"Where Are The Men?"
(Hiding in Plain Sight for 40 Years)

A New Definition of Consent
Men and the Mother Wound
Remembering Allan Johnson
Inspiring Anti-Sexist Books & Films
FROM THE EDITOR

Q: Where Are the Men?
A: Hiding in Plain Sight for 40 Years

Where are the men? Since last fall, when Harvey Weinstein and his predator brothers were exposed for enacting poisonous masculinity, I’ve heard that question a lot. More and more women are speaking out—and, thankfully, being believed. Two simple words—“Me, too”—have sparked a movement that’s woken a lot of people up.

That’s essential. Almost entirely absent from the global conversation has been an examination of the system that allowed men like Weinstein to thrive—a system that is “male-dominated, male-identified, and male-centered,” as the late sociologist Allan Johnson put it. The mainstream media’s coverage of individual stories of fallen men is a copout. If they want to report

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of change rolls over a culture that unfairly privileges men. They

are not alone.

As entitled men in entertainment, politics, the media, and the arts are outset, suspended, or fired, we’re being asked, Where are the men? It’s a legitimate question. Women created and still lead the movement. Many men feel it’s our cause, too. Some have been allies for a long time.

For two generations a growing number of men of all races and ethnicities in the U.S. and around the world have been working to prevent domestic and sexual violence, and also to redefine and transform traditional ideas about manhood, fatherhood, and brotherhood. Voice Male has been chronicling those efforts since 1983, beginning as a sporadically published newsletter for one of the early antiviolence, profeminist men’s centers.

Astonishingly, in reporting on #MeToo most of the media has neglected to cover—or even acknowledge—profeminist men’s sweeping critique of manhood and masculinity going back to the 1970s. When Gloria Steinem famously said, “Women want a men’s movement. We are literally dying for it,” some men were listening.

The first profeminist organizations started long ago: Men Allied Nationally for the Equal Rights Amendment (M.A.N. for ERA, 1976); EMERGE, the first U.S. batterer intervention program (1977); RAVEN (Rape and Violence End Now, 1978); Oakland Men’s Project (1979). Some two dozen such organizations founded over the last four decades are profiled in our anthology Voice Male: The Untold Story of the Profeminist Men’s Movement.

In such a consequential time, we decided to compile a list of books, films, and TED talks on gender justice and equality, and a resource list of more than 100 websites of organizations working to prevent violence against women and girls and promoting gender equality (see pages 28-29, and 32-33). Please share it.

Where are the men? Since #MeToo represents such a pivotal issue. Men not only as perpetrators or possible offenders, but also as empowered bystanders who can confront abusive peers.

Don’t remain silent. If a brother, friend, classmate, or teammate is abusing or being disrespectful to his female partner or anyone—don’t look the other way. Talk to him; urge him to seek help.

Have the courage to look inward. Question your own attitudes. Don’t be defensive when you’ve done something that hurts someone. Understand how your attitudes and actions might inadvertently perpetuate sexism and violence. Work to change them.

Get help. If you are emotionally, psychologically, physically, or sexually abusive to women, or have been in the past, seek professional help. Now.

Join the cause. Be an ally to women who are working to end gender violence. Support the women whose courage and empowered voices have catalyzed the #MeToo movement. Attend events like “Take Back the Night.” Raise money for rape-crisis centers and battered women’s shelters.

Be an ally. Recognize and speak out against homophobia and gay-bashing—abuse with direct links to sexism. (The gender identity and sexual orientation of men who challenge sexism are often questioned, a strategy intended to silence them. This is a key reason few men speak out.)

Educate yourself. Attend programs, take courses, watch films, and read articles and books about multicultural masculinities, gender inequality, and the root causes of gender violence.

Mentor others. Mentor and teach young boys about how to be men in ways that don’t involve degrading or abusing girls and women (or men). Volunteer to work with gender violence prevention programs, including antisexist men’s programs. Lead by example.

Where are the men? Women will continue to lead #MeToo as men play a critical role as partners and allies. If men are willing to investigate the destructive nature of patriarchy, and educate themselves about the benefits of gender equality, then history may well record this perilous time as patriarchy’s last stand and feminism’s—and profeminism’s—next chapter. #MenWhatAreWeWaitingFor?

Rob Okun can be reached at rob@voicemalemagazine.org

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Way Past Time to Revise 2nd Amendment

I read the recent column on gun violence. I have spent 30 years in the feminist movement, first as a domestic violence prosecutor, then as the elected City Attorney of San Diego, and now as the President of Alliance for HOPE International. I am one of those white males in his 50s who you refer to in your piece. I have always been a Second Amendment supporter even while I have advocated for adult and child survivors of men’s rage. It is clearly time to propose changes to the Second Amendment and to work aggressively to limit gun access in this country. It is past time. You are pointing us in the right direction.

Casey Gwynn
President, Alliance for HOPE International
San Diego, Calif.

Thank you for your article on gun violence. I couldn’t agree more. I have been working to address these issues for a number of years now, and continue to believe the words of Dr. King when he said, “The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends towards justice!” My focus over the years has been on violence in general, and violence against women in particular. Hopefully we can collaborate some day as we fight the good fight!

David R. Thomas
Program Manager
International Association of Chiefs of Police, Alexandria, Va.

Men Have Lots of Privilege

Men should be active and vocal as part of an overall strategy to end gun violence in this country. Worgenator [the letter writer above], the fact that you have never met a man who employs his privilege in business or in his dealings with women is a miracle of epic proportions. But I suspect your claim is actually an example of the dictum that privilege is invisible to those who enjoy it. Denial of the common denominator that these have all been men is exactly that: a denial. It is prevarication and equivocation, an excuse that only serves the cause of not holding men accountable for a massive worldwide culture of violence that gives us constant war, individual and mass rapes, domestic violence, rampant gun violence, the sexualization of young girls and the objectification of women, and a smorgasbord of media that teaches boys and men that women and girls are property, inferior, and whose private parts can be grabbed at any time. The beliefs, attitudes and behaviors boys and men are inculcated with at an early age are unhealthy for women, but also for men themselves. As a formidable woman once said: “What greater tragedy is there than for a man to be disconnected from his own heart.”

Stephen McArthur
Burlington, Vt.

Men Have Little Privilege

You write, “Let’s organize legions of men to question our gender privilege.” A fallacy. Our privilege? I have never met a single man-boss that selected a man over a woman due to this mythical “privilege” in the 30 years I have been in business. It may exist in your slanted, biased textbooks but in the real world it is ridiculously rare. If anything, women are more prone to select women over men. Seen it happen that way many times. But I don’t expect you to believe me. Oh, and [regarding the Las Vegas shooter], let’s not forget that there was a woman there with him who saw his melt down and could have saved all those people but she was getting a free ride from his gambling and real estate money so she said and did nothing. The twisted version of feminism you are selling is just as crazy as the worldview of the gun nut, the radical zealot or the war mongering leaders of this crazy world.

“Worgenator”
Via the Internet

Cover Clear Enough?

I wanted to email you about your Fall 2017 magazine cover. I saw it in print, and I honestly couldn’t tell if it was a male feminist magazine or an anti-feminist magazine. It looks like something an MRA would design to make fun of liberals. The two biggest factors are the melodramatic stock photo of the man with his hands on his head, and the excessive use of the word “white” in the headlines. I believe in what you are doing, and want to make sure you are getting your message across clearly.

Valerie Lute
Via email

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Men @ Work

#MeToo's Positive Impact on Young Men

With #MeToo dominating social conversation and showing no signs of slowing down, in December MTV conducted extensive research with young people 18 to 25 around the efficacy of the movement and how it's effecting change. The results were optimistic and showed that young men are now questioning their behavior.

According to the results, nearly one in three young men were concerned that something they had done in the past could be considered sexual harassment. Forty percent of the young men admitted that #MeToo had changed the way they act in potential romantic relationships.

And one in four of the young people surveyed said they've noticed guys around them change their behavior since the #MeToo movement began.

Tarana Burke, #MeToo founder, was elated at the results: “I’m very excited that MTV did this research, and am pleased to hear that the work we’re doing in #MeToo is reaching so many young people.”

MTV also found that #MeToo is changing how young people perceive gender dynamics in society. Sixty-one percent of respondents said they have thought about how society enables sexist behavior among men since the initiative.

Editor's Note: While the suggestions below focus on women, the writer notes they also apply to how to better treat transgender and non-binary people who are in more danger than cisgender women.

- Talk to your friend who is “kind of a creep” at work.
- Don’t talk over women.
- If you are asked to be on a panel/team and see that it’s all men, say something. Maybe even refuse the spot!
- When you see another guy talk over a woman, say: “Hey, she was saying something.”
- Learn to “read” what’s happening in a room.
- Don’t call women “crazy” in a professional setting.
- Don’t use your “feminism” as a way to get women to trust you. Show us in your day-to-day life, not in your self-congratulatory social media.
- Don’t touch women you don’t know, and honestly, ask yourself why you feel the need to touch women in general.
- Do you feel that any woman on earth owes you something? She doesn’t. Even if you’re like, “Hmm, but what about basic respect?” ask yourself if you’ve shown her the same.
- Don’t send pictures of your penis unless she just asked for them.
- If a woman says no to a date, don’t ask her again.
- If a woman has not given an enthusiastic “yes” to sex, back the hell off.
- If a woman is really drunk, she cannot consent to you and she also cannot consent to your buddy who seems to be trying something. Your buddy is your responsibility, so say something and intervene.

Nicole Silverberg is a TV writer and editor at Reductress. This piece first appeared in The Guardian.

28 Ways Men Can Treat Women Better

By Nicole Silverberg

- If you do the right thing, don’t expect praise or payment or a pat on the back or even a “thank-you from that woman.” Congratulations, you were baseline decent.
- Involve women in your creative projects, then let them have equal part in them.
- Don’t make misogynistic jokes.
- Don’t expect women to be “nice” or “cute” and don’t get upset when they aren’t those things.
- Don’t make assumptions about a woman’s intelligence, capabilities or desires based on how she dresses.
- Pay women as much as you pay men.
- If a woman tells you that you fucked up, and you feel like shit, don’t put it on that woman to make you feel better. Apologize without qualification and then go away.
- Don’t get defensive when you get called out.
- Don’t need to literally witness a man being horrible in order to believe that he’s horrible. Trust and believe women.
- Don’t use your power to get women’s attention/company/sex, etc.
- Be aware of your inherent power in situations and use it to protect women, especially via talking to other men.
- Stop thinking that because you’re also marginalized or a survivor that you cannot inflict pain or oppress women.
- If women’s pain makes you feel pain, don’t prize your pain above hers, or make that pain her problem.
- Don’t read a list like this and think that most of these don’t apply to you.
began, and 59 percent said the movement has made them think about how difficult the world is for women.

The survey was designed and conducted by MTV Insights Research among a nationally representative sample of approximately 1800 young people ages 18 to 25 in December 2017. For resources and survey information go to metoo.mtv.com.

Macho Men Skewing Pain Studies

Hypermasculine men who exhibit traits such as competitiveness and aggressiveness may be more likely to take part in pain research—and it could be skewing our understanding of how women and men experience pain differently.

Research published in the Journal of Pain last November looked at whether identification with traditional gender roles influences the likelihood of participating in a pain study. The team from the University of Reading in the United Kingdom and Federal University of Rio de Janeiro recruited 137 student volunteers to answer questions about their biological sex and gender identification, and then say whether they were willing to participate in a pain study. The findings indicated that men with traditional male gender traits, including competitiveness and aggression, were significantly more likely to sign up as participants for pain studies.

“The discovery not only suggests that pain studies may not accurately reflect population demographics, but may also alter interpretations of observed differences between men and women,” said Dr. Tim Salomons of the School of Psychology at the University of Reading.

“Previous studies link gender identification to pain threshold, so if we’re recruiting more macho men, it stands to reason that men will appear more tolerant. We also know that men report less pain if the experimenter is a woman, suggesting they might report less pain to appear manly,” Dr. Salomons explained.

Trump Administration Endorses LGBTQ Discrimination

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has opened the door to discrimination against the LGBTQ community. A proposed new HHS rule would allow health workers to refuse to treat LGBTQ people because of supposed moral or religious objections.

“HHS civil rights director Roger Severino is an anti-LGBTQ activist who has long fought against equality for our community,” said Gay & Lesbian Victory Institute CEO Annise Parker. “His politicization of healthcare takes us down a dangerous path that will harm not just the LGBTQ community, but other communities targeted by those opposed to equality. “

Severino is one of many anti-LGBTQ activists appointed to the Trump administration, despite almost no LGBTQ people appointed to key departments or positions. According to the Victory Institute’s presidential appointments project, during the administrations of Presidents Bill Clinton, George W. Bush and Barack Obama, there were more than 400 LGBTQ political appointees.
Remembering a Life Guide

Allan Johnson 1946–2017

M y dear friend Allan Johnson, an exquisite human being who lived a life with integrity as his north star, died on Christmas eve. We’d met many years ago after I’d read the galleys of his riveting first novel, The First Thing and The Last, an achingly candid story of a woman who had survived domestic violence, and a crone who nurtured her healing. (We ran an excerpt in the magazine.) Our friendship belied definition. There was a closeness we felt with one another that the term “brother” would only hint at. If I’d described Allan as a mentor, he likely would have demurred. Best I can come up with is we recognized in each other our humanness, occupying a place beyond gender.

Writing these words only weeks after he died, I feel him guiding my fingers across the keyboard as I journey on in our relationship with only one of us here in a corporal body. It’s possible that others who only know—or will know—Allan through reading his books or listening to his recorded talks about race, class and gender (and their overlapping connections) may feel as I do, that he is a life guide. In the last paragraph of his classic work, The Gender Knot: Unraveling Our Patriarchal Legacy, Allan wrote:

The human capacity to choose how to participate in the world empowers all of us to pass along something different than what’s been passed on to us. With each strand of the patriarchal gender knot that we help to unravel, we don’t act simply for ourselves.

