.

They are absolutely representative of 51% of the population, and they are re-enacting ancient and modern feminine cultural practices of collective art practices which enliven social movements and the individual lives of women and their families and communities.

We are ultimately all here together and responsible for each other.

Let's celebrate IWD and the women in all the parts and roles in our lives!

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