

Sexual Inequality and The Adverse Impacts on Women

Introduction

Sexual inequality could be defined in a variety of ways and I am going to focus on how women experience inequality in sexual interactions with men while also taking into account women's condition of inequality is not limited to just this. These inequalities are credited to the societal gender norms that oppress women and have been widely tolerated by women, reinforced by society, and leave a negative impact on women. The objectification of women, sex in heterosexual relationships, and slut-shaming and victim blaming are contributions to the harmful effects that sexual inequality has on women.

Gender Inequality

Gender inequality affects women in a variety of ways including the pay gap, education, job opportunities, politics, and survival (Hazel & Kleyman, 2020).

Although women's rights have made great strides in history there still stands the unequal treatment of men and women in less obvious ways.

"This is how many men affirm, with *quasi* good faith, that women *are* equal to men and have no demands to make, and *at the same time* that women will never be equal to men and that their demands are in vain." (Simone De Beauvoir, 35).

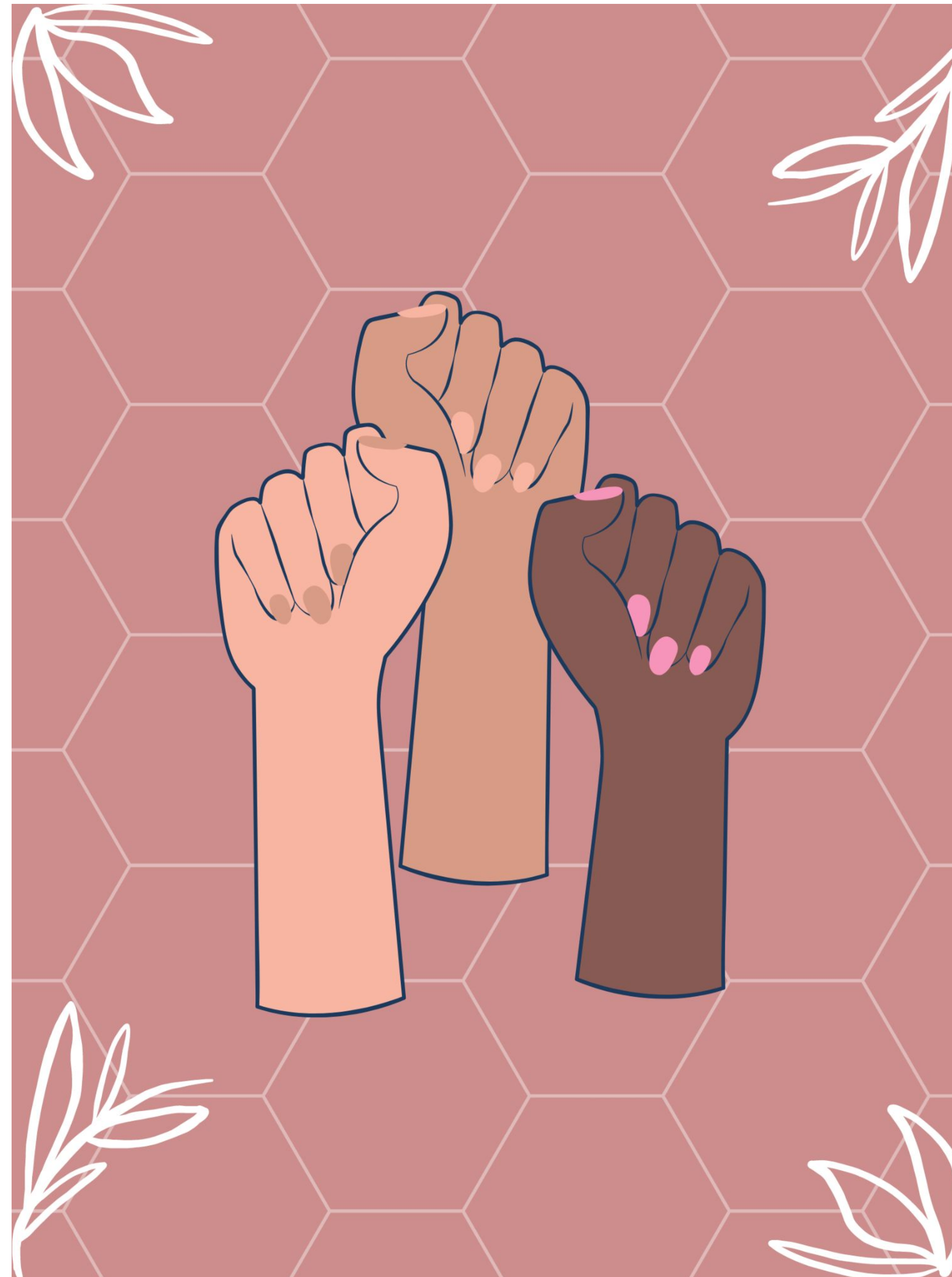
Objectification Of Women

"Female sexuality has always been conceptualized on the basis of masculine parameters" (Luce Irigaray, 23).

The objectification of women could be described as women being looked at for their body parts and seen as a sexualized being, rather than who they are as people (Bernard et. al., 2016).

One study found that "viewing sexually objectifying media contributes to evaluating a harassed female as more to blame" and that the levels of "self-objectification" in men and women may also affect their perception of sexual harassment (higher levels of self-objectification would create more tolerance towards sexual harassment) (Bernard et. al., 2016).

Self-objectification is described as "the internalization of an observers' perspective on one's physical appearance," (Bernard et. al., 2016). This self-objectification is a result of the toxic media of women and gender inequalities in society.



Sexual Interactions in Heterosexual Relationships

A study that investigated the "women's orgasm and sexual enjoyment in hookups and relationships" found that while women were putting in many efforts to give their hookup partner pleasure, "both men and women reported that men are typically not concerned with women's pleasure in hookups" (Armstrong et. al., 2012).

Along with this, there are other dangers that befall heterosexual relationships such as: intimate partner violence, rape, sexual assault, and toxic work environments (Hazel & Kleyman, 2020; Rich, 1980).

Slut-Shaming and Victim Blaming

In sexual interactions, women are typically shamed for their behaviors and this is something that can start at a young age and continue into adulthood.

Miller (2016) studied high schoolers and sexual drama. The study found that all the participants had struggled with some type of drama, but it was girls that were spreading the rumors about their sexual actions.

The girls were gossiping about what "they are not supposed to do, what they are not supposed to say, and what 'kind of girl' they are not supposed to be" (Miller, 2016).

Loughman et. al. investigated "sexual objectification and rape victim blaming" and found that the victim who was "objectified" was blamed more in a sexual assault/rape compared to the "nonobjectified victim" and that people believed that "objectified victim" suffered less. (Loughnan et. al., 2013). These results indicate that due to the objectification of women, people will blame the victim in sexual assault.

"What were you wearing?", "How much did you drink?", "Were you asking for it?"

Conclusion

Sexual inequality is something that has had adverse impacts on women in society of all ages. The objectification of women, sexual situations in heterosexual relationships, and slut shaming and victim blaming are just a handful of the experiences that demonstrate how women are not unconditionally treated with respect in sexual interactions and in their daily lives.

References

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