

Republican Perspective

12 October 2016

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The Educational Gender Gap

At Cal in 1960, it was commonly said that there were two-and-a-half male students for every female. Very likely correct, or close to it. In fact, that imbalance was probably pretty standard at most co-ed public universities back in the day.

(I say “co-ed” because there were still all-men and all-women schools at that time. For perspective, Schroeders restaurant in San Francisco was still men-only at lunchtime, and no ladies were allowed at the Olympic Club.)

Cal’s gender imbalance reflected the society of five decades ago. The Ozzie and Harriet family. Dad was the breadwinner and mom was the housewife (sorry---homemaker). I grew up in such a family, as did most of my peers---today’s geezers.

The bra-burning (I favored this) era took hold, as part of the feminist movement (not so keen on this). Times, as the song said, were a-changin’. Without apparent concern for the child-raising and long-term socio-economic implications, society sprinted headlong into achieving gender equality in employment, education, athletics, and so on. Unless you were a movement advocate or a folk-singer, you just sorta hung on for the ride.

So here we are fifty-plus years later. How are the co-eds doing at my alma mater? Well, enrollment seems to have flipped in favor of the gals. Latest available data show a slight edge for female students---gone are the days of two-and-a-half to one. But more importantly, what about schools nation-wide and what about the number of degrees earned? Ah, there’s the real test.

Well, apparently the girls are kicking buns. The American Enterprise Institute has provided a report on this, which says: “Based on Department of Education estimates, women will earn a disproportionate share of college degrees at every level of higher education in 2016 for the eleventh straight year.”

According to the DoE estimates, for every 100 degrees earned in 2016 by men, women will earn 154 associate’s degrees (female majority in every year since 1978), 135 bachelor’s degrees (female majority since 1982), 139 master’s degrees (female majority since 1987), and 106 doctorates (female majority since 2006).

So apparently the college degree gender gap in favor of men was erased decades ago and has been replaced by a gender gap in favor of women. Has there been a public outcry over this? Have there been jock strap burnings? Have government-funded “men’s programs” sprung up? If any of these things has happened, I’m unaware of it.

Where are the gender equality activists now?