

Gloria Steinem's Rape Cover-Up?

The curious things feminists do to protect their political brand.

by Rebecca Bynum



Gloria Steinem and Phyllis Chesler meet in Gloria's office,
Fall 1972.

Second wave feminism, edgy, in-your-face, bra-burning feminism reached its crescendo in the late sixties and early seventies. The Pill hit the market at the same time which immediately opened a brave new world – a world where sex was de-coupled from reproduction. Almost overnight, marriage and motherhood were deemed to be “below” the aspirations of young girls who were encouraged to pursue careers rather than eligible men. Gloria Steinem’s *Ms.* magazine was at the forefront of this movement.

Marriage was out, children were out, free love was in, and it was definitely fun while it lasted.

Soon, however, feminism turned to an outright attack on men. Steinem herself famously quipped, “A woman needs a man like a fish needs a bicycle.” Again, seemingly overnight, chivalry became chauvinist and the long march toward de-valuing (white) men continued all the way to the vicious playing of the woman-as-victim card at Judge Brett Kavanaugh’s Senate confirmation hearing for the Supreme Court. When the women’s movement is turned into simply another tool to smear a political opponent, it has lost its way. The backlash will be broad and deep, mark my words.

Whatever else our children absorb from the current *Zeitgeist*, they are all thoroughly convinced that the oppressed is *invariably* morally superior to the oppressor (how could it be otherwise?), and the oppressed sex is thus morally superior to the oppressor sex. Modern feminism distilled.

#MeToo, then, is a mark of moral superiority and the oppressor class (white men, that is,) damn well better walk on eggshells. And they do. Sexual advances on the part of oppressor-men toward victim-women has quickly become very tricky territory and numerous formerly illustrious careers have been ruined as a result of this shifting sexual landscape, Justice Kavanaugh notwithstanding.

Which brings me to the explosive allegation at the center of Phyllis Chesler's searingly honest memoir, [*A Politically Incorrect Feminist*](#). I believe this was a pivotal turning point for the women's movement under Steinem's leadership and it also helps to explain why the women's movement devolved into the hapless state it is in today, as nothing more than the female wing of the Democratic Party.

The shocking story is as follows. In 1979-80, Phyllis Chesler took a position at the UN working for Davidson Nicol, a dignitary from Sierra Leone, who brought her in to organize an international women's conference under UN auspices. The proceedings would be published and Chesler would write the introduction.

Though Nicol was married, he soon began pursuing Chesler (who re-buffed his advances) and then shockingly, he raped her. Around the same time, the international women's conference took place in Oslo and though Chesler had invited Gloria Steinem, a surrogate was sent instead, Robin Morgan. Morgan refused to stand up for Chesler against Nicol. In fact, she positioned herself to usurp the UN report then wrote the introduction herself and with that brought 'international feminism' firmly into the *Ms.* orbit – all under the watchful eye of Steinem, whom she represented.

Chesler begged Morgan and Steinem to help her confront her rapist, even long after the conference. No dice. Morgan maintained it would be bad for *Ms.* to accuse a black man, because quite simply, in the victim hierarchy of things, black, third-world men rate above white, first-world women. *Ms.* might be accused of *racism* – an even greater sin than sexism. Therefore, Chesler's rape was swept under the rug and *Ms.* marched forward toward the sunny uplands of the pussy-hatted women's march to protest the first presidential campaign successfully managed by a woman (Kellyanne Conway), after having first marched over the bodies of Bill Clinton's numerous sexual victims.

The hypocrisy is startling. As Chesler writes,

Gloria has also kept feminism (and herself) fashionable by positioning and repositioning an ever-modified brand of feminism, one that is always in sync with the next media-favored movement.

Over time, Gloria's brand of institutional and media iconic feminism was less about violence against women and more about racism, prison reform, climate change, foreign "occupations," and nuclear war – all important issues but not exactly "on message," or likely to appeal to women of all political persuasions.

The women's movement's embrace of the Democrat Party was fully cemented when [Steinem publicly defended Bill Clinton](#) in 1998 with what became known as the "one grope free pass rule" – applied only to Democrats, of course. Republicans would continue to be crucified as usual.

Though Chesler parted ways with *Ms.* magazine's mainstream women's movement, to my mind, she stayed truer to the actual mission of feminism, which was formed to help improve the lives of women and to fight injustice against them. This Chesler has done in book after book over her entire life. Most notably, Chesler has been one of the few feminists willing to tackle the pitiful state of women under Islam – a fact studiously denied by mainstream feminism – but a fact nonetheless.

For example, thousands of little British schoolgirls have been cruelly raped and trafficked among Muslim men in the most sadistic manner imaginable, over a period of twenty-plus years, while the police and Britain's social services were frozen in fear of being called "racist" for noticing.

"Diversity is our strength" must taste like sawdust in their mouths, but this is where modern feminism has brought us. The mainstream women's movement is guilty of pointing out the

tiniest mote in any and every man's eye, while simultaneously ignoring the wooden beam in its own.

Gloria Steinem might have some explaining to do.

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