

Feminism is No Longer About Equality

Erica Brown went to school one morning in early October wearing a slogan on her shirt: "The future is female". When a female teacher at Guelph Collegiate Vocational Institute (Guelph, Ontario, Canada) pointed out that her message might make some of the boys feel uncomfortable, Brown's response was to complain to her parents, and the principal of the school. She wrote an open letter to the teacher in question, and then of course, posted it on Facebook, ensuring the incident would make news.

As a mother of four teenagers, two of whom happen to be boys, I am growing increasingly concerned about the message being hammered into boys' heads that they are not worth as much as girls.

Call me crazy, but I thought feminism was supposed to be about the equality of the sexes, not their division into competing camps.

Every week another "female power" meme or story about how we need to teach our girls they matter hits our social media feeds. The problem is, that in the western world, girls are *not* being left behind, or told that they are not entitled to an education. More girls than ever are [entering STEM](#) (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) programmes at colleges and universities and pursuing careers in those areas.

I was raised in the 1970s and 1980s, during a time when women were just beginning to enter the workforce in larger numbers than had ever been seen. We were told that we could have it all – a career, a marriage, a family – and that we could pursue all of those things without compromising any one of them. We were taught that our voices and our roles in society

were just as valuable as those of the men with whom we competed. We were not taught that boys and men were somehow lesser human beings for being male.

And yet, that is the world we now live in.

I get it. Around the world, especially in parts of Africa and in the Middle East, girls and boys are not treated as equals. Girls are not afforded the same educational opportunities, are treated as though they are the property of male relatives, and some are forced to suffer the evil that is female genital mutilation. Those girls definitely need to be taught that they are of equal worth in this world.

Activists like Malala Yousafzai, now 20 years old and a Nobel Peace Prize winner for her role in opposing the suppression of children and for the right to education for all children, have been making the rest of the world sit up and take notice of what is happening elsewhere in the world.

But in Western societies, that is not an issue. Women entering colleges and universities make up [more than 60 percent](#) of the student population, and are more than half of all graduating classes in medicine, [law](#), and journalism. Meanwhile, boys are being made to feel as though their opinions and biologically based way of doing things is not acceptable.

Girls are [joining the Boy Scouts](#), but I don't see boys being welcomed into the Girl Scouts. Women have "women only" centres on university and college campuses, but if the male population of a school wants to have a "men's centre", the feminist hordes [rise up](#) in extremely loud, vocal disgust that such a thing could even be suggested. We have "women only" gyms, but there are no such options for men. The old saying, "two wrongs don't make a right", still holds true.

Men may have had their men's only clubs once upon a time, but those spaces have been invaded by women for decades. Being a hypocrite does not help your end goal, which is supposed to be

equality among the sexes. Equality, as in, “women have the same rights and privileges as men.” That is not what we have today, where equality means trampling the rights of boys and men in an effort to build up the status of women.

It’s one thing to encourage our girls to follow their dreams, and to let them know that they are valuable contributors to the world, and that if they choose to be doctors, or lawyers, scientists, and engineers, they can absolutely pursue those careers and be successful at them.

It’s another thing altogether to encourage the idea that in order to do that, we must make our boys feel that they don’t matter as much as girls. For true equality, we need to make sure that boys *and* girls are getting the opportunities to be the best at whatever they choose for their lives.

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