We join a process of creative resistance to oppression that’s been unfolding for thousands of years. We become part of the long tradition of people who have dared to make a difference—to look at things as they are, to imagine something better, and to plant seeds of change in themselves, in others, and in the world.

May we heed his words.

—Rob Okun

What follows are excerpts from his obituary, and tributes from those who valued his work and life.

Allan Johnson, Noted Sociologist, Novelist, at 71

O ted sociologist and novelist Allan G. Johnson, an influential figure in the profeminist men’s movement and the broader progressive movements for social justice, died on December 24 at his home in Canton, Connecticut, surrounded by family and friends. He was 71.

Author both of nonfiction books and novels, his work coupled keen analysis with engaging, accessible writing in books addressing gender, race, and class. Best known among them are The Gender Knot, and Privilege, Power, and Difference.

“Allan was passionately committed to ending men’s violence against women, which is how I was initially drawn to his work, and to him,” said the author and cultural critic Jackson Katz. “He made a major contribution to our theoretical and practical understanding of how men—especially white men—can and should play a role in the struggles for gender, racial and economic justice.” Paula Rothenberg, editor of Race, Class, and Gender in the United States, said by unraveling society’s patriarchal legacy, The Gender Knot was “one of the best, most readable, and most comprehensive accounts of patriarchy that is available in print.”

While a professor of sociology at Wesleyan University in Middletown, Connecticut, he began a lifelong commitment to understanding the fundamental nature of social life and systems of oppression and privilege, including how and why systems of privilege are created and maintained by society.

The issue that first drew him to these problems was men’s violence against women. In the late 1970s, he began volunteering at the Rape Crisis Service in Hartford, Conn. He developed an undergraduate course on the sociology of gender to explore the structure and culture of patriarchal systems and male privilege. A consultant with the National Center for the Prevention of Rape, he served on the board of the Connecticut Coalition against Domestic Violence, as well as testifying before the state judiciary committee on laws to protect the rights of sexual assault victims.

His first novel, The First Thing and the Last, was published in 2010 after meeting with considerable resistance from mainstream publishers because of its realistic portrayal of domestic violence. Publishers Weekly recognized it as a notable debut work of fiction. Nothing Left to Lose, his second novel, was published the following year and revolved around an American family in crisis during the Vietnam War. Not from Here was his last book, a memoir published in 2015 that explored the meaning of being white in North America.

“He was a man of integrity and depth of soul,” said Nora Jamieson, his life partner of 37 years, “who carried and wrote of suffering, creating exquisite beauty that pierced the heart. More than anything, Allan wanted to walk the path of a real human being.”

“His Work Changed My Life”

By Anita Sarkeesian

Several years ago, award-winning media critic Anita Sarkeesian, founder of Feminist Frequency, was on a New York subway when a friend told her to listen to a speech he had on his primitive, first-generation iPhone. They listened together, one ear bud in each of their ears, as “an older white dude” spoke about systems of privilege and oppression. At the time, Sarkeesian recalls, she didn’t fully understand what those terms meant, but “this guy just started laying out the concepts piece by piece, slowly, carefully, deliberately.” The “guy” was Allan Johnson. He used an analogy about the board game Monopoly she still thinks “is one of the most compelling arguments to help folks understand how social systems work, not just theoretically, but how they concretely impact our lives.” While she “didn’t know it then, this moment changed the course of my life forever,” prompting her to begin voraciously reading—and listening—to everything she could of Allan’s work. What follows is an edited version of the tribute she posted on the Feminist Frequency website (feministfrequency.com), which analyzes modern media’s relationship to societal issues such as gender, race, and sexuality.
I woke up on New Year's Day to the news that Allan Johnson had died on Christmas Eve. A sociologist, writer, novelist, educator, and advocate to end violence against women, I wish his book The Gender Knot: Unraveling Our Patriarchal Legacy was required reading for everyone. I often have several copies on my bookshelf so I can hand them out to friends and colleagues.

I'd never met Allan in person, although we did talk and correspond. I initially reached out to him because I was frustrated that his website (www.agjohnson.us/) was so ugly; I wanted to send people links to his articles and speeches but I was afraid folks wouldn't take work seriously on a website that looked so makeshift.

So I sent him an email asking if I could build him a new site and, much to my delight, he agreed. I remember hearing his voice on the phone and feeling a little starstruck because I had listened to his speeches many times over. We worked on building his site into a resource people could use and share. He thanked me by sending me copies of each of his books. I remember specifically asking him not to bother signing them. “I think autographs are stupid,” I said.

We would occasionally exchange emails. When the third edition of The Gender Knot was being published, he asked me to write a few words in support of the book. I couldn't have been more honored. I wrote:

"The Gender Knot is a book that never leaves my side, intellectually at least. Since I was first introduced to Allan Johnson's work, this text has served as a faithful companion to my personal and professional growth. Johnson lays out how patriarchy, as a social system, interacts with all of us, in one of the most accessibly written books on the topic. He proficiently explains how this damaging system hurts people of all genders, and gently guides us away from reactionary feelings of guilt and towards those of social responsibility. The Gender Knot is an invaluable and timeless resource for everyone who cares about gender equality."

Allan dedicated his life to bringing a knowledge of systems of privilege and oppression beyond the realm of academia, making people aware of their effects on our lives so that we are better able to work to change individual behavior and challenge institutional oppression. His work changed my life, as I'm sure it did the lives of many others. With no exaggeration, I can say that Feminist Frequency would not exist without his influence.

They say you should never meet your heroes, and in most circumstances I fully agree with this sentiment, but I feel so very honored to have met this man. Allan Johnson's passing is a terrible loss, but I know that his vital work will live on in so many who had their eyes opened by his wonderful books, talks and trainings, and I'll forever be grateful for the moment I first heard his voice on that subway all those years ago.

Anita Sarkeesian is a media critic and founder-executive director of Feminist Frequency, an organization exploring representations of women in pop culture narratives.

Colleague, Comrade, Role Model

Allan Johnson was a friend, colleague, comrade and role model. A fellow sociologist, he and I knew each other for more than 20 years. I greatly admired his work, especially The Gender Knot, which was one of the more careful and accessible books to help people explain the dynamics of gender and gender inequality.

When the book was first published, here is what I wrote:

"As any knitter will tell you, the way to unravel a knot is not to pull hard on one end, but gently shake the entire skein until all the threads are loosened. In this book, Allan Johnson gently and patiently shakes the patriarchal knot until each of the constituent threads becomes analytically clear. In doing so, he gives men a way to be part of unraveling that oppressive knot, rather than simply tugging defensively on their end."

What I remember most is Allan's patience—as a writer, reader and thinker. He was quiet, thoughtful and methodical in both prose and polemic. He wanted to render ideas so accessible that anyone could understand them, because he knew that if they understood how patriarchy worked, they'd support feminist efforts to dismantle it.

His was a major voice among profeminist men, and I will miss him very much.

—Michael Kimmel

An Unraveler of Knots

When I first read Allan's book The Gender Knot: Unraveling Our Patriarchal Legacy, I knew it was going to change lives. Including mine. The book is still one of the best, most readable sociological analyses of gender we have. I used it for years in my undergraduate gender course, and I've recommended it to generations of graduate students studying inequality.

One of the great insights in the book is that patriarchy is not an either-or condition but a variable one. Societies are patriarchal, Allan says, to the extent that they are male-dominated, male-identified, and male-centered. That simple definition has the profound effect of making patriarchy visible and amenable to analysis.

Allan could also explain, as well as any sociologist ever has, how self and society are intertwined. In The Gender Knot he shows us how gender and patriarchy don't just exist "out there" in the world, apart from us. They exist no less inside of us and because of us—because of what we think, feel, and do as social beings.

In 2001, Allan gave a workshop at a symposium I had organized on teaching about inequality. During the session, a colleague remarked to Allan, for reasons I don't recall, on the need for more research about inequality. Most sociologists would have bowed to academic convention and said that yes, of course more research is needed. Allan didn't. He said that what we needed was to do a better job of teaching what we already knew. Allan put that principle into practice. Which is why his work has made a difference and will continue to do so.

—Michael Schwalbe
We may be at a watershed moment for feminism. The global movement surrounding #MeToo, in which many women and some men are bravely sharing their experiences with sexual harassment and abuse, has sparked a surge of public awareness about the persistence of gender inequalities around the world.

Shortly after the movement began, the global secretariat of the MenEngage Alliance, a network (including Voice Male) of more than 700 NGOs in 70 countries working with men and boys to transform masculinities and achieve gender equality, released a statement, “expressing solidarity with the survivors of abuse and highlighting men’s critical roles and responsibilities in putting an end to the persistent culture of violence,” according to Sinéad Nolan, MenEngage programs assistant. It provoked a lively debate among MenEngage Alliance members. (menengage.org/news/hear-believe-and-act/).

“We realized that to appropriately address such a complex issue we would need to engage the membership in further debate, essentially crowdsourcing ideas and solutions,” MenEngage global advocacy coordinator Jennifer Rodriguez Bruno said.

At the end of last year, the Alliance held a virtual roundtable, “Roles and Responsibilities of Men and Boys in Response to #MeToo.” With more than 30 MenEngage Alliance activists from around the world participating—a lively “chat box” for comments was peppered throughout with questions and observations—MenEngage created “a safe-space for both critical reflection and collective exploration of men and boys responding to #MeToo.

Panelists for the roundtable included: Srilatha Batliwala, director of knowledge building at CREA, a nearly two decades-old feminist human rights organization based in New Delhi; Urvashi Gandhi, deputy director of community mobilization for Breakthrough, also based in New Delhi, an NGO addressing women’s empowerment, domestic violence, harassment, and gender discrimination; Humberto Carolo, executive director of the men’s antiviolence organization White Ribbon Canada; and Luis Lineo, president of the Swedish-based MÄN—Men for Gender Equality. The panel was moderated by MenEngage global director Joni van de Sand. What follows is a summary of the virtual roundtable.

#MeToo has had a remarkable impact in almost every corner of the globe, albeit in different ways. Panelists in the MenEngage virtual roundtable shared their experiences during a dialogue that took place across time zones from India to Sweden, and Sweden to Canada and the U.S. In India, for example, #MeToo has created the second major shift in recent times in terms of public awareness of sexual harassment and violence, the first being the reaction to the brutal gang rape of a young female medical student in Delhi in 2012. “The difference this time is the attention drawn to the whole spectrum of sexual
violence that women face," remarked Batliwala, the educator from CREA. ‘While women in India have been speaking out against this violence for a long time, it seems that they are now finally being heard, and men are realizing the scale of the problem,’ added Urvashi Gandhi at Breakthrough. While this increased awareness is encouraging, it is happening at a political moment in the country in which a right-wing fundamentalist regime is reinforcing traditional gender roles in society. These contrasting worldviews are coming up against each other, and in many cases those who have spoken out using #MeToo have faced further violence.

In Canada White Ribbon's Carolo observed that #MeToo has caused a huge surge in interest among men and boys wanting to get involved in White Ribbon, and a groundswell in media interest in these topics. The momentum has opened doors for White Ribbon to have important conversations with men in positions of power. The organization has been contacted by a range of men in business, tech and politics.

#MeToo also has had a dramatic impact in Sweden, according to Lineo of MÄN—Men for Gender Equality, resulting in the resignation of men in power at all levels of society. It's been described as a “second revolution” for women where their voices are finally being heard and taken seriously. MÄN has also experienced an enormous increase in interest by men, resulting in the organization's membership doubling in just three weeks.

Reaching and mobilizing “good men”

#MeToo is not an attack on men; it is an invitation for men to be part of the solution to a worldwide problem. For men to accept the invitation, we must provide men with concrete examples of actions they can take, as well as appealing alternatives to traditional masculinity. One way to do it, panelists agreed, is through contextualized toolkits, providing men with steps they can take to bring an end to violence and harassment in their various spheres of influence—the family, the workplace, and the community.

“Our biggest challenge is how we connect with and mobilize the many well-intentioned men out there, to be part of a critical mass to tip the system,” observed Joni van de Sand, global director of the MenEngage Alliance. “We need to identify male changemakers who aren’t using violence and are willing to speak up and inspire others in their communities and beyond. It is the responsibility of these “converted” men to use the opportunities they have to elevate women’s voices and advance the goals of feminist movements.”

The importance of creating opportunities for men to take collective action was stressed. “It is critical that men create spaces to have these difficult—but essential conversations,” said Lineo of MÄN, acknowledging the need “to build support networks and alliances from which to act.” Breakthrough’s Gandhi added, “If men want to take a stand they want to see who's behind them, who's supporting them. Everyone can't go against the tide, that's also what we've told women,” she said.

Being mindful of language was also addressed, including terms such as “action heroes” and “good men.” “We must not reinforce men’s protector role in our appeals to men and boys,” said Carolo of White Ribbon, “or put men who engage in efforts to end gender-based violence on a pedestal simply for doing the right thing—what women’s rights activists have been doing for decades.” Participants agreed that different terminology may be needed to appeal to specific groups of men.

Accountability to women’s rights organizations and women activists was seen as central in any efforts around #MeToo, as well as the need to keep the focus on survivors of sexual harassment and abuse. There was some debate as to the importance of men-only spaces versus mixed-gender spaces. A balance needs to be found between not burdening women with the responsibility for men's personal transformation, and ensuring women's voices are heard. It was also recognized that, while engaging men and boys is an important strategy in ending sexual harassment and abuse, it is only one of many strategies needed, including work to empower women and girls.

A key takeaway from the event was the need for multilevel approaches to tackle cultures of violence. “Becoming a male ally is a process,” observed Carolo. “Engaging men 1.0 starts with men's individual behavior. Stage 2.0 is acting in solidarity with others, and 3.0 is starting to act within institutions to change policies and cultures. It’s important to help men go beyond 1.0—that's how we create accountability.”

