

Raging Feminists Wrapped in Victim Blankets

Written by Laura Kiefert, Green Bay Progressive

Friday, 05 March 2021 18:10 - Last Updated Saturday, 06 March 2021 11:55



Woman, lifelong proud feminist, comments on where contemporary feminism seems to be going.

GREEN BAY, WI - This post might be particularly interesting to fellow Democrats. It's part of the reason I've chosen to no longer be a member of my local chapter, the Democratic Party of Brown County Wisconsin .

I am proud to have been part of the women's movement throughout my lifetime. A movement that won women the rights to vote, have credit cards, not be legally raped by their husbands, use birth control and generally be considered people instead of property, among other things.

As a result, issues such as basic inequality, sexual discrimination, the epidemic of domestic violence, sexual harassment, and sexual abuse are now being addressed much differently and many freedoms have been won that had been denied to generations of women before mine.

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However, I'm concerned about where contemporary feminism is going, and whether I can be part of it anymore. I've gotten old, but I'm still as passionately angry as ever about women being denied abortions, or treated like a piece of meat by lecherous bosses, or beaten up in their homes by husbands. I know what it feels like to have a loaded gun held to my head by an abusive husband, to be propositioned at work, denied a promotion solely because I was a woman. I have suffered my share of inappropriate comments and innuendoes from the opposite sex.

Regardless, I have always considered myself a survivor rather than a victim. I refuse to just assume I need protection from any person who doesn't have a vagina. Being on guard and becoming enraged at every slight a man makes isn't the most conducive way to effect change. And often, it turns the offender into he victim.

Outrage is easy to channel, hard to bottle up and at epidemic levels in so many areas of society that it's difficult to take a step in today's world without causing controversy. Moral certainty and intolerance are the vices that drag us into the worst of humanity's sins. They do not provide the path towards a better future. Generalization is the mistake we make every time we set about changing the world by making enemies of those we feel have offended or insulted us in any way, or simply don't agree with us.

Over the past few years mainstream feminism, like other forms of identity politics, has become obsessed with victimhood, in what I consider a seriously disempowering way. It has begun to feel like a religion, with its own strict rules about what women are permitted to say, do and think. And just as important, about what men are permitted to say or do, or behave.

In this world, a compliment, or a rude joke is harassment. A pat on the back is sexual assault. Asking someone out for a drink is abuse. Let me be clear: A violation of these rules may be unpleasant, but is NOT traumatic. Suggesting otherwise only diminishes the experience of those women who have indeed, suffered trauma.



For me, being a feminist has always meant supporting women's freedom to be whoever they want to be, regardless of whether anyone else approves or not. I have come to believe that identity politics, taken to its extremes, is essentially divisive. The emphasis is on difference –

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what separates us from one another, not what unites us. Why would any confident, strong, capable woman want her identity wrapped up in being a victim?

In the highly competitive race for ultimate victimhood, contemporary feminism is already fractured along lines of class, race, sexual orientation, disability, and more. Women have become so enraged with the oppression they experience that they can't hear anything but the muffled sound of their voices trying to escape from the victim blanket they have wrapped themselves so tightly in.

So, my advice is to stop raging. Solutions are not found when we are incensed. Instead of living in expectation of the next slight, try imagining that the vast majority of men want the same thing. The dream of a world more female shaped will only be realized using predominantly feminine qualities, such as reason, patience, endurance and emotional sensitivity. For that we need to be calm, rational and ready to listen, not in a state of rage. And, not by assuming the role of victim.

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