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Feminism Has Become A Hot Topic

The liberals have unjustly blamed Sarah Palin for many things, but there's one thing for which she is probably responsible: making feminism the hot topic that it has become today. Every couple of years *Time* and *Newsweek* ask "Is Feminism Dead?", but all of a sudden feminism is being discussed and debated in the MSM.

Feminists have been weighing in to dictate their definition of feminism. Modern feminist Jessica Valenti defined it authoritatively in the *Washington Post*: "Feminism is a structural analysis of a world that oppresses women, an ideology based on the notion that patriarchy exists and that it needs to end."

Picturing women as the victims of mean men is the engine of feminism. The feminists' legislative agenda, from unilateral divorce in the 1960s, to the Equal Rights Amendment in the 1970s, to taxpayer-financed daycare in the 1980s, to the Violence Against Women Act in the 1990s, to the Paycheck Fairness Act in the 2000s, is always wrapped in whines about alleged discrimination.

Feminist dogma decrees that women can never be successful under our oppressive patriarchy. Feminists complain that Hillary Clinton was denied the Democratic presidential nomination in 2008 because of (in Gloria Steinem's words) "profound sexism," and feminists never honor genuinely successful women such as Margaret Thatcher or Condoleezza Rice.

The most scholarly book written about the feminist movement by a non-feminist is *Domestic Tranquility* by Carolyn Graglia. She read all those tiresome books and articles by the feminist leaders, Betty Friedan, Germaine Greer, Kate Millett, Gloria Steinem, and Simone de Beauvoir, and concluded that the principal goal of feminism from the getgo has been "the status degradation of the housewife's role."

Mrs. Graglia documented the fact that all branches of feminism are united in the conviction that a woman can find identity and fulfillment only by a career in the workforce. Gloria Steinem said "you become a semi-nonperson when you get married," while Simone de Beauvoir and Betty Friedan labeled the housewife a "parasite."

Acquiescence in devaluing the role of fulltime homemaker

has become part of our culture, taught in women's studies courses, and endlessly reiterated on the media. Conventional wisdom says that modern women should all be in the workforce because just being a homemaker is a wasted life.

Another contemporary feminist, professor and author Linda Hirshman, set forth a popular definition in the *Daily Beast*. She wrote that "support for abortion rights and ObamaCare were litmus tests for true feminism."

That shows how out of touch the feminists are. The Republican victories in the 2010 elections, which demonstrated American opposition to ObamaCare, included many new non-feminist female House members, a Senator and four Governors. Nearly all newly elected Republicans are anti-abortion.

The feminists don't know what to say about Sarah Palin but they can't resist talking about her. They can't deal with the facts that she has a successful career, a cool husband and lots of kids; and it's salt in the feminists' wounds that she's pretty, even while wearing glasses.

It's clear that feminists never wanted gender equality; they want power for the female left, which is why they use the word empowerment so repetitively. The worldview of the women you see on television and in college classrooms is fueled by feminist dogma about men, sex, work, marriage, motherhood, and politics.

The female left got Barack Obama to make his first acts as President to overturn the anti-abortion Executive Order known as the Mexico City policy, to sign the Lilly Ledbetter Law to facilitate lawsuits against decades-old alleged employment discrimination, and to give women the majority of jobs created by the Stimulus.

By November 2009, the feminists were ready to gloat and to reproach Americans for relying on "an outdated model of the American family." They gave fulsome publicity to "The Shriver Report: A Woman's Nation Changes Everything," published by the leftwing think tank, Center for American Progress.

The 400-page Shriver Report boasted that we are now living in a "woman's world," and "Emergent economic power gives women a new seat at the table, at the head of the table." The female left argues for women to be independent of men,

self-supporting, sexually uninhibited, and liberated from the obligations of marriage and motherhood.

However, the result is that women are chronically dissatisfied. The National Bureau of Economic Research reports, "As women have gained more freedom, more education, and more power, they have become less happy."

