

# Ariana bergerson

Sociology, Feminism



Ariana bergerson Sexism, or gender discrimination, is present everywhere, in every culture, in every country. The terms basically mean the prejudicial treatment of a group or a person due to their gender or sex. It involves a reinforcement of behavior and attitude on the basis of traditionally stereotypical roles people have in the society we live in. Gender bias can involve a whole gamut of issues, from unequal pay to women being portrayed as sexual objects in the media to wives being beaten up by their spouses. While in theory, this discrimination can affect both men and women, however, it is women who have been at the receiving end through the ages and across cultures, since most cultures in the world are patriarchal, or male dominated. A stark and recent example of sexism is Hillary Clinton being judged according to the clothes she wears and her looks, thereby belittling what she stands for intellectually, as she makes a bid for the President's office in the U. S. And there you have it, despite the emancipation of women in the West, there has not been a single woman president yet - what can be more telling! Sexism is a mindset that has the potential of affecting practically every aspect of women's lives, preventing them from accomplishing their full potential. Sexism in the Workplace: From being sexually harassed by male colleagues to women getting paid less for the same jobs to preferential treatment given by male bosses to more compliant women, whom they don't consider a threat, to stronger female colleagues being undercut for openly challenging the conventional gender roles they are supposed to conform to, to discussing female colleagues or making jokes about them in a denigrating manner, gender discrimination exists to some degree in most workplaces. According to the United Nations,

there is not a single society where women are not discriminated against, or have equal opportunities as men. Even in countries in the West where women's emancipation has bettered the lives of countless women, they still experience the unfairness of the 'glass ceiling', wherein women just do not get promoted beyond a certain level. According to the Glass Ceiling Commission in the U. S., about 95-97% of the senior managerial posts in country's largest corporations are held by men.

**Gender Discrimination and Religion:** Practically all religions in the world are male dominated, and most biased ideas have their roots in these religions, with women being relegated to a much lower level than men. She is regarded as unclean when she menstruates, she becomes untouchable after childbirth until she undergoes a ritual cleansing, she is described as a temptress or a whore in the scriptures, she has to cover herself from head to foot in order not to weaken the man's purity of resolve, she is supposed to have been created by God from Adam's rib, and that too as an afterthought, and God is a man of course! From being burnt at the stake accused of being witches to honor killings that still continue in places like India, Pakistan, and other Islamic countries, to undergoing fasts for the well-being of her husband - all religions have always discriminated against women and continue to do so.

**Gender Discrimination in Developing Countries:** If women in the emancipated West are still continuing for justice and equal rights for women, the girl-child and woman in developing countries have a plethora of discriminatory practices which continue to keep them trammled. From being sold into the sex-trafficking trade, to rape, to child abuse, to sex-selective abortion, to infanticide, to neglect, to dowry deaths and honor killings, discrimination

against females is a stark reality that affects large portions of the society across these countries. Women the world over are still regarded as passive or weak or sexual objects. There is still a long way to go to attain gender parity. Women continue to fight for respect, justice, and equality. Gender discrimination has to be resisted wherever it exists. Whereas in the developing world it can be achieved by widespread education and economic independence, in the developed world, women must continue to break all the glass ceiling barriers, to achieve equal parity with men in every field, while continuing to sensitize men about the issues of sexism and gender discrimination.