

- “*Ang kapal ng makeup niya. Mukha siyang puta.*” (“She’s wearing too much makeup. She looks like a whore.”)
- “*Ang iksi kasi ng suot niyang palda, kaya nababastos kapag naglalakad sa daan.*” (“She wears short skirts that’s why she gets catcalled when walking in the street.”)
- “*Ang dami na niyang naging boyfriend. Gamit na gamit siguro siya parang prostitute.*” (“She’s had relationships with many men. She must be so used up like a prostitute.”)
- “*Kasalanan niya din kaya siya na-rape...kasi naglalakad mag-isa sa madilim na lugar at ang iksi ng palda.*” (“It’s also her fault that she got raped...she walks in the dark places alone and she wears short skirts”)
- “*Pangit siya para ma-rape.*” (“Too ugly to be raped.”)
- “*Hindi na birhen ‘yan. Nakakahiya.*” (“She’s not a virgin anymore. What a shame.”)

Sounds familiar, right? And perhaps, at least once, during chitchats with friends or acquaintances, we may have had uttered the same lines, without realizing that we have already judged other women unfairly based on her appearance and her supposed sexual practices.

This slut-shaming is an expression of the pervading double standards in the society and internalized misogyny. And this is sociosexual attitude that has not changed over time (not just yet), considering [this study that has studied college students and compared sexual permissiveness among college students in 1990’s and college students in more recent years](#). According to the study, over two decades, men had been more sexual permissive and endorsed the double standard more than the women. And while the desire for casual sex vary with genetics, [promotion of gender inequality may have been due significantly to nurture or environments that encourage the double standard](#).

Unfortunately, nurture of this double standard begins at an early age and reinforced much strongly during the volatile, teenage years. [Rehtaeh Parsons](#), a 17-year old girl who was bullied and repeatedly called slut by classmates after a photo of her being raped by four boys went viral, is an example of how the double standard can be extremely reinforced. How terrible it was that boys and girls her age thought that it was okay that she got raped and that she somehow “deserved” it because she is a “slut”. Another young girl, [Phoebe Nora](#), became a target of bullying by some girls in school because she got into relationships with boys older than her. And for that, she was called a slut. She hanged herself at home when she couldn’t take it anymore.

And perhaps, a more famous example of a person slut-shamed, even before the word was coined, is [Monica Lewinsky](#). She was called a young tramp looking for thrills and a girl “too tubby to belong in the ‘in’ crowd” among others. Worst, her name has become a sly euphemism for oral sex. She left her internship at the White House and had trouble looking for jobs after. She experienced depression and had suicidal ideations. But what happened to Bill Clinton? Even if his Presidency got smeared with the scandal, overall, the Clinton name remains relatively respectable. To think that the supposed intimate exchange was mutual, Monica got the bad end of the bargain. Even if there’s a [rumor that Bill Clinton will publicly apologize to Monica for what had happened](#) (allegedly to clear and prepare the way for Hilary’s campaign for presidency in 2016), it is a bit too late, considering the pain and suffering that she had gone through.

And not to veer too far away from home, [the recent issue of Deniece Cornejo and Vhong Navarro showed us how misogynistic Filipinos can be](#). Whether she’s guilty of beating up Navarro or not, she’s been called a lot of names and villified online and on mainstream media. One need only look at the comments section of every status update in Facebook or of online news sites pertaining to the issue. She was called out for inviting men in her room when she’s alone, for having relations with a man in a committed relationship, for having relations with a man whose wealth came from questionable sources, for being too sexy, for wearing sexually provocative clothes, for wearing dentures, for having aesthetic enhancements and etcetera. As for Navarro, who went to a woman’s

room, who's not his girlfriend and alone, even if he is in a relationship with another, he got no flak for it. He was not villified for cheating on his girlfriend; rather, most people online and on mainstream media saw him immediately as the poor victim. It is not wrong to have sympathy for Navarro because of the physical beatings he received; rather, what most people cannot see is how the double standard has been applied outside of the criminal aspect of the issue. Instead of focusing on dealing justice, most people have focused on their personalities. And thus, the dichotomy has been applied: Deniece, the slut for being too sexually provocative and engaging in sexual relations outside of a committed relationship, and Vhong, the guy who simply got attracted to a sexually provocative woman because he is a man. Some say that this denigration of Deniece was just an outlet by people who felt they cannot attain justice for Vhong, a victim of powerplay and blackmail. An outlet? But at what expense? Another person's dignity? Deniece was found guilty by most people, even before all the other pieces of evidence and information fell into place. She is the "slut", the "tramp", whose morals are questionable because she does not follow the "norm" for respectable women.

With the proliferation of telenovelas that capitalize on stories of illicit affairs, with the mistress always ending up the "bad" person and the husband as the "poor guy who has to choose between two loves", of men looking down on women who had several relationships, of teenage girls being scolded by parents for being too loud, for coming home late, for drinking, for partying, for having boyfriends, while teenage boys are encouraged and lauded for being loud, for having many girlfriends, for having high tolerance for alcohol, of children being taught that there are toys that are only for girls and there are those that are for boys only, of men and women who supposedly are openminded but still believes in [common rape myths](#), of [women calling other women sluts and whore for being different from them](#), it will be very hard to eliminate this internalized misogyny.

Fortunately, there are movements being started by well-meaning individuals to eradicate slut-shaming in our society.

One such movement or activity is "Guys We Fucked", the [Anti-Slut Shaming Podcast by Krystyna Hutchinson and Corinne Fisher](#). They not only talk about sex and the sex they had, but other issues women and men have in relationships and in the society, without the taboos that are normally present in mainstream discussions of these topics.

Another example is Emily Lindin's [The UnSlut Project](#). She aims to educate people about how cyberbullying is utilized to promote slut-shaming. The project "promotes gender equality, sex positivity, and comprehensive, age-appropriate sex education for all ages." Moved by stories of young girls who had to commit suicides, unable to bear the bullying and slut-shaming, she aims to reach out to young people and give them hope. In 2013, she started a campaign to help fund the filming of "Slut: A Documentary Film" which tells of the lives of the young girls who took their own lives because of sexual bullying.

A controversial movement is [SlutWalk](#), which aims to reclaim the word "slut" from being an insult and challenge the mindsets and stereotypes of victim-blaming and slut-shaming. The movement, perhaps, started in Toronto in 2011 when a [policeman said during a personal security class that women should not dress like sluts in order not to be victimized](#).

In the Philippines, I'm not sure how a similar movement will be received by the society, knowing many Filipino men still have the "machismo" mindset. But I am hoping, as a freethinker and a humanist, that this issue shall also be given proper focus and time by concerned individuals and organizations.

But how can this be started when individuals who supposedly are more open-minded, the freethinkers, are also guilty of doing such? How can we start a movement of fighting for gender equality when women do this to other women also?

*author's note: I forgot where I got this image that I used in the article. If this is yours or you know the source, please do point me to it so I can give proper credit. Thank you.

Ref.: <http://theatheistdoc.ph/the-problem-of-slut-shaming/>

Look more about Slut Shaming here www.sexuality.aboutphilippines.ph