



WOMEN IN CHESS

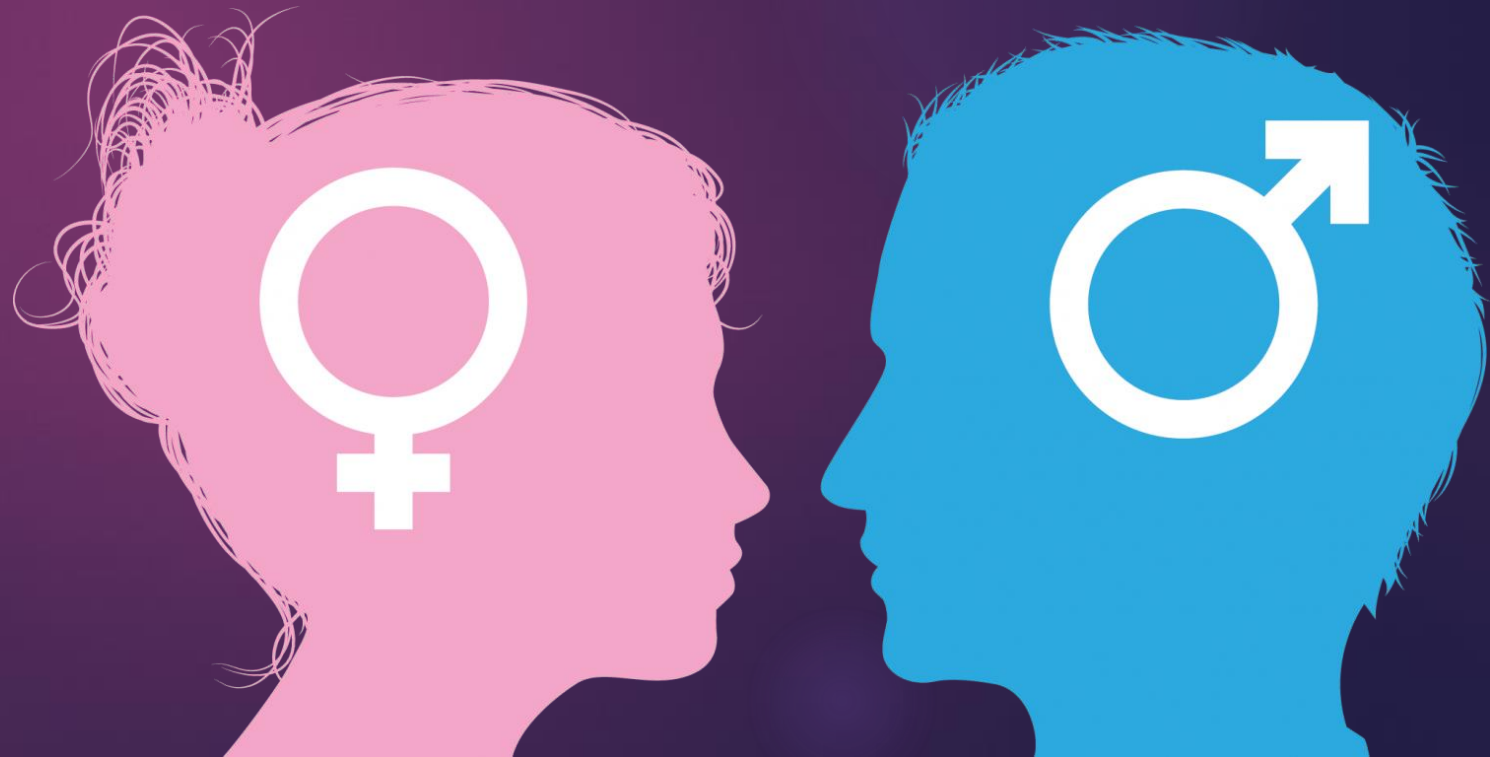
Chess throughout the eyes of
the new generation

LAURA UNUK

Chess – sport of a brain

Why is there a division between women and men?

- ▶ Brain differences?
- ▶ Hormone levels?
- ▶ Statistics?
- ▶ Cultural expectations?



Scientific research

- ▶ Online chess tournament: knowing the gender who you play against vs. not knowing
- ▶ Biochemical research
- ▶ Psychological research



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The Genetics of Sex Differences in Brain and Behavior
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My experience as woman in chess

- ▶ My father's expectation was for my brother to play chess
- ▶ As an introvert I loved playing chess in a quiet environment – better than other sports
- ▶ My motivation was to get any women's title, almost impossible to become WGM – in Slovenia we had only 3
- ▶ Was talked down to by other men in chess competitions
- ▶ I felt motivated by beating male opponents and proud I was the best in my school in the open section.
- ▶ Only when I became WGM I started being motivated for being better in the open section



Do we need a woman category and woman titles?

Reason for yes	Reasons for no
Safe environment for girls – no sexism	Believing we can't reach higher levels than WGM
Comfortable environment	Motivation is only until we become the best in girl category – comparing yourself only to girls
Bigger motivation at the beginning	Equal competitions from a young age
Women trainers and idols for girls	Having girl categories makes us admit we are not as strong as men
When a girl is ready, she can compete in the open section	
Until there is at least 40% of women in chess we can't assume anything	

Conclusion

- ▶ Having women titles and categories is a good thing – at least for the time being
- ▶ Girls need motivation and safe environment to play and improve in chess
- ▶ Girl needs to be treated and told from the beginning not to be scared of the open section
- ▶ There should be equal opportunities for men and women to train and work on chess
- ▶ Once there is a bigger percentage of women in chess then we can talk about facts

