

Christopher Willingham
English 101, MW 3:00
Professor Amanda Jones
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Each page (Works Cited included) has a page number, and the author's last name is adjacent to that page number.

Women Are Still Left Fighting for What's Right

A creative title is centered on the page without underlining or quotes.

Compared to one hundred years ago, the world has made vast improvements in how women are viewed and treated; however, the belief that women are not really equal with men is still prevalent today. For example, one public prosecutor in Cairo, Egypt, recently justified the limited rights of women in his country by saying, "Man are more wise and rational than women" (Dief 110). While overtly sexist comments like this one are not necessarily the norm these days in America, there are many policies that seem to imply the same beliefs. A recent study, "Behind the Pay Gap," reports that "women working full time earn only 80 percent as much as their male colleagues earn. Ten years after graduation, women fall farther behind, earning only 69 percent as much as men earn" (Dey and Hill 2). Sexist beliefs and unfair situations have regularly motivated women to rise up against the oppression they are experiencing and demand the rights that they deserve. In line with the great female reformers of the past, like Susan B. Anthony and Sojourner Truth, Gwen Stefani addresses the problems of gender bias in her song, "Just a Girl." This song shows us that the world is oppressing her, how this oppression is affecting her and how she tries to overcome the oppression.

This is a strong introduction because the writer doesn't simply start with his thesis. Instead, the writer helps readers understand the significance of the topic that the thesis will address. In this case, the topic is gender inequalities and the thesis will explain how the paper will address this topic of gender inequalities.

In a well-organized papers, the thesis statement will come at or near the end of the introductory paragraph.

First, Gwen Stefani makes it very clear in "Just a Girl" that,

This topic sentence continues onto the next page.

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as a woman, she is being oppressed by the society in which she lives.

Specifically, she feels that the world does not really want to see her for who she really is—a person and not “just a girl.” This is perhaps the reason she starts her song by telling us to “Take this pink ribbon off [her] eyes” (No Doubt). Certainly, it is important that the ribbon is pink. After all, the color pink is usually symbolic for female innocence, and innocence is often equated to ignorance. The fact that this pink blindfold is covering her eyes could show that the world wants to keep her from seeing her opportunities and, instead, is hoping that she’ll only be able to see what they want her to be—feminine and ignorant. However, because the eyes are often seen as the “windows to our souls,” Stefani might be trying to say that the world really doesn’t care what she thinks or feels on the inside. In short, the world would rather cover her up in something they want to see—a picture of what they think femininity should be—pretty, pink and pure.”

In addition to covering her eyes, the world is forcing her into traditional female roles. Speaking to her boyfriend, presumably, Stefani laments, “The world is forcing me to hold your hand.” Instead of allowing her to be an independent woman, the world, according to Stefani, wants her to attach herself to a man. Interestingly enough, Stefani’s idea that the world is trying to force women to become subordinate stereotypes is not only heralded by women. As early as the late 18th-century, Marie-Henri Beyle (also known by his pen name, Stendhal) wrote numerous novels that illustrated his sympathy with the women in society (Scott 214). He sympathized with women because

This topic sentence not only expresses the first thesis point, which will be the focus of the paragraph, but it also contains a transition word, “First,” to help readers see the connection between this paragraph and the last one.

Observe how the writer uses the transitional words “in addition” help readers see that the writer is about to list another point that will support his topic sentence from the previous paragraph.

Notice that this paraphrase contains a parenthetical reference to Maria C. Scott. This shows us that Scott said this highlighted information, but she didn’t say it exactly like the author has written it here. However, if you want to see Scott’s actual words, then you can go to page 214 in the book that is cited in the Works Cited.

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he recognized “the socially determined nature of women’s subordinate position” (Scott 215). It’s worth noting that women have not alone chosen to be subordinate, or as Stefani might say, wear the pink ribbon. Instead, it is a product of the society in which we all live. Recently, Mark Evans made a similar claim in the Wall Street Journal when he asserted that “women don’t really know who they are in the workplace because they’ve never been allowed to be themselves. Instead, they’ve been told who their male bosses want them to be” (B12) . In short, women are being forced to live lives that don’t really reflect the people they are.

In addition to showing that women are treated unfairly, “Just a Girl” explains that this oppression is negatively affecting women. One negative effect of the oppression is that Stefani admits that she’s started to embrace the idea that she should be subordinate to males. Speaking to men, she says “Don’t let me out of your sight” and “don’t let me have any rights.” This might seem somewhat sarcastic at first; however, she later confesses that she “can’t do the little things [she] holds so dear ‘cause it’s all those little things that [she] fear[s].” Clearly, her call to be looked after and kept from having too many rights are products of the fears that her years of unfair treatment have created. Essentially, she has partially embraced the rules and regulations that have kept her as a secondary class citizen. This embracing of these roles leads to another negative effect. Specifically, Stefani claims that what she has “succumbed to is making [her] numb.” This numbness is probably best interpreted as a loss of identity.

