

Women's Reflections on Marital Relations under Socialism

V. born 1937, retired nurse, currently working as an artist, widowed, two children, interviewed in Braşov, Romania, summer, 2003.

When a colleague became an adult, then the man began to be dominant. Even if both partners had a job, he is dominant, because that's what he heard in his family, and that's what he saw around him and this type of education is contagious. When I married there was a difference of 12 years, I was 20, he 32.... I had just come from adolescence. I went into marriage straight from boarding school not knowing how to defend my interests. When I realized that a woman could defend herself and when I realized the slogans that were used—equality between women and men—I began to earn my rights, freedom of thought, of behavior, to rest, to take part in raising my child, not to be an obedient slave. I wouldn't take it. Especially when I saw the movie Spartacus.... I decided to leave, because I realized I was not put on this earth to be a slave. After the divorce I decided to go to college, I wanted to change my life. I thought, if I finish university I will have more power to change my life: to change my job and also to change my destiny.

L. born 1946, currently retired, married, two children, interviewed in Braşov, Romania, summer, 2003.

No, No... he didn't help me in the sense that he did housework.... I can't even describe how clumsy he was, it was unbelievable. But he had other attributes, he could get a hold of food that you couldn't find, we never went without meat, coffee, or anything, he succeeded in finding it. He was the type who managed to make circles of friends, and one of them was a guy at a restaurant. He had many acquaintances in the area and there he bought [food] at cost from the restaurant.

Source: Anonymous Interviewees, interview by Jill Massino, oral histories, Brasov, Romania (Summer, 2003), tape, Indiana University Institute for the Study of History and Memory.