Participants in the dialogue offered examples of concrete initiatives at each level, from individual to institutional, that they have been involved in since #MeToo, as well as ongoing initiatives to engage men and boys in transforming violent masculinities.

The Personal is political—for men too

Personal transformation is often the first step for men and boys, and can spur engagement at other levels. Participants shared examples of how they have been working with men and boys to create change at the individual and relationship level:

• White Ribbon Canada has updated its founding pledge—to “never commit, condone or remain silent about violence against women and girls.” The modified pledge asks men to model
equitable behavior and calls on men in positions of leadership to look at the systems around them to make sure gender equality is advanced at those levels.

• White Ribbon Canada is also implementing the campaign 20 minutes 4 Change, a platform for action encouraging fathers to pledge at least 20 minutes to talk to their sons about sexual consent.

• MÄN—Men for Gender Equality responded to #MeToo by holding a meeting for men who want to be part of the change and creating men’s discussion groups, to provide men with the opportunity to talk about these issues. The organization trains men to facilitate these groups; more than 40 have been created.

• MÄN has also promoted five actions for men to respond to #MeToo, from listening, to self-reflection, to taking action. (See story, page 22.)

• #Guytalk is a method for starting conversations about what it’s like to be a man—and what gender equality means—started by the Swedish organization Make Equal. The initiative provides men with the tools to hold “guy talks” in their homes, clubs or workplaces.

Active bystanders and action heroes

Participants emphasized the need for men to be “active bystanders” and highlighted initiatives that support men to actively support gender equality in their communities:

• Breakthrough’s Bell Bajao (Ring the Bell) campaign urges local residents to ring the doorbell when they notice domestic violence occurring in their neighborhood in order to interrupt the violence. Through effective video communication, the campaign has reached millions of people in India and around the world.

• A Bangladeshi organization, Blank Noise, mobilizes men and women to become Action Heroes, engaging with men on the streets of their own communities to have challenging conversations about their roles and responsibilities in sexual harassment and gender-based violence.

• HARASSmap is an Egyptian initiative where anyone who experiences or witnesses sexual harassment can report the incident, including identifying the site on a map. HARASSmap volunteers visit the areas where incidents have occurred to raise awareness about what constitutes sexual harassment and to work toward ending it.

• Next Gen Men has developed 10 Tips for Engaging Boys and Young Men in Gender Equity and Transformative Masculinities. It’s based on their experience running school-based programs with young boys.

“Helping “good men” to see that inaction is complicity, and mobilizing them to act is the key challenge—and the key opportunity—of the #MeToo movement.”

—Srilatha Batliwala

In business, schools and politics

Individual interest sparked by #MeToo must be translated into the transformation of institutions where gender inequalities are perpetuated, such as in businesses, schools and universities, and the media. In particular, there is a critical need to engage with children on gender issues through the education system, starting at preschool, before harmful norms develop. To that end:

• MÄN—Men for Gender Equality was invited to hold a discussion on men’s behavior and #MeToo with Sweden’s top business and tech leaders, where there was considerable interest in doing more to end violence and harassment in the workplace. MÄN is now seeking to work with five companies as leaders on this topic and exploring ways to engage with the private sector.

• MÄN have also started to create a network of politicians in the Swedish parliament and members of almost all major parties in Sweden have pledged to make ending gender-based violence their main election campaign promise.

• White Ribbon Canada launched Parker P., a social enterprise arm of White Ribbon, which collaborates with private sector companies, governments, and institutions to promote gender equality.

• White Ribbon Canada has developed curricula on gender-based violence for preschool to high school students and trained teachers to implement these curricula.

• MERGE for Equality has designed a training called “Developing Healthy Boys—Raising Emotionally and Socially Connected Boys” for early childhood educators and allied professionals.

Changing the system

The main focus of attention since #MeToo began has been on individual men, with minimal focus on patriarchy as a system. Participants agreed on the need to connect the issues #MeToo has raised with broader systems of oppression such as racism, homophobia, neoliberal capitalism, etc. If survivors are being taken seriously, and men and boys who are part of the problem begin taking responsibility to call out men’s violence and cultures of violence and impunity more broadly, the #MeToo movement can indeed catalyze a watershed moment for the feminist movement, create lasting positive social change.
“So far, men have treated #MeToo like a bumbling dad in a deter-
gent commercial: well-intentioned but floundering, as though they are
not the experts.” So wrote Lindy West, the New York Times opinion
writer, in a column not long ago. The author of Shrill: Notes from
a Loud Woman, she frequently writes about feminism and social
justice. Nevertheless, like many other commentators asking, “Where
are the men?” sadly, when she looked all she saw were “bumbling dads.”
Sure, some are, although most aren’t.

Antisexist, profeminist men—academic, activist, some both—have
been following women’s exhortation to challenge men’s violence against
women since the 1970s. Elsewhere in these pages are a substantial
number of resources—books, films, organizations, campaigns, as well
as inspiring stories—that offer ample evidence that there is a gender
justice men’s movement that believes in women’s equality and has been
speaking out and working to prevent sexual and domestic violence
for decades. The movement owes its existence to women’s activism in
the 1960s and 1970s. Many of its veterans have been thinking about
how men can respond in this pivotal moment. What follows are short
essays sparked by #MeToo, written by four members of Voice Male’s
national advisory board.

—RO

Men’s Responsibility to Women, Girls
and Other Men

By Jackson Katz

The #MeToo moment is demanding that men do more than
just listen to—and believe—women’s stories of abuse and
violation. We also have to break our complicit silence,
and act.

When my colleagues and I first began doing gender violence
prevention education workshops with male college athletes in the
early 1990s, we would often hear them express frustration that
they had been unfairly tarnished with the cultural stereotype that
“jocks” don’t respect women. It’s a sentiment we still hear from
male student-athletes.

What I would tell them is that they had a choice: They could
hunker down in a defensive crouch and complain they weren’t
being treated fairly. Or they could change the negative perception
by standing up and speaking out about sexual assault and relation-
ship abuse. They could use their considerable cultural capital with
other men and with younger boys to help prevent the abuse from
happening in the first place.

Many men today are faced with similar choices, and well
beyond athletics. In recent months, a seemingly endless series of
sexual harassment scandals have erupted in Hollywood, Silicon
Valley, the military and corporate America. In addition, a growing
roster of prominent men have been outed—if not formally
charged—as sexual assault perpetrators, including the president
of the United States.

In response to so many women’s raw testimony about the
effects of this abuse in their lives, men who do not engage in
abusive behaviors should ask themselves: Do I retreat to the
shameful strategy of casting doubt on the veracity of the women’s
claims? Do I resort to the embarrassing practice of protesting that
#notallmen commit sexist violence, and thereby absolve myself
of any responsibility to act? Or do those men choose to respond
to women’s demand to be treated with respect and dignity with a
renewed pledge of their own, to do whatever they can to identify
and fight against sexism, both within themselves and when they
see it endorsed by other men?

Fortunately, if they choose to become actively part of the
solution, they will find a great deal of support—and not only from
women, many of whom have been waiting a very long time for
more men to take a stand to end men’s violence against women.

When men who were previously silent make the decision to
speak out and challenge and interrupt other men’s sexism, they
will find that a lot of other men will cheer them on—even if not
always in the moment, and not always in public.

We still have a lot of work to do to make antisexism normal
and respectable among men. Adult men have a responsibility not
only to women and girls to do this; we also have a responsibility to
our sons and grandsons—all young men—and to our own sense
of fairness, justice and basic human decency.

Jackson Katz is founder and president of MVP Strategies. A version of
this article was published in the San Francisco Chronicle.

Manhood? Let’s Try Humanhood!

By Tom Gardner

I recently heard the story of Yaa Asantewaa, the Queen Mother
of the Ejisuhe内e who led a revolt against British rule of Ghana
in the early 1900s after the king of the Asanti federation was
captured and exiled. “If you men won’t stand up to the British, we women will,” she said as she led an army of 5,000 to fight the British before she was captured. Bravery, we are told, is a particularly male trait. Uh-huh.

The women who have led the way and responded by the tens of thousands to the #MeToo movement have shown us the very meaning of courage. But where have the brave men been all this time? Yes, there have been activists developing the antisezist, profeminist men’s movement for decades. Still, how many men have stayed on the sidelines, have known about the harassment, the exploitation, the assaults perpetrated by men in their midst without raising a peep? How many have been afraid to examine their own transgressions or to challenge those of male associates? Like the Queen Mother, the #MeToo women essentially are saying, “If you men won’t stand up to the harassers, we will.”

Many of us involved in challenging traditional notions of masculinity and working to prevent men’s violence against women have also bought into the notion of inherent gender traits, proposing that men should be more open to their “feminine side”—vulnerable, nurturing, feeling, compassionate.

Traits associated with gender are socially constructed myths designed to perpetuate power relations that serve the dominant gender, and they are often turned into deadly weapons. The “protection” of Southern white womanhood, for instance, was the war cry of the lynch mobs. And young men have been sent to slaughter in wars for centuries as a “rite of manhood.”

Enough with manhood! Let’s try humanhood for a change and see where it leads us—to liberation, freedom, equality, the beauty of honest relationships, the end of violence. It’s time to try.

A former member of the board of the Men’s Resource Center for Change, Tom Gardner is a professor of communications at Westfield University.

Mascularity: A Way Forward

By Robert Jensen

Men have long claimed to own, control, or have the right to exploit women’s reproductive power and sexuality. Those claims are deeply embedded in contemporary culture—so deeply that the resulting practices are routinely taken to be “just the way things are”—but the practices also are inconsistent with widely shared moral values of liberty, equality, and solidarity.

What should we men do? What should we do if we want to be decent men? Here are a few suggestions:

- Identify the system of institutionalized male dominance (patriarchy) that gives men unearned privilege and power.

- Challenge that system by joining the intellectual and political movement (radical feminism) that offers the most compelling analysis of patriarchy and resistance to its routine abusive practices (such as men’s violence and the sexual-exploitation industries of prostitution, pornography, and stripping).

- Recognize other systems that also give select people unearned privilege and power (capitalism, imperialism, white supremacy) and join movements to analyze and resist those systems as well.

- Reject the dominant definition of masculinity as asserting control and seeking conquest through aggression.

- Acknowledge that these analyses and actions are not only consistent with the moral values we claim to hold, but also in our own self-interest if we seek a richer, more fulfilling, and meaningful life.

In short: Stop worrying about “how to be a man” and start struggling to be a decent human being.

Author of The End of Patriarchy: Radical Feminism for Men, Robert Jensen is a professor of journalism at the University of Texas at Austin.

Dissociation and the Journey to Wholeness

By Steven Botkin

“Once upon a time there was a baby boy…” (Remember to tell the story from the beginning.) “And just like every baby that has ever been born, this little boy was born with one powerful desire—connection.”

Connection has always been at the heart of our work of understanding masculinity, ending men’s violence, and engaging men in gender equality, for me beginning with the founding of the Men’s Resource Connection in 1982 and the Making Connections Conference the following year.

“This baby boy knew that reaching for connection was good, and right, and healthy. He was not ashamed.” When we begin the story about the journey to manhood with the little boy’s natural desire for loving connection—the human birthright—there is hope.

The journey to manhood is filled with violations of this birthright, creating a profound wound on the individual and collective body, mind and spirit of humanity. We become separated from the experience of wholeness, separated from the parts of ourselves that remember connection, separated from each other.

The abusive distortions of manhood that dominate our social and political world overshadow the memory of connection. It becomes too painful to remember our humanness in the face of the legacies of violence received, witnessed and perpetrated. To avoid being overwhelmed by this pain, we forget our birthright of connection, aided by the drugs of privilege, power and control.

Watching now in horror as the forces of white male supremacy seize new levels of dominance and control in our government, it can be hard to remember the source of our humanness in the birthright of connection. Blatant abuses of individual and corporate power seem to deny our connectedness as interpersonal, institutional and cultural violence is normalized and celebrated by the regime of the current president. The specter of fascism once again spreads across the land.

And yet, as these ugly faces of white masculinity are elevated to the highest offices of our country, they are also being exposed in the shameful truth of abusive power and disconnection. Some are even being catapulted from their pinnacles of power.

We are at a tipping point. Are we witnessing a historic dismantling of democracy and the rise of a corporate oligarchy? Or are we witnessing the slow, painful and often violent dissolution of a patriarchy and white supremacy as we remember our birthright of connection?

How we begin the story makes a difference in what happens next. If we remember, there is hope. “Once upon a time there was a baby boy…”

A founder of the Men’s Resource Connection and Men’s Resources International, Steven Botkin is a senior trainer at MERGE for Equality.
The #MeToo movement has reignited a global conversation on gender. But too often this conversation is happening only among women. Gender activists are now hoping that a transformation will also take place among men in response to #MeToo. Whether in a village in India or in a city halfway around the globe, the shift I’m hoping for would look something like this: A young man reads, hears or sees something about a woman being sexually harassed—or worse. Perhaps it’s a piece in the media; maybe a community video; or something an outspoken teacher in his school or college said. The common denominator in all cases is challenging his way of thinking. Somehow, rather than just making him uncomfortable, a message gets through to him. And then he takes that crucial next step: he says something out loud. He finds his voice. He admits his anxieties or, perhaps, even his mistakes. He starts a real conversation with other men. Maybe just one friend. Maybe a whole village. Maybe on Facebook. Maybe in an op-ed. Maybe in his office.

At this point, we’ll hear something the world has never really heard before: a chorus of male voices committed to ending patriarchy.

A group of young men stare intently at the screen of a tablet computer balanced on a tripod jerry-rigged with a piece of wood. The men, aged 25 to 35, are all members of the Baiga tribe of Madhya Pradesh, a state in central India. In the past they have come together as budding activists to talk about getting legal rights to the forest they live in and depend on. Today they are talking about something significantly more challenging to their sense of self: patriarchy.

