

THE GREAT FEMINIZATION

women as drivers of modern social change

by

J. Stone

THE GREAT FEMINIZATION

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Don't think about making women fit the world—think about making the world fit women.

—Gloria Steinem

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0 AUTHOR'S NOTE

In this book I present a set of hypotheses about women's causative roles in recent cultural and political changes—including deep, civilizational changes—in the United States and other countries.

In many instances, I support my hypotheses with citations of academic studies. However, I'm skeptical that researchers can address all these questions honestly and conclusively, given the ordinary limitations of psychological and social science as well as their present ideological shackles. Thus, my main aim here is just to lay out these possibilities, letting the reader, with the help of everyday experience and common sense, gauge how likely they are to be correct.

Many of the themes in this book have already appeared in essays of mine going back to 2011. I include a short bibliography at the end, which also covers what I know of other writers' contributions in this area up to late 2021.

I am particularly grateful to the following individuals for kind words of support, or deeds—even if it was only the boosting one of my essays with a link: @toad_spotted, @TytoNovo, Helen Andrews, Tyler Cowen, and Spencer Klavan and James Poulos from *The American Mind*. I'm just an amateur, spare-time theorist, and I appreciate every bit of help and encouragement I get.

* * *

1 THE DAY THE LOGIC DIED

In the first years of the new millennium, returning briefly to the USA after a decade living abroad in societies with more traditional cultures, I began to notice something about my native country—something that I sensed I wasn't supposed to notice.

Of course, like everyone else I could see that America had undergone and was still undergoing real changes. Some of them seemed radical, like the then-new push for legalizing same-sex marriage. Others—having to do with environmentalism and political correctness, for example—reflected trends that had been in place for decades. I think that unlike most people, though, I came to see these changes less as changes towards the “Left” and more as changes towards the “Feminine.”

For professional and circumstantial reasons, I was probably more aware than the average American that women had been steadily amassing cultural power as they had entered the upper reaches of culturally important fields of work, such as journalism, law, publishing, science and politics. I perceived that many of America's cultural changes—reflected widely in other developed countries, especially the UK—were the changes one would expect in a society where women were gaining influence.

I had once assumed that innate differences between men and women in behavior and policy preferences were mostly small in relation to the human capacity for learning new ways of thinking. However, relevant events shifted me towards the stronger view that men and women are apt to differ profoundly in their psychology and cognitive functioning—which implies that women's cultural ascendancy must bring profound change. The “relevant event” that did more than any other to shape this view of mine was the Larry Summers cancellation, a brief but fateful episode in American social history that played out in early 2005.

Summers then was the president of Harvard University, and on January 14 he gave a short talk at a conference titled “Diversifying the Science & Engineering Workforce,” at the Cambridge, Mass. facility of the private, nonprofit National Bureau of Economic Research. The audience consisted of a few dozen, mostly

female science and engineering faculty from Harvard and other universities. University administrators such as Summers, then as now, were under pressure from feminist activists in academia, and feminist-friendly media, to even up the male/female ratio in science and engineering, under the premise that a persistent deviance from 50:50 must be due to sexist discrimination.

Summers, a prize-winning economist who had served briefly as Treasury Secretary in the Clinton Administration, was considered a sharp-witted man. He was also the head of a major university, and as such would have known how to soothe feminist activists on the faculty with the usual aspirational cant. Instead, he decided on this day that he would basically speak the truth as he saw it. January 14, 2005 was the occasion of an unusual midwinter warm spell in the Boston area, with a high temperature of 63. It was the sort of pleasant climatic surprise that is apt to make a man optimistic. But Summers was too optimistic. Within a week—as winter resumed and Boston was paralyzed by a blizzard—he would be the hapless, flailing target of a nationwide media/activist/academic hysteria, a prototype of the cancellations that have since become routine.

What did Summers say in his NBER talk that day? Below is a representative selection from the ~7,000-word total. Craftwise, his speech strikes me as verbose, with too many, obviously futile, attempts to appease the hypersensitives before him. But it otherwise seems well reasoned and unobjectionable, and even thoughtful and useful, which is the point of this story: The women who had power over Summers—women who represented the new, Inquisitional regime in Western culture and politics—signaled on that day that they would never be satisfied with “mansplanations,” however logical, that contradict their dogmas or otherwise wound their feelings.

[emphases mine]

I asked Richard [Freeman], when he invited me to come here and speak, whether he wanted an institutional talk about Harvard’s policies toward diversity or whether he wanted some questions asked and some attempts at provocation, because I was willing to do the second and didn’t feel like doing the first. And so, we have agreed that I am speaking unofficially and not using this as an occasion to lay out the many things we’re doing at Harvard to promote the crucial objective of diversity.

I am going to, until most of the way through, attempt to adopt an entirely *positive, rather than normative approach [i.e., describing things as they are, not how they should be]*, and just try to think about and *offer some hypotheses as to why we observe what we observe* without seeing this through the kind of judgmental tendency that inevitably is connected with all our common goals of equality. It is after all not the case that the role of women in science is the only example of a group that is significantly underrepresented in an important activity and whose underrepresentation contributes to a shortage of role models for others who are considering being in that group. To take a set of diverse examples, the data will, I am confident, reveal that *Catholics are substantially underrepresented in investment banking, which is an enormously high-paying profession in our society; that white men are very substantially underrepresented in the National Basketball Association; and that Jews are very substantially underrepresented in farming and in agriculture.* These are all phenomena in which one observes underrepresentation, and *I think it's important to try to think systematically and clinically about the reasons for underrepresentation.*

There are three broad hypotheses about the sources of the very substantial disparities that this conference's papers document and have been documented before with respect to the presence of women in high-end scientific professions. *One is what I would call the—I'll explain each of these in a few moments and comment on how important I think they are—the first is what I call the high-powered job hypothesis. The second is what I would call different availability of aptitude at the high end, and the third is what I would call different socialization and patterns of discrimination in a search.* And in my own view, their importance probably ranks in exactly the order that I just described.

[#1: high-powered job hypothesis]

I've had the opportunity to discuss questions like this with chief executive officers at major corporations, the managing partners of large law firms, the directors of prominent teaching hospitals, and with the leaders of other prominent professional service organizations, as well as with colleagues in higher education. In all of those groups, the story is fundamentally the same.

... the relatively few women who are in the highest-ranking places are disproportionately either unmarried or without children...

... it is a fact about our society that *[high-powered jobs involve] a level of commitment that a much higher fraction of married men have been historically prepared to make than of married women*. That's not a judgment about how it should be, not a judgment about what they should expect. But it seems to me that *it is very hard to look at the data and escape the conclusion* that that expectation is meeting with the choices that people make and is contributing substantially to the outcomes that we observe.

...So, I think in terms of positive understanding, the first very important reality is just what I would call the 'who wants to do high-powered intense work'?

[#2: aptitude hypothesis]

It does appear that *on many, many different human attributes*—height, weight, propensity for criminality, overall IQ, mathematical ability, scientific ability—there is relatively clear evidence that *whatever the difference in means*—which can be debated—*there is a difference in the standard deviation and variability of a male and a female population*. And that is true with respect to attributes that are and are not plausibly, culturally determined.

If one supposes, as I think is reasonable, that if one is talking about physicists at a top 25 research university, one is ... *talking about people who are three and a half, four standard deviations above the mean in the one in 5,000, one in 10,000 class*.

Even small differences in the standard deviation will translate into very large differences in the available pool substantially out [i.e., at the highest-aptitude end of the long tail]... I looked at ... the evidence on the sex ratios in the top 5 percent of twelfth graders. If you look at those—they're all over the map, depends on which test, whether it's math, or science, and so forth—but ... one woman for every two men would be a high-end estimate from their estimates. From that, you can back out a difference in the implied standard deviations that works out to be about 20 percent. And

from that, you can work out the difference out several standard deviations. If you do that calculation—and I have no reason to think that it couldn't be refined in a hundred ways—you get five to one, at the high end. [*i.e., aptitude is so much more variable in men that the very-high-aptitude pool of male physicists may be several times larger than the very-high-aptitude pool of female physicists*].

So, my sense is that the unfortunate truth—I would far prefer to believe something else, because it would be easier to address what is surely a serious social problem if something else were true—is that *the combination of the high-powered job hypothesis and the differing variances probably explains a fair amount of this problem.*

[#3: differential socialization and innate preferences—mostly the latter]

[P]articularly *in some attributes that bear on engineering, there is reasonably strong evidence of taste differences between little girls and little boys that are not easy to attribute to socialization.* I just returned from Israel, where we had the opportunity to visit a kibbutz, and to spend some time talking about the history of the kibbutz movement, and it is really very striking to hear how the movement started with an absolute commitment, of a kind one doesn't encounter in other places, that everybody was going to do the same jobs. *Sometimes the women were going to fix the tractors, and the men were going to work in the nurseries, sometimes the men were going to fix the tractors and the women were going to work in the nurseries, and just under the pressure of what everyone wanted, in a hundred different kibbutzes, each one of which evolved, it all moved in the same direction [i.e., towards males fixing tractors, women working in nurseries].* So, I think, while I would prefer to believe otherwise, I guess my experience with my two-and-a-half year old twin daughters who were not given dolls and who were given trucks, and found themselves saying to each other, look, daddy truck is carrying the baby truck, tells me something. And I think it's just something that you probably have to recognize.

One [hypothesis for this] is socialization. Somehow little girls are all socialized towards nursing and little boys are socialized towards building bridges. No doubt there is some truth in that. *I would be hesitant about assigning too much weight to that hypothesis* for two reasons. First, most of

what we've learned from empirical psychology in the last fifteen years has been that people naturally attribute things to socialization that are in fact not attributable to socialization. We've been astounded by the results of separated-twins studies. The confident assertions that autism was a reflection of parental characteristics that were absolutely supported and that people knew from years of observational evidence have now been proven to be wrong. And so, *the human mind has a tendency to grab to the socialization hypothesis when you can see it, and it often turns out not to be true.*

Summers finished up by noting that discrimination against women in STEM faculty hiring is an unlikely explanation for the present discrepancy, underscoring the likelihood that his own alternative explanations are valid.

[T]here are certainly examples of institutions that have focused on increasing their diversity to their substantial benefit, but *if there was really a pervasive pattern of discrimination that was leaving an extraordinary number of high-quality potential candidates behind, one suspects that in the highly competitive academic marketplace, there would be more examples of institutions that succeeded substantially by working to fill the gap. And I think one sees relatively little evidence of that. So, my best guess, to provoke you, of what's behind all of this is that the largest phenomenon, by far, is the general clash between people's legitimate family desires and employers' current desire for high power and high intensity, that in the special case of science and engineering, there are issues of intrinsic aptitude [the two fatal words, I suspect], and particularly of the variability of aptitude, and that those considerations are reinforced by what are in fact lesser factors involving socialization and continuing discrimination.* I would like nothing better than to be proved wrong, because I would like nothing better than for these problems to be addressable simply by everybody understanding what they are, and working very hard to address them.

Audience members questioned him for a while after that. Almost all were polite. None put a dent in the points he had made. Some were childishly long-winded and seemed to miss his points entirely—almost as if, in some unconscious way, they wanted to buttress his suggestion about “intrinsic aptitude” with clear examples of female illogic and mental confusion. Donna Nelson, a chemistry professor from the University of Oklahoma, responded to Summers' passing

mention of twin studies and their revelations about trait heritability by declaring: “One thing that I do sort of disagree with is the use of identical twins that have been separated and their environment followed. I think that the environments that a lot of women and minorities experience would not be something that would be—that a twin would be subjected to if the person knows that their environment is being watched. Because a lot of the things that are done to women and minorities are simply illegal, and so they’ll never experience that.”

But the only indication of seriously ruffled feathers came at the end, when Denise Denton, chancellor of UC-Santa Cruz, stood up and said, with some emotion: “You know, in the spirit of speaking truth to power, I’m not an expert in this area but a lot of people in the room are, and they’ve written a lot of papers ... and you know a lot of us would disagree with your hypotheses and your premises.” Acting as if Summers had been aggressively asserting truths rather than cautiously elaborating hypotheses, she complained “so it’s not so clear.”



DENISE DENTON

(Denton committed suicide a year and a half later by jumping off the roof of her girlfriend’s San Francisco apartment building. According to SFGate, the chancellor, trained as an engineer, “had been named this spring [2006] in a series of articles examining UC management compensation. She had been criticized for an expensive [\$600K] university-funded renovation on her campus home, and for obtaining a UC administrative job” for her girlfriend.)

A few other women at the conference were upset by Summers’s references to “intrinsic aptitude.” Whether a reporter was present I don’t know, but somehow *Boston Globe* reporter Marcella Bombardieri, who would later quit journalism to become a paid activist pushing progressive, feminist issues in academia, felt this disturbance in the feminist force and ran a story two days later on the 17th.



MARCELLA BOMBARDIERI

Bombardieri's story, headlined "Summers' remarks on women draw fire," recast the speech not as the wordy and sedate event it was, but as riotous act of heresy that had traumatized sensitive listeners.

The president of Harvard University, Lawrence H. Summers, sparked an uproar at an academic conference Friday when he said that innate differences between men and women might be one reason fewer women succeed in science and math careers. Summers also questioned how much of a role discrimination plays in the dearth of female professors in science and engineering at elite universities.

Nancy Hopkins, a biologist at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, walked out on Summers' talk, saying later that if she hadn't left, "I would've either blacked out or thrown up." Five other participants reached by the Globe, including Denice D. Denton, chancellor designate of the University of California, Santa Cruz, also said they were deeply offended, while four other attendees said they were not.

Note the histrionics of Nancy Hopkins, a woman so overwhelmed with indignation that she went right ahead and reinforced all those old stereotypes about women and their preference for drama over reason. Note, too, Bombardieri's last sentence, which a careless reader might take as evidence that *a majority of attendees* were "deeply offended."

Naturally, other MSM organs picked up this story and amplified it. Denton and Hopkins now had their national megaphone.

The NYT on Jan 18:

HARVARD CHIEF DEFENDS HIS TALK ON WOMEN

The president of Harvard University, Lawrence H. Summers, who offended some women at an academic conference last week by suggesting that innate differences in sex may explain why fewer women succeed in science and math careers, stood by his comments yesterday but said he regretted if they were misunderstood.

