

The Ugly Face Of Feminism

By Philip Jones
7-28-9

Was this really what feminism was all about? According to Home Office statistics, to be published later this week, crimes committed by girls aged between ten and 17 have shot up by some 25 per cent over a three-year period.

Earlier this year, a man died and a young woman was badly injured in an explosion in North London. It was thought to have been carried out by a girl gang which had previously been seen causing trouble in the street.

For several years, there has been a disturbing rise in the number of girls committing violent crimes at ever younger ages.

Last month, rival girl gangs used snooker balls in socks to batter each other in a mass brawl at a railway station at Shoreham, West Sussex. In March, a 15-year-old girl was jailed for using a mobile phone to film two drunken teenage male friends beating a man to death in Keighley, West Yorkshire.

Last October, a gang of teenage girls stoned a 72-year-old woman and forced her into a busy road, leaving her with a broken nose and two black eyes.

There has also been a string of murders committed by girls, often sickeningly sadistic. In 1999, for example, two 15-year-old girls murdered 71-year-old Lily Lilley, binding her mouth so tightly that her false teeth were pushed down her throat and giggling as they wheeled her body through the streets before throwing it into a canal.

In the same year, a girl gang was found guilty of murdering mentally-ill Angela Pearce after torturing her. And so on.

Of course, most girls live law-abiding lives. Nevertheless, it is highly disturbing that so many are now committing such acts of savagery.

What would once have been regarded as an aberration among a sex which was once (doubtless a touch misleadingly) a by-word for gentleness, order and self-discipline, has now become a shocking fact of life. So just what has gone wrong with girls?

Certainly, this has to be set in the context of rising crime in general. Only last weekend, a 16-year-old altar boy was killed when a fight broke out in a South London bakery shop, bringing the toll of teenagers killed in London so far this year to 13.

The UK Government's claim that overall crime is falling, as recent statistics also reportedly show, bears scant relation to everyday life. Such figures - even in the supposedly authoritative British Crime Survey - are highly selective or manipulated.

The reality is that crime and disorder are rampant, along with a constant level of menace in many areas from people often fuelled by alcohol or drugs and whose aggression and hostility simmer just below the surface.

The reason for this parlous state of affairs lies in a combination of a collapse of family life and parenthood, depriving children of the love, security and discipline that are crucial in producing orderliness from within, and a parallel collapse in the willingness of the criminal justice system to impose orderliness from without.

On top of all this, however, modern feminism has added an extra and unforeseen twist. Little did those pioneers who fought for equal rights for women dream that one outcome would be equal wrongs by women. Yet that is precisely what has happened.

This is because, like the rest of the equality agenda, modern feminism recast equal rights as 'identity'. The notion that men and women behaved differently because they had different expectations and pressures was deemed to be sexist and discriminatory. Equality meant that men and women had to lead identical lives.

At the same time, however, feminism also held that masculinity was a problem. It was men, alone, who were held to be aggressive - crime was presented as intrinsically a male problem - as well as being emotionally illiterate and unfairly hogging the workplace, while women were chained to kitchen sink and family.

As a result of the feminist revolution, women have commandeered the freedoms and entitlements of the masculine world - while men themselves have now been largely reduced to sperm banks, walking wallets and occasional au pairs.

Women now claim to be equal breadwinners - but some of them will still go to court to fleece men for everything they have if their marriages break up.

Along with this has come an aggressive and self-centred approach to the world which apes the worst caricatures of male behaviour.

Whereas men were once associated with one-night stands, now women demand sex without strings and bring children into the world without a father as their 'human right'. Told to be assertive, they have interpreted that as being aggressive. Female role models in movies, video games or rap music increasingly glorify violence too.

The outcome has been serious confusion among girls about their role in the world and how they should behave.

In the past, girls' perception of where their interests lay meant curbing their own behaviour in order to attract men and safeguard the well-being of any children they might have.

But now they are told they can go it alone and have it all. So the brakes on their behaviour have been taken off. Assuming that to be equal means competing with boys on their own terms, girls try to prove themselves to be 'one of the lads' by drinking and drug-taking.

The number of women arrested for being drunk and disorderly has leapt tenfold over the past five years. And from alcohol and drugs, violent crime

results as surely as night follows day. The original 19th-century feminist pioneers, who fought for women's rights in a society where they really were second-class citizens, would surely have been appalled without measure had they been able to see into the future.

For their feminism was based on the belief that women were different from men - and worthier than them. Indeed, they wanted women to play an equal role in the public sphere precisely because they believed that women's superior moral virtues - sobriety, chastity, self-discipline - would civilise public life.

Instead, just look at what we have done with their great legacy. Bob Geldof's 19-year-old daughter Peaches has been reportedly filmed buying cocaine from a drug-dealer.

Photographs of Mick Jagger's grandchildren published last weekend showed 12-year-old Amba clad in four-inch heels and a microdress posing with a sultry come-hither look at the camera; while her sister Assisi, at the ripe old age of 15, wore a skimpy little satin number and a knowing smile.

Even the likely future wife of Prince William, Kate Middleton, appears to spend half her life downing 'Crack Daddy' vodka and champagne cocktails at Boujis nightclub.

The solution to our crime problem must involve a 'zero tolerance' approach by the police. The instincts of London's new Mayor, Boris Johnson, in outlawing alcohol from public transport and appointing apostles of this approach as his advisers, are admirable.

But we must have the same approach towards values. For too long we have made a fetish of tolerating the intolerable in the name of equality.

No one wants to turn the clock back to deprive women of equal rights. But we must recognise that equality is not 'identity'. Feminism never meant the degradation of women.

Somehow, we must restore the idea that women bring unique gifts and

values to the national party. Reviving the traditional family would be a start. This would make men, women and children happier - and cut crime.

So what's stopping us?

Comments to : <http://righteousalliance.blogspot.com/2009/07/whatever-happened-to-girls.html>

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