

Stupidity and the Sexes

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Unfortunately, the cognitive basis for much social stupidity is not discrimination based on ability but the human tendency to generalize behavior of differentiated members of a group into the form of a representative stereotype. This streamlines social decisions, as individual variation can be ignored and reactions keyed to specific characteristics deemed definitive for behavioral inter-action. However, the loss to stereotyping is obvious: individuals are raised up or put down not due to their individual abilities but because they are lumped into a linguistic category. Women, for example, have been universally and eternally victimized by stereotyping [1] to the degree that 400 years ago expert on females, Cardinal de Richelieu concluded "Intellect in a woman is unbecoming" [2].

It is alleged that the female psyche has somehow been permanently shaped by the oft noted ability of women to bear children. It may well be that there is something to this for mothers (who do usually tend to be female) who spend more than 24 hours a day in the presence of children. Anyone subjected to such a situation might have to sacrifice something to emotional stability,

and it may be a bit of logic and sanity. Recent research indicates there are real differences between male and female brains [3], so there may well be a special brand of feminine stupidity^a. However, before we venture too far into the uncharted domain of comparative idiocy, let us indulge in a bit of intellectual diplomacy and allow that the two sexes are, in their own aggravating ways, equally stupid or at least appear to be so to the advocates of the presumably equal other.

Be that as it may, women make better police people, doctors, drivers, gamblers, spies, world leaders, beer tasters, hedge fund managers and just about everything else—e.g., mothers—than men [4]. In fact, it is difficult to find something—other than 400lb bench presses—in which men excel. The inferiority of women in matters of physical strength when human culture was beginning apparently led males to slight them in all other respects up to now. Along with using race as a basis for stereo-typing, sexism can be denounced as the stupidest idea in history, being more a psychocultural indulgence than a scientific rationale.

^aAs psychologist Justin Timberlake observed when reflecting on his fling with Cameron Diaz: "I learnt a lot.....but I'm still a man, so I have some kind of learning disability".

As an inducer of stupidity, sex narrows the focus of those involved to a single-minded pursuit of self-gratification, so on this one let us give an edge to men. (Lendram *et al.* BMJ 2014; 349: g 7094)

Clearly the institution of marriage is a miserable failure in serving the sex urges of overwhelming numbers of people—especially single males and spouses. Marriage should be a child rearing but not necessarily sexual institution. Marry for children but like the ancient Greeks stay open on sex and sex partners: Forsaking most others should be enough and usually is.

*Btw is it not odd that free sex is legal, but prostitution is a crime? Sex is the only thing for which one cannot charge but can give away. During prohibition the manufacture, transportation or sale of alcohol was illegal but one could give it away or buy it and drink it.

*As Benny Franklin advised, "Keep your eyes open before marriage and half-closed afterwards. (Poor Richard. 6/1/1738.)

Bibliography

1. Hammoned P. "An Introduction to Cultural and Social Anthropology". 2nd edition Macmillan; New York. (1978): 185.
2. Richelieu A de Circa. Quoted by Richard Nixon on p. 106 of Living History by H. Clinton. Simon and Schuster; New York. (2003).
3. Johnson S. Mind Wide Open. Scribner; NY. (2004): 14.
4. Abrams D, *et al.* "Throw in phone operators. The buzz immediately after D-Day was that we could be thrown off the beach unless we got some women on shore pronto to operate the phone system. Maybe men are more logical, but women are definitely better at dealing with chaos and all kinds of crazy things happening at once. Ditto surgeons: Albeit anecdotal, someone who observed the work of women surgeons commented. "It is amazing anyone let men be surgeons" (2011).

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