I'M SICK OF BEING SEXY

By Sarah Hirsch

It's my favorite time of year again, and I've already stocked up on chocolate pumpkins and apple cider. The entire Halloweentown series is set to record on my DVR, all seven seasons of Buffy the Vampire Slayer are on Netflix, and my Stephen King novels are all dusted off and ready to go. Come Halloween, visions of tortured souls, decomposing zombies, and cackling witches will dance in everyone's heads.

As a kid, I had some pretty eccentric costumes. In second grade, I really wanted to be a washing machine. I forced my sister to be the dryer, and with miscellaneous clothes popping out of our cardboard boxes, we happily ran around collecting candy on Halloween. Nowadays, things are different. Young girls are only presented with provocative options, and I'm sick of seeing tweens canoodling in "spooky" lingerie. Somehow the costumes are shrinking while the temperature is dropping.

If you flip through most costume store catalogues, the outfits are split into sections differing by age group and gender. It starts out seemingly normal, with superheroes and cool animals for little boys and princesses and cutesy creatures for the girls. But as you continue your search, you notice that all of the male costumes are fun and action-packed, while the female outfits are 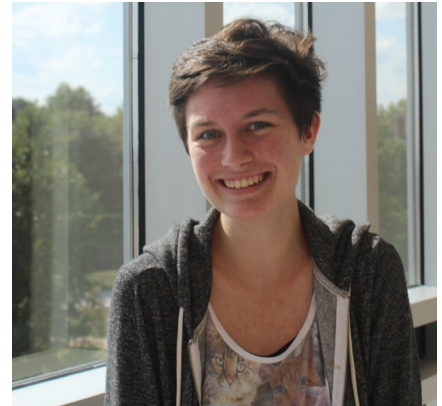essentially the same exact thing in different colors and are packed full of short skirts, corsets, and awkwardly plunged necklines.

Now, I'm not bagging on those girls who actually enjoy being a damsel in distress, but I wish that my gender could have a bit more leeway with our costume choices. So you want to be Mario and Luigi? Too bad, you're stuck being "Perky Plumber" and "Sexy Sidekick." Star Wars fan? Naturally, you would expect the only sexy character option to be a metal bikini "slave" Leia. However, stores have somehow found a way to sex up Chewbacca and R2-D2.

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Even if you try to escape the confinement of female gender roles, you're still forced to feed into the slutty stereotype. It's almost as if we aren't good enough to be anything more than bodacious bimbos. Too bad if you want to be silly or scary. You have to be sexy.

This not only impacts our fragile teenage judgment but also affects the minds of small children. Walmart recently yanked a suggestive toddler costume from its shelves in response to furious parents and numerous complaints. The poofy dress was advertised as a 'naughty leopard,' despite the fact

that it looked more like a purple ballerina with a small amount of subdued animal print. I have no clue why Walmart ever thought it would be a good idea to describe anything for children as 'naughty,' but we all know they don't always have the best fashion taste.

I understand that sex sells, but this is getting out of hand. If Halloween is about being something other than yourself, then why are we only presenting children with overtly promiscuous options? We need to stop being so obsessed with sex. Even if you think the kid doesn't understand what is entailed with her costume's short hemline, she most likely does. I want to have the option of being a Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtle without being forced to be racy. When costume stores start thinking about the good of society I might purchase my costumes from them. I'm sexy the rest of the year — my Halloween costume doesn't need to highlight that.