I have been a Boy Scout for three years. Every Sunday night, I go to the Boy Scout meeting and learn new and exciting lessons as well as make friendships that I hope will be life-long. Boy Scouting is an important aspect in my life, and yet, I have been subject to teasing and taunting due to my participation in this quality organization. Boy Scouts should be treated with respect because they are working towards higher goals, learning life skills and work ethics, and it provides unique experiences that young adults generally do not receive anywhere else.

The Boy Scouts were founded in America in 1910 by a group of men meeting in a YMCA in New York.  The men included. Then current president of the United States, William Howard Taft, as honorary president, and former US president Theodore Roosevelt, as vice president.  Daniel Beard, as national scout commissioner, and Colin Livingstone as acting president. By World War I, Scouts helped sell war bonds and raise money for the war effort. During the Depression, Cub Scouts, a younger version of Boy Scouts, was launched in an effort to recruit younger boys. Today Boy Scouts of America, otherwise known as BSA, with nearly three million has an official office, thousands of employs, and is an international organization youth members, and approximately one million adults. Scouting has countless merit badges and seven ranks. To obtain these ranks, the Scout must perform each requirement in front of a certified adult. Badges have pre-set requirements that the scout must do, then have an official merit badge counselor sign that the scout has done the work for and received the merit badge. All of these requirements must be fulfilled before the scout’s eightieth birthday because once a Scout reaches his eighteenth birthday, he is not able to be a scout anymore. Scouting includes hard work, discipline but tome for fun and friendship along the way.

Scouts have always been working toward higher goals. Ever since 1912, scouts have been working toward the Eagle Scout Award. This award is the highest award in Boy Scouts and commands more prestige than all other awards. Michael S. Malone, award winning author and an Eagle Scout states that "The Gold Award in Girl Scouts is at least the equivalent of Eagle Scout (and some say it is even harder to earn), but few outside of Girl Scouts of America have ever heard of it. The Little League American Youth Soccer Organization, and other youth sport organizations have their MVPs and All-Stars, but those honors are all but forgotten by the time the next season begins. Only the Eagle stands apart.”  (Four Percent 9-10). Eagle Scout is a nationally respected award, and scouts working toward it should be praised and respected. People respect famous people even when they do not know they are Eagle Scouts. Many celebrities who are respected today are Eagle Scouts such as Neil Armstrong, Steven Spielberg, and Manti Te’o a Linebacker with the San Diego Chargers. Moreover, The Eagle Scout Award is so important that it is remembered throughout the recipient’s lifetime. Malone also states, “Why at a man’s funeral, three score or more years after he earned the award, his eulogy will likely include the fact that he was an Eagle Scout” (Malone Four Percent 9). In order to even think about obtaining Eagle Scout a boy needs to to rise up through the ranks which include Scout, Tenderfoot, Second Class, First Class, Star Scout, and Life Scout. These ranks are also learning experiences for the Scouts and help them achieve higher goals like being role models to younger Scouts also.

While in Scouting, Scouts learn life skills and work ethics. Throughout Scouts, and even on the trail to Eagle Scout, Scouts learn Life Skills. These Scouts use the skills in later life, and they use these skills to their advantage. The BSA website states, “Earn a total of 21 merit badges (10 more than you already have), including the following, First Aid, Citizenship in the Community, Citizenship in the Nation, Citizenship in the World, Communication, Cooking, Personal Fitness, Emergency Preparedness OR Lifesaving, Environmental Science OR Sustainability, Personal Management, Swimming OR Hiking OR Cycling, Camping, Family Life” (BSA Website Eagle Requirements). These merit badges are all based on life skills that normal people have to learn from experience. These merit badges are also required for Eagle Scout, so Eagle Scouts and other Scouts working toward Eagle Scout are learning life skills. Scouts also learn life skills while in Scouts that benefits their lifestyles. The study proves that "Eagle Scouts are more likely to exercise every day for 30 minutes (see Figure 1). Eagle Scouts are approximately 58 percent more likely than other Scouts to exercise every day for 30 minutes than Non-Scouts." (Baylor University Fogleman Merit Beyond the Badge). These life skills improve the Scout’s lifestyle, and will make them healthier as well. People Respect Scout’s life skills because they use them to get ahead in life, they benefit other people with it, and it often lets them excel in their occupation because of the skills like leadership and listening. While in Scouting, Scouts learn work ethics as well. According to a Study conducted by Baylor University Scouts have higher work ethics than normal people. The study states "Eagle Scouts are 56 percent more likely than non-Scouts to work with others in their neighborhood to address a problem or improve something." (Fogleman Merit Beyond the badge 15). This Study shows that Eagle Scouts, and other Scouts, use the work ethics they learned to work and improve their community. These Scouts are successful because of their work ethics, and they owe it all to Scouting. People respect the Scout’s work ethic because they use it for good reasons, and they know how to do the project at hand because their skills tell them to be prepared and know what they are going to do ahead of time. These Scouts also have a strong work ethic to their community. This is a good work ethic because the people who benefit from these acts will respect the scout even more. Scouts and Eagle Scouts using their life skills and work ethics that they learned in Scouting will strive for the better of their community all throughout their life, and their community will respect them for it.

