

The Anti-male Backlash

Male-friendly Media
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malefriendlymedia.com

In World War II, women proved they could be productive and important aside from their traditional domestic role. Rosie the Riveter became an icon to women who wanted more and different life options.



This horizontal view of patriarchy became the dominant conception of the power relationship between men and women.



After the war, ex-GIs wanted their jobs back.

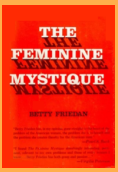
Many of them resisted sharing their old economic domain. They promoted and exploited deep-seated stereotypes about women. They claimed it was women's essential nature to be at home raising kids, not in the rough-and-tumble world of business.



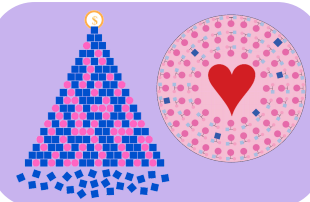
But Friedan saw that women had power, too. She wrote, "I've heard women recently admit that they don't like it when men take over so much [childcare] that the kid comes to Daddy first with her report card or cut finger... There was a lot of power in women's role in the family."

That "Family Gap" is harmful to men. "Friends are equally important to men and women," researchers found, "but family matters more for men's well-being."

— Cable, et al., 2013



But the lesson of Rosie the Riveter endured. Betty Friedan, in her 1963 blockbuster *The Feminine Mystique*, galvanized women's wish for more life options — sexist stereotypes notwithstanding. (Friedan went on to become a co-founder and the first president of the National Organization for Women in 1966.)



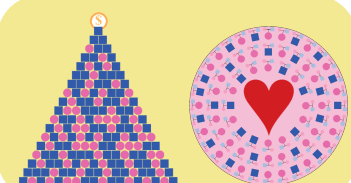
Imbalance and injustice between men's and women's life options arose in the absence of reciprocity.

Men's economic, social and psychological displacement is evident.

Friedan recognized that men, too, needed balance. "The work of most American men..." she wrote, "leaves a vacant, empty need for escape—television, tranquilizers, alcohol, sex." She also endorsed an article that had appeared in *Redbook*, March 1962.



This is the fairness and balance we need instead.



Some women were alarmed at Friedan's suggestion that dismantling sexism would require women, too, to share their traditional role. They loved their families. They loved being mothers. They didn't want to jeopardize that. Maybe "women's lib" wasn't such a good idea.



"The dialogue has gone on too long in terms of women alone. Let men join women in the center of the second stage."

— Betty Friedan, 1980

Women had no doubt about the value of money. But the post-war generation of men didn't think much about feelings and relationships. They were Providers, first and foremost. They focused on making money, whether their jobs made them happy or not.

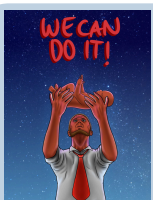


Redstockings MANIFESTO
Women are an oppressed class. Our oppression is total... We identify the agents of our oppression as men.

But, starting with divorced fathers who missed their kids, men began talking about the sexism they faced.

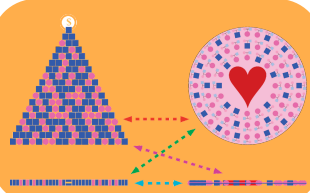
Not to worry! In 1969, a women's group found a way to shut men down. They cast men as women's enemies.

Rosie the Riveter, meet Charles the Childraiser.
Charles represents the need for men to be seen, valued, respected and included for more than how much money they make.



No matter what country you live in, if it has an effort to establish equal employment opportunity for women it needs to have an effort to establish equal parenting opportunity for men.

Equipped with that way of thinking, many women resisted sharing their domestic domain with men. They promoted and exploited deep-seated stereotypes about men. They claimed men's essential nature is unsuited to raising kids.



"No one gives up power willingly."

But smart women will share it so we can all make more and more together.