

Barbara Kay: At the Vimy centenary, a rare (and dwindling) chance to celebrate male courage

[National Post](#) - Tuesday April 11th, 2017

The Vimy Ridge centenary dominated Canadian commentary this past week. It was stirring to read the many eloquent commentaries on this watershed event in our evolution as a nation. Some of the reportage of the ceremonial aspects of the weekend was written by women. But virtually all the editorializing on the event was delivered by male writers. In fact, it's generally the male journalists who have the interest and historical knowledge to editorialize on any war. Where are the female opinionists when it comes to war? Few and far between. War and the all-male culture of military combat does not interest most women writers. They don't identify with it or sympathize with it, or even study it. (Former Comment section editor of the Post Matt Gurney came to the Post's editorial board with a Master's degree in military history, which has served him well. He's written countless superb editorials on military affairs. Matt told me that in his military history program at Wilfrid Laurier University, which was a subset of the broader history department, there was but one woman — and she from Poland, where the harsh realities and importance of military history are imbued with mother's milk. )

We are constantly told that one important measure of an equitable society is proportional gender participation in elite professions. Opinion journalism has lagged in that respect behind professions like medicine and law, where equity has been achieved or — according to law and med school rolls — soon will be over-achieved in some areas. Women opinionists account for about 20 per cent of legacy media (what you are reading now) and a higher percentage, though still quite a bit shy of 50 per cent, of new media.

But lawyers and doctors don't choose their clients and patients, who are equally well served by either sex, while opinion journalists do choose what they want to write about. And so, if equity in numbers is achieved in the Comment section, will male readers be well served? Because what young women writers mostly want to write about is gender and other social justice issues, a logical outcome of several years spent in leftist campus hothouses, where straight white men are looked upon with suspicion at best.

Thus, it is only on such occasions as official war remembrance ceremonies like the Vimy centenary, and of course every Nov. 11, that open praise of manhood is permitted. Only then do we see and hear glowing tributes to the traditional male virtues of honour, gallantry, steadfastness, stoicism, brotherhood and chivalry. Most of the year, men — not as individuals but as representative of their sex — are far more likely to be portrayed negatively: as misogynists, predators or man-children.

But when these moments pass, all these fine masculine qualities are forgotten, and the male-bashing begins again with nobody to defend living men leading ordinary lives. The women writers (who do not themselves suffer the least disadvantage for being female) go back to complaining about how tough it is to be a woman, and how awful men are. The male writers who wrote so movingly about the heroes of Vimy Ridge go back to their other concerns: budgets, economics, climate change, corruption in high places.

The sad fact is that in general, men are not well served in opinion journalism by either male or female writers. Male writers may feel a masculine kinship with other men in real combat, but they don't feel any sense of brotherhood with men who are under siege in the culture wars. Maybe they don't want to feel the wrath of the sisterhood, which can happen when male writers defend men's rights. Or maybe they simply accept the fact that it is men's lot to suffer more violence, endure the brunt of parental disenfranchisement, take on the crappiest jobs (24 of the 25 worst jobs as rated by the Jobs Almanac that rated 250 were 95-100 per cent male: boiler-maker, lumberjack, sheet-metal worker, etc), cope with joblessness, kill themselves at three times the rate of women, suck up having their lives ruined by false allegations of rape or child abuse, and in general, be considered "disposable" by society, in Warren Farrell's memorable description of men's social role.

Who is left to praise living men in legacy media? Women who have resisted the excesses of feminist anger and the misandry that floods the culture. Some of us are older and were educated before the word "misandry" had to be invented. And there are some admirable young women journalists who beat against the current with heroic intellectual independence. But if present gender trends continue in opinion journalism, men can expect to see their legitimate grievances even more expeditiously swept under the commentariat rug.

