



# OVERCOMING SEXISM

*Addressing and Altering the Condition of Our Society*

“Visibility of sexism in Hollywood is suddenly exploding. So what’s the news? Hasn’t it always been this way?” is a statement that someone made in a recent interview we conducted. In our efforts to learn the “truth” about what’s really going on in Hollywood, we at the Institute for Gender Partnership have been deliberately gleaning perspective through conversations.

Some of the world’s top female actors are raging about their childhood and adult sexual assaults and how they’re still influenced by them today. Men are fearing for their lives, and running for the hills... What’s up with that?

Well, it’s been called “a man’s world” for good reason... Men have been running the show, and based on the “show” that it is, they have been the most fit to “run” it. Business seems to have become a “show of force,” based on a focus on

overcoming the competition, combined with a “survival of the fittest” mindset. Inherently, men have proven to focus more on beating their competitors, oftentimes with little regard for courteous, respectful, professional behavior; women’s leadership mindset has been proven to be more collaborative and divergent, focusing on the possibilities versus simply overcoming the opposition. This has

**Definition of sexism:**

- 1: prejudice or discrimination based on sex; especially: discrimination against women
- 2: behavior, conditions, or attitudes that foster stereotypes of social roles based on sex

let to an inherent hierarchy of power, which has served to consume / abuse women in the workplace, over the past several decades.

Fast forward to what’s happening in the mainstream media now: extreme exposure, accountability and consequences:

*“Harvey Weinstein’s Fall Opens the Floodgates in Hollywood” - The New York Times*

*“Three of Trump’s sexual harassment accusers call on Congress to investigate the President” – The Daily News*

*“The Latest: Lawmaker accused of sexual assault told: Resign” - SCNow*

*“Jessica Chastain feared speaking out against Harvey Weinstein would ruin her career”  
– The Daily News*



## SEXISM AFFECTS ALL OF US

- Women working 41 to 44 hours per week earn 84.6% of what men working similar hours earn; women working more than 60 hours per week earn only 78.3% of what men in the same time category earn (Bureau of Labor Statistics, cited in Hilary M. Lips, “The Gender Wage Gap: Debunking the Rationalizations”).
- Furthermore, women may work longer to receive the promotions that provide access to higher pay. For example, among school principals, women have an average of 3 years longer as teachers than men do (National Center for Education Statistics, cited in the same).
- Pay inequality figures are even worse for women of color. African American women earn only 72 cents and Latinas 60 cents for every dollar that men earn (AFL-CIO, “It’s Time for Working Women to Earn Equal Pay”).
- Women typically face challenges breaking into male-dominated fields. However, they still dominate traditionally female professions, such as the following:

### Industry Growth for Women’s Occupations (1997-2006)

Occupation	Percent
Secretaries & Administrative Assistants	96.7
Child Care Workers	94.6
Hairdressers, Stylists, Cosmetologists	92.9
Registered Nurses	91.7
Teacher Assistants	91.5
Medical Assistants & Other Healthcare Support	90.6
Auditing Clerks	90.3
Maids & Housekeeping Services	89.2
Home Health Aides	88.3
Elementary & Middle School Teachers	80.9
Office Clerks, General	85.3
Cashiers	75.6
Supervisors, Office Managers & Admin Support	73.4
Customers Service Representatives	68.5
Accountants & Auditors	61.8

*(Department of Labor, cited in Lahle Wolfe, “Job Fields Business Women Dominate”)*



The EEOC defines sexual harassment as follows:

- Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when:
- Submission to such conduct is made explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment;
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as a basis for an employment decision affecting individuals;
- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment.

