

LE BON SENS DES FRANÇAIS.  
Common Sense of the French.<sup>1</sup>

Do you want to destroy pride, or do you want to nurture it

Do you want to encourage men to respect natural law, or to violate it?

Do you want to establish love and harmony within families, or allow fear and mistrust to reign?

Do you want to develop good behaviour or do you want to accommodate corruption?

Do you want, in a word, to do good or to propagate harm; create happiness or ensure that the misery of the present generation endures?

If you want to do good then make haste. Before you became our representatives the Nation invoked a law. It had been articulated; the first contract, the most important of contracts that binds the human race had to be regulated according to the Constitution's plan.

It takes only a single explanatory decree to quash cupidity, selfishness and arrogance and to implant equality, liberty, peaceful security and equity in our sanctuaries.

Oh Legislators, you are being led astray! You are being encouraged to delay that which would be a crime to defer, for justice and humanity are violated every day.

Do not listen to the objections of the church or those of jurisprudence.

The people have abandoned their prejudices; they are enlightened by the Constitution and by philosophy. They beg for a decree, a single decree that will reduce to dust the shameful vestiges of our ancient customs and halt the lawyers, preventing them from blocking the majestic simplicity of the constitutional act with barbarous outdated laws; a decree that makes it clear that equality exists between husbands and wives just as it does between all French individuals; that ensures the security of everyone's property; that allows them to separate under the guidance of family tribunals and that will guarantee to arbitrate according to the lights of reason, and only reason, and to take care of the interests of children and the division of assets.

Persuade the tribunals, as soon as possible, to understand what the people understand. Finally denounce the anathema of all feudalism, of all usurpation of property, and of all types of servitude; then a race of proud and totally invincible people soon will arise from the bosom of liberty and equality.

By a Woman Citizen.

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<sup>1</sup> This poster, dating from February 1792, expresses de Gouges's belief in divorce as a source of equality within marriage by creating a fair system of separation, protecting the property of the individual partners and securing the rights of their children for a safe future through the intermediary of family tribunals.