

## **The Relevance of Chivalry In Today's "Post-Feminist" World**

Matt Campbell, Men's Activism New Network (MANN) – matt\_at\_mann@yahoo.com  
<http://news.mensactivism.org/>

*Please note that the subject matter was addressed in response to a student in Australia asking an opinion from MANN. This explains the qualifying comments that mention there may be divergent sociological factors to consider when reading the reply.*

### **Chivalry Past and Present**

"Chivalry" can have a number of meanings depending on who you ask, but it is probably useful to go back to the genesis of the term (Wikipedia discusses it here: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chivalry> ). I won't try to out-write the Wikipedia entry, as it does a pretty good job of reviewing its evolution. What is perhaps critical to note about the term "chivalry" is that it was at its start associated with a class of men (knights) who made their living (or more accurately, maintained their social roles) in their societies by being adept at two things: horseback riding, and doing so in a martial context. The two were closely intertwined for the knight, as the two things, for all practical purposes, that distinguished him from other men-at-arms was that he rode a horse into battle and was heavily armored when doing so. The other "common men" of war were more lightly armored if at all and wielded weapons either of less quality, utility, or both. In addition, knights could afford the upkeep, whether by patronage or other means, not just of any horse, but a war horse: one typically much stronger than other horses and having the kind of temperament to go along with it. Therefore, if he had any chance of meeting success in battle, as a mounted warrior he had to be able to manage his horse effectively under very difficult circumstances. This required knowing his horse thoroughly, being good at gauging the horse's state of calm or upset, and making allowance accordingly. All this, as he engaged enemy knights or soldiers who favored taking him down, as doing so would bring them greater esteem than doing in any number of ordinary troops. Killing popular or well-regarded knights among the enemy's forces also had a strong morale-boosting effect for one's own side and a morale-undermining effect on the side whose popular knight had been killed. So knights were considered "high-value" targets by everyone on the battlefield. The knight had to be able to defend himself and his horse, and he had to keep his horse calm and controlled throughout the melee, all while maintaining the requisite "knightly bearing" that the Code of Chivalry required. That was not easy.

It has always struck me that when considering chivalry as a concept, this rooting of it in battlefield horsemanship has been greatly overlooked. The key relationship that exists embodied in chivalry seems to me to be that between the knight and his horse. For without his horse, he is simply another armed man on a battlefield, albeit

with better armor and weapons than most others. If he fails to manage his horse appropriately, he loses the advantages that having a steed gives him: a mobile form of "higher ground", psychological advantage, more places to store a variety of weapons, and a lot better support for his physical person, being as it is encased in metal. And, getting thrown off his horse for his shortcomings as a battlefield horseman was often a death sentence; in the split-second-chance times that battlefield conditions created back then as now, a knight on his back while encased in armor was not too different from a turtle flipped onto its shell in the presence of a flock of hungry pigeons. Given enough time, maybe just two or three seconds, the knight could right himself. But if he had even one or two enemy soldiers, much less knights, near him when this happened, it was all over for him. So he has to be really good at managing his horse on a battlefield, and everywhere else.

As chivalry came to imply less that a given chivalrous man necessarily rode a horse, what then takes the place of the horse in the relationship that defines the term on a practical level? A romantic partner. Chivalry then comes to mean how well a man is "managing" his romantic partner, as he would a horse. This has always struck me as being more than a little patronizing, at best, toward women in a relationship with men who consider chivalry to be a good thing. However I acknowledge that many people of either sex may simply not interpret the concept the same way I do, or have pondered its genesis as much. And even those who have may have a different opinion for their own reasons. This one is just mine.