Scouts have unique experiences that they don’t receive anywhere else. Scouts get to go places and do things that BSA offers at places called high adventure camps. The high adventure camps include The Northern Tier, Philmont Scout Ranch, and Florida Sea Base. These camps have a lot of things do offer that are considered “High Adventure” The Northern Tier is the oldest high adventure camp that BSA owns. The Northern Tier’s website states, "The Northern Tier is the BSA's oldest national High Adventure program, outfitting scouting groups for canoe trips since the summer of 1923. The Charles L Sommers Base has been home to the program since 1941. North America’s Canoe Country, a vast series of navigable lakes and rivers spanning thousands of square miles, is one of the last great wildernesses on the continent. This boreal forest of waterfalls and bogs, bears and wolves, granite crags and waist-deep mud remains nearly as much of a wilderness as it was for the first fur traders who explored the area in the 1600s. Two centuries after the fur trade’s peak in the early 1800s, our participants still follow in the footsteps of the French-Canadian voyageurs, paddling the same waters and straining over the same portage trails." (Northern Tier About History). This Camp is a good experience because it is a whole twelve days on a canoe trip. Scouts have unique experiences on this trip that they will remember for the rest of their lives. Scouting has other high adventure camps to offer. Florida Sea Base’s website states, "Come dive the coral reefs and wrecks of the Florida Keys. Designed for certified divers, this program offers eleven dives (weather permitting). Explore the only living coral reef system in the USA, diving sites like Alligator or Tennessee Reefs, exploring uncharted dive sites up and down the Keys or adding to Sea Base's own artificial reef. Your dive itinerary features a night dive, a deep dive (to 60 feet), marine life studies, and other underwater adventures. All food, lodging and equipment are included." (Sea Base Adventures). There are a lot of things to do in BSA. This is only one activity at one high adventure camp. There are a lot more things to do in BSA than this. The stories and experiences of Scouting are unlimited, and the Scout who is destined to have these adventures must choose how to do them and what to do. This is what makes up every Scout’s unique experiences their own.

Since the 1980s, Boy Scouting has come under attack because of its policy on homosexuals joining as Boy Scouts and serving as Scoutmasters. This policy states, "The reason homosexuals are inappropriate for Scouting is that homosexuality is contrary to the Scout Oath or the Scout Law, or that homosexuals cannot be appropriate role models, or that homosexuality contradicts some concept of 'traditional family values' that is supposed to be part of Scouting" (Scout Pride 1). This policy was created in the 1980s Homosexuals should be allowed in scouting because they are equal people to. Being a good role model is about being a good person, not about gay or straight. A traditional family does not exist anymore. If BSA is truly American they should know that homosexuals are people too, and according the United States Constitution you can’t deny people their rights. Although BSA has lifted their policy on openly gay Scouts, but the segregation still exists because Scouting won’t let openly homosexual adults be Scoutmasters. This is very disrespectful of Boy Scouts to say the least.

Scouting is an important part of American culture, and remains popular among many American youth.   Although it is currently under fire for some of its policies, it is still respected as an organization that can prepare young men for later life, teaching them valuable life lessons while learning skills, having fun, and exploring new adventures.  While everyone remembers the Boy Scout motto:  Be prepared, I want to leave you with their slogan:  Do a good turn daily.