

WHEN DOUBLE DOESN'T MEAN MORE OR BETTER

When you hold different people to different sets of standards, you may be guilty of perpetuating double standards. Many double standards involve men and women. Consider the ones below. What do you think about them? Which ones have you noticed in your own life?

Family: Parents are often more “protective” of daughters and enforce stricter rules on them for curfews, dating, and driving than they do for sons. (Have you noticed this in your life?)

Appearance: In some cultures, women and girls are expected to be thin and youthful, while boys and men are not. (What is the standard in your culture? Do you think you will ever feel pressure to color your hair or turn to plastic surgery to look younger?)

Age: It is routinely accepted that men date women considerably younger than they are. But when women date younger men, they are sometimes mocked or called “cougars,” as if they are attacking innocent cubs. (Do you feel that’s fair? What name would you give to men who date younger women?)

Career: Despite the passing of the Equal Pay Act, women in the United States today still earn only about 80 cents for every dollar earned by a man doing the same job. (What could you do to ensure that you are paid what you’re worth when you enter the workforce?)

In the 2008 election year, two women ran high-profile campaigns: Sarah Palin and Hillary Clinton. Many people pointed out double standards and sexism that affected the media coverage. To find out more, try doing an online search for articles and videos analyzing the coverage.

And while you’re at it, take a look at how much sports coverage of women your local news provides, compared to the coverage of men!