

Superwoman vs The Desperate Housewife”

⑥ "Desperate Housewives" aren't just found on Wisteria Lane in Television City. They can be found in every walk of life as the result of social change over the last four decades. ① Forty years ago feminism was at a peak. Frustrated, bitter women wanted all the same rights as men, including being able to go out into the workforce instead of being slotted into the role of traditional housewife. Early feminists, Betty Friedan, Gloria Steinem, and New Zealander Sue ⑩ "it's not your penis we envy - it's your freedom," Kedgley paved the way for new generations of women, making them believe that they could be Superwoman and have it all, run a household, look after their children, spend time with their hubby and friends as well as have a successful career. But some would say this just set women up for a fall in the future. And they're right.

⑩ ② Today, more and more women are deciding that while it is possible to juggle all these factors, it's simply too difficult. Being Superwoman doesn't mean that women achieve at a super high level across the board, impressing everyone with their "amazing powers" with a quick ⑧ ⑩ flick of their red cape and toss of their tiara topped hair. No, it means difficult choices have to be made: women can't neglect their children but they can't neglect their job either, not if they want that promotion. ⑦ Guilt comes naturally to women. If they aren't being 'Superwoman', they feel guilty. If they just go a job or a family, they feel guilty. They can't win. It's ridiculous really that the feminists believed in this 'Superwoman' thing. Men were only able keep a high flying career going because they had wives to cook, clean and look after the children for them.

So this is the backlash. Although women fought hard for the rights and opportunities that women have today, two thirds of Australian women say they would go back to being a housewife if they could afford to do it. In a Time magazine poll, the majority of men and women thought it was best for children to have a father working and a mother at home. ③ According to the British Guardian, most children grew up with a stay-at-home mother in the 1970s. Now only 30% do. 65% of adults view this as negative for society. So much for the "amazing powers of Superwoman! Women want the perfect 1950's white picket fence and the 'happy family' fairytale where men looked after their wives by providing for them, taking on the pressures of the outside world so women didn't have to. We can see this in films like Stepford Wives and Pleasantville. They're perfect, aren't they?

⑥ Of course not. When you put someone else in control of your life like this, you're not really having a life your own at all and that is what made women become desperate housewives in the 1960s, taking Valium or Mother's Little Help to get through years in the suburbs. Handing control over to men and relying on them financially can drain women's sense of independence and can even be dangerous for some.

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⑪ The picture perfect view modern day housewives have about 1950's is an illusion. If you asked housewives then what it was like for women in that era, I bet some would have a rather bitter reflection of it, just like the women of today have about trying to be a superwoman. ⑤ ⑩ Maybe this is the real challenge for the future: finding a solution for modern women who don't live in a comic book world of super heroes.