

Misleading Myths of Feminism Ignore the Human Heart

Two myths shared by feminism and the radical left have a major influence on contemporary culture. One is that the external problems of life are the most significant; the second, that men do the bad things. These are united by one underlying assumption: the public is more significant than the private. Yet some things are bigger on the inside.

It's the System

The idea that systemic, chronic, historically verifiable injustice is what keeps people from their desired goals seems to be an original principle of the extreme political left. While I agree that we should not ignore the external social sins of our world, I also believe we do a great disservice to women (and all people) when we treat them as though the alleviation of social problems will result in their automatic happiness. Social sins spring from the private world and to focus on the public is to not address the unrest at the source.

Anyone who has done anything of value knows that the real battles are on the inside. In pursuit of our personal goals we battle our own negative self-talk, our lack of discipline, our personal insufficiency and incompetence, all of which need to be conquered to achieve any public good. We do young women and men a great disservice when we pretend that if we just get society right their success is inevitable; or worse, we teach the subtle inverse: that one's unhappiness is due mostly to the actions of other people.

Inevitable unhappiness will be attributed to external circumstances and external methods will be used to alleviate internal struggles. Young people will turn to drugs,

surgeries, movements, programs, therapies – and after achieving those goals will still be left with their unexamined internal angst. While these sorts of solutions will probably boost our Gross National Product through more people buying products and services, they do solve not the internal problems we have.

Men Do the Bad Stuff?

Myth two is that men have been the primary bad actors of history. If we were to only look at criminal and historical records we might have some grounds to make this argument but only if we see criminal behavior as originating in the criminal himself and do not hold with [Wordsworth](#), “the child is father of the man.” Whatever evil there is in society, whether we are speaking of personal evil or social injustice, it is co-created by women and men *together* regardless of whose name is on it and it has always been so.

Just as human beings are created by the coming together of a man and woman, so is society. Yes, it is true that men are more often public leaders, but men do not live in a vacuum, creating their evil alone without the influence of others, perhaps especially the influence of women.

Men, and women too, become who they are partly through their parents and other influential adults, both through active mentoring and the child’s reaction to the parents’ and mentors’ good and bad influences.

People are perhaps most seriously influenced in their life choices by their mother, who, more often these days, raises the child without a partner. Some [40 percent](#) of all children are now born into single mother led households. Mothers have total control over their small children. The mother’s mistakes in the first four years of life are potentially devastating to the later adult. Her right actions are deeply integral to who the child becomes in his or her adult years.

Now that women [totally dominate](#) the fields of education, psychology and health care, and children are often raised without fathers, how can we blame the bad behavior of men on the bad influence of men over boys?

We cannot judge men simply by their predominance in the historical record. Elenore Roosevelt is often quoted as saying, "Well behaved women seldom make history." In that case well behaved men do not make history either, at least not by name.

George Eliot (pen name of Mary Ann Evans) stated in her classic novel, [Middlemarch](#):

...for the growing good of the world is partly dependent on unhistoric acts; and that things are not so ill with you and me as they might have been, is half owing to the number who lived faithfully a hidden life, and rest in unvisited tombs.

Public and Private

Public life is only a sliver of the total life of any human being. While women hold fewer public offices, currently [more women than men vote](#). We could blame men for creating a world we don't like because they hold more offices than women but apparently women are voting these men into office. Men have always (and probably will continue to be) the majority of those in public life because the demands of being a mother are significant and deeply impact the majority of women. Even those women who have no children have bodies that were made for making children which takes energy. Nurturing children properly makes women put their children first before outside employment and leadership opportunities at least while her children are very young.

It causes me no concern that more men than women lead in public. I live in a country that trusts representative

government to work. If men could not represent women adequately simply because they are men, then we are doubting the basis of our representative system to work at all. Women rule the private world and always have. The private world is actually not only mathematically speaking the greater part of life, I would argue it is the most influential part of creating a person.

The public is not the only significant space of action. Think of people visiting the psychologist in a therapy session. Are they discussing with the therapist the recent elections? Foreign policy? Corporate policy? The pros and cons of public health care? Legal minutiae? I would guess the greatest part of those therapeutic interventions are discussions about the things that happen in private moments of our lives, and even in the seclusion of our own mind: the private sins and accomplishments of ourselves and others closest to us.

G. K. Chesterton in his work, "The Common Man," said:

We cannot insist that the first years of infancy are of supreme importance, and that mothers are not of supreme importance.... Every word that is said about the tremendous importance of trivial nursery habits goes to prove that being a nurse is not trivial. All tends to the return of the simple truth that the private work is the great one and the public work the small. The human house is a paradox, for it is larger inside than out.

The private world is deeply important. Those who (on the right) see human beings as merely cogs in the machine of financial gain, or (on the left) as creators of tax revenue for utopian programs, will be threatened by that very true idea.

The Home is the 'Real' and Most Influential World

The home, not public life, is the "real world." The public realm is a mass experiment to try and achieve what the best households manage on a small scale. The private moments of home and the relationships found there are what creates citizens. Public life is where we try to implement what we seek (with varying degrees of success) to achieve in the best homes: safety as well as adventure, comfort as well as growth (which is by definition uncomfortable), and contact with others as well as fruitful solitude.

Home is deeply influential in the lives of humans; home teaches children what normal is. Home can have its own beautiful culture of love or have all the comfortable familiarity of a fast food franchise; merely the night-time barracks for the perceived "real life world" of buying and selling. The decision is up to the people who live there.

As more people live in isolation in small rentals without connection to land or marriage or family-life or even neighbors and real life friends; as more people live increasingly facing their smart phones, we have never been so [lonely](#). Over 50 percent of respondents in some surveys say they feel like "no one actually knows them well." We have never been so [unhappy, drug addicted](#) and [suicidal](#).

Perhaps alienating the sexes from one another and promoting public life over private life, is not a good strategy for the future?

Hopefully, we can agree that love is the greatest force for good we possess; and that the private moments of life are powerful. Hopefully, we can also agree that our genitalia and chromosomes are not the only indications of the extent to which each of us positively or negatively impact the world;

that is, we should agree, as we used to, that sexism should have no place in our society.

Public life is only the bubbling up out of the depths of that which began in the privacy of homes and relationships. If we don't like what we see around us in public, perhaps we should examine our private lives for the source. All of history, the good and the bad, is the tale of the triumphs and failures of both men and women, and is mostly born out of their own private hearts and minds and the secluded moments they have together, for better or for worse.

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