



ENVY AND MALEVOLENCE THE SHAKY FOUNDATION OF GENDER STUDIES

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ABSTRACT

Most versions of gender ideologies are founded on the implicit or explicit assumption that all relations between men and women are based on male oppression and female victimhood throughout the entire history of mankind.

Gender theories do not promote female autonomy but rather foster a mentality of complaint and the demand for third-party-support, such as from state institutions in welfare states, or even redemption, whereby benevolent men act as bearers of a resurrected chivalry. Gender theories belittle female contributions to society and culture, for example, by socializing children for the functioning of society, aiding demographic reproduction as well as shaping the culture of food and living.

There is no evidence-based research that shows women are as passive and disabled as portrayed in gender studies. The glorification of female victimhood is instead based on a deeply embedded psychological condition of gender activists in academic institutions and administrations. The driving force is their envy, be it subconsciously or openly expressed. The cause of their envy is simply the difference between the sexes and the absence of pride in women's own natural abilities and cultural contributions.

Keywords: Envy, malevolence, gender struggle, totalitarianism, conflict solution, misogyny, conflict avoidance.

INTRODUCTION

Which is less pleasant: being envied or envying yourself? Envy is an intense feeling, it can consume one's soul and destroy the envied person's enjoyment of the object in question. However, envy is also part of life, and it is worth to not only point it out but to furthermore investigate which significance it can obtain in societies. That is in its positive sense as well, as to allow envy to become a progressive force. In this essay, I want to show one example in which way envy can be dynamic by turning it into ambition, fantasy and persistence. Through the example of *gender studies*, on the other hand, we are going to explore the paralysing potential of envy. It can befall individual people or entire groups and then pushes them into an isolated envious fixation. In this case, nagging envy leads to a hostile self-centredness, which alienates the individual and the collective alike from society.

PROGRESSIVE ENVY

My personal example of a productive envy is dating back to the 1950s. We were several boys in our neighbourhood and ten years old. We were each faced with a major decision: either to continue at our single-sex class at the local elementary school or to transfer to a secondary school.¹ In a Frankfurt suburb with quite a few illiterates, such a transfer in itself would already have constituted a parting with their milieu. Thus, most boys stayed at their elementary school while only a few moved up to the secondary school. We boys, many of whom had lost their fathers during the war, envied one boy in particular in our neighbourhood. Not only did he have a father (who was a teacher), but he also attended a grammar school in town. For many years we both envied and admired him. However, none of us could really say with any clarity what we envied him for. We did not know what one *actually* learned at a grammar school. Perhaps it was Latin, which appeared to us both intellectually challenging and mysterious. In any case, Latin was emblematic of thinking and knowledge, which we hoped that, one day, would also enable us to understand our provenance and allow us to change our world for the better. Our envy thus became the motor for further educational achievement. Later on, our employers considered this as detrimental to the work climate as too much striving would cause unrest. That did not discourage us. None of us gave up our dreams of, against highly improbable odds, going to university one day. When the opening-up of educational reserves started in the early 1960s, it was very much in line with our thirst for knowledge. Many young

men and women from an uneducated milieu, with a similar drive, for the very first time had a route to attain A-levels (high school diploma). The 'second chance education' (similar to G.E.D. in the US) became the vehicle that extinguished our envy of a privileged education by allowing 'those at the bottom'—us—the advancement all the way into the universities. We owed that to Social Democracy, which at the time still made policies for the underprivileged. This is an example of state intervention that—in tandem with the high motivation of the individual—allowed for societal change.

ENVY AS A SOURCE OF CONFLICT

Not so the proponents of gender studies. While they have a variety of differing approaches, they share one particular tenet: They do not believe that upward-mobility through individual effort is possible for women. Therefore, they argue, it is now the women's turn, no matter what. As if men had hitherto achieved anything without effort and at the cost of women, picking up the ripe fruit lying at the roadside. Followers of gender studies are looking for activities from which they assume that women are maliciously excluded and that they are not deliberately staying away. They always find what they are looking for. And even if they overwhelmingly do not find anything, as they only encounter successful women, then they are not even capable of being pleased about it. Pleasure would require giving up envy as one's elixir of life and, instead, working ambitiously for one's own success, like everybody else—a renunciation of the very basis of gender studies.

