



Sexism. The New Prudery?

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The delusion of sexism not only denies that eroticism creates and maintains relationships. It also attempts to unmask eroticism as an instrument of male domination and to replace it with the belief that men are perpetrators and women their victims, and that the sexes are bonded together solely by male dominance rather than arrangements. The ideology of sexism is intended to anchor guilt feelings in every man over his potential status as perpetrator. As a result, sexism can only be experienced by women. This ideological belief system disparages the importance of everything personal. It is therefore argued, that the ultimate goal is to defend eroticism as the most highly developed form of civilized boundary crossing in intimate relationships against condemnatory feminism.

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The lament over sexism stems from the plundered arsenal of feminism. It is a battle cry that draws life from political indoctrination, not enlightened conviction. Ultimately, its intention is to describe the world of men and women in terms of irreconcilable opposition and to create the appearance that their relations to one another are shaped not by eroticism but rather annoyance, anger, and violence. Sexism fights eroticism because the latter focuses on what men and women have in common rather than what separates them. The intention is to significantly weaken eroticism, a pulsating occurrence between the sexes that has always made it possible to transition from stranger to acquaintance and finally to sexual intimacy. For as long as the cultivation of eroticism is maintained, the ideology that divides society into perpetrators and victims has no chance of survival. Especially since erotic relationships refute the belief that women are controlled by male animosity alone. It is above all women whom this message of salvation has not yet reached, who are meant to become acquainted with it through official government channels. As they establish themselves and become pervasive, feminist-influenced bureaucracies see themselves as the chosen ones bearing the glad tidings of polarization!

Yet the delusion of sexism not only denies that eroticism creates and maintains relationships. It also attempts to unmask eroticism as an instrument of male domination and to replace it with the belief that men are perpetrators and women their victims, that the sexes are bonded together solely by male dominance rather than arrangements they enter into with one another, and are driven either by habit, intent, carelessness, or unconscious motives. The allegation of sexism is therefore intended to transmute eroticism into male autocracy, if not sheer violence, so that women are left with no sphere of domination of their own, and convincingly embody a call for constant help. Although this view is extremely out of touch with everyday life, things cannot be otherwise because this is the only way to cast women as a collective of victims, and because their advocates' own passionate infatuation with victimization would not make sense to those on the outside.

Since eroticism attempts to near the vulnerable intimate sphere of the other, it not only entails risk but can lead to misjudgments, grave breaches of decency, misunderstandings, a sense of personal offense, and consequently violence. And that holds true for both sides, women as well as men. There are innumerable examples of abuse happening all the time. The abuses are committed by men and women in every stage of their lives, in every conceivable situation, every imaginable place and manner. But because feminist circles can only imagine this as unilaterally male behavior, the intention is to replace erotic spontaneity as a male characteristic with a body of formalized approach regulations. The object is to rein men in, regulating their conquest behavior step by step—right up to the sexual act itself—bringing their alleged violence under control, and thereby protecting women. At many American universities and businesses this already defines daily life. For a man who is alone, not riding in the same elevator with a woman is part of it, as are student events with headings such as “She’s afraid of you!” Meanwhile, feminism fantasizes that all women are passive and helpless and therefore require no such body of rules.

Bill Clinton was already abiding by these protective regulations in exemplary fashion when, in 1999, he asked intern Monica Lewinsky in the White House Oval Office whether he could touch her. Her answer was yes, and all the rest is history. Even though incrementally granted permissions have rendered eroticism toothless, in the end every individual still has the final say as to yes or no. Everything becomes very simple-minded and bureaucratic, however; during the process of garnering consent, passion is lost.

When eroticism arises between two individuals, it is something extremely intimate. As a result, the media have in the meantime fastened on sexism as a means of increasing advertising rev-

enue. Eroticism has been proclaimed an everyday risk for women. Their bodies have been declared totally off-limits and cloaked under a chador of approach rules. Beyond the vagina, the buttocks, and breasts, this defines the rest of the female body as sexual as well. Thus, while the chador in Islam shrouds the object completely from sight, democracy would wrap the rather naked female body in protective legislation. The chador as a visual mantle is replaced by a secular taboo against touching and thereby clashes with female self-presentation which by design is a progressive removal of clothing. In this manner, feminist clichés gradually blossom into prudery in practice. And when erotic risk is no longer linked to two individuals, a boundless space abruptly opens, where all male activity can be explained as violent encroachment. At the same time, this vein of thought once more casts women in their traditional role as custodians of passivity.