It's time that young women have a handbook that sets forth the real goals and agenda of the feminists plus a non-feminist roadmap to a happy life. My co-author, Suzanne Venker, and I have provided this in our new book, *The Flipside of Feminism: What Conservative Women Know and Men Can't Say*. (WND Books)

The Fraud of the Century

by Suzanne Venker

Feminism is back in vogue. Or at least it's back in the headlines. Ever since Sarah Palin's rise to fame, the meaning of feminism — or what it means to be female and powerful — has been debated in the blogosphere and newspapers throughout the country.

In November 2010, the *Wall Street Journal* published two op-eds by feminists Erica Jong and daughter Molly Jong-Fast, and soon afterward described a new book by feminist Stephanie Coontz, titled *A Strange Stirring: The Feminist Mystique and American Women at the Dawn of the 1960s*. Fortunately, WSJ contributor Melanie Kirkpatrick admitted in her review that Coontz offers "an unpersuasive vision of a utopian feminist future."

This is an apt observation. A feminist future is precisely what American women don't need, particularly in light of a new study by Dr. Catherine Hakim, a sociologist at the London School of Economics. In *Feminist Myths and Magic Medicine*, Hakim highlights a dozen feminist myths that have persisted for decades. "New feminist myths are constantly being created, seeking to portray women as universal victims."

To support her claim, Hakim analyzes myths that have "no solid basis in social science research — yet are popular, widely believed, and constantly reiterated in the media." Indeed, op-eds like those by Ms. Jong and her daughter are routinely published. And books like *A Strange Stirring* — which lament the same tired notion that women are second-class citizens in need of special attention and support — are a dime a dozen.

Then there are the lesser-known publications, such as Maria Shriver's 2009 document "The Shriver Report: A Woman's Nation Changes Everything." This report claims government policies and laws "continue to rely on an outdated model of the American family" and must be restructured to accommodate women, who now make up half the American workforce.

To drive home the point that change is necessary, "The Shriver Report" claims: "Mothers are the primary breadwinner or co-breadwinner in two-thirds of American families. Three-quarters of Americans view this as a positive development for society."

This is a good example of the kind of myths to which Dr. Catherine Hakim refers. It just isn't true that most Americans view dual-income families as a good thing for society. According to the nonpartisan polling agency Public Agenda, 70% of parents with children under age five agree that "having a parent at home is best," and a full 72% of parents — including the majority of low-income parents! — believe parents, not the government, are responsible for their children's care.

Yet the myths persist, and Dr. Hakim debunks them one by one: 1) Equal opportunities policies have failed, 2) European gender equality policies are effective, 3) Occupational segregation is noxious, 4) Scandinavian policies deliver gender equality, 5) Social and economic development promotes gender equality, 6) Higher female employment promotes gender equality, 7) Women's access to higher education changes everything, 8) Men and women do not differ in careerist attitudes, lifestyles and goals, 9) Women prefer to earn their own living and hate financial dependence on men, 10) Family-friendly policies are essential to break the glass ceiling, 11) Family-friendly policies make companies profitable, and 12) Women have a different, cooperative, managerial style.

As an example, consider myth No. 12. In *More* magazine (October 2010), Nancy Pelosi mocks men as being incapable of consensus building and claim it takes a woman's unique managerial style to get things done.

Or consider myth No. 8. In December, *Facebook* COO Sheryl Sandberg spoke to a large group of women about why she thinks there are so few women at the top. Her conclusion is not that women and men are different with respect to life goals but that discrimination persists as long as women refuse to act like men and be more demanding.

Feminist myths are embedded in our culture to such a degree that people don't even recognize them as such. Because of this, Americans of all stripes — men, women, liberals, conservatives — continue to believe feminism is, or once was, a good thing. They think today's women owe their older feminist sisters a debt of gratitude and are thus reluctant to eschew feminism.

Meanwhile, the truth lies buried: Feminism has never been about equal rights for women. It's about power for the female left. That's what makes feminism the fraud of the century.

Suzanne Venker is co-author with Phyllis Schlafly of the forthcoming book The Flipside of Feminism: What Conservative Women Know — and Men Can't Say (WND Books). Her website is www.suzannevenker.com.

VAWA: A Good Target for Spending Cuts

While the U.S. House is trying to figure out how to cut wasteful and/or extravagant federal spending, Members should be mindful of Reagan's advice to begin by cutting programs that are harmful. One that fits this definition is the billion-dollar-a-year Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), now up for re-authorization.

