

GIRL TALK

MAY 2019

THE ROLES OF WOMEN

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WELCOME TO GIRLTALK

Dear Readers,

When it comes to gender, change is happening all around us. Women are achieving what they've been prevented from pursuing for centuries, freeing themselves both literally and metaphorically from constraining gender norms. The voices of females echo through the House and Senate. When we laugh at the TV screen, it's not just because the Three Stooges struck again—women are cracking jokes, too. Young girls smile as Captain Marvel darts throughout the screen, a visual reminder of who they are capable of becoming.

Inevitably, there are those who are resistant to change. Some display their resistance in a very obvious manner, arguing that social justice movements have all their reasoning wrong. The Trump Administration is making daily efforts to bar women from accessing abortion. Others are more subtle, whether that be through media portraying stars judging women's clothes. Nevertheless, change and transitions are happening right in front of us, and at The GirlTalk Magazine, we are ecstatic to be a part of it. We decided to dedicate this issue specifically to some of the transitions occurring in the world of feminism.

The staff for GirlTalk is transitioning, too! We are so excited to welcome new members to our team as some of our valued members head to college. (Don't worry—they'll still write!) We want to give a special welcome to Sierra Stern, Sophie Friedberg, Monie Choi and Olivia Weiner to their new roles on the leadership team. And, as always, shoutout to Alex Stern, who will keep doing our fabulous layout.

Charlotte Kramon and Eunice Park
GirlTalk Co-Editors in Chief

evolution

by Charlotte
Kramon

OAKWOOD
SECONDARY
SCHOOL

“Ok, but...evolution!” Maybe you’ve heard it, maybe you haven’t. The classic response from a skeptic of social issues, particularly feminism and civil rights. When movements threaten to change an ingrained social structure, and benefactors of that structure see its impending dissipation, it is only natural for them to search for something more tangible than philosophy to defend their skeptical positions.

I am not advocating for ditching science-based facts when forming arguments. However, using basic notions of evolution and the human need for survival—which many of us learned in 1st grade—to justify sexism is not just an easy way out of a conversation, but history has proven the dangers of such a position.

Some use evolution to constrain women and justify misogyny. Simone de Beauvoir laments in the introduction to *The Second Sex* society’s bafflement at what, exactly, a woman is. Even back in 1949, men would say, “She’s not a woman,” or question whether or not a woman’s behavior aligns with her sex. Beauvoir dedicates the rest of her book to unpacking what a woman actually is, both from a psychological and scientific perspective. While I don’t have time to go into a deep-dive on *The Second Sex*, (I’ll save that for another time,) I will say that womanhood is a complicated subject that can’t be defined by mere evolution. If people questioned women’s femininity in 1949, what on earth would they say about our achievements now? Because such people would merely argue that from an evolutionary perspective, this is not how women normally act, should we revert back

to confinement from the 40s?

Canadian psychologist Jordan Peterson is a favorite among conservatives, who sites psychological theories rooted in evolution and science to justify certain problematic attitudes towards women. “Women are choosy maters (unlike female chimps, their closest animal counterparts),” Peterson writes in his new self-health book, “12 Rules for Living”. “Most men do not meet female human standards. It is for this reason that women on dating sites rate 85 percent of men as below average in attractiveness.”

The argument Peterson presents here is that historically, women get to choose mates, which is why men are particularly fragile when rejected. Peterson is absolutely right—men have fragile egos because men have been raised in a society with a narrow notion of masculinity. They are expected to walk around with puffed-out chests and shiny smiles, perhaps thinking about their hot girlfriend or wife. Emotions are a no-no. Luckily, this is changing, much to the benefit of men as well as, obviously, women. How do we eradicate some of feminism’s most pressing issues? Author and speaker Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie says that it all goes back to how boys are brought up to believe they must be a very specific kind of man.

Also, Peterson’s argument is a dangerous slippery slope. If you haven’t heard of Incel, they are a group of very sad, disturbed men who build community based on the belief that they have been oppressed by society because the “Stacys” of the world do not want to have sex with them. The “Chads,” they call stereotypical macho-man, get all the Stacys. Chad

is not at fault, though—Stacy is. That is why extreme members of the group have intentionally driven vans into women, the ultimate cause of their sadness. These men deal with serious mental health issues, but take it out on women. Peterson’s argument is a slippery slope towards justifying extreme responses to rejection, as if women are fault—because evolution, of course.