National Post

kaybarb@gmail.com

(--image--)

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```
CommentsnpReady(function(){npJ('.npStoryShare .npIconComments').unbind().bind('click',function(){npJ('html, body').animate({scrollTop:npJ('#disqus_thread').offset().top});return false}})
```

LinkedIn

Tumblr

Pinterest

Digg

FarkIt

StumbleUpon

Topics: Full Comment, Vimy 100, Vimy Ridge

```
jQuery( document ).ready( function() {
```

```
googletag.cmd.push(function() {
```

```

var gpt_bigboxtop = googletag.

defineSlot ("/3081/npo_opin/full-comment/story", [[300,250],[300,251],[300,600],[300,601]] , 'gpt-bigboxtop');
adSlots.push( gpt_bigboxtop ); gpt_bigboxtop.addService( googletag.pubads() )
.setTargeting(
'loc'
, "top" )

; pnJustInTime.route(
{
ad_id: "#gpt-bigboxtop",
pixels_away:100,
pixels_away_count:1,
mode:'down',
lazy_loading_enabled:"on",
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refresh_time:62,
block_these_ads:"#gpt-bigboxtop, #gpt-grannybar,#gpt-skinnybar,#gpt-wallpaper, #gpt-leaderboard, #gpt-leaderboard-
mobile, #gpt-oop, #gpt-bigboxtop-mobile, #gpt-impulse, #gpt-impulse-mobile, #gpt-300x600, #gpt-title250x60, #gpt-
title88x31, #gpt-tile-120x90, #gpt-bigboxnewsletter, #gpt-impulsebot, #gpt-impulsebot-mobile, #gpt-impulsemid",
admode:""",
ad_data:'null',
adslot: gpt_bigboxtop,
}
);

});
});

```

Full Comment Videos( function() { pnShowVideo( "1\_9hi1opyb", 846600, "", "", "false", "", "", "kultura", "playlist", "http://news.nationalpost.com/full-comment/video/{videoId}", null, "", "false" ); } )(); Post Picks

‘You can stop staring’: Caitlyn Jenner confirms she has undergone sex reassignment surgery (--image--) I am going to have an enthusiasm for life that I have not had in 39 years since the Olympics, almost two thirds of my life'

‘We’re number one’: Award-winning Canadian book tops annual ranking of books Americans tried to ban (--image--) The book does not have any explicit sex or nudity, but two characters discuss sexuality, including arguments over breast size and confused uses of the word 'slut'

‘I did a lot of sit-ups for that!’: Ludacris sports hilariously fake CGI abs in his new music video (--image--) 'Ludacris is just gonna CGI himself with abs using Sega Dreamcast graphics??? It's rough out here'

50 Cent punches female fan in the chest at concert, apologizes by having her twerk on stage (--image--) The rapper had been reaching into the crowd to shake hands and offer high-fives when the fan pulled a little too hard and the rapper retaliated

Korn’s new bassist is the 12-year-old son of Metallica’s Robert Trujillo (--image--) Tye Trujillo, son of Metallica bassist Robert Trujillo, will be filling in as bassist for Korn’s Reginald 'Fieldy' Arvizu temporarily

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(--image--) FP Comment William Watson: Kevin O'Leary has a great goal for the economy — and no idea how to reach it  
Brady Yauch: How Queen's Park broke Ontario's provincial electricity sector  
Jack Mintz: How Kathleen Wynne can cool Toronto's market by cutting tax — not raising it

```
jQuery( document ).ready( function() {  
  
  googletag.cmd.push(function() {  
  
    var gpt_bigboxbot = googletag.  
  
defineSlot ( "/3081/npo_opin/full-comment/story", [[300,250],[300,253],[300,600],[300,603]] , 'gpt-bigboxbot');  
adSlots.push( gpt_bigboxbot ); gpt_bigboxbot.addService( googletag.pubads() )  
.setTargeting(  
'loc'  
, "bot" )  
  
; pnJustInTime.route(  
{  
  ad_id: "#gpt-bigboxbot",  
  pixels_away:100,  
  pixels_away_count:1,  
  mode:'down',  
  lazy_loading_enabled:"on",
```

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refresh_time:62,
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mobile, #gpt-oop, #gpt-bigboxtop-mobile, #gpt-impulse, #gpt-impulse-mobile, #gpt-300x600, #gpt-title250x60, #gpt-
title88x31, #gpt-tile-120x90, #gpt-bigboxnewsletter, #gpt-impulsebot, #gpt-impulsebot-mobile, #gpt-impulsemid",
admode:""",
ad_data:'null',
adslot: gpt_bigboxbot,
}
);
});
});
```