Given that gender ideologues do not want to act themselves, concentrating on voicing complaints instead, they require others to lead them to the lofty heights of their utopia. Gender studies did not develop concepts comparable with those of social movements, allowing for the individuals or groups to free themselves. Nor are they contributing to any kind of professionalism. A certain adherence to unhappiness is not alien to them as is the traditional quest for knightly men, keen on liberating women from imaginary distress. I have described this mentality many years ago as *Opferverliebtheit* or "the state of being enamoured with victimhood."² From the viewpoint of psychology, we can spot symptoms of masochism here, which are characterised by the enjoyment of suffering and punishment. Politically, the proponents are against rough violence, yet they are quite open to a more refined version in their personal daily lives.

Followers of gender studies relentlessly seek in the most secret corners of society indicators of the victim-status of women, in order to portray a rounded image of the suffering collective of women. This is practiced with such passion, it resembles religious belief whereby faith is replaced by a devout victimhood. The enemy man, in contrast, is stylised as having a godlike superiority.

Even though it is always a personal choice to adapt such a mentality of victimhood, left variants of the welfare state do strengthen this trend as it is thought that every individual needs to be increasingly spared from the efforts of having to autonomously shape one's life. This trend is enlivened by the sponsorship of victim studies at colleges and universities or the search for victims within the Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland (Evangelical Church in Germany). Who then can be surprised that victimhood is fashionable? No one ought to be ashamed or enraged about his or her own failures, no one ought to feel pressured into accounting for their own life. With the feeling of victimhood, the guilty party is delivered for free. Every victim is confronted with a recognisable culprit. And, just like that, a slow reversal of lifestyles begins. Personal responsibility is replaced by benevolent directives from the outside, that is, the internal is replaced by the external. Consequences are far-reaching, because we are increasingly pushed by external institutions toward a new normality.³ We have known for over three decades about the aims of gender studies and political correctness. And in more extreme form from totalitarian systems, as it is envisaged in literary form in George Orwell's *Animal Farm*, for instance, or from the practices of former socialist states.

ENVY AS AN ELIXIR OF LIFE

If we do not have to work ourselves for that which others already own, then we do not only let our envy loose unscrupulously, but eventually we surrender to the horrid feeling of malevolence. Both envy and malevolence become socially acceptable, because it is always others who are responsible for them. The maxim is: "If you are good people, procure me what I envy in order to rectify a wrong! Otherwise I will become aggressive and malevolent. I am already an approved victim!" Anyone who counts on that will solidify through immobility and thus envy turns into entitlement. Redress is only possible through the welfare state's intervention in order to pacify all enviers. To invent a credible rationale for such action is essentially the objective of gender studies at universities and colleges. This search is mostly financed by

Federal Ministries and not, as one might think, through a laborious research funding process, overseen by experts. Gender studies shall provide the foundation to thoroughly vilify men, in order to maintain malevolent envy as the power engine for the discipline. It is for this reason that gender studies can exist as debris on the fringes of our educational system. State financing does not only enable the gender studies' subcultural encapsulation from science and humanities, it furthermore protects them from verifying its societal usefulness by means of the usual methods of scientific evaluation. "Gender-political progress" aggravates the envy of men. Along the way it propagates a mentality according to which women should present themselves as being disenfranchised and lamentation is a legitimate principle for women to make demands.

BEYOND POLITICS—THE SHAKY FOUNDATION

We cannot justify the dynamics of envy and malevolence with reference to the injustices experienced by women. All claims of systematic discrimination have been refuted by and large. Those differences that still exist are expressions of agreements within society or personal partnerships about the division of labour between the sexes. Therefore, we have to look into another, unusual direction in order to understand why envy and malevolence as a foundation are sustained. Only, what is this foundation now? It is evidently not about the advantages any longer that men have surreptitiously obtained at the expense of women. For the mostly female followers of gender ideology, this is rather about inner sensitivities, which can be captured as a psychological conflict. This is nothing new, it is merely overlooked too often. Among genderists, this conflict leads to an essential division between men and women, which is considered to be immutable. They basically break down the men and women's world into opposites. Not in order to reconcile opposites, which alone would make sense, but to intensify them and to conjure women up as the saviours of history and humanity out of the magician's hat. For them to be able to rise like Phoenix from the ashes of a wicked male history, men have to be vilified thoroughly. Let us single out the principal point from the bandwidth of such lines of arguments: violence is male. Men are violent, women, in contrast, are not. Yet, no evidence for this mythical-male violent being can be provided. In day-to-day life, countless anecdotes of wives standing with an iron frying pan behind the door are in opposition to this myth, and not to mention the findings of researchers. The consequences of ignoring this reality is a poisoning of men and women's relationship and leads to an atmosphere of threatening hostility. It is

