

Who Stole Feminism
Christina Hoff Summers

Holds up well after a decade and a half

This book is fresher than it ought to be. In other words, things seem to have stalled on the feminist front. Feminists are still firmly in charge on campus, but other issues have moved to the forefront of public attention. The abuses of young men (and women who don't toe the feminist line) remain pervasive on campus. But by now they are taken as givens.

She is very strong on the side of science, documenting carefully how feminists are so willing to commission and exploit shoddy statistics, including willful rejection of evidence and fabrication of studies to suit their own ends, in order to spread fear of rape, the "glass ceiling", the "patriarchy" and other tenets of radical feminism. Politicians who want to lie with statistics should read Summers as a case study of instances in which it has worked. "One in four women is a victim of rape." "SuperBowl Sunday sees a spike in hospital admissions for wife battery." "You can't beat your wife with a stick larger than your thumb, as the origin of the rule of thumb." Total fabrications, we find out, but ones that have entered our cultural awareness. Big lies that worked.

It is interesting to see Joe Biden's name everywhere in the book, none of it favorable. I just reread "My Grandfather's Son" and found similarly disparaging notes. How in the world did he make it into the White House? There are honorable opponents, and then there are just plain slimeballs. Both authors would put Biden in the latter category. And I had just thought of him as a benign plagiarist.