

Oppressive fashion essay



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Women have been faced with many challenges throughout history. A major example of this would be the fight for women's rights and equality. Women worked and worked to attempt to gain equality with men and eventually triumphed. However, another challenge that women had to face was oppressive clothing and fashion.

The corset, the practice of foot binding, and hijabs were all massive parts of oppressive fashion. Each served a specific purpose, but hindered women at the same time. Foot binding was a practice in China that began around the 10th century. It lasted for a very, very long time in history – all the way up until the mid-20th century.

Foot binding consists of pressing the toes up against the sole of the foot and tying it there. This was done to girls around age 5. The feet would first be numbed before the toes were broken and tied up. After the initial binding was done, the feet would require periodic attention and washing, to avoid serious infections. This process was extremely painful to women and the pain would last through their entire lives.

The main reason behind foot binding was to “show-off”. The idea was that a girl who was foot banded came from a family that was rich enough that she didn't have to work (meaning manual labor). Although, women who were foot banded could still walk, hike, and do minor field work. Women would wear beautiful silk slippers over their now-tiny feet. This fashion still hindered women greatly though.

Through life the woman would have to suffer extreme pain and risk infections that could ultimately lead to death. The process would lead to

lifelong disabilities. Foot binding has not been known to be implicated since the mid-20th century. The hijab is a type of fashion that came from Arabian and Islamic beliefs. It is the style of dressing of Muslim women and still continues on today. This fashion generally means covering all of your body except for the face and hands.

There is a lot of controversy about hijabs right now. For instance, whether or not women should have to dress this way in schools, whether this fashion should be required, or if women should be able to decide if they want to wear hijabs. The history of this fashion can be traced back to the Islamic conquering of Persian and Byzantine societies and as an expression of the Quran. It is also written in history that the prophet Muhammad ordered it.

In addition to the general covering of the skin other than the face and hands, sometimes women would wear veils. A veil is a scarf or other cloth worn in front of the face, almost like a mask. However, a veil is not practical for women who are working in the fields or other labor as it would be an obstruction of vision. So the wearing of a veil came to be more of a sign that the woman who was wearing it came from a rich enough family that she didn't have to work, very similarly to foot binding in China. The wearing of the hijab is also for women to be taken " more seriously".

For example, if a female judge walked into a courtroom in a mini-skirt, would she be taken seriously? This is a type of justification that Muslims see behind the hijab. Though this fashion does not lead to serious, life-threatening results like some other oppressive fashions do, it still hinders women.

Women are unable to be unique, be themselves, and show off who they

really are while following this fashion. Rather than being who they really are, they're “ just another Muslim woman”. It is also been known that sometimes women who wear hijabs in the U.

S. publicly sometimes receive stares, head-turns, or dirty looks from Americans. The hijab is a religious fashion that limits the expression of Muslim women that is still worn today. Corsets first became popular in the mid-16th century and have changed in shape and purpose throughout history. Corsets are still worn by some women today (mostly Europeans).

A corset is a garment that shapes the torso and hips of a woman for beauty and to get a desired “ shape” and thinness. A corset would keep the wearer's body straight and in an almost cone-like shape. The 18th century corsets were worn mostly to create a very skinny, stiff upper body while wearing large, wide, and bulky skirts. This was a popular style for parties and other public appearances.

By the early 19th century the purpose of the corset changed to being worn for the sole purpose of supporting the breasts. Corsets at this time became much shorter and only went around the middle torso area. They still shrunk the torso slightly, but this was not their main purpose. The mid-19th century brought corsets to the Victorian style of the “ hourglass” shaped torso.

Although this was a very widely popular fashion, it still had negative effects. Corsets were notorious for being extremely uncomfortable to wear. Women who obsessively wore corsets were sometime described as “ slave to fashion”. This means that although the corsets got desired results, they were

not good for your health. Main negative results of this fashion were serious constipation and indigestion.

More rare, but even more serious and dangerous side effects resulted, including hysteria and liver failure. But disregarding the dangers of the fashion, it was still very popular throughout history. Women have faced many hardships throughout history. Even something that can seem as innocent as clothing and fashion trends were sometimes hazardous.

Sometimes the clothing was worn by choice of the wearer for beauty, such as corsets. Others, like hijabs, were worn as a result of religious beliefs. And fashions like foot binding were forced upon the women at a very young age. Often fashions like foot binding and corsets would have serious and dangerous repercussions that lead to major health issues.

Hijabs, on the other hand lead to more social and self-expression limitations. Some of these fashions have had a lasting impact that is still seen today. Corsets, hijabs, and the process of foot binding are all historical fashions that have hindered women throughout the world and throughout history.