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Time To Tell the Feminists Bye-Bye

"If there is a theme among those coming of age today — and a theme for this issue — it is that gender differences are often better celebrated than suppressed. . . . The feminist label is viewed with disdain and alarm; the name of Gloria Steinem is uttered as an epithet."

With that statement in its lead-off article in its special issue dated Fall 1990 entitled "Women: The Road Ahead," *Time* magazine buried the women's liberation movement which demanded a "gender-free society." America has evolved from the "post-feminist" era, which the *New York Times* proclaimed in the mid-1980s, to the anti-feminist decade of the '90s.

When the feminist movement burst on the American scene in the 1970s, it appeared to be the wave of the future. The new woman seeking male careers instead of family dominated the media and was cruelly condescending to the fulltime homemaker. Feminist Robin Morgan told a Phil Donahue audience in 1983, "We are becoming the men we once wanted to marry."

But 20 years in a woman's life make a crucial difference. That is illustrated by TV newswoman Connie Chung announcing that she is abandoning the fast track at CBS-TV in a last-ditch drive for motherhood at age 44.

Less than two years ago, the media gave extravagant coverage to feminist outrage at the very suggestion of a "mommy track," which allows career women to trim their careers to accommodate raising their babies, and of "sequencing," which means raising children first and seeking a career only after that. *Time* now respectfully describes these as "options" seriously entertained by bright young college women.

Time quotes a college senior as saying, "I'm not willing to have children and put them in daycare. I've babysat for years and taken kids to daycare centers. They just hang on my legs and cry. I can't do that."

Time's national survey just conducted by Yankelovich found that today's young women age 18 to 24 are more family oriented than career oriented. In choosing which of the following is your "single most important goal," only 27% said a successful career, while 39% said a happy marriage and 23% said well-adjusted children, making a total of 62% who are primarily family oriented.

What about the attitudes of women who are currently in

the paid labor force? *Time* reports a Gallup poll which shows that only 13% of employed mothers want to work full time, although 52% of them currently do so. They don't like the fact that the "total contact time" between parents and children has dropped 40% over the past 25 years.

Again, *Time* illustrates this factor with a personal comment. A Los Angeles public relations executive and mother of an 8-month-old said, "I see her only an hour in the morning and an hour in the evening. I don't have a single friend who has worked full time who doesn't regret how little time she's spent with her children."

Isn't that exactly what First Lady Barbara Bush told the Wellesley College graduates at their commencement — which threw the feminists into a nationwide tantrum?

For the last five years, we've heard *ad nauseam* that "the days of Ozzie and Harriet are gone forever . . . they've been replaced by the two-earner couple who put their kids in daycare." That's another feminist myth which *Time's* special issue dashes on the rocks of reality.

Time reports that "homemaking mothers married to breadwinning fathers still make up the largest category of families with young children. The 'Ozzie and Harriet' arrangement represents one-third of the nation's 14.8 million families with preschool children."

Time includes an interesting article by author Sylvia Ann Hewlett, who describes what happened to family income when millions of wives moved from the home into the workplace in the mid-1970s. Alas, the two-earner couples don't make any more real income than the "Ozzie and Harriet" couples made 25 years ago.

A typical 30-year-old man buying a median-priced home in 1973 made monthly mortgage payments equal to 21% of his income. In 1987 it cost this young husband 40% of his income to do this, and on top of that, he must pay massively higher taxes. Between 1955 and 1973, the median wage of men rose from \$15,056 to \$24,621. When wives flooded into the workforce, the male wage (adjusted for inflation) declined 19% down to \$19,859.

This is the same phenomenon that happened in Sweden a decade earlier. When social legislation induced all wives into the labor force, there was a temporary "bubble" when households with two wages appeared to have a higher income;

but then wages and prices readjusted and the combined labor of two spouses working an 80-hour week barely gives them the standard of living that their parents had when the breadwinner worked 40 hours a week and his wife was a fulltime homemaker.

These changing trends have confused men. What do they want now? *Time* answers that, too. "The American man wants his manhood back. Period."

The feminists of the '70s demanded a "sensitive" man like Alan Alda or Phil Donahue, but after they got him they now say that "the sensitive male is a wimp and an object of derision to boot." Women continue to judge and define men by their performance in the workplace. The writer Erica Jong summed it up: "Beware of the man who praises women's liberation; he is about to quit his job."

A Feminist's Complaints

It was with extraordinarily poor grace that Sandra Day O'Connor — of all people — made a speech on November 14, 1990 at Washington University in St. Louis voicing the tiresome feminist complaint that women are still the victims of "discrimination" and "sexism."

