

THE FEMGUIN

a feminist newsletter



SEXISM IN SPORT

the discrimination and harassment women face in sports (pg 05)

TRUE FEMINISM IS INTERSECTIONAL

Why the only form of feminism should be intersectional and how today's feminism is not (pg 09-10)



WOMAN OF THE MONTH

all about Dorothy Detzer and what she did (pg 12)

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A Note From the Editors

We need to stop saying

"Boys will be boys"

By Elle

There is almost nothing like an English garden on a spring evening. It's warm, the smoky scent of the barbeque still lingering in the calm air. The grass is soft beneath my feet, springing up each time my feet lift as I make my way to the last empty chair on the lawn. The melodic sound of soulful 60s music comes from the speaker on the table, drifting lazily through the air and my head droops as it begins lulling me to sleep.

"No, we never clean up. The school has cleaners for a reason and besides, that's girls' work."

"No, don't worry, my sister likes cleaning. She's a girl, why wouldn't she?"

"It's not my fault there are dents in the walls! I get mad when I lose a game, all of my friends have dented walls too. It isn't a big deal."

"Jeez that's so gay. It's gross."

"No, we don't ever get into trouble. You know how it is, boys will be boys!"

Excuse me? 'Boys will be boys'? How utterly absurd to suggest that the mere fact you are a man excuses your actions. Surely nobody could honestly believe that?

Unfortunately, a lot of people seem to be called nobody.

The first recorded use of the phrase 'Boys will be Boys' was in England, 1589; originating from a latin proverb 'Children (boys) will be children and do childish things' and has since morphed into a grotesque monster that shields men and boys alike from taking any responsibility for their actions. The things excused typically range from jumping in muddy puddles, to hitting girls in the playground, to sexual harassment, and even rape. The use of 'boys will be boys' is a plague upon humanity and it is slowly sweeping the world, raising masses of men who have god complexes because everything they did was excused with their gender.

A phrase so inherently problematic is rare to be seen but 'boys will be boys' fits the bill perfectly.

Removing accountability for problematic actions and attitudes in men, and saying that harmful behaviour is simply a side effect of being male, is frankly not only incredibly irresponsible, but also a pretty pathetic excuse. In a male dominated society, however, it's sadly to be expected.

Unfortunately women in our society do not get these 'get out of jail free' cards that men do. Whilst there are many phrases that place the blame on women, we have yet to discover (or use!) a phrase that takes the blame away.

However, the lack of such a phrase is one of lesser evils in the world today. From a young age women can learn to be held accountable and grow from their mistakes, compared to the hordes of men who blame mistakes on anything but themselves.

I cannot count the number of times I have heard the phrase 'boys will be boys'. It's so ingrained in our culture that it is almost a knee jerk reaction to certain situations. But all is not lost yet. Slowly but surely, boys are being held accountable and managing to mature from boy to man. The #MeToo and Everyone's Invited movements are accomplishing the feat of drawing attention to the entitled behaviours caused by phrases such as 'boys will be boys' and unless we want to continue our current trend and keep raising entitled men we need to continue the conversations and accountability that they provoke. We need to remember the problems caused by this phrase. 'Boys will be boys' is dismissive, irresponsible and harmful. So let's start changing society today. How about starting by changing the phrase all together? Maybe to something like 'boys will be held accountable?'



Sexism in sport

by Zoe



You have probably watched a football game in your life, and I can almost guarantee that it was a men's football game. Massive stadium, tv coverage, a buzzing atmosphere all around. Women's football however, is nothing like that.



I've been lucky enough to see both men and women's football close in real life. A men's arsenal game in a huge stadium full of drunk old men chanting and yelling at the players, and a women's football game, in a much smaller stadium, and with the crowd being supportive and generally good people. When the players would fall over, they would pick themselves up again and carry on, rather than rolling around pitifully on the floor, crying for attention.



As someone who used to play football (and rather enjoyed it), it got very repetitive telling people you play football and getting rude remarks about how women's football is 'boring' and not as fun to watch as the men's football. In fact, for two years I

played in a mixed team, so anyone could play together. Not only was I the only girl in my team and club, I was the only girl in the entire league. That meant that photographers were always running to take photos of my team. Not because we were good at the game, not because we won the match, but because we had a girl, and our team was diverse.

The actual playing experience was less than enjoyable. Never being passed the ball, because I was a girl, so I must have been weak; spending most games on the side-line so I wouldn't mess everything up; getting pushed around and shoved by the other team more than anyone else, because I was a frail and weak little girl and God forbid, I get the ball for once.



But football isn't the only sport. Recently, I've started playing squash more, and I have become quite committed to it. While I'm not the greatest player, I still represent my county and try hard in training. In one lesson, my coach (we'll call him Chad)

said he needed some people to film a video for him. Just us doing a simple drill to record our progress. He picked two boys and me to be in the video - note that I was the only girl in a group of ten kids. As everyone walked off, Chad stopped me and said 'you know, I only picked you because you're a girl. We need to show diversity and I don't want to leave you out'. The sad part is this isn't the first time something like this has happened. Chad is constantly joking about how he always picks me to play so I don't feel left out, because I'm "the only girl in the group."



