

June 19, 2017 – CAMILLE PAGLIA

The Weekly Standard interviewed Ms. Paglia this week which prompted a day just for her. The first question for her was on President Trump.

Camille Paglia is one America's smartest and most fearless writers. Like Elvis, she's the kind of superstar who really needs no introduction—though it is worth pointing out that Pantheon has just published a collection of her essays on sex, gender, and feminism, titled [Free Women, Free Men](#). It's fantastic and if you love her work, it's must-reading. (And there's another collection due out in the Fall of 2018, which is more good news.)

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My position continues to be that Hillary, with her supercilious, Marie Antoinette-style entitlement, was a disastrously wrong candidate for 2016 and that she secured the nomination only through overt chicanery by the Democratic National Committee, assisted by a corrupt national media who, for over a year, imposed a virtual blackout on potential primary rivals. Bernie Sanders had the populist passion, economic message, government record, and personal warmth to counter Trump. It was Sanders, for example, who addressed the crisis of crippling student debt, an issue that other candidates (including Hillary) then took up. Despite his history of embarrassing gaffes, the affable, plain-spoken Joe Biden, in my view, could also have defeated Trump, but he was blocked from running at literally the last moment by President Barack Obama, for reasons that the major media refused to explore. ...

... Had Hillary won, everyone would have expected disappointed Trump voters to show a modicum of respect for the electoral results as well as for the historic ceremony of the inauguration, during which former combatants momentarily unite to pay homage to the peaceful transition of power in our democracy. But that was not the reaction of a vast cadre of Democrats shocked by Trump's win. In an abject failure of leadership that may be one of the most disgraceful episodes in the history of the modern Democratic party, Chuck Schumer, who had risen to become the Senate Democratic leader after the retirement of Harry Reid, asserted absolutely no moral authority as the party spun out of control in a nationwide orgy of rage and spite. Nor were there statesmanlike words of caution and restraint from two seasoned politicians whom I have admired for decades and believe should have run for president long ago—Senator Dianne Feinstein and Congresswoman Nancy Pelosi. How do Democrats imagine they can ever expand their electoral support if they go on and on in this self-destructive way, impugning half the nation as vile racists and homophobes? ...

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remarks at the Department of Transportation about "regulatory relief," excerpts of which I happened to hear on my car radio that afternoon. His words about iron, aluminum, and steel seemed to cut like a knife through the airwaves. I later found the [entire text](#) on the White House website. Some key passages:

"We are here today to focus on solving one of the biggest obstacles to creating this new and desperately needed infrastructure, and that is the painfully slow, costly, and time-consuming process of getting permits and approvals to build. And I also knew that from the private sector. It is a long, slow, unnecessarily burdensome process. My administration is committed to ending these terrible delays once and for all. The excruciating wait time for permitting has inflicted enormous financial pain to cities and states all throughout our nation and has blocked many important projects from ever getting off the ground..."

... Of course this rousing speech (with its can-do World War Two spirit) got scant coverage in the mainstream media. Drunk with words, spin, and snark, middle-class journalists can't be bothered to notice the complex physical constructions that make modern civilization possible. The laborers who build and maintain these marvels are recognized only if they can be shoehorned into victim status. But if they dare to think for themselves and vote differently from their liberal overlords, they are branded as rubes and pariahs.

In summary: to have any hope of retaking the White House, Democrats must get off their high horse, lose the rabid rhetoric, and reorient themselves toward practical reality and the free country they are damned lucky to live in. ...

Earlier Paglia was interviewed by the [Free Beacon](#).

... What impact, if any, do you think Hillary Clinton's loss in 2016 had on feminism? Former Texas state senator Wendy Davis said Clinton faced a "misogynistic climate" during the election. Do you agree with this?

Misogyny played no significant role whatever in Hillary Clinton's two defeats as a presidential candidate. This claim is such a crock! What a gross exploitation of feminism—in the service of an unaccomplished woman whose entire career was spent attached to her husband's coat tails. Hillary was handed job after job but produced no tangible results in any of them—except of course for her destabilization of North Africa during her rocky tenure as secretary of state. And for all her lip service to women and children, what program serving their needs did Hillary ever conceive and promote? She routinely signed on to other people's programs or legislative bills but spent the bulk of her time in fundraising and networking for her own personal ambitions. Beyond that, I fail to see how authentic feminism can ever be ascribed to a woman who turned a blind eye to the victims of her husband's serial abuse and workplace seductions. The hypocrisy of feminist leaders was on full display during the Monica Lewinsky scandal, which incontrovertibly demonstrated Bill Clinton's gross violation of basic sexual harassment policy. Although I had voted for him twice, I was the only feminist at the time who publicly condemned Clinton for his squalid and unethical behavior with an intern whose life (it is now clear) he ruined. Gloria Steinem's slick casuistry during that shocking episode did severe damage to feminism, from which it has never fully recovered. ...

Continuing her book tour, Paglia was interviewed by the [Examiner](#).

... Fresh off a spirited panel with Christina Hoff Sommers hosted by the [Independent Women's Forum](#), the iconic feminist dissident, who serves as a professor of media studies at the

University of the Arts, accused journalists of colluding with the Democratic Party in an effort to damage the Trump administration.

"Democrats are doing this in collusion with the media obviously, because they just want to create chaos," she said when asked to comment on the aforementioned stories. "They want to completely obliterate any sense that the Trump administration is making any progress on anything." ...

And from an essay in [Time](#), Paglia writes;

... The Free Speech Movement, led by a fiery Italian-American, Mario Savio, erupted at the University of California at Berkeley in 1964, the year I entered college. It was a cardinal moment for my generation. The anti-establishment stance of the Free Speech Movement represented the authentic populist revolution of the 1960s, which resisted encroachments of authority by a repressive elite. How is it possible that today's academic Left has supported rather than protested campus speech codes as well as the grotesque surveillance and over-regulation of student life? American colleges have abandoned their educational mission and become government colonies, ruled by officious bureaucrats enforcing federal dictates. This despotic imperialism has no place in a modern democracy. An enlightened feminism, animated by a courageous code of personal responsibility, can only be built upon a wary alliance of strong women and strong men.