In any case, chivalry as it morphed into being seems to demand that men behave toward women in a fashion substantially different from the way they behave toward other men, and also to hold themselves to a standard of honorable behavior (whose definition seems to vary over time and place) that they do not hold women, nor do women expect themselves to meet. While this different (or "double", if you prefer) standard may seem to be of benefit to those on the more pleasant side of it, I think that it's the kind of benefit a parakeet may feel when it lives in a cage. There is far greater safety living in the cage. The bird is fed regularly, enjoys love and attention from its captors (who arguably are doing the bird a favor in a sense; life for small birds in the wild is often both short and scary) and it need worry for nothing. However it also never knows the joys of discovering new and different trees, testing itself against the challenges of nature (even if it loses -- life spans notwithstanding), and how it feels to really fly. There is also the down-side of this standard that men have to live with. First, they are being, in essence, discriminated against by their fellow men and by themselves. There is nothing written in stone that says they need to live up to an honor code on the one hand while others (women) do not, but chivalry addresses only a man's obligations in a relationship to others, both men and women (chivalry also included unswerving compliance with oaths of fealty toward monarchs, aristocrats, or other knights, depending on to whom a particular knight was in service), and not theirs toward him. Thus it becomes acceptable for

women to behave in ways categorically considered dishonorable and no one judges them negatively. Behaving in some way irresponsibly or underhandedly, both of which are signs of immaturity, immorality, or similar in any person, gets a pass when it comes from a female but not when it comes from a male. Examples even today include the fact that minor and more serious forms of violence that are aggressively condemned when exhibited by men are either laughed off or never really taken seriously either by other people generally or by the authorities. Examples: slapping a man's face, kicking a man in the shins or genitalia (definitely not a minor form of violence), actual physical emasculation (need I comment?), etc. So male DV victims are often overlooked or even laughed at while female ones are not.

In addition, chivalry places the needs and well-being of others categorically ahead of those of oneself. There certainly is something good and virtuous about not living life exclusively for oneself; such an attitude breeds indifference toward one's fellow humans. However if a man is raised with the chivalric concept of service to and protection of others (especially women) as the greatest moral good he can strive for, it results in making him a rather easily-exploitable servant of others who will quickly identify him as a soft touch and use it against him. His goodness in this regard will be ruthlessly taken advantage of, especially in many contemporary western societies. These kinds of ideals that came to be associated with chivalry cannot be isolated from the role and status of the actual historical knight; knights were adept men-at-arms who often held significant positions at aristocratic or royal courts and were usually appointed officers or acted as such in a king or lord's army. Thus the chivalric code they followed acted as a kind of moderating force against any inclination a knight may have to abuse or exploit his position of trust and martial skills. This was probably even more important given that at the time, knights acted as the king's or lord's law enforcers along with any appointed sheriffs or constables. Despite this moderating moral force, there were of course "bad apples" in the Middle Ages, both knights and their bosses. It wasn't too much different than today; many political leaders and law enforcers are relatively clean (as clean as can be when playing in the sandbox of politics and/or criminality) and strive to keep to their oaths of office and duty—others, not so much. But at least back then, there was something to instill a sense of moral responsibility among those most in a position to exploit their official positions, even if it wasn't always fully successful.

So to bring the matter of chivalry today, I do not see how it has a role as it may apply specifically and only to men. If however it could be applied to everyone equally as a standard to live up to in one's personal and professional life and any other dealings with others he or she may have, then it may indeed have a place. However the caveat is that everyone needs to adopt it: the ideals are such that it is far too easy for someone who does not play by the same rules to use them against the chivalrous

person. In addition, chivalry, as it was classically, carries with it a significant burden of religious observance, specifically Christian religious observance. I'll venture to say that the typical person in western countries today does not think people ought to be compelled to recognize or practice a specific religion, or any religion at all if he or she chooses not to. So this moral underpinning of chivalric standards of behavior that arises from Christian beliefs would have to be supported by something far less parochial.

