

- Redefine female beauty standards
- Normalize sharing your pronouns

# OPINION

EL GATO • FRIDAY, OCTOBER 16, 2020 • LOS GATOS HIGH SCHOOL • WWW.ELGATONEWS.COM

## Republican Party policies contradict Christian values

by Esther Sun  
Editor-in-Chief



"[The Lord] executes justice for the fatherless and the widow and loves the sojourner, giving him food and clothing," Moses declares in Deuteronomy 10:19. "Love the sojourner, therefore, for you were sojourners in the land of Egypt."

In contrast, a 2019 survey by the Pew Research Center found that only 32 percent of Republicans said it was very important for the U.S. to provide safe and sanitary conditions for asylum seekers. Amid the humanitarian crisis at the southern border, Senator Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.) pushed through a Senate committee a bill that would prevent thousands of migrants from applying for asylum in the U.S.

For a political party that espouses Christian evangelicalism as its core ideology, Republicans have failed to live up to their purported values at even the most basic level, especially during Donald Trump's first presidential term. Republican attacks on sanctuary cities, support of deportations, efforts to cut large groups of unemployed and low-wage workers out of welfare programs, and countless other policy stances directly contradict God's call for Christians to protect the vulnerable people in our society — undocumented immigrants, low-income families, refugees, and more.

Some may defend Republican leaders by arguing that Jesus does not require perfect actions from his followers — simply faith. To this I respond: what kind of real faith in Jesus's sacrificial love can produce these Republican acts of exclusion? Though the Bible says good actions can't save a person the way faith does, it also points out that good actions are a pretty solid litmus test for whether or not someone's faith is genuine. In light of this, Republican leaders have demonstrated clearly to me time and time again that they are simply exploiting Christianity as a political prop to rally support from America's Christian evangelicals rather than legitimately using Christian principles to guide their leadership.

"What good is it, my brothers," writes Jesus's brother James in James 2:14, "if someone says he has faith but does not have [good] works? Can that faith save him? If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, and one of you says to them, 'Go in peace, be

warmed and filled,' without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that? So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead."

If Republicans truly want to integrate Christian values into their policymaking, they need to reverse their attitudes on large-scale issues like immigration and welfare, as mentioned earlier. Rather than fighting tooth and nail to keep in place legalistic traditions like the reference to God in the pledge of allegiance, Republicans should fight to protect the powerless.

I'll conclude with a final Scripture passage from Isaiah 58, in which God calls out the Israelites for religious fasting while failing to show humanity in their worldly lives. God says: "Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke? Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter — when you see the naked, to clothe them, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood?"

(Sources: Pew Research Center, Reuters, Holy Bible English Standard Version, USA Today)



## Don't comment on weight

by Emily Duvall  
Culture Editor



Nobody wants someone to tell them what to do with their body or how they should view their own physical appearance. As a society, we have normalized detrimental weight comments.

By weight comments, I do not just mean speaking about someone gaining weight; such comments could involve all remarks regarding skinny-shaming, commenting on someone's weight loss or gain, saying "you need to work out," "are you sure you should eat that?," and so many more. Making any statement to another individual about their weight is just not okay.

A common misconception is that weight comments that talk about being skinny can't be harmful. However, not everyone loves themselves just because they more closely adhere to society's standards of what beauty should look like. Telling someone they need to gain weight is just as bad as saying they need to lose it. This feeds into the issue of eating disorders and how people feel so neglected because of their body that they let themselves depreciate. Insecurities lurk within everyone, and these remarks build on one's insecurities.

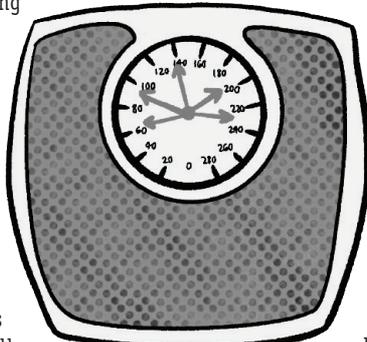
On the flip side, commenting that another person is overweight is equally inappropriate. Some find these words encouraging and harmless. However, statements like "you need to work out" are actu-

ally incredibly toxic. Making this comment does not encourage someone; instead, it acts as a demotivator. Simpler phrases that have undertones of fatphobia include "you're just muscular" or "it's just how you're built." These words are simply excuses for the people making these comments to unleash their fatphobia. Do not make up an excuse like this that only makes you feel comfortable about commenting on someone's appearance.

Many remarks seem to resemble an uplifting comment, but they are actually inconsiderate. For example, someone might say, "Oh my gosh, you've lost weight!" The person on the receiving end of these words could be dealing with an eating disorder, with body dysmorphia, or with any sort of struggle in life that has led them to lose this weight. Or, they could have simply felt so pressured by society to fit the world's social norms for how a body "should look." Complimenting weight loss reinforces the idea

that being fat is an inherently bad thing. Weight loss can be a positive thing, but making a mindless "compliment" like this is insensitive.

Weight comments are detrimental to the individual on the receiving end, and drawing unnecessary attention to something that they may have little to no control over is unacceptable. These remarks do not benefit anyone. They only promote beauty standards that we have come to normalize in society. Please stop commenting on people's weight. A new phrase to think of when you consider talking about someone's appearance is this: "if they can't fix it in ten seconds, don't point it out."