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```
var NPFreeScreen = NPFreeScreen || {};  
NPFreeScreen.ajaxUrl = 'http://news.nationalpost.com/wp-admin/admin-ajax.php';  
NPFreeScreen.nonce = 'b4c391de52';_fskparameters=[];  
if ( localStorage && localStorage.getItem("janrainCaptureToken") ) {  
  _fskparameters['_sid'] = localStorage.getItem("npPostPointsSid");  
  if ( !_fskparameters['_sid'] ) {  
    _fskparameters['_sid'] = "";  
  }  
} else {  
  _fskparameters['_sid'] = "";
```

}

```
janrain.settings.borderColor = '#ffffff';  
janrain.settings.fontFamily = 'Helvetica, Lucida Grande, Verdana, sans-serif';  
janrain.settings.width = 300;  
janrain.settings.actionText = ' ';  
janrain.settings.capture.modalCloseHtml = ' ';  
janrain.settings.capture.noModalBorderInlineCss = true;  
  
janrain.settings.capture.flowName = 'standard';
```

Sign Up / Sign In

With your existing account from:

```
{* loginWidget *}
```

or with your account:

```
{* #signInForm *}
```

```
{* signInEmailAddress *}
```

```
{* currentPassword *}
```

Forgot your password?

Sign In

Create Account

```
{* /signInForm *}
```

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Sign in to your account

Welcome back, { \* welcomeName \* }!  
{ \* loginWidget \* }  
Not { \* welcomeName \* }? Switch Account

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Sign in to your account

Welcome Back, { \* welcomeName \* }!

{ \* #signInForm \* }  
{ \* signInEmailAddress \* }  
{ \* currentPassword \* }

Sign In

{ \* /signInForm \* }  
Not { \* welcomeName \* }? Switch Account

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Account Deactivated

Your account has been deactivated.

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Account Reactivation Failed

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Account Activated

Your account has been reactivated.

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## Email Verification Required

You must verify your email address before signing in. Check your email for your verification email, or enter your email address in the form below to resend the email.

{\* #resendVerificationForm \*}  
{\* signInEmailAddress \*}

{\* /resendVerificationForm \*}

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Almost Done!

Please confirm your details below.

{\* #socialRegistrationForm \*}

{\* firstName \*}  
{\* lastName \*}  
{\* emailAddress \*}  
{\* displayName \*}

Postmedia wants to improve your reading experience as well as share the best deals and promotions from our advertisers with you. The information below will be used to optimize the content and make ads across the network more relevant to you. You can always change the information you share with us by editing your profile.

Birthdate{\* birthdate \*}

Gender{\* gender \*}

Attention Print Newspaper SubscribersFor verification of Print Subscriber offers (e.g. epaper, Digital Access, Subscriber Rewards), please input your Print Newspaper subscription phone number and postal code.

{\* phone \*}

{\* addressPostalCode \*}

By clicking "Create Account", I hereby grant permission to Postmedia to use my account information to create my account.

I also accept and agree to be bound by Postmedia's Terms and Conditions with respect to my use of the Site and I have read and understand Postmedia's Privacy Statement. I consent to the collection, use, maintenance, and disclosure of my information in accordance with the Postmedia's Privacy Policy.

{\* backButton \*}

{\* /socialRegistrationForm \*}

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Almost Done!

Please confirm your details below. Already have an account? [Sign In](#).

{\* #registrationForm \*}

{\* firstName \*}

{\* lastName \*}

{\* emailAddress \*}

{\* displayName \*}

{\* newPassword \*}

{\* newPasswordConfirm \*}

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Birthdate{\* birthdate \*}

Gender{\* gender \*}

Attention Print Newspaper SubscribersFor verification of Print Subscriber offers (e.g. epaper, Digital Access, Subscriber

Rewards), please input your Print Newspaper subscription phone number and postal code.

{\* phone \*}

{\* addressPostalCode \*}

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{\* backButton \*}

{\* /registrationForm \*}

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Verify your email

We have sent you a confirmation email to {\* emailAddressData \*}. Please check your inbox and follow the instructions to confirm your email address.

[Close](#)

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## Create a new password

Follow these simple steps to create a new password:

1. Enter your email address below
2. Wait for the instructions to arrive in your inbox
3. Follow the instructions to update your password

{\* #forgotPasswordForm \*}

{\* signInEmailAddress \*}

{\* backButton \*}

{\* /forgotPasswordForm \*}

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## Create a new password

We've sent an email with instructions to create a new password. Your existing password has not been changed.

Close

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```
{* mergeAccounts {"custom": true} *}
```