Weekly Standard

[Camille Paglia: On Trump, Democrats, Transgenderism, and Islamist Terror](#)

In a wide-ranging interview Paglia talks about Donald Trump's successes, how Chuck Schumer emboldened the "resistance," why the left can't condemn Islamist terrorism, and "the cold biological truth that sex changes are impossible."

by Jonathan V. Last



Camille Paglia is one America's smartest and most fearless writers. Like Elvis, she's the kind of superstar who really needs no introduction—though it is worth pointing out that Pantheon has just published a collection of her essays on sex, gender, and feminism, titled [Free Women, Free Men](#). It's fantastic and if you love her work, it's must-reading. (And there's another collection due out in the Fall of 2018, which is more good news.)

Last week I sat down with Paglia over email to talk about Donald Trump, Islamist terrorism, and the transgender crusade. Here's a transcript of our conversation:

JVL: Donald Trump has recently feuded with Jim Comey, Bob Mueller, Sadiq Kahn, Emmanuel Macron, Angela Merkel, NATO—we'll stop the list there. You were one of a very small number of people who understood Trump's populist appeal early on. Looking at his presidency so far, do think he's continuing to deliver on that appeal? What is he doing right? What is he doing wrong?

Camille Paglia: Some background is necessary. First of all, I must make my political affiliations crystal clear. I am a registered Democrat who voted for Bernie Sanders in the 2016 primary and for Jill Stein in the general election. Since last Fall, I've had my eye on Kamala Harris, the new senator from California, and I hope to vote for her in the next presidential primary.

Like many others, I initially did not take Donald Trump's candidacy seriously. I dismissed him as a "carnival barker" in my Salon column and assumed his entire political operation was a publicity stunt that he would soon tire of. However, Trump steadily gained momentum because of the startling incompetence and mediocrity of his GOP opponents. What seems forgotten is that everyone, including the Hillary Clinton campaign, thought that Marco Rubio would be the Republican nominee. The moment was ideal for a Latino candidate with national appeal who could challenge the Democratic hold on Florida.

Thus Rubio's primary-run flame-out was a spectacular embarrassment. Under TV's unsparing camera eye, he looked like a shallow, dithering adolescent, utterly unprepared to be commander-in-chief in an era of terrorism. Trump's frankly arrogant self-confidence spooked and crushed Rubio—it was a total fiasco. Ben Carson, meanwhile, with his professorial deep-think and spiritualistic eye-closing, often seemed to be beaming himself to another galaxy. With every debate, Ted Cruz, despite his avid national following, accumulated more and more detractors, repelled by his brittle self-dramatizations and lugubrious megalomania.

There were two genial, moderate Mid-Western governors who could have wrested the nomination from Trump and performed strongly versus Hillary in the general—Ohio's John Kasich and Wisconsin's Scott Walker. But they blew it because of their personal limitations: On television, Kasich came across as a clumsy, lumbering blowhard while Walker shrank into a nervous, timid mouse with a frozen Pee-wee Herman smile.

The point here is that Donald Trump won the nomination fair and square against a host of serious, experienced opponents who simply failed to connect with a majority of GOP primary voters. However, there were too many unknowns about Trump, who had never held elective office and whose randy history in the shadowy demimonde of casinos and beauty pageants laid him open to a cascade of feverish accusations and innuendos from the ever-churning gnomes of the cash-propelled Clinton propaganda machine. In actuality, the sexism allegations about Trump were relatively few and minor, compared to the long list of lurid claims about the predatory Bill Clinton.

My position continues to be that Hillary, with her supercilious, Marie Antoinette-style entitlement, was a disastrously wrong candidate for 2016 and that she secured the nomination only through overt chicanery by the Democratic National Committee, assisted by a corrupt national media who, for over a year, imposed a virtual blackout on potential primary rivals. Bernie Sanders had the populist passion, economic message, government record, and personal warmth to counter Trump. It was Sanders, for example, who addressed the crisis of crippling student debt, an issue that other candidates (including Hillary) then took up. Despite his history of embarrassing gaffes, the affable, plain-spoken Joe Biden, in my view, could also have defeated Trump, but he was blocked from running at literally the last moment by President Barack Obama, for reasons that the major media refused to explore.

After Trump's victory (for which there were abundant signs in the preceding months), both the Democratic party and the big-city media urgently needed to do a scathingly honest self-analysis, because the election results plainly demonstrated that Trump was speaking to vital concerns (jobs, immigration, and terrorism among them) for which the Democrats had few concrete solutions. Indeed, throughout the campaign, too many leading Democratic politicians were preoccupied with domestic issues and acted strangely uninterested in international affairs. Among the electorate, the most fervid Hillary acolytes (especially young and middle-aged women and assorted show biz celebs) seemed obtusely indifferent to her tepid performance as Secretary of State, during which she doggedly piled up air miles while accomplishing virtually nothing except the destabilization of North Africa.

Had Hillary won, everyone would have expected disappointed Trump voters to show a modicum of respect for the electoral results as well as for the historic ceremony of the inauguration, during which former combatants momentarily unite to pay homage to the peaceful transition of power in our democracy. But that was not the reaction of a vast cadre of Democrats shocked by Trump's win. In an abject failure of leadership that may be one of the most disgraceful episodes in the history of the modern Democratic party, Chuck Schumer, who had risen to become the Senate Democratic leader after the retirement of Harry Reid, asserted absolutely no moral authority as the party spun out of control in a nationwide orgy of rage and spite. Nor were there statesmanlike words of caution and restraint from two seasoned politicians whom I have admired for decades and believe should have run for president long ago—Senator Dianne Feinstein and Congresswoman Nancy Pelosi. How do Democrats imagine they can ever expand their electoral support if they go on and on in this self-destructive way, impugning half the nation as vile racists and homophobes?