Going back a bit further, social Darwinism was the prominent theory used to justify the mass genocide of black people in Africa and later slavery. Natural selection, social Darwinist argued, explains why black people are inferior and thus naturally in a position to be oppressed. Then there’s the “white man’s burden,” which justified genocide during the Scramble for Africa as a necessity for superior white men to “civilize” black men. While I disagree with men like Jordan Peterson, I do not think he thinks mass genocide of black people or slavery is okay. Because of that, I see the use of evolution to justify sexist attitudes as a dangerous slippery slope.

To me, feminism is not the denial of the existence of masculinity and femininity, but instead the assertion that regardless of how feminine or masculine a person is, they should be treated the same. Men should be held accountable for their inability to control “human nature,” or their “innate” behavior against women that is really just inappropriate. To continue shifting people’s perception of womanhood and femininity, we have to be cognizant of what science is legitimate and relevant to the cause, rather than un-revolutionary or merely historically dangerous and untrue ideas.

Reflecting On CAPTAIN MARVEL

by Lily Kramon
OAKWOOD SCHOOL

On March 8th, 2019, Captain Marvel became one of the biggest opening films worldwide with a female lead. Captain Marvel, played by Brie Larson, is the first female superhero to get her own film. Captain Marvel is about an extraterrestrial superhero who is caught in the middle of a battle between the Kree warriors and the Skrulls. This long battle takes place in 1995 on earth and a few other planets.

Marvel already has female superheroes that are a part of the main Marvel group, The Avengers, but these female heroes can only be seen in group movies including "Avengers: Age of Ultron," and "Avengers: Infinity War." Marvel took 11 years to release a superhero film with a female star/main character. This shows how slowly but surely, the film industry is changing.

Captain Marvel reflects on real issues that women experience today. Carol Danvers (Captain Marvel) is used by a group of Kree warriors simply because of her powers. These warriors never took the time to tell Carol about her long forgotten memories of her life on earth. This resembles how women in the current world are expected to hide their messy experiences in life and cover up their scars from their past.

However, Captain Marvel finds the courage to look for her past memories that could possibly be scary and disappointing, or they

could be incredible and joyful. This has the potential to inspire many women and young girls to face their imperfections and use their fears as their power.

Captain Marvel proves to the world that the film industry is improving, but it also shows some flaws that still remain in movie-making today. There is a supporting character in the movie named Maria Rambeau, who was Carol's best friend and flying partner before Carol disappeared.

Once Carol and Maria are reunited, Maria becomes a huge asset in Captain Marvel's journey. Maria builds a spaceship, flies it safely through the enemies territory, and fights against extraterrestrial creatures all while dealing with the struggles of being a single mother and having lost her best friend for many years.

However, the movie honors and highlights all of Captain Marvel's work throughout the journey while ignoring Maria's courageous work. This shows how movies need to highlight more characters and focus on multiple perspectives throughout the entire movie.

The movie industry is beginning to respect and include women and feminist topics, but they are still learning how to properly highlight them in films. If feminists continue to push companies to hire more women stars and directors, we could reach amazing heights.



Why Women Aren't Funny

by Sierra Stern
OAKWOOD SECONDARY SCHOOL

It's no secret that comedy is subjective. Somebody who doesn't menstruate probably isn't going to laugh at a period joke, and someone with half a brain isn't going to laugh at John Mulaney. (Kidding. I just wanted to say something controversial. It's called a hook.) It's fine not to think Amy Schumer's funny. I'm not going to jump to her defense just because we're both women. What's not fine is that Amy Schumer has become a standard for stand-up comedienne. (That's French for lady-comedian. Not to nitpick, but the English language is damn sexist.) According to my grueling research scrolling through youtube comment sections, comedienne are always one of two things, "better than Amy Schumer, at least" or "ugh, worse than Amy Schumer." Where's that standard for men? Nobody's watching stand-up sets by men and saying "well, he's better than Dane Cook." (Dane Cook is one of the most hated stand-up comedians. Ever.) That's because, when it comes to women in any area of entertainment, really, it's always a comparing game. Comedienne lost their right to individualism when society started perpetuating the mantra "women aren't funny." I'm not going to sit here and tell you that you aren't entitled to that belief if that's something you think to be true. Nobody's universally hilarious. No matter how much you love Friends, there's going to be a good number of people that won't even crack a smile at a joke you think is sitcom genius. I could just as easily assert that "nobody's funny" because entertainment and laughter aren't a science. Somebody thinks Amy Schumer is funny. It may not be me or you, but they're out there. Also, disclaimer—I know that Amy Schumer has been accused of stealing material from other comics, and I believe that she has. But you'll find that more people hate Schumer for being crass than being unoriginal.