B. Gibson

## Ignore people you dislike

by Alia Arafah  
Editorial Editor



The internet is a vast place, so it's no surprise that it includes both people you agree

with and people with whom you disagree. While it may be tempting to post hate comments or rewatch, repost, and spread videos just to show people how much you disagree with their beliefs, this is actually a counterproductive way of demonstrating your dislike of the content.

First, on many platforms, people can earn money off of likes, views, reposts, and comments. For example, the TikTok creator fund pays users based on the amount of views a video gets. Therefore, the more attention a video gets — whether it is positive or negative attention — the more money that creator makes. The more money they make, the more money that goes to supporting a cause or a person that you don't like. Most of the time, it's better to scroll past a video you don't like. Acknowledge your disagreement and maybe even get angry that the video exists, but don't waste your time trying to do anything more.

In addition to contributing money to creators based on negative attention, reposting and commenting on posts will actually cause more people to see these posts, and the message you disagree with will be spread even further. While it's sometimes satisfying to repost a video simply to make fun of it, you're only allowing more people to see it. Some of those people may actually like the video that you don't like and follow the creator of it. In addition, reposting a video only allows more people to view it, and as I stated above, the original creator makes more money.

While ignoring things that make you angry is often difficult, it's also the best thing to do in most situations. Any publicity is good publicity when it comes to making money, so don't contribute to the spread of videos that make you angry or are offensive in general. This especially applies if an influencer is known for making offensive videos. If they're simply ignored, the account will fizzle out or at least the creator won't make as much money.

I often feel the urge to address these types of videos or creators, and I see many people go through with it by posting hate comments and bringing negative attention to the videos. It's always better to keep scrolling in the face of bad content. Don't allow disrespectful people to make money off of viewers' anger. There are enough mean people in the world, and it's better not to let them gain the satisfaction of earning money and fame off of a bad reputation.



C. Wagner

## Davidson redefines the meaning of beauty for women

by Cara Davidson  
Public Relations Manager



Growing up a woman, I have never felt content with my body. There has always been a constant bombardment of tasks I have had to complete in order to be "beautiful" — tasks that weren't really me,

but if I didn't do them, I was an outcast. Starting in pre-school, I noticed that the girls all owned pink or purple backpacks, usually with flowers, unicorns, or princesses. I'd always gravitate towards the "girly" side of the store. I watched Disney princesses, the muses of my childhood, because that's what girls watched. These small factors about my gender never meant anything too unusual to me. They were simply part of being a girl.

Throughout elementary school, I had long hair that grew to my waist. It made me feel beautiful, like a woman. One day, a girl in my grade cut her hair short, and she was immediately labeled a tomboy. At the time, I went along with this

undesired labeling because it was simply the norm. I, and many others, viewed her as a tomboy because she didn't fill what we considered girly. Looking

back on it, the decision to cut her hair was perhaps the most womanly action she could have done. Being a woman is about being a strong individual, being unrepeatable. If anything, cutting her hair made her unique and more herself, and that is what I believe should be the guide to being a woman.

Moving into middle school, I noticed that when I went to my friends' houses they had bright pink razors littering their bathrooms. Following their example, I got one for myself and started regularly shaving my body. At the time, I didn't even question whether or not I should shave. I only knew that it is just what girls did, and if they didn't do it, they were "gross." From

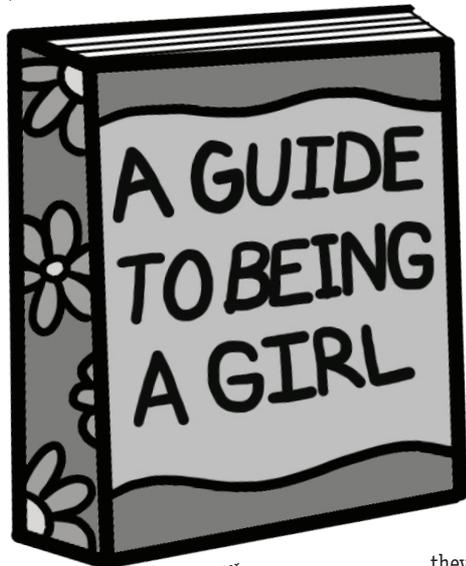
a young age, I had been led to believe that girls were hairless, flawless creatures who had to follow a set of rules, or

they weren't girly. Indeed, girls are flawless creatures, but not because they lack hair on their legs. Beauty has always been determined by how strictly we could follow the norms set by people who just want us to feel bad about ourselves.

Not only was I bombarded with the need to change my appearance to feel like a 'proper' girl, I was also convinced that I had certain unchangeable features that took away from my femininity. I'd never been 'curvy' and I was only reminded of this by kids at my school who consistently told me I wasn't enough. Women are expected to have tiny, stick figure waists with full breasts and butts. This unrealistic body type is commercialized everywhere we look, taunting young girls with the implication that they are not "good enough." I remember I used to watch a YouTuber who generally posted simple content about clothes. One time she reflected on her breast implants and said "I wish I'd gotten them earlier. They make me feel more womanly." As if breasts are everything that a woman is.

Throughout my middle and high school experiences, I've heard boys say about women: "No one will ever like her, she's flat" or "Maybe if she had an ass she'd get some attention" or even "She's good — from the neck down." They act as if all that a woman is is her body. If even considered, her mind is simply an afterthought.

It's time for all of us to defy these rules. The world is hard enough to live in already, let's bring each other up. We must teach our daughters that they are stunning and that their beauty is defined by their mind and uniqueness, not by what others tell them is girly. We must remind them that to be unique is to be beautiful.



C. Wagner