Gender Roles and Sexual Ethics

So at a high level, we made Golarion more sexist because we like worldbuilding around patriarchy, how economic and social conditions produce gender roles, how gender roles are affected by magic, etc. I absolutely understand why many gaming groups wouldn't want to get into these topics at the table, and you can skip this section.

A Non-Exhaustive List of Changes

There is not trivially available perfectly reliable contraception. There are good options for powerful magic users, but for the average person there are only the options that were available in the premodern real world: non-ideal condoms, teas that with mixed reliability and some risk cause an early-term miscarriage, poisons that effect an abortion at significant risk to the pregnant woman. Most of Golarion, like most of the premodern world, expects sensible people to refrain from premarital sex and judges people especially women heavily for engaging in premarital sex. There are sex workers in Golarion, for the most part women who do not have other options for employment; hiring sex workers would not be Evil under ideal conditions, but is in fact pretty Evil under the conditions that prevail in most of Golarion.

Babies get souls about twelve weeks after conception, which means that an abortion past the point where a pregnancy is detectable-by-fetal-movement is a killing that sends a soul to the Boneyard. The exact point where babies get souls is not known in universe; the fact abortion is Evil is known. Abortion and infanticide both happen frequently anyway.

There is somewhat less sexism than there was in any Earth-analogue country in 1800, as a consequence of the influence of gods (many of which directly concern themselves with the rights of women, most of which select female priests, and half of which are women insofar as gods have genders which is a bit complicated). There is still a lot more sexism than you are accustomed to in modern America, and most readers/players who haven't studied a lot of history are shocked by how much sexism there is.

Avistan has less sexism than Garund or Casmaron, because Avistan was until recently Arodenite, and Aroden was a mortal from a magitech industrial civilization that did have women's rights. But in almost all countries, men inherit over women, and in many countries men exclusively inherit; typical families are more concerned with educating their sons than their daughters; women typically cannot respectably live independently; women typically promise their husbands obedience in marriage. In Lastwall women have formal equality under the law; the majority of the leadership has still historically been male because their leadership comes from their officer corps. In [Lastwall](https://www.glowlarion.wiki/books/regions/page/lastwall) women with significant political and military careers are generally celibate, while men in such roles generally marry. In most countries, women are formally or informally barred from most careers; most universities will not accept women as students; in most countries with a vote, women don't have it.

Cheliax and Andoran were before the Chelish Civil War more gender-egalitarian than anywhere else in Golarion, and Hell has doubled down on encouraging casual sex in order to promote abortion and infanticide. In the rest of the Inner Sea, people associate casual sex with a deliberate effort by Hell to make people be Evil. There's widespread confusion about whether casual sex is itself intrinsically Evil.

Northern Garund and Casmaron are more sexist than Avistan. In the Keleshite Empire and the former Keleshite colonies including Osirion, women who are not powerful spellcasters have very little ability to interact with the court system, open a bank account, leave their husbands, etc. If they are divorced (they broadly cannot initiate a divorce, and some countries ban divorce altogether) they will not get custody of their children. Female seclusion is not an uncommon tradition in the social classes that can afford it. Marriages are negotiated between a woman's parents and a man's parents. Public education is exclusively for boys. The Church of Sarenrae has been on a centuries-long campaign to

raise the minimum age of marriage to 19, when it was often as young as 13. Abortion is generally illegal in Garund and Casmaron, and women's rights is associated with Avistan, with vice, and with the killing of children to enable the licentiousness of their parents.

In the opposite direction, we removed Hell being patriarchal because devils don't have gender. Hell is intensely oppressive on the basis of various status hierarchies but not this one specifically.

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