
Feminists Assault Science

By Philip Carl Salzman

Feminism is a closed, partisan ideology designed to lobby for female advantage. Science is an open exploration designed to test and expand knowledge. Feminism and science are entirely incompatible.¹

Feminism rejects biological knowledge about the differences of males and females. To quote a university student about her feminist courses, “merely mentioning biological differences can be wrongthink. Or worse, as I learned in one of my classes, it can be upsetting to genderqueer or transgender students. Thus, some of the root causes of what makes men and women differ — hormonal, neurological, and biological differences — is left out of the discussion.”² Biology is rejected on the grounds that locating gender differences in biology has been used to oppress women.³

In place of biology, “social construction” of gender roles explains the differences between males and females, according to feminists. In feminist ideology, “biology doesn’t determine fate, but culture. Men are violent not because of hormones, but because of socialization into ‘toxic masculinity.’ And women, who are more nurturing, do so because of sexist conditioning, says social constructionism.”⁴

Feminists deny the most basic facts of biology. A feminist colleague refused to accept that human males are on average physically larger and stronger than human females. She knew perfectly well that female elite athletes could not compete with male elite athletes, but even refused to concede this point. Is “social construction” the reason that there are no female players in the NFL, CFL, NBA, NHL, MLB? Or is there a biological basis to the parallel male and female sports leagues and competitions? The physical advantage of males is behind the controversy over transsexual male-to-female athletes competing in events against women.⁵

The biological differences between human males and females are myriad, as they are in the animal kingdom among species with sexual reproduction.⁶ Both neurological and hormonal differences can impact emotions and skills.⁷ For example, cognitive skills differ, with men being stronger in spatial cognition.⁸

Feminists deny all of this, because genetically -based biological characteristics are not amenable to change for

¹ <https://www.acsh.org/news/2016/10/26/modern-feminism-incompatible-science-10366>

² <http://quillette.com/2016/08/26/what-i-learned-in-my-womens-studies-classes/>

³ <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/feminist-philosophy-biology/>

⁴ <http://quillette.com/2016/08/26/what-i-learned-in-my-womens-studies-classes/>

⁵ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Transgender_people_in_sports

⁶ <https://phys.org/news/2013-06-extraordinary-gender-differences-animal-kingdom.html>

⁷ https://www.amazon.ca/Taking-Differences-Seriously-Steven-Rhoads/dp/159403091X/ref=sr_1_fkmr1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1543781029&sr=8-1-fkmr1&keywords=talking+sex+differences+seriously

⁸ <file:///C:/Users/user/Downloads/ReillyPUB3335.pdf>

the convenience of benefitting females. And biological characteristics that stand in the way of female equality or superiority cannot be admitted. Therefore, all differences in gender roles are attributed to “social construction,” that is, to culture and socialization. It is thus a basic precept of feminism that genetics and biology are false. This makes feminism an enemy of science.

Feminist animosity to science is seen particularly in the opposition to and suppression of scientific studies that do not conform with feminist ideology. One example is the “Greater Male Variability Hypothesis.” Theodore P. Hill, Professor Emeritus of Mathematics at Georgia Tech, and currently a research scholar in residence at the California Polytechnic State University, describes the subject of his recent paper:

“In the highly controversial area of human intelligence, the ‘Greater Male Variability Hypothesis’ (GMVH) asserts that there are more idiots and more geniuses among men than among women. Darwin’s research on evolution in the nineteenth century found that, although there are many exceptions for specific traits and species, there is generally more variability in males than in females of the same species throughout the animal kingdom.

“Evidence for this hypothesis is fairly robust and has been reported in species ranging from adders and sockeye salmon to wasps and orangutans, as well as humans. Multiple studies have found that boys and men are over-represented at both the high and low ends of the distributions in categories ranging from birth weight and brain structures and 60-meter dash times to reading and mathematics test scores. There are significantly more men than women, for example, among Nobel laureates, music composers, and chess champions—and also among homeless people, suicide victims, and federal prison inmates.”⁹

This paper was accepted in sequence by two respected journals, and then, after feminist intervention, was rejected by both journals. The feminist group, Women in Mathematics, insisted that the journals reject the article, and feminists lobbied the National Science Foundation to refuse acknowledgment as a funder, which it did. Other contributors to the paper were threatened by feminist colleagues with loss of their jobs; Women in Mathematics said “the paper might be damaging to the aspirations of impressionable young women,” and feminist professors at the university of the co-author said, to argue that “women have a lesser chance to succeed in mathematics at the very top end is bias.” The chair of the co-author’s department said, “sometimes values such as academic freedom and free speech come into conflict with other values to which Penn State was committed.”¹⁰ In other words, feminists are allowed to negate academic freedom, and to deny publication of scientific evidence. As we see in this case, feminist views not only conflict with scientific evidence, but throughout our governmental and educational institutions feminists are officially allowed to bully scientists and suppress scientific conclusions that they do not like.