- The largest percentage of employed Asian and white women (47% and 39%, respectively) worked in management, professional, and related occupations. For both black and Hispanic women, it was sales and office occupations--33% (Department of Labor, Women's Bureau, Quick Stats 2007).
- In jobs that are predominantly occupied by women such as cashiers or child care workers, women make about 95% of men's wages (DoL, cited in Karen Harper, "Sexism in the Media").
- Estimates of non-fatal domestic violence against women range from 1 million to 4 million a year with nearly 1 in 3 women experiencing a physical assault from a partner in adulthood (Domestic Violence Statistics, District of Columbia Coalition Against Domestic Violence at [www.dccadv.org](http://www.dccadv.org)).
- Women have a 10 times greater likelihood of being victimized by an intimate than men (ibid.).

The question to ask, now that you're awestruck by these statistics is: How have I been a participant as an "accomplice"? Harvey Weinstein was surrounded by accomplices. Many times, other women. As well as dignified men, who turned the other cheek. Some justify, "how could they not, with their career hanging in the balance?" Others ask "how could those women put themselves in those situations?" (re: they typical practice of Harvey Weinsten having "meetings in hotel rooms). Again, "how could they not with their career hanging in the balance?"

These are complicated questions and are rooted in a complex cultural condition in which we all live and work: **SEXISM**.

# HOW DO WE CONFRONT AND OVERCOME SEXISM?

Since sexism effects us all, it's important that we ALL are part of the solution.

- **Non-Tolerance:** If you tolerate it, you're condoning it. It's time to turn on the lights and expose those who are allowing sexism to happen. This will take courage across our leadership ranks as well as all of us individually in the communities in which we are a part.
- **Confrontation:** We're well past "just say no." It's now all about SHOUTING "NO." Lest we let this initiative atrophy back to its status quo, which some people actually want to maintain.
- **Accountability:** We get to hold others, and ourselves, to account. If you experience it or do it, step up, and skyline it. Again, this will take courage.
- **Consequence:** In order for compliance to be enforced, there must be consequences. In our law-abiding society, it's time to pass some legislation that spells out what's not tolerable, and pass it. Perhaps the fear of being locked up will quell this unrest.

The military has this down to a science. Specifically, the United States Marine Corps. Extensive "ALMAR" orders which spell out – to the letter – exactly how and when Marines will be trained on a regular basis, including online and mandatory classroom sessions, driving home the Corps' policies and specifics of sexual harassment.

Yet sexism still exists in the military and continues across all strata of business and society...

**Sexual harassment is a violation of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964**

# THE SOLUTION: GENDER PARTNERSHIP

Coming to terms with human nature... How we're compelled... It's important to define what "consent" means, and confront the unconscious biases that we don't know we have.

It's now time for us to imagine and create a world of collaboration and respect across sexual lines - true partnership between the genders. It's imperative that we learn how to come together in better partnership.

"Evolved" business is all about men and women working together, harmoniously complementing each other's capabilities, therefore raising the bar of performance and profitability of business.

At the Institute for Gender Partnership, we have a solution to anchor a new paradigm around how men & women can work together. At IGP, we're not about the typical "gender bias" work; instead, we offer customized programs, which facilitate awareness, and foster true leadership development by directly confronting the realities of specific organizational cultures.

According to The Huffington Post, the problem is that most Unconscious Bias training is ineffective because it doesn't go deep enough, and it doesn't address effectively the two largest groups of employees in most companies, namely men and middle managers (August 10, 2017). "For unconscious bias training to be successful it must take a deep dive into cultural differences. An online course or even a program facilitated by the instructor without proper knowledge and expertise will not work. The reason unconscious bias training doesn't work is that it doesn't go deep enough. Companies today must offer unconscious bias sessions with deep dives into gender, race, age, and specifically white male culture."

Gender Partnership is the global imperative for winning in the 21st Century. It's a single strategy that ensures success in multiple areas of your business. When men and women work together, they are statistically better at solving problems, innovating, making money, empowering each other, and enjoying their jobs.

It's time to confront sexism.  
It's time to build some pressure, then relieve the pressure through substantive conversations about how to advance this "status quo" into more advanced, progressive business.



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