## **Chivalry and "Post-Feminism"**

Regarding the term "post-feminist", like many others, I have had a hard time understanding the exact meaning. Looking at Wikipedia (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Postfeminism>), I see I am not alone. However it seems to me that our society today is far from post-feminist even in terms of its various definitions. I will mention here that I am writing from the United States, in the northeast. The U.S., being a rather large country, has varying cultural features many of which I will admit I am unfamiliar with. I am as unfamiliar with the details of Australian cultural touchpoints, generally or among its various regions, too. Having prefaced my response with that information, I believe that our society has become very much "feminized" in the feminist sense. I don't think it is "feminized" in the sense that some people seem to think society has become; if that were true, would men and boys still be playing football (i.e., American football), or enjoy watching it, or like to do the "guy things" men have enjoyed doing long before Gloria Steinem got on the book circuit? No, that hasn't changed much. But the goals of feminism are largely implemented and even goals past those goals have been met.

There are for example some issues that are near and dear to feminists' hearts that get challenged regularly, such as abortion rights. Frankly I doubt that battle will ever end, as long as fetuses are considered by enough people to be human beings, just unborn ones. What seems ludicrous to me is how people cannot see that women having the right to abort a child before a certain time or even anonymously abandon it in places such as police stations and firehouses (legal in many U.S. states) is acceptable while a man simply voluntarily declining parental rights and responsibilities in that same period of time (or as soon as he is informed of the pregnancy or even the birth of the child, should he first find out post-birth) is not. But aside from that one bigger example, the rights of men to have equal access to all manner of resources even when they are paying for them are routinely denied (educational grants, job training programs, some welfare benefits programs, etc.) and people of both sexes seem not to mind too much. In the private sector, there are women-only hotel floors in some places, women-only hours at some gyms, women-only health care events (where services are given away), etc. If these same things were occurring but for men only, there would be a lot of upset people holding rallies, etc. But as it is, nothing. When men and women who disagree with these

occurrences have tried to get these matters addressed, they are usually met with a great deal of hostility or laughed out of whosever (yes, that's a real word: [http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/us/definition/american\\_english/whosever](http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/us/definition/american_english/whosever) ) office they are in.

### **Equality and Double-Standards: Where Are We and Where Are We Going?**

To answer the question about whether we are moving toward a more equal nation for both sexes or a slightly skewed one in favor of women, again I stress that I cannot speak for life in Australia. However I can give you the report from the U.S., or at least my take on things. First, the question is not a simple 'yes' or 'no'. There are ways in which women have it better than men, and ways in which men have it better than women. These are less a matter of who has what and more a matter of whose rights are being respected and defended. As others have pointed out, people can have equal rights, but outcomes may vary as a consequence of substantive factors. But I will say that overall, I feel our society is quickly moving toward a more skewed state in favor of women. Unless this is recognized and checked, the ultimate outcome will not be good for people of either sex. For example, the very significant and commonplace matter of parental rights when a marriage breaks up. It is the contention of MRAs that the courts are heavily biased in favor of awarding custody/primary residence to the mother, even if the father is every bit as good a parent and possibly better than the mother. I cannot imagine a more significant skewing in favor of one sex over the other.

Due to the fact that "no fault" divorce has been implemented at the behest of feminists in all 50 U.S. states, a husband-father has no way of legally creating a basis of showing contractual fault on the part of his spouse. Should she be "at fault" due to having had an affair, started misusing money to gamble or run up severe credit card debt unnecessarily, become an intolerable addict of some kind, etc., the assets accrued through the marriage are still split 50/50, including the house, which she may have never paid a penny into if she wasn't earning money during the marriage. So here in the US in most states, a man has to hand a divorcing wife half the equity value of their house even if she never paid any part of the mortgage. Assuming a soon-to-be ex-wife (whether she filed or not and regardless of whose behavior led to a divorce) was the stay-at-home parent, she will get the kids as the "primary residence" parent even if so-called joint custody is awarded. In essence, a man in a "traditional marriage" is heavily penalized for going to work all those years and supporting her and any kids they have by having to pay her alimony and/or child support even though they are no longer married and his kids are effectively not his anymore -- as if they ever really were. That is not equality. That is gross injustice, and there are far worse example of courts trampling a father's rights into the dirt and laughing at him while it does it.

