

The Backlash

A Column for the Politically Incorrect

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In Search Of Justice

This article originally appeared in "The Newspaper" (University of Toronto) concerning the men's rights group In Search of Justice. -by William Steeves [Editors' note: The editors of this column are submitting this article to present an alternative viewpoint and do not necessarily endorse all the opinions expressed in this article.]

Is opposing feminist ideology, opposing women? Absolutely not, since feminism doesn't speak for all women. Don't try to tell that to Suzette Reid, women's centre coordinator, who called In Search of Justice, whose U. of T. activities I coordinate, "a bunch of spoiled boys". Are these the words of one working to end sex discrimination, or just some feminists hatred towards men? Most men understand women's anger at being called "girls," but some women think they can call us "boys". This is just the tip of double standard iceberg, but society allows them to vent their misandronist rage unabated.

Worse still, their greatest weapon is to whine "Misogynist Backlashers!" or "Real men support women's rights". How about "Real PEOPLE support EQUAL rights"?

Is it true that only women are oppressed while all men are privileged? Some feminists want us to think so, to continue rewriting laws for their benefit. While women have had, and still have many problems, including domestic violence, poor opportunities, and societal stereotypes, men also have problems. Many of them are the result of overzealous lobbying, leading to statutes ignoring the fact that laws are not for women's privilege, but for the benefit of all. So, what problems do men face?

Let us first consider family law. How many single fathers do you know? Not many, because judges think that only women should parent, and award custody to them in 85% of divorces. Plus, the state goes out of its way to make fathers pay support, while dragging its feet on ex-wives disobeying visitation orders. In

Ontario, a bill guaranteeing fathers fast court access in access violations, was passed near the end of the Peterson administration. When Bob Rae was elected, he refused to proclaim it. I wonder if he had heard some feminists crying "This allows men to harass women". What about the NDP's Bill 17, which garnishees pay for support? If you don't believe this

is harassment, consider the ads, showing fathers as deadbeats who "forget" their payments. My heart goes out to these men, forced to pay ostensibly for children with whom they are denied quality time, but more likely going into that new car. These ads perpetuate the stereotype that women should raise kids while men are only wallets. For years, we have supported an alternative: joint custody. Thus, children aren't traumatised by being ripped from a parent, fathers and mothers can share parenting, and there would be no question of access or support.

Let's consider sexual assault cases. Once, women were afraid of reporting rape because police would laugh it off. If they didn't, the woman was shown as the criminal. We all condemn this today, but we now blindly assume men guilty. A SAC calendar once featured a section on dealing with suspected rapes, which stated "Believe the woman, not the man". What about listening to both sides? Also, legal protection of plaintiffs only, can be abused by a small minority of vindictive women who will charge a man to see his name besmirched. In fact, we believe the identity of both parties should be protected in any crime, except where the victim wishes to be named and/or the defendant is at large. In any case, the defendant's name should be released after a guilty verdict.

Let's move on to reproductive "rights." Linked with paternity suits (forced fatherhood) and the abortion debate, this has become our most controversial issue at U. of T., especially due to the revelation of my personal experience with abortion, which devastated me for over a year and still deeply hurts.

But for every fifteen people who condemn me for "getting revenge", and/or "invading privacy," I get one who says "I feel sorry for what happened, and applaud your standing up for yourself". I am sorry that I had to break a promise and implicate the woman involved, but the question was between her right to privacy versus my right to tell a painful story which is as much mine as hers. So, my decision was to speak out, but to keep her name off, in order to minimise any unwanted attention towards her. I am