Alessandro Strumia, a Senior Scientist at the European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN) and Professor at Pisa University, on 28 September 2018 presented a talk designed to respond to previous presentations. According to Strumia, “This workshop was continuously telling (saying), ‘men are bad, men are sexist, they discriminate against us’ – lots of things like this. I did a check to see if this was true ... and the result was, that was not true. There is a political group that wants women, and other people, to believe that they are victims.”¹¹

Strumia presented a series of charts, tables, and graphs to demonstrate that, far from being discriminated against, women were favoured, and men were discriminated against. He also said that “Physics [was] invented and built by men.” Whatever the historical reasons for it, this is of course true of all sciences. In Physics, the subject under discussion, women have won three Nobel Prizes, men 207.¹²

⁹ <https://quillette.com/2018/09/07/academic-activists-send-a-published-paper-down-the-memory-hole/>

¹⁰ <https://quillette.com/2018/09/07/academic-activists-send-a-published-paper-down-the-memory-hole/>

¹¹ <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/cern-scientist-suspended-sexism-alessandro-stumia-large-hadron-collider-a8564366.html>

¹² https://stats.areppim.com/stats/stats_nobel_sexcat.htm

The response was immediate: Strumia was suspended from CERN, and his university has launched an investigation. 1600 scientists signed a petition against Strumia, saying, among other things, that "Strumia's arguments are morally reprehensible. Belittling the ability and legitimacy of scientists of colour and white women scientists using such flimsy pretexts is disgraceful, and it reveals a deep contempt for more than half of humanity that clearly comes from some source other than scientific logic." There was much high rhetoric in the petition, and most of the counter arguments and allegedly refuting evidence are dubious at best.¹³

It would have been difficult to provide refuting argument about "scientists of colour," because Strumia never mentioned them. The petition also said, "Signatories to the statement agreed that they wanted to "state, in the strongest possible terms, that the humanity of any person, regardless of ascribed identities such as race, ethnicity, gender identity, religion, disability, gender presentation, or sexual identity is not up for debate".¹⁴ Strumia of course said nothing about anybody's "humanity," nor about religion, disability, or sexual identity. What he did say was "The data about citations and hirings show that women are not discriminated (against) in fundamental physics," he said. "We reward merit, irrespective of gender."¹⁵

The reaction to Strumia was not an impartial scientific challenge based on evidence. Rather, the reaction to Strumia was an indignant rejection of a heretic who violated the religion of progressive feminism's most cherished commandment, that females must make up at least 50% of the people in any enterprise. Strumia received the usual treatment of a heretic: vilification and excommunication. A major part of the vilification was to condemn Strumia for saying things that he never said. The underlying view of his accusers is that if you do not accept feminist ideology and goals, then you are evil.

Where did the idea come from that "justice" is the demographic representation in every activity and enterprise of every category of humanity according to their statistical representation in the general population? And that if equal representation does not exist, it is in every case because of bigotry and discrimination? This precept ignores the differences among different categories of population, and their different suitability for different activities. For example, members of particular categories who are, on average, short in stature, are unlikely to be represented in professional basketball, not due to bigotry, but due to suitability. Why is the illustrious idea of "diversity" in physical type and ability ignored in the equal representation commandment? The equal representation precept also ignores freedom, the ability of people to choose what they prefer. If people of certain categories prefer urban living, must a representative proportion of them be sent to the farms and forests against their wills?

Throughout North American society, in governments, scientific agencies, granting agencies, and universities, there is a determined policy, with sanctions attached, to increase the number of females in STEM (science, technology, engineering, mathematics) fields. This has been determined from above, from progressive feminist principles. Below, among students, the enthusiasm of females to commit to STEM has been, shall we say, lukewarm. Given the free choice that females have had in universities, they have massively chosen to go into the social sciences and humanities. Females now make up 60% of university graduates across North America, males 40%, so females are already substantially overrepresented, but this does not seem to be a violation of "gender equality," at least according to feminists. Nonetheless, feminists are frantic that females do not have a higher representation in STEM. Here are the Canadian figures:

¹³ <https://areomagazine.com/2018/10/31/gender-controversy-comes-to-physics-a-response-to-the-statement-against-alessandro-strumia/>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sOCiKe7zLMo&t=6s>

As of 4 December 2018, there are 1962 signatures on a petition "CERN: Return Prof. Strumia to office!"
<https://sciencecensored.com/cern-return-prof-strumia-to-office/>

¹⁴ <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/prof-alessandro-strumia-cern-physicist-scientists-petition-particles-for-justice-a8574626.html>

¹⁵ <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/prof-alessandro-strumia-cern-physicist-scientists-petition-particles-for-justice-a8574626.html>

“According to the National Household Survey (NHS), women accounted for 39% of university graduates aged 25 to 34 with a STEM degree in 2011, compared with 66% of university graduates in non-STEM programs.