All of which brings us to the issue of Trump's performance to date. The initial conundrum was: could he shift from being the slashing, caustic ex-reality show star of the campaign to a more measured, presidential persona? Perhaps to the dismay of his diehard critics, Trump did indeed make that transition at the Capitol on inauguration morning, when he appeared grave and focused, palpably conveying a sense of the awesome burdens of the highest office. As for his particular actions as president, I am no fan of executive orders, which usurp congressional prerogatives and which I was already denouncing when Obama was constantly signing them (with very little protest, one might add, from the mainstream media).

Trump's "travel ban" executive order in late January was obviously bungled—issued way too fast and with woefully insufficient research (pertaining, for example, to green-card holders, who should have been exempted from the start). The administration bears full responsibility for fanning the flames of an already aroused "Resistance." However, I fail to see the "chaos" in the White House that the mainstream media (as well as conservative Never Trumpers) keep harping on—or rather, I see no more chaos than was abundantly present during the first six months of both the Clinton and Obama administrations. Trump seems to be methodically trying

to fulfill his campaign promises, notably regarding the economy and deregulation—the approaches to which will always be contested in our two-party system. His progress has thus far been in stops and starts, partly because of the passivity, and sometimes petulance, of the mundane GOP leadership.

There seems to be a huge conceptual gap between Trump and his most implacable critics on the left. Many highly educated, upper-middle-class Democrats regard themselves as exemplars of "compassion" (which they have elevated into a supreme political principle) and yet they routinely assail Trump voters as ignorant, callous hate-mongers. These elite Democrats occupy an amorphous meta-realm of subjective emotion, theoretical abstractions, and refined language. But Trump is by trade a builder who deals in the tangible, obdurate, objective world of physical materials, geometry, and construction projects, where communication often reverts to the brusque, coarse, high-impact level of pre-modern working-class life, whose daily locus was the barnyard. It's no accident that bourgeois Victorians of the industrial era tried to purge "barnyard language" out of English.

Last week, that conceptual gap was on prominent display, as the media, consumed with their preposterous Russian fantasies, were fixated on former FBI director James Comey's maudlin testimony before the Senate Intelligence Committee. (Comey is an effete charlatan who should have been fired within 48 hours of either Hillary or Trump taking office.) Meanwhile, Trump was going about his business. The following morning, he made remarks at the Department of Transportation about "regulatory relief," excerpts of which I happened to hear on my car radio that afternoon. His words about iron, aluminum, and steel seemed to cut like a knife through the airwaves. I later found the [entire text](#) on the White House website. Some key passages:

We are here today to focus on solving one of the biggest obstacles to creating this new and desperately needed infrastructure, and that is the painfully slow, costly, and time-consuming process of getting permits and approvals to build. And I also knew that from the private sector. It is a long, slow, unnecessarily burdensome process. My administration is committed to ending these terrible delays once and for all. The excruciating wait time for permitting has inflicted enormous financial pain to cities and states all throughout our nation and has blocked many important projects from ever getting off the ground...

For too long, America has poured trillions and trillions of dollars into rebuilding foreign countries while allowing our own country—the country that we love—and its infrastructure to fall into a state of total disrepair. We have structurally deficient bridges, clogged roads, crumbling dams and locks. Our rivers are in trouble. Our railways are aging. And chronic traffic that slows commerce and diminishes our citizens' quality of life. Other than that, we're doing very well. Instead of rebuilding our country, Washington has spent decades building a dense thicket of rules, regulations and red tape. It took only four years to build the Golden Gate Bridge and five years to build the Hoover Dam and less than one year to build the Empire State Building. People don't believe that. It took less than one year. But today, it can take 10 years and far more than that just to get the approvals and permits needed to build a major infrastructure project.

These charts beside me are actually a simplified version of our highway permitting process. It includes 16 different approvals involving 10 different federal agencies being governed by 26 different statutes. As one example—and this happened just 30 minutes ago—I was sitting with a great group of people responsible for their state's economic development and roadways. All of you are in the room now. And one gentleman from Maryland was talking about an 18-mile road.

And he brought with him some of the approvals that they've gotten and paid for. They spent \$29 million for an environmental report, weighing 70 pounds and costing \$24,000 per page...

I was not elected to continue a failed system. I was elected to change it. All of us in government service were elected to solve the problems that have plagued our nation. We are here to think big, to act boldly, and to rise above the petty partisan squabbling of Washington D.C. We are here to take action. It's time to start building in our country, with American workers and with American iron and aluminum and steel. It's time to put up soaring new infrastructure that inspires pride in our people and our towns.

No longer can we allow these rules and regulations to tie down our economy, chain up our prosperity, and sap our great American spirit. That is why we will lift these restrictions and unleash the full potential of the United States of America. We will get rid of the redundancy and duplication that wastes your time and your money. Our goal is to give you one point of contact to deliver one decision—yes or no—for the entire federal government, and to deliver that decision quickly, whether it's a road, whether it's a highway, a bridge, a dam.

To do this, we are setting up a new council to help project managers navigate the bureaucratic maze. This council will also improve transparency by creating a new online dashboard allowing everyone to easily track major projects through every stage of the approval process. This council will make sure that every federal agency that is consistently delaying projects by missing deadlines will face tough, new penalties...

Together, we will build projects to inspire our youth, employ our workers, and create true prosperity for our people. We will pour new concrete, lay new brick, and watch new sparks light our factories as we forge metal from the furnaces of our Rust Belt and our beloved heartland—which has been forgotten. It's not forgotten anymore.

We will put new American steel into the spine of our country. American workers will construct gleaming new lanes of commerce across our landscape. They will build these monuments from coast to coast, and from city to city. And with these new roads, bridges, airports and seaports, we will embark on a wonderful new journey into a bright and glorious future. We will build again. We will grow again. We will thrive again. And we will make America great again.

Of course this rousing speech (with its can-do World War Two spirit) got scant coverage in the mainstream media. Drunk with words, spin, and snark, middle-class journalists can't be bothered to notice the complex physical constructions that make modern civilization possible. The laborers who build and maintain these marvels are recognized only if they can be shoehorned into victim status. But if they dare to think for themselves and vote differently from their liberal overlords, they are branded as rubes and pariahs.