A related injustice is when men find themselves paying for kids who are proven not to be theirs via DNA testing and they can get no legal relief or compensation for it, even if it can be shown the mother intentionally engaged in subterfuge to get a particular man to become the presumed other parent under the law. He is then fiscally responsible for the child, or more accurately, obligated to pay the child's mother should she choose not to have an on-going relationship with him other than to cash his child support checks. There are other legal system-related problems that men have that women do not seem to have, but I do not wish to belabor the point, as important as it may be.

Military service obligations are another point of inequity. In places where there is a national military service requirement as a matter of course, this is clearly serious inequality between the sexes. Here in the U.S., conscription (euphemistically termed "selective service") typically occurs only when authorized by the U.S. Congress via a law and then signed into effect by the president (this is however a mere formality intended to keep the full extent of the president's power under wraps; the president does not need Congress' permission, as discussed below), but registration for it is still required when males turn 18 or, if they naturalize before reaching 26, they must do so immediately. (Oddly, so must nearly all male non-U.S. citizens in the same age range, including men in the U.S. who used to be or were never in lawful immigration status, but men present on student or visitor visas are exempt.) Failing to do so is legally punishable, though I do not believe anyone has been prosecuted for that "offense" since Vietnam. However, men are denied unemployment benefits and services as well as eligibility for federal jobs, and federal student loan opportunities – which is the consequence of not having registered or also not maintaining current address and phone number information with the Selective Service Commission. This is a legal jeopardy that women do not have to face simply because they are women. In the mean time, the federal government has literally thousands of programs set aside to advance women's educational and professional lives in that age group (18-25), while I am not aware of a single one in existence for men unless it is for men only of a particular ethnic group or groups, and these are far fewer than those set aside for women.

In many US states, men in a certain age range are legally defined as state militia members, albeit not trained as such or active. Those same laws or other laws give the state's governor the right to activate them into military service at any time. No legislation need be passed for the governor to do this. No women of any age range are included. (Two examples: New York: Mil. Law § 2 sect. 2 (<http://codes.lp.findlaw.com/nycode/MIL/1/2>) and sect. 3 (<http://codes.lp.findlaw.com/nycode/MIL/1/3>), and the CA Military and Veterans Code sects. 120-130 (<http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/cgi-bin/displaycode?section=mvc&group=00001-01000&file=120-130>). Notice the commonality of wording and age ranges. That is because able-bodied men between

17 and 45 are actually also members of the Unorganized Militia of the United States; see 10 U.S. Code § 311: <http://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/10/311> .)

This on-going pretense about needing a law to activate "Selective Service" can be dispensed with. It's a dog-and-pony show. American men between 17 and 45 are already \*in\* the service, both federal and state at the same time. And did residents of NY know the governor thereof has the power to conscript men into service and also to declare "martial rule"? Read it at <http://codes.lp.findlaw.com/nycode/MIL/1> , sects. 7 and 9. It wouldn't surprise me if this was a commonality among most or even all the states.

As for women not having equality with men, there are issues there also, though I do not know how these manifest in the legal sense. In my opinion, I believe women are by and large treated very leniently by the criminal justice system and are much more likely to receive lighter sentences for the same substantial offense when compared to a male convict. Women are also less likely to be convicted of a crime as compared to men even if the evidence is substantively the same. Finally, charges are less likely to be filed in the first place by prosecutors against a female suspect than a male one, all other things being equal.

