

OPINION & EDITORIAL

Editorial

Over the course of my primary education, I was never concerned about my status as a female member of the population. No one else really cared either and I don't feel that they viewed me in any different way.

Only this year did begin to feel inferior to the male sex. I must say that I am not a bra burning feminist. Just because a girl plays baseball (not softball) or rugby, doesn't sit back and accept her fate as a member of the weaker sex, and doesn't cry every time she breaks a nail, this does not classify her under the category of a bra burning feminist. I will admit that I am a feminist, though I do advocate the equality of all peoples, not just women.

Until this year, I have not felt unequal. I also accept the fact that, in some ways, people can never be totally equal. I, because of my bone structure and 'feminine' build, can never be as strong as my fiancé. I can, however, show my equality in sports, like baseball or soccer, in the business world and through academics. Like I have already said, up until this year, I have felt nothing but equal on all aspects.

I grew up with my brother and his friends, who were all boys, and all older. When I was young, there weren't any kids my age in the neighborhood so I got stuck hanging out with them instead of playing with dolls. I learned how to be a good baseball player and a tough little girl. I felt accepted and I was never taunted because of my sex. I had no reason to feel inferior to males.

I mean, if you take a look at how women and men think, there is an obvious difference. Most men often think more about sex in one day than I would in a year. Men often feel a need to show off their strength in various crazy ways. Men also may be more emotionally stable (at least in some cases and at least on the surface). Women, on the other hand, are weaker and some express their femininity in weird ways. For example, my cousin once sat in front of a mirror for an hour, curling her hair. I kind of ignored her and was totally disgusted when she decided to wash it out

and then straighten it, after she had finished curling all of her hair. This was all in an afternoon's work for her. Some women are strange in some ways. I would never spend more than ten minutes on my hair unless someone else was doing it for me and even then, I don't think so.

My point with all this - people are different. Not just because of their sex, just because they were brought up differently, or because they have weird genes. I would have to say that my brother spends more time on his hair than I usually do. Oh yes, and men - women do not typically take longer to get ready. Face it - you guys spend a lot of time in the bathroom yourselves.

Throughout high school I didn't feel inferior; I was on the Student's Council and I had my say and was listened to and respected when respect was due. Even in class here at university, I do not feel inferior. Maybe it is because I am not paying attention to what people are saying or maybe the only reason that I feel respected in class is because there is a professor who is sitting in the classroom, silently encouraging people not to speak when I speak.

Lately, I have noticed that people around the office have a tendency to speak when I am trying to address the room yet they won't do that when a male is speaking. No, I am not whining about it - I am just surprised that I finally noticed what many other females are talking about. Men generally don't accept women who are in positions of authority.

Why? Well, our equipment is rather different, men are sometimes stronger and, oh yeah, men have always controlled the power.

This realization that I do not have much respect when I hold a position of authority discouraged me at first. I also tend to believe that the old way is not always the best way. Now, my inferiority, whether imagined or real, is more of a challenge, something else to overcome.

• Cindy Brown

Mugwump: A Rant

"Hey! What's up?!"

"Not much. What's up with you?"

"Not much."

... Sound familiar? It should. That's a standard code of greeting that draws on the following logic: *I can see you; you can see me; we have interacted before; we do not hate each other; we ought to show recognition for each other; we are within earshot of each other; so waving is not adequate; it is proper to show an interest in another person's life.* I think that it's safe to assume that every student on campus, who is reasonably experienced in Canadian-American slang, and falls between the ages of 17 and 26, has been in, or observed, exactly this pseudo-conversation, consisting of exactly these words, taking place as the participants walk by each other, and ending at that.

OK. So what?

Exactly: so what? I am not trying

to draw attention to the awful slang involved, and what some would call the horrible misuse of the English language that characterizes contemporary youth discourse. Rather, I seek to point out that a greeting consisting of a simple "hi" no longer seems adequate. More often, its: "hi, how are ya?," or something like that. All people are expected to behave in something like this way, and most of us do. Moreover, and perhaps more importantly, when we initiate interaction with others in this way, asking our friends or acquaintances how they are getting along, we often haven't actually considered the fact of whether or not we care. I am convinced that this is the case.

At the same time, the set of questions used to ask a person how she/he is doing are so standard, and the interaction so expected, that people sometimes give the wrong

answer to the question. I have seen, or rather, heard this too many times. For example, one person will say: "Hey, how's it going?," and the answer will be: "Not much ... what's up with you?" But I doubt that I notice it every time that it happens.

So let's say, for the sake of my argument, that this does happen. Is there actually something wrong with it? Does it indicate a serious misuse of the English language by most of us, and predict its further decadence? Let's say that it does. Is it, then, be possible for people to give it up? Arguably not. Conversations not initiated in this way seem awkward. People that cut from a quick hi to the chase, in a conversation, are seen as rude and/or abrupt.

What's up with that?

• Patryk Reid



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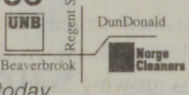
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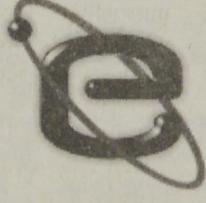
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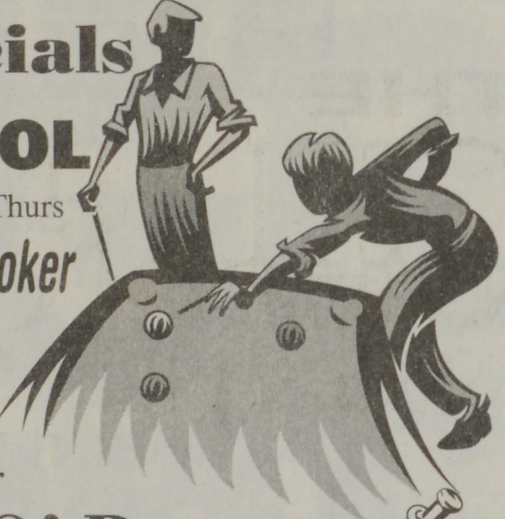
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