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Boys will Boys: The Promise of the Good Life and the Inequalities it Forgot to Disclose

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It sounds quite wonderful when your mentors, teachers, parents, and professors tell you to pick a career for the pure enjoyment of it, rather than for the monetary benefit it may offer. They tell you to decide to dedicate your life to a job in which you will not feel like you are working a single day. It is all so poetic, so promising, that we want to believe it. I want to believe it. So, I decided to pursue a career in sports journalism. However, in college they tell you more of the realities that the dreamers forgot to mention. They clue you in on how you will spend many days on the road, with almost no sleep. They educate you on the amount of work you will actually have to do for free, the intense, unreasonable deadlines you will have to meet, and all of the coffee that will most likely have to be consumed. Yet, for some reason, every person who taught you about finding a career in either the most reality-censored or dream-oriented manner failed to mention that if you are a woman, you will have to deal with all of these nuisances in addition to utter mistreatment, harassment, and disrespect in your quest for a fulfilling career, especially a career in sports. As a society in which unequal treatment of women in the workplace has become so prevalent, it is our moral obligation to our sisters, mothers, aunts, wives, and friends to fight for the equality and respect of with women in one of the most treacherous terrains females must trench through-the male-dominated athletics.

Women in sports-related careers are continuously demeaned by viewers, ‘fans’, and even other athletes. They are constantly questioned on the knowledge of the topics they cover, or in the case of female athletes, their ability to perform at a high capacity. In an NFL press conference, Carolina Panthers quarterback, Cam Newton, chuckled smugly at female Charlotte Observer beat reporter Jourdan Rodrigue, after she asked a question regarding the game. He was quoted saying, “It’s funny to hear a female talk about routes” (Fowler, 2017). His connotation came with an undertone of sarcasm, suggesting that he believed it to be humorous that a female

was demonstrating knowledge of the game of football. His laughter signaled a level of belittlement that basically questioned her ability to comprehend something that females are apparently not supposed to comprehend. Cam Newton was unable to mask his predispositions to women and their place in this male domain; yet, most are not surprised by this because it seems to be so commonplace for people to agree with his degrading remarks.

The struggles extend much further than questionings of qualifications and knowledge. Women in athletic-based jobs also have to deal with varying levels of objectification and sexual harassment. In an article recently released by the Boston Globe, numerous ESPN female employees reported being sexually harassed by their male co-workers. Some of the men made comments about the bodies of their female counter-parts, their appearance, and their hopes of pursuing relationships with these women (Abelson & Faraoni, 2017). These females were there to do a job in which they were greatly outnumbered in terms of gender, but they faced awkward and difficult workplace situations because these perpetrators were never reprimanded. They felt as if they were not being taken seriously. To them, they were supposed to be evaluated on their ability to offer educated and valued opinions regarding games, athletes, contracts, and championships. Yet, instead they were being sexually objectified and identified with the shape of their body and the appeal of their face. The worst part is, this seems to be accepted. It seems to be okay. The company Barstool thrives off this degrading, this objectification of women, and the society laughs. They think its funny when they tell female reporters that the only reason they are tuning into Monday Night Football is to see them in their tight outfits, not to hear what they have to say.

In addition to demeaning remarks and instances of sexual harassment, women working in the sports related field face extreme inequalities in pay and incentives. These mismatched forms

of treatment extend even outside the broadcast booth as they make their way onto the fields of play as well. Patty Gasso, the head coach of the University of Oklahoma women's softball team has won the NCAA Division National Championship the past two years. Her salary increased to \$925,000, making her the highest paid coach in NCAA softball (Bailey, 2017). The University of Florida head baseball coach, Kevin O'Sullivan, won the NCAA Division 1 men's baseball National Championship in 2017. He gets paid \$1.25 million per year, and he is not even the highest paid coach in division 1 baseball (Caraviello, 2017). Patty Gasso is twice as successful and makes less due to the inequalities with women in sports.

It is difficult to comprehend that in a world where there was almost a women president, there still remains such gross mistreatment and inequalities within the workplace. But then, maybe the key to this is almost. America does not have a women president, just as it does not have a healthy area for women to thrive, demonstrate their knowledge, and promote their individual selves. And, the fact that this does not exist is an extreme moral dilemma that cannot be ignored anymore. If we as a society continue to sit back and just watch, if we continue to just be slightly uncomfortable with the way Barstool makes remarks about the reporters on Monday Night Football, and if we continue to realize that something does not feel right about the way Cam Newton smirked at Jourdan Rodrigue's question, then we are enabling. We submissively ceding to the idea that athletics are a male domain. We are telling our sons and daughters, peers and family that to converse in the topics of football and basketball, or to debate if LeBron James is more talented than Michael Jordan is only talk for the males.

It is strictly against our moral obligation to enable. It is in the deepest roots of all moral principles that we are to treat one another as we would hope to be treated. By stepping in and refusing to flow with the crowd of the boys who think that they have more rights, more power

than the female, is to fulfill your duty to yourself, your environment, and your society around you that can only advance with the resistance and strength of those wishing to defy the norms. If we wish to one day be like the parents, educators, dreamers, and realists pushed us to pursue our goals with the promise of loving the work you do, then we must strive to ensure that this promise is one of equality, respect, and dignity for people of all genders, races, ethnicities in all fields.

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