"I'm sorry for any misunderstanding but believe that raising questions, discussing multiple factors that may explain a difficult problem, and seeking to understand how they interrelate is vitally important," Dr. Summers said in an interview.

Several women who participated in the conference said yesterday that they had been surprised or outraged by Dr. Summers's comments, and Denice D. Denton, the chancellor designate of the University of California, Santa Cruz, questioned Dr. Summers sharply during the conference, saying she needed to "speak truth to power."

Nancy Hopkins, a professor of biology at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology who once led an investigation of sex discrimination there that led to changes in hiring and promotion, walked out midway through Dr. Summers's remarks.

"When he started talking about innate differences in aptitude between men and women, *I just couldn't breathe* because this kind of bias makes me *physically ill*," Dr. Hopkins said. "Let's not forget that people used to say that women couldn't drive an automobile."

Buried in the NYT's piece was this interesting fact [emphases mine]:

Dr. Summers arrived after a morning session and addressed a working lunch, speaking without notes. No transcript was made because *the conference was designed to be off-the-record so that participants could speak candidly without fear of public misunderstanding or disclosure later.*

Perhaps Denton and Hopkins, who with Bombardieri were the ring-leaders of this hullabaloo, would say that an off-the-record rule such as that is merely a "Man's

Rule,” designed to protect the patriarchy and keep women down—and thus can be flouted by feminists without fear of reproach.

But they didn’t merely flout this rule: They turned it against Summers, exploiting the apparent lack of a transcript by dramatically misrepresenting his speech as a misogynist rant. Indeed, their complaints of psychosomatic injury (“I just couldn’t breathe”) were presented as *prima facie* evidence that they had been victimized by his attack.

Many women and men had listened to Summers’s talk, or had heard of his arguments second-hand, and had perceived nothing objectionable. Ultimately it would turn out that an official recording *had* been made. A transcript of that recording emerged, and it indicated—as the reader has seen already—that by traditional, commonsense standards, Summers had neither made false, “hurtful” assertions nor had been guilty of even mild insensitivity. To the contrary, the man had spoken sensibly and sensitively—even oversensitively. My own impression is that he had come to the gathering with the view that his audience of feminist academics included some bad apples who were childish and emotionally unstable and might easily fly into a temper. He simply had underestimated how irrational and unstable they were! And as the hysteria blew up, it was clear that Summers’s feminist antagonists were the ones making unsupported assertions. *They* and not he were the dogmatists who wanted to quash all opposing ideas.

Bombardieri, for her January 17 piece in the *Globe*, tried to mute any sense of pushback from defenders of Summers, but clearly had gotten an earful from the organizer of the NBER conference, Harvard economist Richard Freeman:

Freeman ... described Summers’s critics as activists whose sensibilities might be at odds with intellectual debate.

Well, yes. And Freeman, who these days probably feels much less free to express such sentiments, defended Summers to the *Guardian* for their Jan 18 piece on the controversy:

Richard Freeman, who invited the Harvard president to speak at the conference, said Dr. Summers’s comments were intended to provoke debate, and some women over-reacted.

“Some people took offence because they were very sensitive,” said Dr. Freeman, an economist at Harvard and the London School of Economics. “It does not seem to me insane to think that men and women have biological differences.”

Freeman’s defense of Summers was followed by others’, including that of Hannah Gray, a distinguished member of the Harvard governing body, the Harvard Corporation. Conference participant Paula Stephan, a professor of economics at Georgia State University, also defended Summers, telling the NYT that his “remarks offended some participants, but not her. ‘I think if you come to participate in a research conference,’ Dr. Stephan said, ‘you should expect speakers to present hypotheses that you may not agree with and then discuss them on the basis of research findings.’”

Then there was Harvard colleague Steven Pinker’s reasoned defense of Summers in *The New Republic*.

Summers did not, of course, say that women are “natively inferior,” that “they just can’t cut it,” that they suffer “an inherent cognitive deficit in the sciences,” or that men have “a monopoly on basic math ability,” as many academics and journalists assumed. Only a madman could believe such things. Summers’s analysis of why there might be fewer women in mathematics and science is commonplace among economists who study gender disparities in employment....

The analysis should have been unexceptionable. Anyone who has fled a cluster of men at a party debating the fine points of flat-screen televisions can appreciate that fewer women than men might choose engineering, even in the absence of arbitrary barriers. (As one female social scientist noted in *Science Magazine*, “Reinventing the curriculum will not make me more interested in learning how my dishwasher works.”) To what degree these and other differences originate in biology must be determined by research, not fatwa. History tells us that how much we want to believe a proposition is not a reliable guide as to whether it is true.

A defender of Summers in *The Atlantic* even went so far as to attack his antagonists: “The hysteria about Summers furthers the career agendas of feminists who seek quotas for themselves and their friends.”

But as Larry Summers's defenders, and Summers himself, must have suspected, reasoning like this was just pissing in the wind. The typhoon of feminine offendedness, deliberately fed by the media and an email-enabled campaign among feminist academics, continued to strengthen. The NYT followed its initial story on Jan 18 with another one the next day, headlined "NO BREAK IN THE STORM OVER HARVARD PRESIDENT'S WORDS."

Members of a Harvard faculty committee that has examined the recruiting of professors who are women sent a protest letter yesterday to Lawrence H. Summers, the university's president, saying his recent statements about innate differences between the sexes would only make it harder to attract top candidates.

The committee told Mr. Summers that his remarks did not "serve our institution well."

"Indeed," the letter said, "they serve to reinforce an institutional culture at Harvard that erects numerous barriers to improving the representation of women on the faculty, and to impede our current efforts to recruit top women scholars. They also send at best mixed signals to our high-achieving women students in Harvard College and in the graduate and professional schools."

The letter was one part of an outcry that continued to follow remarks Mr. Summers made Friday suggesting that biological differences between the sexes may be one explanation for why fewer women succeed in mathematic and science careers. . . .

Denise D. Denton, the dean of engineering at the University of Washington who confronted Mr. Summers over his remarks at the conference, said that her phone had not stopped ringing and that she had received scores of e-mail messages on the subject. She said Mr. Summers's remarks might have put new energy into a longstanding effort to improve the status of women in the sciences.

"I think they've provoked an intellectual tsunami," Dr. Denton said.

Emotional tsunami would have been more accurate—but anyway Summers felt the full force of it. He was an extraordinarily accomplished man, and had seemed

destined for still greater things, but now faced the modern equivalent of the stake or the gallows: vilification from every progressive pulpit across the land, followed by professional and social ostracism.

And so, he did what so many victims of witch-hunts, Inquisitions, and ideological purges had done before him: He caved, confessing his heresy and begging forgiveness. As the NYT reported on day 4 of the hysteria, Jan 20:

HARVARD PRESIDENT APOLOGIZES AGAIN FOR REMARKS ON GENDER

With the unabated furor over his recent remarks suggesting that women may not have the same innate abilities in math and science as men, Harvard's president, Lawrence H. Summers, issued a two-page apology to the Harvard community late last night.

"I was wrong to have spoken in a way that has resulted in an unintended signal of discouragement to talented girls and women," Mr. Summers said in a letter that was posted on his Harvard Web site.

"Despite reports to the contrary, I did not say, and I do not believe, that girls are intellectually less able than boys, or that women lack the ability to succeed at the highest levels of science," Mr. Summers wrote.

It was his third public statement in three days about his remarks at a conference on women and minorities in science and engineering last Friday, with each statement becoming stronger and more apologetic. His remarks have dominated the discussion on the Harvard campus and beyond, with female academics, alumni and donors expressing concern over his leadership.

Mr. Summers, an economist and a former treasury secretary, acknowledged that he had been hearing plenty of reaction himself. "I have learned a great deal from all that I have heard in the last few days," he wrote in his statement. "The many compelling e-mails and calls that I have received have made vivid the very real barriers faced by women in pursuing scientific and other academic careers."

He wrote in the letter that he had attended the conference, held by the National Bureau of Economics, "with the intention of reinforcing my strong

commitment to the advancement of women in science, and offering some informal observations on possibly fruitful avenues for further research.”

However, he added: “Ensuing media reports on my remarks appear to have had quite the opposite effect. *I deeply regret the impact of my comments and apologize for not having weighed them more carefully.*”

It was abject. It was shameful. It was a surrender to the forces of unreason—to the hysterical mob that had already done so much to distort both science and the hiring of scientists. Despite this crawling penitence, or perhaps because of it, the hysteria intensified. In March, a majority of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, including female faculty, of course, but also male faculty fearful of the same whirlwind that had consumed their leader, approved a resolution of “no confidence” in Summers. The NYT reported among things that:

J. Lorand Matory, a professor of anthropology and African and African-American studies, told reporters after the meeting that Dr. Summers should step down. “There is no noble alternative for him but resignation,” said Professor Matory, who introduced the resolution....

Dr. Summers, an economist and a former United States Treasury secretary, has been meeting individually with faculty members throughout the Faculty of Arts and Sciences over the last several weeks, apologizing for his remarks about women and for any other offense he might have given and asking for their support so he could move forward.

Although the resolution was only symbolic, and Summers in the ensuing months continued to try to placate and soothe his antagonists, it eventually became clear that his position was unrecoverable. On February 22, just about 13 months after his fateful utterance of the words “intrinsic aptitude,” the New York Times reported:

PRESIDENT OF HARVARD RESIGNS, ENDING STORMY 5-YEAR TENURE

Lawrence H. Summers resigned yesterday as president of Harvard University after a relatively brief and turbulent tenure of five years, nudged by Harvard’s governing corporation and facing a vote of no confidence from the influential Faculty of Arts and Sciences....

... advisers and confidants of Dr. Summers said he privately concluded a week ago that he should step down, after members of Harvard's governing corporation and friends—particularly from the Clinton administration—made it clear that his presidency was lost.

No one should have shed any tears for Summers. He was offered a well-paid university professorship at Harvard, joined a hedge fund, and within a few years became a high-profile economic adviser at the Obama White House. As embarrassing and degrading as his ordeal at the hands of Denton et al had been, he had managed by his public confessions and repentance, his surrender to the New Inquisition, to forestall his full banishment and unpersoning. At the end of the day, he retained his wealth, his high status, and his potential for moderately high public office.

American civil society, on the other hand, didn't fare so well. Summers's high-profile moral cowardice emboldened the unreasoning mob he had faced, and within another decade Harvard and most universities across the land were quasi-totalitarian in their insistence on conformity with What Feminists Want—an ever-changing, ever-expanding code of acceptable thought and speech. The same conformity spread as well through the mainstream media and entertainment industries, and even into the executive layers of big corporations.

Observers would use labels such as "Progressivism," "Cultural Marxism," "wokeism," and even "the Successor Ideology" to describe this attitude or mindset. But none of these labels captured its essential feminist and indeed broadly *feminine* aspect. Nor was there any evident awareness that "female empowerment," celebrated universally as progress along the rainbowed arc of history, might instead be gravely weakening the societies in which it had occurred.

* * *

2 THE GREAT FEMINIZATION

“Suppose truth is a woman—what then?” asked Nietzsche with a chuckle.

His aim, in that opening line of *Beyond Good and Evil*, was to tell us something about truth. But in so doing he touched on some old assumptions about women: their inconstancy, their irrationality. The dogmas of the day, Nietzsche meant, were neither as immutable nor as reasoned as people assumed.

Nietzsche’s skepticism, the acid core of postmodern thought, makes good sense in a philosophical context, and has helped us to see that our “knowledge,” whether scientific or religious, emerges from sociological processes—and at any moment represents only a temporary edifice. How much of the scientific knowledge of, say, the year 1700, survives just three centuries later? How much of the Bible does the average citizen of Christendom now hold to be literally true?

The postmodern dissolution of dogmas has not been confined to the religious and scientific. It has also worked in the realm of implicit knowledge and cultural tradition, ironically including the traditional male underestimation of the fairer sex. The age-old idea that a woman’s place is in the home now appears to be in the dustbin of history along with a million other discarded notions.

The resulting “emancipation” of women from their traditional, homebound roles, freeing them to pursue roles in the working world or otherwise in the public sphere, has led to a phenomenon I call the “Great Feminization.” Women have acquired voting rights, have entered universities and the workforce at rates higher than men’s, and ultimately have taken positions at the top of elite, culturally influential professions such as journalism, publishing, business management, law, science, medicine, and of course politics—so that now, early in the Third Millennium AD, women’s influence on the affairs of the world is at least comparable to men’s, and arguably has become dominant.

The cultural and political ascendancy of women in a major civilization is important in its own right as an unprecedented event in human history—a history that until now has been made and written almost entirely by men working within

patriarchal traditions. But there is much more going on here than a mere personnel switch. My central contention in this book is that women's new control over Western culture has been—by far—the largest driver of the social changes that have roiled the West in the past five or six decades.

Why? Simply because women do not think and act as men do. The female mindset has been shaped by millions of years of human, hominin, and primate evolution—not to mention hundreds of millions of years of vertebrate evolution—in which female roles have been distinct from male roles. One can argue about whether the female mindset is somehow better adapted than the male one for managing societies in the modern world. But that there are differences in the two mindsets seems beyond dispute.

Virginia Woolf, in an essay (“Three Guineas,” 1938) that deserves to be better known, presciently warned of these differences, and the impacts they would have once women moved into the working world of men: “Let us [women] never cease from thinking—what is this ‘civilization’ in which we find ourselves?” She put scare-quotes around the word civilization, because she questioned whether the one built by men was worth retaining.

In my view, women—often without stating or perhaps even knowing any of this explicitly—have effectively been doing that questioning for decades now, and have been remodeling Western societies to suit their distinctive ways of thinking.

I submit that this remodeling, which Western societies have experienced as sudden, disorienting changes over the past half-century, mostly reflects distinct female psychological traits. Discussions of these will take up the next few chapters.

3 A WORLD OF PAIN

Experimental psychology and related fields of research in Western countries over the past several decades have come to be controlled to a great extent by female activists. Many of these women—like those who persecuted Larry Summers—tend to deny psychological differences between the sexes. Frequently they seek to suppress or corrupt research that does or might indicate those sex differences. The production of scientific knowledge is, to them, chiefly a means to an ever-shifting set of social ends, and must not conflict with those ends.