January 28th marks the 18th anniversary of an event that precipitated passage of VAWA in 1994. It's known as the Super Bowl Hoax, the assertion made in 1993 in Pasadena, California, with fulsome media coverage, that more women are victims of domestic violence on Super Bowl Sunday than any other day of the year.

That radical feminist fairy tale lacked even a shred of truth. It was designed to feed the feminist anti-male and anti-masculine prejudices that men are naturally batterers, women are naturally victims, sports fans are prone to aggression and macho posturing, and football is especially guilty.

Reinforcing this non-news-story was an appearance on Good Morning America by Lenore Walker to regurgitate her then 14-year-old book called *The Battered Woman*. It is credited with originating what is known as the "battered woman syndrome," which spread the propaganda that batterers are always men, the battered are always women, and the definition of domestic violence includes acts and words that are not violent.

Feminist political correctness demands that we accept these gender-specific notions while at the same time denying any other innate male-female differences. Larry Summers was driven out of the Harvard University presidency for daring to suggest that we might research possible gender differences between men and women in math and science.

NBC joined the propaganda push by airing a public service announcement before the 1993 super bowl to remind men that domestic violence is a crime. The original feminist news release, plus all its "legs" (a favorite media word), was later conclusively proved false by the scholar Christina Hoff Sommers.

Of course, real domestic violence exists, and is a crime, and should be punished. However, this issue raises constitutional problems that domestic violence has come to mean whatever a woman alleges, with or without evidence, and men often lose their presumption of innocence and right to confront their accusers.

The fiscal problem is that a billion dollars a year are streaming into the hands of leftwing feminists to pursue their agenda, which does not include preserving or restoring marriage. Taxpayers' funds are used to lobby for feminist legislation, to train law enforcement and judicial personnel in feminist ideology and in the aggressive enforcement of feminist laws, and to break up families instead of giving them pro-family and anti-substance-abuse counseling.

The VAWA appropriation is only the start of its high cost to taxpayers and society. When marriages are broken by false allegations of domestic violence, U.S. taxpayers fork up an estimated \$20 billion a year to support the resulting single-parent, welfare-dependent families.

The total annual taxpayer costs for federal poverty programs arising from family fragmentation and fatherlessness are at least \$100 billion. We should establish rigorous accountability for how the taxpayers' money is spent for domestic violence and evaluate the results of the spending.

An organization called SAVE (Stop Abusive and Violent Environments) has identified VAWA's major shortcomings. SAVE also offers some less-costly solutions for domestic problems.

Other proposals include requiring proof of physical violence or credible evidence of imminent violence, and removing funds from persons who are "gaming" the system so funds can be directed to enhance services for true victims. Taxpayers should not have to fund special-interest feminist lobbying, support for enforcement of counterproductive feminist legislation, or training and public awareness programs until they have been reviewed and shown to be accurate and truthful.

One example of VAWA funding doing actual harm is the lobbying to enact state laws requiring mandatory arrest and training the criminal justice system to pursue aggressive enforcement. A Harvard University study of mandatory-arrest laws in 15 states found that they increased partner homicides by 57 percent.

In the interest of truth, SAVE has set up a Training, Education, and Public Awareness (TEPA) program. The hope is that taxpayer funding will be suspended for any domestic violence educational program that lacks TEPA accreditation, a process that should eliminate the fake statistics that have plagued this issue.

SAVE estimates that these VAWA reforms can shave a significant sum off the federal deficit. Some may say that's "chicken feed" in the big picture of cutting the budget, but these cuts will enable us to do a better job for true victims as well as save money.

Trampling on Constitutional Rights

When the liberals and the feminists, including Hillary Clinton, began saying the "village" should raise the child, most people recognized village as a metaphor for government. We're now seeing how intrusive Big Government Nannyism really is. State agencies operating under various names such as Child Protective Services (CPS) have been assigned the task of protecting kids from abuse or neglect by any adults, especially by their own parents. A new study casts doubt on the value of CPS.