On a whim, I searched "why are men funnier than women" and the results made my brain hurt. There was this Vanity Fair article from 2007 by some guy named Christopher Hitchens, saying that comedy was essential for men in order to impress women. Alright, Hitchens. That's pretty funny. Straight, male comedians (which is the kind that most comedians tend to be) are not primarily trying to appeal to a female demographic. That's why frequent topics for stand-up comics are the glorification of sex and the analyzation of women. Because that's what's been proven to be entertaining for men. There was a study done by University of California San Diego, where they got an equal number of men and women to caption photos (think New Yorker caption contest) and had both sexes blindly vote on what captions they deemed funniest. The final results showed that the male captions were voted, on average .11 points funnier (out of 5.0) than the women's captions, but don't get all smug. This difference had nothing to do with women thinking men were especially funny. Actually, men just tended to score other men higher. So science and I are in agreement—Hitchens is wrong. I think, honestly, the reason why men are funnier than women is that the definition of a funny woman is so constricting that hardly anybody can fit inside.

It helps to be conventionally attractive. Duh. That's always a plus for a woman in the entertainment industry, even when it shouldn't be. Being unattractive is an asset for male comedians in that it makes them look funny.



Why do female comedians have to look like actresses when it isn't part of their job description to be beautiful? Why should actresses have to look like models when the roles they play (for the most part) aren't? And what is beautiful anyway? Comedienne are picked apart for their weights, clothing, hair, and faces even when what they look like has nothing to do with the set they're performing. Conventionally attractive comedienne aren't treated much better. People write, "attractive women can't be funny" under YouTube videos as though those two things have any correlation at all. It seems like the only winners are "average-looking" women, but these women only avoid a tiny corner of society's abuse.

Did I already use the word double-standard? No? Well, I am now. The biggest criticism of successful female stand-up comics is that they talk about sex too much. People think it's crass, and that's honestly a whole other issue—the perception of sex and all things sex-related as taboo subjects. (I'm sure another GirlTalk article in the Love and Culture issue addresses it.) As I mentioned previously, male comics love to

talk about sex. I hate to break it to everybody, but the clean-cut John Mulaneys of the world are extremely hard to come by. It's difficult to be funny without going blue—that's why potty jokes are so popular in elementary school. Men can talk about boobs and dicks all day long, but the minute a woman starts talking about her vagina, conservatives are suddenly all fired up (even though they were totally ice-cool about it when dozens of successful men did the same). Louis C.K. and Bill Cosby were widely beloved comedians before they were labeled sex offenders. The most hated female comics are despised for being vulgar, while the most hated male comics are despised for being rapists. I don't consider those two things equal offenses. One could argue that I'm not separating the art from the artist here. Damn right. I'll separate Louis C.K. from his sexual misconduct when men start separating the appearances of female comedians from their acts. Wait. . . no, I won't!

People shouldn't have to be talented to deserve human decency, especially when that talent is in the eye of the beholder. Could even a fraction of Amy Schumer's critics have launched stand-up careers half as successful than hers? Absolutely not. Our perception of entertainment is becoming increasingly toxic as people start to believe that there is an objective good and bad for mediums like music, comedy, and art. When did we start taking these things so seriously

that one stand-up routine can be, according to several youtube commenters, "so bad that I want to shoot myself." If watching a four-minute clip of Sarah Silverman incites that type of violence in you, I don't think that's Sarah's fault. Even if everyone in the world agreed that somebody was unfunny, that person wouldn't deserve the death threats, shallow comments, and generalizations that comediennes face on a daily basis. What gives anybody the right to hate somebody for being untalented? Are we just angry that they think they're talented when we so strongly disagree? Is that what we're mad at? Confidence?

This final paragraph is addressed to everybody guilty of the above, myself included. The wonderful thing about videos, television shows, and live performances is that you can walk away. If you don't think women are funny, don't waste your time watching them. If you're personally offended by somebody's appearance, close your eyes. Ali Wong is not strapping you to a chair and screaming "watch my Netflix special!" Spare everybody that you think is untalented your abuse by leaving them alone. It's really that easy.



by Dani Pinkus

Dani Pinkus is a feminist opinion writer.

