



Feminism and femininity are not mutually exclusive. It is misogynistic to suggest that they are.

Sadly, women have learned to be ashamed and apologetic about pursuits that are seen as traditionally female, such as fashion and makeup.

But our society does not expect men to feel ashamed of pursuits considered generally male — sports cars, certain professional sports.

In the same way, men's grooming is never suspect in the way women's grooming is — a well-dressed man does not worry that, because he is dressed well, certain assumptions might be made about his intelligence, his ability, or his seriousness.

A woman, on the other hand, is always aware of how a bright lipstick or a carefully-put-together outfit might very well make others assume her to be frivolous.



We say to girls “You can have ambition, but not too much. You should aim to be successful but not too successful, otherwise you will threaten the man. If you are the breadwinner in your relationship with a man, pretend you are not, especially in public, otherwise you will emasculate him.”

Because I am female, I am expected to aspire to marriage. I am expected to make my life's choices always keeping in mind that marriage is the most important. Marriage can be a good thing, a source of joy, love and mutual support. But why do we teach girls to aspire to marriage, yet we don't teach boys to do the same?

We are all social beings. We internalize ideas from our socialization.



Because human beings lived then in a world in which physical strength was the most important attribute for survival, the physically stronger person was more likely to lead.

And men in general are physically stronger. (There are of course many exceptions.)

Today, we live in a vastly different world.

The person more qualified to lead is not the physically stronger person. It is the more intelligent, the more knowledgeable, the more creative, more innovative.

And there are no hormones for those attributes. A man is as likely as a woman to be intelligent, innovative, creative. We have evolved.

But our ideas of gender have not evolved very much.



Gender matters everywhere in the world. And I would like today to ask that we begin to dream about and plan for a different world. A fairer world. A world of happier men and happier women who are truer to themselves. And this is how to start: We must raise our daughters differently. We must also raise our sons differently.