“Among STEM graduates aged 25 to 34, women accounted for 59% of those in science and technology programs, but accounted for 23% of those who graduated from engineering and 30% of those who graduated from mathematics and computer science programs.

“Women are always less likely to choose a STEM program, regardless of mathematical ability. Among those who went to university, 23% women in the three highest categories of PISA [Programme for International Student Assessment] scores (out of six) chose a STEM program, compared with 39% of men in the three lowest categories of PISA scores.”¹⁶

Furthermore, it appears that gender equality in the society at large is negatively correlated with females in STEM. That is, “In countries that empower women, they are less likely to choose math and science professions.” The explanation seems to be that girls, while good at math and science, are better at reading, and prefer reading. And there are more opportunities in economically advanced countries for people with literary backgrounds. “The upshot of this research is neither especially feminist nor especially sad: It’s not that gender equality discourages girls from pursuing science. It’s that it allows them not to if they’re not interested.”¹⁷ This evidence does not support the feminist argument that females do not go into STEM because they are discriminated against. Rather, it supports what female students have shown by their free choices, that they prefer non-STEM fields.

Finally, the assault on science continues with a demand that science be transformed into “feminist science.” In other words, feminist say that science as it has been practiced during the past 500 years is no good and should be abandoned. After all, say the feminists, “objectivity is male subjectivity.”¹⁸

In its place? Feminist science that “infuses social justice, inclusion and equality into science to advance progressive social change. ... a socially just science.”¹⁹ In other words, feminists do not want to explore reality through the collection and assessment of evidence. Feminists already know the answers that they like, and wish to transform science to fit feminist ideology. That will allegedly “advance progressive social change,” although it is likely to end the masculine discovery of the world.²⁰

We already know that feminism is toxic to our culture and our educational system²¹, and next it will be toxic to science. Are we smart enough and serious enough to defend science?

¹⁶ <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/75-006-x/2013001/article/11874-eng.htm>

¹⁷ <https://www.theatlantic.com/science/archive/2018/02/the-more-gender-equality-the-fewer-women-in-stem/553592/>

¹⁸ <https://now.org/blog/creating-a-more-feminist-science/>

¹⁹ <https://www.thecollegefix.com/feminist-science-event-teaches-researchers-socially-just-science/>

²⁰ <https://www.thecollegefix.com/feminist-science-event-teaches-researchers-socially-just-science/>

²¹ <https://fcpp.org/2018/07/11/toxic-feminism/>

About the Author



Philip Carl Salzman B.A. (Antioch), M.A., Ph.D. (Chicago) is Professor of Anthropology at McGill University, appointed in 1968. He founded the Commission on Nomadic Peoples of the International Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences, and its international journal, *Nomadic Peoples*, for which he received the IUAES Gold Award. In recent years he has also served as Senior Fellow at the University of St. Andrews, Open Society International Scholar at the American University of Central Asia, Erasmus Mundus International Fellow at the University of Catania, and Visiting Professor at the University of Sydney. Extensive ethnographic field research in Baluchistan (Iran), Gujarat and Rajasthan (India), and Sardinia (Italy) provided the foundation many articles in academic journals, and for book publications such as *The Anthropology of Real Life: Events in Human Experience* (1999), *Black Tents of Baluchistan* (2000), winner of the Premio Pitr-Salomone Marino, *Understanding Culture: An Introduction of Anthropological Theory* (2001), *Pastoralists: Equality, Hierarchy, and the State* (2004), *Culture and Conflict in the Middle East* (2008), *Postcolonial Theory and the Arab-Israel Conflict* (2008), and *Thinking Anthropologically 3rd Ed.* (2010). His latest book publication is *Classic Comparative Anthropology: Studies from the Tradition* (2012). In public affairs, he was a member of Middle East Strategy at Harvard (2008-2010), a member of the Board of Directors of Scholars for Peace in the Middle East (2004-2012), and is currently a Senior Fellow at the Frontier Centre for Public Policy, a member of the Academic Council of the Canadian Institute for Jewish Studies, a Fellow of the Middle East Forum (2015-), and a member of the Board of Directors of Scholars for Peace in the Middle East (2016-). His articles have been published by the Frontier Centre, the Middle East Forum, the Gatestone Institute, the Canadian Institute for Jewish Research, the Macdonald Laurier Institute, and *Areo Magazine*.