## Merge Your Accounts

```
{| rendered_current_photo |}
```

```
{| current_displayName |}  
{| current_emailAddress |}
```

```
{| foundExistingAccountText |} {| current_emailAddress |}.
```

```
{| moreInfoHoverText |}  
{| existing_displayName |} - {| existing_provider |} : {| existing_siteName |} {| existing_createdDate |}
```

```
{| moreInfoText |}
```

```
{| existing_displayName |}  
{| existing_provider_emailAddress |}
```

```
Created {| existing_createdDate |} at {| existing_siteName |}
```

{| connectLegacyRadioText |}

{| createRadioText |} {| current\_provider |}

Validating

{| connect\_button |}

{| create\_button |}

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Sign in to complete account merge

{\* #signInForm \*}

{\* signInEmailAddress \*}

{\* currentPassword \*}

{\* backButton \*}

Sign In

{\* /signInForm \*}

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## Resend Verification Email

Sorry, we could not verify your email address. Please enter your email below, and we'll resend the instructions for email verification.

{\* #resendVerificationForm \*}

{\* signInEmailAddress \*}

{\* /resendVerificationForm \*}

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## Verification Email Sent

Check your email for a link to verify your email address.

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Email Verified

Thank you for verifying your email address.

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FAQ

Change Password

{\* #changePasswordFormNoAuth \*}

{\* newPassword \*}

{\* newPasswordConfirm \*}

{\* /changePasswordFormNoAuth \*}

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Password Changed

Your password has been successfully updated.

Close

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Create New Password

We didn't recognize that password reset code. Please enter your email below, and we'll send you a new code to reset your password.

{\* #resetPasswordForm \*}

{\* signInEmailAddress \*}

{\* /resetPasswordForm \*}

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FAQ

Create New Password

We've sent you an email with instructions to create a new password. Your existing password has not been changed.

Close

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/\* \*/

/\* \*/

//

```
_tkq = window._tkq || [];
```

```
_stq = window._stq || [];
```

```
_tkq.push(['storeContext', {'blog_id':'37979189','blog_tz':'-4','user_lang':'en','blog_lang':'en','user_id':'0'}]);
```

```
_stq.push(['view', {'blog':'37979189','v':'wpcom','tz':'-4','user_id':'0','post':'1354706','subd':'nationalpostcom'}]);
```

```
function st_vt() {var
```

```
x=document.createElement("img");x.src="http://pixel.wp.com/g.gif?blog=37979189&v=wpcomvt&tz=-
```

```
4&user_id=0&post=1354706&subd=nationalpostcom&rand="+Math.random();}
```

```
_stq.push(['extra',
```

```
{'crypt':'UE40eW5QN0p8M2Y/RE1BNmNJfGhxNCVxUDEExYmtib2E/SzdEJm0lUEtbdFU0fFk4cHZvcUFrZT90Tn4yQr
```

```
_stq.push(['clickTrackerInit', '37979189', '1354706' ]);
```

