

GENDER INEQUALITY

*History shows us we need labels to help define our place.
For hundreds of years, people have categorized others as less so they could feel like more.
Color, gender, class, religion, physical handicaps, sexual orientation, and pedigree
are just a few ways in which one group is divided from another.*

Sejal Badani: *The Storyteller's Secret*.

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I believe in equality in all things, as does Monica Crowley, former Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs for the U.S. Department of the Treasury; political commentator and lobbyist. She was a Fox News contributor, a former online opinion editor for *The Washington Times*, and a member of the Council on Foreign Relations. She wrote:

*True equality means holding everyone accountable in the same way,
regardless of race, gender, faith, ethnicity – or political ideology.*

What I object to is enforcing quotas based on gender, sexual orientation, and ethnicity. I also object to the massaging of the truth in order to gain brownie points, which is a lot like some journalists who don't let the truth get in the way of a good story.

This is a drum that it being beaten unmercifully around the world, 24/7—but we must consider, is the word *inequality* appropriate?

Our forebears established a system of survival in which the males, the physically stronger of the two genders, did the hunting and protected the women and children, the aged and the infirmed. The women, by virtue of their femaleness, gave birth, raised their children and cleaned the cave.

If we go back a few hundred years, gender role-playing became an important part in guaranteeing the survival of the human species in a world that favoured the strong over the weak. Back then there were just two genders—those with dangly bits, and those without.

It came to pass that, by experience, those who were most suited to perform tasks were assigned to those tasks. Were women defiled and abused? In the probable absence of foreplay, they probably were, and it will likely always be so while there is a minority of males who prey on those they consider weaker than themselves, including other males, females and children. You have my permission to euthanise, with prejudice, them all.

Things started to change after World War II, but not before many women voluntarily performed vital wartime roles, such as making ammunitions, building motor vehicles, folding parachutes, and of course there were our indispensable teams of nurses who often served near the front.

The 1,074 women in the United States Women Airforce Service Pilots program served their country bravely during World War II, from 1942 to 1944. They ferried over 12,000 military planes, completed countless domestic missions, and flew over one million miles in service of the war.

In 1941, when they were on our side, Soviet women pilots were organized into air combat units. Three women's air regiments were set up by the Soviet high command, which included fighters, night bombers (nicknamed by the Germans 'Night Witches'), and dive bombers.

Many United States and British women pilots wanted to fly in combat, but were relegated to Air Transport Command roles ferrying aircraft, pulling practice targets, and teaching basic flying. While the wall between the genders was beginning to crumble, as did the Berlin Wall, it still had a long way to go.

The combined efforts of these women, all of whom were volunteers, were instrumental in keeping our troops properly equipped and alive. Perhaps the bravest of the brave were the selfless women who saved many thousands of lives while risking the worst possible death if they were exposed as fifth column activists, or spies.

Notwithstanding that she worked for the other side, the most remembered and immortalised spy was Margaretha Geertruida MacLeod, better known by her stage name *Mata Hari*. She was a Dutch exotic dancer and courtesan who was convicted of spying for Germany during World War I. She was arrested by the French and executed in 1917.

This all served to prove that women are at least as capable of men in most capacities when given the opportunity. We now have increasing numbers of females rising to the top of their chosen professions, as it should be. It is no longer an exclusive man's domain.

Much is being said about the difference in salaries between males and females. To understand this, we again have to go back to around 1945. The wage disparity had a lot to do with males supporting whole families, while the majority of females entering the workforce, by now in ever-increasing numbers, were single and without the financial responsibility of many married males who may have had six or more mouths to feed, and bodies to clothe.

Despite the progress being made in wage parity, the pace of change is apparently still not enough to satisfy many within the feminist movement. They want equal representation in all aspects of government and private enterprise, irrespective of qualifications or merit, and they want it yesterday. It's not a numbers game. If we are going to have a level playing field, then equal rules must apply to both genders, otherwise the favouring of females over males based solely on gender is a mirror image of what the feminist lobby is accusing men of having done to them since the time of Adam. Two wrongs simply do not make a right.

Although I am sure there must have been exceptions, when I was growing-up we were taught to treat females with respect, and we did. We also knew that 'no' meant 'no', and the alternative was sexual assault or rape. The current rhetoric about females being treated badly, or as sex objects during those years is just so much bovine excreta. We instinctively knew that we could attract more girls our age with honey than we could with vinegar. I know—I was there.

The reality is that 70 to 80 years ago, few females went on to university after graduating from high school. The majority entered the workforce in an office or retail environment, met and married the man of their dreams (or too often, nightmares), and raised a family. They were not forced to do this, but it was the convention of the day, and those who chose, willingly went along with it.