Reporters called it a "strongly feminist speech" and said she made a "grim" assessment. She charged that women are oppressed by "society's sexism," which "feeds on itself" and has systematically excluded women from positions of power in America.

That sounds like George Bush complaining that ivy leaguers are discriminated against, or Ronald Reagan complaining that movie stars are excluded from power, or Madonna complaining that rock stars don't get the respect they deserve.

O'Connor holds the most prestigious position in the U.S. Government ever held by any woman, as well as the most prestigious position to which any lawyer could aspire. Yet she's still whining that she wasn't invited to join a law firm when she graduated from law school.

Actually, fewer than half of all law school graduates are hired by established law firms. The other half of young lawyers must find their own clients, or look for jobs in business or government.

Even in the pre-feminist era, well qualified women made successful careers in the law. The late Soia Mentschikoff, co-author of the Uniform Commercial Code enacted by 49 states, became a partner in a Wall Street law firm in the 1940s, taught at Columbia, Harvard and Chicago in the 1950s and 1960s, and was a law school dean in the 1970s. Mentschikoff refused to support the Equal Rights Amendment and never complained that "sexism" retarded her career.

Sandra O'Connor is the leading exemplar of getting a high position solely because she is a woman. No one could claim that she was well qualified to be a Supreme Court Justice. Any man with her resume would have had a hard time getting phone calls returned in Washington.

She got the job because Ronald Reagan made a campaign promise to appoint a woman, and she was lucky enough to fit the profile when a vacancy occurred. No men were considered for the seat she occupies.

Did she get the raking over of her opinions and qualifications which liberal Senators inflicted on Robert Bork, David Souter and Dan Manion? No, siree. The Senators

treated her like a lady in her confirmation hearings — no embarrassing questions, no aggressive interrogation.

Feminism is not about achievement for women; it is about taking power away from men and giving it — *not to women*, but — to their own little coterie of doctrinaire feminists who are trying to restructure society and change human nature. Justice O'Connor's speech clarifies that what feminists really want is not equal opportunity, but "power" for feminists and the displacement of men from power.

For two reasons, no constituency exists for O'Connor's feminist view of our nation. First, women as a group are not seeking power or to replace men in the exercise of power. What women want is the opportunity for personal achievement and fulfillment through family and career.

Second, those who do want "power," the radical feminists, will never be O'Connor fans because they are the left wing of the Democratic Party. It's a bone in their throat that the first female Supreme Court Justice was appointed by President Ronald Reagan.

Feminists will never thank Reagan for this or honor O'Connor for being on the High Court. Feminist publications and spokespersons never look for role-models among successful women such as Margaret Thatcher, Jeane Kirkpatrick, Elizabeth Dole, Kay Orr, or Mother Teresa.

Indeed, many feminists have stridently criticized O'Connor for not using her position more aggressively in behalf of the feminist cause, and it looks as though her Washington University speech was an attempt to placate them by adopting their bitter rhetoric.

Admitting that she has had no special impact on the Supreme Court, O'Connor nevertheless expressed pride that she has been able to make some small changes that "send an important signal." She got her eight male fellow Justices to change the bronze nameplate on their doors from Mr. Justice to Justice, to rewrite the federal rules of procedure to make them gender-neutral, and to use Ms. instead of Mrs. or Miss in Supreme Court summaries.

Whatever happened to the rights of the women who like being called Mrs. or Miss? In the feminist lexicon, they are expected to endure being expurgated from the record by the feminist censorship brigade.

Justice O'Connor is 20 years behind the times in mouthing the feminist "oppression" rhetoric of the '70s. Today's press is full of the regrets of women who 20 years ago abjured family in favor of career and now realize at age 40 that it's too late for the family life and fulfillment they could have had.

Today, women are looking for a mommy track so they can spend time with husband and babies, for sequential careers in which business or profession comes only after they've raised their children, and for family-friendly workplaces to accommodate the new traditional woman.

There Isn't Any Latchkey Crisis

The feminists who reject the security and permanence of marriage loudly proclaim that they want to be independent. In fact, they always turn to government to provide the economic comforts and security which husbands once provided. Government daycare for all children is a longtime feminist goal.

One of the arguments made by the liberals who seek to establish government daycare in the public schools as a

middle-class entitlement is the so-called crisis of "latchkey children." Many bleeding-heart segments have appeared on television about the need to provide daycare for children who would otherwise be left on the streets or go home to an empty house between the close of school in the afternoon and the time their parents return home from work.

Prince William County, Virginia spent \$60,000 of taxpayers' money in the summer of 1990 to start a new school-based latchkey daycare program in September in seven county public schools, with 30 morning and 30 afternoon slots available in each school.