In summary: to have any hope of retaking the White House, Democrats must get off their high horse, lose the rabid rhetoric, and reorient themselves toward practical reality and the free country they are damned lucky to live in.

JVL: One of the other big news stories for the last few weeks has been terrorism in Great Britain. Everyone goes to great pains to say that this isn't "Islamic" terrorism, but rather "Islamist" ("Islam-ish?") terrorism. Does nomenclature matter here? Does the fact that Western liberalism gets so wrapped up in knots over how to talk about its antagonists mean anything?

CP: You've nailed it about Western liberalism's obsession with language, to the exclusion of wide-ranging study of world history or systematic observation of present social conditions. Liberalism of the 1950s and '60s exalted civil liberties, individualism, and dissident thought and speech. "Question authority" was our generational rubric when I was in college. But today's liberalism has become grotesquely mechanistic and authoritarian: It's all about reducing individuals to a group identity, defining that group in permanent victim terms, and denying others their democratic right to challenge that group and its ideology. Political correctness represents the fossilized institutionalization of once-vital revolutionary ideas, which have become mere rote formulas. It is repressively Stalinist, dependent on a labyrinthine, parasitic bureaucracy to enforce its empty dictates.

The reluctance or inability of Western liberals to candidly confront jihadism has been catastrophically counterproductive insofar as it has inspired an ongoing upsurge in right-wing politics in Europe and the United States. Citizens have an absolute right to demand basic security from their government. The contortions to which so many liberals resort to avoid connecting bombings, massacres, persecutions, and cultural vandalism to Islamic jihadism is remarkable, given their usual animosity to religion, above all Christianity. Some commentators have suggested a link to racial preconceptions: that is, Islam remains beyond criticism because it is largely a religion of non-whites whose two holy cities occupy territory once oppressed by Western imperialism.

For a quarter century, I have been calling for comparative religion to be made the core curriculum of higher education. (I am speaking as an atheist.) Knowledge of the great world religions—Hinduism, Buddhism, Judeo-Christianity, Islam—is the true multiculturalism. Everyone should have a general familiarity with the beliefs, texts, rituals, art, and shrines of all the major religions. Only via a direct encounter with the Qu'ran and Hadith, for example, can anyone know what they say about jihad and how those strikingly numerous passages have been interpreted in different ways over time.

Right now, too many secular Western liberals treat Islam with paternalistic condescension—waving at it vaguely from a benevolent distance but making no effort to engage with its intricate mixed messages, which can inspire toward good or spur acts of devastating impact on the international stage.

JVL: I keep waiting for the showdown between feminism and transgenderism, but it always keeps slipping beneath the horizon. I've been looking at how the La Leche League—which stood at the crossroads of feminism once upon a time—has in the last couple years bowed completely to the transgender project. Their central text is (for now) *The Womanly Art of Breastfeeding*, but they've officially changed their stance to include men and fathers who breastfeed. The actual wording of their [policy](#) is wonderful: "It is now recognized that some men are able to breastfeed." Left unsaid is the corollary that some women are biologically unable to breastfeed. Though this would go against the League's founding principles, one supposes. What does one make of all of this?

CP: Feminists have clashed with transgender activists much more publicly in the United Kingdom than here. For example, two years ago there was an acrimonious organized campaign, including a petition with 3,000 claimed signatures, to cancel a lecture by Germaine Greer at Cardiff University because of her "offensive" views of transgenderism. Greer, a literary scholar who was one of the great pioneers of second-wave feminism, has always denied that men who

have undergone sex-reassignment surgery are actually "women." Her Cardiff lecture (on "Women and Power" in the twentieth century) eventually went forward, under heavy security.

And in 2014, *Gender Hurts*, a book by radical Australian feminist Sheila Jeffreys, created a heated controversy in the United Kingdom. Jeffreys identifies transsexualism with misogyny and describes it as a form of "mutilation." She and her feminist allies encountered prolonged difficulties in securing a London speaking venue because of threats and agitation by transgender activists. Finally, Conway Hall was made available: Jeffrey's forceful, detailed lecture there in July of last year is [fully available on YouTube](#). In it she argues among other things, that the pharmaceutical industry, having lost income when routine estrogen therapy for menopausal women was abandoned because of its health risks, has been promoting the relatively new idea of transgenderism in order to create a permanent class of customers who will need to take prescribed hormones for life.

Although I describe myself as transgender (I was donning flamboyant male costumes from early childhood on), I am highly skeptical about the current transgender wave, which I think has been produced by far more complicated psychological and sociological factors than current gender discourse allows. Furthermore, I condemn the escalating prescription of puberty blockers (whose long-term effects are unknown) for children. I regard this practice as a criminal violation of human rights.

It is certainly ironic how liberals who posture as defenders of science when it comes to global warming (a sentimental myth unsupported by evidence) flee all reference to biology when it comes to gender. Biology has been programmatically excluded from women's studies and gender studies programs for almost 50 years now. Thus very few current gender studies professors and theorists, here and abroad, are intellectually or scientifically prepared to teach their subjects.

The cold biological truth is that sex changes are impossible. Every single cell of the human body remains coded with one's birth gender for life. Intersex ambiguities can occur, but they are developmental anomalies that represent a tiny proportion of all human births.

In a democracy, everyone, no matter how nonconformist or eccentric, should be free from harassment and abuse. But at the same time, no one deserves special rights, protections, or privileges on the basis of their eccentricity. The categories "trans-man" and "trans-woman" are highly accurate and deserving of respect. But like Germaine Greer and Sheila Jeffreys, I reject state-sponsored coercion to call someone a "woman" or a "man" simply on the basis of his or her subjective feeling about it. We may well take the path of good will and defer to courtesy on such occasions, but it is our choice alone.

As for the La Leche League, they are hardly prepared to take up the cudgels in the bruising culture wars. Awash with the milk of human kindness, they are probably stuck in nurturance mode. Naturally, they snap to attention at the sound of squalling babies, no matter what their age. It's up to literature professors and writers to defend the integrity of English, which like all languages changes slowly and organically over time. But with so many humanities departments swallowed up in the poststructuralist tar pit, the glorious medium of English may have to fight the gender commissars on its own.