Ramlal Bhaiga, who had previously organized a gender discussion club three or four times, is a community correspondent with the organization I work for, Video Volunteers. Ramlal, who is 27, was married at the age of 12, worked as a daily wage laborer, and then got involved in India’s largest nonviolent social movement, Ekta Parishad—fighting for redistribution of land. Since we first trained him in video reporting in 2013, he has produced 44 videos on problems in his community arising from corruption and poor infrastructure and education. In nine of those cases, Ramlal also managed to get the problems resolved, by networking with government officials.

Ramlal says the group has seen a few videos addressing concepts such as honor, marital rape, why women don’t say their husband’s name out loud and about the division of labor based on gender. “During one session many of the boys admitted they teased girls when they went to the market or school,” Ramlal said. “They realized they ought not to behave like this. They felt that if they teased girls even after joining a gender club, they were no different than [other men]. They wanted to be better than that.” He said one of the boys told him a few days later that when a “wrong thought” crossed his mind he remembered what they’d discussed in the gender club and reconsidered his actions.

Ramlal, of course, has never heard of the #MeToo movement. There’s no hashtag for it in the language he speaks. And if there were, he wouldn’t have seen it anyhow, since he is hardly on social media. Internet has only come to his area in the last couple of years.
years. But once Ramlal learned what #MeToo was, he had this to say on the power of media, in any form. “From what I see and hear, women are oppressed in every part of the world. Video Volunteers is running discussion clubs across the country and so we end up seeing videos from other parts of the country. This way we all learn from each other’s perspectives; what is acceptable in one part of the country may not be acceptable in another. This helps us form a real picture of what’s going on.”

Ramlal says creating spaces for dialogue among men is critical “because we have so internalized what we have learned from society, movies and our families. In our area the boys follow the example of their fathers who abuse their mothers. Or elder brothers who drink or go out and harass or grab girls during festivals or fairs.” He said that in his village, “we often feel incapable of stepping in to stop violence against women. We are told that it is not right to interfere in someone else’s problem. But through discussion groups, I think I can equip at least one person in each family to stand up for themselves or others. Then other people in the family will change their perspectives. Then the family next door will learn by example and then a whole village.”

Will the #MeToo movement die out before it spreads to men? There are three reasons it might: the conversations required are so difficult, they are happening mostly online, and they are missing the root cause, which is patriarchy.

Social media is simply not an adequate platform for collective soul-searching. For that, we need live-in-person discussion. From my experience, I know that structured, live discussions about gender discrimination work. Video Volunteers has helped 63 men and women in rural India—men like Ramlal—to lead more than 300 such discussions in the last 18 months across 13 states of India.

None of them had much of an idea of how to lead a gender discussion, and all were fairly nervous. We gave Ramlal a series of videos that some of our 250 community correspondents have made. Having visual aids helps the messages hit home. We gave him a discussion guide, seven days of live training, and access to mentors to help him understand how to break the uncomfortable silences and how to get people to speak up. In particular, we wanted to get past the “easy” answers—the kinds of answers, in fact, I saw from the male stars on the red carpet at the Golden Globes, the vague expressions of solidarity, the exhortations against violence against women, that left me and so many other female viewers unsatisfied. “Of course I know you think sexual assault is wrong!” I wanted to shout at the TV screen that night. “But what else are you willing to give up?” At VV we are purposefully focusing much less on violence against women, and much more on its root cause, patriarchy and internalized misogyny. Because that is the truly difficult conversation. How do we get men to give up a system that has benefited them for millennia? How do you get people to give up a privilege? This is the really hard conversation, and this is where the #MeToo movement needs to go next. It needs to move into tackling other major aspects of gender discrimination.

Ramlal’s discussion club does go into difficult areas. It has touched on sexual consent several times. He says the group’s conversation on marital rape went around in circles for a while. Most participants believed that men had complete right over their wives’ bodies because by marrying her, they had in fact “bought” her. Only a couple of young men strongly felt that both partners had an equal say in choosing to have sex. These are somewhat chilling thoughts to admit to, even in rural India. Would anyone ever admit these thoughts unless they were in a safe space? And can the Internet ever be that safe space?

Gender discussion clubs like these are part of a tradition in India that started nearly 50 years ago. When well-meaning urbanites started going into villages to empower women, they began with literacy groups, which morphed into self-help groups. All are discussion-based, aiming to help women find their voice on issues of sexual violence or asserting their rights to be treated equally. Most groups focused on women, but in recent years as the field of engaging men has grown, more have come to involve men.

There are some questions we need to start asking ourselves. How do we get men to start talking about sexual harassment and discrimination offline? Is there a role for formal spaces? Will it even happen without formal spaces? These questions can be explored both by those who work professionally on raising people’s consciousness, such as teachers and feminists and NGO workers, but also by men and women—who need to start stretching themselves, bringing up things that make them
uncomfortable, and figuring out how they can change attitudes of the people around them. Ultimately, the only way it will happen is if men start setting an example for other men. To an extent, in the urban universe we have lost the spaces for structured, reflective group discussion, and we should be concerned about this. When I bring city folk to a village video screening, they usually comment how unusual it is. Some 300 people watch a film, pass a microphone around in the dark, and a moderator ensures that as many people from the marginalized communities (women, or Dalits, for example) speak up.

An American supporter of our work commented to me at one of these screenings, “Democrats and Republicans don’t have any space like this, where they come together to really listen to each other. Instead they make do with Fox and CNN and the Twitter-sphere. We need these spaces.”

As we drove back from the village that night, I thought more about what these spaces represent. I don’t mean to romanticize village life. I certainly don’t want to gloss over the politics and centuries-old feuds that often poison conversation in India’s rural areas. But the fact remains that in our global cities people now rarely come together for live conversations in physical spaces, focusing much less on women, and much more on its root cause: patriarchy and internalized misogyny.

Video Volunteers

Video Volunteers is an international media and human rights organization founded in 2003 that promotes community media to enable citizen participation in marginalized and poor communities around the world. It was founded by Jessica Mayberry after she spent a year as a fellow of the American India Foundation training rural Indian women in filmmaking. She works closely with co-director Stalin K, an award-winning Indian documentary filmmaker and community radio activist.

Video Volunteers provides disadvantaged communities with the journalistic, critical thinking and creative skills they need. VV’s models for locally owned and managed media production teach people to articulate and share their perspectives on the issues that matter to them on a local and a global scale. Video Volunteers amplifies the voices of marginalized communities in India so they can report their own stories and create change in their communities.

The problem they address is that on any given day only 2 percent of media content relates to rural areas, despite the fact that is where 70 percent of the population lives. The result? The poor are often excluded from development discourses, and bad decisions get made. VV’s network brings tremendous diversity to the media, which is crucial to a vibrant democracy. More than four million people have been impacted by VV’s work, which has won numerous awards.

Jessica Mayberry is the founder and executive director of Video Volunteers, an organization she founded after spending a year training rural Indian women in filmmaking as a fellow of the American India Foundation. A TED Fellow and a Fellow of Echoing Green, an organization that invests in social entrepreneurs with high-impact solutions, in 2009 she was recognized as an Architect of the Future by the Waldzell Institute of Austria, and in 2010, as an Outstanding Young Person by the Junior Chamber International Osaka. Prior to starting Video Volunteers, Jessica worked in television news in New York.

Among their first projects was one in 2005 training former child brides in Andhra Pradesh to make a video about child marriage. Most women in that region had experienced child marriage and domestic violence, but the community never deemed these things important enough to discuss.

Twelve years later, after producing nearly 4,000 videos either by or about women, they published a book describing “some of the most courageous and thought-provoking content” their “community correspondents” have created. The correspondents—pointing their cameras in directions others rarely bother to look—documented unusual, inspiring and heartbreaking stories about gender in India. Topics covered include maternal health, good governance, and violence against women, among others. Interspersed are profiles of women community correspondents, and reports from the gender discussion clubs they’ve been running in 67 districts, thanks to a grant from the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA) in support of Khel Badal, their campaign to dismantle patriarchy.

Over the last two years, they have dug deeply into a few key questions, including: What kinds of conversations about patriarchy are needed today? And how can we encourage men and women to have ever more personal, challenging and groundbreaking dialogues about gender?

As more and more women around the world speak up to share their stories in the #MeToo movement, the urgency for such honest conversations has never been greater.
Dan Miller is a 42-year-old father of two boys. Married for 12 years, he lives near Chicago and loves his job as a union organizer. With the Weinstein crisis ever widening, he says, and a sexual predator in the White House—and as the father of boys—“I can’t help but think about how it’s affecting them and what I can do about it.” He was an athlete in high school and part of what he calls jock culture, which he sees as related to toxic masculinity. He says he wrote this essay as a letter to other fathers raising sons.

Dear Guys,

The ravages of toxic masculinity are now on full display. So is an unprecedented level of fighting against it. We should be at the forefront of the fight back. There’s much work to do. I am the father of boys ages 11 and 7. This moment is pushing me to try and raise them into men who reject toxic masculinity. Not to mention motivation to overcome my own struggles with it.

I have a question: If we are against toxic masculinity, what are we for? What type of masculinity are we after? Is that the right question? I don’t want to raise my boys only in opposition to something, but to strive for a vision of what it means to be a good person, and a good man.

If you’re like me and came up in jock culture you might have had a father who taught you boys don’t cry or talk about their feelings, a coach who yelled at your team to take off your skirts and toughen up, friends who called you a sissy for taking piano lessons or a fag when you did something not considered “manly.” You may have been bullied and/or bullied others.

Even if you weren’t in jock culture, this may have happened to you, or worse. Maybe you were physically or sexually abused. If you were, chances are overwhelming that it was another man who did it to you, if you get my point.

Maybe you endured some or all these things and were able to overcome them and grow into a man who doesn’t give a shit about traditional masculinity and are living your truth. If so, I say: You Go! Maybe you still harbor the pain and are subjecting others to it. If you’re like me, probably somewhere in between.

There seems to be less bullying masculinity in my sons’ peer culture than there was in mine, a result, I believe, of the success of the women’s and gay rights movements. But we’re still raising too many boys who become harassers and abusers, and too few who stand up to their peers to make harassment and abuse socially unacceptable. I know I’ve failed to call it out more times than I’d like to admit. And it’s an emergency that’s harming the women we love.

I like to smoke cigars, watch football, lift weights, wrestle with my sons, drink beers with the guys and complain about our wives, and countless other “manly” activities. I also like to prance around the house in my underwear belting out show tunes. But these are just things I like to do.

Sometimes I lash out in anger when I’m actually feeling shame, sadness, fear or hurt because vulnerability isn’t “manly.” Sometimes I interrupt women coworkers in meetings and get called out. But I do more housework in a week than I saw my dad do in a year, and I’ll bet you do too. I’m into how strong my wife is and want to support her in achieving her goals, and same with my buddies. I hug and kiss my sons every day and tell them I love them. I try to be in touch with my feelings and I’ve been to therapy to talk about them. Credit feminism for all that.

Is there anything positive to be salvaged from traditional masculinity? My dad may have modeled not crying, but he also taught me a man keeps his word and is always there for those who rely on him. He was accepting of his lesbian sister when I was growing up in the 1980s. I learned by watching.

Do we need to label traits and teach what’s masculine and feminine? Shouldn’t we be beyond that? Is no masculinity the opposite of toxic masculinity? There’s nothing especially male about integrity or reliability for instance, but I’m a man so that’s part of how I understand those traits. Watching my dad display those positive social traits was important somehow.

Can I raise my boys to live their truth, spread love and positivity, solidarity and caring, and stand for justice?

Maybe one or both is gay. In that case they need to know their straight dad is proud of their courage to be who they are. But let’s assume they’re straight, as is most likely the case statistically speaking. Then they’ll be like me: straight, white, men.

I like who I am and I want them to like who they are. Maybe they’ll be straight men who don’t connect with traditional masculinity. I remember the lightbulb that went off at 12 years old when I would sneak to stay up late and watch Saturday Night Live. The “Lyle the Effeminate Heterosexual” skit was the first time I realized that wanting to sleep with only women is what made you straight and nothing else. Watching it now might be cringe inducing but then it was an important insight.

My hope is that my boys become men who are confident enough in their masculinity—however they live it—that they’re not threatened by the power of women, LGBTQ people, or people of color. That they learn from what the experiences of trans and genderqueer people teach us about gender. That they stand for love and caring, and against harassment and abuse. Not just that they’re against it and don’t harass and abuse, but that they actively call it out. That they respect the women they are friends with and the women they have as romantic partners. And that they have fun! Can we please remember not to forget about the fun when we talk about sex?!

What is that a definition of? What is that called? Healthy masculinity? Positive masculinity? Loving masculinity? Humanity? What do you think?

Best,

Dan
While not explicitly offering a feminist analysis of consent, Noah Bogdonoff’s refreshing take on the topic implicitly sees consent through a feminist lens. Men would do well to educate themselves about what respecting women really means—which for most men would necessitate education about basic feminist principles of equality.

We need to fix our definition of consent

I’m a sex educator. I teach about consent. I’ve taught my workshop on consent more than three dozen times in the past two years. I’ve taught it to middle schoolers, high schoolers, college students and even older adults. I’ve taught the workshop so many times that I can now predict, with spooky accuracy, exactly how people will react when I tell them the topic for the day.

“Not again,” they will say. “We get it already. Yes means yes. No means no.” When I first started teaching, this was actually a pleasant surprise. I was happy that my students were so familiar with the concept—after all, I didn’t hear about it until I was in college.

Soon, though, I began to feel uneasy. Looking around the room one day, I realized that although my students could all tell me what consent was, I didn’t truly believe that any of them could practice it. It didn’t matter if they were men, women or nonbinary; if they were old or young, highly educated or barely in middle school. The way my students talked about consent felt damaging, simplistic and completely impracticable.

Let me explain. Nowadays, people tend to think of consent as a tool for preventing sexual violence (which, of course, it is). We are told it is a simple matter of asking to make sure that our potential sexual partners want to do the same things that we want to do. And if they say yes, we’re good to go; consent has happened.

