

International Women's Day

On issues related to socialization, we are questioning whether women are born women or whether they learn to be women. Well, women are the ones who do the bulk of raising and educating children. Therefore, it is largely their responsibility to socialize boys and girls to be non-sexist.

Women's maternal role is very important. Before women go out into society to work and become deputies, they must play their role as mothers for what it contributes to society.

I would like to object to what someone said about the Arabic usage of the word woman versus the English usage of the word. In the Bible, women were created out of men's rib. So even in English, the word woman is used in a certain pejorative way, I would say.

I would like to talk about psychological violence most men have against women and most women have against each other. In my opinion, many women are out of professional fields because in one way or another, it affects their self-esteem and makes them think less of themselves.

In my opinion no one can achieve equality, freedom and liberty if he/she does not make it. Men are not going to give it to us if we do not ask for it and earn it. On another level, if we want to be really honest with ourselves, and identify what is really restricting us then we have to admit that it is our religions, not civil laws. We have to stop pretending! Who, here, can deny that men cannot have four wives?

I want to question what women's liberation really means. If women's liberation means we must become men, then I refuse to be liberated. I am not prepared to have two men in my house, me and my husband. We

must speak of human rights and human development, be it women or men.

Religious laws in the country are restrictive. But to do anything about women's liberation we must begin with civil laws.

There isn't one gender that is more important than the other. Both men and women are equally important, and therefore it is a matter of respect. Women must accept themselves and liberate themselves first. When women achieve that, men will automatically treat them accordingly. It is not a question of challenging our culture, but ourselves. Women have to become serious to be taken seriously.

Religion does not force women to do the dishes and the cooking. It does not deny them work and development.

We want equal rights first, and then we can decide what we want to do with our lives, i.e. whether we want to be liberated or not.

We must separate religion from politics. We ask that Lebanon ratify the Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women.

When we ask for our rights, we should also be aware of our duties and obligations. Many Lebanese women are not aware of neither their duties nor their rights, either because of excessive wealth or excessive poverty.

Young women say they want to do a lot of things and achieve a lot of goals but in reality they spend their lives waiting for a husband.

Men are proud of their sexual experiences and women are ashamed. This is not fair. Lebanon is in the reconstruction

process, and it is a very big chance that young women should take advantage of, to assert themselves and prove themselves. It is not too late. In our country it has just begun for us.

There is a difference between religious theories and actual practices. Someone said that in Islamic religion, a woman is not forced to serve the man a cup of tea if she does not want to. Well I don't think that in practice the man will just respect her decision if she doesn't serve him.

Men ruled the world for five thousand years, it is the turn of women to rule it for the five maybe ten thousand years.

It is a shame that in a university like BUC, there are very few men who support and defend the women's cause.

Why do we care about religion when we are all born equal? It might have been said in religion that women are made out of the rib of a man. But I was born from the womb of a woman. My sister is a woman, my mother is a woman and my daughter will be a woman. If I am going to have respect for myself, I should respect these women to whom I belong. There are a lot of strong women here who speak of themselves as being inferior. Why do you maintain this inferior position? You should be strong as a person, because there isn't a man and a woman, we are all humans.

Boys can go out and have more freedom and rights than girls. Our society is as such, this is what our society says.

I am a man, and I have been listening to you. Please explain to me what are the rights that you do not have? •