Free Beacon

[Prominent Democratic Feminist Camille Paglia Says Hillary Clinton 'Exploits Feminism'](#)

by Sam Dorman

Camille Paglia is a woman of seeming contradictions. She's a lesbian who thinks homosexuality is not normal, a Democrat who often criticizes the party's 2016 presidential nominee Hillary Clinton, a self-described "transgender being" who calls sex changes for children "abuse," and a feminist who says abortion is "murder."

Decades after she burst onto the scene with her best-selling book *Sexual Personae*, Paglia is back with a timely commentary on sex and gender. Her recent book *Free Women, Free Men* argues, among other things, that feminism is "stunting the maturation of both girls and boys" and that "if women seek freedom, they must let men too be free."

Paglia talked to the *Washington Free Beacon* about a variety of topics including Sen. Elizabeth Warren's (D., Mass.) alleged populism, Megyn Kelly's performance as a moderator during the first Republican presidential primary debate, and whether misogyny played a role in Hillary Clinton's failed 2016 presidential bid.

You say in your new book that feminism's "sex war" has stunted the maturation of both girls and boys. What do you think is the end result of that?

Second-wave feminism went off the track when it started to demonize men and blame them for all the evils in human history. It's a neurotic world-view that was formulated in too many cases by women (including Gloria Steinem and Kate Millett) with troubled childhoods in unstable homes. First-wave feminism, in contrast, focused on systemic social problems that kept women in secondary or dependent status. My favorite period in feminism has always been the 1920s and 1930s, when American women energized by winning the vote gained worldwide prominence for their professional achievements. My early role models, Amelia Earhart and Katharine Hepburn, were fierce individualists and competitors who liked and admired men and who never indulged in the tiresome, snippy rote male-bashing that we constantly hear from today's feminists. I am an equal opportunity feminist who opposes special protections for women. What I am saying throughout my work is that girls who are indoctrinated to see men not as equals but as oppressors and rapists are condemned to remain in a permanently juvenile condition for life. They have surrendered their own personal agency to a poisonous creed that claims to empower women but has ended by infantilizing them. Similarly, boys will have no motivation to mature if their potential romantic partners remain emotionally insecure, fragile, and fearful, forever looking to parental proxies (like campus grievance committees or government regulators) to make the world safe for them.

What impact, if any, do you think Hillary Clinton's loss in 2016 had on feminism? Former Texas state senator Wendy Davis said Clinton faced a "misogynistic climate" during the election. Do you agree with this?

Misogyny played no significant role whatever in Hillary Clinton's two defeats as a presidential candidate. This claim is such a crock! What a gross exploitation of feminism—in the service of an unaccomplished woman whose entire career was spent attached to her husband's coat tails. Hillary was handed job after job but produced no tangible results in any of them—except of course for her destabilization of North Africa during her rocky tenure as secretary of state. And for all her lip service to women and children, what program serving their needs did Hillary ever

conceive and promote? She routinely signed on to other people's programs or legislative bills but spent the bulk of her time in fundraising and networking for her own personal ambitions. Beyond that, I fail to see how authentic feminism can ever be ascribed to a woman who turned a blind eye to the victims of her husband's serial abuse and workplace seductions. The hypocrisy of feminist leaders was on full display during the Monica Lewinsky scandal, which incontrovertibly demonstrated Bill Clinton's gross violation of basic sexual harassment policy. Although I had voted for him twice, I was the only feminist at the time who publicly condemned Clinton for his squalid and unethical behavior with an intern whose life (it is now clear) he ruined. Gloria Steinem's slick casuistry during that shocking episode did severe damage to feminism, from which it has never fully recovered.

In 2016, you said Donald Trump had a "swaggering retro machismo" that would give "hives" to people like Gloria Steinem. How do you foresee a President Trump impacting gender relations and perceptions of men in America?

First of all, I must emphasize that I am a registered Democrat who voted for Bernie Sanders in the primaries and Jill Stein in the general election. Having said that, I will don my political analyst hat and say that Donald Trump's retro style of confident masculinity (which dates from the Frank Sinatra/Hugh Hefner period) was surely a major factor in his victory and represents what was probably an inevitable and necessary course correction in American gender relations. The delirious excesses of unscientific campus gender theory, translated into intrusive government regulations by elite school graduates saturating the Obama administration, finally hit a wall with the electorate. The mainstream big-city media too have become strident echo chambers of campus gender dogma, as demonstrated by last year's *New York Times* fiasco, where two wet-behind-the-ears reporters fell on their faces in trying to prosecute the Trump of his casino days as a vile sexist. I mercilessly mocked that vacuous article in my [Salon.com column](#) and stand by every word I wrote.

***The Guardian* asked in 2010 whether Nancy Pelosi was the most powerful woman in U.S. history. More than ten years after she became the first female Speaker of the House, how do you think Pelosi has furthered perceptions of women in positions of power and leadership?**

Unlike Hillary Clinton, both Congresswoman Nancy Pelosi and Senator Dianne Feinstein owe their national prominence to their own skills, tenacity, and achievement in the political world. I have repeatedly said that Feinstein, with her even temper, natural gravitas, and long experience with military affairs, should have been the first woman president. Pelosi, who emerged from a prominent political family in Maryland (her father was a U.S. Congressman and mayor of Baltimore, and her brother was also Baltimore mayor), has an amazing aptitude for deft insider maneuvering and bare-knuckles power plays, without ever losing that cool, unflappable persona, always so primly ladylike and stylish. She smiles and smiles—even as she shoves the stiletto in! Even when I've found her too predictably partisan, I have been continually impressed by her poise and aplomb. However, Pelosi herself, to some reports, has been frustrated by her difficulties in giving formal speeches, and perhaps this has held her back from running for president. The main point here is that we should have had our first woman president way back in the 1990s, but neither Pelosi nor Feinstein, the leading female candidates, chose to run, as even Elizabeth Dole bravely did. There is absolutely no mythical "misogyny" holding back American women from the presidency: for heaven's sake, the U.S. has had women mayors, senators, and governors for decades now. But our money-grubbing presidential campaigns, which must cover an immense geography (far vaster than any European nation), are both too prolonged and too arduous for most women to want to tackle. Perhaps both Pelosi and

Feinstein (unlike Hillary) are too happy and content in their personal relationships to want that kind of crazed derangement of their private lives.

