

The Tree Bees

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Racial discrimination is a social injustice that I don't see on campus but I know that it happens on campus. Racial discrimination is something that is hard to see but it can be all around you. We have had many instances where professors treat students of color differently than white students and last semester, we had a professor use inappropriate language that disrespected every person of color in the classroom. This issue impacts all students of color on our campus. It impacts their mental states and self esteem. Racial discrimination matters to me because it is such a large problem in the world and at college's that needs to stop.

Here on our campus, there have been many walkouts having to do with race and injustice led by our Office of Diversity and inclusion. I can start being more engaged with this issue by attending these walkouts and fighting for change at my school. There have also been mandatory seminars that faculty and staff have had to sit through that focus on discrimination and stopping it.

Racial discrimination isn't something new and it isn't just located in one area of the world. This is something that has been happening for years all over the world. People of color from all over the world can tell you of instances where they were discriminated against because of the color of their skin. This should not be happening! The color of your skin should not determine the way that people are allowed to treat you. Everyone deserves to be treated with respect and this is something that I truly believe.

Another social injustice that I have observed on campus is sexism, specifically from the Republican Club within the last week. They recently held a "change my mind" event, where they talked about controversial topics and shut down any audience member that tried to argue with them. They were prepared with facts and propaganda to skew beliefs and to make themselves look better, smarter, and most importantly, right. Since then they have had a "bake sale" to support the club, with cupcakes that said pro life on them. This is a club that consists of only men (that I have seen). To have this happening on campus impacts all of the women here. It matters because students should be able to go to class without getting a message of pro life quite literally shoved down their throat.

I have become engaged and active around these issues by keeping myself aware of what is happening and support my fellow students and women in the face of men telling us what to do with our bodies. Although I was working last week and could not participate with the group that stood in solidarity against their event, I still

was receiving updates from my friends who were there and sending them lots of love. At Champlain we have a Women's and Gender Center and the Office of Diversity and Inclusion. These are groups that help to stand up for minorities on campus and are places to go to when we see things like this happening that make students feel unsafe.

These both are issues within our local community and campus life that link to injustices happening globally. Sexism and racism are prevalent social injustices that affect women and people of color every single day. Women are being silenced, told what they can and can not do, being put down, raped, passed over for jobs, and killed all over the world. Black men are being shot in the street just for daring to exist. Women of color are the least likely to be taken seriously in hospitals, and the most likely to be killed during pregnancy. These facts are not just a coincidence. Sexism and racism is killing people in the world and until we can recognize and put a stop to this social injustice, this will just keep continuing. We have to start at the local scale, though, and fight for our rights within our college campuses and communities, and I am working toward doing that by standing up for what I believe in. I believe women. I believe people of color. I believe that we will rise.