So it may yield more ideas to approach the issue of equality in today's western society regarding women more from the roles-and-expectations point of view. I feel though that men face a great number of challenges in this area, too. For example, in the matter discussed above (chivalry), men are still expected to behave in ways consistent with a hodge-podge of "cafeteria chivalry" that is stripped of its religious and authoritative assumptions about men, while women are not, creating a rather "uneven playing field" in most if not all social and relationship-related situations. In the case of women, these are some major areas of inequity driven by social expectations that undoubtedly women come into contact with routinely. Below is a list which discusses some but is not comprehensive, I am sure. [Perhaps if I could change genders for a year or so, I'd have a different or different-sized list, but that isn't possible without some fairly radical medical intervention.]

1. Physical appearance: Volumes have been written about this already. In my opinion, women are expected to wear a greater variety of clothes and spend a lot more time (and money) on their appearance than are men. For younger women, this is not too terrible a standard because youth brings with it a "natural comeliness" for people of both sexes. However as people get older, women find that to maintain an "acceptable" level of personal appearance, they need to spend ever-increasing amounts on so-called beauty supplies. Madison Avenue ruthlessly exploits this standard and fuels the fire by constantly finding ways to encourage the typical woman to ask herself if she looks "good enough" to be acceptable to others. It is true that for people of both sexes, body weight as proportional to height as well



as the fitness condition of their physical form is an important consideration for anyone, but primarily for health reasons. A woman or man of any age who is 50 pounds overweight is not being good to him- or herself. Excess weight constitutes a significant health complication factor, especially if carried into middle age, as it becomes very, very hard to lose that weight after the body's metabolism slows down as much as it does. So weight concerns for women (and men) should not merely be brushed off as an unfair double-standard. However if a woman seems to be a little overweight, she is more likely to judge herself negatively since images of physical comeliness for women have been bombarding her much of her life in the form of "beauty magazines", actresses who seem never to be cast into significant roles unless they can also double as "eye candy" (requiring of course a very trim waistline and toned physique, with "very presentable" breasts an added bonus). In addition, others are faster to notice her extra weight as well, while men's extra weight, assuming it is not too much, is generally not held against them. I believe this double-standard is rooted in some fairly primal expectations that are hard-wired into our brains. The opposing double-standard for men is accomplishments/position in society. A man becomes more "important" as he ages, and unless he is a high-achiever in his youth (and so rises quickly in status due to his successes), the typical man will need to wait at least until he is 40 before anyone starts paying attention to what he says. It is for this reason most male mid-level managers in companies are at least 40, with a few getting in after 35. Since female comeliness is so valued however, the up-side for attractive women is that if they show even a reasonable dedication to their jobs and solid competence and potential, they are more likely to be promoted into management positions earlier in their careers than are men. Again, this is about subconscious motivations at work: both male and female high-level managers are more likely to promote such women earlier in their careers over men who have more time in grade and may be better choices. Life, as they say, ain't fair. So for women who can meet this expectation around appearance, life is much better than those who cannot. This is not much different from how men who can meet the "Alpha Male" standard have no complaints about how men are valued; after all, why would the game's winners want to change its rules? Don't hold your breath waiting for supermodels and millionaires (or both together in the same person) to start lobbying for social changes that vacate the tendency to value men for their status/wealth and women for their attractiveness/sexuality.

2. Over-emphasis on and over-examination of female sexuality: People of both sexes seem nearly obsessed with female sexuality. Again, this is probably rooted in early mammalian programming in our brains, but as with the physical appearance standards, as self-aware beings who are capable of examining our own thought processes and values, there is no excuse for people to hold onto their double-standards around both men and women. In this particular matter of female sexuality, it makes sense that as a social species struggling to keep its numbers up,



