

# EQUALITY

In order to reach the goal of equality, everyone must accept each other as equals. People should be treated with respect no matter what gender they are born into or how they identify themselves. Equal opportunities should be available for everyone- including you.

## Q&A: With Laura Dawn

**Q. How would you define feminism?**  
A. The belief that all people should have equal rights under the law including the right to fair pay and to bodily autonomy.

**Q. What do you think are the misconceptions of feminism?**  
A. The idea that feminism is some kind of man hating thing, which is just ridiculous.

**Q. Why do you think people have misconceptions of feminism?**  
A. We've always lived in a patriarchy and it's normalized inequality. Our perceptions are skewed and representation matters. For instance, when I was young, I never saw a doctor that was a woman until I was in college. My 3 year old daughter met a male doctor for the first time this year and said, "That can't be the doctor! Doctors are girls!" So when culture changes, sometimes painfully, it enlarges our sense of "normal".

**Q. What do you think should be the solution to end gender inequality?**  
A. I would advocate that each state has two Senators and that it should be one man and one woman. I believe we need to literally change the power structure to make sure women are included. We are over 51% of the population, made up 53% of all voters in the last election, and yet still make up only 19.4% of congress? This greatly affects what laws we pass and what we value as a society.

**Q. What advice would you give someone to help empower them to make a change?**  
A. Get involved. Being loud about being a feminist and demand a culture and a government that values women. Better yet: run for office yourself.

## A man's plea to feminism

by junior Caleb McCullough.

I am a feminist to the core. I support the equal treatment of women under the law and in society, and I recognize where there are still injustices.


However, I see a danger in certain branches of feminism today. There seems to be a push in by some feminists to bring men down in order to lift women up. Too many times have I seen women claiming to be "feminists" lumping men together under stereotypes, demasculinizing and delegitimizing males in an attempt to feel a sense of superiority.

I believe this is a minority, but a loud minority. It is through this movement that I see young men my age getting a warped perception

of feminism, and why I think so many young people don't believe in it. And how could they?

When they feel victimized and objectified, lumped into a generality, how is that a movement they could get behind? In the pursuit of equality, radical feminists are turning away what could be some of the greatest allies of the movement: Men.

The reality is that for women and men to be equal, men also must be valued and respected. The feminism that I believe in advocates the equal treatment and value of men AND women in society. The solution is obvious: communication. Communication must be held between men and women, between feminists and anti feminists, between radical and moderate. Through more communication and a better understanding of what feminism actually is, I believe a peace can be found, and equality can be achieved.



**Meet Laura Dawn**

Dawn is a political activist and music/documentary producer in New York City. She has directed and been involved in many campaigns and organizations such as MoveOn.org and Art Not War. Dawn is a 1988 graduate from Pleasantville, a 1A school in south central Iowa.

photos courtesy of Laura Dawn

Political activist Laura Dawn teaches the importance of feminism to her 5year old daughter Mona.

### "How would you define feminism?"

People who favor females more than males.  
-anonymous male junior

When people stand up for women's rights.  
-anonymous female freshman

Women believing they need to be treated better than men.  
-anonymous female senior

Girls wanting more gender equality.  
-anonymous female sophomore

### Laura Dawn's thoughts on EQUALITY & feminism

Laura Dawn well said, Angie Aker. Judging other women is not in my definition of feminism. Elevating ALL women to equality and power IS. :)  
March 2, 2013 at 10:14am · Like · 1

Laura Dawn female leadership, more feminine values of communication, cooperation and collaboration! more women sharing power with men can save us all. I believe it.  
3 · April 13 at 5:46pm

LauraDawnARTNOTWAR @LauraDawnANW · May 25  
The key to building equal partnerships at home: paternity leave

LauraDawnARTNOTWAR @LauraDawnANW · Feb 6  
We act as if work is optional for women. It's not.

What do you think should be the solution to end gender inequality?

If you don't want gender inequality, don't make exceptions for a certain gender.  
-junior Garrison Thompson

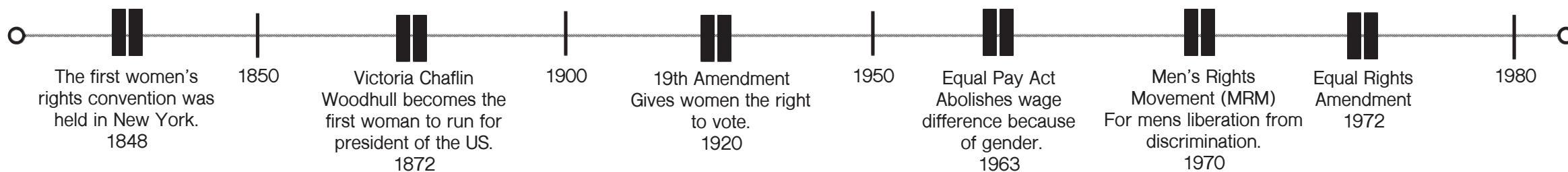
Make transgendered bathrooms.  
-freshman Jake Hoppes

Stop everything that compares guys to girls.  
-freshman Harley Schley

A strong woman in power.  
-sophomore Becca Entiken

People should learn that there are differences & that that should be respected.  
-senior Alicia Zuck

Inform them by using data to back up that their "problems" are not a problem.  
-senior Noah Haack



## Equality for all.

by junior Abby Lashbrook.

Equal. It's a simple, five-letter word, but do we all really know what it means? Maybe to you, it's splitting a cookie, and you and your friend each get an equal half, no one getting less than nor more than the other? It's fair. It's equal.

Shouldn't this apply to other things that, I don't know, actually matter? Isn't that what we should strive for when thinking of how we treat each other- that neither gender is less than nor more than each other? They are fair. They are equal. Sadly, in our society today, not everyone thinks in that way- or at least not everyone wants to.

It's 2016, 53 years after President John F. Kennedy passed the Equal Rights Act which guaranteed equal pay for equal work, yet women are still being paid less than men. On average, women are being paid 80 cents less per dollar that every man earns. Keep in mind that more than 60% of college students are women as well as women earning the majority of master's degrees and doctorates. Women don't need more than and they don't deserve less than; they just need to be treated fair and equal.

Clearly it's an issue for men, too. For instance, if a man and a woman committed the same crime, statistics show the man's sentence would be longer. Does this sound fair to you? Women also get full custody of their children 86% of the time in court. Is this because women are supposed to be the most nurturing parent after all?

Family leave in the workplace isn't equitable either. Females are granted leave when having a child to not only heal from giving childbirth but to bond with the child; men are not. When does the father get time to bond with the child? Every other Saturday? In the pursuit of equality for women, men are being stripped of their rights as well.

The equality for genders shouldn't just end with men and women. It should extend to those who are anything from transgender, to bigender, to agender, to any gender. All genders should be treated equally and have the same opportunities.

We shouldn't close the doors on those who some think don't fit into their standards of what our identities should be. Equality isn't about being equal in every way, it's about seeing each other as equal members of society and giving everyone the opportunities they earn and deserve.