claimed that male violence was part of an unchangeable nature as much as amicability⁴ was of women's. This is all the more astounding as gender ideology has declared the influence of nature, such as biology or genetics, on human behaviour to be insignificant or, at best, marginal. The escape into an essentialist allocation of negative or positive features is due to one fact: the world is not polarised in a simplified manner, yet it ought to be declared as such. The ideology of mighty men and powerless women is meant to do the trick so that political leverage persists to take state-financed gender-political against action evil men. Gender ideologues' practices of daily life are not disturbed by this inconsistency, although they are in stark contrast with their more subtly arguing precursors and representatives such as Simone de Beauvoir, Judith Butler and more generally with social constructivism. These make the assumption that woman is not born as woman, but made into one. Logically, this principle of socialisation should equally hold true for the man. If the male and female in its particular form are created socially indeed, then envy of men also has to be considered as a social construct and as ephemeral. This logical corollary is not pursued, because the second target would be missed: namely, to maintain the emotional certainty of envy and malevolence being justified.

In the hostile tradition of certain branches of feminism, emotional needs and fantasies are being forged into one ideology. In the end, this resonates with the notion that masculinity and femininity are not only essentially distinct, but on top of that, unequal in worth. One gender is therefore worth more, the other rather less, that is inferior. From the point of view of gender ideology, masculinity is considered as enviable and femininity is not. Therefore, women have every reason to envy men on the basis of their anatomy and to endow them fancifully with characteristics such as magnificence and omnipotence; and they cover themselves with a veil of defectiveness and powerlessness. Although genderists do not phrase it like this explicitly. They do so indirectly by portraying their own fate as the opposite of magnificence, thereby attaining yet again more reasons to establish envy and malevolence as a political strategy. As if there was no other way to achieve what is missing and desired. Men have indeed, such as the neurologist and electrotherapist J. P. Möbius about one hundred years ago, attributed to women a lesser worth—namely, an anatomically conditioned *mental deficiency*. They have done so with the intent of protecting the gender arrangement from a modernising dynamic. Men feared for the pillars of their own self-certitude. Now, there are a few indicators that gender ideology is far closer to the conservative Möbius than its proponents are aware of. While

the women's movement of the last hundred years, trusting its own strength, has moved on from the debate of inferiority, the allegedly subversive gender ideology is reawakening this debate anew. It is doing it differently than Möbius, but with the same result. Women are shown as weak and dependent on benevolent redeemers and providers.

THE STATE OF BEING ENAMOURED WITH VICTIMHOOD—THE BIPOLAR WORLD-VIEW

What is the driving force, which allows the genderists to cling onto the fiction of a woman's fate full of deprivation? Why are they ignoring the successes that women have achieved in competition and in society? Why are they valuing a woman's right to self-determination so little? Such successes and merits have neither been given to women by men nor the welfare state. Why then do genderists cultivate the right to quotas and other undeserved advantages for women and girls instead of counting on their potential to succeed themselves? They cannot accept that women can be as autonomous and successful as men, even though they are surrounded by plenty of achieving women at the universities. Autonomy and individualisation have no exceptional significance in their world-view. They count on liberation through others, just like Möbius did. While he thought of benevolent yet patronising men, gender ideologues are hoping for the regulations of the welfare state. This encourages passivity, triggering a deep dissatisfaction and leading to a life without freedom. Additionally, it is a plea for supremely traditional relationship-arrangements, which many women—especially highly educated women—have left behind a long time ago.⁵

Wholly in contrast to the life of women envisioned as depressing, the life of all men is being imagined as pleasant, satisfactory and exhilarating. And it is envied. As if men's lives were free from any burdens and sacrifices and day in, day out a single jamboree. If their work is perceived without its complexity and hardships, then this amounts to tunnel vision.