Unlike the paraphrase earlier, this shows that Scott said EXACTLY what is contained within the quotation marks. If you want to see this exact quote, then go to page 215 in the book that is cited in the Works Cited page. Also, because the sentence doesn’t mention Maria C. Scott, “Scott” must be in the parentheses.

This is an effective transition and topic sentence because it not only reminds readers of the last point, but it also tells readers exactly what the point of this paragraph is.

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Interestingly enough, Mary Lightinghouse has noted this problem in her essay, “Do As I Say and Not As I Do.” In short Lightinghouse explains that

Women who are born into oppressive societies, regardless of their race or religion, tend to not only follow the rules of that society but also embrace those rules as well. This can often lead to a situation where a woman feels as though she has no choices other than continuing to follow the rules that she’s always followed. In turn, many of the women we surveyed reported that they often felt as if they weren’t really themselves most of the time. Instead, they were like zombies—the living dead—walking though the world but not really able to be accepted in it. (Lightinghouse 198)

Jasmine Yleder supports Stefani and Lightinghouse in her biography, *Marked Woman*, as she explains that “for many years, a personal identity was something reserved for men . . . and women felt awful ” (12). Obviously, these feelings of helplessness and lost identity lead Stefani to claim that she would “rather not be” a girl. To be a man would be a welcome change because at least she could feel free to be herself. As it is, however, she laments that “what [she has] become is so burdensome.” The burden is, obviously, living in a world where she is forced to be someone other than herself.

However, even though Stefani grieves over her situation, she offers herself and other women in similar positions ways to overcome

Quotes that exceed 5 typed lines must be set off in block format. To do this, tab in twice (instead of once like you do for each new paragraph). Also, note the in-text citation at the end. Unlike non-block-quoted text, 1) there are no quotation marks required and 2) the period comes before the parenthetical citation. Use these quotes sparingly and when the author’s exact words are important.

The ellipses here indicate that part of the original text has been omitted. NOTE: do not omit text that changes the meaning of the quote.

Again, this is a solid transition and topic sentence because it clearly shows where the writer has come from and what he intends to argue in this paragraph.

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these oppressive bonds. Primarily, she believes women need to let society know that they are fed up with their situations. This is exactly what Stefani does when she repeats throughout the song that she has “had it up to here!” This common phrase, which has been uttered by many frustrated people for generations, often serves two purposes; it lets others know we are frustrated and it warns them to tread lightly. This double-purpose is interesting because Stefani is turning the tables on the oppressors. She is not only expressing herself, specifically her frustration, but she is warning men to beware of impending adversity. . . . [To save space, the remainder of this paragraph has been omitted.]

Stefani’s “I’m Just a Girl” is certainly not the only explication of the problems with gender equality in the United States, and it certainly doesn’t exhaustively address all the problems that women face in our society. It does, however, offer us a starting place for looking at the problems with the lack of women’s equality and the effects of that inequality. If nothing else, this song addresses a new generation of children and adults and tries to further the cause of equality that has been sometimes ignored, often dismissed and rarely revised. This is important because, after all, as Dr. Heafner once claimed in class, “without reminders, nothing would ever get done in this country.”

This is an effective conclusion because it doesn’t sound overly formulaic. It does not use the words, “in conclusion,” which more-or-less invite readers to stop reading. It also doesn’t repeat the thesis, which is not needed because the reader should already completely understand the argument by this point. What it does do is make the rest of the paper relevant to readers and gives them something to think about.

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Note that the sources listed on this page are in alphabetical order and each new item uses a "hanging indent"—which keeps the first line further out to the left margin than the subsequent lines.

When you have two authors, make sure you list them in the same order that they appear in the work you're citing.

This lets readers know that this source came from a print copy of this newspaper. If the newspaper was online, then the reference would say "Web." at the end.

This information lets readers know that this journal article was accessed through an online database on February 22, 2010.

NOTE: THIS PAPER IS AN ADAPTATION OF A PAPER ORIGINALLY WRITTEN BY AMANDA YATES DURING THE SPRING SEMESTER OF 2010. THANKS TO AMANDA FOR ALLOWING THE DEPARTMENT TO USE AND AMMEND IT.