These activists thus bely their own women-and-men-are-the-same dogma, for they do not share the modern, Western, “male” level of respect for free scientific inquiry.

Why not? I suggest that this and several other prominent female psychological traits stem from a single meta- or precursor trait, namely *greater emotional sensitivity*. As Aristotle put it, about 2,350 years ago in his *History of Animals*:

[W]oman is more compassionate than man, more easily moved to tears, at the same time is more jealous, more querulous, more apt to scold and to strike. She is, furthermore, more prone to despondency . . .

(Important caveat: In discussing psychological differences between men and women, I am referring to differences *on average*—offsets in the means of overlapping bell curve distributions—rather than absolute, “all women are x, all men are y” differences.)

To say that women are more emotionally sensitive is not to say that men are emotionless, or even that they necessarily trail women in emotionality in every domain of life—men are, for example, quick to express intense emotions in certain contexts relating to fighting and war. But that women are on the whole more emotional, in the everyday sense of being quicker to experience/express emotional discomfort from everyday stressors—including fear and grief, but also just mild stressors such as having to hear or read ideas they don’t like—seems to be a universal observation that no amount of academic legerdemain can obscure

(although I think that on this point there is plenty of research support). Is it not true that women are more likely to cry? Can we deny that women are more likely to be diagnosed with depression, anxiety, and other mood disorders?

We also can grasp that a greater emotional sensitivity in the sense just described is a logical and expected adaptation, given women's traditional roles, especially child-bearing and child-raising. A greater emotional sensitivity enables the average woman to be more emotionally empathetic, more compassionate, and thus quicker to sense and address threats to, or problems in, her children. Insensitivity in a mother is generally regarded as pathological. By contrast, male insensitivity is considered, by women, par for the course—a basic male trait. (Modern women complain almost universally about male insensitivity, as if it were a design defect, though plausibly it is one of the key factors enabling men to keep their heads in highly stressful situations, for example in the great conquests and explorations without which our civilization would be long extinct.)

Surely the best way to see the distinct male and female psychological trait-sets is as an adaptive partnership, in which the “male brain” and “female brain” complement and support each other. Of course, this complementarity evolved in a traditional setting where men and women had more separate sets of roles. Over the past couple of centuries, though, and especially in the last several decades—an eye-blink in the course of human biological and cultural evolution—women's activities and influence have spread beyond home and hearth into the sphere traditionally occupied by men. There women's innately greater sensitivity has played out in new ways.

Compassionate policies

Perhaps the most obvious marker of this new, feminine, sensitization of Western culture is the decisive shift it has brought towards a more “compassionate” style of public expression and reasoning, resulting of course in many new “compassionate” public policies.

I frame the word “compassionate” here with skepti-quotes because Western elites don't always feel or intend actual compassion when they make “compassionate” policies. They often craft policies chiefly to enhance elite power, or to benefit themselves in other selfish ways. But in this new era when women are more politically active and less husband-dependent than ever—are more of a

distinct political/cultural force than ever, essentially—the elites have learned to use “compassion” as an effective psychological tool for selling public policies to women and steering the surrounding public discussions.

In short, women are much more susceptible to compassion-related themes, compared to men, and in a world where women’s cultural and political power equals or exceeds that of men, that susceptibility is bound to have big socio-political consequences.

One can easily list actual policy and public-opinion trends that are plausibly among these consequences—trends that have been more and more prominent during the period, approximately 1950 to the present, when women ascended to culture-making and policymaking parity/dominance in the USA and other Western countries:

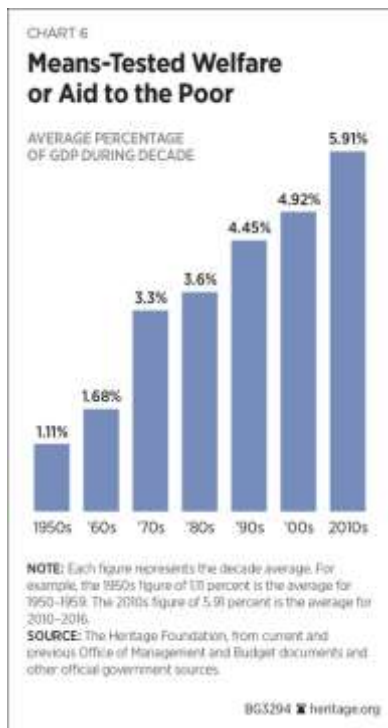
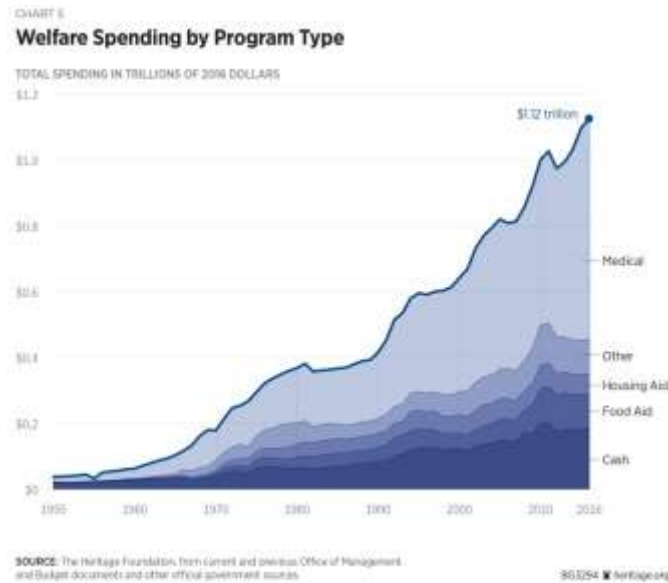
Welfare expansion

Government traditionally has provided for infrastructure elements that individuals and corporations can’t, such as major roads, police, and a military. Over the past 150 years or so, welfare for the poor has been another, increasingly prominent government provision. But it is really only in the new era of female empowerment that the provision of welfare has become, on an ongoing basis, the chief focus of modern government.

That women, compared to men, are significantly more sensitive to issues of socioeconomic and related inequalities, and are more supportive of governmental programs to address them, has long been obvious from various studies as well as common experience. Women probably have a greater sensitivity to inequality because 1) as mothers, they need to be more emotionally sensitive generally, and thus tend to experience a stronger sense of guilt/injustice when confronted by inequality; and/or 2) they need the specific trait of greater sensitivity-to-inequality in order to minimize conflict and maybe maximize overall outcomes among their children. In these broad senses, women in the public sphere may subconsciously consider welfare recipients and other objects of compassionate policy as something like their adopted children.

In any case, the mothering embrace of welfare in most Western countries now affects virtually *all* citizens, plus many non-citizens, with a range of goodies including (in the US, for example) food-assistance programs, tax credits, Social

Security, Medicare, Medicaid, emergency stimulus checks, and no-repayment “loans.” Some local governments in the US and Europe even provide heroin addicts with free needles, safe spaces, and healthcare assistance for shooting up.



Civil rights expansions

This is an area of ideology and policy that is closely associated with the US, but has also been embraced—for similar reasons—by the elites of other Western countries. Like welfare, it seems to be a core “women’s issue” due to its natural evocation of feminine compassion and guilt. Moreover, women themselves have seen their rights expanded, so they are not only trustees of civil rights culture but also, to a great extent, beneficiaries.

The main thread of the civil rights story in the US includes:

- The emancipation from slavery of and bestowal of citizenship upon African-Americans.
- The extension of voting rights to women.
- The ending of “Jim Crow” apartheid and the push for full African-American integration into US society.
- Further expansions of civil rights for women, gays and the disabled.
- The liberalization of immigration law to end discrimination against non-European immigrants.
- The establishment of “affirmative action” and other reverse-discrimination measures favoring basically every group except non-disabled white males.

In each of these civil rights expansions, women have made key contributions—mainly by supporting a culture of enhanced sensitivity toward the plights of those who were apparently marginalized.

Toward the end of the slavery era in the US, for example, women had very prominent roles in the abolition movement. President Lincoln is said to have greeted Harriet Beecher Stowe—author of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*—at the White House with the remark: “[S]o you are the little woman who wrote the book that started this great war.” Female abolitionists were proud of their feminine, maternal ability to feel more keenly the injustice of slavery.

A century later, as the Jim Crow laws began to be abolished and what we know as the Civil Rights Era got underway, women’s sympathy for the plight of African Americans—reflected, for example, in Harper Lee’s 1960 bestseller *To Kill a Mockingbird*—became a significant factor in this major socioeconomic shift.

In general, through the 1960s and 70s, the Republicans and Democrats revised their traditional sets of policies in ways that aligned better with male and female

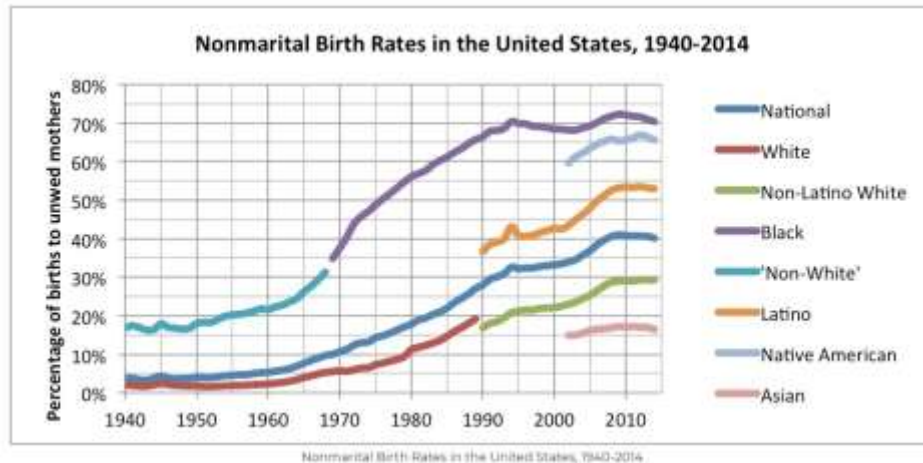
preferences—the Democrats’ essentially redefining themselves as the party of compassionate policies, civil rights policies being front and center.

Although gaining electoral advantage (especially capturing the votes of African-Americans and women) was one of the motivations for the politicians who initiated and drove the Civil Rights Era and culture, their expansions of civil rights were always justified in much loftier terms, as transcendent victories over inequality and injustice—and, as I noted at the outset of this chapter, it is that latter moral framing that has helped make these policies so attractive to women and thus so enduring.

Again, women are not the only reason Western countries became saturated with civil rights ideology. On the whole, though, I think the relative ease with which compassion and guilt can be evoked in them has been the strongest wind in the civil rights movement’s sails. We don’t see such expansions of civil rights to such an extent in countries, such as China, where women are not so influential culturally and politically.

From equal opportunity to reverse discrimination—and open-door immigration

The dream of the American civil rights movement in the 1950s and 60s was simply to abolish the Jim Crow segregation system so that African-Americans could be treated equally. By the late 1960s, though, it was clear that African Americans, despite achieving much more equality of opportunity, were not achieving equality in socioeconomic outcomes. In fact, in the era of generous Great Society welfare programs, they seemed to be [losing ground](#). Their poverty rate declined but not by very much, and a large proportion of them appeared to become chronically dependent upon on the new welfare programs. Their births-out-of-wedlock rate also soared.



At the same time, US elites were more than ever committed to the idea of integrating African-Americans. Thus, Americans generally were browbeaten into accepting a new system of laws and rules in which equal opportunity was abandoned and pro-Black discrimination embraced, ostensibly as a temporary measure to correct for the enduring effects of past anti-Black discrimination. This new “affirmative action” regulatory culture effectively encoded anti-White preferences in a variety of important settings from state and federal contracting to university admissions.

It was bad enough that the United States, so soon after dismantling its racial segregation laws, was again sanctioning race-based discrimination, with no end in sight. But the Democratic Party also realized that their near-total capture of the African-American vote could be replicated in *other* nonwhite groups—whose electoral power could be amplified via mass immigration.

This new immigration-based civil rights crusade relied heavily on the same old themes of equity and inclusivity to which women are so receptive—themes foreshadowed in the proudly maternal, even anti-male sonnet by Emma Lazarus that decorates the Statue of Liberty:

Not like the brazen giant of Greek fame,
With conquering limbs astride from land to land;
Here at our sea-washed, sunset gates shall stand
A mighty woman with a torch, whose flame
Is the imprisoned lightning, and her name
Mother of Exiles. From her beacon-hand
Glow world-wide welcome; her mild eyes command
The air-bridged harbor that twin cities frame.

"Keep, ancient lands, your storied pomp!" cries she
With silent lips. "Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!"



THE COLOSSUS OF RHODES (THE VERY MALE "BRAZEN GIANT OF GREEK FAME")

By the 1980s, American elites, mainly Democratic elites but with considerable Republican acquiescence, had constructed an extensive and complex system of preferences and set-asides favoring all nonwhites—Africans, Latinos, American Indians, Native Hawaiians, Filipinos, Indians, Pakistanis etc.—even if this meant favoring privileged and rich newcomer foreigners over impoverished whites with deep American roots, as it very often did. Once again, this discriminatory system was made easier by women, who, with their visceral commitment to equality, were relatively easily coaxed into seeing it as preferable to a colorblind meritocracy in which the strong would dominate the weak.

The Great Awakening

The same forces have been expanding these “good discrimination” policies for decades now, with predictable results: On the one hand, nonwhites who were already relatively high-achieving (e.g., Indians, Chinese, Koreans) have thrived under the new antiwhite rules. On the other hand, nonwhites who were *not* high-achieving, especially African-Americans, have failed to close the gaps with whites and Asians despite a vast system of academic and socioeconomic largesse in their favor. So, for many and perhaps most women, the emotional pain of “cognitive dissonance” due to this policy failure has been building up. And, again, it is tempting to see this as a maternal phenomenon—picture a mother at the end of her tether as her repeated efforts to address inequalities among her differently-abled brood come to naught.

In 2020 came the further stress of the COVID-19 pandemic, and then the intense media coverage of emotionally disturbing events including the death of George Floyd—and thus was ignited the explosive cultural conflagration known as the Great Awakening.



