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Controversy Over The Slut Walk Movement

Choosing a topic for this research paper was very difficult for me at first. There were numerous articles I’ve read to this day that sparked an interest in me. I find it hard to believe I am the only student that was stumped with this, but considering my questioning nature I found myself struggling. One day in my English Composition course my professor had the class watch a video called “Potty-Mouthed Princesses Drop F-Bombs”. At first I was shocked watching young girls younger than eleven years old using that type of language. My professor asked the entire class what we all thought about the video. Of course everyone was surprised, but one student’s comments made me livid. He mostly stated that it was a terrible video, and he thinks it was a terrible way of showing Feminism. After I showed it to my family and friends when I returned home, I realized how great this video really is. This video lead my interest to find a movement called “Slut Walk”. So now I find myself wondering, how would Feminist and Anti-Feminist view this type of a movement?

There are plenty of methods I will use to gather information for this research paper. So far I have looked up first, what really is Feminism? That question is a paper in itself, considering there are numerous definitions, viewpoints, and thoughts. In contrast I searched the internet for Anti-Feminist view points. This was most interesting to me considering before I actually researched Anti-Feminism and what it’s all about, I had preconceived thoughts for myself that these women must be completely sexist towards their own sex! Lastly I read numerous articles pertaining to the “Slut Walk” and how Anti-Feminist and Feminist may view this controversial movement.

The main place I searched for information for this research paper was of course the internet. First I started by using Google and simply typing in “How do Feminist and Anti-Feminist view the “Slut Walk”. The number of articles that came up were amazing. I proceeded to write down any quotes I found pertaining to the movement by either the Feminist or Anti-Feminist. I have about two pages full just of quotes I found. Then I narrowed the articles down to how Feminist in particular viewed the “Slut Walk”, and how it was viewed on the other side of the fence. Also while in class, I had asked a few other students what they thought about the “Slut Walk” and it’s name, and everything that it symbolized. I didn’t find this method to be too successful because first, not many of the students knew what the movement was. Secondly, considering I had to explain it to them myself, I felt like I unknowingly put my own thoughts into their head which lead to them saying they felt the same way I did. Lastly, after watching “Potty-Mouthed Princesses Drop F-Bombs” I decided to post on my Weebly account about the “Slut Walk” in particular. I had received a comment on this post from someone in my class saying “I wonder if this name caused any issues for certain people. I think it would be good to go into more detail about this in your essay”. And there it was, my final push to decide on my topic that I feel so strongly about.

Feminism is defined by organized activity in support of women’s rights and interests "Feminism." *Merriam-Webster.com*. Merriam-Webster, n.d. Web. 3 Dec. 2014. <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/feminism>. Feminist Sarkeesian writes that Slut Walk is defined as a movement to end slut-shaming and victim blaming. Her article “Feminist Frequency” stated, “Slut Walk has become a mini movement that was originally conceived in Toronto in response to a police officer who claimed that women should stop dressing like sluts to avoid assult.” (Sarkeesian, 2011) When I first read this statement, I was completely disgusted. To think that someone that is supposed to be protecting you from harm would say something so disrespectful is quite disturbing. And the fact that this officer put all women in one category being, “sluts” is wrong. I can see why the movement was created out of this action, and it’s upsetting that someone that is thought of so highly saying this, is what pushed the “Slut Walk” to be created. Sarkeesian also writes, “I have been quite vocal in my little internet space about my strong dislike for SlutWalk, for the name and for the unstrategic organizing which sadly, seems to ignores the systemic and institutional issues of rape culture, victim blaming and well, radical feminism.” (Sarkeesian, 2011) When I first heard of Slut Walk, this was the first thing I questioned. Why would the girls whom are sadly a part of the rape statistics, call themselves sluts?

Anti-Feminist critique Slut Walk by stating, “yet another example of the neoliberal mantra of personal responsibility which promises achievement for women, but has resulted in pushing them back into the kitchen.” This author also writes that Barack Obama told the graduates of a historically black liberal arts college that using the slavery and segregation card is not an excuse for not following through with what will make you successful. (Phipps, 2014) Overall I inferred that Phipps is basically saying, take responsibility for what happens and if you’re not happy with something, do something about it and don’t blame anyone. I can completely appreciate what she is saying and I completely agree with her 100%. Although I see her viewpoint, I think that cannot be compared to slut-shaming and victim blaming in any way. Phipps also mentions “in the words of a Women Against Feminism member, “I don’t need feminism because… I am a victim of nothing but my own bad choices”. I beg to differ – the neoliberal logic of personal responsibility is why we need feminism now more than ever.”

"Feminism." *Merriam-Webster.com*. Merriam-Webster, n.d. Web. 3 Dec. 2014. <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/feminism>.

Sarkeesian, Anita, and Jonathan McIntosh. "Link Round Up: Feminist Critiques Of Slut Walk." *Feminist Frequency*. N.p., 16 May 2011. Web. 2 Dec. 2014.

Phipps, Allison. ""I Am a Victim of Nothing but My Own Bad Choices": Women Against Feminism and Neoliberal Individualism."*Contemporary UK Feminism*. N.p., 5 Aug. 2014. Web. 02 Dec. 2014.