

Feminism: the new F word



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Since when has calling yourself a feminist become a bad thing? Throughout the school year, I've heard people call feminists 'Feminazis' and I'm tired of it. By definition, feminism is the advocacy of women's rights on the grounds of political, social and economic equality to men. Now somehow that term has become diluted and has gained a negative connotation.

When I was a freshman, I proudly called myself a feminist. After I said this, I was asked if I hated men by one of my classmates. I then took a moment to try and explain what feminism is and my classmate just rolled her eyes and turned away. My classmate is the perfect example of society's misinterpretation of feminism.

Yes, there are some radical feminists but there are extremists in almost all activist groups. We shouldn't stereotype feminists just because one feminist is extreme in her tactics; our society has made that too much of a habit.

Women should be the movement's biggest supporters. Instead, many condemn the campaign. So many women have the wrong idea of feminism, because many believe that feminists want to be superior to their male counterparts. Some women are afraid to openly identify as a feminist due to the negative connotation. Women can only destroy the patriarchy by working together.

A large problem feminists have to face is the double standards little girls have to live with. For example, if a 5-year-old girl takes on a leadership role she's told she's being "bossy" but when a little boy takes on a leadership role he's praised for taking initiative. In this instance, society is telling a little girl that she needs to sit back and let a boy be in charge because she is too intimidating.

In order for feminists to achieve the goal of total equality, people everywhere need to realize one thing: feminists don't want men to be subordinate. Feminists' only want one thing: equality. The only way for the movement to be successful is by standing up together and throwing away the double standards.

Feminism has turned into a dirty word and it shouldn't be. If you want equality, you are a feminist. You aren't being radical and you shouldn't be ashamed for saying you support the movement.