Could you envision Elizabeth Warren running successfully as a populist candidate in 2020 against Donald Trump?

Elizabeth Warren, a smug Harvard professor, is no populist. She doesn't have an iota of Bernie Sanders' authentic empathic populism—but Sanders will be too old to run next time around. I tried to take Warren seriously during the run-up to the primaries, but her outrageous silence about Sanders' candidacy when he was battling the corrupt Hillary machine made me see Warren as the facile opportunist that she is. She craftily hid from sight throughout the primaries—until Hillary won the nomination. Then all of a sudden, there was bouncy, grinning Warren, popping in and out of Hillary's Washington mansion as vice-presidential possibilities were being vetted. What an arrant hypocrite! Warren stands for nothing but Warren. My eye is on the new senator from California, Kamala Harris, who seems to have far more character and substance than Warren. I hope to vote for Harris in the next presidential primary.

What do you think of Megyn Kelly and her decision to leave Fox News?

I long ago stopped watching TV news and chat shows because of the tedium of their hackneyed polarized politics and smarmy personnel. Hence the first time I ever laid eyes on Megyn Kelly was when she was narcissistically snorting and snickering on air in the ten-minute prelude to the first GOP presidential debate in August 2015. The nation's selection of presidential candidates should be treated as serious business—not as a platform for adolescent exhibitionism by the TV hosts. Hence when the very first question to Donald Trump, as posed by Kelly, was "You've called women you don't like 'fat pigs, dogs, slobs, and disgusting animals,'" I thought it was grounds for Kelly's instant termination from her job. The tenor of the entire national campaign, from that moment forward, was lowered by Kelly's sloppy ad hominem crudity. Ironically, it was because of her unprofessional behavior at that first debate that I discovered the unsparing podcast commentary of Diamond and Silk, two pro-Trump African-American sisters in North Carolina who satirically lambasted Kelly the next day for her rudeness.

That one video by [Diamond and Silk](#) woke me up hard about Trump, whom I had already dismissed as a "carnival barker" in my Salon column. I suddenly saw Trump's populist appeal—and from that moment forward, month after month, I felt the slow movement in the country toward him. As for Megyn Kelly, I have no idea what her appeal is. She seems shallow and self-absorbed—one of those glib types (not unlike Rachel Maddow) who has somehow been led to think she's much smarter than she really is. As a college teacher with red pen in hand, I'm not impressed.

You say in the abortion chapter in your new book that pro-lifers have the "moral high ground" in trying to protect the innocent. Yet you've also argued that overcoming nature is a moral imperative and that we should "thwart nature's procreative compulsions" through activities like abortion. How do you reconcile those two views?

In ethics, one of the many branches of philosophy invented by the ancient Greeks, we are usually faced not with a simple, reassuring scheme of right versus wrong but rather an often painfully conflicted choice between morally mixed options. I stated in *Vamps & Tramps* (1994): "Women's modern liberation is inextricably linked to their ability to control reproduction, which has enslaved them from the origin of the species." However, as an atheist who nevertheless respects religion, I see and respect the contrary position. As I went on to say: "We career women are arguing from expedience: it is personally and professionally inconvenient or onerous

to bear an unwanted child. The pro-life movement, in contrast, is arguing that every conception is sacred and that society has a responsibility to protect the defenseless."

Contemporary American feminism has distorted and desensitized itself by its inability or refusal to recognize the ethical weight of the pro-life position, which it routinely mischaracterizes as "anti-woman." In contrast, I wrote (again in *Vamps & Tramps*): "Modern woman has become an agent of Darwinian triage. It is or should be ethically troubling: abortion pits the stronger against the weaker, and only one survives." The inflammatory abortion issue has consumed far too much of feminism, to the point of monomania. I used to be a contributing member of Planned Parenthood, until I realized that it had become a covert arm of the Democratic party. If Planned Parenthood is as vital to American women's health as feminist leaders claim, then why can't it be removed from the violent political arena altogether and fully funded by wealthy liberal donors? Let the glitterati from Hollywood to Manhattan step up to the plate and put their money where their mouths are.

What do you think of *50 Shades of Grey* and highlighting sadomasochism in a popular film?

Neither the original novel nor the two bland films of *50 Shades of Grey* interest me in the least, because I was fortunately exposed during my college and graduate school years to far more sophisticated and substantive literature about sadomasochism, such as *The Story of O* and the collected works of the Marquis de Sade, then widely available in Grove Press paperbacks. It is intriguing, however, that at a time when feminist rhetoric blankets the culture, the tremendous worldwide success of *50 Shades of Grey* seems to suggest that many women of all ages still secretly long for the old-fashioned sizzle of traditional polarized sex roles. In my first book, *Sexual Personae* (1990), based on extensive research into history, anthropology, and psychology, I correctly predicted the return of sadomasochism, a prophecy that seemed baffling at the time: "My theory is that whenever sexual freedom is sought or achieved, sadomasochism will not be far behind." My long review-essay, "Scholars in Bondage," commissioned by the *Chronicle of Higher Education* in 2013 and reprinted in my new book, dissects the current chic trend for academic studies of sadomasochism, which I find both faulty in scholarship and lacking in basic common sense.

You say you were never encouraged by "misguided adults" to believe that you were actually a boy or "that medical interventions could bring that hidden truth to life." Do we have an obligation to not participate in or encourage someone's gender dysphoria in adulthood, or just childhood?

