

Fighting for Equality

Jonathan CC culture, muaythai, nakmuay June 08, 2020



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Sexism has no place in Muay Thai. There I said it.

In a week rife with protests fuelled by social injustices, primarily the inexcusable murders of Black lives in the United States, our focus was/and continues to be with our Black community members. It is our responsibility as allies.

And then this news broke - the Muay Thai Committee in Thailand is discussing the mandatory use of elbow pads for female fighters. Their reasoning? Too many “good-looking” women are getting cut.

I was speechless. This is yet another rude awakening of the system that we live within. An awakening for many of us privileged to live without daily micro aggressions based upon gender, class, race, sexuality, and/or identity.

I am not here to take away from the momentum of the Black Lives Matter movement, and everyone should support the cause where they can (BLM resources), but all levels of inequality needs to be called out when it happens.

The potential ruling in favour of gendered elbow-pad usage is not for the overall safety of all practitioners, à la the concussive studies in football, but a male-centric view on sporting regulation.

As Nak Muay, we enter into the gym, ring, and each other’s presence with a mutual love for Muay Thai. It is rooted in tradition and respect; the preservation of culture.

I am not saying that the culture is perfect but if we want to see shifts in an equitable direction, we need to treat each other indiscriminately.

When one group is treated differently, we are putting those individuals in danger and at risk. We are establishing a basis to treat them unfairly.

At Muay Thai Tips, we stand behind and support the everyday Nak Muay. This means that we have a firm “come as you are” policy. But with a small team, all of whom are cis-men and non-Black persons of colour, we can only lend our perspective.

We must do better.

If we say anything that can or will put individuals in harm's way, aside from the usual spinning elbow, please hold us accountable and let us know. If there are resources that are advantageous to understanding gender and race politics, please leave them in the comments.

Our stance on social equality will not waver. If this offends you, please feel free to stop following us and watching our content, as we are building a community of Nak Muay determined on an inclusive present and future.

To those of you building along with us, we give you our deepest appreciation and gratitude. We would be nothing without you.

Khop khun khap.

UPDATE: A big thank you to Muay-Ying for the continual updates and supporting the Muay Thai community at large.

About the writer:



Jonathan Chan-Choong (JCC) is a Toronto-born, BC-based copywriter, poet, and content creator with 8+ years as a Nak Muay. A penchant for lifestyle and editorial content, JCC writes to invite his readers to take a glimpse at the world all around us, if nothing else.

Learn more at jayseese.com and follow his Instagram [@jayseese](https://www.instagram.com/jayseese).