

# **Transformation of Women's Health: The Fight Continues**

**Rachel Cahall**

# Menstrual Sponges and Women's Health

## MENSTRUAL SPONGE A NATURAL ALTERNATIVE TO TAMPONS

**NATURAL** — Mediterranean Silk Sponges are directly from the Mediterranean Sea — no additives! As an ecological alternative to the man-made, uncomfortable, deodorized tampons, silk sponges are soft, comfortable, free of chemicals and bleach, and less expensive than paper products! Your vagina has a delicate balance of germs and bacteria which is natural and healthy. Unless upset, this balance is maintained by your own body's defenses. Since there are no chemical additives, artificial fibers or perfumes, these natural sponges work with your body to help you take back control of your menses.

**ECONOMICAL** — Tampons are a constant monthly expense, yet one Mediterranean Silk Sponge can be expected to last from six months to a year.

**EASY TO USE** — When dampened before inserting, your sponge will be fluffy soft and will never pinch or poke you. Even women who have never been able to use tampons before can use sponges easily. Wash your hands before inserting or removing your sponge. Squeeze the sponge and examine it to make sure there are no pieces of coral attached to it. Now, boil your sponge for about 1 minute. This is the only time it will ever need to be boiled. From now on, merely rinse after each use and air dry. Just as you rely on rinsing and air drying to keep your toothbrush clean, air drying will work to keep your sponge clean. Upon using, wet it with warm water, squeeze it dry and push it gently but firmly into your vagina. If it is too bulky, remove it and cut it down to a more comfortable size. Your sponge is approximately as absorbent as a super tampon, so use that as a guide when rinsing it. The soft sponge may feel like your vaginal wall at first or it may be high up in your vagina. Sitting on the toilet and bearing down should bring it into reach. Removing it will become much easier with practice. Some women find it helpful to tie, sew, or loop a piece of dental floss around their sponge to aid in removing. If this is more comfortable for you, the string should be changed once a month.

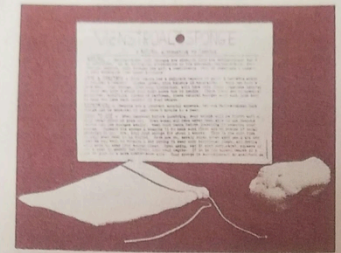
## MENSTRUAL SPONGE A NATURAL ALTERNATIVE TO TAMPONS

**NATURAL** — Mediterranean Silk Sponges are directly from the Mediterranean Sea — no additives! As an ecological alternative to the man-made, uncomfortable, deodorized tampons, silk sponges are soft, comfortable, free of chemicals and bleach, and less expensive than paper products! Your vagina has a delicate balance of germs and bacteria which is natural and healthy. Unless upset, this balance is maintained by your own body's defenses. Since there are no chemical additives, artificial fibers or perfumes, these natural sponges work with your body to help you take back control of your menses.

**ECONOMICAL** — Tampons are a constant monthly expense, yet one Mediterranean Silk Sponge can be expected to last from six months to a year.

**EASY TO USE** — When dampened before inserting, your sponge will be fluffy soft and will never pinch or poke you. Even women who have never been able to use tampons before can use sponges easily. Wash your hands before inserting or removing your sponge. Squeeze the sponge and examine it to make sure there are no pieces of coral attached to it. Now, boil your sponge for about 1 minute. This is the only time it will ever need to be boiled. From now on, merely rinse after each use and air dry. Just as you rely on rinsing and air drying to keep your toothbrush clean, air drying will work to keep your sponge clean. Upon using, wet it with warm water, squeeze it dry and push it gently but firmly into your vagina. If it is too bulky, remove it and cut it down to a more comfortable size. Your sponge is approximately as absorbent as a super tampon, so use that as a guide when rinsing it. The soft sponge may feel like your vaginal wall at first or it may be high up in your vagina. Sitting on the toilet and bearing down should bring it into reach. Removing it will become much easier with practice. Some women find it helpful to tie, sew, or loop a piece of dental floss around their sponge to aid in removing. If this is more comfortable for you, the string should be changed once a month.