There are some accepted caveats to this definition, of course—most people will tell you that consent can’t involve coercion or inebriation, for instance—but no matter how many asterisks or footnotes we add, the fact remains that consent, as it is defined today, is more about the appearance of enthusiasm than it is about the actual emotional experiences of those partaking.

Yes means yes; no means no. This is easy for people. It lends itself well to blog posts, rants on social media and cutesy YouTube videos. It also works very well for people who are more concerned with avoiding accusations of sexual violence than they are with actually preventing sexual trauma. In this framework, if somebody has said yes, you’re off the hook. No need to dwell on it any longer.

But the fact is that sometimes yes does not mean yes. Sometimes yes means, “It’s easier for me to do this than to say no.” Sometimes yes means, “Maybe.” Often it means, “I’d rather say yes than hurt your feelings.”

Sometimes yes does not mean yes. Sometimes yes means, “It’s easier for me to do this than to say no.” Sometimes yes means, “Maybe.” Often it means, “I’d rather say yes than hurt your feelings.”

By our current standard, this is consensual sex. There are, of course, people who would categorize these sorts of sexual encounters as nonconsensual, but I’m loath to tell people they’ve been traumatized when that’s not what they feel.

Those sorts of experiences are so common. And they may not be violent or coerced, but they’re certainly not healthy. So, over the past two years, I’ve searched and searched for a definition of consent that asks people to practice empathy, to set healthy boundaries and to ensure that yes actually means yes.
Here's what I've got: Consent is the process we use to make sure that everybody is having fun. That’s it. By removing emphasis from the appearance of enthusiasm and instead focusing on the experience of enthusiasm, this definition demands that we do more than perform consent; it demands that we actually care about it. Most important, it asks us to put ourselves in our partners’ shoes and think about what might get in the way of their having fun, even if they say yes.

What’s incredible about teaching consent from this angle is that people actually want to learn about it. Why? Because sexual communication is mystifying to people. It’s scary. Rejection is difficult, and so is acceptance: after “yes,” what next? The idea that there is a process we can use to make sure that sex is actually fun for everybody involved is comforting. Where the old model attempts to prevent us from being sexually violent, this model actually teaches us how to be sexually literate.

So what’s the process?

Talk about power dynamics

Is there an age gap? Are you different genders? Is one of you wealthier than the other? Does one of you live with mental illness? Does one of you have a history of trauma? All of these things—and way more—can affect how comfortable each of you are giving an honest “yes” or “no.” By bringing this to the surface, you know what to watch out for.

For example, if I’m going out to dinner with a partner who’s much wealthier than me, he might want to check in and say, “I know I have more money than you; are you comfortable spending this amount of money or would you prefer to go somewhere cheaper?” Or, if I’m interacting with someone who’s sexually inexperienced, I might say, “I really want you to tell me what feels good and what doesn’t. I won’t laugh at you or judge you for it.”

The simple act of acknowledging power can’t ever remove power from the equation, but it can begin to level the playing field.

Learn to enjoy saying no; learn to enjoy hearing no

In our culture, rejection inspires self-loathing. When somebody says that they don’t want to date us, spend time with us or have sex with us, we immediately launch into the “not enough”—we’re not good enough, hot enough, smart enough, funny enough, cool enough, etc.

But people’s preferences and desires have almost nothing to do with us. Our self-worth cannot be contingent on other people. When someone rejects us, we should be focusing on the opportunity we have: to validate for them that their bodies and choices are their own.

When somebody says no to me, I actually try to thank them—it’s a huge gift to know that someone is comfortable enough with me to say no. Not to mention the fact that I don’t want to hang out with someone who’s just saying yes because they don’t want to hurt my feelings.

Don’t take the first thing that’s offered to you

Sexuality, at the end of the day, is about intimacy and exploration and pleasure. Everybody has different desires, different turn-ons and different physical experiences of sex. This means that different situations and types of stimulation will work better for some people and worse for others. This means that it’s almost impossible to know what you truly, actually enjoy until you discover it for yourself.

One of the biggest problems with the old model of consent is that it doesn’t make use of feedback or preference. Your choices are “yes” or “no.” This new definition of consent allows for answers like, “No thanks, but how about this?” or “Yes, but can we do it like that?”

In other words, a new version of consent is a two-way street—and you can’t get anywhere unless you listen to (and learn about) your partner, pay attention to your own desires, and look forward to hearing the word “no.”

Noah Bogdonoff teaches sex education in middle and high schools. His courses focus on building confidence, kindness, knowledge, and social skills, necessary components of healthy romantic and sexual relationships. He has specific competencies working with children on the autism spectrum and LGBTQ children. A version of this article first appeared in Motif magazine (www.motifri.com).
Some men are able to reject restrictive, negative social pressures related to masculinity, but many embrace these pressures and rules, as well as the version of manhood they represent. While young men surveyed in the U.S., the United Kingdom, and Mexico, overwhelmingly reject notions of manhood that imply that men are superior to women or that men should not care for children, they show strong support for toughness and the repression of emotions. Indeed, while men in the three countries have come a long way toward accepting equality between women and men, they still have a long way to go to break free of norms that hold them in emotionally straitjacketed forms of manhood.

In a groundbreaking study on young men’s views about manhood, Promundo, an international gender justice organization, created an instrument they call the “Man Box”—a set of 17 attitude questions that measure how much men adhere to the tenets of “toxic masculinity.” The original study includes representative samples of more than 1,000 young men in each setting, including rural/urban areas, and young men in all educational and income levels. The survey was carried out in October 2017 (promundoglobal.org/resources/man-box-study-young-man-us-uk-mexico/). More recently, Promundo conducted additional analysis of the data focusing specifically on young men and sexual harassment. Among the findings:

Harassment starts young and takes many forms

Much of the discussion about harassment has been about the behavior of men in power: Harvey Weinstein, Matt Lauer, prominent legislators, and business leaders. However, recent research from Promundo finds that harassing and abusive behaviors start young and are pervasive among men of all backgrounds:

• One in five young men in Mexico to nearly a third in the U.S. and the U.K. had made sexually harassing comments to a woman.

Manhood 2.0

Manhood 2.0 is a gender-transformative initiative developed by Promundo and the University of Pittsburgh to engage adolescent boys and young men 15 to 24 in reflecting on the impacts of harmful gender norms, specifically with the aims of preventing teen pregnancy, dating violence, sexual assault, and LGBTQ bullying, and of building healthier relationships.

The initiative is an adaptation of Promundo’s flagship Program H, an evidence-based program the organization and partners launched in 2002. Program H methodology combines group education sessions with youth-led campaigns and activism, and has been adapted in more than 22 countries around the world.

Manhood 2.0 is designed to engage young men in the U.S. in questioning and challenging harmful norms, and ultimately aims to transform them. Seen through an intersectionality lens, Manhood 2.0 encourages adolescent boys and young men to reflect critically about their identities, including thinking and talking about gender beyond the rigid divisions of male and female. They are further encouraged to value a diversity of gender expressions, and to build healthier attitudes, behaviors, and relationships, based on respect and equality.

Their ongoing program runs in Pittsburgh and Washington, DC. Manhood 2.0 is one of the few masculine norms-focused curricula being evaluated in the U.S.
or girl they didn’t know, in a public place, like the street, their workplace, school/university, or in an Internet or social media space, in the prior month.

- Between 42 and 48 percent of young men ages 18–30 in the three countries had teased someone or called them names, either male or female, in the prior month.

- One in five young men in Mexico, and nearly one in three young men in the U.K. and the U.S. had posted photos or messages to embarrass or harass someone, either male or female, in the prior month.

- One in five in Mexico to a third of young men in the U.S. and the UK reported hurting someone physically, with their fist or a weapon in the prior month.

Far from the behavior of only rich and powerful men, abuse and harassment of various kinds are commonly and routinely carried out every day by young men in all three countries, at rates from one in five to one third of young men surveyed.

**Which young men harass or use violence?**

It’s important to point out that a majority of young men don’t harass males or females, don’t bully, and don’t approve of such violence. But one in five to one in three do. What makes the harassers different from the non-harassers? Which young men are more likely to harass?

Across all three countries, when young men who had harassed were compared to those who had not, the strongest factor was their attitudes about what it means to be a man. These were measured using the Man Box scale of 17 attitude statements, including: “Guys should act strong even when they feel scared or nervous inside” and “A real man would never say no to sex,” among others. Young men who believed in these toxic ideas of manhood most strongly were the most likely to have ever perpetrated sexual harassment.

Young men who held the strongest belief in toxic norms of manhood were nearly 10 times as likely to have harassed as young men who least believed in these norms. This association was significant even when controlling for age, income, and education. In other words, young men who harass come from all income levels, all educational backgrounds, and all ages. Harassment is not only perpetrated by men in power; at the same time, it is clearly an attempt to exert power over women, girls, and/or other men. What seems to drive young men’s harassment, more than any other factor surveyed, is how much they believe in, or have internalized, toxic ideas about masculinity.

**We’re all responsible for ending harassment among men**

If it’s their attitudes that are in large part driving men’s harassing behaviors, how often are these toxic ideas about manhood communicated to boys? The survey included asking young men about whether they had been exposed to these ideas:

- Across all three countries, at some point in their lives nearly two thirds had been told that a “real man” behaves a certain way.

- More than half of the young men surveyed in all three countries agreed, “Society as a whole tells me that a real man would never say no to sex.”

- One in five young men in Mexico to one in three in the U.S. and the U.K. said that his partner (primarily women) expects him to use violence to defend his reputation.

Parents, teachers, the media, colleagues, intimate partners, and male and female peers too often repeat and pass on these messages that “real manhood” is about domination, using violence, and never taking “no” for an answer when it comes to sex. The bottom line? Society spends a lot of time and energy raising boys into a toxic version of manhood.

**What can we do to end toxic masculinity and harassment?**

The encouraging news is that there are programs, with evidence to back them up, that have been shown to change young men’s views about manhood, and to reduce sexual harassment and other forms of violence. Promundo’s Manhood 2.0 group education initiative is currently being evaluated by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) as a promising practice in sexual assault prevention. Manhood 2.0 is based on Promundo’s Program H approach, which has been used in more than 20 settings globally where it’s been found to change attitudes related to toxic masculinities and to reduce violence by young men in multiple impact evaluations. These have been conducted from Latin America and sub-Saharan Africa to South Asia and Europe (promundoglobal.org/programs/manhood-2-0/).

There are many exits to the Man Box; it is up to us to show young men the way.

Brian Heilman is a senior research fellow at Promundo-US. Gary Barker is Promundo’s president and CEO.

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**Key actions to take to raise healthy boys and men**

- Start early, engaging youth in reflection and discussion about respect and equality, in school and in after-school programs.

- Reach children and adolescents where they are—at home, school, online, in sports programs, and beyond.

- Discuss directly “what it means to be a man,” using critical conversations about gender norms to show how young men can shape their definition of masculinity around respect, care, generosity, and rejection of violence.

- Listen to women and include their voices at all levels of programming and outreach, and elevate the voices of women of color, disabled women, immigrant women, and lesbian, transgender, and bisexual women, who may be disproportionately affected by violence.

- Involve caregivers, particularly fathers and other male caregivers, in teaching and modeling equality, respect, and nonviolence at home.

- Work alongside and follow the lead of women’s rights activists.

- Target all men: sexual harassment and assault is pervasive across men’s ages and backgrounds.

- Work with celebrities and key gatekeepers (such as religious leaders) as visible role models for positive behavior.

- Implement bystander approaches, teaching young men to speak out in nonviolent ways when they see the abusive behavior of their peers.
Swedish Men Join the Self-Reflection Movement

By Hanna Navier

In Sweden, the #MeToo movement became a sensation on social media, with hundreds of men contacting the Swedish organization MÄN: Redefining Masculinity with important questions: “Could I have contributed to the suffering that the #MeToo movement has shed a light on? How can I contribute to being part of the solution?” Out of those questions has emerged a growing self-reflection movement within MÄN; the Swedish organization that’s been working to redefine masculinity for 25 years.

When a few brave women across Sweden started to speak up about sexual harassment, many other women soon followed. As in the U.S., first it was the entertainment sector #tystnadtagning, #närmusikentystn har_(silenceaction, #whenthemusicstops). Then it moved on to other sectors including law, care, school, women in vulnerable positions, and more recently #allavi (#allofus), addressing violence and harassment other than in the workplace. Individual cases of perpetrators—actors, media personalities, and politicians have been outed and forced to leave their positions. Within MÄN, internal discussions began with a central question: “What should our message be?”

MÄN is a unique platform for men to get involved in equality issues. Founded as a nonprofit feminist organization in 1993 as a platform for men to take action against men’s violence toward women, the organization works to change destructive masculinity norms and reduce male violence. Their vision is an egalitarian world free from violence.

“We get men to act, both in Sweden and around the world,” says Luis Lineo, MÄN’s president. “Many men contacted us seeking guidance. It became important for us to first emphasize the importance of men listening to women’s stories.” He says they started by making a list of suggestions for what men should do when they hear women’s stories of sexual harassment and abuse. They posted them on social media: They include:

- Listen
- Confirm that you heard
- Practice self-reflection: What is my part in this problem?
- Talk to other men (don’t burden women with difficult feelings about being part of the problem)
- Take action; start taking steps to change your behavior and that of the men around you

Spokespeople from MÄN appeared more than a dozen times on national media talking about the need for men and boys to listen, confirm, self-reflect and become part of the solution to the problem that #MeToo made visible.

As the debate grew, more and more men contacted MÄN, not only to join the organization, but also to meet and talk about #MeToo and their possible role in the suffering #MeToo is addressing. Out of those conversations MÄN facilitators designed a module of “reflection conversations” for and by men.

With their considerable experience with self-reflection groups as a foundation, in less than 10 days, they were ready to host a group of men for five self-reflection sessions all held in a safe, confidential space, according to Lineo.