Things have certainly changed. We now have females entering all vocations, from combat soldiers to airline pilots, and from politicians to scientists. This represents a massive leap in social structure that happened in a very short space of time. And happen, it should, and did.

The time had come for females to step up and pursue whatever career they so desired. We should also be aware of the fact that a sizeable portion of females, even today, still choose the wife-mother-homebuilder role, which is as noble as finding a cure for cancer.

There are also relationships in which she works, and he stays at home, does the cooking, the housework, and tends to the kids. Can you imagine what comment that would have caused 80 years ago, but hey, if it works, more power to them.

There is an avoidable downside to the push for recognition of women's rights. The difference between being feminine and feminist can be a void the size of the Grand Canyon.

Those of the extreme left of the feminist movement want to punish all males, irrespective of their guilt or innocence, for their perceived, real or imaginary, transgressions that may or may not have been perpetrated. (How's that for ambivalence?). This is incredibly counter-productive and only serves to widen the gap, as opposed to mending it. Perhaps they revel in keeping the wound open in order to further their cause, and to embolden their activists. This is like saying all blacks are criminals, all Arabs are terrorists, and all whites are racist. In each case we should be looking more closely at who the real terrorists are.

I believe there are but few males who do not support gender equality, but it's also time those who don't grow up and got onboard. Everything is coming up trumps for females, so don't spoil it by allowing those who want to sabotage this very important process, to overplay their hand.

The Queen of England is also the reigning monarch of Australia, a former British colony that hasn't quite severed its umbilical cord attachment to the Motherland. I am not a royalist, a decision based on my knowledge of history and what the kings and queens in Europe, over the centuries, have done to ordinary people. Why do we curtsy and bow to these people simply because of their perceived royal heritage? They have proven time and time again that they are just as capable of screwing up as are we ordinary folk. Shouldn't their breeding and positions elevate them above all that?

I have had two close encounters with English royals. The first was when I was still in High School, and I was Troop Leader of the 4th Wagga Scout Group. It was during the summer of 1954, when the sun is very hot. Newly crowned Queen Elizabeth II was on a visit to the Land of Oz, which is part of what remains of the former British Empire.

I, and a Troop Leader from another local scout group, were detailed to hold beach umbrellas over the exposed seats of the royal Bentley to keep them cool for the royal derrieres. Elizabeth and Prince Phillip returned to the car, totally ignored us even though we were almost touching, and got into the rear seat of the car. There was no top, but there was a glass partition between them and the driver. Phillip picked up the mike and proceeded to cut the driver a new one. My mate and I just looked at each other.

My next encounter, the memory of which will stay with me forever, involved the Queen's Mother, former Queen Mary to King George VI. It was 1958, and I was a probationary constable with the Victoria Police, and was detailed as security to Government House where the Queen's mom was staying during a visit to the Land Downunder.

It was my turn in the sentry box at the entrance to the property. I looked up and saw the Bentley, this one was a sedan, flying the royal standard and coming towards me. I immediately positioned myself in front of the sentry box, stood to attention and saluted as the vehicle entered the walled confines.

The queen's mom was in the back seat, alone, and sitting on my side of the vehicle. Upon seeing me, she leaned forward, raised her right hand, made eye contact, and gave me a wave, accompanied by one of the warmest and most unaffected smiles I have ever seen.

The difference between my encounter with the Queen's mom and her daughter, Queen Elizabeth II, was that the Queen's mom was a 'commoner', not born of royal blood. She was a breath of fresh air in the stodgy corridors of Buckingham Palace. King George VI was also a bit of a softie, but Elizabeth quickly ended that. For seventy years she has reigned in the ways of yesteryear.

Something that really irked me was that Elizabeth and Phillips visit to Australia was onboard the Royal yacht, Britannica. When they returned to England an entourage of VIPs lined up to greet them, including their children Charles and Anne. Captured on camera, they had to wait their turn to see their parents, which required them to bow (Charles) and courtesy (Anne) without touching, kissing or hugging either parent. No wonder the lineage is so screwed up. Give me common, any day.

We are all born equal, and die in the same state, so let's apply that principle to our individual and collective lives. How much better this world would be in the absence of greed. We must also come to grips with the fact that we are the only members of the animal kingdom that mistreats and kills its own.

In short, I believe the most able should get the job with the same benefits, and that there is no place in our global society for any of the 'isms' that cause unnecessary division, resentment and hurt.

And a final word from that human monolith of wisdom, Albert Einstein:

***Stay away from negative people.
They have a problem for every solution.***
