

Kelsey Sutton

Opinion

April 6, 2013

One of Linfield's legacies is the opportunity for students to attend lectures and seminars by intelligent, professional and, sometimes, famous people. We get to learn about a huge variety of topics and issues from important people all over the nation. Not every college is as fortunate as ours.

But looking through the pages of the Review, or looking at posters on the walls, there is a problem. An overwhelming majority of these notable lecturers are men. And these men sorely lack the ability to inspire me in way that a female speaker can.

As a woman, having man after man attempt to inspire and move me begins to feel counterproductive and rather exhausting. In the world that we live in, having a woman to draw support, and hope, from is really important to me.

Recently I've begun learning what any ambitious woman wishes to ignore. The field of journalism is largely occupied by men. I don't feel like I can connect to a male journalist and ask him questions. At least not in the way I could to a woman who has been through exactly what I have. This issue becomes more present for me every day, and it gets really frustrating.

I even almost censored myself in this article, thinking of future male employers reading it. If I come off as too

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aggressive or opinionated, they might be less likely to hire me. But then I remember- that's the point!

In male dominated fields, which are almost every career field, it is especially important to have female allies and mentors. Each woman's experience is unique, yet still shared among other women. It is essential for women in college to learn from mentors who have been through what they have.

Let me digress and back up a little. Linfield does bring speakers who talk about all sorts of human rights, including women and LGBT issues. But I'm not just talking about women who talk about issues like feminism and empowerment, that's a given. Who I want to see are women in professions like business, journalism or politics.

Now I have to ask myself, is this a coincidence? Do women just not have the availability to travel to schools? Or is there more? I don't blame event coordinators or administration at Linfield at all. I believe it's because patriarchy is still so deeply etched in our society. It is highly possible that women don't get as many chances to speak publicly.

So I encourage, or rather challenge, Linfield's faculty, staff and administration to reach out find more inspirational women. Find women in the sciences, math or politics. We already learn so much from our guest speakers, let's learn even more.