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Sexual Assault, Mrs. Claus—and Mrs. Trump

By

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It is necessary to come to terms with the specific—and uncomfortable--reason why sexual assault is so pervasive: in the manner of the way domestic animals are treated, women are

portrayed as being devoid of subjectivity. Hence, women are denied control of their bodies and lives. America's black slaves and Jews in Nazi Germany were subject to the whims of their power-sodden controllers. Contemporary sexual assault relates to these historical atrocities in that they are inordinately and indescribably less in degree but the same in kind.

Caging farm animals, whipping slaves, persecuting Jews, and sexually assaulting women are all about power dynamics. Women are defined as being worthless to the extent that—until late 2017—men enjoyed open season to commit sexual assault with impunity. Women, positioned as powerless victims of male predators, were not believed when they tried to articulate their stories of subjugation. Denying women bodily integrity was par for the course.

What is to be done about dehumanizing women? It is necessary to remove the cultural traditions which normalize female subordination. We need to stop routinely depicting women as men's handmaids who spring from Adam's rib. Now, after taking steps to combat racism by removing Civil War monuments, it is time to remove cultural icons which normalize women's secondary status.

I am talking about the Santa Claus myth and America's First Lady nonposition. More specifically, I am talking about Mrs. Claus—and Mrs. Trump. Mrs. Claus and Mrs. Trump both derive their social status from their connection to men.

While watching the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade's penultimate float, I saw her: Mrs Claus. She was attired in a white fur trimmed green suit and she stood on the float's side below Santa's center sleigh focal point. Santa is an empowered active male; his wife is a secondary after thought. She does not even have a first name. (I suggest that her name should be Yetta Claus.)

What exactly does Mrs. Claus do all day? Surely Santa's elves are capable of taking care of all domestic North Pole chores. No one ever implies that Mr. and Mrs. Claus enjoy a healthy senior citizen sexual relationship. Mrs. Claus has no reason to exist other than to signify that women derive agency from men. A modest proposal: portray Mrs. Claus driving the sleigh. Santa deserves a rest. Children would benefit from imaging that a woman actively engages with Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer and comes down chimneys. (And while we are at it, why not make the Clauses something other than Caucasians?) Relegating Mrs. Claus to stay at home status vis-à-vis sleigh flying smacks of how Saudi Arabian women were treated in relation to automobile driving.

The American First Lady is a real version of Mrs. Claus moved from White Christmas to the White House. Despite the fact that Jacqueline Kennedy was intelligent and glamorous, after her husband's death she was evicted from the White House by a date certain. Even the amazingly accomplished Hillary first gained prominence because she was Mrs. Clinton.

And now we have the spectacle of First Lady Melania Trump. Mrs. Trump failed to graduate from college. It is fair to say that she has not accomplished anything of professional consequence in her entire life. Because she "lucked out" in the gene pool, she was able to be paid for posing naked. How can we justify positioning Mrs. Trump as a role model?

Like Mrs. Claus sitting home at the North Pole, Mrs. Trump is now ensconced in the White

House doing nothing. Both “Mrs.” figures normalize the subordination of women—and serve as the foundation for sexually assaulting devalued female subalterns. Mrs. Claus is an insult; Mrs. Trump is an atrocity. They are both irrelevant female statues who need to be toppled.

Mrs. Claus should drive the sleigh. The male President’s wife should be nothing more than a private citizen who is free to live as she sees fit. If cultural structures which support women’s subordination are removed, men will feel less inclined to grab pussies—and rape—when the spirit moves them.

When Mrs. Claus holds the reindeers’ reigns, men will come down from their high horses.

Women are now sleighing it. More power to us.