But county officials discovered in August that they couldn't find enough latchkey children to use the program. Fewer than half the slots which the county had financed for before- and after-school daycare were filled. "We're all ready to go," the program coordinator said, but "the problem is, we have no children. If there's no program, what do you do with \$5,000 worth of crochet hooks and Popsicle sticks?"

The money already spent was only for startup costs. The county planned to subsidize the daycare on an ongoing basis and charge parents only \$27 per week. If the daycare slots weren't filled, then the subsidy per child would be so high that county officials couldn't justify it. The county then reduced the participating schools from seven to five. Of the 310 daycare slots then available for before- and after-school daycare, only 126 applications had been received by opening day on September 4.

How did Prince William County get itself into the fix of spending all this money for a service the public doesn't want? The county conducted a survey of 6,775 households two years before to ascertain the need but, according to one of the County Supervisors, "There must have been an incorrect analysis." That's an understatement. It now comes out that, of the 6,775 families surveyed, not one said they left their children unattended after school. The parents either stayed home with their children or made private child-care arrangements.

Prince William County Supervisors just decided that they knew better than the parents and so modeled their daycare program after a similar program in Fairfax County, Virginia which they had been told was "successful." In fact, the Fairfax program has been a hornet's nest of controversy, and many people call it a failure.

Fairfax County officials tried to make themselves the exclusive broker for all child care services by headquartering a latchkey daycare program in the public schools and denying the services to children who do not attend public schools. This discrimination caused a major flap, and ultimately Fairfax County voted to allow non-public school children to use the services, too.

The second headache of the Fairfax experiment was the financing. The plan was to use tax funding from federal, state and local government sources, and then charge parents for daycare on a sliding scale, with the middle class paying higher fees (as well as higher taxes). This financing caused another controversy because some parents didn't see why they should pay more than others. The property tax revolt in Fairfax County also helped to put the daycare plan on the skids.

The Fairfax County plan was a model demonstration project of the Wellesley College Center for Women, which

has plenty of foundation and corporation funding behind it. The plan was to bribe parents into using public daycare rather than private or religious or parent-at-home care, and to make a government agency the broker, or manager, of all child care.

Programs such as those in Fairfax and Prince William are designed to *create* a need, *not* to fill a need. The programs are promoted by social service professionals whose goal is to establish a national, or even an international, daycare network in the public schools for all children beginning in infancy.

Their plan is to start with a latchkey daycare program in the public schools for school-age children, and thereby accustom parents to having the public schools supervise their children from the time the parents leave for their employment in the morning until they return in the evening. Phase two of this master plan is to extend the school-based daycare downward to three and four-year-olds. This system would effectively Swedenize America and transform child care into a governmental rather than a family responsibility.

Those promoting this master plan talk privately, and sometimes openly, about costs of \$100 billion a year, and say they don't care what this does to the tax burden. But the failure of the Fairfax and Prince William daycare plans indicates that the American people are not ready to accept either the theory or the financial costs of daycare in the public schools.

Combat: The Cutting Edge of Feminism

The assignment of women to military combat is the cutting edge of feminist ideology. To those who fantasize about a gender-neutral society, the attempt to repeal the laws that exempt women from military combat is the final test of their goal to deny us our right to make reasonable differences of treatment between men and women. When Sandra Day O'Connor was a member of DACOWITS (Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services), she was an advocate of repealing the laws that exempt women from military combat.

The Carter Administration started the policy, which has been continued ever since, of pushing more and more women into "combat support" and "combat related" roles. "Combat" is constantly being redefined in order to fill more and more men's jobs with servicewomen, at the same time that the embarrassingly high rate of pregnancies of active-duty servicewomen is concealed from the public. Apparently no one in the military was even embarrassed when, after a U.S. Navy plane went down in the South China Sea in July 1988, it was discovered that the CT-39E copilot pulled out of the ocean, Lt. j.g. Elizabeth Steinnecker, was three-months pregnant.

In our present substantially-integrated All Volunteer Force, no one will say how many women have been deployed to the Middle East theater. The "jury is still out" on how this gender integration is functioning under adverse circumstances. The public is being fed disinformation such as the front-page pictures on November 26 showing women Marines playing football in Saudi Arabia. Only in the eighth paragraph did the reader discover that it was *touch football* with no tackling allowed.

It is instructive to review the pro-feminist propaganda that we were given right after the U.S. invasion of Panama in December 1989. Extraordinary front-page publicity was given to a female soldier who allegedly led a successful charge against enemy troops. Congresswoman Patricia Schroeder

(D-CO) immediately called for repeal of the laws that exempt women from military combat duty.