A MANIFESTATION OF THE GREAT AWOKENING IN BETHESDA, MARYLAND, SUMMER 2020

The Great Awakening was, ostensibly, the glorious culmination of the movement for equity for African Americans. In reality, it was a tsunami of public sentiment whose waters have already mostly receded. Its wild demands for “reparations for slavery;” its coddling, even deification, of murderers, rioters, looters, arrest-resisters, and grifters; its biased and harsh treatment of Whites in conflicts with the latter; its hysterical indifference to basic liberal traditions such as due process—all are reminiscent of the episode of mass madness that occurred in China in 1966-76 and is known as the Chinese Cultural Revolution. The CCR was driven by young people who, infected by radicalism as perhaps only the young can be, went around tearing down, toppling, smashing, even killing—even [killing](#)

and eating—reminders of pre-Mao China, including professors of history and Confucian philosophy. This orgy of upheaval eventually expanded to become a general reaction against the tough Chinese educational system, so that CR cadres persecuted teachers and professors generally, and shut down China's universities, shipping would-be students off to collective farms in the countryside. The CCR was a ten-year Dark Age for China. But even before the death of Mao in 1976 it had largely run out of steam—as mass hysterias do, sooner or later.

The Great Awakening may face a similar fate over the next few years, at least in regard to its more extreme elements, although generally speaking it seems to be deeply rooted among women, especially single women, who won't be easy to dislodge from the institutions they now substantially control.



A preoccupation with trauma

Women's greater emotional sensitivity appears to involve a greater sensitivity to situations of harm or potential harm—to themselves or others.

As women ascend to power and influence in society, we would expect this facet of their psychology to become more prominent throughout culture and policy. And, indeed we do observe that the decades in which women achieved power in the media, medicine, and other influential professions also brought a striking new emphasis on "trauma" and related emotional upsets as things to be taken much more seriously than ever before.

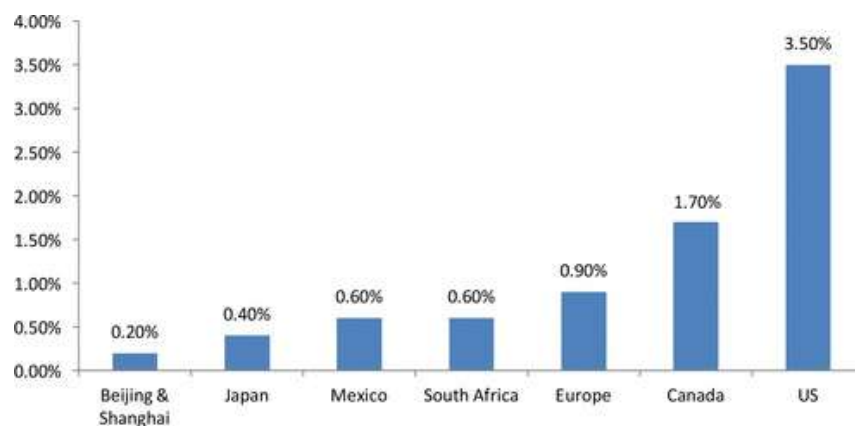
We can find an early thread of the trauma theme in the realms of psychiatry and

psychotherapy, where women have made up a significant share of professional caregivers—they were always dominant as patients—at least since the 1970s, and now vastly outnumber their male colleagues. As women gained more and more influence in this domain of medicine, new, female-dominated clinical syndromes began to emerge that were clearly akin to the old hysterical syndromes of Charcot's and Freud's day, yet were encouraged, sanctified, and protected from skeptical scrutiny as never before.

These new syndromes included the various flavors of affliction due to “repressed memories”—repressed *traumatic* memories—which were attributed by afflicted to ordinary sexual abuse, “satanic ritual” abuse, and even abducting aliens, and typically were “recovered” through hypnosis. These syndromes were quite common in the USA in the 1980s through the mid-1990s, and sold many books, and wrecked many lives, and also, in the end, cost some big-name psychiatrists their professional reputations. As hysterics they blew themselves up in the usual way, with ever more fantastic claims that essentially begged to be disbelieved. Most such claims (excepting the alien abduction claims, of course) involved false claims against real people, which thus brought the claimants into conflict with the criminal justice system—then not yet heavily feminized. The proponents and beneficiaries of these hysterics were effectively silenced when the elites of psychiatry, the media, and law enforcement agencies belatedly recognized that “hypnotic recovery of repressed memory” was really only a fancy way of generating dramatic fiction.

However, around the time that the recovered-memory craze fell into disrepute (and basically disappeared, demonstrating that it had been merely a social contagion), a new and remarkably similar epidemic involving traumatic memories started becoming very common. In this syndrome the patient, usually female, complained of sleeplessness, fibromyalgia, irritable bowels, chronic fatigue, or other selections from the rich lore of psychosomatic illness. Instead of hinting that these symptoms derived from some *repressed* trauma-memory, as in the now-discredited recovered-memory craze, the patient attributed them to an *accessible* trauma-memory, perhaps of a recent car accident or divorce, or even something as common as childbirth. It was an easy route to victimhood and the tangible and intangible benefits that went along with that status. For a person in the military or police, who had no shortage of alleged “traumas” to choose from, and could use such claims to get taxpayer-funded disability benefits, it was a gold mine.

I am describing PTSD, of course—Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. As a clinical entity it was rare in the 1960s and 70s. Now it is easily one of the most common psychiatric diagnoses. Even in the early 2000s, the U.S. National Institute of Mental Health estimated that more than 5 percent of women and almost 2 percent of men in the US “had PTSD” in the past year (“past-year prevalence”). In the US military, where a PTSD diagnosis can be a monetary gift that keeps on giving, the prevalence has been much higher—even among men, now that the benefits of victimhood in this context are monetary, i.e., go beyond the psychological comforts of victimhood that tend to draw women almost exclusively.



SOURCE: [\[LINK\]](#)

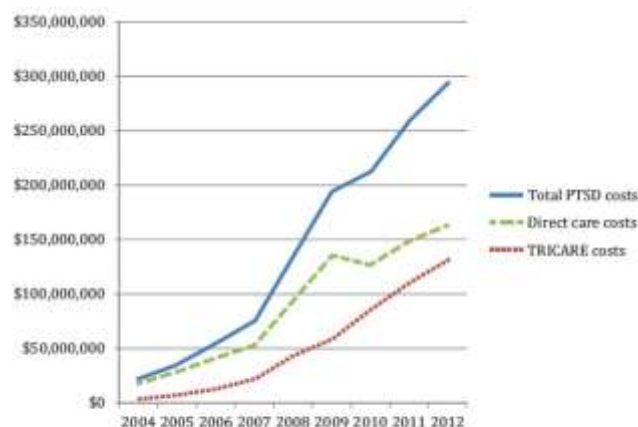


FIGURE 5-1 Costs of direct care for PTSD, cost of TRICARE for PTSD, and total cost of care for PTSD over time, 2004–2012. Costs are not adjusted for inflation. SOURCE: Kennell and Associates, 2013.

SOURCE: [\[LINK\]](#)

Despite its alleged roots in World War I and earlier “shell shock” cases, PTSD is essentially a modern, culture-bound syndrome. It first came to prominence as a veterans’ complaint with the help of Vietnam Vet advocacy groups in the aftermath of that war. However, as the recovered-memory epidemic receded in the 1990s, sensitive women and their enablers in the mental health profession began adopting it as a civilian, primarily female illness. From my perspective as a hysteria-aware skeptic, it was and continues to be almost perfect as a replacement for recovered-memory syndromes. There is no reliance on hypnosis, nor does it require claims against a perpetrator and resulting scrutiny from the justice system. In a newly feminized, newly sensitized age, how can it even be questioned? Therapists or psychiatrists who doubt its validity (a validity that is of course enshrined in the latest editions of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders) can lose not only their patients but also their professional reputations, even their licenses to practice. Skepticism from within academia or the medical profession therefore has been rare. And when doubts have been expressed, they usually have been expressed only in the most opaque and convoluted academese:

Nothing that I have written in this book should be construed as trivializing the acts of violence and the terrible personal losses that stand behind many traumatic memories. The suffering is real; PTSD is real. But can one also say that the facts now attached to PTSD are true (timeless) as well as real? Can questions about truth be divorced from the social, cognitive, and technological conditions through which researchers and clinicians come to know their facts and the meaning of facticity...? My answer is no. [from Allan Young’s [*The Harmony of Illusions*](#)]

MeToo

No sane person denies the reality of rape and other forms of sexual abuse and harassment. No sane person would want these behaviors to go unpunished. However, it should also be obvious that the cultural and political ascendancy of women has brought a clear shift in standards of evidence and argument in such cases, and more than a hint of copycatting social contagion—as the very name of the “MeToo” movement implies. Just as we saw in the recovered memory craze, and as occurs every day in the world of PTSD patients and therapists, the female victim/plaintiff’s expressed feelings of trauma—especially in highly publicized cases—now have much greater weight, culturally and judicially, than at any other

time in modern history, other than during witchcraft hysterias.

This new “overweightness” of female emotion was starkly evident in the recent prosecution of the film producer Harvey Weinstein. For example, a key accuser and prosecution witness, Jessica Mann, claimed with essentially no real corroborating evidence, and of course many years after the alleged event, that Weinstein had “raped” her. However, she admitted (there was email evidence, so she had to) that she had continued in an intimate relationship with Weinstein for years after the alleged rape, declaring that she loved him, etc. I think it’s fair to say that, if not for the new overweighting of female emotion and the resulting witch-hunt culture, prosecutors and juries would tend to view complaints like Mann’s as essentially dishonest efforts to “edit” shameful sexual histories. In fact, the same prosecutor who brought the case in 2018, amid tremendous media and political pressure to do so, had declined to do so three years earlier, when that pressure did not yet exist.

Similarly, some of the young women who provided paid sexual services to the predator Jeffrey Epstein—for years, and not just as minors—emerged long after, at a moment when the cultural winds favored them, to claim that they had been traumatized by abuse and were thus owed (further) monetary compensation. After Epstein’s death, at least some of them continued in this tree-shaking enterprise, with varying success, against Epstein associates and acquaintances including Ghislaine Maxwell, Alan Dershowitz, and Prince Andrew.

From the formal complaint of Virginia Roberts Giuffre, the most litigiously active of Epstein’s former sex kittens, against Prince Andrew:

Prince Andrew committed sexual assault and battery upon Plaintiff when she was 17 years old. As such, Prince Andrew is responsible for battery and intentional infliction of emotional distress pursuant to New York common law. The damage to Plaintiff has been severe and lasting

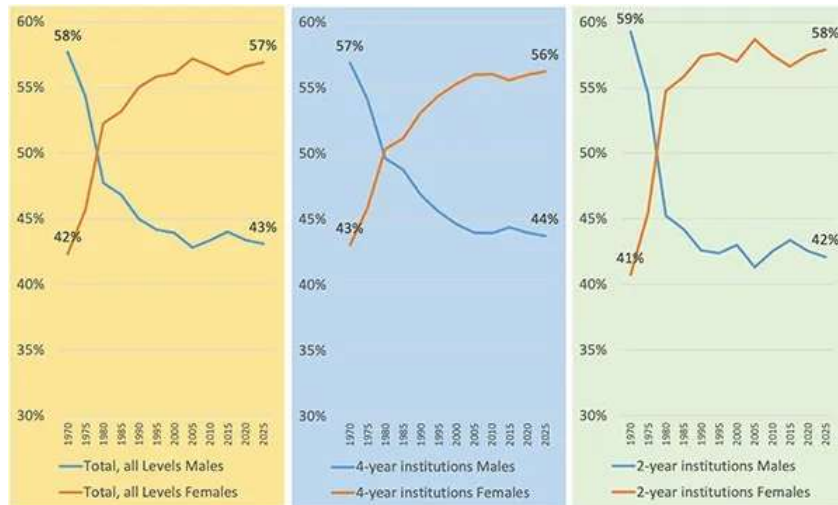
The below photograph depicts Prince Andrew, Plaintiff, and Maxwell at Maxwell’s home prior to Prince Andrew sexually abusing Plaintiff.



That's it! That photograph of a young woman who looks for all the world as if she is intensely pleased and charmed to meet a famous man—a very prince!—was all the “evidence” needed, in this brave, new, feminized legal system, to file a case that, merely by its brief existence, largely destroyed the famous man's life. Isn't it likely that such a case would have been thrown out of court (certainly laughed out of the court of public opinion) as a preposterous and blatant shakedown attempt, in the days before women had such overwhelming media, political, and judicial power? Isn't it chilling that such cases can now be brought not only without fear of sanction but also with some confidence regarding an eventual payout?

Painful utterances

I am old enough to recall that the English language was beginning to change—in ways consistent with women's cultural ascendancy—at least by the early 1980s. I encountered this a lot at university in that period, which, as it happens, was the period in which female undergraduates in the US began to outnumber male undergrads.



SOURCE: [\[LINK\]](#)

Female undergrads, in effect, declared certain words and phrases insensitive and effectively shooed them from ordinary discourse—starting with public discourse, and proceeding to private discourse. Ultimately many males started self-policing their own all-male conversations, and “problematic” words and phrases started disappearing from the language, except for their occasional use as examples of how benighted pre-feminized people used to speak.



These language changes, like all the other cultural changes apparently driven by the feminization of higher education and other institutions, were not all objectionable. I think we can all agree that male-dominated culture encouraged some words and themes that *were* cringingly offensive—even discounting for the distortion of retrospect.



However, as time went on, and especially in the last two decades, a phenomenon akin to a “land rush” took hold. Activist women, emboldened by their successes in deleting old, insensitive terminology or converting it to softer words, started reaching, competitively, for more and more stuff to change, even—and ultimately this was all that remained—words and phrases that no normal person found offensive. These activists issued demands, and used their media or other institutional power to apply pressure as needed—threatening, in essence, to set up a keening wail of hysteria if their demands were not met—and everyone who stood in their way folded, including big manufacturers, filmmakers, dictionary makers, style curators, medical associations, and sports teams.





We thus entered the era of “language policing,” though it was really a culture of enforcement of the new orthodoxy—and Inquisitionist punishment of the old heresies—in *all* forms, lingual, visual, conceptual, symbolic and otherwise. At its core, this new Inquisition was not really about enforcing “Left” orthodoxies over “Right” orthodoxies; it was more about creating a new, *female*—or at least female-activist—orthodoxy, concerning language and other culture elements, and of course exterminating the more insensitive, more “male” elements.

