



Feminism's Career-over-kids Pressure Hurts Women — and Everyone Else

“No woman should be authorized to stay home to raise her children,” said French feminist icon Simone de Beauvoir in 1976. “Women should not have that choice, because if there is such a choice, too many women will make that one.”

If you think this sentiment died with de Beauvoir, think again. In 2017, Sarrah Le Marquand (is this a French thing?), editor-in-chief of *Stellar*, Australia's “most read” magazine, wrote that it “should be illegal to be a stay-at-home mum.” So much for the “pro-choice” crowd.



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Yet even when feminists wouldn't legislate against devoted motherhood, they agitate against it. Fox News' Suzanne Venker [wrote](#) in 2017, for instance, about how a professor speaking at her mother's graduate-school reunion said that “women would need to deal with children as an ‘intrusion’ in their lives.”

My, while I suspect that professor was childless, could you imagine being her kid and coming to the realization that this is how your own mother views you? True love never considers its object an “intrusion.”

Writing about this anti-motherhood phenomenon Friday, the Federalist's Abby Roth [asks](#), “It's natural for women to choose family over high-powered jobs, so why won't the Left just let them?” While she doesn't answer the question, she writes that the “feminist idea that women only stay at home because they are oppressed or that the wage gap exists because women are discriminated against *hurts* their pursuit of happiness.”

“I know several women, including me, who went to college then earned a graduate degree,” Roth continues. “When we entered school, we were single and seriously career-driven. But within five years of graduating, we were all married, and most have a child on the way — and we've all gone through feeling guilty about wanting to step back from work.”

“Even though it's entirely natural for women to want to mother their children or make the choice to work part-time so they can more involved at home generally, women are made to feel that their natural impulses are inauthentic, self-harming, and *wrong*,” she sums up.

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There's much value in Roth's article. She points out that women aren't disadvantaged in the workplace (quite the opposite with affirmative action), that there's no discrimination-caused male/female wage gap, and that women prefer balanced lives over tunnel-vision pursuit of job success and often chose kids over career. Yet the piece also reflects certain modernist misconceptions.

Trying to explain feminists' disdain for domesticity, Venker suggests that feminists are frustrated



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because they “can’t get women to do what they want.” With the sexes being different, men “have a visceral need to provide for and protect their families, whereas women are more invested in the home,” she writes.

“Even today, parents ‘split up paid and domestic work along gendered [sic] lines because that’s what most of them want to do,’ [writes Ashley McGuire of Institute for Family Studies](#),” Venker relates.

“The truth is, women change when they have children,” Venker points out. “They care less about what they do for a living and more about how their children are faring.”

Of course, most people, male or female, do change upon having a family (responsibility does that to you). Yet Venker references a characteristically female phenomenon. For example, I remember when a woman close to me had her child and said, somewhat incredulously, “I *can’t believe* the feelings I have for this kid.”

I could have told her she would. I’ve observed that men are far more likely to understand phenomena in the abstract, which is why they’re given to philosophy. In contrast, women often grasp the realities of a situation only when they themselves have it and experience the attendant emotions.

Returning to Roth, one phenomenon she criticizes is social pressure. She registers the common complaint that while there shouldn’t be pressure on women to stay at home, there also shouldn’t be today’s typical pressure to have a career.

Yet if the implication is that people should be free from “constraining” social pressure, this is impossible. For just as man naturally establishes governmental laws, he does and must create *social laws* — and social laws’ enforcement arm is social pressure.

Children experience it regarding manners, customs, and how to behave in general; there’s tremendous pressure today to be politically correct, for example. Men experience it regarding what it means to be a man, and I don’t just reference that feminist notion that they endure pressure to be tough and “not show their feelings.” For the Left itself puts pressure on boys and men: to be more like girls and women.

The point is that social laws are as governmental ones: We can argue about which ones to enact, but that we will have them is unavoidable. Being sentient social beings, people will have social laws and their accompanying social pressure.

So why do feminists push careerism on women? Why, as Roth puts it, “won’t the Left just let them” follow their hearts?

There are various agendas at work, of course. We could note that women who prioritize career have fewer children, sometimes none at all, and that this pleases the misanthropic zero-population-growth crowd; and that single women are far more likely than their married peers to vote Democrat, support big government, and, put simply, become “good” feminists. Yet there’s another reason.

As I often point out, people more often act based on emotion (and sinful tendencies) than reason. Now consider a story.

Back in my competitive tennis days, a fellow player I roomed with during a few tournaments mentioned that his non-tennis friends would sometimes mock his sporting endeavors. I immediately told him what I knew to be true: They were jealous.

Whenever someone mocks a legitimate ambition or pursuit, envy is generally the driving force. They



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may or mayn't want what you possess or are trying to achieve, but for certain they lack the discipline and/or drive to attain it. And they recognize it as something desirable, as a *good*.

Likewise, feminists may be immune to reason, but they're not immune from the maternal instinct, without which humanity would likely no longer exist. Moreover, feminists usually sense on some level that children are a good for a simple reason: because they are — in fact, one of the *greatest* goods.

Feminists also see how so many married women exude a happiness that eludes them, and this enrages them. They are trapped, in a way: They can't throw off the shackles of feminism yet still want what it precludes. It's a bit as with a man whose disordered attachments compel him to commit crimes that land him in prison. His own choices have put him there, yet he still peers through the bars with envy upon those roaming free, enjoying their day in the sun.

This is why feminism isn't good for anyone. But there is here some good news, along with some bad news — and they're the same thing. Feminist-driven careerism leads to below-replacement-level fertility rates, which now plague virtually every Western nation. And people who don't replace themselves will disappear.

The good news: The "values" authoring their demise will usually disappear with them. *Au revoir, le féminisme.*



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