

Women and STEM by Sara O'Hare

Gender in the US is something that is something that is gradually becoming recognized as something more than just man and woman. Male and Female. Women in particular, are fighting against the stigma that men have put on women for so long. Stigma about topics such as equal pay, where women don't get paid as much as a man doing the same job, even when she might be better at it than he is. There are more and more companies owning up to their mistakes and fixing this problem.

Women and girls are not represented equally in many ways, especially in the awesome fields of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics. Women in these fields only make up a quarter of the people working in these fields, and some of them even less than that. In America, we have come up with ways to combat that by representing females in these sorts of roles in children's shows, to help girls feel more confident about going into those types of subjects. Another way that we are fighting against that is within the schools by introducing these topics together as STEM, and the teachers find ways to encourage all the kids to be more interested in these topics. We also have several famous women who have degrees in these fields. My personal favorite is Mayim Bialik, an actress on a show about scientists called *The Big Bang Theory*. In the show, her character is a neurobiologist, but in real life, she has a Ph. D in neuroscience, proving that girls can be whatever they want to be when they grow up.

I speak of these topics because all of these fields are vitally important for improving people's way of life around the world. I feel that if we, as human beings, are going to fully represent everyone's needs, especially in the fields of science and technology, that more women need to join those fields. There is so much more to any of these fields, especially science, than meets the eye. I want to encourage anyone who is even a little bit interested in going into a science or technology-related field to at least try it. They might find that they love it, and doing what you love is a very important thing. Don't be discouraged because it seems like no one else is interested in those topics. They might be secretly wishing to know more about that subject too.

There are so many cool jobs in the science and mathematics industries, not only to be something like a neurobiologist, but an computer code writer, astronaut, teacher, anthropologist, architect, or many, many other positions that are great, and make a lot of money. If you are interested in a subject that's got math or science in it, that's okay! One day, you could be making a lot of money doing something you're interested in, as well as changing the world!

Anyone can do these jobs if they put their minds to it, and women have just as much power as men to accomplish the same tasks, and the best way to do that is to put ourselves in

positions where we can do just that. If you have an interest in anything STEM-related, go out and represent your gender, and prove to the world that you are just as good as anyone else. In doing so, you will not only be involved in a really cool profession, you'll be helping other young girls recognize that they too, can do cool things.