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# Gender Inequality

Before you are even born you are assigned a sex based off your characteristics seen through a sonogram. Your families have a reveal and parties to celebrate you and what sex you're classified as before you have even entered the world, before you have taken your first breath outside of the womb. But why is the sex of your child so incredibly important? Is it so that you can buy pink clothing and Barbie Dolls for your little girl, or blue clothing and monster trucks for your little boy? Or is it even so that you can prepare yourself for how you are going to teach them about the world? By the time you are born your fate is decided for you until you can speak for yourself.

It is known that in society your gender is viewed as what decides who you are and who you become. Through the years, women have been known to be the ones who tend to home and the children while the man is the breadwinner. As time went on, women started going to work and having a family got put off until later on when they became financially stable and finished school and got a career. Regardless, from birth to death your sex has been characterized for you as well as your gender. If you are fortunate enough to be characterized as a female you are taught from a very young age how a "lady" should always act, behave, and dress. The same behaviors females are punished for at a young age are the same behaviors males get to indulge in for years

of the gender inequalities displayed and practiced in society.

In my childhood I had a best friend who was also my next door neighbor. This friend just so happens to be a male. Growing up until the time he moved away we did absolutely everything together. We went to school together, played together at home, I helped him practice for all of the sports he played. To us we were equals. In second grade we decided to play church league basketball, we had no idea we wouldn't be on the same team and would end up playing against each other, but in the end that turned out to be a blessing. I was the only girl on my team and there was only one other girl who played basketball at the church, she was on my friends team. At practices we would scrimmage and all of the boys wanted to scrimmage against me. Being young and ignorant I thought it was because they thought I was cute and they liked me, but then I asked one of them why they always wanted to scrimmage me and he told me it was because I am a girl so I'm not as good and easier to play against. I was absolutely crushed because I knew I was just as good as the boys. That was, what I remember, my first time coming across gender discrimination in my life.

By the time I was in fifth grade I was an absolute tom-boy. I owned camouflage everything, I would shoot my BB guns in the backyard with my dad aiming at targets and squirrels. I was the little redneck child my dad always wanted considering he didn't get a son. I also learned in class from my peers that camouflage and guns weren't lady-like and that I should act more like a girl. Due to the fact that I was in the early stages of puberty, I cared very much about what other people, especially boys, thought of me. So I got rid of all of my camouflage and I put up my guns and started doing girlier things. But for some reason that wasn't enough for society. I was then "too girly", but how can an 11 year old be too much for one thing in the eyes

place?

The approval and disapproval of women in society is a never ending cycle. You just go round and round with no end in sight. By the time I had reached my sophomore year of high school I had stopped caring about what other people thought about me, the way I acted, and the way I dressed. When I started doing that was really when I came to peace about who I am as a person, and that also just so happens to be when people started to like me more and more because I didn't need anyones approval to be me, and people loved that. But there are always the people who will try and bring you down for their own self benefit. Even though it may seem as though everything was starting to look up for me, it was not. I had a boyfriend at the time and he felt as though he needed to have a say in who I hung out with, who I talked to, what I wore, and where I went. Meanwhile, he could do whatever he wanted. The double standards in that relationship were just flabbergasting. The way I let myself degrade me, as a person, over a man's approval because I thought it was love is truly disgusting. But the thing is, that is not the only double standard I have had to live in my life nor have women all over had to live.

Women all over the world are in mentally abusive relationships; being controlled by their significant other having to live with double standards. It's not just in relationships that women are being oppressed by men and sometimes even other women. Women all over the world are being told what they can and cannot do with their bodies while men are actually the root of the main problem. The Government, which is mostly made up of white middle aged or older males, are telling women all over the continental U.S. what they are allowed to do with their bodies, but once women try to tell men what they can and can't do with their bodies it's like it's the end of

it's like to be a woman, yet women can't control the bodies of men?

Not only are there issues with the main political issues now that are dividing men and women all over again, but there are other issues that used to be talked about all of the time, but now seem to no longer exist in conversation because it is considered an "inappropriate discussion". The gender pay gap is still a huge issue in the U.S., but is never talked about because all of a sudden it has become "inappropriate" to discuss income. The average non-adjusted female annual salary is 79% of the average male salary when holding the same position. It is also proven that women ask for raises just as often as men do, but are more likely to be declined. I can prove this statistic myself because I have lived it. I had been working at a company for a little over a year, but have yet to get a raise. A male coworker of mine had been working there for a couple of months, started off making more than I did, and by the time I left he was still making more than me. I finally asked for a raise when I found this out. I was granted the raise, but later found out about the sexual things my boss had said about me to other male workers, and his thoughts on my body are the main reason I even got the raise. I quit a week later.

Being sexualized by men is just the tip of the iceberg. Women can't even walk to their cars without being followed, cat called, hollered at, kidnapped, or raped. It is so sad that females have to walk around with weapons because they are too fearful to go anywhere or go anywhere alone. I do believe that all women should carry around a minimum of a taser until males start being taught at a young age that women are not sexual objects, or property. I am glad to say that I have yet to use my taser, but that does not mean I haven't come close.

that we shouldn't hold positions of power because we are "too emotional", and "is it that time of the month? Won't you act irrationally?" When in reality the hormone that is being produced in the female body that makes us so "irrational" and "emotional" during the menstrual cycle is the exact same hormone being produced through a man's body all day every day. Testosterone is the reason men get so bent out of shape when they lose a videogame or when they get insulted by someone. So, shouldn't it be men we should be concerned about holding positions of power?

Women are taught to live life through the looking glass self, living by the standards put in place for them by society. Most women live their lives trying to accommodate to those standards. When they can't, they become very depressed, feeling negative about their bodies, the way they look, and their personalities. There are very few things I wouldn't change about myself. I hate my belly, my stretch marks, cellulite, my nose, my hips, and so many more things. But those things, no matter how much I hate them, I cannot change without changing who I am. As much as I'd love to change them, they are what make me beautiful. I refuse to live life through the looking glass self and the standards placed on me. I know I cannot live up to the standards placed upon me, and most other women have realized it as well. This also goes hand and hand with the "beauty myth" which labels the unachievable standards placed on women by society. It is the idea of a "perfection" that women cannot achieve.

Yes, men have their own struggles with the standards placed on them, but when it comes to the one thing they cannot change, their appearance, it is scientifically proven that women are less likely to fall in love with someone for the looks over their personality. Whether men choose to believe it or not, the pressure for mens "standards" to be met is less than that of women. This world is a man's world, created and led by men for men.