how often and quickly females are having sex and getting pregnant is a critical matter to the social group's (tribe, clan, etc.) survival, much less thriving. It is easy to forget that the human race only recently crested the 100 million person mark, and it is estimated that humanity stabilized at only roughly 3 million individuals in the 11th millennium B.C. (a mere 13,000 years ago) and it did not reach one billion until around the year 1800. (See [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World\\_population](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_population) ). Humanity has had little time for evolution to update our brain's wiring and arguably, given that our strong social ties allow us to support and defend our weaker members who are thus able to reproduce (and don't think I believe this is a bad thing; humanity's redeeming virtue, if we have one, is our willingness to support and protect our own weaker and more vulnerable members, though we don't always succeed at it), the natural selection that makes short work of individuals of other species doesn't succeed at taking down our weaker members nearly as often. Understand here when I say "weaker" I am not referring to physical strength as such, but speak in terms of traits that allow the individual to attain reproductive maturity and successfully reproduce. These include a sufficiently robust immune system, a high enough intelligence to learn important lessons and thus avoid or deal with dangers of all kinds in the environment, and physical traits that do not impede the ability to function well enough to undermine the individual's survival or reproductive capacity or appeal. As a more mundane example of this, flat-footed people would not do well in an agrarian, pre-industrial society wherein orthotics do not exist, but because others have invented them and in that way "supported and defended" those with bad feet, such limitations that used to cause people to need walking sticks (later re-named "canes") and become less attractive as mates or versatile as providers/contributors/defenders, are removed. So a cooperative, socially integrated society allows such "weaker" members to stay productive and to reproduce, thus allowing them to pass along their genes which contain, in this example, the trait of flat-footedness. And the beat goes on.

The child-bearers of the mammalian world are, by definition, females. Thus the choice of females' sexual partners, attractiveness to mates, and sexual behaviors becomes a matter of presumptive "public scrutiny". It rests with the subconscious assumption that everyone has a stake in what a female's sexuality is, who she is having sex with, how much, how often, is she pregnant and who's "de daddy", etc. In times past, maybe this was understandable, given the very high infant mortality rate and the constant struggle to maintain numbers. Now, it is utterly unnecessary, and by over-emphasizing this line of interest, it encourages females to value themselves more for their sexuality and seek ways to influence the world either by maximizing their sexual or prurient appeal (think of the current "Duke porn star" media blitz; would a male college student who makes money for college by being in straight and/or gay/bisexual porn scenes cause even a small amount of interest by the media, or most anyone else?). As a further observation though, for centuries male homosexuality in particular has been aggressively persecuted and condemned in

many societies to the point that such proscriptions have been added to the societies' religious canons. Even in those whose religions are more lenient/permissive, male homosexuality has historically been considered at least undesirable, while female homosexuality, not nearly as much, or not even addressed, as is the case in the Abrahamic religions. But even in countries that have vacated religious standards (the old USSR, for example), female homosexuals were considered "mentally ill" and put into asylums. However gay men were considered criminals/state enemies and sent to work to death in gulags. So while it was bad for both gay men and women, at least a discovered lesbian was not sent to a gulag (unless the authorities had another reason to send her there). This insistence on male heterosexuality was generated by male religious and political leaders, not women. So what could be the motivation thus for limiting male sexuality if a presumptive patriarchy is in charge? Don't those in charge tend to make rules benefitting their own members? The answer again rests entirely with keeping the babies coming, an overarching concern that trumps the individual's decisions or tastes in sexual partners. If a man has sex with a man and he ejaculates (as is expected), his semen is not going into a woman's vagina regardless of where else it is going. Thus that particular opportunity to impregnate a woman that was his ejaculation is lost forever, and if his expected age of demise is 35-40 (typical even fairly recently), every chance counts, as neither IVF nor erectile dysfunction medicines had been invented. A woman however can have sex with other women all day and still have sex with a man any time and get pregnant. The critical piece is that she at least have sex often enough with men to get pregnant enough times to at least replace herself and her mate with new people who survive to also reproduce, assuming he is also not having sex with other women and thus "double-reproducing", which was usually the case (remember: any chance to keep the numbers up was a good opportunity to take). For this reason, male homosexuals have been aggressively persecuted but should a man behave heterosexually in his sexual life, whether he likes it or not, he not only receives no condemnation but is cheered on, even if he is being promiscuous. That is because "it's all about babies". It also explains the aggressive proscription found in many religious teachings against masturbation as applied to males but the topic is unaddressed when concerning females.

