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Boy Bashing?

By Valerie Zilinsky

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Sometimes I wonder what these fashion designers are thinking. I read an article in our local newspaper recently which left me in wonder. What happened to girl power? Teaching our daughters to respect themselves? Emphasizing self-esteem & sexual equality?

Now, it seems that someone in the fashion industry decided that it's a good thing for our girls to brag about how they look down on the male gender. To them, it's cool to treat men & boys like unworthy objects. Is that supposed to make our daughters feel better about themselves? Your daughter can actually walk into a well-known department store and purchase shirts with sayings like:

"Boys Lie"

"Boys Are Great – Everyone Should Own One"

"Lying, Cheating, Stinking Boys"

Now, I have no problem with girls wearing shirts that say things like "Girls Rule", or "Girls Are Great", but since when is it cool to talk bad about someone else to make ourselves feel better? Isn't that something that responsible adults are supposed to teach our kids to NOT do?

Not only that, but can you imagine what kinds of things the men's & boy's department will fight back with? Are you going to put your foot down and draw the line, explaining to the young girls in your life why this is NOT cool?

I know what I'm going to do. I will not spend a penny on these types of products. I will urge others to do the same. If nobody is buying them, there will be no need to continue to make such degrading clothing. I am not pro-censorship, but I am for mutual respect of others – treating others how we wish to be treated. If we say bad things about them, they will most likely do the same in return. This isn't the type of behavior that I want to see my young daughter engaging in as she gets older. When she is an adult, she can make her own decisions. This clothing is being marketed to our 'tweens & teens!

My daughter only going on five years old right now. But if this trend continues, I hate to think about what girls' clothing might be saying in another five or ten years. As a parent, I feel it is our job to teach

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our girls good values and morals. How can it help a young impressionable girl's self-esteem to be putting down others in such a rude way? Imagine the harm that it can do to the self-image of today's youth. I hope that whoever started it will see the error in their ways, and the moms at the malls and department stores with their daughters will openly show their disapproval.

Valerie Zilinsky is a married mother of two young children, and 'WebMom' of <http://www.RaisingOurKids.com>

Taking in the Good Criticism and Leaving the Rest Behind

By Gary R. Hess

Taking in the Good Criticism and Leaving the Rest Behind by Gary R. Hess

We have all been criticized upon sometime or another, as a writer it is something to be expected. Every paragraph, every sentence, every word is criticized. We just need to know how to benefit from the criticism and learn the difference between constructive and bashing as well as good and bad criticism.

Something else that is important to remember is that good criticism should not be frowned upon. Always take into account suggestions from your readers. If they don't like a certain segment of your work don't worry, the criticism should not upset you but make you a better writer.

If someone suggests that a sentence our line is out of place, take it into account and look it over a few times. Read it to yourself and then out loud. Hopefully they have made a suggestion as to what to replace it with, but if not just think of something and replace it and see if you like it any better. It doesn't hurt to edit your work and then edit your work again. Whatever it takes is what we as writers have to do.

If the suggestion is not a good one, do not worry. This happens many times. People will read your work and think they know what is better for it. Do not scream and yell or throw a big fit, just take the advice and throw it out the window. It's better to have people commenting on it, because it means someone is actually reading your work. The more you complain, the less people will read it.

The same goes for bashing. If someone is bashing your work don't fret. This kind of thing happens all the time. Most of them just want to get under your skin to see if they can or not.

When someone bashes your work it either means they don't care about it or they are too immature and can't help you out anyway. So just move on and wait until someone comes along and gives better advice.

Constructive criticism is the only thing you need to listen to. Just be sure to not take it the wrong way. Listen to it and take suggestions on how to better your work. Do not let all the other stuff people say bother you. This is your work and you wrote it for yourself.

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Take it easy and do what you think is right, but don't ever quit writing!

Gary R. Hess is a writer and web designer for



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