Get more from her on her website, www.danipinkus.com

President Orange is after our vaginas - again. This has been on his agenda from day one, and it will take all of us to stop him. Here's what's going on and how you can tell Trump, NO GAG RULE.

A couple of key things you should know going in:

What is Title X?

Title X is a family planning grant program that provides care for low-income individuals and families who otherwise could not afford healthcare. The Senate unanimously passed this bill, showing fierce bipartisan

support. President Richard Nixon signed Title X into law in 1970.

The law provides education, counseling, contraception, routine exams, and other family planning services at a reduced or no cost. Title X serves [over 4 million people annually](#), many of whom fall below the federal poverty line and are uninsured. The majority of these individuals live in rural areas, are individuals of color, and are LGBTQ+.

Title X helps [1.9 million women](#) prevent unwanted pregnancies, including [440,000 teens, every year](#). It allows individuals the

vital right of autonomy over their bodies by providing safe access to healthcare.

What is Roe v. Wade?

Roe v. Wade is a 1973 United States Supreme Court decision affirming a woman's right to an abortion. The case allows women the right to choose, with respect to a woman's health and the potential life of the fetus. This court limited abortion to the third trimester of pregnancy, a limitation that has been challenged and overridden in certain cases. This case activated the ongoing debate on pro-life versus pro-choice.

If you want to dig a little deeper... this case was actually about Norma McCorvey, a 21-year-old woman who was pregnant with her third child and wanted an abortion. She falsely claimed that she was raped, in order to skirt around 1969 Texas law that only permitted abortion in the case of rape or incest. After considering illegal abortion and working with lawyers, Linda Coffee and Sarah Weddington, McCorvey had her child before a local court decision was made. She gave the child up for adoption.

Coffee and Weddington pursued the case into 1970, using the name Jane Roe as McCorvey's alias. The case ultimately reached the supreme court against Henry Wade, the Dallas, Texas district attorney at the time. Roe won 7-2.

Sometimes we forget the magnitude of this success. Roe v. Wade certifies a freedom that feels so obvious, it's insane the work that goes into defending it. So long as the opposition is fierce, it is our responsibility to uphold and protect Roe v. Wade - especially in the face of an administration that continues to prioritize dismantling women's rights.

To reiterate the short version, Roe v. Wade legalized abortion and a woman's right to privacy and choice.

The Trump-Pence administration's impending gag rule is threatening these rights. A "gag rule" is a prohibiting regulation. Think of literally being gagged by someone - having

something stuffed into your mouth to prohibit you from speaking or calling out. That, or a healthy dose of BDSM. But not in this article.

This gag rule would impact three major things:

Gag health care providers in the Title X program, making it illegal to refer patients to safe and legal abortions.

Gag patients from getting a full scope of accurate information regarding their health care options.

Gag Planned Parenthood and other birth control providers by implementing new restrictions.

The gag rule is a direct attack on Title X and Roe v. Wade. Of the 4 million+ assisted by Title X, Planned Parenthood health centers serve [41 percent](#). The gag rule takes this access away. The gag rule is anti-choice. The gag rule is a frightening attempt to deny women the right to our bodies.

The gag rule has also been a top priority from Trump's campaign to his presidency. Just three days after being sworn-in, Trump reinstated and expanded the [global gag rule](#), targeting international U.S. funded programs to prevent access to abortion. This rule forces providers to choose between U.S. financial support or providing a safe range of options for their patients.

A domestic gag rule would force health care providers at home to make the same decision, putting millions of people out of

care and safe, affordable access.

On February 22, changes to Title X implementing the gag rule were released by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). As expected, the [revised regulations](#) require total separation of direct Title X funding, referral, and support for abortion.

To be clear, Title X's function is not to provide abortion, just like Planned Parenthood's function is not to provide abortion - they provide access to safe and honest healthcare, which provides the option to a safe abortion. Yet these new regulations bar a level of provider-patient confidence that directly gags abortion talk, particularly impacting the communities in which Title X was built to protect.

These changes will likely be challenged on a large scale - but that's just hope talking without your support.

How can you take action?

Change happens when people show up for it. If you believe in NO GAG RULE and want to uphold Title X and Roe v. Wade, please take quick, simple, and effective action here:

[Pledge to protect Title X](#) with Planned Parenthood by adding your name to the open letter.

