

Gender equality and women's empowerment

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Women have been dealing with what we call today as 'gender issues' (to be politically correct) since the beginning of time. Most other people refer to it as chauvinism or discrimination. This thing however we refer to it as has existed since the beginning of time. Referring back to the bible times of Adam and Eve there was well documented issues of gender differences. We go back to the creation of 'man' do you really think that man is superior because he was created first, or the fact that man was used to create woman?

Or the fact that it was the woman who ate the fruit off of the forbidden tree, does that make the women less superior. Both man and women were ultimately created equal and everybody makes mistakes. Look at cave men for instance, have you ever heard the phrase cave women. No you haven't, when we picture 'cave men' the way society has groomed the thoughts into our mind, we picture very unattractive men with their clubs dragging their women around by the hair. Women were there only to cook and to bare the children of the tribe. But why has society chosen to put these images out there for us to believe.

Do we have any proof that their women were dragged around by the hair, or is it a simple rhetoric devise to play in the mind of our subconscious thinking to lead us to believe that men have and always have been more superior than women. As the ages have passed not much has changed for women. It wasn't until WWII that women were even given the chance to work. During that era there were no men to work, the economy was taking a serious hit, so they looked upon the women to fill the positions that the men had filled for so long.

The women took to their new roles as champions doing the manual hard labor in the factories, leaving their children at home to be cared for by another. During that time in our history I think many people have forgotten the significance of what happened. While then men in our country were out fighting and dying to ensure our freedom, the women were here keeping our country alive the best they could, and they succeeded. At that time women had no education and no training but they managed to be strong and get out there and fight.

They also in a way fought for the freedom of our country, the men could have not succeeded without the women that took that stand. It is a known fact that even some fifty years later women do not receive the same opportunities as men. Women have earned the right to be considered as equals and deserve the same equal rights to work as men do. Women have earned that right and have fought for equality, but they still do not receive it. Women do not receive the same job opportunities, promotions and pay as men do. Men are more likely to gain the success in these areas than women, even if the woman is more qualified.

Women are the caretakers of the world. Women are the ones who take care of the families; families are what form communities, communities are what make the nations. " If women have a chance to work and earn as full and equal partners in society their families will flourish. When families flourish, communities and nations will flourish. " (Clinton, H. R.). If women are successful they will be able to better provide for their families. In doing so, they give their families a better chance at a prosperous life. Society still has a long way to go; according to The American Prospect Inc. Over twenty-five

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years ago the United Nations developed a global bill of rights to end discrimination against women. The All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) was signed by all nations except the United States, Iran, Somalia, and Sudan. For years Jesse Helms led the attack against CEDAW, calling it the work of "radical feminists" with "anti-family agenda." "I do not intend to be pushed around by discourteous, demanding women," he said proactively on the Senate floor in 1999. Helms, is no longer around to exercise his objections.

George W. Bush is now standing in the way, even as he justifies two wars against fundamentalism, at least partly in the name of advancing the status of women abroad. " (Chesler, E). Which shows that this world still has along way to go before it sees women as equals. George W. Bush is worried about "advancing the status of women abroad", but what about the status of the women right here in the United States. He is the president of the United States and not that of the women abroad. As long as we still have these views that women are not equal.

Society will never gain the talent, perspective, and ambition for success that women can bring to the table. " Around the world, empowering women is now widely considered essential to expanding economic growth, reducing poverty, improving public health, sustaining the environment, and consolidating transitions from tyranny to democracy. A near universal consensus is calling for fundamental changes in practices that have denied rights to women for centuries. If the democrats retake the White House and/or the Senate, it will be time to insist that the United States finally become an official party to this agreement. " (Chesler, E)

A good example of empowering women right here in the United States is based on an article in the San Diego Union Tribune. Based on the statistic of the United Nations, " Women made up 16. 3 percent of parliament worldwide at the end of 2005, edging up from 15. 7 percent a year earlier. Based on this groups latest statistics, according to the annual survey women have made steady progress in elections since a landmark world conference in Beijing in 1995, when females made up just 11. 3 percent of the world's lawmakers. Women on an average made up 20 percent of the deputies elected in the 39 countries that held parliamentary elections last year.

