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Text Venus Williams, "Wimbledon Has Sent Me a Message: I'm Only a Second-Class Champion"

In her article, "Wimbledon Has Sent Me a Message: I'm Only a Second-Class Champion," Venus Williams argues that although Wimbledon outwardly appears to value men and women equally, really they are promoting a message that women's roles and achievements are less important.

As a three-time champion at Wimbledon, Williams is qualified to talk about the inequalities she sees at the tournament. What spectators see is that "winners receive the same trophy and honorary membership", and that "the two photographs of last year's men's and women's champions are hung side by side, proudly and equally" (44-46). To "the general public", it appears that Wimbledon treats their players the same, and that "the men's and women's games have the same value" (61-62).

However, Williams uses her inside knowledge and experiences to pull back the curtain on the elite All England Club. She accounts for the exact amounts that each winner receives, including that "the winner of the ladies' singles receives £30,000 less than the men's winner" (28-29). She even provides readers with Wimbledon's defense, which is "that women's tennis is worth less for a variety of reasons; it says, for example, that because men play a best of five sets game they work harder for their prize money" (52-54). Ultimately, Williams argues that "Wimbledon's stance devalues the principles of meritocracy and diminishes the years of hard work [of] women" (33-34) and that the All England Club "can only be trying to make a social and political point, one that is out of step with modern society" (88-89).

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