[Write your state representatives](#) with a pre-populated message by SameSide or text "GAG RULE" to the phone number 52886 to defend Planned Parenthood.

History of Women in the Workforce

by Monie Choi
OAKWOOD SCHOOL

The Industrial Revolution is one that can be attributed to the expansive shift in gender roles, especially of women in the workforce, that are the traditional roles we see in the status quo. During Industrialization, much focus was put on expanding industry and increasing profits. This is because numerous in-

ventions that were created in the 18th to 19th century pushed mass production to become the norm for industry. Thus, less attention was put on the craftsmanship of the worker. Because of this, one of the primary focus of the growing supply side of the market was to maximize utility of workers. This meant that when employers were making decisions on staffing their business, they paid more attention on the availability of their employees and the amount of household responsibilities that would hinder said employee to show up to work every day.

As mass production persisted, men were constantly preferred over women for job openings as men do not bear the chance of becoming pregnant, something that would slow down work progress in the factory. Following the consistent male bias, women were not valued the same as men in the workplace,

often being paid at a rate much lower than men for whatever work they could get. Many women then began to become used to, at times even prefer, to stay at home because of the double burden that factory work followed by household chores and child care imposed.

During the same time, early feminist movements were also gaining popularity. With demands for equal work opportunities and equal voting rights, the movement was ultimately an attempt to liberate women to stand on level ground with men. As a result, the government began to extend more rights to women under mounting pressure from the suffrage movement, leading to the legalization of women to vote. Now, the feminist movement has expanded greatly, continuing to fight for equality for women, trans, non-binary, and many more individuals amongst society, leaving no one behind.

gLObAL QuESTIONNAIRE

How do you see the changing role of women in society?

“I think more people in the world are understanding that if we empower women, we empower everyone. Unfortunately, there is still a lot of sexism in my country. There’s still a lot of sexism around the world.

But, slowly and surely, we are making progress. People are making more investments in girls’ education. This makes girls like me be able to be educated to get access to a lot more different types of jobs in the future and chase after our dreams in what we want to do.”

16 years old, India

“I feel like the future is female, but the future is also intersectional. The changing role of women in our society is that now our society recognizes more than ever how important women are to offer their diversity of experiences and identities.”

18 years old, USA

“South Korea recently had a female president. Even if she was very unpopular, it still gave me hope because it showed that nowadays, women can achieve great career aspirations. I want to be a doctor when I grow up. My grandparents, because of their more traditional perspectives, want me to be a nurse, but my parents are more encouraging of my dream to become a doctor. I’m inspired when I see women in high positions of power because it helps me believe it is possible for me too.”

16 years old, South Korea

“With #MeToo and #TimesUp becoming at the forefront of national discussion, I feel like women are more empowered than ever to speak up and demand justice. I wouldn’t say that women are changing, but more so that there are more opportunities available to them. Women have been strong since forever, but now, we are finally being heard and believed.”

18 years old, USA

“I’ve been lucky to have been raised by a single mother and be surrounded by sisters. They show me how powerful, strong, and capable women are. They make me excited for the future, especially now, with more choices being available to women in the types of jobs we can have, the families we can choose, and more.”

