



Written by [Selwyn Duke](#) on February 9, 2015

Silicon Valley Girls: Do Women Need Affirmative Action in Tech Industries?

It was a couple of decades ago now that Mattel [got in trouble](#) for making Barbie dolls that exclaimed, “Math class is tough!” The company had done market research, the story goes, and found the aforementioned was one of young girls’ laments. But it appears that changing toys hasn’t changed reality. Because almost a quarter century later, girls still are avoiding the STEM fields: science, technology, engineering, and math. And the social engineers (already a “diverse” group) are none too happy about it. Writes the [AP](#):



Facebook and LinkedIn want to boost dwindling numbers of women studying engineering and computer science with a collaborative initiative announced Friday that they hope will eventually fill thousands of lucrative Silicon Valley jobs long dominated by men.

In an exclusive joint interview with The Associated Press, Facebook Chief Operating Officer Sheryl Sandberg and LinkedIn CEO Jeffrey Weiner said they’re launching mentoring and support programs at colleges to get more women involved in studying technology in general, but also as future employees for their companies.

Fifteen percent of Facebook Inc.’s employees working in tech jobs and 31 percent of all employees are women, according to diversity figures the company released last year. At LinkedIn Corp., women comprise 17 percent of its tech employees and 39 percent of employees overall. Most Silicon Valley companies have similar demographics.

In other words, they want to institute more affirmative action and quotas for women.

The problem with such initiatives is that they’re medicine forced on a healthy patient. After all, isn’t it possible that different groups have different interests and proclivities? Isn’t it possible that even with a perfectly level playing field, group outcomes will vary?

As economist Dr. Walter Williams has pointed out, there is no example in all of history of groups, anywhere, being represented proportionately across every field. Thus, we’ll have much work to do if equality of outcome is our goal. As Williams [wrote](#) last year, providing some examples of disparities:

Jews are less than 3 percent of the U.S. population and a mere 0.2 percent of the world’s population, [but] between 1901 and 2010, Jews were 35 percent of American and 22 percent of the world’s Nobel Prize winners.

... During the 1960s, the Chinese minority in Malaysia, where Malays politically dominate, received more university degrees than the Malay majority — including 400 engineering degrees, compared with just four for the Malays.

... Asian-Americans routinely score the highest on the math portion of the SAT, whereas blacks



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score the lowest.

... Blacks are 13 percent of our population but 80 percent of professional basketball players and 65 percent of professional football players and among the highest-paid players in both sports.

Of course, no one complains about blacks' "overrepresentation" in football and basketball and lobbies for demographic balancing in sports. And the danger of such social engineering isn't hard to grasp.

Let's say you had to assemble a basketball team for a world competition. Would you want a squad that "looked like America"? Or one that looked like the best? And what would the best look like?

Given that the mile record for 15-year-old boys is better than the women's world record and that this sex gap, with some variation, holds across high-physicality sports, it seems unlikely your team would include women. And smart money says it wouldn't reflect the U.S. racially and be 63 percent (non-Hispanic) white. It would probably look like the NBA.

But if groups have such vastly different physical talents, is it unreasonable to think they could also possess different intellectual ones? And since having a sports team that "looks like America" would mean ignominious defeat, shouldn't striving for a "science team" that looks like America raise the same concern? We behave as if we take sports more seriously than intellectual endeavors, on which our country's fate can hinge. And note, by the way, that the Chinese are already producing 10 times as many scientists as the United States

Some may now bemoan what they see as stereotyping. But it seems everyone stereotypes — only not everyone knows it. Just consider, for instance, LinkedIn CEO Weiner, who the AP [reported](#) as saying, "To limit the perspective of the people building our product and services ... [would] lead to suboptimal outcomes." The AP also pointed out that "Telle Whitney, president and CEO of the Anita Borg Institute ... said diversity brings greater innovation in technology."

What's between the lines here? *American Thinker's* Pedro Gonzales tells us, [writing](#), "So the Borg Institute claims it wants to assimilate diversity into technology. But what is the woman's point of view on computer programming? What is the woman's point of view on using Facebook, or LinkedIn? In school, do we have men's math and women's math, men's physics and women's physics?" (The Left has already spoken of "white male linear logic," so give it time.) Then Gonzales identifies what's really going on:

"Why do we assume that people will have different points of view just because they are women?" he writes. "It's stereotyping."

Of course, without stereotyping and claiming "women bring different perspectives" to a given table, the rationale for the Silicon Valley affirmative-action initiative is undercut. But if we're going to stereotype, it follows that we should do it accurately. And then shouldn't we consider that maybe women generally don't want to sit at that table or, as former Harvard president Larry Summers once perilously opined, that they don't bring as much to that table in the first place?

This gets at a contradiction: The leftist principle "Our strength lies in our diversity" conflicts with the leftist principle that states, as Dr. Williams [relates](#) it, "'gross' disparities are probative of a pattern and practice of discrimination." After all, diversity can only strengthen us if some groups possess strengths others don't — if they are *superior* to other groups in those respects. If so, however, it then follows they will dominate in fields relating to those strengths.

The result? "Gross" disparities.



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And what of women and STEM? Is their relative absence in the fields a function of female nature or patriarchal nurture? Well, let's examine the real world. Question: Are women more likely to pursue STEM in equality-obsessed nations such as Norway or less egalitarian places such as India? Consider here that Norway's über-feminism has actually birthed laws ensuring that women comprise at least 40 percent of public committees and corporate boards.

Nonetheless, the answer is places such as India.

The excellent 2011 Norwegian [documentary](#) *The Gender Equality Paradox* explores the phenomenon and provides the explanation for the paradox: People in poor nations such as India must do whatever makes money; that means pursuing technology. In rich nations, however, people have the luxury of following their hearts and proclivities. In other words, girls can afford to be girly.

Yet none of this will matter if the Obama administration succeeds in [applying](#) Title IX and the principle of "proportionality," which have already ravaged men's sports such as wrestling, to STEM. This would mean that if a university student body was 60 percent female — not uncommon today — 60 percent of the STEM students would also have to be. Since it would likely be impossible to find enough interested women to achieve this proportionality, it could only be done by denying STEM opportunities to qualified men. And then, just maybe, the Chinese/American scientist-production ratio can go from 10 to 1 to 40 to 1.

Perhaps the Chinese will one day produce an America doll, wearing a dunce cap, that says "National prosperity is tough!" And it is — especially when you place social engineering ahead of success.



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