“Interest in joining a self-reflection group was greater than ever before. At the first gathering some 80 men came, with almost as many on the waiting list,” she said. “We invited the women’s shelter movement to open the session. It was important for us to begin this effort with a clear message from the women’s movement.”

The organization’s position is clear, Lineo said: “Listen to women. Back women every day in your daily life.”

That October evening, Halloween, marked the start of a self-reflection movement within MÄN that continues to grow. To date, more than 30 groups have started around the country; many more are expected in the days ahead. Professional requests have resulted in MÄN conducting interventions at workplaces such as Dramaten, Sweden’s national theater, and within a tech company management network.

“We have started to link self-reflection groups to bystander intervention methodologies for a more systematic approach in workplaces,” Lineo said. “We have been in dialogue with a dozen private companies and public sector actors requesting interventions aimed at preventing sexual harassment and violence,” she noted.

For many men the self-reflection approach to listening to one another was completely new. Many described it as a new way of talking to each other. “Thank you, it’s been a long time since I had a conversation with other men that on so many levels felt so alive,” one participant wrote on social media. “It filled my heart with a sincere hope—and belief—in men’s ability to change.”

Hanna Navier is the communications manager for MÄN.
What's going on with men? That's the question writer and women's transformational coach Bethany Webster has been asking in the wake of the #MeToo movement. Noting that men and women alike are grappling with the sobering reality of rampant misogyny, she observes, "As a culture, we're left to ask, why do so many men have the impulse to disrespect, hate or violate women? Where does that impulse really come from? And how do we stop it?" Long recognized for her work investigating the "mother wound" in women, she has recently turned her attention to examining the mother wound in men. In her essay she identifies the mother wound as "the missing link in our understanding of misogyny." Her approach emphasizes empathetically exploring "how boys develop in the modern world, the unprocessed anger below the surface of the lives of men, the role of privilege, and the inner work that both men and women can undertake to transform our [present] situation."

“The role of the artist is exactly the same as the role of the lover. If I love you, I have to make you conscious of the things you don’t see.”

—James Baldwin

“The mother-child relationship can be seen as the first relationship violated by patriarchy.”

—Adrienne Rich

The Oxford dictionary defines misogyny as “dislike of, contempt for, or ingrained prejudice against women.” To understand misogyny, then, we have to explore the first relationship a man ever has with a woman—his mother.

For both girls and boys, the relationship we have with our mothers is among the most significant in our lives. It is impossible to overstate just how foundational this relationship is and how it impacts our well-being well into our adulthood. In the first weeks and months of our lives, mother is food, mother is world, mother is body, and mother is self. For both women and men, the mother wound itself is a product of patriarchy, of living in a culture in which domination of women by men is at its core.

On a personal level, the mother wound is an internalized set of limiting beliefs and patterns originating from the relationship with one's mother. The mother wound exists on a spectrum, with healthy, supportive mother/child relationships on one end and abusive traumatic mother/child relationships on the other. A host of complex factors go into how one's mother wound manifests and where one falls on that spectrum.

For men, it comes down to the specific dynamics that played out between a boy and his mother and how the father supported or thwarted that primary connection. Because patriarchy—with its core principle domination—can be embodied by either men or
women, or father or mother may have played the role of patriarchal parent in a boy’s life. For example, some boys may have experienced their mothers as neglectful or as domineering. Some may have experienced their mothers as victims of their fathers or experienced their mothers as dominant and their father’s passive.

“Patriarchy demands of men that they become and remain emotional cripples. Since it is a system that denies men full access to their freedom of will, it is difficult for any man of any class to rebel against patriarchy, to be disloyal to the patriarchal parent, be that parent female or male.”

— bell hooks

As a boy grows up today, he is being socialized about what it means to be a man by his father, by other men, and by society. The patriarchal culture enforced by the media, education system and traditional religion reinforces that function. To some degree this socialization involves boys learning to dominate others, to shut down their emotions and to devalue women. The result is both a personal and collective trauma.

**Healing personal trauma is central to undoing patriarchy**

Unlike the modern world, history is full of examples of cultures giving boys an initiatory experience of graduating into manhood through physical trials, which helps them symbolically cross a psychological bridge from the relative comforts of childhood into the rigors of adulthood. In such a positive context, surrounded by male elders, some kind of physical/emotional wound occurs, helping the boy contact his inner strength, confidence and sense of responsibility. Today, however, most boys experience wounding but with no positive transformation. There are too few official rites, too few wise elders and a dearth of positive male role models.

The cultural expectation to devalue women, including his mother, sets a boy up for cognitive dissonance about what his mother represents in him including, among other examples, the ability to express his emotions, to be vulnerable, and to express physical affection. In this way, his mother could be seen broadly as a “lost source” to the boy, and the father, as socializer of the boy into the world of men, could be seen as “severer of the bond” with the mother, with his source.

For white men, privilege plays a big role. In addition to discouraging men to express their emotions while simultaneously encouraging them to dominate, society gives men unearned advantages denied other groups, including especially women and people of color. As the sociologist Michael Kimmel, executive director of the Center for Men and Masculinities, has observed, “Privilege is invisible to those who have it.” In the case of white men, they have a triple wound: an injury to their ability to process their emotions, blindness about their privilege, and a lack of empathy for those they harm. For most white men those wounds have numbed them into relative unconsciousness while causing unspeakable suffering in the world.


“Misogyny is a son’s outwardly projected rage on a mother who was unable to protect him.”

— Gabor Maté

At its core, for men and women alike, the task of healing the mother wound is ultimately the same: to decouple one’s inner and outer life from the lamination of “mother” in order to fully access and actualize their potential. In *Under Saturn’s Shadow*, author and Jungian analyst James Hollis encapsulates it this way:

“When we remember that patriarchy is a cultural contrivance, an invention to compensate for powerlessness, we realize that men, contrary to widespread opinions, are more often the more dependent sex. The Marlboro man, the rugged individualist, is most ambushed by his inner feminine, for he is most in denial. Whenever a man is obliged to be a good boy, or conversely he feels he must be a bad boy, or a wild man, he is still compensating for the power of the mother complex. I do not say it is a man’s fault that he is so vulnerable, so dependent; that he is merely human. What is his responsibility is to recognize how deeply any child needs positive mothering and how much the pattern of that need sets his psychic life in motion and continues to operate beneath the surface. He may pretend to adult empowerment, hold the reins of government or the purse, but the lines of stress reach deep down into his relationship with his mother. Men must grasp and accept this fact, and then take responsibility for it, or they will continue to play out infantile patterns forever.”

For men, healing the mother wound means redirecting their rage away from women and toward the true target—patriarchy itself, including the very specific traumatic events of their childhood in which that played out. To do this deep inner work, it is crucial men get support from other men who have already engaged in this journey, including seeking professional support from skilled male therapists.

[continued on page 26]
Doing the Work

Men have both inner and outer work to do, including:

1. Processing the anger about the parent (mother and/or father) who betrayed you by making you give up vital parts of yourself in order to “be a man.” Grieving about what that has cost.

2. Being honest about your life. Acknowledging your secrets and taking responsibility for your actions.

3. Finding the lost inner source within yourself and working to reclaim it.

4. Feeling genuine remorse about the ways you may have harmed other people and the earth by acting out your pain in unconscious ways, both personally and collectively, while taking empathic actions on a consistent basis.

5. Finding community with other conscious men who are on the same path of reclamation and reconciliation.

In the long term, men must commit to the long-term inner work; in the short term, men need to experience real consequences for their actions.

It’s not for a lack of training that men sexually assault in the workplace, says Spokane, Washington, writer Shawn Vestal. In a column at the end of last year in the Spokesman Review, he wrote, “It’s not about what men don’t know. It’s about what men have known too well: That we can get away with it. That it will be excused, hidden, justified and rationalized, and no one will be called to account.” In other words, until men have sufficient integrity to not sexually assault, they must “be called to account—and accept the consequences of their toxic behavior, at work and in their relationships.

To support this process, women have to reject the raging boy within the men in their lives, whether friends, colleagues, brothers or husbands. Women have to withdraw from the ways we have over-mothered men. As Adrienne Rich wrote, we have to “withdraw the breast, the lullaby and the constant attention associated by the infant with the mother.” Only then can men feel the full magnitude of their predicament, which is the beginning of their journey making lasting change.

As men feel the painful gap in their lives when women are no longer willing to do for them, hopefully they will experience sufficient motivation to finally step in and fill that gap from within, including themselves:

- Taking responsibility for their emotions, feeling them and processing them. Getting support.
- Seeing sex as a way to connect, not a way to feel powerful.
- Soothing the little boy within when they’re triggered.
- Differentiating between the pain of the past from what’s happening in the present.
- Becoming aware of their projections and seeing the women in their lives as people, not objects.
- Spotlighting and amplifying the voices of those who are marginalized, while listening and learning from them.

At the same time, women must keep using our voices and speaking out about male abuse of power every chance we get; and we must amplify the voices of other women who are enduring male abuse, particularly the voices of women of color and indigenous women. Women must also stop:

- Catering to our illusions that come from an ignorance of our own privilege
- Staying quiet to avoid conflict
- Internalizing their projections from our disowned pain
- Minimizing our feelings in men’s presence
- Accepting crumbs of respect instead of what we truly deserve
- Giving our power away by emotional caretaking
- Giving time and energy to men who refuse to do their inner work
fully about the connection between misogyny and the mother wound in men. “Much male fear of feminism is the fear that, in becoming whole human beings, women will cease to mother men, to provide the breast, the lullaby, the continuous attention associated by the infant with the mother. Much male fear of feminism is infantilism—the longing to remain a mother’s son, to possess a woman purely for him. These infantile needs of adult men for women have been sentimentalized and romanticized long enough as ‘love.’ It is time to recognize them as arrested development, and to re-examine the ideal preservation of the family within which those needs are allowed free rein to the point of violence. Because the law and the economic and social order are heavily weighted in favor of men, the infantile needs of adult males are affirmed by a machinery of power which does not affirm or validate the needs of adult women. Institutionalized marriage and motherhood perpetuate the will of male infants as law in the adult world.”

The #MeToo movement, with women telling their stories of sexual assault and outing their abusers, has meant men are being called out, that their belief that they have “free rein” to dominate women in the home and in the workplace is being interrupted. Women are less willing to remain silent; they are rejecting being a blank screen onto which men can project with impunity the pain they wish to deny. And many male witnesses are no longer willing to look the other way.

Assault as sexualized hostility

Sexual assault is not about sex; it’s about power. “Guys who engage in this type of behavior are incredibly rambunctious towards females,” according to Los Angeles sex addiction therapist Dr. Alexandra Katehakis, clinical director of the Center for Healthy Sex. “It often harkens back to childhood abuse... maybe they had mothers who were emotionally abusive or who didn’t protect them from abusive fathers. As some men get older, they act out that anger towards women in the language of sex. They sexualize their emotions because they don’t know any other way of comporting themselves.”

It is as if the inner male child is unconsciously caught between his painful longing for the “lost source” represented by his mother and his cultural conditioning to hate her as a woman. Put another way, men are caught between a natural desire for their full humanity—the ability to be emotional, vulnerable, and empathic—and their desire to remain privileged and dominant. They can’t have both. To hold on to the dominator model (patriarchy) is to lose access to their humanity (egalitarianism). And to fully be human, one has to forsake the dominator model and all the insidious ways it can show up in oneself. No amount of privilege—wealth, power, fame, prestige—will ever compensate for the devastation, to whatever degree, that patriarchy has wrought on the little boy within. No amount of power over others will ever make up for that lost part of himself. It can only be found by doing the inner work to reclaim it.

A man can find his lost source not in the form of physical women, but through exploring what it means to reclaim what the mother—or the feminine—represents within him—the world of feelings and emotions, the experience of deep connection within himself, and a sense of authentic belonging with others. However, in order to access these vital capacities that have been in shadow, men first have to engage with the angry child within for whom there has been little payoff to forsake these vital aspects of himself. It’s easier to project rage onto a “mother substitute” or “father substitute” out in the world.

It takes courage to process the anger about the inner patriarch—the archetype of the cruel, unfeeling father. The father may have granted him access to the world of men but at considerable cost: disconnection from the true self, the innocent boy who came into this world capable of expressing empathy, emotionality, and vulnerability. The anger belongs with the patriarchal father (personal and/or collective), the “severer of the bond,” who betrayed the boy, who socialized him to give up a vital part of himself in order to be accepted in the world of men. The anger also belongs with the mother who was unable to protect him from this patriarchal wound or who may have inflicted it herself. When men can direct their anger there, the culture will begin to shift.

“One oppresses what one fears.”

—James Hollis

Healing from patriarchy requires that every privileged group actively confronts its ignorance and cultivates empathy for how its privilege has caused harm to others. Allowing ourselves to be emotionally affected by the truth of what we have perpetrated by our privilege is a necessary but often avoided step in creating real equality between people. Just as white women need to endure the experience of feeling genuinely horrified about the ways in which we have, knowingly or unknowingly, facilitated white supremacy onto people of color, white men have to do the same about how their ignorance, afforded by privilege, has collectively caused an unspeakable amount of pain in the world to women, people of color and the planet itself.

May the rising tide of female anger be followed by a commensurate wave of brave men willing to explore their inner lives, embracing the abandoned boy within and addressing the legitimate anger and grief about what patriarchy has stolen from them—their humanity.
I was running. The Arts Against Abuse event was going smoothly. The messaging was strong, the crowd engaged and activated by the cause and there was the right mixture of indignation and determination for change in both performers and those attending.

While the majority of high-profile silence breakers—and the #MeToo movement in general—has had a largely Western focus, its effects have reached every continent. For a small country, Swaziland carries the weight of some big statistics. HIV and TB prevalence remain the world’s highest per capita, levels of intimate partner violence, including sexual violence, are alarmingly high and economic instability continually threatens family structures and livelihoods.