Out of nine countries more than 30 percent of those elected or returning to office in 2005 were women, with Norway topping the list at 37. 9 percent. " (Reuters 2006) The Inter- Parliamentary Union found that women fared the best in Nordic countries and the worst in Arab states. The United States on the other hand ranks 69th among the world's nations, with 66 women in the House of Representatives (15. 2 percent) and 14 female senators (14 percent). The proportion of female legislators fell in eight countries last year: Bolivia, Bulgaria, Denmark, Dominica, Egypt, Germany, Kyrgyzstan and St.

Vincent, and the Grenadines. In two countries, Kyrgyzstan and Micronesia, elections were held in 2005, but no women won seats. In Saudi Arabia, whose parliament was appointed, no women were named because women there do not have the right to vote or run for election. Turns out, that brought the number to a total of nine countries without a single female lawmaker as of the end of last year in 2005: Kyrgyzstan, Micronesia, Nauru, Palau, St. Kitts and Nevis, Saudi Arabia, the Solomon Islands, Tuvalu and the United Arab Emirates.

A new and recent study has shown an impressive and dramatic change from the numbers that we have been seeing in the past. Since 1975 women from all different races have struggled to compete with men on a professional level. As it appears race as well as gender plays a big part in what kind of job one will get, not to mention how much they will be earning. From the graph below is information collected from the online almanac, and as you can see over the past twenty-eight years. White males have dominated the economy white men have maintained a hundred percent of the median annual earnings.

While white women, on the other hand over the same twenty-eight year period have increased their median annual earnings by approximately twenty percent, and still only hold seventy-five percent of the median annual earnings. That is twenty five percent less than white men. The Wage Gap, by Gender and Race This graph shows the median annual earnings men and women of different races. It also measures the difference in wage earnings over a twenty -eight year period. As we can see from the graph above race plays an equal part in the effect of annual earnings. Black males are up only four percent in twenty eight years.

Hipic males are down by nine percent over the same twenty eight year period. Black women are up only ten percent and Hipic women are up ten percent over the past twenty eight years. In America and in other countries all over the world it is about time to start breaking through the barriers and stereotypes that society has welcomed for too long. America should be a role model for the rest of the world. America is considered the land of the free,

but as long as these barriers continue to discriminate and divide our country by race and color is it really free?

Sure America is known for having the best opportunities in the world, but what is the benefit of having those opportunities if it is subject to race or gender? These are the questions that one must ask every time that thought of race or gender comes into question. That's just it; it shouldn't be a question or an issue. If the qualifications meet the need then there's your answer. Have you ever wondered if you were to submit a resume without a full name just a first initial and a last name what kind of response do you think you would get? Well let me give you some insight into what might happen.

I tried this research method to prove my theory that men are more preferred for a job than women and the responses I received were unbelievable. I submitted my resume to several different lines of employment such as computertechnology, emergency medical technician (E. M. T), and firefighter. I have significant experience, training, certifications in all these lines of employment. When I received calls from perspective employers they would call (my cell phone, my phone contact number listed on the resume and T. Torres as the name listed on the resume.) and ask if Mr. Torres was available.

Right there they automatically assumed that my gender was male when in fact I am female. When the correction was made the response that I received was even more amazing. All of a sudden they did not have any openings at the time but would call me in the future if anything was available. It is

amazing that the judgments that are passed in society today based on your gender or race. We as society could accomplish more than we know if we eliminate gender and racial boundaries, not to mention to overcome the stereotypical images that society has painted for us to believe.

According to Russian Education and Society, " Men hold stereo typical traits of professional competence, rational thinking and an active life stance. Women hold the stereotype of social and communicative skills, heartfelt warmth, and emotional support. " (Razumnikova, O. M.). We, as society are blaming the gender issues on tradition or religion. Boys and girls are taught at a very early age that 'girls do this and boys do that'. Eventually as the world progresses children should be taught that girls and boys can do anything alike. There is nothing a man can do that a woman can't, and this is how children should be raised.

Motherhood shares the same responsibilities as fatherhood does. So in turn family obligation should not be a factor into a woman getting a job, a promotion or how successful she can be. Women's rights should not be talked upon as if they are separate fromhuman rights. Women are in fact human and should be treated alike. There is a lot of talk classified as human rights, women's rights, andcivil rights: they are one in the same, rights are rights and every person should be entitled to the same equal rights as the other, man or woman. I do truly believe that if this was the case the world could be and would be a better place.