



Rise of the Feminine Radio <http://www.voiceamerica.com/show/2581/the-rise-of-the-feminine>

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Episode 7 Feature on The Huge Shifts Disrupting the Balance of Relationships

Featured Guest Jack Myers

<http://futureofmen.com/>

Gina: Hello Jack, welcome to The Rise of the Feminine.

Jack: Thank you Gina, it's good to be with you.

Gina: Great. Am I speaking to you in New York?

Jack: You are. I'm actually in Millbrook, New York which is in the beautiful Hudson Valley.

Gina: Gorgeous. We're having a little tour today, we've been to the West Coast, we're now over to you. What we've been looking at in the program is relationships. First of all, we're looking at relationships in later life and vulnerability that those relationships can have. It's not easy as seemingly for earlier ages, there are different issues. I'm wondering since you've been writing about this, is it any easier for today's youth, we might think so but tell us what you've been finding out?

Jack: What's interesting is as you've been talking about the middle age, and I'm always reluctant to use the words *middle age* because it covers a huge amount of territory but women 30 to 45 who are heading into middle age, according to the statistics, **45% of women in that age group today**

are single compared to only 15% in 1970. There's been a huge shift toward more unmarried women, more fatherless homes for a number of reasons. I focus on, as you know, the women and men under 30 and "*easier*" would be, I don't think the right word to use, as much as more interesting because in that group, **women have been emerging as economically more successful group.** In fact, under 30 unmarried childless women under 30 are **out-earning young men** in cities like San-Francisco, Los-Angeles, New York by as much as 20% and nationally by 8%.

Couples are waiting to get married. The average age of marriage has grown to 28 and, again, in major cities, that's over 30 now. They're waiting to have children. In that age group there are more than a million more college-educated women than men, so women are **finding it much more difficult to find their educational equal** and it's more important to them than it was to men a couple of decades ago, to find an educational equal.

Yet, of course, there's the dating sites- in the research that I've done for two books now over the last 10 years focused on this younger generation, one of the big surprising facts coming out is **how much control women are taking of the relationship** and how women are much less interested than they have been in the past of finding that man to stay with, finding that relationship. They're much more- one of the common threads I heard from young women graduating college was the last thing they wanted was **some immature guy dragging down their career.**

They're much more willing and able to be financially independent than ever before. Is it easier or harder to be in a relationship? I think they're less interested- the women I'm finding are less interested in being in a relationship in that age group than ever before.

Gina: I'm certainly that generation where I was actually given mixed messages brought up to get married and at the same time, brought up to have choices and have an education and emerging in the 1970s to have opportunities that the generations before me did not have. I had those mixed messages and it's been confusing ever since I think but things seem to be getting faster and more exaggerated now. I'm feeling that there must be boys who are confused. If we are having conversations about relationships looking back over these years, they haven't got the benefit of hindsight, they're not looking at this [wider?] perspective. Inside of their age they must be very confused about the mixed messages they get from movies and the media and expectations.

Jack: **They're confused, conflicted and confronted by this huge shift** in society where this generation of young men under 25 is the **first to grow up in a more feminist society** where most of their teachers were women, they're growing up in fatherless homes, their school in college

where over 60% of their classmates are female. In 13 of the top 15 growth industries, women represent 60% of the workforce and are **much more likely to stay in their careers because they're out-earning their male counterparts.**

We see this huge shift in society and the women have their 60 year history of the women's movement and corporate support whereas the young men really only have the old boys network that's their worst enemy to look at, it's no good. The negative aspects of the patriarchy that continue to send messages to men, be a real man, big boys don't cry, big boys aren't vulnerable, big boys aren't emotionally open, and at the same time, the younger men are more vulnerable, are more emotionally open and are **totally open to supporting the women's movement**, totally open to supporting pay equality.

Over a third of young men under 30 even call themselves feminists and 85% of them agree with the goals of the women's movements. We have a generation here where the men are open, eager, willing to be partners with women moving forward but they're **not given the same kind of organizational support.** I'm not feeling sorry for them because men have had the benefit of decades, if not centuries, of being given the advantage, so I think it's totally appropriate that we [crosstalk] that.

Gina: We don't want to make them suffer though, Jack. It's not like ... payback time.

Jack: One of the things that I say in my book is, I'm talking about men under 30, men under 25, it's the men my age and the men over 30 who have to suffer a little so be it. We've probably earned the right to have to suffer a bit!

Gina: It's a whole system that the individuals didn't decide. You do what you're programmed to do, you're influenced by the whole culture. We're creating the cultural shift inside the culture so it is interesting. We might sometimes feel slightly negative but then no woman wants to punish her partner or her son.

Jack: We're talking about the younger generation but earlier you were talking about the generations over 30 and I think one of the realities is men I'm in my '60s and men my age, a lot of us are coming to terms with the fact of **how inappropriate our behavior has been over the years** and throughout our lives and how destructive they've been to relationships and we're **feeling guilt and shame and there's really no support infrastructure to help us through this process** and help us gain understanding and even forgiveness and this [past?] anger that you've talked about. I think that anger is often appropriate but by the same token, I think we need to also develop and find a path towards understanding and forgiveness.

Gina: Absolutely. Something that I'm very involved with..... You've talked about the old boys network, I have, for the last decade at least, been involved in women circles, women's gatherings, hosted them all over the world. They're such nurturing environments for women to come together. We come together as entrepreneurs, we talk about business but immediately we're talking about our lives, our needs, our emotions, where we are in life, what we're processing that will affect our business and a really safe wonderful space that nurtures us and nourishes us.

We only exclude men from that because it's a **different quality of conversation that we can have as just women**. It empowers us and that's been happening in the past but men need something similar, don't they? Or boys do. They need to be able to have that.

Jack: Men of all ages. Young men need the support, the guidance, the kind of a GPS. We don't like to ask for directions, that's the old joking, we don't but there's no GPS for life, there's no GPS for relationships and there's no GPS for careers and we do need guides and support. I'm actually beginning a process- you talk about the women's groups, I'm in the process of putting together small groups of men and women and asking them to read my book, The Future of Men in advance, and to **come together to talk about solutions** and not just for ourselves at our ages but for young men and women and how we can make sure that- because there's a blending of the genders in the younger age groups, the qualities, the competencies, the **young men are more vulnerable**, more emotionally open.

The young women are open to change, more technically oriented, more assertive and competitive. We're finding this blending and it's a generation that is they're being multicultural, diversity is in their DNA, gender neutrality and equality is in their DNA, so how do we really reinforce and support those qualities and bring them together instead of separating them out, men to this room and women over here for their groups? We need to **really start bringing the genders together** in common cause.

Gina: Absolutely. Bring the genders together with a conversation about our gender and to explore that in an open conversation and create the safe spaces so that we can talk about these things and sometimes anger may pass through but as long as we're there together as a group really examining this, I think you're right, these circles are great and your book's a great read. Jack, we've run out of time. I could talk to you for another hour or two, I'm sure and in fact, I'll surely invite you back on the show.

Jack: Easily, I'd love to do that someday.

Gina: That was brilliant Jack, thank you so much for being with me today, thank you.

Jack: Thank you.