Unfortunately, I'm not the only person who has had to experience this type of discriminatory behaviour. Things like this are a common occurrence for female athletes at all levels.

There are lots of other problems that are built into different sports as well. For example, in tennis, men play 5 sets, whereas women only play 3. The reason for this is that it is assumed women are weaker than men, and thus won't be able to play the full five sets. There's also the problem

of women getting paid far less than men who do the same sport at the same professional level, and to the same standard.



This is due to an enormous number of factors which I won't go into now for fear of boring you, but one factor is the difference in media coverage between men and women's sport. Women's sport is often not broadcast to as wide a scale as men's, causing there to be less excitement surrounding it, which has a knock-on effect that means women don't get paid nearly as much as their male counterparts.

So, what's the lesson to take from this article? First, I would like to make all misogynists aware that – as a blanket statement - women are not weaker than men and are just as able to compete in sports as men. Additionally, some people need to accept that women in sport exist, always have and always will. Letting out your repressed misogynistic feelings on women within sports will get you nowhere.



The 97%

By Lara

You've probably heard about the 97% statistic, but sexual harassment is more than just statistics and facts. It is the constant worry, stress and fear we feel when walking home alone. It is the fact that we cannot go out if it is dark. The fact that we must wear clothes hiding our bodies because men can't control themselves. The fact that we just have to ignore the boys shouting sexualised comments from across the street because "boys will be boys". And it's all your fault for wearing a short skirt.

The sad reality is, that the majority of us know what it feels like when someone shouts or stares at you in a way which they should not, but it is accepted, normalised, and thought of as okay. The sad reality is that behind all the statistics, many girls just don't feel safe walking down the road alone.

An investigation by UN Women UK found that 97% of women aged 18-24 have been sexually harassed. Almost every young woman in the UK has experienced sexual harassment, yet we are not taught self-defence or how to deal with these situations. Instead we are afraid to speak up due to the fear of being shamed, called a "liar" or no change happening. 97% appears impossibly high to those who have grown up without the experience of sexual harassment as a part of their existence, but living in London as a young girl this statistic, unfortunately, makes sense.

"Do not go out when it's dark, message a parent when you leave school, carry your keys and alarm just in case, wear your jumper and roll down your skirt. If someone is following you, cross the street or go into a shop, don't go into an elevator with just you and a man, cover up."

Girls are told these things from a young age in order to “protect them”, but we are not fighting the root of the problem by telling girls how to reduce their chances of being assaulted. It isn't just telling boys not to harass or assault girls and women. Instead, it is teaching boys how to make girls feel safe when walking down a street, teaching them how to stand up when someone is harassed, teaching them that jokes about assault are not okay. These are things that will start to break down the social norms.

What should we do? Some crucial things needed to create change are: from the age of five, teach in mixed and all boys schools how to treat girls and start to unpick the social norms to stop the normalisation of sexual harassment. As well as this, treat these issues seriously, punish offenders harshly and teach them how to act appropriately and why their actions are unacceptable. We must also teach in schools about assault and harassment (we are almost guaranteed to

experience some form of harassment so we should be prepared on what to do and how to defend ourselves). On top of this, we need to create a safe, supportive and caring environment for victims of assault or harassment.

These are things I believe need to be done to create long lasting change. We should feel safe walking down the street. We should be able to wear what we want to wear. We should be able to speak up and talk about our experiences. 97% is not okay. 97% should never be accepted. We have to create the change that is crucially needed to turn the 97% into 0%.



True Feminism is Intersectional

By Arya

Feminism is the belief in social, economic, and political equality for women. This statement seems obvious, but the predominant, current feminist wave is directed at middle class, educated, white women and does not include women from other groups. For example, working class women, women of colour, lgbtq+ women etc. Current mainstream feminism lacks intersectionality.

Intersectionality is the understanding that factors such as race and class have a profound effect on the discrimination a woman may face when she is a part of one or more of these social categories. Intersectionality is critical in speaking to every woman's experience.

So, how is popular feminism not meeting its true aims? Popular feminism is currently seen through the lens of the white, educated middle class. These experiences are seen as the 'default' paradigm -

- because they are primarily affected by a singular issue – sexism. Hence, feminism has solely focused on the line between sexism and feminism.

However, this single focus issue does not include all women, which subverts its aims. This does not in any way demean the origin of the feminist movement but shines a light on the fact that it is not complete. We must recognise the fact that white privilege exists in feminism and it has an exclusionary effect.

Consider the example of the 'Free the Nips' movement. Modern western feminism needs to understand the impact of some of their headline grabbing activism. The message is necessary – freedom to own our bodies. But how does a woman from a traditional Indian or African background, or devout Muslim, who may take pride in their cultural expression, support and participate in such a movement?

