

Misogyny

Misogyny is an extreme form of sexism that is often defined as the hatred of women. A person with misogynistic beliefs may not be aware that they are demonstrating a hatred towards women — or even believe that they hate women — but their behaviour and words expose prejudice, disdain of, or hostility to women.

In societies where misogyny is prevalent, there are often high rates of violence towards women. Women may be seen as property or second-class citizens, and mistreated at both the individual and institutional level as a result. For example, a police officer may tell a woman who is abused by a spouse (individual level) that they won't bring charges against her husband because it's a family matter (institutional level). Other views of misogyny define it as a way of controlling or punishing women who challenge male dominance.

Misogyny is also inextricably linked to many other forms of violence, particularly gender-based violence such as domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking. When a person feels hatred or disdain towards women generally, it becomes that much easier to commit violence against them.

An individual with a misogynistic worldview may view the women in their life as property, and harshly control them. They may also react with anger if a woman does not give them what they feel entitled to, such as sex or romantic love, which may result in sexual assault, physical violence, or even homicide.

Each of us has a role to play. Men can be allies, through their everyday actions women and can push back on the type of internalised misogyny that often limits our ability to support other women. We can all support girls and boys to help them grow into healthy, emotionally mature adults, with a particular focus on helping boys move beyond gender stereotypes that may harm them or that may cause them to develop misogynistic beliefs (like telling them that "boys don't cry" or "you throw like a girl").

Resources:

Get it right for the girls

What does Misogyny look like?

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/03/08/style/misogyny-women-history-photographs.html>

12 Ways to spot a misogynist

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/gb/blog/the-mysteries-love/201502/12-ways-spot-misogynist>