(--image--)

```
if ( 'object' === typeof wpcom_mobile_user_agent_info ) {
```

```
wpcom_mobile_user_agent_info.init();
```

```
var mobileStatsQueryString = "";
```

```
if( false !== wpcom_mobile_user_agent_info.matchedPlatformName )
```

```

mobileStatsQueryString += "&x_" + 'mobile_platforms' + '=' +
wpcom_mobile_user_agent_info.matchedPlatformName;

if( false !== wpcom_mobile_user_agent_info.matchedUserAgentName )
mobileStatsQueryString += "&x_" + 'mobile_devices' + '=' +
wpcom_mobile_user_agent_info.matchedUserAgentName;

if( wpcom_mobile_user_agent_info.isIPad() )
mobileStatsQueryString += "&x_" + 'ipad_views' + '=' + 'views';

if( "" != mobileStatsQueryString ) {
new Image().src = document.location.protocol + '//pixel.wp.com/g.gif?v=wpcom-no-pv' + mobileStatsQueryString +
&baba=' + Math.random();
}
}

//right rail native ads position
jQuery(document).ready(function(){
if (jQuery("#npContentSide .pn_kaltura").length>0) {
jQuery("#npContentSide .pn_kaltura").prev("#npContentSide
.npGutterBot:not(.npAd)").removeClass("npGutterBot").css("margin-bottom", "30px");
}
});

jQuery(document).on('keydown', '.sponsored-icon img', function() {
jQuery(this).click();
});

jQuery(document).on('click', '.sponsored-icon>img', function() {
var popUpBox=jQuery(this).next(".sponsored-icon-popup");
if (popUpBox.css("display")==='none') {
popUpBox.fadeIn("slow");
} else {
popUpBox.fadeOut("slow");
}
});

jQuery(document).on('click', '.sponsored-icon-popup>img', function() {
jQuery(this).parent().fadeOut("slow");
});

jQuery(document).on('click', '.sponsored-icon>input[type=image]', function() {
var popUpBox=jQuery(this).next(".sponsored-icon-popup");
if (popUpBox.css("display")==='none') {
popUpBox.fadeIn("slow");
popUpBox.focus();
} else {
popUpBox.fadeOut("slow");
}
}
}

```

```
}  
});
```

```
jQuery(document).on('click', '.sponsored-icon-popup>input[type=image]', function() {  
jQuery(this).parent().fadeOut("slow");  
});
```

```
window.fbAsyncInit = function() {  
FB.init({  
appId : '114466555268868',  
xfbml : true,  
version : 'v2.4'  
});  
};  
(function(d, s, id){  
var js, fjs = d.getElementsByTagName(s)[0];  
if (d.getElementById(id)) {return;}  
js = d.createElement(s); js.id = id;  
js.src = "//connect.facebook.net/en_US/sdk.js";  
fjs.parentNode.insertBefore(js, fjs);  
(document, 'script', 'facebook-jssdk'));
```

(--image--)

```
var _sf_async_config = {uid: 34988, domain: 'postmedia.com', sections:'nationalpost.com,nationalpost_full comment',  
path: window.location.pathname};  
_sf_async_config.authors = 'Barbara Kay';(function(){  
function loadChartbeat() {  
window._sf_endpt = (new Date()).getTime();  
var e = document.createElement('script');  
e.setAttribute('type', 'text/javascript');  
e.setAttribute('src',  
(('https:' == document.location.protocol) ? 'https://a248.e.akamai.net/chartbeat.download.akamai.com/102508/' :  
'http://') +  
'static.chartbeat.com/js/chartbeat_video.js');  
document.body.appendChild(e);  
}  
var oldonload = window.onload;  
window.onload = typeof window.onload !== 'function' ? loadChartbeat : function () {  
oldonload();  
loadChartbeat();
```

```
};  
}());
```

```
var _gaq = _gaq || [];  
_gaq.push(['_setAccount', 'UA-17097415-1']);  
_gaq.push(['_setDomainName', document.location.hostname]);  
_gaq.push(['_trackPageview']);  
(function() {  
var ga = document.createElement('script'); ga.type = 'text/javascript'; ga.async = true;  
ga.src = ('https:' == document.location.protocol ? 'https://ssl' : 'http://www') + '.google-analytics.com/ga.js';  
var s = document.getElementsByTagName('script')[0]; s.parentNode.insertBefore(ga, s);  
})();
```

```
var _comscore = _comscore || [];  
_comscore.push({ c1: '2', c2: '10276888' });  
(function() {  
var s = document.createElement('script'), el = document.getElementsByTagName('script')[0]; s.async = true;  
s.src = (document.location.protocol == 'https:' ? 'https://sb' : 'http://b') + '.scorecardresearch.com/beacon.js';  
el.parentNode.insertBefore(s, el);  
})();
```

```
(--image--)
```

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/* */
```

```
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