In response, Kwakha Indvodza (Building a Man), with support from the U.S. Embassy in Swaziland, unwaveringly challenges gender-based violence, especially sexual violence against women and girls. Since 2015, Kwakha Indvodza and the U.S. Embassy have hosted an annual Arts Against Abuse campaign, using the arts to provide young people a platform with which to engage in issues of gender inequality and violence against women and girls. Last year’s four-month campaign included campus events at Swaziland’s tertiary institutions, a public Walk a Mile in Her Shoes march and, as has become tradition, a mixed-arts exhibition.

I was running—almost absent-mindedly—to the advocate or artist onstage, thinking about what happens next, about the lighting, sound, audience reaction, not about the speaker. So I was caught unawares, blindsided by the enormity, pervasiveness and global nature of men’s abuse of power over women. The Hon. Lisa Peterson, U.S. ambassador to Swaziland, stood on stage about to give what I thought would be a politicized vote of thanks. Instead, she said:

As Swazi activists and citizens fight against gender-based violence, I think it is important to note that the United States is going through its own significant moment of calling out gender-based violence and sexual harassment. Developments in the U.S. prompted Time magazine to name as its 2017 Person of the Year ‘The Silence Breakers’, the women who stepped forward to shed light on sexual harassment and abuse.

“In the spirit of those brave women and of #MeToo, I have decided to share some of my own experiences. I too have been subjected to catcalls. I too have been subjected to flashing. I too have been groped on public transport. And I too have been subjected to sexual harassment in the workplace. While the first three were definitely not pleasant, the fourth was by far the worst because I had to work every day with my harasser in a job that I was not, at that point in my life, in a position to leave.

“People may hear of these experiences and say to themselves that these acts are really not so bad because I was not physically injured, raped, or even killed—all of which are outcomes routinely reported in the Swazi press. The problem is that actions such as flashing or groping grow out of, and reinforce, notions that women do not require the same degree of respect as men and that a woman’s body is there for anyone to enjoy, in any manner they wish—regardless of the wishes of the woman herself.

“These smaller acts create the environment for the larger headline-grabbers of physical abuse, rape, and murder to occur. And they are all rooted in a fundamentally unequal status for women…”

My staff and I, seasoned advocates whose skins are thick from regularly hearing such horror stories, stopped cold. It was not so much what was said, but who had said it—the U.S. ambassador. In her story, as elsewhere in media, politics and business, there is now a head-on confrontation with the visible and invisible power structures that allow men to dominate and abuse and promote a belief that women should accept domination and abuse. It is no different in southern Africa than in North America.

We need to contextualize the act of speaking against predatory behavior into our particular, already burdened part of the world. We need to do this not only to prevent the view that #MeToo is a Western phenomenon, but also to prevent its global stagnation, to avoid the inevitable patriarchal backlash which is already beginning. But most of all, we need our own #MeToo movement to reject the view that this simply is our reality. Abuse and violence have become so normalized in the region that many believe it is an expectation rather than the inexcusable exception. We desperately need to strengthen legislation that protects women and girls from sexual violence and harassment.

We need our own southern African #MeToo revolution. Now.

Tom Churchyard is founder and executive director of Kwakha Indvodza (Building a Man). He can be contacted at tom@kwakhaindvodza.com.
That one way men can respond to the #MeToo moment is by listening to women, a good place to start is by reading books by and about women across the ethnic/racial and sexual orientation spectrum. Similarly, men seeking greater insight into men’s role in the changing sociocultural landscape can acquaint themselves with the rich body of work that men and women have produced over the past generation that focuses on men and multiracial, multietnic masculinities.

Because the #MeToo moment was catalyzed by women’s testimony about the harassment, abuse and violence they have experienced from men, and because men’s violence against women is one of the great, ongoing injustices of our time and all time, it is crucial that men who care about gender equality and justice engage directly with this difficult topic.

Fortunately, there are many great resources available to help men understand the roots of sexual and domestic violence and many other forms of abuse, and their connection to cultural ideas about manhood.

While it is not practical in this limited space to do justice to the richness of writing and filmmaking on these crucial matters, the following lists provide a good introduction for anyone—but especially men—who wants to proceed on the parallel paths of critical self-awareness and social justice activism. The lists are hardly exhaustive. There are many great works that don’t appear here, and the selections reflect an obvious U.S.-centric bias. With some exceptions, the lists also are biased toward material released in the past couple of decades. Nonetheless, what follows is a sampling of some of the best and most useful books and films available on this topic in the English language today.

—Jackson Katz

Books


Dying To Be Men: Psychosocial, Environmental and Biobehavioral Directions in Promoting the Health of Men and Boys, by Will Courtenay (2005)


Fraternity Gang Rape: Sex, Brotherhood and Privilege on Campus, by Peggy Reeves Sanday (2007)


I Don’t Want to Talk About It: Overcoming the Secret Legacy of Male Depression, by Terrence Real (1998)

Men Speak Out: Views on Gender, Sex and Power, Shira Tarrant, editor (2013)
Documentary Films and Education Videos

All films produced or distributed by Media Education Foundation (www.mediaed.org) unless otherwise noted.

Asking for It: The Ethics and Erotics of Sexual Consent (with Harry Brod) (2010)
The Empathy Gap: Masculinity and the Courage to Change (2015)
Hip Hop: Beyond Beats and Rhymes, God Bless the Child Productions (2016)
The Hunting Ground, Chain Camera Pictures (2015)
The Invisible War Cinedigm, (2012)
Killing Us Softly 4: Advertising’s Image of Women (2016)
The Mask You Live In, The Representation Project (2016)
Miss Representation, The Representation Project (2011)
The Price of Pleasure: Pornography, Sexuality and Relationships (2014)
Tough Guise 2: Violence, Manhood & American Culture (2013)

Ted Talks by Men

Among Ted talks addressing transforming masculinities and men challenging violence against women, consider watching those delivered by the following: Justin Baldoni, Jackson Katz, Michael Kimmel, and Tony Porter.
Developers have been using technology for survivor empowerment and support for years. But what would it look like to have sexual violence prevention technology that’s directed specifically at men, especially since at least 90 percent of perpetrators are men?

“Here’s an app for that” is an expression you’ve probably heard. Owning a cellphone is almost ubiquitous in this day and age. Unfortunately, it’s also ubiquitous to know someone who has experienced sexual assault or harassment, wherever you are in the world and especially since the #MeToo campaign went viral this fall.

A 2014 survey from Stop Sexual Harassment, a U.S. organization, found that 65 percent of all women had experienced street harassment and among all women, 23 percent had been sexually touched. Among men, 25 percent had been street harassed—a higher percentage of men from the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) community than heterosexual men reported this. Aggressors—mostly men—assault one in three women and one in six men before the age of 18. Trans and gender nonconforming people are 3.3 times more likely to experience intimate partner violence. Rates of violence are also significantly impacted by other intersections of identity including race, ability, age, sexuality, and class.

Awareness and prevention apps

To leverage the rapid growth and accessibility of smartphone apps for combating the problem of sexual violence, developers and social justice initiatives have been teaming up since the early 2000s to design and mainstream apps about prevention and awareness.

In Iran, TORANJ is an app produced by legal experts and women’s rights activists to provide education and support to survivors and those who are at risk. According to TORANJ, “social, cultural and legal barriers already make gender equality a struggle for women, [thus] user-friendly technologies are vital to providing support to at-risk individuals and raising awareness about their right.” In Lebanon, HarassTracker brings together mapping technologies with multimedia campaigns to advance reporting, awareness, and access to resources. Ramallah Street Watch in Palestine, similarly addresses empowerment through reporting.

In Canada, Sayfe.U is a mobile platform out of Toronto that educates university students about consent and supports survivors. In the US, Circle of 6 alerts a user’s six chosen emergency contacts. The app UsafeU.S. connects campus-based users with resources including counseling, legal advocacy, and how to be an effective bystander. HollaBack! empowers users to report street harassment immediately or shortly after an incident. Heartmob, a digital tool powered by Hollaback!, provides a platform for exposing online harassment.

As part of a 2013 World Bank challenge to create a digital gender-based violence prevention tool, Costa Rican developers designed an app about healthy relationships for young people. In El Salvador a web, and text message—based tool for identifying and reporting violence was produced.

In Kenya, a report on gender, income level, and mobile phone usage found that concerns about mobile security and harassment are common among women and serve as a barrier to mobile phone use. Thus, call blocking apps are noticeably popular with female users in sub-Saharan Africa, as a means of avoiding harassment.

Mobile phone users in India are reporting and mapping cases of sexual harassment via HarassMap Mumbai, and HarassMap Cairo in Egypt. SafeCity is similar but for users anywhere in the world, as it aims to generate awareness and “solutions for hotspots through local action.”

Sawt Nissa addresses sexual harassment in Algeria; users post pictures and stories in order to reclaim action and subjectivity after an incident of harassment and objectification.

It’s important to note that these apps seek to empower the survivor or potential victim of violence. They are not geared toward encouraging critical reflection on the part of men who are intentionally or unintentionally committing acts of violence and harassment or who may be seeking support in changing for themselves and their communities.

Addressing the root causes of sexual violence

In an episode of NPR’s Radio Rookies, Jared Marcelle is a reformed catcaller in Brooklyn, New York, interrogating the roots of street harassment. He discovers that it’s more about peer evaluation among men than about a given woman and the impact upon
her. He also discovers how pervasively normal and unexamined it is that men harass women and act entitled to do so.

A report from Cornell University and HollaBack! found that “85 percent of women in the United States experience street harassment before the age of 17.” Some of the impacts of this norm include men feeling a precarious sense of having proved their masculinity in the eyes of their male peers—a homosocial behavior according to sociologist Michael Kimmel, executive director of the Center for Men and Masculinities. The impacts also include that “more than half of women surveyed in the Cornell report] changed their clothing, refused a social event, chose a different transportation option or felt distracted at school or work.” It is worth speculating about how men might feel about this disconnection between the behavior society resigmely expects of them and the impact it’s having—on the harassed and the harassers.

With an awareness of men’s behavior, some men are, and have been, looking to change. Jared, the reformed catcaller, was once like his friend Shawn, who is steadfastly certain that women enjoy harassment and the harassed and the harassers.

What are some of these strategies? How could they be made available in a globalized and mobile-oriented world? Are they already operating? Last December, the Men Engage Alliance, all the network working to engage men and boys for gender equality, co-hosted “Virtual Roundtable Dialogue: Roles and responsibilities of men and boys in response to #MeToo” (in which Voice Male participated). Two of the participating organizations, from Canada and Sweden, are already utilizing technology to build community among men for gender equity and to provide resources for change.

20 Minutes 4 Change is an online project created in partnership with Canada’s White Ribbon campaign. The project presents fathers with a mobile-device-friendly script for discussing consent with their sons. Since 2016, fathers have pledged more than 100,000 minutes to engage in conversation about consent with their sons.

In Sweden, Män för Jämställdhet (mf.se) is an NGO focusing on social norms of masculinities and their impacts, has developed interactive videos similar to a role-playing video game. The viewer is a participant in a scene and given options to intervene or to be complicit in violence in a high school setting, including learning about the results of your actions. (See article, page 22).

In Russia, Отцовство в России (“Fatherhood in Russia”) has an interactive map and online portal that highlights centers, organizations, and activist groups that are strongly urging more men to be active caregivers and involved fathers. Currently 26 organizations are mapped in 16 cities around Russia. In addition to the map feature, the portal also includes a database of resources, methodologies, events, and news stories advancing men as caregivers.

Men embracing and developing their capacities to do care work is one piece in the tapestry of men’s engagement in violence prevention, as noted in a 2016 article, “The Opposite of Rape Culture Is Nurturance Culture.”

The future of prevention

On the horizon there may well be a sexual violence prevention app for men. This app might connect men who are doing antiviolence work, like the fatherhood mapping tool in Russia, highlighting, for instance, when a community already exists. Such an app could also be used by men who want to brainstorm what to say next time after remaining silent after witnessing street harassment or hearing rape jokes. It could be for reformed aggressors like Jared seeking a community to hold them accountable and offering guidance from men who have rejected the status quo and feel isolated as outcasts.

Channeling resources, talent, and technology into transforming rape culture will continue to require tireless and life-giving support for survivors and potential victims; survivorship is always present. Simultaneously, though, transforming the culture is—and has been for decades—about engaging men and boys. Social and cultural norms already make gender equity activism an abnormality for men; therefore, user-friendly technologies have incredible potential to provide resources and a much-needed community of countercultural men.

In the future, when a man insists that women enjoy catcalls or is outraged that his partner is harassed or wants to connect with others feeling alone in this fight, the day is coming when another man will say, “Hey, you know, there’s an app for that.”

Organizations

20 Minutes 4 Change (20minutes4change.org)
Circle of 6 (circleof6app.com)
HarassMap Mumbai (akshara.crowdmap.com)
HarassTracker (facebook.com/harasstracker.com)
HeartMob (https://iheartmob.org/)
HollaBack (ihollaback.org)
Män för Jämställdhet (mf.se/)
MenEngage Alliance (menengage.org)
Отцовство в России (men-care.org/2017/12/19/russia-interactive-map-online-portal-organizations-fathers)
Ramallah Street Watch (streetwatch.crowdmap.com)
SafeCitity (safecity.in/)
SawtNissa (facebook.com/SawtNsaa?ref=hl)
Sayfe.U (sayfeu.org)
TORANJ (toranjapp.com)
USafeUS (usafeus.org)
White Ribbon Canada (whiteribbon.ca/)

Voice Male director of programming Amanda Pickett is a gender specialist in Boston advancing men’s engagement in gender equality with the specific aim of setting in motion men’s “aha” moments about the reality of sexism. An organizer of the Cambridge Forum for Feminist Discussion of Masculinities, she holds a master’s in gender and cultural studies from Simmons College.
MEN AND GENDER EQUALITY ANTIVIOLENCE WEBSITES

In the four decades since women invited men to work to end men's violence against women—and to transform restrictive, conventional masculinity into an openhearted reimagined masculinities—a growing number of grassroots organizations, practical initiatives and innovative projects have emerged around the world.

