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Different lands, different rights

Citizens of the United States don't know the freedoms they have until they're compared to other countries. We act like some rights are something that all countries have, however that may not be true for others. To achieve these, citizens outside of the United States may have to immigrate. Nelson Mandela once said "To deny people of their human rights is to challenge their humanity." The U.S has freedoms that others would get in trouble for, such as the right for what religion you believe, the ways we are allowed to dress or express ourselves, and the things that everybody, including women and girls, are able to achieve through work or school.

To begin with, the United States allows people to follow and express their religions in a respectful manner. Except if you were to live in or go visit Saudi Arabia, if you're not muslim, the government will have consequences for you. "The government prohibits the public observance of any religion other than Islam and restricts Shiite and Sufi Muslims' religious practices" (Freedom House). By doing this, the government has full control of the citizens' daily lives and can prison them if they don't believe so. "The public expression of other religions is forbidden by law including the wearing of religious jewelry, including the crucifix" (Saudi Arabia Travel Guide and Visitor Information). When Saudi Arabia does this, not only are the people that live there are hiding but so are the people who are visiting! However in the United States, the freedom of religion is protected by the Bill of Rights. "The Bill of Rights guarantees

that the government can never deprive people in the U.S of certain fundamental rights including the freedom of religion” (Your Right To Religious Freedom). By doing this, people are given the freedom to choose their religion and not have it chosen for them if they want to. When citizens are given this right, they help flourish a diverse society filled with different beliefs but still connected by respect for human’s natural rights and cultural freedom of expression.

In contrast to Saudi Arabia, citizens of the United States have the right to dress and express themselves with their clothing. However in Saudi Arabia, visitors, no matter the gender, are not always able to wear the same thing as they would while in the states. “Basically, loose-fitting clothing that covers to the elbow and below the ankle is recommended for both men and women” (Saudi Culture and Customs). Although, the rule of women having to cover their heads with hijabs, a head scarf that covers Muslim women’s hair when they’re in public, is no longer a legal dress code of Saudi Arabia unless it’s required for religion. However, if you are a female tourist, you are not expected to wear a hijab while visiting except if you’re respecting their religion. “Even though there are no laws that mandate you to wear an abaya or a hijab, you must respect their religious sentiments” (Do Tourists Have to Wear Hijab in Saudi Arabia?). And in the United States, the ability to wear what you want is protected as a freedom of expression. “Overall, yes, expressive clothing choices are protected by the First Amendment as free speech-with some exceptions” (Freedom Forum). Once citizens can express themselves, they can not only connect with others and their community but they can also connect with their culture and heritage, being able to do the traditions that show who they are and who they honor within the expression of it. However, this expression may be a challenge to do in places such as Saudi Arabia, if you’re doing something with another religion or your outfit doesn’t fit the country’s standards.

Finally, a right that goes unnoticed and is overlooked frequently in the United States, is the ability to work no matter your gender. In Saudi Arabia, women are allowed to work but aren't paid the same as men. "Where there is employment, the gender wage gap in Saudi Arabia remains significant: as high as 49% in the private sector" (Yuki). Another form of work is school, which in America is mixed with all genders. However, in Saudi Arabia, girls can't go to school with boys. "Girls in Saudi Arabia are segregated from boys in different schools, but in the past, they also had to take different subjects and curriculum than what the boys were studying" (Alharbi). In America though, girls are allowed to learn the same things as boys and go to the same schools as them. Malala Yousafzai once said "Let us remember: One book, one pen, one child and one teacher can change the world." However, women in the United States also work just as hard as men and still aren't paid equally. "In 2022, American women typically earned 82 cents for every dollar earned by men" (Kochhar). Michelle Obama once said, "When girls are educated, their countries become stronger and more prosperous." Perhaps if women in the United States and in other countries had the rights they deserve, everyone would be treated, paid and educated equally no matter their gender.

In conclusion, citizens of the United States aren't fully aware of the rights we have unless we compare them to other countries'. Freedoms within the U.S, such as the rights for our religions and the ability to express them respectfully, the way we dress, and who can do things based on gender, can get people from other governments in trouble.