Desire, as communicated either verbally or mimetically, not to mention the speechlessness of passion—*silently, they draw unspeakingly near*—goes down the drain. Some men have already begun to fear that they, too, could harbor a molester; that in the end they could be a rapist simply because they, too, have on occasion looked at a woman's behind before looking into her eyes. A man who entertains such fears has already infected himself with sexism's allocation of guilt. He no longer lives the life of an individual who can lustfully desire women, but instead numbers himself among the imaginary throng of perpetrators. And this is precisely what the politically driven polarization of the sexes strives to achieve; it is an attempt to ossify a conflict-laden world in an insuperable antagonism between good women and bad men. The ideology of sexism is intended to anchor guilt feelings in every man over his potential status as a perpetrator.

This probably already characterizes the internal world of many men in the German Social Democratic Party who have mutely submitted to the misanthropic image of masculinity espoused by their party constitution—because according to this document human society can only be realized if masculinity has been eliminated beforehand. In their manifesto against machismo of 2010, the men of the Green Party in North Rhine-Westphalia submitted to accusations of sexism no less permanently and with no lesser degree of self castration.

At the same time, however, a growing number of men would like to escape the misandrist denigration that is washing across the country. They rummage through their life histories searching for far-flung pieces of evidence that women are no less sexist. Yet the you're-no-better-than-we-are misses sexism's core accusation. In sexism there is no symmetrical distribution as we know it from violence in relationships. There can be no such thing as sexism in women, although there are just as many forms of emotional and sexual offensiveness as among men, be it in the personal or the public sphere. One who tries to pin sexism on women as a means of relieving unpleasant feelings has failed to understand that "sexism" is merely an application of condemnatory feminism, according to which men alone can be perpetrators and therefore evil and violent. And, above all, it is a failure to realize that the idea is to spur the polarization of society ahead and into the very pores of the intimate sphere. That is the reason why only men can commit sexual abuse, for only those who rule come into question as perpetrators, and not the ruled themselves.

As a result, sexism can only be experienced by women. Anybody who accuses women of sexism fundamentally misunderstands the totalitarian polarization of society that feminism seeks to advance. Although normality always entails conflicts of many kinds, according to feminist ideology it can be explained through male destructivity alone. Hence, this ideological belief system disparages the importance of everything personal while passing off sexism as a structural principle, according to which intimate relations are dominated by male violence from the outset. A differentiation is no longer made between a gentle touch that is premature, a look that is too direct and can be annoying,

invasive bottom grabbing, the lack of women in corporate board rooms, the physically violent male in the home, Oscar Pistorius pulling the trigger, and a homicidal rape in an Indian bus. That is intentional. That is why it is generally claimed that women should have the right to define violence according to their own criteria. There must be no law stipulating the criteria or setting any limitations. Women are granted the right of self-determining harm. Instead of defending the female erotic space, feminists are inculcating women with a world view that paints any approach by a man as a threat. For Julian Assange, this right to self-determine harm resulted in rape proceedings; the case of Joerg Kachelmann was similar. Instead of clarifying what women want or do not want of men, the articles of this faith would permit women to pass judgment on a man's advances autocratically.

In the current heated debate, the ultimate goal is to defend eroticism as the most highly developed form of civilized boundary crossing in intimate relationships. Crossing boundaries in a cultured manner generally protects us from incursions that injure others or harm them. As a rule, however, it creates the intimacy desired because, in principle, eroticism attempts to explore whether something can be shared, the existence of separation notwithstanding. For without crossing the boundaries of daily life, without overstepping (or even exploding) day-to-day routines with another person—consensually and yet simultaneously embracing risk—personal relationships simply cannot come about. The person who is incapable of transcending routines will ultimately remain isolated and lonely.

The differences between men and women, despite their many commonalities, lie in the way they overcome the aloofness of everyday life. For the most part, men choose and reach out with their eyes, sometimes in the form of pleasant flirtation and captivating charm, sometimes aggressively, obtrusively brash, or disinterested and dismissive, sometimes overshooting the mark with their “skirt chasing.” Men are the active ones—not always, but probably more often than not. Women, on the other hand, tend to be more selective, allowing themselves to be courted in order to create a sense of having been shown preference—not always, but probably quite often. For many women, being drawn out of their careful reserve is already perceived as a sign of esteem. Although many traditional customs have become more fluid in the younger generation, believers in sexism categorically insist that men are the only ones who boorishly violate boundaries. They speak of sexism because they generalize individual cases out of resentment against all things male. But in reality they are waging war against eroticism and reverting to puritan prudery! While opposing the chador in other countries, feminist adherents of sexism actually champion an invisible chador here. The media have taken up the conservative trend, thereby resurrecting the female passivity of bygone days in neo-conservative guise.



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