My lifelong gender dysphoria has certainly been a primary inspiration for my entire career as a researcher and writer. I have never for a moment felt female—but neither have I ever felt male either. I regard my ambiguous position between the sexes as a privilege that has given me special access to and insight into a broad range of human thought and response. If a third gender option ("Other") were ever added to government documents, I would be happy to check it. However, I have never believed, and do not now, that society has any obligation to bend over backwards to accommodate my particular singularity of identity. I am very concerned about current gender theory rhetoric that convinces young people that if they feel uneasy about or alienated from their assignment to one sex, then they must take concrete steps, from hormone therapy to alarmingly irreversible surgery, to become the other sex. I find this an oddly simplistic and indeed reactionary response to what should be regarded as a golden opportunity for flexibility and fluidity. Furthermore, it is scientifically impossible to change sex. Except for very rare cases of intersex, which are developmental anomalies, every cell of the human body remains coded with one's birth sex for life.

Beyond that, I believe that my art-based theory of "sexual personae" is far more expansive and truthful about human psychology than is current campus ideology: who we are or want to be exceeds mere gender, because every experimental persona that we devise contains elements of gesture, dress, and attitude rich with historical and cultural associations. (For Halloween in childhood, for example, I defiantly dressed as Robin Hood, a Roman soldier, a matador, Napoleon, and Hamlet.) Because of my own personal odyssey, I am horrified by the escalating prescription of puberty-blockers to children with gender dysphoria like my own: I consider this practice to be a criminal violation of human rights. Have the adults gone mad? Children are now being callously used for fashionable medical experiments with unknown long-term results.

In regard to the vexed issue of toilets and locker rooms, if private unisex facilities can be conveniently provided through simple relabeling, it would be humane to do so, but I fail to see why any school district, restaurant, or business should be legally obligated to go to excess expense (which ultimately penalizes the public) to serve such a minuscule proportion of the population, however loud their voices. And speaking of voices: as a libertarian, I oppose all intrusion by government into the realm of language, which belongs to the people and which evolves organically over time. Thus the term "Ms." eventually became standard English, but another 1970s feminist hybrid, "womyn", did not: the populace as a whole made that decision, as it always does with argot or slang filtering up from ethnic or avant-garde subgroups. The same principle applies to preferred transgender pronouns: they are a courtesy that we may choose to defer to, but in a modern democracy, no authority has the right to compel their usage.

What do you think of Kate Upton?

Believe it or not, I had no idea who you were referring to! After consulting the Web, I realize that the lady in question is a lively but rather gawky, chipmunk-toothed Taylor Swift clone who gained fame as a Sports Illustrated cover model. In her gum-baring goofiness, she is somewhat reminiscent of model Margaux Hemingway, one of the "It" girls of the 1970s. But alas, Upton has never risen above the tide of banality to register on my radar screen.

There once was a time (during the resurgence of pro-sex feminism in the 1990s) when I never missed the luscious Sports Illustrated swimsuit issue and enjoyed twitting feminist prudes by publicly celebrating it. But the great age of dynamic, distinctive super-models is long gone. My all-time favorite swimsuit model was Stacey Williams, an alluring brunette whom Sports Illustrated featured for a record eight years. Today, traces of Stacey's sensual mystique can perhaps be seen in Chanel Iman Robinson, the half Korean, half African-American Victoria's Secret model who has vivaciously adorned three annual swimsuit issues thus far.

Examiner

[Camille Paglia: Democrats are colluding with the media to create chaos](#)

Camille Paglia is much more worried about the media than about the steady string of Trump-related scandals they claim to be uncovering.

by Emily Jashinsky

In a Tuesday interview with the *Washington Examiner*, Paglia excoriated the press for its coverage of Trump's decision to fire FBI Director James Comey and his alleged sharing of classified information with Russian officials.

Fresh off a spirited panel with Christina Hoff Sommers hosted by the [Independent Women's Forum](#), the iconic feminist dissident, who serves as a professor of media studies at the University of the Arts, accused journalists of colluding with the Democratic Party in an effort to damage the Trump administration.

"Democrats are doing this in collusion with the media obviously, because they just want to create chaos," she said when asked to comment on the aforementioned stories. "They want to completely obliterate any sense that the Trump administration is making any progress on anything."

The popular author, [whose latest book was released in March](#), pointed to early struggles experienced by previous presidential administrations to illustrate the media's bias against Trump. "Obama's administration for the first six months was chaos," Paglia recalled. "Bill Clinton's was chaos for six months. Nobody holds that against a new person."

"Those two guys had actually been politicians!" she continued, noting Trump's relative inexperience with government operations.

Paglia's assessment of media bias in the Trump era leaves little room for optimism. "I am appalled at the behavior of the media," she declared. "It's the collapse of journalism."

As the *Examiner* reported in April, Paglia, who cast her ballot for Jill Stein last November, is [predicting](#) Trump will win re-election in 2020. "I feel like the Democrats have overplayed their hand," she said at the time.

Though the news cycle has moved through plenty of additional scandals in the past month, it appears as though Paglia's assessment of the president's prospects has not changed.

"I'm looking forward to voting Democrat again," the acclaimed philosopher explained. "But the point is I feel that the media has so utterly lost its credibility that I think people are going to vote against the media again."

Emily Jashinsky is a commentary writer for the Washington Examiner.

Time

[Blocking Campus Speech Is Anti-Democracy and Anti-Feminist](#)

by Camille Paglia

History moves in cycles. The plague of [political correctness](#) and assaults on [free speech](#) that erupted in the 1980s and were beaten back in the 1990s have returned with a vengeance. In the United States, the universities as well as the mainstream media are currently patrolled by well-meaning but ruthless thought police, as dogmatic in their views as agents of the Spanish Inquisition. We are plunged once again into an ethical chaos where [intolerance](#) masquerades as tolerance and where individual liberty is crushed by the tyranny of the group.

The premier principles of my new book, [Free Women, Free Men](#), are free thought and free speech—open, mobile, and unconstrained by either liberal or conservative ideology. The liberal

versus conservative dichotomy, dating from the split between Left and Right following the French Revolution, is hopelessly outmoded for our far more complex era of expansive technology and global politics. A bitter polarization of liberal and conservative has become so extreme and strident in both the Americas and Europe that it sometimes resembles mental illness, severed from the common sense realities of everyday life.