It was, in short, about making the world safe for the sensitive women who increasingly populated the West’s institutions. There was no central plan; there was just a broad application of pressure . . . by a mostly female set of sociology professors here, a mostly female set of immigration lawyers there, a mostly female set of political activists over there . . . to outlaw and eradicate speech and imagery that conceivably could cause emotional upset—and to replace these hard and horrid things with soft, new euphemisms (e.g., “abortion clinic” becomes “women’s health center,” “illegal alien” becomes “undocumented immigrant,” and “mental illness” becomes “behavioral health issues.”).

This broad social movement was unmistakably, quaveringly, feminine in its treatment of words and images as potential sources of trauma—it spoke of even mildly direct and honest language as being “violence” or “hate speech,” and sought to carve out “safe spaces” where the newly ennobled, newly empowered sensitives could be protected from all traumatic language, all pain-inducing

cognitive dissonance, all associational “triggers,” even “microaggressions.” These people wanted to have at least as many words for trauma as the proverbial eskimos do for snow.

It was a cultural movement driven by the emotional and ideological needs of a comparative minority of Western civilization, and otherwise almost completely unmoored from tradition and logical consistency. Thus, it wasn’t long before its proponents were doing and saying things that seemed absurd to normal people. My favorite is the activist insistence that the word “women” in some contexts fails to be inclusive towards trans men born female, and should be replaced, for example, with the term “menstruators.”

From the Palgrave Handbook of Critical Menstruation Studies [[link](#)]

The potential for a degendering of menstruation is likewise found in the multiplicity of it as phenomena. By showing that no menstruating body is more natural than another, we can counter the Othering of trans menstruators based on the conception of unnaturalness (Stryker 2013, 149; Barad 2015, 412–13). In my opinion, it is our responsibility as scholars and activists to do so; as part of the acknowledgment that there are no naturally preexisting boundaries of phenomena (Barad 2007, 139–40), I agree with post-constructionist scholars arguing that we are all accountable for the kind of phenomena we materialize (Barad 2003, 827; 2007, 90–91; Haraway 2016, 7). Within the field of critical menstruation studies, our depictions of menstruation and menstruators, and the knowledge we produce to de-stigmatize and de-taboo menstruation, directly affect menstruation as phenomena—not only in discursive but also material terms.

But, again, this elaborate renovation of culture by the West’s new intellectual leaders hasn’t been limited to the elimination of Oldspeak and invention of Newspeak. It also has sought to suppress traumatic or at least emotionally problematic facts and data—for example, data on how crime rates, IQ test results, educational achievement, socioeconomic outcomes, etc. tend to vary strongly by race.

This movement even hopes to prevent the existence of problematic *future* facts by banning various sensitive areas of inquiry. To that end it wants to replace—and

already to a great extent *has* replaced—the ideal of “academic freedom” with the new, improved ideal of “academic justice.” [[link](#)]

If our [Harvard] university community opposes racism, sexism, and heterosexism, why should we put up with research that counters our goals simply in the name of “academic freedom”?

Instead, I would like to propose a more rigorous standard: one of “academic justice.” When an academic community observes research promoting or justifying oppression, it should ensure that this research does not continue.

It follows from such reasoning that these sensitive activists hope to ban not only research but also all other forms of communicating or even debating ideas that they find threatening. Needless to add, “ideas that they find threatening” is a fluid definition—they can always construe ideas they dislike as “promoting or justifying oppression,” no matter how innocuous or mainstream those ideas may seem to a non-neurotic person.

And this is why “free speech” and “free debate,” formerly considered bedrock elements of Western liberalism, are now under such threat, particularly [among women](#), and particularly at universities, which began being dominated by women much earlier than most other cultural institutions did.

As a psychologist wrote in an [article](#) in 2021 (making points that were in my own earlier essays):

Across decades, topics, and studies, women are more censorious than men. Compared to men, women support more censorship of various kinds of sexual and violent content and content perceived as hateful or otherwise offensive to minorities.

Women are more supportive of illegalizing insults of immigrants, homosexual individuals, transgender individuals, the police, African Americans, Hispanics, Muslims, Jewish people, and Christians, and are more supportive of banning sexually explicit public statements and flag burning. In contrast, men evaluate free speech as more important than do women.

One likely reason for this pattern is that women are more averse to

interpersonal harm and have a relatively stronger concern for protecting others. Indeed, women believe sexual media content has more harmful effects on the self and others, and women view hate speech as more harmful and violent than do men.

Although support for censorship is often associated with authoritarianism, it likely is motivated—at least in part—by desires to protect others from harm. In the communications literature, the third-person effect refers to a tendency for people to view others (compared to the self) as particularly vulnerable to media content, especially for negative or potentially harmful media. And those with larger self-other vulnerability gaps tend to be more supportive of censorship.

The higher sensitivity to harm among women likely influences how women weigh the tradeoffs regarding freedom of expression vs. the protection of vulnerable others.

For example, in a 2019 report by the Knight Foundation, *59% of women said that promoting an inclusive society is more important than protecting free speech, whereas 71% of men said that protecting free speech is the more important value*. Moreover, 58% of college men said it is never acceptable to shout down a speaker, whereas only 41% of women agreed that it is never acceptable to do so.

[my italics]

Again, this cultural shift appears to stem from the greater female sensitivity to emotional pain, including the empathetic pain of seeing or even imaginatively contemplating harm done to others.

The Great Feminization as a global mission

Modern Western women's compassionate protectiveness of others—which I suspect is most intense among women who don't have children at home to absorb their compassion—does not extend only to African Americans or even to the huddled Mesoamerican masses who currently surge across the US southern border by the millions every year. It extends far, far beyond the water's edge, encompassing the whole world and its myriad miseries.

Thus, being now highly feminized, the United States government and many other Western governments in the 21st century make a point of preaching feminist, LGBTQ, BLM, and other Great Feminization values in most or all of the countries where they have diplomatic missions—even quite conservative and traditional countries where these values are not particularly welcome.



US EMBASSY, SEOUL, 2020

It must be puzzling to the people and the leadership of the countries that have to put up with this. They must wonder at the pushiness, the narcissistic lack of self-awareness, of Americans and their government. But, in a way, this is part of a fundamental Western tradition of evangelism that goes back at least as far as the Age of Exploration. This evangelistic impulse was once presumably an adaptive trait, an auto-ennobling of physical and cultural conquest. And, what started with the conquistadors' planting of crosses on hilltops and mass baptisms of conquered natives, and later evolved into secular evangelisms about trade and democracy, is now about the new, improved ideology—as always, treated by its crypto-Christian missionaries as a universal faith.



Of course, a feminization-driven, more maternal emphasis on empathy and protectiveness has many other implications in the realms of diplomacy, foreign-policy and war. It should bring a lower tolerance for deaths in combat, for example, but, at the same time, a greater willingness to use military power to resolve conflicts that tug at the heartstrings, even if they are fairly peripheral in terms of national interests.



The feminization of Western foreign policy elites also would seem to predict a greater reliance on “appeals to global opinion,” a sort of point-and-scream strategy, versus the more traditional, manly approach of just fighting and winning.

I think it’s fair to say that we see all these trends—with compromises, where necessary, to soften their contradictions—playing out now in various foreign crises.

* * *

4 SYSTEM FAILURE

One of the things that prompted me to start thinking about cultural and political feminization was the work of Cambridge University psychologist Simon Baron-Cohen. In a series of scientific studies and popular science books starting roughly at the turn of the millennium, Baron-Cohen advanced the hypothesis that while women (on average) are better than men at empathizing, men are better than women at what he called “systemizing.”

The way I like to frame this is that women’s greater emotional sensitivity means that they have a greater ability to sense (and experience, to some degree) other people’s emotions, which in turn contributes to a higher affinity for other humans and social relationships. Men, by contrast, with their lesser emotional sensitivity, end up with a higher affinity (compared to women) for more abstract and inanimate things—including systems made of those things. This would help explain, for example, the common observation (noted among others by Larry Summers in his fateful 2005 speech) that women are more into thinking about human relationships, whereas men are more likely to be into the workings of cars, computers, and other gadgets, or the abstract mechanics of military or sports strategies. Again, these basic differences probably reflect the distinct roles of females and males throughout most of human and hominin history.

A greater male affinity for abstract things and systems would in turn help explain—as Summers and many others have pointed out—why women tend to be underrepresented in science and engineering realms. Women constitute only about a quarter of the STEM workforce in the US, and only about one-eighth of the engineering workforce—and this is despite decades of heavy pressure on girls and women to get into these fields, as well as strong discrimination in their favor in academic and industrial hiring.

What social changes have plausibly resulted from the combination of women’s lower STEM-subject affinity with their unprecedented cultural and political influence?

One is the anti-male, anti-meritocratic discrimination I just mentioned. Feminist

dogma holds that a below-50% participation rate for women in any field can only be the result of misogynistic discrimination, which must be remedied somehow—by any means necessary. Thus, STEM graduate programs, along with faculty and industry hiring, have had to discriminate in favor of women, which requires lowering standards.

At the same time, cultural and political feminization has promoted mass immigration and associated set-asides for nonwhites, adding somewhat to the pressure to relax normal standards of STEM aptitude and competence (though of course many immigrants *are* competent engineers), and discouraging STEM-oriented whites, especially white males. Statistics do show a long-term decline in the percentage of U.S.-born individuals among resident scientists and engineers—which could be due in part to this discrimination.

Foreign-born in STEM workforce, 1990-2015

Year	Narrow STEM Definition		STEM + Health and Social Science	
	Foreign-born STEM workforce	Foreign-born as share of STEM workforce	Foreign-born STEM workforce	Foreign-born as share of STEM workforce
1990	508,659	11.9%	1,228,057	10.6%
2000	1,341,451	18.6%	2,277,730	15.3%
2010	1,653,206	22.3%	3,279,195	18.0%
2015	1,976,722	24.3%	3,945,759	19.3%

Source: American Immigration Council analysis of American Community Survey data.

The partly forced entry of women into STEM schools and industries has, moreover, created fertile ground for a wokeist ideological transformation of these institutions. Across STEM as well as other fields, women have wielded their new power in part to bring about the mass-hiring of highly paid political commissars known as Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) “officers.” The mission of these woke commissars, in STEM fields, is not only to enforce discrimination against white males, but also more generally to make these fields into friendlier spaces for females and nonwhites—spaces where STEM experts can take a break from their complex equations and machines to talk about the pain of discrimination and the joys of diversity.



All this must be having a very negative, demoralizing effect on many would-be—especially white male—STEM workers, poisoning STEM fields and reducing their competitiveness vs. the STEM workforces of less woke countries such as China.

The drift from hierarchical religion

When I grew up in the USA in the 1960s and 70s, religious participation in the country tended to occur in traditional forms. There were Roman Catholic, Greek Orthodox, Episcopalian, Baptist, Methodist, Lutheran and other more or less mainline Christian churches; there were a few further-out sects such as Seventh Day Adventists, Christian Scientists and Mormons; and there were Jewish synagogues. And that was about it.

Then in the early 1970s, amid Vietnam protests and the “hippie” movement, an interesting trend began, at least as I—then still a child—perceived it. Traditional churches began letting their hair down. They started using more contemporary music—folksy vocals, backed by guitars and tambourines—and more contemporary themes in worship. (Remember *Godspell*?) That was fine for some people. For others, it wasn’t enough. Led by its females, virtually all the baptized Catholics of my immediate and extended family left the Catholic church entirely, joining the new, Born-Again, “charismatic” churches that were forming everywhere.

I was then old enough, and doubtful enough about religion in general, that I declined to move in the same direction. But, like anyone, I could see the sweeping change, which eventually came to be called the Fourth Great Awakening.

I think it was one of those cases in which denied desires and preferences well up behind the dam of traditional institutions, for years or decades, until they suddenly break through, bringing rapid change—enhanced by various mechanisms of social contagion. More specifically, millions of people—led by women in all the cases I knew about—decided that they didn’t like the structures of mainline Christianity. (There was a broadly similar if more muted trend in Judaism.)

Those traditional structures, in the case of Roman Catholicism for example, had involved a fairly complex, millennia-old hierarchy extending from the Pope down to lay helpers at the parish level. That was mirrored in the structure of worship, specifically the somewhat rigid, roughly hour-long ritual known as Mass. In the Fourth Great Awakening, people chose much different, much simpler structures of organization and worship.

At the apices of the new church structures stood not some remote and infallible patriarch, but the local pastor, who increasingly often was a woman. (Roughly 10 percent of Protestant pastors are now female.) The worship services also were much less bound to ritual prayer and other elements of traditional liturgies, were much more participatory and flexible in their themes, and I think in general were much less “systemized.” The old rituals, catechistic conformity, and the view of god as a distant and somewhat abstract lawgiver became more and more passé.

A more intimate conception of God, or Jesus Christ, took hold. In this new view, God/Jesus didn’t merely love us all; He loved each and every one of us, and even watched over and guided—especially if we asked Him to—our individual lives. If we were sick, He healed us. If we were poor, He put money or other resources in our way. No longer the stern, impartial lawgiver and judge, he had become more like a sympathetic therapist. Overall, my impression is that this pronounced shift from more systemized forms of religion to simpler, much-less-hierarchical, “direct-relationship” religiosity was driven at least in large part by women—whose new cultural and institutional power meant that their particular psychological needs had to be catered to as never before.

Similarly, the pagan religious system called Wicca—often cited as one of the fastest-growing forms of religion/spirituality in recent decades—has structures of organization and worship that are relatively simple and flexible compared to what is seen in traditional, mainline Christian churches. These structures also are very

female-oriented, emphasizing New Agey ritual over complex theology. Of course, Wicca as a “witches’ religion” also gives its female participants a status that they could never have had in traditional mainline Christianity.

The extensive realignments in religious affiliation and expression over the past half century are therefore, very plausibly, yet another reflection of women’s new cultural power.

* * *

5 WOMEN AND NATURE

It is often said that women, with their ancient animal role as child-bearers, are tied more closely to Nature, compared to men. I would say that women are also natural environmentalists. Children with their fast-dividing cells are on the whole relatively vulnerable to toxic or otherwise unhealthy environments, and it makes sense that women would have an innate alertness to this threat—and in general would prefer anything that promotes, or claims to promote, a healthy environment.

