

## Are Feminists Running Out of Things to Campaign About?

The Guardian, on 23/10/13, devoted a large part of the front page, plus more room inside, to an article written by Ruby Tandoh, a contestant on The Great British Bake-Off, a TV competitive baking programme ("Great British Backlash"). This gave Ruby a platform to complain about various nasty things people had said about her. I did not watch the programmes, nor am I familiar with the things some silly people were saying. I can well imagine they might have been things better not said (or written). One of the things, I believe, was a suggestion that Ruby might have been flirting with a male judge. She complained about misogyny, possibly rightly. People who appear on reality TV shows generally come in for stick from someone. OK, that does not excuse the bad-mouthers and it is unfortunate that the idiots will not just shut up. But then it was only a darn baking contest and it was only some words. Did this issue really deserve such a huge platform as a large chunk of The Guardian front page, plus more inside? Can you imagine The Guardian doing this for a man who had been subject to similar remarks? No, what we have here is The Guardian making use of a propaganda opportunity.

I might have let the matter go, but in the same issue of The Guardian was an article, "Yes feminists are attacked" by Caroline Criado-Perez. This is the woman who campaigned recently to have pictures of women on bank notes and got 'attacked' on Twitter by morons threatening rape and such like. I really do wish they wouldn't do that<sup>1</sup>. This particular article didn't seem to be about anything new - perhaps just The Guardian making sure we didn't forget about it. But note the relative triviality of the original issue: whose picture appears on bank notes. Is this all women have left to complain about?

I still would have let it go but in the same week The Guardian again gave massive coverage to another non-story, purely as a front for feminist propaganda. This time nearly half the front page was taken up with a photograph of actress Natascha McElhone (of whom I had not previously heard). This was to draw readers' attentions to the two-page spread inside the newspaper, containing Natascha's own report of a talk she had given at Wired 2013. She talked of the desirability of "reprogramming the male" or having "an app for gender equality" to counter the perceived "objectification of women and reduced aspirations for girls". But re-reading the

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<sup>1</sup> Of course these anonymous tweeters are *assumed* to be men. But don't rule out the possibility that it was feminists doing it deliberately to stir up an artificial 'cause'. Far fetched? Not as far fetched as you'd think. Take the case of Meghan Lanker-Simons, a former University of Wyoming student, who was apparently sent rape threats via Facebook. Women were outraged by the Facebook posting and demanded the author of the post be found. The university made a statement denouncing 'rape culture'. Lanker-Simons herself hit the feminist warpath. But the police have determined that the posting came from Meghan's own computer, with the named person logged on as Meghan herself. Lanker-Simons has since announced her intention to plead 'no contest' to a misdemeanor charge. In exchange for the plea, she will receive a minimal fine and no prison sentence. The maximum penalty would have been a year in prison and a \$1,000 fine. Lanker-Simons has now taken up a place at law school! Frightening, isn't it? No doubt she will soon be contributing to the noble cause of taking men's children off them in the so-called family courts.

generous two pages she was allotted in The Guardian, the only actual issues she raises are words - just words. Things people said of which she did not approve.

For example, 5 years ago, following the death of her husband, some male friends had said to her eight year old son, "look after your mum, you've got to be the man of the house now". Bastards! You can see why Natascha was up in arms about that. And then there was the woman at the school gates (woman, mind) who suggested that a good education was more important for boys than girls. Shocking! I can only admire Natascha's self control in not slapping the bitch. Oh - and then there's the boobs in The Sun, don't forget that.

Yes, Natascha, I can appreciate that those things are annoying. But, you see, they just don't measure up to the mountain of crap which men have thrown at them. It has probably never entered your head that all those examples you cite are actually anti-male as well. Take the remark to your son. What message was being conveyed to that little eight year old? It was this: "Your duty, my lad, is to look after women. That's your role, and don't you forget it". You may think, Natascha, that it is infantilising women to suggest that they need a man to look after them (and it is, I agree), but did you not notice that it is actually your son against whom the principal oppression is being exercised? The remark of the woman at the school gates (and I'm surprised there is anyone so daft left) is motivated by the same gender-expectation. Men need the better education, in this woman's archaic view, because they will be expected to work all their lives to keep woman and children. I humbly submit that being obliged to play the indentured servant is a greater infringement of men's freedom than merely being expected to be the recipient of such attention is an infringement of women's - though both have cause for complaint.

And as for the boobs....just who is it that is being exploited? This is too big a topic for this brief note, but here's an analogy. In the relationship between a junkie and a drug dealer, who is exploiting whom? The partner with the insatiable craving is clearly the one being exploited, whereas the drug dealer is doing the exploiting - in that case for money. So, whose craving is being exploited when men are exposed to sexually alluring pictures of women? And who is in the controlling position?

But actually we are violently agreeing - though for different reasons. Men do need reprogramming. Men need to be deprogrammed of the expectation to be a white knight and to dedicate themselves to women. They need to be reprogrammed to think of their own interests. Shocking, isn't it? The answer to gender-oppression is for the oppressed gender to demand their rights and put *their* rights first! Where have I heard that before? Men also need to deprogramme their sex drive. They need to understand that sex is their weakness, just as heroin is a junkie's weakness. Indulging the craving is not the best course.

And that is just a brief response to the issues you were complaining about, Natascha. Far more important than mere words and pictures are the real-world discriminations to which men are subject. They are not trivial. It will take me months, probably years, just to express them even partially on this web site. And, you see, Natascha, it's not just unwelcome words than men have to contend with. It is actual real disadvantage in every aspect of life from infancy to death, inclusive; education, marriage, reproduction and healthcare. Understand this, Natascha, if I could stop all those thoughtless people saying those things which upset you, I would. But it would be nice, really nice, if, in return, men could get a little bit back. Perhaps we could start with 50% men teachers in all schools? That sounds a bit like equality to me. You are

likely to find out only too late how your son has been disadvantaged in that sphere. And let's hope that in years to come he doesn't have children and then get divorced. Because, Natascha, you can brace yourself to lose those future grandchildren. And you will have only yourself to blame - hoist by your own petard.

By the way, Natascha, you need to watch that son of yours. He's showing signs of rational thought. We can't be having him asking questions like, why is there a Woman's Hour (but not a Men's Hour - not on Radio 4, anyway) - and why are there special women's pages in newspapers (but none for men)? He might need some corrective action at some point. No need to worry, though, the schools are pretty good at that these days.

I note that you ask why men should not be the ones staying at home, looking after the children? Well, I'll tell you one reason why, Natascha. It's because of a thing called maternity leave. You see, women have rights and men don't. Oh, yes, there's something called paternity leave, right enough. Let's have a look at this one aspect of equality, shall we? In most large companies, a woman, after 6 months employment, is entitled to maternity leave which consists of, typically, 6 months on half-pay, with her job guaranteed to remain open for her for a year. And paternity leave? That'll be one week's extra holiday - and perhaps the option for a second week, unpaid. So, for the majority of couples, it's hardwired into the system that it will be the woman looking after a new baby. *That's* why men don't do more of the staying at home to look after children, Natascha. Perhaps, instead of man-bashing, you'd like to campaign about that? Do something constructive, you seem to have the influence to get a double page spread in The Guardian - campaign to get paternity rights on a par with maternity rights. And then, maybe, just maybe, men might start to get a fairer chance in custody battles too.