**Talking About Hillary Without Saying Her Name**

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“They only got into that college because they’re black”. “They didn’t pick me because I’m Muslim”. “They just wanted to have a woman on the council”. Discrimination exists all around us. Even if we like to think we are well informed and open minded, the majority of us are subconsciously influenced every day by social norms of race, religion and gender. Music, TV, magazines, even ads on the subway are all a part of this normative culture that promotes discrimination. For example, body types depicted in advertisements are often unrealistic and cause self-esteem issues for all genders. However, this new century has been marked by a new wave of social activists that have brought attention to the systemic discrimination against women in many fields, and my focus today is to focus on sexism in politics. Sexism takes many forms, and while I’m sure my fellow writers will definitely tackle the most disgusting forms, I am writing today with a plea to stop misguided sexism. Don’t vote for someone because she is a girl.

Voting for someone because of her gender is a form of sexism. One usually votes for a candidate because of their merits and ideas, so why should it be any different for female candidates? It shouldn’t. Voting for a woman just because of her sex is wrong. By evaluating female candidates in a different way from male candidates, you are implying that female candidates are different. Furthermore, consciously preferring to vote for one sex implies that they could not win on merit. Thus, don’t say “I voted for her because she is a woman”, because that immediately invalidated the idea that she was the better candidate. John Rawls explains this best with his Veil of Ignorance theory. He argues that the only fair decisions can be made when we know nothing about the person in question, their looks, their voice, and their identity. While it may be impossible in reality, the only correct choice that can be made is one where sex is not a factor. From a more philosophical point of view, voting with sex as a factor is a form of oppression, since the media confuses sex and gender. By voting based on sex, we fall into one of two lines of thought. First, we need more female representation. As previously stated, this is a subtle form of sexism which implies that women need help to gain representation, which is inherently untrue. Second, she is a better candidate because she is a woman. This is still sexist, and actually quite destructive. This statement implies that men are incompetent, which totally clashes with feminism’s advocacy of equality. Furthermore, thinking that someone is a better candidate because of her sex would imply that person had preconceived notions of what traits and talents members of each sex bring to the table. However, this is heteronormative and completely excludes any individuality within each sex. To associate certain qualities with each sex oppresses those who don’t identify as a man or a woman, but who identify on the gender spectrum. There are women who possess stereotypically masculine traits, or who identify as something else on the gender spectrum that would not fit with this hypothetical employer’s view of women.

To conclude, voting based on sex is inherently sexist. It’s an unfortunate truth that many uninformed men (and women) only vote for men for whatever sexist reasons, but just as one can’t fight fire with fire, we cannot fight sexism with sexism. As the internet and social media continue to gain power, I have hope that more and more people will become aware of discrimination in society, and how we can act in a moral way. Don’t vote for her because she’s a woman, vote for her because she’s the best candidate.