We see women's alertness to environmental threats in the morning sickness, food/smell aversions, and nesting reflex behaviors (e.g., sudden compulsion to tidy the house) of pregnancy. These behaviors are linked to surges in blood levels of estrogen and other pregnancy hormones, and are widely assumed to be adaptive (if imperfect) reflexes meant to keep the environment as healthy as possible for unborn or newborn children.

If hormonal surges in mothers create these extreme aversions, it's plausible that everyday hormone levels, even in childless women, create lesser but still detectable aversions—perhaps only at a nonconscious level but enough to shape behavior including policy preferences.

Toxophobia aside, women also have—as discussed at length in chapter 3—relatively high emotional sensitivity, which may account for the relatively high empathetic compassion women generally display towards animals, the relative aversion they have to hunting, etc.

I suggest that these traits, newly empowered through mass cultural and political feminization, are among the biggest drivers of the shift towards “green,” environmentalist themes in Western life over the past several decades.

Environmentalism has deep roots in American and Western history. However, it started to become central in Western life only in the 1960s and 70s, with an emerging broad awareness of the harms—to wildlife as well as to humans—of industrial pollution, litter, and the overuse of pesticides.



This awareness was driven in part by other changes stemming from post-WW2 prosperity. People had more leisure time in which to worry about such quality-of-life matters. Thanks to rapid population growth, the mass production of automobiles, and other aspects of industrial expansion including coal- and diesel-fired power plants, there was also more environmental degradation than ever before. Urban smog, caused by these pollution sources, developed more frequently after the war, and by the 1960s was consistently drawing public attention to the aesthetic and health problems of air pollution.

Environmentalism thus didn't necessarily start as a female-driven movement. But it certainly has drawn many women into its ranks. Prominent early environmentalists included Rachel Carson, author of the highly influential 1962 anti-pesticide book *Silent Spring*; the primatologist Jane Goodall; and Rosalie Edge, a feminist who pivoted from the American women's suffrage movement in the 1920s to a leading role in the Audubon Society.

There is also, by now, a substantial body of evidence that women on average are likelier than men to embrace environmental causes. This has been called the "eco gender gap."

It also seems plausible that the maternal traits underlying women's greater affinity for environmental causes could explain many other, adjacent, cultural phenomena, such as:

- The anti-nuclear-weapon, anti-nuclear-power movements, which began in the 1970s, prominently featured women, and fed upon nightmare visions of nuclear holocaust, radiation-ruined environments, etc.

- Broader concerns over uncontrolled environmental changes, e.g., global warming and climate change—and even the “global cooling” scare of the 1970s.
- The “antivax” movement (pre-COVID) which was led by women including the actress Jenny McCarthy and espoused the belief that common childhood vaccines such as the measles-mumps-rubella vaccine cause autism.
- Widespread folkloric beliefs among women concerning “toxins” in the body, quack “detox” and “chelation” practices; and the rise of the apparent hysteria variant known as Multiple Chemical Sensitivity Syndrome.
- The anti-GMO (genetically modified organism) movement, which has had an outsized influence on public views of GMO and on food producers, and essentially regards genetic modification of crops and other foods as potentially or likely toxic—notwithstanding the fact that all cultivated plants and animals are *ipso facto* “GMO.”
- The vast “health supplement”/“natural medicine” industry, whose products are mostly used by women, seldom have backing from randomized clinical trial data, and appear for the most part to operate on the placebo principle, if they benefit users at all.
- The even-more-vast “organic” foods industry.

Of course, none of these phenomena is exclusively female. Additionally, it can be hard to disentangle women’s preferences from men’s with simple survey questions. Much of what the average man eats, for example, is in fact chosen and prepared by his wife or girlfriend. Men also are influenced by media, academia, the entertainment industry etc., whose messages now reflect women’s preferences to an unprecedented degree—men in that sense have been partly feminized by female-driven cultural change.

All in all, though, the obvious inference here is that, in the absence of women’s new cultural power, pro-environment, toxin-aversion attitudes would be much less popular and pervasive than they are now, and we’d probably have a lot more nuclear power-plants.

* * *

6 FIGHTING, RISKING, CIVILIZING—AND TESTOSTERONE

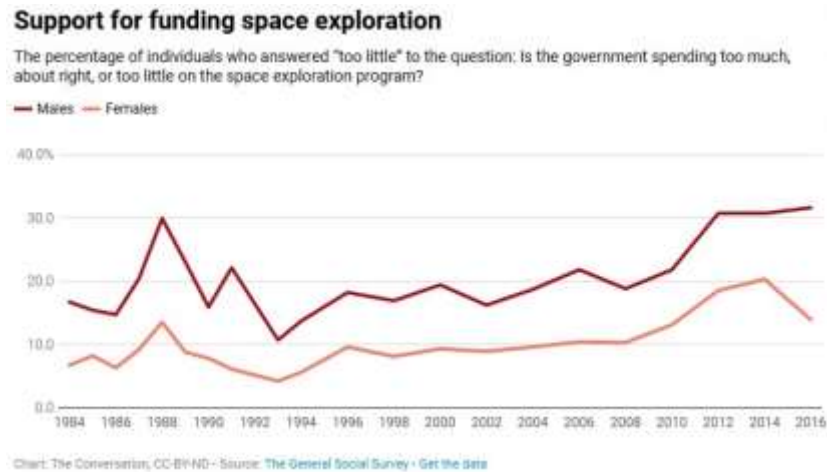
From conception through adolescence, male and female humans—mammals in general—are driven along distinct neural and anatomical developmental pathways by androgen and estrogen hormones, men having more of the former, women having more of the latter. The divergences in those developmental pathways are what underlie innate differences in attitudes and behaviors between men and women.

One of the most striking of these behavioral/attitude differences has to do with *risk*: Women are, on average compared to men, markedly less willing to undertake risks—more “risk averse”—and this gender difference has been shown ([here](#) and [here](#), for example) to be broadly testosterone (T)-linked. In general, research in the past few decades suggests that either the bloodstream T level, or a marker (based on relative finger lengths) of prenatal T exposure, or both, predicts a person’s propensity for risky behaviors, as well as for competition and aggression.

Social psychology experiments on risk aversion typically examine risk behaviors, such as gambling choices, that can be studied relatively tidily in a laboratory setting. At the same time, in the modern West, low risk aversion (meaning a greater willingness to take risks) is often framed as a negative, maladaptive trait that tends to lead people astray. In fact, in the real world, the ability to cope with fear and take big risks is probably an essential step in the process of civilization. As Camille Paglia famously quipped, “If civilization had been left in female hands, we’d still be living in grass huts.”

Indeed, a greater willingness to take risks, even in comparison to other male-run civilizations, is plausibly one of the reasons the West got so far out in front of the rest: exploring and conquering most of the non-European world, developing the most technologically and culturally advanced societies ever known, exploring outer space, etc. But now that the West’s culture and policy have been heavily feminized, the lesser female enthusiasm for risky adventures like space exploration—a difference that seems even more pronounced anecdotal than it

is in surveys—helps explain why spending on such endeavors has become just a tiny fraction of spending on welfare and other matters dear to women’s hearts.



[\[link\]](#)

That testosterone reduces fear, enhances the willingness to compete, and enhances the desire to dominate probably is a major reason men, on average compared to women, are more competitive, more willing to engage in violence, less subject to anxiety and fear, and less emotionally sensitive in general. Again, this is entirely what one would expect from men’s traditional roles not only as explorers but also as hunters and warriors. And, of course, we know that the vast majority of violent criminals are male. Thus, “willingness to fight” and related traits are obviously gender-determined to a great extent.

Should we care if the West’s feminization makes its people and their leaders less inclined towards fighting as well as exploration? Yes, we should care, especially if not all countries have been feminized. In the latter context, a country’s feminine aversion to fighting could result in its becoming enslaved, or even extinguished in genocide, by a less-feminized rival. But even a more subtle weakness could make a country highly susceptible to a bully’s manipulative threats.

For example, many already view the current New Zealand prime minister, Jacinda Ardern, as a personification of that weakness.

Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern labelled the 'West's woke weak link' over reluctance to join Five Eyes' China stance

11:26, Apr 22 2021



I think we also see some of this in the war between Russia and Ukraine, which is in its early stages as I write. Despite the apparent moral lopsidedness of the conflict, and the fact that neither is losing fast enough for peace talks to be necessary, both sides appear eager to be seen engaging in such talks. This presumably seems normal and rational to modern, feminized Western sensibilities. But now try to picture Churchill, in 1940, sitting down to negotiate with Hitler. That is something Hitler wanted, of course, but, then as now, it would have been recognizable as a sign of weakness on Churchill's part, and a trigger for widespread demoralization. Hitler by then was viewed (pretty much as Putin is viewed today) as an unprovoked aggressor who should be brought to book for his crimes.

Unfortunately, in this and other crises, in geopolitics and in ordinary life, fear in the moment often dictates our actions. Yet cool common sense tells us that bullies ultimately will rule over us if we cannot, in time, master our fear of them, and confront them, despite what may be terrible costs—costs that tend to escalate when confrontation is delayed. If we are handing over our civilization to a subset of the population that has a harder time managing their fear in that sense, we may be putting ourselves in great peril.

In general, human civilization seems to require a willingness—at least in a critical mass of the population—to undertake fearful hardships, stresses, even violence and death, for good ends. Without men and their fear-lowering testosterone, who would supply that crucial willingness?

Testosterone and a feminized culture

Speaking of testosterone, if you haven't been living in a cave for the past two decades, you know that T levels in men have been declining. One large study of Danish men, for example, found that those born in the 1960s had, on average, 14 percent lower T levels than age-matched men born in the 1920s. Similar studies have been done in the US and many other developed countries, with similar

findings. Some of these studies have specifically controlled for potentially confounding factors such as increases in obesity, which lowers T, and still have found evidence of a decline.

No one really knows what is causing this drop in T levels among men. Apart from rising obesity, suspected culprits include estrogen-mimicking compounds that leach out of common plastics, and the big decline in cigarette smoking among men (smoking inhibits estrogen synthesis, and a few studies have linked smoking to higher T).

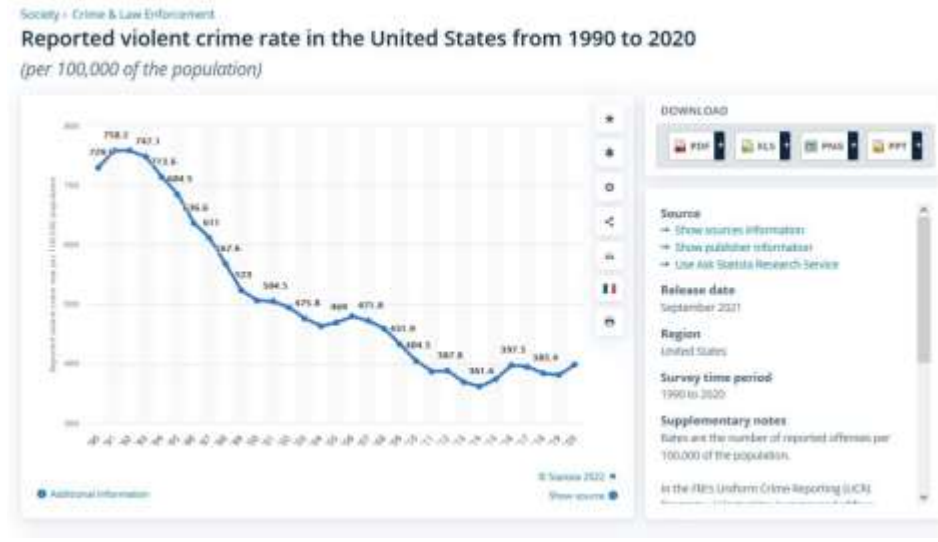
One hypothesis that never gets mentioned—well, except by [me](#)—is that cultural feminization is itself a significant driver of declines in T. In other words, cultural feminization represents a shift in cultural themes and norms, effectively suppressing or stigmatizing many traditional aspects of traditional masculinity, and of course simply taking power away from men, and all this has had an essentially feminizing effect on the male brain, resulting among other things in lower T levels.

To the average reader, it may seem totally implausible that sociocultural factors, working via cognition and emotion, can influence something as deeply biological as the secretion of a sex hormone. However, it is a well-established phenomenon—in fact, it's quite clear that the androgen system in mammals was designed by Evolution to be regulated by social and other external cues.

It is known, for example, that sexual activity raises T levels in men (and women). Also, sports players and even their fans show increases in T levels after winning games, whereas losers show decreases. In general, it seems that T levels in men tend to rise before fights and other challenges, and either stay high or keep rising after wins, and drop after losses—one of Nature's "winner take all" effects. There is even evidence that becoming a father—which requires a less aggressive, more nurturing character—downregulates T production. In other words, T levels definitely do rise or fall based on external sociocultural cues, with negative experiences being more likely to drive T levels lower. And thus, in a feminized society that hands men Ls every day, we should expect them to show big drops in T.

T and Civilization

In principle, the consequences of lower T levels aren't all bad. For example, there appears to have been a striking drop in the rate of violent crime in the US since the 1980s and early 90s.



Of course, there are many other factors, including declining lead exposures, the passing of the 80s/90s crack-cocaine epidemic, and changes in urban policing policies, that could help explain this trend. But the hypothesis that falling T levels, over the same period, have contributed, is at least plausible. Wouldn't that be a good thing?

Maybe in that narrow sense, it would. But, again, there would be tradeoffs. Some would involve men's health: Low-T, for example, is known to promote depression, osteoporosis, obesity, erectile dysfunction and heart disease, among other adverse health consequences. Other tradeoffs might affect society even more profoundly. In particular, low-T would be expected to reduce men's sperm counts—which, by the way, is a trend that researchers have specifically detected. Lower T and lower sperm counts would be expected, in turn, to make men less likely to marry and/or have children. One well-known study did find that lower-T men in their mid-20s were less likely to be married several years later—and of course many studies have noted the wider trends of falling marriage and cohabitation rates, and associated birth rates, in recent decades.



SOURCE: [\[LINK\]](#)

Endemic low-T in a society, or a wider civilization as in the case of the West, might thus be considered a clear warning sign that the bottom is dropping out. One would expect this warning sign to emerge in a society that has been subject to a major defeat in war. In the West, in a historically unprecedented turn of events, it may be happening *despite* Western war victories and geopolitical supremacy. In other words, Western social liberalism, with its handover of most cultural power to women, may have delivered to its men, and to Western civilization, the equivalent of an annihilating defeat.

