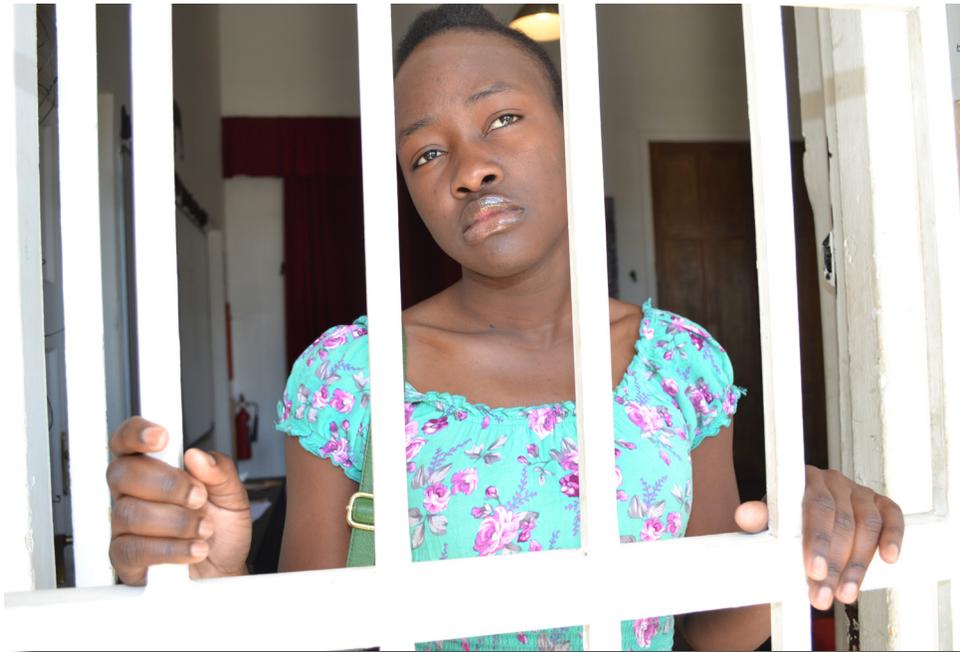


GENDER-BASED CURFEWS REVISITED



I would like to thank Mimi Mwiya on her article regarding gender-based curfews, which appeared in the September 2013 edition of Sister Namibia. In response to that article, I would like to start by saying I agree with her opening statement. Society is more lenient with males than with females. And even though we might not like it, this leniency stems from our cultural background and culture is something we can't seem to ignore or change drastically.

So why is it that guys are allowed to stay out late at night while the ladies have to be home as soon as the sun sets? I believe it depends on the relationship between the girl and her family.

In this article I would like to look at one aspect that causes this curfew. Let's start with guys. In households where guys bring over their friends and hang out with them at home it means the guy's parents get to know his friends. Eventually a relationship between the three (the dude, his parents and his friend/s) develops. The dude may also take

this a step further by inviting his girlfriend over as well. And so the household knows his "peeps". When the guy thus goes out his parents won't be all that worried because they know the people he is out with.

Now let's look at the ladies. In many households ladies almost never bring over their friends. They do this when they are younger, but as soon as they start developing it just stops. Of course this can't be the case for all girls but nearly all those I know keep their girl friends away from their home. So now their parents don't really know who their friends are. And when it comes to boyfriends, let's just say 95 out of a 100 girls would never even let their boyfriends see their parents' living room while the parents are around of course. I for one can confess that while growing up, I never knew any of my sisters' boyfriends. I just knew they were dating. I have nieces and cousins that are teenagers now and I still haven't met their boyfriends or even their female friends. So when this lady wants to go out, the parents start asking a lot of ques-

tions. Who are you going out with, who will take care of you?

And of course like Mimi said, ladies are highly vulnerable. I for one cannot seem to bear the thought of my sister being out late at night with people I only know by name. If my sister is to spend a night out, it should be with people I know personally, people I have developed a relationship of trust with.

All in all, what I'm trying to say is that ladies should let the people they live with be part of their lives. I'm not saying they (ladies) should share their deepest and darkest secrets with the whole household. I'm just saying they should open up a bit.

In conclusion I would just like to reiterate what Mimi said. Our society as a whole needs to educate the boy and the girl child on issues of violence and abuse. This is the only way we'll be able to move towards a non-violent Namibia.

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