husband at all. That knowledge didn't develop, however, until a green parakeet, a brown dog and four bath towels brought to the surface what I had not been able to fathom before; that, like charity, liberation begins at home.

Two years ago we gave one of our sons a parakeet and a bird cage. He placed the bird in his room, studied a pamphlet about parakeet care, and regularly fed and watered the bird. After several months he lost interest in Pete the Parakeet. Then I began to hear his mother say, "Son, the bird needs water," and "Your room is filthy—feathers are all over the floor—vacuum!"

Time passed, I forgot about the bird until I heard her say, "The newspaper in Pete's cage stinks. I'm not going to change it this time. Pete's your bird, not mine!"

I learned that for more than a year she had been cleaning up Pete's mess while I had remained indifferent to the problem. I asked myself several questions: Why did my son expect his mother to clean up after Pete? Why didn't I insist he take care of Pete? Why didn't I think of doing it myself? Why didn't I do it?

As I sought answers, one fact became clear. Our son and I had a "Let-Mom-do-it" attitude. We presupposed that "cleaning-up-after-Pete" was her duty. Without asking her to do it, we had simply unloaded that distasteful task on her. That startled me. I allowed—even unquestioningly expected!—her to accept the role of "bird-dropping-cleaner-upper." That was strange behavior for a "liberated" husband who spoke out for women's rights.

I began to think of other household chores I and the rest of the family assumed were her duties:

—Shopping for groceries and putting them away. (We eat the food, don't we?)
—Cooking meals and washing greasy pots and pans and dishes. (We eat from the dishes, don't we?)
—Mopping and waxing the floors. (We dirty them, don't we?)
—Scrubbing the toilet bowl and tub. (We use them, don't we?)

The parakeet episode forced me to admit that I believed these chores to be "her" work—a chauvinist attitude, indeed!

While I was trying to sort out my feelings, the dog caught my attention. We've had Rocky—part Dachshund, part bulldog and part something else—for five years. He belongs to the family, but belongs to no one in particular when he needs to be walked. Almost nightly I heard my wife say, "All right, who's going to walk Rocky?"

One night after we were in bed, Rocky came into our room, placed his white paws on the bed, looked at my wife with his big brown eyes and whined. He was ready to go out. But why had he come to her and not to me? The answer was clear. Like "cleaning up after the bird," "walking the dog" had become her responsibility, too, and somewhere along the line Rocky had discovered that.