

# opinion

## Should girls be allowed in Boy Scouts?

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The change of adding girls into Boy Scouts was extremely significant when it was made by the Boy Scouts of America. While I am not necessarily for the 21st century and its changing ways where everyone has to be equal, I believe that allowing girls in Boy Scouts may be a little different. The first reason that this change is different is because these girl troops are under the system of the Boy Scouts, which is what the point was when allowing girls to join. The system of Boy Scouts is so honorable because it teaches so many different life skills and it gives the participant the ability to get out into nature and have many different experiences. The problem with the Girls Scouts is that they did not necessarily teach these life skills that the Boy Scouts offer. To be honest, I think the strength of the Boy Scouts comes within the adult leaders and their strong desire to be involved. You do not see that as much with Girl Scouts because there are not as

many women that want to start up a troop and go camping with a troop full of young girls. That is the true strength of the Boy Scouts, is having those adult leaders that want to be involved with their boys and teaching them these life skills and watching them grow up. However, now some women want to achieve the same thing, and so they start up girl troops within the system of the Boy Scouts. The structure of the Boy Scouts has developed this leadership style to where it leads to success for the boys that are involved. Since Boy Scouts starts at the age of 11, the boys themselves have the ability to make the decision of joining on their own whether they have been through Cub Scouts or not. From my experience, I think the Girl Scouts have lived on a faulty system where the girls fall out of the troop when they enter middle school or high school because they have been involved with that same troop. In Girl Scouts, it is based on an age system as you progress and there is no incentive to climb up rank to keep the participants involved.

Boy Scouts have the incentive to climb rank and eventually try to earn the rank of Eagle Scout which is the ultimate goal, and this was something that the Girl Scouts is lacking. While rank achievement is one thing, merit badges also give the scout an opportunity to heavily learn one particular subject and become proficient at it. With over 135 different merit badges with an Eagle Scout needing to earn 21 merit badges, it gives the participant the opportunity to learn about subjects that they will enjoy (ex: archery and cooking) and subjects that will be useful for the rest of their life (ex: Personal Management and Emergency Preparedness). Therefore, allowing girls into the Boy Scouts gives them that same incentive of achieving rank and feeling accomplished through merit badges. As far as personal experience goes, I have been a part of Boy Scouts my entire life and it has impacted me a great deal. While I never had girls in the troop that I was involved with, I had the opportunity to work alongside a lot of women during the summer of 2017 when I worked at a Boy Scout ranch called Philmont in New Mexico.

These women I worked with wanted to have the experience of Boy Scouts growing up but were never able to and so they joined Venture Crew in which they were able to go on high adventure trips. However, Venture Crew costs more money and the opportunity may not always be there. A lot of these women had more skills and worked harder than most people and it really opened my eyes to agreeing with this side of the argument that there is a spot for girls in the Boy Scouts. The Boy Scouts gives a girl the opportunity to experience the outdoors the way that boys do while being in Boy Scouts. By allowing girls in Boy Scouts, I think it will give girls who have a strong appreciation and love for the outdoors that opportunity to experience it within the right system, the Boy Scouts of America.

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Rutherford County made history this week by being the first all-girls Boy Scout unit, and to be honest, I do not think this is okay at all. Maybe it's the conservative side of me coming out, but isn't it called BOY Scouts and GIRL Scouts for a reason? Don't get me wrong, I understand that parents may think it's not right to divide young boys and girls up, and that it can have their kids be exposed to gender stereotypes, or feel like girls are made to do this and boys are made to do that. They might think, "It's 2019, my daughter de-

serves to learn the same things boys do", but I feel like it would be so much easier to talk to whoever is in charge of the Girl Scouts in the U.S and see if they can change some rules and have girls learn some things boys learn. I also see how parents may say that, "my daughter can do just as much as the boys do," and all this equality talk that's going on in the world, but is it really necessary to try and change something that's been around for decades? Don't get me wrong, I'm all in for change and new ideas, but I feel like this change is just not necessary. What's next? Sorority women joining fraternities? I am a proud sorority woman and I can say that I cannot see that happen and would not like

to see that happen. Yes, if Fraternity and Sorority Life (FSL) would become a mix of boys and girls in each that would be fun, but that's not the point. It's supposed to help build leadership skills for both men and women in different ways. This is what I believe Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts do as well. They both build leadership, team-work and social skills, but in different ways. Some people may not have liked how boys and girls were separated, but overall it seems like this change in rules has already made a lot of people mad. From what I have experienced, everyone who I have talked to about this topic has said that this rule change is the dumbest thing that they've

heard, and some don't even believe me at first. I get that everyone has their opinions and everyone has the right to them, but with the amount of criticism that this topic is already getting, I wonder if Boy Scouts will change their mind.

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