The Resource section presented here emphasizes men's antiviolence efforts. While no list could possibly be complete, “Men and Gender Equality” is wide-ranging and global in scope. We welcome you to visit websites, learn more about campaigns, and find a place of your own in this work. If you wish to suggest an organization or website to include here in the future, please email info@voicemalemagazine.org. Readers are also encouraged to visit xyonline.net/links#a2, a site that provided many of these entries.

INTERNATIONAL

Breakthrough
Working to make violence against women and girls unacceptable
http://www.inbreakthrough.tv

Centre for Health and Social Justice
Addressing health rights, reproductive and sexual health rights, masculinities and gender
http://www.chsj.org

MenEngage Alliance - Global network of more than 700 NGOs in 70 countries engaging men and boys to reduce gender inequalities and promote health and the well-being among women, men, and children.
http://www.menengage.org/

Men and Boys, Virtual Knowledge Centre to End Violence Against Women and Girls

Men and Gender Equality Work, European Institute for Gender Equality

Men, Boys, and Gender Equality - Engendering Men: Evidence on Routes to Gender Equality (EMERGE) project, IDS
http://menandboys.ids.ac.uk/

Hollaback - Ending street harassment through a network of activists around the world.
http://ihollaback.org

MenCare - A global fatherhood campaign
http://www.mencare.org/

Instituto Promundo – Part of a global organization, the Brazilian institute works in Latin America with young men, youth and children to promote equality between men and women and the prevention of interpersonal violence
http://www.promundoglobal.org/

Sexual Violence Resource Initiative collection on men and masculinities
http://www.svri.org/documents/men-masculinities

Voice Male – Book and magazine chronicling antismen's movement

ASIA AND PACIFIC (INCLUDING AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND)

White Ribbon Campaign - Australia
http://www.whiteribbon.org.au/

Coalition for Men Supporting NonViolence (Adelaide, Australia)

Tairawhiti Men Against Violence (TMAV) - New Zealand
http://tmav.org/

Male Champions of Change (Australia)
http://malechampionsofchange.com/

Boys-Talk: a program for young men about masculinity, non-violence and relationships - Australia
http://www.boys-talk.org.au/

Men Against Violence & Abuse (MAVA), Mumbai, India working to stop and prevent gender-based violence by involving sensitive men.
http://www.mavaindia.org

Equal Community Foundation (India): Engaging men to end violence against women.
http://www.ecf.org.in/

Rozan (Pakistan)
http://www.rozan.org/

China White Ribbon Volunteers' Network
http://www.whiteribbon.cn/

MEN UNITE (Men Against Violence and Abuse Alliance) (India)
http://www.facebook.com/men.unite

Cambodian Men's Network
https://www.facebook.com/CambodianMenNetwork

Men's Action for Stopping Violence Against Women (MASVAW)/Centre for Health and Social Justice (India)
http://www.chsj.org/masvaw.html

AFRICA

Sonke Gender Justice Project: HIV/AIDS, Gender Equality, Human Rights - includes “Men As Partners” project (South Africa)
http://www.genderjustice.org.za/

Congo Men's Network
http://menengage.org/regions/africa/dr-congo/

Men for Gender Equality Now - Kenya
https://megen.org/

Movement of Men Against AIDS in Kenya (MMAAK)
http://www.mmaak.org

Rwanda Men's Resource Centre: Aims to mobilize Rwandan men to support women's leadership, end men's violence and act as role models for positive masculinity
http://www.rwamrec.org/

EUROPE

EuroWRC (European White Ribbon Campaign)
http://www.eurowrc.org/

White Ribbon Campaign - Profeminist Men Finland
http://www.profeministimiehet.net/wrc/

White Ribbon Campaign UK – Working to get men to take a stand against violence against women
http://www.whiteribboncampaign.co.uk

Reform - Resource center for men (Norway)
http://www.reform.no/index.cfm

White Ribbon Campaign (The Other Half, Ireland)
http://www.theotherhalf.ie/whiteribbon/

Hombres por la Igualdad. Ayto. de Jeréz de la Frontera - Pro-gender equality men's program.
http://www.hombresigualdad.com/default.htm

Prometeo - Pro-gender equality men's group (Leon, Spain)
http://www.nodo50.org/prometeo/que_es.htm

Hombres Contra la Desigualdad de Genero (Men Against Gender Inequality)- (Spain)
http://www.stopmachismo.net

Men for Gender Equality - Sweden (MÄN för Jämställdhet)
http://www.mfj.se/

MANS CENTRUM: Swedish men's centers addressing men in crisis
http://www.manscentrum.se/

Working with Men (UK)
http://www.workingwithmen.org/

Profeminist Men Finland
http://www.profeministimiehet.net/

NeMM, Netværk for forskning om Mænd og Maskulinitet (Denmark)
http://www.nemm.dk/

PEOPLE’S GUIDE TO ANTiSEXiST MEN’S ACTIVISM
PEOPLE’S GUIDE TO ANTISEXIST MEN’S ACTIVISM

Nettverk for forskning om menn (Norway)  
http://www.mannsforsking.no

Maltese Men Against Violence  
https://www.facebook.com/pages/Men-Against-Violence/1437413136479124

Men opposed to prostitution  
http://www.zerodisco.de/

Der DISSENS mit der HERRschenden Männlichkeit (DISSENT to Dominating Masculinity) - Germany  
http://www.disSENS.de/

LATIN AMERICA & THE CARIBBEAN

Caribbean Male Action Network (CariMAN)  
http://menengage.org/regions/caribbean/

Complices por la equidad (Partners for Equality)  
http://menengage.org/regions/latin-america/mexico/

Red de Masculinidad por la Igualdad de Género (REDMAS) (MenCare Nicaragua)  
(REDMAS: A coalition of 22 Nicaraguan organizations working together on gender and masculinity issues with boys and men of diverse social backgrounds)  
http://www.redmasnicaragua.org/

Costa Rican Masculinity, Family and Sexuality (WEM) (MenCare Costa Rica)  
http://www.institutowemcr.org/

Heterodoxia. Hombres por la Igualdad – Provides information on profeminist issues for Spanish-speaking countries  
http://heterodoxia.org/

MIDDLE EAST

ABaad (Dimensions): Resource Center for Gender Equality (Lebanon)  
http://abaadmena.org

NORTHERN AMERICA

Center for the Study of Men and Masculinities – Understanding men, transforming masculinities, promoting gender equality  
http://storybrook.edu/csmm

Men Can Stop Rape - Washington, D.C.-based national advocacy and training organization mobilizing male youth to prevent violence against women  
http://www.mencanstroprape.org/

A Call to Men - Training and initiatives on ending violence against women  
http://acalltomen.org

CONNECT | Safe Families - Peaceful Communities  
www.connectnyc.org/

Defying Gender Roles  
http://defyinggenderroles.org/

Futures Without Violence - Working to end violence against women; programs for boys, men, fathers  
http://futureswithoutviolence.org/

Institute on Domestic Violence in the African American Community  
http://idvaac

Men’s Initiative for Jane Doe, Inc. - Statewide Massachusetts effort coordinating men’s anti-violence activities  
http://www.mijd.org

National Coalition Against Domestic Violence - Provides a coordinated community response to domestic violence  
www.ncadv.org

National Sexual Violence Resource Center (NSVRC) - national resource hub relating to all aspects of sexual violence  
www.nsвrc.org

National Resource Center on Violence Against Women - An online collection of searchable resources on domestic violence, sexual violence, and related issues  
vawnet.org

One in Four - An all-male sexual assault peer education group dedicated to preventing rape  
www.oneinfourusa.org

Party with Consent – national campus campaign facilitating dialogue about preventing sexual violence  
http://partywithconsent.org

PreventConnect – Utilizes online media to build community among people engaged in preventing sexual assault and relationship violence  
preventconnect.org

Rape Abuse and Incest National Network (RAINN) - A national anti-sexual assault organization  
www.rainn.org

Voice Male magazine  
http://voicemalomagazine.org/

MVP Strategies (mentors in violence prevention)  
http://www.mvpstrat.com/

Men Advocating Real Change - An online community of men committed to making real change in the workplace  
http://onthemarc.org/home/

The Men’s Story Project: Engaging boys and men for healthy masculinities and gender justice  
http://www.mensstoryproject.org/

MERGE for Equality

Training and consulting to change the way we raise boys  
http://www.mergeforequality.org

Masculinity Project - Addresses the complexities of masculinity in the African American community  
http://blackpublicmedia.org/project/masculinity

Men Against Sexual Violence  
http://menagainstsexualviolence.org

National Organization for Men Against Sexism (NOMAS) -  
http://www.nomas.org/

Out of the Box - curated collection on evolving masculinities  
http://outofthebox.org

Men’s Resource Centre of Saskatoon (Saskatchewan, Canada)  
http://www.saskatoonmenscenter.com/

MASV: Men Against Sexual Violence: Men working in the struggle to end sexual violence  
http://www.menagainstsexualviolence.org

Men Stopping Violence - Atlanta-based organization working to end violence against women, focusing on stopping battering, and ending rape  
http://www.menstoppingviolence.org/

Men Against Violence (Yahoo e-mail list)  
http://groups.yahoo.com/group/menagainstviolence/

Alan Berkowitz, Rape prevention  
http://www.alanberkowitz.com/ Preventing Sexual Assault; guidelines for consent in intimate relationships.

Michael Kaufman, violence prevention educator  
http://www.michaelkaufman.com/

Paul Kivel, violence prevention educator  
http://www.paulkivel.com/

Jackson Katz (anti-sexist activist)  
http://www.jacksonkatz.com/

Healthy Dating, Sexual Assault Prevention (Mike Domitrz)  
http://www.canikissyou.com

Teaching to Transform: Searchable Resources for Violence Prevention Education  
http://www.tcfv.org/prevention-curricula

Voices of Men - An educational theater piece exploring gender-based violence  
http://www.voicesofmen.org
FILM

Raise Our Men

This 35-minute film features interviews with New Zealand men talking about their experience of being socialized as a boy and their experiences as a man. Raise Our Men is designed to prompt men to choose to be more respectful toward women.

Developed by White Ribbon New Zealand for its 2017 Respectful Relationships campaign, it is free to be used in any community program to prevent men’s violence against women. Among topics men address are their experiences growing up and conforming to male stereotypes, the “Man Box.”

White Ribbon New Zealand believes that how society currently encourages and expects men to behave directly affects the high level of domestic violence and sexual harm in the country.

The film explores four key links:

- Men learn they have more power than women and feel they are entitled to use violence against women.
- Men hold to a rigid division of gender roles—what men do and what women do—and use violence to enforce this division.
- Men tend to express anger through aggression and are not encouraged to express all the other feelings they have.
- Men take their traditional masculinity identity from peers and the media, rather than developing their own more healthy identity.

The film paints a hopeful portrait of individual men making choices to be more respectful. It features interviews with nine kiwi men, who by telling their stories illustrate how change is possible—when men are shown and supported to choose a different respectful path. To watch Raise Our Men, go to www.whiteribboncampaign.org.nz. Included is a free study guide to assist in facilitating discussions of key themes in the film.

—Rob McCann

White Ribbon NZ also offers a “toolbox” with educational materials for boys, young and older men (https://whiteribbon.org.nz/toolbox/). They include: “Step Up and Stop Violence (and take other men with you)”; “Start with Respect”; “What Kind of Guy Do You Want to Be?”

For fathers: White Ribbon wants to give kiwi dads the confidence and skills to talk about respectful relationships and respectful sexual relationships with their sons, so they created a toolbox for dads and five short videos that focus on the top five tips.

POETRY

Richard Jeffrey Newman

Because I Can’t Not Know What He Saw
—remembering a photograph from Iris Chang’s The Rape of Nanking.

This month, Harper’s “Readings” brings from the people of Boro in eastern India a list of verbs impossible in English: khonsay, to pick an object up with care; dasa, not to place a fishing instrument; asusu, to feel unknown in a new place. Some sound like Yiddish curses: “You should ur,” dig soil like a swine, or “May your children gobray,” fall in a well unknowingly.

I want that kind of verb for the way whoever-it-was pulled the woman’s robe up over her head, for how the men the man who did this to her forced to watch—brother, father, husband, son, neighbor—for how each of them invades my sleep; and for the way I felt when I first saw it, what I feel now remembering it, the way I kept taking Iris Chang’s The Rape of Nanking off the shelf and crouching in the corner of Borders’ lower level to stare, and to stare—for that too I want a verb; and I want a verb as well, and it’s not rape, though certainly he raped her, for the sword hilt rising from between her parted thighs, and for the way I hate myself for hoping she was already dead when he buried his blade in her.

Richard Jeffrey Newman is an essayist, poet and translator. This poem is from his latest collection, Words for What Those Men Have Done.

The Nanking Massacre was an episode of mass murder and mass rape committed by Japanese troops against the residents of Nanjing, then the capital of the Republic of China, during the Second Sino-Japanese War.
Voice Male is a superb, groundbreaking publication offering a powerful way to engage men in working towards gender justice and to encourage younger men to learn new ways to become a man. Every individual and institution interested in gender equality and violence prevention should subscribe and spread the word!

—Judy Norsigian, coauthor and former executive director, Our Bodies, Ourselves

“Rob Okun’s brave book chronicles a movement of men standing with women in the struggle to end violence against women and reveals an emerging new man culture where men are reclaiming their tears and their hearts.”

—Eve Ensler, playwright of The Vagina Monologues, founder of Vday

“A very worthwhile introduction to the profeminist movement among men. It will reward both casual readers and serious students of the subject.”

—Library Journal

“Readers interested in gender issues will appreciate the strength of the individual articles and the book’s powerful message.”

—Publishers Weekly
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President of The Lorein Arbus Foundation, The Goldstein-Arbus Foundation, and Lorein Arbus Productions, Inc.
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JAMIAH WILSON
Executive Director and Publisher of the Feminist Press

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