So that covers the past. But the present? As I said above, there's no excuse for it now. I believe neither women nor men should be scorned ("slut-shamed") simply because they like to have sex with different partners, and the sexes of those partners are also their own concern, no one else's. One's sex life is their business and in some cases, that of only a specific other person or people, regardless of their sex. [This position, however, does create a freedom of expression issue if it has the force of law; if person A thinks behavior done by person B is morally or otherwise wrong, but still legal, and if person B's behavior does not directly affect adversely person A's life or exercise of their own rights, should person A's \*right\* to denounce person B's behavior be suspended? That, I do not support. The right to express opinions,

even if they are deemed objectionable or even hateful, is in my judgment protected by the U.S. Constitution. It may be speech I don't like, but I can disagree with the opinion of the person making the condemnatory remarks -- fair's fair. While I much prefer to live in a world where people genuinely agree with my opinion on this or many other matters, I would not want to deprive them of their right to speak their mind. After all, if it can be taken from them, what is to stop it from being taken from me?]. My only qualification to this concept is around exposure to STDs and relationship status; one has a duty to at least inform others if they have an STD and let the use of barrier or other protection be determined by anyone who may catch that STD, even if it is a very common one that is easily curable by an antibiotic, etc. In addition, if one is in an implicitly monogamous or otherwise limited-partner relationship (as in polyamorous and open relationships), I think they have a duty to be honest about their intended sexual activities prior to engaging in them. If for no other reason, this can avoid a trip to the divorce lawyer and it complies with the "STD rule" I mention above.

3. Expectations of congeniality: Society seems to be ready to accept assertiveness/less-collegial behavior from men much more than from women. As in the first two points, I believe this is rooted in our ancestral neurobiology. However we can and should consciously realize it is at work. While people of both sexes can be terribly undiplomatic in the way they assert themselves, this lack of diplomacy in assertiveness has a much lower "acceptability bar" for men who display it than women. A man who is for example a mid-level manager may have a coarse and rather undiplomatic style, and while his reports may refer to him as "Captain Queeg" (if needed, see [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Caine\\_Mutiny](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Caine_Mutiny)) behind his back, or some such term, if he were a she, it is likely that she would have a far-less poetic nickname. And this double-standard is applied, I have noticed, by people of both sexes. "Captain Queeg" also stands a better chance of getting kicked upstairs, being regarded as "tough" but merely in need of some mentoring by his higher-ups on how better to deal with his subordinates, while the less-popular female version of him may be considered too "course" to assume a higher position. Same basic behavior, different body shape and vocal pitch, that's all. And that isn't fair.

4. Child care: Women expect themselves and other women to assume most of the burden of child care. While many women enjoy taking care of kids and seem much more interested in executing and directing child care activities than do men, a presumptive role such as this can be limiting to a woman's life path, even if she herself wants this path to go down. The problem with it is that it blocks the efforts made these past 40 years to get more men/fathers involved in assuming a 50/50 split of childcare activities with the mother of their child. The courts discourage men from seeing themselves as child-raisers because they doggedly will not change their stance on where fathers fit into their children's lives, and many women seem fine with that since it results in them getting custody, child support, and if not

working outside the home, alimony from their ex-husbands, should the marriage break up for any reason regardless of “fault”. As for employers, they grudgingly allow women who have babies to go on maternity leave, but in the U.S., there are just a few states that mandate a limited amount of time for paternity leave but nothing like what other countries have (see: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parental\\_leave#Americas](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parental_leave#Americas) ). So employers are propagating the parental gender roles of men and women alike.

There are other ways in which women do not have equality with men and vice versa, but I could write on this and related topics indefinitely, so I’ll stop here.