## MENSTRUAL SPONGES



Nature's alternative to man-made tampons!

- **NATURAL** - free of chemicals and deodorants.
- **COMFORTABLE** - soft, conforms to body. No plastic applicator to ulcerate vaginal walls.
- **ECOLOGICAL** - no waste product to dispose, saves trees, and sponges are harvested to ensure regrowth.
- **ECONOMICAL** - reusable, lasting from 6 months to 1 year!
- **EDUCATIONAL** - provides learning experience regarding one's body and, most importantly, allows you to participate in, and take charge of, your own menses!

Each package contains:  
1 quality silk sponge  
1 linen drying/storage bag  
1 information/instruction card  
\$3.00 per package

# Educating Women to Protect Their Sexual Health



**ChemShield**  
**RIOT CONTROL AGENT**

Professional Model Non-Lethal Weapon  
 Repels Instantly! and Stains Chemically!

This price includes the custom-crafted  
 top-grain Leather Holster with Belt Clip  
 and Heavy-Duty Magnet.

Professional-size aerosol spray may be  
 used up to 100 times!

Professional Model Price of aerosol alone  
 Only \$19.95 \$9.95 (This Model is excellent for the home - by the  
 stand or front/back doors.)

A Non-Lethal Self Protection Device By  
**WEAPONS CORPORATION OF AMERICA**

10/5/81 **County sheriff deputies to carry gas canisters**

Butler County sheriff's deputies will use incapacitating gas as a weapon in fighting crime.

Sheriff Robert R. Walton today announced officers will carry canisters of gas on gun belts along with other police equipment they carry.

Sheriff Walton predicted use of the gas will prevent violent confrontations from getting out of hand.

He said the use of the chemical is effective and "produces immediate effects even in low concentrations. The effects last for the duration of up to 20 minutes and during this time the affected individual is incapable of effective concerted action."

San Duley, administrative assistant to the sheriff, said the gas is non-lethal and in training the department stresses that it is a potent gas.

He said the gas, identified as CS, is actually ortho-chlorobenzmalononitrile, and has been used by the U.S. Army since 1976 and extensively tested.

Duley said the gas is incapacitating and that no deaths have been connected with its use.

He added Hamilton and Cincinnati police officers already use the gas canisters containing CS.

**CHEM-Shield CHEMCODE**  
 "Self Defense Products" "Burglary Deterrent"

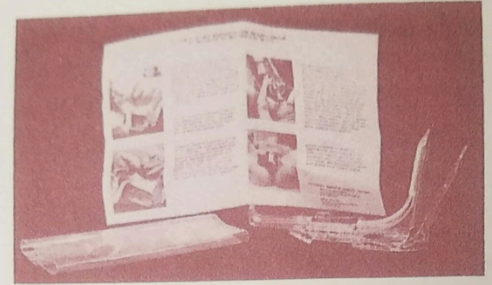
**WEAPONS CORPORATION OF AMERICA**  
 NINA AND DICK BISHOP  
 AUTHORIZED MASTER DISTRIBUTOR  
 (305) 276-3400

**BISHOP ENTERPRISES**  
 P.O. BOX 425  
 DELRAY BEACH, FL. 33444

# Women Educating Themselves



## PLASTIC SPECULUM FOR SELF-EXAMS



Discover the joy of seeing your own cervix and the adventure of learning more about your body!

Each package contains:

- 1 plastic speculum
- 1 zip-lock storage bag
- Written and pictorial instructions by the Federation of Feminist Women's Health Centers

\$3.00 per package

For information concerning in-depth preventive health care, contact the Federation (address included with instructions). Their book, *How to Stay Out of the Gynecologist's Office*, is extremely thorough and informative!