The real lesson we can learn from the use of women in the Panama invasion is that most of what we heard about the performance of women in the U.S. Army was grossly exaggerated, even to the point of falsehood. The U.S. Army finally admitted that, contrary to page-one newspaper articles all over the country, Captain Linda Bray was a half mile away in a safe schoolhouse when she radioed an order to her unit to attack a dog kennel (she didn't "lead" any troops), there wasn't any "battle" (when she arrived at the kennel, there were no Panamanian troops), there were no casualties (the "three dead Panamanians" were fiction), and the entire event lasted just ten minutes (not three hours). This is hardly "evidence" that women should be assigned to military combat duty.

Whether women are assigned to combat duty is a decision that doesn't concern merely those few women who choose the military as their career. It affects every American woman and girl under age 26, now and in the future.

Under current federal law, every young man of age 18 must register for the military draft. No young women are required to register. This exemption of women is based on the laws that exclude women from military combat, since the only purpose of a draft is to induct for combat. If the government could promise that all those drafted would never see combat, we would obviously never need conscription!

On June 25, 1981 in the landmark case of *Rostker v. Goldberg*, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that it is constitutional for Congress to exempt all women from the military draft and from draft registration. In that decision, the Court recognized the reality that draft registration, conscription, and military combat are all one continuum.

The court based its decision on the fact that any military draft is for the purpose of raising combat troops. If women are not eligible for combat duty, then it makes no sense to draft them or to register them for the draft. The Court said: "Women as a group, unlike men as a group, are not eligible for combat. The restrictions on the participation of women in combat in the Navy and Air Force are statutory," citing 10 U.S.C. 6015 and 8549. The Army and Marine Corps prohibit the use of women in combat as a matter of policy in conformity with those statutes.

The Court quoted from the legislative history of the draft law. The Senate report stated: "The principle that women should not intentionally and routinely engage in combat is fundamental, and enjoys wide support among our people. It is universally supported by military leaders who have testified before the Committee. . . . Current law and policy exclude women from being assigned to combat in our military forces, and the Committee reaffirms this policy."

The Court's decision in *Rostker* hammered home the point. "The existence of the combat restrictions clearly indicates the basis for Congress' decision to exempt women from registration. The purpose of registration was to prepare for a draft of combat troops. Since women are excluded from combat, Congress concluded that they would not be needed in the event of a draft, and therefore decided not to register them." The Court cited the legislative history in the Senate Report: "The policy precluding the use of women in combat

is, in the Committee's view, the most important reason for not including women in a registration system."

The Supreme Court decision makes it clear that, if the laws exempting women from military combat are ever repealed, every young woman in America will become subject to being drafted if and when conscription is reimposed.

Feminist Assault on VMI

For 150 years, Virginia Military Institute (VMI) has been conducting a unique style of undergraduate education which graduates disciplined, honorable young men who are exemplary citizens and are ready to serve their country in time of war. It is a tough regimen that few men can endure and no women have ever tried. Ted Koppel calls it "quaint," but the proof of VMI's value is the many thousands of good citizens and leaders it has graduated since 1839.

Those with common sense and experience with life can understand why no woman has tried to enroll in VMI. Women don't like to have their heads shaved and be forced to keep their hair only 1/4 inch long. Women don't like to be called "Brother Rat," or insulted and ordered around as VMI freshmen are treated. Women don't like to share common showers and toilets with a bunch of men.

Women don't like the lack of privacy involved in being forbidden to have a lock on your door or a curtain on your window. Women don't like having strangers enter your bedroom at any hour, day or night. Women don't enjoy boxing and wrestling with men or other body contact sports.

You would think the Department of Justice would have enough to do, dealing with our nation's many legal and criminal problems, but on a slow day in 1990 it filed suit against Virginia Military Academy, charging "sex discrimination" because VMI does not admit women.

The purpose of this mischief-making lawsuit is not to enable young women to be called Brother Rat. The real purpose is to force VMI to feminize its educational system and conform to the androgynous society demanded by the radical feminists. The statutory language and legislative history of Title IX's rule against sex discrimination clearly exempt military schools and undergraduate colleges that have been traditionally single sex. The feminists' suit against VMI should be laughed out of court.

Every woman in Virginia is within a few miles of at least one of Virginia's 40 colleges or universities. Five of them are exclusively for women. A woman with a hankering for a military experience can take ROTC at many colleges or even become a cadet at Virginia Polytechnic Institute.

On November 19, 1990, *Newsweek* ran an Op-Ed piece called "The Failure of Feminism," and on November 23, the *New York Times* ran an Op-Ed piece called "Feminism, a Dirty Word." Some people are finally learning that feminism is a dead-end road to nowhere.

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