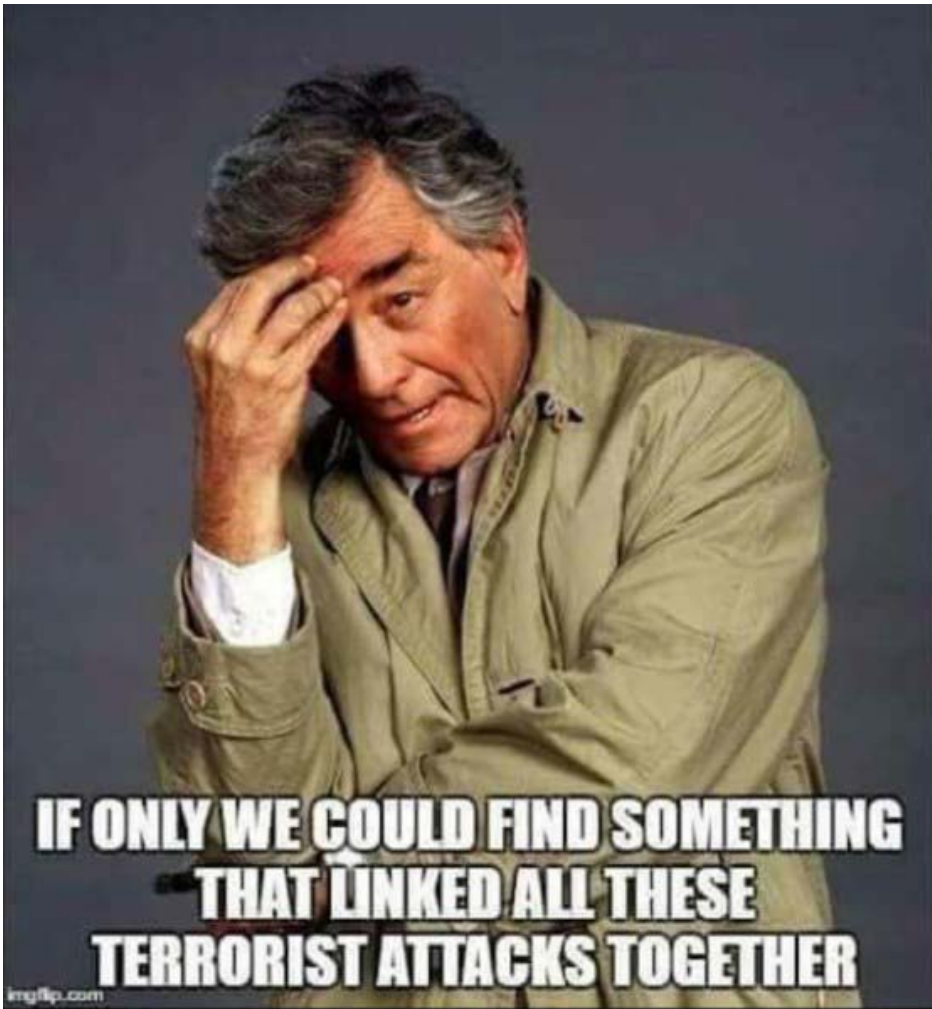
My dissident brand of feminism is grounded in my own childhood experience as a fractious rebel against the suffocating conformism of the 1950s, when Americans, exhausted by two decades of economic instability and war, reverted to a Victorian cult of domesticity that limited young girls' aspirations and confined them (in my jaundiced view) to a simpering, saccharine femininity.

In 1991, New York Newsday published my op-ed on [date rape](#), which remains the most controversial thing I have ever written. Syndicated in regional newspapers from coast to coast in haphazard truncated form, it caused a huge backlash. There was a coordinated campaign, evidently emanating from feminist groups in the Midwest, to harass the president of my university with demands for my firing. That article, often reprinted in freshman-composition course packs at state universities, caused me endless trouble throughout the 1990s. It led to picketing and protests at my outside campus lectures and to my own walk-offs (to avoid fisticuffs) from Austrian and British TV talk shows and even from the stage of Queen Elizabeth Hall in London.

I still stand by every word of my date-rape manifesto. Women infantilize themselves when they cede responsibility for sexual encounters to men or to after-the-fact grievance committees, parental proxies unworthy of true feminists. My baby-boom generation demanded and won an end to such parietal rules, and it is tragic indeed how so many of today's young women seem to long for a return of those hovering paternalistic safeguards. As a career college teacher, I want our coddling, authoritarian universities to end all involvement with or surveillance of students' social lives and personal interactions, verbal or otherwise. If a crime is committed, it should be reported to the police. Otherwise, college administrations should mind their own business and focus on facilitating and funding education in the classroom.

The Free Speech Movement, led by a fiery Italian-American, Mario Savio, erupted at the University of California at Berkeley in 1964, the year I entered college. It was a cardinal moment for my generation. The anti-establishment stance of the Free Speech Movement represented the authentic populist revolution of the 1960s, which resisted encroachments of authority by a repressive elite. How is it possible that today's academic Left has supported rather than protested campus speech codes as well as the grotesque surveillance and over-regulation of student life? American colleges have abandoned their educational mission and become government colonies, ruled by officious bureaucrats enforcing federal dictates. This despotic imperialism has no place in a modern democracy. An enlightened feminism, animated by a courageous code of personal responsibility, can only be built upon a wary alliance of strong women and strong men.

This is an excerpt from Free Women, Free Men, by Camille Paglia. Copyright © 2017 by Camille Paglia.



Your Rights
End Where
My
Feelings
Begin.

~ Every
Liberal



President Donald Trump is....

Driving Libs Crazy

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**AFTER 146 YEARS, THE RINGLING
BROS CIRCUS HAS CLOSED**



**THEY COULDN'T COMPETE
WITH THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY**



When you are down in the dumps and think you have *real problems*, just remember:

SOMEWHERE IN THIS WORLD, THERE IS A MR. PELOSI.....



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FLIGHT OF FEMINIST ACTIVISTS



HEADED TO SAUDI ARABIA
TO PROTEST FOR WOMEN'S RIGHTS

