

The Fallacy of Women's Liberation

Popular history speaks of political activism having liberated women, when actually it was technology that made them obsolete as women.

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Popular culture holds that women were liberated from the enslavement of the white man, by decades of political activism and diligent campaigning by famous feminist such as Gloria Steinem and woman suffrage leader Susan B. Anthony. In reality . . . what really liberated women was they were made obsolete by technology and displaced, thereby leaving them free from traditional women roles to



pursue new avenues of life. Now to understand that, it's back to basics- When the big engineer in the sky designed us, it wasn't for anything even remotely like the world we live in today. We were designed to be hunter-gathers. We were designed to live in groups of about a dozen to a few dozen people. We were designed for a life span of thirty to thirty-five years. We were designed to tolerate a 50% kill-off of our young, most before age five. We were designed to tolerate a 10% kill-off of females from birthing problems. We were designed to be a highly effective . . . not necessary efficient . . . food gathering and reproduction machine. This design is what allowed us to leave the paradise of the rain forest and move out onto the harsh unforgiving life of the savannahs.

For the 230,000 years our species has existed, it wasn't until about 10,000 years ago that the new technologies of supplemental agriculture and animal herding came into being and began displacing the hunter-gather. Up until the last couple of hundred years, the woman's role was very important to the survival of humanity, there just wasn't any choice of alternatives, just as there were no alternatives for the role of men. It wasn't until the mid 1800's that technologies started to appear that replaced many of the drudgery task of keeping a household. By the turn of the century, appliances such a hot water heaters, washing machines, vacuum cleaners, central heating, pre-processed foods had reduced the time and effort needed by a woman to run a household. The new medical and food production technologies drastically reduced the kill off of children and women, which in turn caused the reproduction rate to far surpass the death rate. The principle task of a woman, as a woman, was eliminated almost overnight by technology. America, and the world, had many more new people than was needed. The woman, as a woman (the birthing of children), had been made obsolete by technology, and so she was no longer needed for her primary function of sustaining and propagating the species.

Women found themselves with more and more free time. By the mid twentieth century, a person, male or female, was able to keep house for themselves. To feed, clean and care for

themselves while still holding down a full time job. Then World War II came, and suddenly American industry was desperate for workers to replace those millions going off to war. Across the country, North, South, East and West, women flooded into the job market, learning new skills, making good money. But then the war ended, and like the receding tide, the work force drained of women, as they quickly returned to their homes to start families with the returning men. And like the tide, they slowly started coming back in again. Women started returning back to the job market in droves now able, because of technologies, to work full time and yet run a household too. Birth control technologies mushroomed as people limited the number of children in their families, the need for reproduction no longer needed because the death rate of children was now so very low.

And things might have worked out just fine, except that during this post war period, men were beginning to feel increased technology displacement of their jobs. Starting in the nineteen-fifties, jobs . . . good well paying jobs, began disappearing. Slowly at first, then at an ever increasing rate, machines were replacing people, both male and female, until the late nineteen-sixties when the rush of manufacturing to leave America became noticeable to everyone and the Rust Belt began to appear. The robot machine tools was allowing less developed countries to do manufacturing because they didn't need the highly skilled, highly trained machinist who had been central to American manufacturing.

The newly liberated women found themselves in a foot race not only with their male counterparts, but with the machines who were increasingly taking all those good jobs they wanted. I witnessed the introduction of the personal computer starting with the MITS Altair 8800 in January 1977, and then just two years later, Electric Pencil, the first word processor program for that first personal computer, was released. The word processor technology, using personal computers, exploded and in less than ten years wiped the clerk-typist career field right off the map, a career field that had provided about one third the jobs for women. Jobs that were now gone, leaving women struggling to find something else. It's really hard to climb up a hill, when the ground keeps crumbling and sliding away! As fast as women made inroads, those jobs crumbled away to leave them where they were, because now technology displacement wasn't about some poor slob standing on an assembly line- now it's the white collar professionals such as teachers, doctors, lawyers and middle management in corporations who are increasingly being pressed out of jobs. (Go Google three words- IBM, Watson and Jeopardy)

Now, while the feminist political activist are seeing 'blood red' over what I've just said, most readers are saying 'How very interesting . . . but so what? What's your point?' The dichotomy of technology displacement is that it's both positive and negative, for the technology displacement of women was what liberated them, but then in turn held them back in the job field as both men and women were being replaced by technology. That's why it's so difficult to say a technology is bad and therefore should be restricted, not to mention that ill effects are usually known only after a technology has spread into society. It is very hard to predict the impact of a technology before it is released into the market place . . . if not down right impossible.

Bottom line- you can't stop or control technology displacement. You can only strive to advance and stay ahead of it . . . and even then there's no guarantees!