

Forum

SPITZER, SCANDALS, SENATORS

Sexism still prominent in today's society

CALLEY LATHROP

Staff Reporter

Women were given the right to vote in 1920. Over the next 50 years, many worked tirelessly to ensure women gained more rights in their male-dominated world. The issue hit home when, in 1972, Title IX, which prohibits discrimination in schools and in school athletics on the basis of gender, was passed. Many would like to say that women and men are equal today. On paper and in the mainstream, that is somewhat so, however, a close look at the issues we face today proves that all men and women are not treated equally.

Eliot Spitzer, former mayor of New York, recently resigned after it was leaked that he had been deeply involved in a prostitution ring. This was the epitome of hypocrisy as Spitzer spent much of his career fighting white collar crime and fraud. However, much of the negative attention was turned to his wife, and she received a great amount of scrutiny for "not taking care of her husband," as several analysts called it.

"When the wife does not focus in on the needs and feelings sexually, personally, to make him feel like a man, to make him feel like a success, to make him feel like her hero, he's very

susceptible to the charm of some other woman making him feel what he needs," Dr. Laura Schlessinger, psychiatrist and radio talk show host, said, in a Mar. 11 interview on "The Today Show." She was later asked by the host if Spitzer's wife should be to blame for her husband's

in our local media, as the front-page headline in *The Oregonian*, summarizing her visit to Portland, read: Clinton gushes over Oregon's green steps." Would a newspaper ever have used that description if it had been a male candidate's visit? I don't think so.

A majority of the victims of sexual harassment are women, and countless cases are seen at high schools and middle schools across the country. According to a musc.org survey, 83% of high-school students experience sexual harassment during their school careers. In the same

WLHS student said.

Personally, I do not agree with this statement, as women are often held to higher standards than their male counterparts, and often have to work harder to be accepted in roles that used to be reserved for men. I feel that some women are also sexist which only serves to reflect a segment of the society.

Whether standards in the workplace will be the same regardless of gender, who knows, but everyone should be entitled to that right and challenge. One thing is for sure: women are capable of any task a man is. Yes, physical strength must be addressed, but nothing should keep a woman from thriving and excelling in her workplace.

Don't stand for sexism in the workplace, the classroom or anywhere else. If you do feel discriminated against in a working environment because of your gender, then act. Talk to the person, whether it be an employer or co-worker so that they know their behavior is unacceptable.

There are laws against discrimination in the workplace, and don't hesitate to hold employers accountable for how you are treated. If you are ever harassed, sexually or otherwise, report it to someone: a teacher, friend, counselor or administrator. They can and will help you.

Look around. In many ways, this is a world that is dominated by men. That needs to change. In many places, women are not allowed to vote (like Kuwait, Taiwan and the United Arab Emirates), hold office, or even go outside without the accompaniment of a man, according to the United Nations Office at Geneva.

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promiscuity. "Yes, I hold women accountable for tossing out perfectly good men by not treating them with the love and kindness and respect and attention they need," Schlessinger said. The idea that women should sacrifice their own needs to protect a man's ego is outrageous.

For the first time in our country, a woman has a good chance of becoming a front-runner in the presidential campaign. However, this has not come without criticism: Hillary Clinton has been described as "too tough," or, conversely, "too tender" to run the country. She has been wrongly characterized

Some of Clinton's critics say that, if she becomes president, her husband, former President Bill Clinton, will really run the show. Why? Because he's a man? I have heard this from several other students, and the idea is ridiculous. This implies that in a household, the men have the control. This "man of the house" concept was one that should have died long ago. Sen. Clinton is formidable; she's proved that time and time again. I don't think she would allow any man to be on the top of her totem pole.

Sexual harassment, which stems from sexism, also shows its ugly head quite frequently, even at West Linn High School.

"I was in a PE class, going about business as usual when all of a sudden, completely by surprise, I felt a sharp hit against my bosom. I was taken completely aghast. Only minutes after touching my chest, the same boy slapped me on my bottom. I was humiliated. He had taken away my dignity and pride as a woman and turned it into an atrocious feeling of self-loathing and grief," an anonymous female WLHS student said. Although the administration is very firm about sexual harassment and maintains strict rules, some male students still consider these inappropriate acts to be acceptable.

survey, 56% of males reported abuse sometime in middle or high-school as well. Sexual harassment comes from a lack of respect for victims, often women, and in many cases this is really a lack of respect for women in general.

Another issue in our society is that of discrimination in the workplace. Whether women are capable of carrying out the same tasks of men is sometimes debated. However, no employer has the right to tell their employee, woman or man, that they cannot hold a certain position or carry out a certain task.

"I work very closely with men, and if anything, we are held to lower standards that we abide by. If women were held to the same standards as men, they would wish that they weren't. Personally, women have it easy; if they whine, moan and complain about it, I say that they should be made to do everything a man does. Unless women as a whole are willing to start working harder, sexism will always exist," an anonymous female

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