

Their Favorite Kind of Misogyny

Shortly after I got engaged, my paternal grandparents requested a sit-down with myself and my fiancé. We sat down first individually with each grandparent, myself with Grandpa, and my fiancé with Grandma.

They gave us counsel on how to make a marriage work. Theirs lasted well over 60 years, until each of them passed, in turn. My grandpa lived to 93, surviving his own beautiful bride by a few years.

The preeminent marriage counsel I was given was in the form of two words: “Yes, dear.”

I was told that these two simple words would prevent and/or solve every conflict. Grandpa was only half-joking.

If you’re a wife reading this, you might be thinking to yourself, “Great advice!” If you are, then congratulations, you’ve identified your favorite kind of misogyny.

Come again?

The thoughts I had at the time I received this counsel were “Oh, come on...” and “That’s ridiculous... I should just do everything she asks or accept everything she says?” Thinking more on it, I realized that in some, or perhaps most cases biting my tongue and keeping a happy wife (in this way) would indeed maintain a happy life.

It makes some sense, and I’ve reaped some of those benefits, but I don’t use these words nearly as often as Grandpa counseled or my wife would like.

Thinking about this recently, I’ve decided that such a tactic by husbands is misogynistic. Think about the implications:

- Wives can’t be reasoned with (they’re stupid)
- Wives can’t be bothered to rationally explain their requests (they’re authoritarian)
- Wives can’t control their emotions so husbands shouldn’t “make them” unhappy (they’re emotionally undisciplined)
- Wives can’t handle the possibility of being wrong (they’re emotionally fragile)

While there may be other implications, these ones seem pretty serious to me. Should husbands treat their wives as if they are stupid, or authoritarian, or emotionally undisciplined or emotionally fragile? I think those are terrible ways to consider the love of your life, the person (or persons?) you are committed to spending decades to over half a century with. (Please don’t misunderstand, I don’t believe Grandpa was any more a

misogynist than anyone else of his generation, quite possibly less so considering the gentle and honorable man he was. I loved him, dearly!)

I think the non-misogynistic marriage counsel summed up in as few words as possible is something like: “Probably, dear, but can you tell me why?”

If you’re a wife reading this, how will *that* be received?