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English 1121

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Unit 1: Discourse Community Writing Assignment

“Same Script, Different Cast”

Burridge, Marlee. “The pay gap in women's sports”. 2018. “The public needs to know that female athletics are just as important as male athletics. Without this understanding, the sports world will continue to justify the pay gap and other inequalities”. It’s astonishing that in modern day society we’re continuously feeding the narrative of women not having enough value in the workplace. We as a country often selfishly retreat from topics that seem somewhat taboo on the surface in order to satisfy our current circumstances but truthfully everybody has their own opinions and agendas on everything. On one hand, you have most people just waiting on the perfect storm to pass so they can finally reveal their closeted thoughts and I’m sorry in advance for squandering your moment but the storm is NOT coming. It’s like the old adage most of you have heard before and come to live by “you can think it but don’t say it”. I’m not saying this doesn’t have it’s truths but to use it as an escape mechanism every time you feel compelled to speak up about something, takes away from the ongoing battle WE fight. Now, obviously you should hold true to that sentiment sometimes, like when your dad asks you if you liked his home cooking or if your mom asks if you WANT to

accompany her to the local grocery store on a Saturday morning .Rightfully so, there are certain instances like in the case of social issues where you SHOULD speak out even when your position isn't what the general consensus aligns with. Today, my goal is to certainly reach those that are afraid to speak out, reassure those that do, and hopefully change the minds of some. I'm going to firstly give you a list of what social issues are not, just so you can have an idea of what soil we're digging into. Social issues are NOT easily solved, emotionless, politically neutral, one sided, or any ONE person's fault. To understand any issue whether it be socially motivated or not you must first start from the beginning like you would with any good investigation. As we look back to the commencement of society women have ALWAYS been treated as inferior to men. It's not an opinion or made up story, it's our history. From intense discrimination and lack of legal rights to little or no independence from their husbands, society has long viewed women as being less than fully human. Therefore, it shouldn't come as a surprise to anyone that this lingering mentality has had such an economic impact on how women fit into a society that not long ago undervalued their usefulness. Historically speaking women in the early 1800's had few civil rights and could not own property, vote or sign contracts which essentially rendered them legally non existence apart from their husbands. These truths unfortunately have a significant impact on today's disparities in compensation between men and women. Specifically in the sports world we see these unjust figures exemplified, according to data collected in the past year "most players in the U.S. Women's Soccer Team – the No. 1 women's soccer team in the world – gets paid "as little as 40%" of those in the U.S. Men's Soccer Team". Not

only are women unjustly compensated they are blatantly excluded from representation, in fact “only 18 percent of board members were women across the 28 international sports federations, and this percentage has been static from 2014 to 2016”. So I’m begging the question, why is there little to no female representation in these governing boards? This sounds awfully similar to the tactics implored through the beginning of society which helped keep women from having basic legal rights. Ask yourselves, if women can’t even get onto the boards of these organizations, then how can we expect change? Again, men dominate the female sports world. I know some of you may ask “why does she care so much” but you should ask instead why do I care so little and if YOU are a part of the problem? You see when I was about eleven years old I remember telling my mom that nursing was the career path I wanted to choose. As I looked into the specifics I found out that male nurses were paid significantly more than female ones. Baffled and not believing what I saw a quick question flew out my mouth. Mom, why do female nurses get paid less than the male ones, even though they went through the same amount of schooling and worked just as hard? She did not have a clear answer for me. From that moment forward I recognized that there can be something outside a person's control that affects your merits that doesn't have to do with how well you perform or how long you've been with a company and it's your gender. Gender inequality in the workforce is a problem that needs solving and women deserve to receive equal compensation. In the case of women athletics the S.W.A (The senior woman administrator is the highest-ranking female in each NCAA athletics department or conference office) proposes higher ticket prices simply because “studies show men’s

teams are thought to be better as the tickets to their games cost more... combined with the public's assumption that the price of a product reflects its value leads to an imbalance". This proposal by the S.W.A of balancing ticket prices helps break the stigma of women's sports being less valued than men's and increases their revenue. As more efforts like these gain traction the pay gap will continue to shrink and so will our society's perpetuated public perception on women's athletics. You must not leave without this understanding, the sports world along with society will continue to justify the pay gap and other inequalities if people like you and I don't step up for the future generations. WE must continue to fight for women in this country even if the problem doesn't directly affect you. Our constitution was written with this idea of equality as its foundation and we MUST fully extend that right to women in all of the same aspects that have largely favored men. As I wrap things up I'll leave you with a quote that ties into what I said earlier about most people just sitting around and waiting for a sign to appear before assuming the role of a free/groundbreaking character.

"One of the great liabilities of history is that all too many people fail to remain awake through great periods of social change.

Every society has its protectors of status quo and it's fraternities of the indifferent who are notorious for sleeping through revolutions.

Today, our very survival depends on our ability to stay awake, to adjust to new ideas, to remain vigilant and to face the challenge of change." MLK

So, I ask if not now, then when? Are YOU a face that inspires change or a protector of status quo? The answer ladies and gentlemen lies within.

Thank you for your time today everybody.