And this is how we have encountered for about three decades in wide parts of society and especially the media a ritualised rhetoric, according to which *all* men are violent and *all* women are peaceful. Their everyday life in their partnerships is broken down into irreconcilable antipodes as a consequence. It is not surprising that the state of being enamoured with victimhood cannot dissolve, making way for the transition to rational research within the humanities.

The followers of gender ideology are, as I need to highlight here expressly, characterised more concisely by their psychological motives than their political ideas. They are plagued by what the psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud described as penis envy. For this reason we can consider the anatomical difference as the main source for their stubborn state of being enamoured with victimhood. Not as an explanation for individual women, but as a model of analysis for the reasons behind the irreconcilability and the supposed lack of a future in relation to the male. As long as we cannot openly speak about this, we are upholding personal dissatisfactions that might exist. Furthermore, this alarming culture of bipolarity complicates the finding of a solution for conflicts—conflicts that have shaped the relationship between the sexes since the dawn of time. In order to keep the ideology of the irreconcilable relations between the sexes in place, all men have been subjected for more than three decades to an unflattering overall condemnation. Every single myth should debase them, not allowing anyone an escape and simultaneously ought to deliver another pretence of being able to still envy them wholeheartedly. Gender studies as a royal road to women’s redemption.

In the 1980s Leonore Weitzman and her female team conjured up the fable that all men were enriching themselves in the divorce process and successfully pushing their ex-wives and children into poverty. This went hand in hand with the attempt to revoke and revise the recently liberalised divorce legislation in almost every western society in order to ensure the preference for mothers before the law. This legal liberalisation was characterised not only by the facilitation of divorce but especially by the equal treatment of both partners in regards to child custody. This revisionist attempt was imbedded in the lingering lore of men subjecting their ex-wives and children to violent control. Just recently the die-hard feminist Gloria Steinem declared: “The most dangerous place for a woman in this country is her own home!”⁶ And that despite the fact that women are packing a punch just as often as men do.⁷

Even the notion of a wage differential between the sexes is put to bed, because this white lie for the benefit of women does not withstand the realities as captured by the Federal Statistical Office (and its equivalents).⁸

A polarised world-view is to be maintained at all costs, and therefore no accusation steps too low. For instance, one of the many denunciations currently circulating is the claim that western civilisation was similar to a *rape culture* and all men were their protagonists. An-

ybody opposed to this myth is being branded as a member of the fantasy collective of the *angry white men*, as it was termed by Michael Kimmel.⁹ As one of the most devoted defenders of this viewpoint, he wants to maintain the purity and benignity of all women in image of the Virgin Mary.

All terrifying claims, of which I only recounted the most frequent ones, have been scientifically refuted. Some of them are even considered as a falsification of research results by biased interest groups (that is, advocacy research pushed too far).¹⁰ They could only continue to exist as left party politics as much as the accompanying sexual arousal kept the debate alive. Not to forget the culturally embedded tendency to portray women, like children, as particularly in need of protection.

Gender ideology thrives off destroying imagined enemies. That is not a model for social change, but for belligerent actions. It has nothing to do with science. It is a danger for the individual as much as it is to society. Usually, conflicts are solved with the help of science and professional mediators. In that process, people are not perceived according to their anatomical sex but in keeping with their social, ethnic, religious and other relevant attributes—such as their lifestyle or a passion for or an abhorrence of autonomy based on cultural or personal factors. Those factors specifically that allow distinction between the individuals, that separate, bring together or cause conflict. Gender studies, on the other hand, deny any other determining factor from class-affiliation, education, and ethnos to personal responsibility. As social and individual moments do not have significance any longer, recourse to the genital anatomy as the last remaining differentiator occurs.

The social changes of the relationships between men and women are liable to multifaceted historic, cultural and material factors. These are in constant motion. They are not determined by our bodies. Admittedly, the existence of these is presupposed. To sort men and women commensurate with their anatomical sex is therefore a biologist misconception. One's anatomical sex in itself is not a social category.¹¹ Gender studies are succumbing to the paradox that they are flatly denying the relevance of biology, yet they are dividing people relative to whether they have a penis or a vagina and, ultimately, reducing them to it.

