STEM Industries Need To Hack Sexism and Racism Now

Belinda Moreira in Politics, Women's Issues 8 hours ago

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STEM Industries Need To Hack Sexism and Racism Now

In the technology world, names like Steve Jobs and Bill Gates are idolized. In this field, men are still the majority, and the lack of women has become more apparent. Recently, the Brit Ruby 2013 Conference, a major event that was to take place next March for Ruby Programmers, was canceled. Although it is said that this cancelation was due to "lack of sponsorship," the real reason to alarm came from a series of tweets where San Franciscan rubyist Josh Susser tweeted:

Josh Susser @joshsusser   17 Nov
Nice speaker lineup for @BritRuby. Except for the 100% white guys part.
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This tweet quickly brought others into the conversation, and questioned why there was not a more diverse line-up. The overall answer from @BritRuby was that the speakers were based on merit and what they had to say. The overall feeling from the tweet session was that people of color and females did not have anything of merit to say. Since this, the BritRuby twitter account has been deleted.

The major problem that is occurring every day in the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) world is the lack of diversity. It has become an industry centered on white males, leaving little opportunities for minorities or females to help diversify it. With less than 25% of women in the STEM field, and even fewer minorities, the call for change is necessary.

The demand for more people in STEM fields has been increasing for the past few years, and that will only continue. Yet, women and minorities still do not seem to be moving towards these jobs. Technology jobs have long been thought of as a "man's job," along with careers like engineering or physics. Women and minorities do not feel comfortable walking into these fields because they immediately feel like outsiders, and are treated differently. Events like the Brit Ruby 2013 conference highlight the need for more recruitment within different populations.

As long as the population continues to be one-dimensional, sexism and racism within STEM jobs will continue to build up. This is not an issue of the past, but one that is still very poignant in many industries today. In the STEM field, the demand for more employees should be a clear indication for more women and minorities to make moves towards these majors. If changes do not happen soon, these jobs will continue to be vacant, and leave the economy in shambles. The time to act is now.