* * *

7 DO WOMEN HAVE A SURRENDER REFLEX?

As a woman, I have no country. As a woman, my country is the whole world.

—Virginia Woolf

In the last chapter I highlighted the possibility that women’s relatively high emotional sensitivity, and relatively high risk/violence aversion, may make them (on average) less willing to enter into confrontations, including wars, even when men would see those confrontations as necessary for long term civilizational health or survival.

In this brief chapter, I want to note the possibility that women have another trait that—if given free rein in a feminized civilization—could lead to a similar “surrender” outcome and civilization loss.

This trait can be inferred from the references in early works of history, and even in the Old Testament, to tribe-vs.-tribe battles that ended with the slaughter of all the males and the enslavement of the females [[link](#)]. Here, for example, is Agamemnon in the Iliad:

“Not a single one of them must escape sheer destruction at our hands. Not even if a mother carries one in her belly and he is male, not even he should escape. All together they must be exterminated from Troy . . .”

Such references, along with recent genetic studies of ancient population movements and admixings, suggest pretty strongly that genocide, or an andro-genocide that eliminated the men of an enemy ethnicity and raped/enslaved their women, was a common occurrence in conflicts between populations—a brutal behavior shaped presumably by cold evolutionary logic.

If conflicts ending in the killing of the losing population’s men and raping or concubinage of the women were common for a long period of human existence,

they plausibly would have created evolutionary selection pressures favoring women who complied with their conquerors. In other words, a woman in a losing population who was more obedient, even welcoming, towards her conquerors, would stand a better chance of having her genes passed on to future generations, via couplings with conqueror men. A woman who “stood by her man” and continued to resist her conquerors would be much more likely to die instead.

Thus, we should consider whether female evolutionary psychology contains a “surrender reflex” with respect to potential conquerors. This is obviously an issue that is likely to be explosively controversial, to the extent it is taken seriously. But I think it at least needs to be studied—it hasn’t been studied directly at all, as far as I know. Really, the mere likelihood that women are innately divided in their loyalties, at a deep, nonconscious level, should set off alarm bells in modern societies where women routinely make decisions regarding national defense, immigration, and other matters relevant to national survival against competitors.



* * *

8 CONTAGIONS AND COALITIONS

From the late Renaissance to the early Industrial Age, it was common for European families to send their adolescent daughters to convents for long periods, in order to educate them, to let them become nuns, or just to keep them out of trouble. The experience must have been something like *Girl, Interrupted*, but with lots of medieval-style Catholicism, stone walls, and cold baths. Not too surprisingly, the prison-like concentrations of stressed, sexually maturing girls began incubating epidemics of hysteria, often with florid sexual aspects. Given the mystical and demonological themes that were prevalent in Christian cultures of the day, the epidemics generally took the form of “demonic possession.”

Sometimes these episodes stayed within convent walls, and either burned out from lack of attention or broke up after the forced dispersal of the participants. But in some notable cases recorded in the history books, convent hysterias had significant impacts beyond the convents—typically when the victims blamed their possessions and/or sexual activity on a male priest. Often this was the priest who said Mass and heard confessions at the convent. The claims against him would be that he had either directly debauched his victims, or had done so remotely via priapic demons. These accusations and the acting-out behaviors that went with them could be competitive and contagious among convent girls, resulting in lurid, highly detailed claims and possession theatrics, even in cases where the accused priest was clearly innocent.

One of the most notorious of the convent hysterias began in 1632 when an epidemic of supposed demonic possession swept through an Ursuline convent in Loudoun, France. The affected young women claimed that they had been possessed and sexually abused by demons sent by a local priest, Urbain Grandier. He was not the convent confessor, and could not have done the things alleged—virtually all the women who accused him had never been in his presence. But he was fairly well known locally; moreover, he was good looking and wealthy, and was rumored to be quite the ladies’ man—the daughters of several prominent local families being among his alleged conquests. Later historians and writers, including Aldous Huxley, who novelized the story in *The Devils of Loudoun*, suggested that the convent’s Mother Superior, the index case in the hysteria, had heard of Grandier’s romantic exploits and had developed a sexual obsession with him.

To the investigators who were initially called in, there was ample evidence that the “demonic possessions” and associated claims against Grandier amounted to hysterical fantasies. Unfortunately for Grandier, there was also a political dimension to the case. On an unrelated matter, he had recently made an enemy of the powerful Cardinal Richelieu, King Louis XIII’s right-hand man. On Richelieu’s authority, a new investigation of Grandier was set up to reach the “correct” verdict and suppress contradictory evidence.

To this end, there were public “exorcisms” of the possessed nuns. These were fantastic displays in which the women, reportedly well coached by Richelieu’s minions, mimed sexual acts while loudly accusing Grandier of various demonic crimes. Thousands of townspeople and even tourists attended these spectacles, and, no doubt as Richelieu had hoped, many considered the nuns’ antics to be convincing evidence of Grandier’s guilt.

Eventually some of the affected nuns, including the Mother Superior whose antics had set off the whole hysteria, had second thoughts and publicly recanted. Unfortunately for Grandier, the case had acquired too much momentum by then, and he was found guilty, tortured, and burned at the stake in 1634.

The coalition-building sex

Why do I bring up that 400-year-old witch-hunt, in a book about contemporary cultural feminization? Isn’t the Loudoun case just a historical oddity from a benighted age of demon-beliefs and repressed nuns?

I bring it up because it highlights aspects of femininity that I think are primordial but also remain very active and relevant in contemporary society, and need to be covered at least briefly in any discussion of women’s new influence on culture. So far in this book, I have mostly covered female traits—at least putative traits—that seem to have evolved as adaptations for women’s maternal roles. Here in this chapter, I want to examine a different set of traits—ones that may have evolved in part for female empowerment, or even collective defense, against the “stronger” sex.

Cases like the hysterical outbreak at Loudoun belong to what should (by now) be a familiar, recurring pattern: in which women—in an apparently contagious, cascading, “coalition-building” and even competitive manner—make claims of having been traumatized, almost always by a male. The recent Weinstein, Epstein, and Cosby cases were like this—indeed, virtually all #MeToo-type cases fit this

pattern. The public parade of Judge Brett Kavanaugh's accusers, with their lurid, weepy tales, fits this pattern too.

Trauma claims are the most obvious features of these episodes. Less obvious but no less important is the social contagion aspect. The term "hysteria" is often suppressed or avoided these days, due to women's power in psychiatry and related professions, but traditionally it has been used to describe claims of illness or harm that are both imaginary and *contagious*. For example, convent hysterics such as the one at Loudoun were understood even by many ecclesiastical authorities of the time to be capable of spreading infectiously within individual convents. In some cases, affected young women, sent from one convent to another as part of a dispersal strategy, would seed outbreaks of hysterical behavior in their new institutions. Hysterics in more open settings, such as the one at Salem (which began with a group of girls and women acting out "possession" behaviors similar to those seen in European convent episodes), were apt to spread more freely through their communities and into neighboring ones. More modern, medicalized forms of hysteria such as Charcot's "hysteroepilepsy" of the late 1800s and the "multiple personality disorder" (MPD) that became prominent in the 1980s, also grew in scope as they were publicized and the knowledge of how to act them out spread among susceptible/inclined women.

Now in the age of the Internet there is the potential for near-instant mass contagions of these trauma tales. Even one prominent news story about one alleged victim may be enough to trigger the participation of many others from around the world. The very term that feminists use for these cases—"MeToo"—reflects this broadcast effect.

But what about the *truth* of the claims in these episodes? If a man actually has—for example—engaged in serial sexual assault, and his victims duly come forward to file complaints so that charges are brought against him, how is that "hysteria" or anyway a remarkable social phenomenon requiring explanation? My response is that in such cases there is no need for a social-psych explanation—but that *I'm not referring to such cases here*. I'm referring to cases in which the claims are obviously to some extent false or exaggerated, are made *years or decades* after the alleged assaults, come in cascades that strongly suggest a social contagion, and typically wouldn't have been prosecuted in the pre-woke judicial system due to these factors and the overall lack of evidence.

Another common theme in these episodes is the victim's loss of agency—a helplessness on her part that implicitly absolves her of any responsibility for her

plight, and underscores her urgent need for aid and sympathy. In premodern and early-modern spirit-possession cases, the loss of agency (to the possessing spirit) *was* the traumatic event. Late 20th century MPD cases worked in almost but not quite the same way: The victim's "dissociation" into "alter personalities" was said to be not the trauma itself but, rather, the principal reaction to the trauma. As one prominent pro-MPD psychiatrist [\[link\]](#) put it at the time, MPD is the victim imagining that the abuse she is suffering is happening to someone else. However, in both spirit-possession and MPD, possessing spirits and "alter personalities" often are designed to highlight the victim's traumatized and helpless state, and may even act as her overt spokespersons, explicitly detailing her trauma to her audience—a job that in #MeToo cases is externalized in the form of a plaintiff's lawyer.

Similarly, the hysterics who were studied/induced by pioneering psychiatrist/neurologist Jean-Martin Charcot in the 1880s, though they were not afflicted by spirits or alters, were seized by mysterious syndromes that mimicked epilepsies or movement disorders and ostensibly robbed them of their will, contorting their bodies and putting them into trance, "hypnotic" states. The theme of hypnosis, of course, runs through virtually all modern forms of hysteria, as a route to the hysterical state of consciousness and the retrieval of buried trauma memories—and as a suspender of ordinary consciousness and agency.



CHARCOT WITH ONE OF HIS CELEBRATED CASES

The loss-of-agency theme is still present in more modern, matter-of-fact cascades of sex-assault claims. In the Cosby case, for example, his accusers typically acknowledged having dined with him, having drunk alcohol with him, having gone to his hotel room at night, or having done other things that hint at some degree of

volition. But virtually all of these women claimed or suggested that Cosby had then robbed them of their ability to resist by slipping them tranquilizer or “knock out” pills of one kind or another. Weinstein’s accusers, for their part, have spoken of his coercion and threats, of his menacing bulk, of his “power” to destroy their careers. Epstein’s accusers have claimed in some cases that he “enslaved” them, if not by actually clapping them in chains then by flying them to remote islands from which no escape was possible. I am not trying to argue these cases, let alone defend the actions of someone like Epstein, but I think it’s worth noting that as far as I know none of the alleged victims has offered evidence that she fought back against the accused and was overpowered.

Lastly, there seems to be a social aura of intense feeling around these cases. They don’t exist in isolation as civil or criminal matters to be decided by a sober, judicial weighing of facts. We may pretend that they do; but they clearly don’t. Many women, including female journalists, are fiercely, even blindly, supportive of the plaintiffs, and are ready to punish anyone who is insensitive enough to express skepticism. Some men have their female-protecting instincts activated and are also strongly supportive. Many of the rest, perhaps a large majority, are skeptical but know better than to draw opprobrium by saying anything. A few, of course, do voice their skepticism and catch hell for it—and though their skepticism may be well-founded and perfectly logical, even obvious, we tend to see such people as foolish rather than honest or brave or perspicacious. An unspoken but widely accepted fact about hysterias and related trauma-tale cascades is that the truth has little power against the mass emotions they evoke.

Superpower of the Weak

“Power” may be an essential concept here. One can speculate almost endlessly about this sort of thing, but an obvious hypothesis is that these female-driven trauma-tale cascades are, at least in part, manifestations of an ancient, instinctive “asymmetrical warfare” tactic—a means by which women collectively can defeat men who are on an individual basis physically and psychologically more powerful. As one well known anthropologist, I.M. Lewis, referring to female-dominated African possession clubs called *zar* cults, has put it:

zar possession provides women patients (acting consciously or unconsciously) with an opportunity to pursue their interests and demands in a context of male dominance. [Lewis, *Ecstatic Religion*, p. 71]

Where they are given little domestic security and are otherwise ill-protected from the pressures and exactions of men, women may thus

resort to spirit possession as a means both of airing their grievances obliquely, and of gaining some satisfaction. [Lewis, p. 68]

If women have evolved an instinct to use this tactic, or have evolved traits that favor such behavior, it's at least conceivable that men would have evolved their own way of responding.

What is the typical male way of responding? These days, I think it is best described as appeasement. Plausibly this is an evolved, instinctive response. One can imagine that it would have worked pretty well in older, patriarchal societies where men held nearly all the power and the risks that came from letting women "blow off steam" would have been very limited. Indeed, according to Lewis:

Depending on the marital circumstances and the value placed upon the wife concerned, the normal reaction is for the husband [of the *zar* cult possession "victim"] to accept reluctantly a few bouts of this kind, especially if they are not too frequent. [Lewis, p. 68]

As Lewis noted, possession cults and similar groups were sometimes formed or joined by socially marginalized men—his view was that social marginalization was the real driver. But of course no group would have been more consistently marginalized than women.

In any case, now in modern societies where women have an unprecedented level of power, and where there are few if any barriers to their taking ever more power, appeasement appears to backfire most of the time. Apologies, even vague ones, or anything placatory, are taken as confessions, and thus as proper justifications for the punishments the furies want to deliver. In this way, women's power ratchets ever upward.

If women have evolved this cascade tactic, or otherwise find it relatively easy to adopt, as a kind of "equalizer" weapon against men, it makes sense that they also would use it for other, non-sex-related situations—in which they can build the necessary coalition of claimants to achieve some goal that would otherwise be harder to reach. So I think it's at least plausible that modern media-driven cascades aimed at "canceling" or "de-platforming" people—not rapists but merely people who have done or said something unsettling to female activists—also reflect this "basic instinct" that women use to amplify their power. The complainants who join these cancellation cascades may even instinctively use terminology suggesting that they themselves have been severely victimized and traumatized—when they obviously haven't. Thus, for example, in the Larry

Summers cancellation, one of the prominent complainants declared that “When he started talking about innate differences in aptitude between men and women, I just couldn’t breathe because this kind of bias makes me physically ill.”

To sum up, then, I think it’s at least worth considering the possibility that #MeToo type trauma-tale cascades, and even ordinary cancellations of the politically incorrect, are, at their cores, manifestations of an ancient, hysteria-related behavioral program. To some extent we acknowledge this hypothesis already when we compare cancellation cascades to witch hunts, although the comparison is more than just metaphorical if both phenomena have the same ancient roots in female psychology.