# What the Scanning Actually Means

- We have to look through the work of the people before us in order to continue to move forward with our own fight
- The fight is never over, there is always more work to be done
- Let's stop trying to "Make America Great Again" and instead, keep making it great!
- Allows us to see the work already done and apply it to the work we are currently doing

## What The Scanning Actually Means

Over the course of this semester, I have been working to digitalize a couple of years of Joanne McQueen's work, 1979-1981 in particular. In addition to getting to know Joanne personally and listening to her stories about the ERA and countless of other events, I have gotten to see the work she accomplished in the name of Feminism. As a current day feminist, it is important to see and recognize the fight that the people before us fought. These fights are not finished, no matter what we or they have accomplished. The current feminist generation *has* to look at the past in order to succeed in the future. I don't mean to say that we must live in the past, but instead we have to learn from the accomplishments of our predecessors in order to strive for our own fight and our own accomplishments. These women and men paved the way for us, and we need to trust them to show us the ropes for a world they helped mold. The scrapbooks that Joanne has provided us with tells me one thing: let's not "Make America Great Again", let's "*Keep Making America Great*". We can do this by fighting in similar ways that Joanne's generation have fought. We must learn from their work and advance it to make our own mark on this world. We have to keep fighting for women's right to choose what they can or can't do their own bodies. We have to fight to keep issues such as abortion out of politics, as it is not a political issue. Abortion is between a doctor and the family and has *no* business being in the minds of our politicians, especially when those politicians have shown no formal education on the issue. Abortion is not a public procedure and it deserves to be treated as such. It is also no a choice women make lightly, so we need to stop feeding a discourse that punishes women for making that decision. The scanning matters because it allows us to see the work already done and apply it to the work we are currently doing. If you ever have the chance to learn through the work of another feminist, a role model, I would greatly encourage it.

# Applying it to Today

- Anonymity created variables: allowing people to express their opinion without fear of being judged and to blindly attack a subject (abortion)
- People from different backgrounds,
- All problems outlined in the survey and resulting answers went back to one issue: sex education classrooms
- When a society fails to fully educate an individual on their sexual health and sexual identities, we are setting up citizens who are ignorant and afraid of their own sexual parts and health.

1. Where are you from? (State, City, Town)
2. What was your sex education like in high school? What kind of program was it? Did you have to use outside resources to complete or add to that education? What age were you when you received it?
3. Can you compare the education you had over your own sexual health in high school to what you have learned about sex in college? Was the education you received effective?
4. How much have you experienced the furthering of your personal sex education outside of what you had in grade school?
5. Have you been keeping up with women's sexual health in the election? (Talks about abortion rights, control over women's sexual health)
6. Do you feel secure in your own sexual health? Do you feel like you can protect your sexual health? What methods do you use to protect your sexual health?
7. If sex education classrooms were to be reformed, how would you like them to be changed?
8. Have you ever gone to a Planned Parenthood clinic? If so, what was your experience? If not, what are your perceptions of Planned Parenthood?
9. If you are comfortable talking about it, what are your menstrual cycles like? What products do you use? Are you embarrassed of them? Do you feel the side effects of menstrual care are worth it? If you are male identifying, how do you perceive periods and what is your knowledge on them?
10. Have you been to the gynecologist before? What was your first experience like? How are they now? Male identifying people can talk about your sexual health experience at your doctor's office.

# Applying it to the Election

- Looking through the Fantastic Feminists' work and through the work of NOW should remind people that the work women and men have to do to achieve equal rights is not finished. There is always more work to be done, regardless of what we achieve.
- Women's sexual rights, especially the ones Planned Parenthood fights hard to protect, are contested in every election and is a topic of controversy.
- We have to fight to stop the defunding of Planned Parenthood because the organization does so much more than meets the eye
- We have one candidate that wishing to take away women's rights while the other seeking to protect them. One wishes to punish women for their right to choose while the other fights to protect that very right
- We have the choice to either lose years of feminist progress or to preserve the work already done and continue the fight happening today