The idea is inclusive, however, the execution can often be exclusive.

This example is not to say that the movement isn't valid, but to recognise that the movement is a part of a wider picture. True intersectionality focuses on allowing us to own our bodies in all ways.

For example, France banned the hijab for women under 18 in a 'feminist' act. How is a law from a government telling a woman what to wear 'a feminist act'? This simply takes away the freedom of clothing choice, religious freedom, the right to personal expression - a woman's right. Intersectionality tackles this by looking at what empowers different women and not making assumptions at surface level.

Intersectionality demands that ALL women's issues be recognised and addressed. This concept is consistent with the morality of feminism. For example, intersectionality looks at how the struggles may be different and more varied for a poor, under educated woman. By attending to the needs of the most vulnerable group, you are de facto attending to the needs of the strongest members of the group.

After all, it's better to take a whole cake to a party rather than one slice.

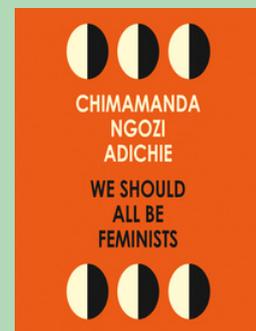
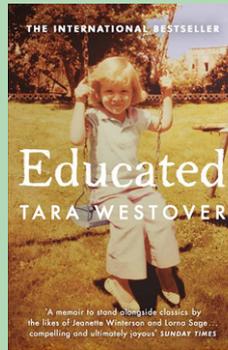
Women of colour can be marginalised in the feminist movement when they face other forms of oppression, such as racism. This re-enforces an idea that feminism is only for white women. This excludes women of colour from the very feminist movement that should be supporting them. This is also relevant to many other women who face forms of oppression in conjunction with sexism.

Intersectionality places feminism in the real world. It does not 'dilute' the core issues. The essence of feminism is equality for all. Some may argue that single focus issues are more easily understood, however the real world is more complicated. The very definition of feminism requires intersectionality in order to fulfill that definition. A multiplicity of women's experiences does not dilute the issues of feminism; it strengthens it.

Media Recommendations

Books

- Invisible Women By Caroline Criado-Perez
- We Should All Be Feminists by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie
- Women Don't Owe You Pretty by Florence Given
- Educated by Tara Westover
- Wild Swans: Three Daughters of China by Jung Chang
- Why I'm No Longer Talking to White People about Race by Reni Eddo-Lodge



Podcasts

[Disclaimer: Some podcast episodes may contain explicit content]

- Feminists Don't Wear Pink
- Your Angry Neighborhood Feminist
- Black Feminist Rants
- Feminist Book Club: The Podcast





Woman of the Month: Dorothy Detzer



Dorothy Detzer was born on the 11th December 1893 in Fort Wayne, Indiana. Her father, August, was a drugstore owner and her mother, Laura, was a librarian. Throughout her childhood, Dorothy's parents focused on her education, and in her late teens, she spent time travelling in the Far East, instead of going to college. After settling back in the US, she moved into Hull House in Chicago. Hull House was a settlement founded in 1889, originally for people who had immigrated to America and over time became a space for women's education.

In 1918, Dorothy's twin brother, Donald, died in a mustard gas attack. Forever changed by his death, Detzer gave the rest of her life to fighting for peace and justice across the globe. She became a pacifist and joined the American Friends Service Committee, a Quaker committee set up to work for peace and social justice across the US. She spent many years campaigning for legislation to be passed through Congress, including for the Kellogg-Briand Pact, that outlawed war between France and the US. She also coordinated a national petition for global disarmament which got over 500,000 signatures.

In 1928, she became the National Executive Secretary of the US Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF). While working there, she campaigned for a Senate investigation into the international munitions industry, as well as focusing attention on the exploitation of African countries, by US businesses. She also worked for freedom for Cuba from U.S. intervention, and argued for neutrality as the US approached World War II.

After she stepped down, she spent many years working as a foreign correspondent. Dorothy died on the 7th January 1981, at the age of 87.

Her life is one that has been forgotten by a world built to remember men. She played a huge part in trying to work towards world peace in the aftermath of both World Wars, but her name has largely been forgotten. She is just one of the women we have to thank for where we are today, and we must make sure never to forget other women like Dorothy Detzer, who played a key role in shaping government policy and direction.



A Note From the Editors

By The Editors



Hey there! It is us, the editors (believe it or not). We hope you enjoyed the second of The Femguin. In 50 years, you can brag to your kids that you were one of the first readers, and of course we will be a national corporation making multi-million figures by then.

But back to the present day for a second. We would greatly appreciate it if you could fill out this anonymous form, to give us some advice and feedback for future issues!

We're also looking for an illustrator, so if you are interested in that position please enter your email address in the relevant space in the form below.

If you would like to submit an article for the next issue in the spring term, there is also an option to do that, and we will get back to you - just remember to include your name and email address!

<https://forms.gle/VYyo6YGm>

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