18 years old, Mexico



Axe the Tax: Breakdown of the Tampon Tax

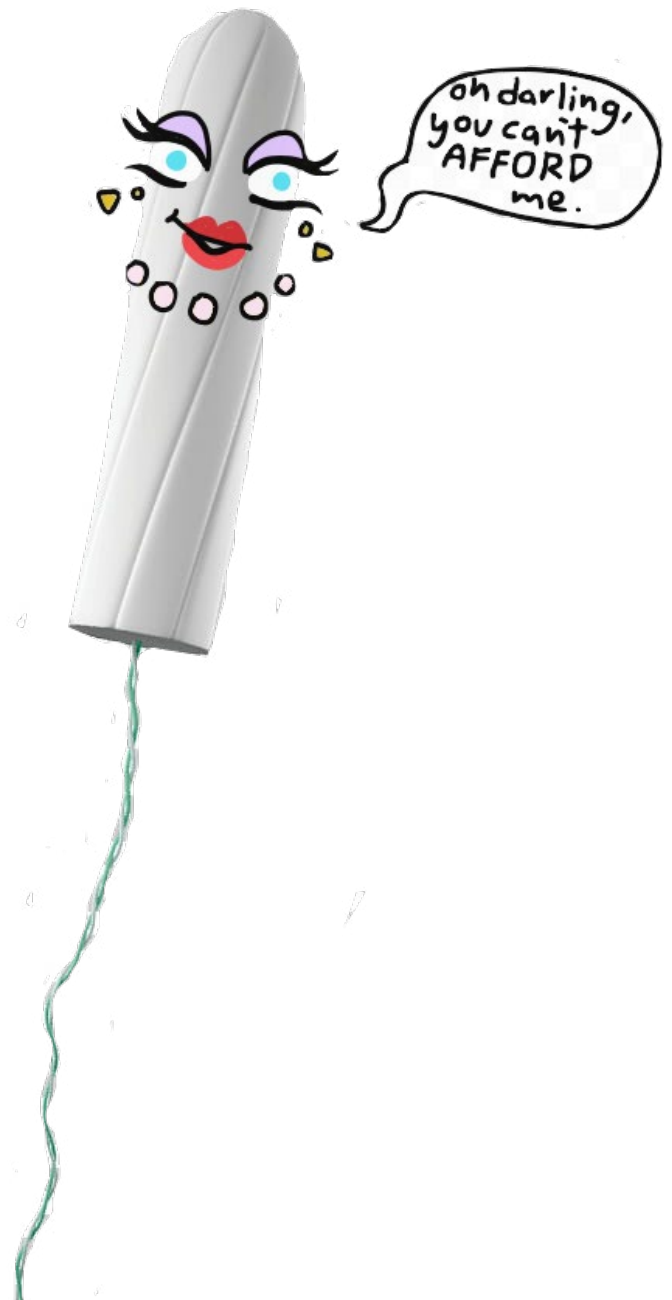
by Mason
Maxam

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In many states country wide, menstrual products are still taxed. One of those states happens to be California. On average women in California pay \$7 a month for access to menstrual products such as pads and tampons for around 40 years. These numbers add up very quickly and total to about 20 million dollars in taxes state-wide. Obviously, that is not a small amount of money. For people living in low-income situations, menstrual products become less and less accessible. This is all happening because tampons are considered a “luxury” and not a “necessity”. Meanwhile, products such as Viagra and condoms are not taxed because they are considered necessary health products.

Christina Garcia, an assemblywoman working at the Capitol in Sacramento, has dedicated her career as a politician to rectifying this issue. She believes menstrual products are a necessity and that the tax is unjust because women are already on the wrong side of the wage gap. In 2016, Garcia presented Assembly Bill 1561 which proposes an end to the tax on tampons and pads. Unfortunately, this bill did not get passed. Assemblywoman Garcia tried twice more after that, and the bill was turned down for the third time.

Although California has had trouble passing the bill, there are a few states who have already removed tax from the sale of menstrual products. In Maryland and New Jersey, tampons and other similar items are no longer taxed. So why hasn't California followed suit? Being an extremely liberal and progressive state, most would think ending the tampon tax would be easy. The tampon tax is the only gender-specific tax left in California. In the words of Christina Garcia, “California feels that being born with a uterus is a luxury.” While she is not giving up yet, it is important that we don't either. Advocate for women and for the equal, fair access to menstrual products.



Why Jordyn's Taking the Heat

by Sophie Freidberg
PALISADES CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL

After what seems like countless cheating rumors (and video proof), Khloé Kardashian has decided to split from Tristan Thompson, her boyfriend of two years and father of her daughter, True. This split was especially scandalous because the cause of the split was infidelity. And if that wasn't bad enough, the woman he was allegedly caught cheating with is Jordyn Woods, model and close family friend of the Kardashian/Jenners. This scandal has been broadcasted on what seems to be every news source imaginable, and comes up in daily conversation. People talk about the headlines and frequent the phrases, 'How could she?' 'What was she thinking?' 'No matter how drunk she was, she had to have known what she was doing!'"

Society has pushed her to the outskirts. We deem her actions unforgivable. And while I do not condone Woods's actions in any sort, I still can't help but wonder, why is she taking all the heat? Why has society forgotten that it takes two to tango?

I'll tell you why. Society has placed a stigma around girls who express their sexuality more than they have placed one around guys. If a 16 or 17-year-old girl loses her virginity, she's called a slut; a whore. But if a guy loses his virginity at the same age (or even earlier), he is praised; he is glorified. Why?