Child Protective Services, which rushes into action based on anonymous tips, investigated more than three million cases

of suspected child abuse in 2007. Researchers examined the records of 595 children nationwide alleged to be at similar high risk for abuse, and tracked them from ages 4 to 8. The researchers concluded that CPS's intervention did little or nothing to improve the lives of the children, and there was no difference between children in the families CPS investigated or did not investigate. The social scientists looked at all the factors known to increase the risk for abuse or neglect: social support, family functioning, poverty, caregiver education and depressive symptoms, plus child anxiety, depression and aggressive behavior.

The Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act was passed by Congress in 1974, and about 45 states passed complementary state laws. Taxpayers' money began to flow big time to the bureaucrats.

The research results were reported in the October issue of the *Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine* (available at blog.eagleforum.org). The report was accompanied by an editorial entitled "Child Protective Services Has Outlived its Usefulness." It argued that CPS should not be engaged in law enforcement. If it's a crime, call the police; if it's neglect, call a public health nurse; if it's an unsuitable living situation, call the appropriate social services.

Unfortunately, the researchers did not look at the harm caused by CPS bureaucrats who arrive unannounced with the police, interfere with a functioning family, and often take the children away from their parents and turn them over to foster care. When taxpayer appropriations are voted next year by Congress and state legislatures, CPS bureaucrats should be required to demonstrate whether any good outweighs the harm.

Two cases involving Child Protective Services are before the U.S. Supreme Court in the current term. The High Court has agreed to decide a case involving the interrogation of an elementary schoolchild at school by a CPS caseworker and a deputy sheriff about possible sexual abuse at home. This is a Fourth Amendment case: *Camreta and Alford v. Greene*. Oregon investigators are appealing a lower court ruling that they violated a nine-year-old girl's constitutional right to be free from unreasonable search and seizure when they interviewed her for two hours at school without a warrant, court order, parental consent, or exigent circumstances.

This case could have a significant impact nationwide. Unfortunately, some government agencies are more solicitous in guaranteeing constitutional due process to vicious criminals than to parents.

The other CPS case recently heard by the Supreme Court, *Los Angeles County v. Humphries*, involves the constitutionality of the child abuse index, or list, maintained by Child Protective Services in California. More than 800,000 people are now listed on California's child abuse index. These listings are very hurtful to individuals since employers consult

the list before hiring employees to work with children.

CPS puts people on this list from agency reports that are based on anonymous tips and suspicion, not proof. It's mighty easy for a malicious wife or ex-wife to allege child abuse as part of her game plan to get child custody or increased child support.

The issue in this case is the fact that there are no procedures, no standards, and no criteria for a wrongly accused person to get his name off the child abusers index. The Supreme Court is reviewing the Ninth Circuit ruling that Craig Humphries (whom a court pronounced innocent of all charges) had a "nightmarish encounter" with the California system, and "There is no effective procedure for Humphries to challenge this listing."

In 2006, Congress toyed with a plan to create a national child abuse registry. The plan was abandoned because of the unreliability of state lists and lack of due process.

The child abuse registry should not be confused with the sex offender registry, which lists only those who have been convicted of sex crimes. The child abuse registry puts men on the list who have never been proven guilty of anything or even charged with a crime, a punishment that is entirely contrary to our legal assumption of being innocent until proven guilty.

Humphries has been trying to clear his name for nine years. Congress should defund these abusive registries and the Supreme Court should declare them unconstitutional.

Feminist Traps in the Office, Too

The feminists have made the workplace a challenging minefield for men. If a man wants to ask a female colleague for a date, he must be careful. When his overture works, writes Warren Farrell in *The Myth of Male Power*, "it's called courtship. When it doesn't, it's called harassment."

One brave judge with experience in sexual harassment cases, Missouri Judge Robert H. Dierker Jr., describes his observations in his book, *The Tyranny of Tolerance: A Sitting Judge Breaks the Code of Silence to Expose the Liberal Judicial Assault*. Judge Dierker explains that claims of sexual harassment have become a means by which feminists vent their malice toward men. This is another proof that the feminist movement is not about equality; they demand that the law treat women better to compensate women for centuries of oppression.

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