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- 1 In the German school system at the time, children were sorted after the first four elementary school years according to their academic ability and resources. They then continued their education at different school types—the Gymnasium or grammar school being of the highest academic standard and later allowing for entrance into universities, the Mittelschule was open to able children who would eventually enter the apprenticeship-system, while the Volksschule, as a continuing elementary school, offered the most basic level of education and was the “normal” choice for the working-class children up until the educational reforms in the 1960s.
 - 2 G. Amendt (2009), “Die Opferverliebtheit des Feminismus oder: Die Sehnsucht nach traditioneller Männlichkeit; Die Zukunft der Männer jenseits der Selbstinstrumentalisierung für Frauen,” in *Befreiungsbewegung für Männer: Auf dem Weg zur Geschlechterdemokratie; Essays und Analysen*, ed. P.-H. Gruner and E. Kuhla. Gießen: Psychosozial-Verlag, 41–55.
 - 3 D. Riesman (1950), *The Lonely Crowd*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
 - 4 Cf. M. Mitscherlich (1983), “Antisemitismus—eine Männerkrankheit?,” *Psyche* 37/1: 41–54.
 - 5 And generally, the collective identification of women on the basis on their anatomical sex is increasingly perceived as anachronistic. Hillary Clinton, in her recent bid for the presidential nomination in the US American elections 2016, called for women to vote for her because she was a woman herself. The actress Susan Sarandon declared in response: “I don’t vote with my vagina. It’s so insulting to women to think that you would follow a candidate JUST because she’s a woman.” See <http://www.nydailynews.com/news/politics/susan-sarandon-not-vote-vagina-article-1.2536095> (18 February 2016).
 - 6 G. Steinem in conversation with NPR (26 October 2015). Retrieved from <http://www.npr.org/2015/10/26/451862822/at-81-feminist-gloria-steinem-finds-herself-free-of-the-demands-of-gender>.
 - 7 See R. A. Medeiros and M. Straus (2006), “Risk Factors for Physical Violence Between Dating Partners: Implications for Gender-Inclusive Prevention and Treatment of Family Violence,” in *Family Interventions in Domestic Violence: A Handbook of Gender-Inclusive Theory and Treatment*, ed. J. Hamel and T. Nicholls. New York: Springer, 59–86.
- See also M. Philips: “The Scandal of Women’s Violence to Men: Feminists Ignore the Fact That Aggression in the Home is a Female, as Well as a Male, Problem.” *The Times*, Opinion, (11 March 2016), Retrieved from <http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/opinion/columnists/article4710456.ece> . And G. Amendt (2013), *Von Höllenhunden und Himmelswesen: Plädoyer für eine neue Geschlechter-Debatte*. Vienna: Ikaru, 64ff.
- 8 Cf. a publication by the German Federal Statistical Office: “As a measurable chief cause for the gender pay gap we can identify a diverging choice of professions or rather industries between male and female employees (four percentage points) as well as the unequally distributed job requirements in regards to management and qualification (five percentage points). It can be observed that women, compared with their male colleagues, are more likely to pursue an occupation that is in tendency linked to a lower earnings potential and lower requirements. Ultimately, the higher number of women within minor occupations also contributes to the gender pay gap (2 percentage points). [...] The net gender pay gap in Germany amounts to ca eight per cent.” C. Funke (2006): *Verdienstunterschiede zwischen Männern und Frauen*, ed. Statistischen Bundesamt, Wiesbaden, S. 5 [translation mine]. Retrieved from https://www.destatis.de/DE/Publikationen/Thematisch/VerdiensteArbeitskosten/Verdienstunterschiede/VerdienstunterschiedeMannFrau5621001069004.pdf?__blob=publicationFile.

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- 9 To the critique of *Angry White Men* see M. Groth (2014), "An Angry Non-White Man? Research and Rhetoric in Michael Kimmel's *Angry White Men*," *NEW MALE STUDIES* 3/2: 90–122.
 - 10 R. R. Peterson (1996), "A Re-Evaluation of the Economic Consequences of Divorce," *American Sociological Review* 61/3: 528–36.
 - 11 J. Alber (2010), "Geschlecht—die überschätzte Dimension sozialer Ungleichheit: Zentrale Herausforderungen liegen anderswo," *WZB Mitteilungen* 129: 7–11.

AUTHOR PROFILE



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