

Q & A

Number 1 – Why?

Q: Why do women need a separate night to work on bikes? Don't women already receive equal treatment because of suffrage, civil rights, etc?

A: I founded the shop that I work at over 2 years ago, and I still have people (both men AND women) double check something I have told them with a male mechanic, or ask if they can talk to a mechanic when they are already talking to me. I have also had men interrupt me while I am explaining something, hit on me or unload all of their emotional problems on me while we are trying to fix their bike, or take a tool out of my hand. These things have never happened to me at Women's Night!

Number 2 - Segregation

Q: Isn't separating a group of people based on race, gender, class, etc. called segregation, which is a bad thing?

A: Think of society like a big ladder, with the people who control resources, labor, money, politics, etc. (people with power) at the top and the people with no power at the bottom. People with some power are in the middle. Men are higher up on this ladder than women (see government and income as examples in first world societies, women's health in third world societies). When a group that is higher on the ladder tells a group that is lower on the ladder to go away, that is called segregation. When a group that is lower on the ladder tells a group above them to go away, that is called "organizing." When and ONLY when a group has the initiative to organize can they gain power by helping each other.

Number 3 – Oppression for Everyone!

Q: What about a night for gay men, or people of color, or children? Aren't there other oppressed groups besides women?

A: Good idea! In fact, any group that wants to run a program is more than welcome to do so in our shop, as long as it is consistent with our mission statement and principles of equality, and one of our staff members is willing and able to sponsor it.

Number 4 – The Gender Bender

Q: What if someone is transgendered and male bodied, or male bodied but otherwise identifies as female, or identifies as female only some of the time, or is female-bodied but identifies as male, etc etc etc?

A: We simply call our program "Women's Night" in order to avoid isolating any people who may not fit a traditional definition of the word "woman" but as long as someone relates to the experience of being a woman on a daily basis and is being genuine, they are welcome to use our shop during women's night.

Number 5 – Just One Person

Q: I am a man. Can I just come by and fill up my tires really fast?

A: I frequently have men ask me if they can "just" come change their tube or put air in their tires during women's shop hours. They get offended when I say no or think that I

should do them a favor. Let me explain it this way: when someone comes to women's night, they are not expecting men to be there. Even if you are just changing your tube, you are using the shop and anyone who comes in will see you using the shop. And no, you are not the only person who asked me if you could be the exception that day!

Number 6 – The Myth of the Person Who Knows Everything

Q:

But Who Really Does That?!? (A List of Shop with Women's Programs)

Community Cycling Center, Portland OR
Velocipede Bike Project, Baltimore MD
The Recyclery, Evanston IL (Chicago)
The Bike Church, Santa Cruz CA
Durham Bike Co-op, Durham, NC
The Good Life Community Bicycle Shop,
Calgary; Alberta, Canada
The Bicycle Kitchen, LA
Community Bicycle Network, Toronto,
Canada
Bike Pirates, Toronto Canada
Philadelphia's Bike Church Coop
(at Neighborhood Bike Works)
Salt Lake City Bicycle Collective,
Salt Lake City UT
Free Ride, Pittsburgh
Off the Chain, Anchorage, AK
1304 Bikes, Raleigh, NC
BICAS, Tucson, AZ
Fargo-Moorhead Community Bicycle
Workshop, Fargo, ND

Community Cycling Center, Portland OR
Women's Basic Maintenance
Women's Urban Cycling Class
communitycyclingcenter.org, Shop: 503-287-8786

Velocipede Bike Project, Baltimore MD
Women/Transgender Night
<http://velocipedebikeproject.org>

The Recyclery, Evanston IL (Chicago)
Women and Trans Night (Open Shop)
<http://therecyclery.org>, info@therecyclery.org

The Bike Church, Santa Cruz CA
Women's and transgendered day (safe space shop time)

thebikechurch@gmail.com

Durham Bike Co-op, Durham, NC

Women's Shop

<http://www.durhambikecoop.org/>, durhambikecoop@gmail.com

The Good Life Community Bicycle Shop, Calgary; Alberta
Canada

Women's Wednesdays, Women & Trans Workshops, etc.
goodlifebikes.ca

The Bicycle Kitchen, LA

Bicycle Bitchen

www.bicyclekitchen.com

Community Bicycle Network, Toronto Canada

Wenches with Wrenches

www.communitybicyclenetwork.org/wenches

Bike Pirates, Toronto Canada

Women & Trans only day

(www.bikepirates.com)

Philadelphia's Bike Church Coop (at Neighborhood Bike
Works)

Women and Trans Night

Girls Only Class (as part of a youth program)

Wednesdays 6:30-9:00

<http://www.neighborhoodbikeworks.org>, Office: (215) 386-
0316

Salt Lake City Bicycle Collective, Salt Lake City UT

Women's Shop Night

www.slcbikecollective.org

krista@slcbikecollective.org

Recipe for a Women's Program

Ingredients

- One or more women who is already a mechanic*
- One or more women who want to learn how to fix something on a bike*
- One space with a full toolset (bike shop)

Instructions

Mix the ingredients in a bike shop for approximately 1 – 6
hours

Enjoy the results!

* If you do not have these ingredients, try reaching out to the community at large**. Men cannot be used as a substitute for this recipe to work! Everyone (including women) needs a mode of transportation, and chances are there is at least one woman in your town or city that wants to learn about her bike. Try putting up fliers at outdoor supply stores, commercial bike shops, women's shelters, schools, libraries and any other community gathering place you can think of.

** I have used 2 women who want to learn how to fix something on a bike as a substitute if I have no current female mechanics. This is a fine substitute, especially if you have some bikes that you can take apart without having to put back together, and at least one bike mechanics book. I like the one called "Chainbreaker."