Why can't girls be just as sexual as guys? I thought we had moved out of the time where women were only seen for their use as domestic servants. I thought society said it was OK for women to take control of their bodies and decide when and who they would experience their sexuality with. Was I wrong? I hope not. But I don't think this is a stigma that has been particularly overt, making it that much harder to erase. We have a bias against women who are vocal and active about their body articulation, and we don't always out right say it.

We as a whole need to be cognizant of said bias in order to ever be rid of it. It is a stigma that plagues girls in this country and teaches them that they must feel shamed for their chosen body expression. Again, I am not condoning the action of Jordyn Woods by any means. But, if we're going to blame one, we must blame the other. Jordyn Woods and Tristan Thompson were equal partners in this scandal, and should be treated as such. Their genders should not interfere with their repercussions.



SLUT SHAMING: ARE WE REALLY WHAT WE WEAR?

by Olivia Weiner
OAKWOOD SECONDARY SCHOOL

Fashion trends come and go, (from 60's mod to 70's hippie to 80's grunge, to modern day street style) but judging a woman by the clothing she wears is evergreen. It is a truth that all women know from the time that we are young and are told what is appropriate to put on our bodies: from our parents saying we can't go out of the house *in that*, to biased school dress codes that sexualize little girls, to side glances and insults when are our outfits are deemed too revealing.

This judgment doesn't just take place in our homes or classrooms or even on the streets. It has also made its way into our legal system. What a woman was wearing could be used in court during a rape trial for decades until The Violence Against Women Act made it inadmissible in 1994. While that is clearly a huge step forward, society still plays the "what was she wearing" game when it comes to shaming women. In 2018, an 18-year-old girl was raped by two NYPD officers. The coverage of her case in the New York Post contained just ONE photograph... not of either accused rapist, but of the teen victim herself wearing a

bikini taken off Instagram. Ironically, women are also facing extreme backlash for wearing too much in recent years. In 2004 France banned wearing the burqa in public. Even the burkini (a modesty bathing suit for Muslim women) was outlawed from French beaches. In 2016, Switzerland passed a similar law. In Belgium, a woman caught wearing a full-face veil can now be jailed for up to seven days. Modest clothing is not just unwelcome in certain parts of the world, it has now become illegal. It seems like no matter how much or how little we wear, the real issue is not just about slut-shaming or prejudice, it is about society's continued desire to control women... restricting their freedom of expression and degrading them via the clothing that they put on their bodies.

But in the #MeToo era we find ourselves in now is offering glimmers of hope and change. Women are embracing their bodies on social media and pushing back against stereotypes, both online and on the picket line. In 2018, an Irish court acquitted a man accused of rape because, they reasoned, his teen victim wearing a lacy thong implied the sex was consensual. Instead of taking it lying

down, the people of Ireland were outraged and took to the streets in protest, creating a social media firestorm and demands for new protections for women in their legal system. Celebrities are also beginning to clap back at the slightly more subversive, but equally insidious, slut-shaming that happens online. Ariana Grande took to Twitter regarding comments she "looked like a whore" in one of her music videos, saying "Men take their shirts off and express sexuality anywhere they want to... All. The. Time. The double standard is so boring and exhausting... women can love their bodies too!"

Fashion is the ultimate form of self-expression, a projection of who we are, and it's hard enough to figure out who that is - especially as teens - without the added burden of society restricting or judging us for it. Girls can be smart and they can be kind and they can be hard-working... and they can also dress sexy (or modestly) while they do it.

Although there is a lot more work to be done on many fronts, it's a new world for women and one that is generating much more progressive ways of thinking about who we are... no matter what we wear.

You're Invited!

On May 26th, The GirlTalk is hosting a promotional event in partnership with nonprofit organization Same Side and sponsored by the Jewish Federation.

Join us at McConnell's Fine Ice Cream in Studio City on Sunday, May 26th from 10:30-11:30 to enjoy FREE ice cream, enjoy our GirlTalk panel featuring Torie Osborn and Meiko Takayama, and learn about Same Side's "No Gag Rule" campaign.

From 10:30-2:30, there will be a photo booth, free GirlTalk stickers, and other material to learn more about how to get involved with GirlTalk!

[Don't miss it! RSVP to thegirltalkmagazine@gmail.com](mailto:thegirltalkmagazine@gmail.com)
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