* * *

9 WOMEN IN INSTITUTIONS: THE BATTLE OF THE SEXES

Up to now I have discussed social effects attributable to putative female traits—traits that range from greater emotional sensitivity and toxin-aversion to a superior ability to form emotional coalitions and transmit social contagions. Here, in this last chapter before the final summing-up, I want to mention another hypothetical “change-effector” for women that I think has been very consequential, although I don’t think it’s attributable to just one female trait.

The idea here is that when women, a few decades ago, began to achieve parity with men within professions and institutions across the West—parity in terms of their numbers and effective power—they automatically set up a rivalry, a “battle of the sexes” as they used to call it. Why? Simply because in general the two sexes are different, with different group identities and different ways of thinking—differences that are not entirely compatible in the long run, in any given institution. In other words, if only at a nonconscious level, and if only to avoid the emotional pain of having to conform to the others’ ways, each sex has a reason to seek dominance over the other. (This reasoning could be applied to other within-institution groupings, of course—and it should already be evident that women in US institutions commonly ally with nonwhites in their struggles for supremacy over legacy white males.)

The institutional battle of the sexes is something that I think has really crept up on men, creating a challenge for them that I suspect they can’t surmount. Men, in particular the white, European-derived men who created the institutions of Western civilization, were—in comparison to their counterparts in more traditional societies—trying to be at least a little bit progressive and even-handed when they admitted women into the upper reaches of the working world. They were trying to be meritocratic. Indeed, that relatively meritocratic mindset had helped them build the West into the powerhouse it was. And, of course, most men regarded the scaled-up presence of women in the workplace as a colossal sexual opportunity.

What men didn’t reckon with is that many women, once they reached a certain level of power in an institution, a critical mass as it were, would tend to discard any submissiveness and instead seek control—not just for themselves but for women as a group in that institution.

We already see this reach for dominance across multiple institutions these days. In academia and education, media, publishing, philanthropy, Hollywood, the advertising business, and the public relations business, women now to a very great extent make the rules and set the customs, and use those rules and customs to increase their numbers and correspondingly reduce the numbers of men, particularly white men.

They do this chiefly by insisting, in hiring and school admissions, on “more diversity” and “more equity”—anti-meritocratic codewords that above all mean “fewer white men.”



They do this also by condemning men as sexist and otherwise defective—and of course by hounding men from key jobs or business relationships whenever the opportunity arises—to justify the ever-increasing rule of women, perhaps allied with nonwhite men (or, at the very least, gay white men).





Hachette workers stage walkout to protest publication of Woody Allen memoir

Workers say company is not listening to their concerns over support for film-maker accused of sexual abuse

Update: Hachette cancels plan to publish Woody Allen memoir



NEWS

NY Times Staffers Send 'Outraged' Letter to Bosses Demanding Reporter Apologize for Racial Slur

DEEPLY DISTURBED

More than 150 employees dissociated paper bosses for what they said was an insufficient response to allegations that a top reporter made racist comments in a 2019 play with students.

By David S. Cohen, New York Times Staff Writer, and Jonathan L. Cook, New York Times Staff Writer



Women also nudge men from organizations simply by making its culture more feminine and anti-male. They insist on personal pronoun announcements, appoint diversity commissars, talk constantly about traumas and triggers, use buzzwords such as “inclusivity” and “safe space,” insist on the prioritization of “ESG” (environmental, social, governance) concerns, and so on and so on. The end result is female, or allied female/nonwhite, control over one organization after another.



2020 National Public Radio interns

Their steamrolling victories suggest that women are simply better than men in these institutional struggles. In a way, this shouldn't be surprising. Men, on top until recently, presumably have not been under long-term evolutionary or cultural pressure to cope with competition of this sort from women. Women, on the other hand, as the weaker sex, have long had need of "force multiplier" tactics and instincts, such as their instinct and facility for building emotional coalitions—discussed in the previous chapter. Women also, due to their greater emotional sensitivity, might simply have less tolerance, compared to men, for a workplace culture dominated by the opposite sex.

Of course, women also continue to benefit tremendously from the civil rights dogma and legal regime that, in part through their efforts, has gripped the US and some other Western societies for decades now—a regime that includes women among the "traditionally disadvantaged" and thus justifies favorable treatment of them, especially vis-à-vis white males.

Women in the Workplace: Why Women Make Great Leaders & How to Retain Them



Organizations that don't realize the importance of women in the workplace are missing out. Besides doubling your talent pool, more women may also improve your company's performance.

Previous research has shown that women in the workplace and gender diversity is key for organizations' bottom lines:

- Fortune 100 companies with the highest representation of women on boards financially outperform companies with the lowest representation of women on boards.
- Gender-diverse teams have higher sales and profits compared to male-dominated teams.
- A recent Gallup study found that gender-diverse business units have higher average revenue than less diverse business units.

* * *

10 SUMMING UP

In this book, as in many earlier short [essays](#), I have put forward the hypothesis that women, chiefly by entering politically and culturally influential professions and bringing their femininity with them, have been dramatically reshaping societies—chiefly Western societies—where they are so empowered.

In a sense, this hypothesis is obviously, trivially true: We know that women have moved into the workforce *en masse* since the early 1960s. We know that in the last two decades they have begun achieving parity or dominance with respect to men in key culture-influencing institutions and professions. We also know that women on average think and act differently from men, on a whole range of culturally and politically relevant issues, from immigration and welfare policy to nuclear power and herbal medicines. To believe that women have *not* had an earth-shaking effect on Western society, one would have to embrace the absurd belief that women leave their female traits and instincts behind and suddenly become “male” in their thinking and self-image when they work, vote, or otherwise participate in public life.

However compelling it may seem, this hypothesis is one that many commentators do not welcome. For that reason, it has had little play. In fact, up to about a year ago, I tended to be ignored, or anyway rejected, whenever I pitched the idea (even in softened form) to a journal or magazine. Sometimes I was dealing with female editors, but I’m sure even the male ones sensed that this kind of thing was apt to get them into hot water.

I speculate that women tend not to welcome the notion of an ongoing “great feminization” for several reasons.

Firstly, women’s power traditionally has worked indirectly, in settings of apparent male dominance. If women were to acknowledge that *they* are now dominant, they would be discarding the ancient but highly effective set of tools and stratagems (sometimes termed “feminine wiles”) they have for getting their way. Such an acknowledgement also would undermine women’s ongoing contention that they are oppressed and thus deserve victim status along with all the other “traditionally disadvantaged” groups in modern societies.

Secondly, the idea that women’s distinctive and for the most part “maternal” mindset is the principal driver of recent social changes clashes with the standard

explanation for those changes, namely that they are “progress” on the glorious and inexorable march of history.

Finally, the great feminization hypothesis invites scrutiny of female traits, including “irrational” traits relating to emotional sensitivity and susceptibility to social contagions, and understandably many women do not welcome such scrutiny.

Whatever the explanation turns out to be, just the broad possibility that women have substantial control over Western culture and politics, and are using that control to *suppress the knowledge of their influence*, is reason enough to be concerned about societies where their influence is strongest.

As I have suggested in earlier chapters, there are more specific and acute reasons to be worried. For example, I have argued that women’s greater emotional sensitivity, on average, leads to:

- a preference for rigid, “because I said so!” conformity over core Western liberalism values such as independent thought, free debate, free scientific inquiry, and due process of law;
- a preference for “inclusivity” and “equity” over meritocratic logic;
- a very high sensitivity to, and need for, short-term, feelgood outcomes (“oh those poor Somali refugees!”) and a relative blindness to long-term policy consequences;
- a strong susceptibility to the “woke” mindset with its hatred of, and desire to discriminate against, white males;
- acceptance and encouragement by the medical profession of various simulated or imagined illnesses including PTSD and dissociative identity disorders;
- a generally greater susceptibility (especially via feminized media, academia, Hollywood, and the publishing industry) to social contagions, including the Great Awokening frenzy with its uncomfortably close resemblance to the Chinese Cultural Revolution;
- distortions of language that suit neurotic female activists but frequently serve to conceal the true meanings of words;
- routine formations of emotional coalitions to cancel enemies, often in utter defiance of reason and logic (as in the Larry Summers case I described in chapter 1).

Meanwhile other traits, including women's greater aversion to toxins and lesser affinity for "systemization," probably have contributed to:

- the virtual abandonment of nuclear power, the only no-carbon-emission energy source that can hope to replace oil, gas, and coal in the near- and medium-term;
- the vast snake-oil industry of "natural medicine," "health supplements," "wellness" products, "detox diets," "mindfulness exercises," etc.;
- a lowering of standards in STEM academic admissions and faculty/industry hiring;
- the pronounced shift away from traditional, hierarchical religious structures.

Finally, women's apparent tendency and remarkable facility for taking over institutions where their presence becomes significant, and the general failure of men to resist these takeovers successfully, has transformed—I would say mostly harmed—myriad institutions and fields of endeavor, including scientific and technical disciplines, professional sports leagues, and of course the US military.

What to do?

This book was meant to be more descriptive than prescriptive, mainly because I'm inclined to think that prescriptions would be fruitless. It might help if people simply acknowledged the possibility that their cultures and politics have been extensively feminized. But they don't seem ready to do even that. On the whole, I guess that the problems stemming from cultural and political feminization—along with the West's other problems—will be "solved" only when the West effectively falls apart and is replaced by something less Western and less feminized.

Just hypothetically, just for argument's sake, what would reforms that protect Western civilization from feminization's adverse effects look like? I think the emphasis should not be on banning women from culture and politics (a possibility that most people would consider absurd anyway). I think it would be more effective and practical to restrict the powers of *all* citizens to alter and harm society. In other words, Western countries should move away from the current, relatively "fragile" model in which government and large corporations have enormous power and can be controlled by a highly feminized elite. They would move instead towards a small-government—"small is beautiful"—model that strictly limits the powers of politicians, the media, the entertainment industry, etc. to change the traditional family-, town-, and small-scale-commerce-based

structures of Western life. Women who wanted careers could pursue them in most professions, but they would not be oppressed with feminist propaganda that homemaking is retrogressive and shameful. Speech and scientific inquiry would be relatively free, but against a background of official skepticism that smashing the foundations of society, such as the two-parent heterosexual family, could ever improve things.

Again, this seems more of a pipe-dream than a realizable vision, given: the current power of the West's feminized elites; the relative passivity of the men who could oppose that power; and, of course, the extensive civilizational disruption that feminization has already produced.

* * * *

FURTHER READING

2011 “The Demise of Guythink”

An old blog post—my first brief sketch of the cultural feminization idea.

2019 “The Great Feminization”

Blog post on a new website—an updated but, again, brief, brief version of the cult-fem theory. I started the website and placed the essay on it because I had offered a version of the piece to two or three conservative webzines, with no luck.

(Tyler Cowen linked to this essay in his Marginal Revolution blog two and a half years later, prompting a flood of readers.)

Wednesday assorted links

by [Tyler Cowen](#) October 13, 2021 at 11:17 am

1. [Sam Enright reviews Bryan Caplan on open borders](#). Very good piece.
2. [The persistence of Paul McCartney](#) (New Yorker).
3. [Nursing homes and expected loss of life expectancy](#).
4. [China is improving its pricing for coal power](#).
5. Zena Hitz, [The Catherine Project](#).
6. [Against alcohol](#).
7. [I Stone on feminization](#).

 156 Comments     print

2019 “The Day the Logic Died”

A fuller account of the 2005 Larry Summers “intrinsic aptitude” controversy/hysteria, with some cult-fem theory.

2021 “Pink Shift” (*The American Mind*)

Short piece summarizing the theory—thanks again to James Poulos et al for publishing it.

Other writers

(I’m sure this is still a very incomplete list.)

1985 *The Feminization of America* (Elinor Lenz & Barbara Myerhoff)

The authors “envision the emergence of a new ‘feminized’ America, a society made more human, less destructive, and more compassionate by women’s nurturing and integrative influences in all walks of life.”

1987 “The Feminization of the American Left” (James Neuchterlein, *Commentary*)

Contrasts modern leftism with the more masculine leftism of yore. “Feminization, as understood here, suggests the establishment of traditionally feminine virtues (those normally associated with the private realm) as norms of behavior for public life. It indicates an ethic of noncoercion, a preference for emotion over rational analysis and for noncompetitive modes of social interaction, a focus on being rather than doing and on interpersonal relations as the primary preoccupation of the good life.”

1990—present *Sexual Personae* and other works (Camille Paglia)

Though never really in a systematic way, as far as I know, Paglia has frequently made references to issues that relate to cultural feminization. For example, in a

short essay on #MeToo in 2018: “The big question is whether the present wave of revelations, often consisting of unsubstantiated allegations from decades ago, will aid women’s ambitions in the long run or whether it is already creating further problems by reviving ancient stereotypes of women as hysterical, volatile and vindictive.”

1998 *The Feminization of American Culture* (Ann Douglas)

Not as relevant as its title suggests. Douglas argues that in the late 19th century American literature became “feminized” with “books that idealized the very qualities that kept [women] powerless: timidity, piety, and a disdain for competition.”

2006? “When Did We All Become Women?” (Kathryn Robinson, *Seattle Weekly*)

“Think of values like nurturing and caring, emotion and sentimentality, connection and community, passivity and submission, vanity and appearance, cooperation and equality, openness and access, manipulation and influence. These are the values on the ascendancy in our public and private lives.” Robinson projects the same sense of awe that I had when I started to perceive the significance of this unprecedented cultural development. (Her piece may have been buried in the search rankings until Cowen linked to it in 2021.)

2009 “The Education of a Libertarian” (Peter Thiel, *CATO Unbound*)

Within this essay by the then-not-so-well-known tech billionaire and libertarian evangelist is a recognition of at least one aspect of cultural/political feminization: “. . . I no longer believe that freedom and democracy are compatible,” Thiel wrote. “The 1920s were the last decade in American history during which one could be genuinely optimistic about politics. Since 1920, the vast increase in welfare beneficiaries and the extension of the franchise to women—two constituencies that are notoriously tough for libertarians—have rendered the notion of “capitalist democracy” into an oxymoron.”

* * *