What's the Best Way for Men to Be Profeminist?

Time to Join the Gender Equality Revolution
Capturing the Boggart of Patriarchy
Combating Pornography's Impact on Men
There is No War on Men (but There Are Peace Talks)

Toxic vs. healthy. Stoic vs. vulnerable. Clueless vs. clued in. In spite of the limiting, binary approach contemporary culture employs to grapple with understanding masculinity today, men are changing. Not in a straight line, or a wavy gender-fluid one, for that matter, but the shift is noticeable almost everywhere you look.

In the space of a few weeks this winter, the Gillette razor company launched a campaign centered around a nearly two-minute digital ad featuring a montage of news reports on bullying, #MeToo, and toxic masculinity and calling for men to be better men (page 5). Also, the American Psychological Association published its first-ever guidelines for working with men, “drawing on more than 40 years of research showing that traditional masculinity is psychologically harmful, and that socializing boys to suppress their emotions causes damage” (page 7).

If that wasn’t enough, a range of male singer-songwriters and bands have released albums explicitly calling out old-school masculinity, tackling among other struggles men’s alarming suicide rates, loneliness, and emotional restrictiveness. Songs like “The Stigma (Boys Don’t Cry)” by the British band As It Is: “Just close your eyes and bite your tongue for now/Don’t let them see you fall/Stay strong/Hold on/You’ve got to keep it together now/Just dry your eyes/Cause boys don’t cry/No, no/Boys don’t cry…”

Among the complex range of experiences that make up manhood—and the continuum of masculinities—some men are not only uncovering the source of their own pain, but also getting in touch with their accompanying, heart-wrenching feelings. They are learning to speak a rudimentary form of emotionalese, articulating a hunger for deeper connection with other men—and a better understanding of themselves.

For more than a year and a half, women’s achingly honest, white-hot #MeToo testimonies have given men the greatest opportunity we’ve ever had to jumpstart our inner transformation. Will we accept the invitation?

Kaufman’s book aims to show men that “feminism is the greatest gift men have ever received.”

From Rimjhim Jain’s overview of a new anthology on global masculinities, “Capturing the Boggart of Patriarchy” (page 21), and Pamela Saavedra Castro’s eye-opening report, “Learning from Young Feminists in Chile” (page 22), to Rus Funk’s new curriculum for men, “Examining the Feasibility of Masculinity” (page 28), and Diederik Prakke’s painfully honest memoir, “To Heal My Wounds, I Work with Men and Boys” (page 30), Voice Male continues our work chronicling the gender equality revolution. In “Deferring to Men” (page 12), Linda Stein recalls the struggle for gender dignity more than half a century ago, before the feminist revolution burst forth, and Michael Messner offers a tender portrait of vets-turned-activists in “Thank You for Your Service” (page 11).

Anne Eastman Yeomans’s poem about Christine Blasey Ford reintroduces us to a shero whose voice proclaims, “The Silence Is Broken” (page 14), and Steve Kanji Ruhl with raw honesty and tenderness takes us inside men’s lives, revealing darkness and karmic light in his poems, “Running on Rattlesnake Gutter Road” and “Chink.”

Frederick Douglass reminds us that some men have been championing women’s rights for a long time in an 1888 speech excerpt, “Why I Insist on a Woman’s Right to Vote,” delivered on the 40th anniversary of the pioneering women’s rights convention in Seneca Falls, New York (page 8). “Men have very little business here as speakers…they should take back benches and wrap themselves in silence.”

For men in the feminist-led movement that since #MeToo has begun a new chapter, it’s time to speak out and speak in. It’s time to examine our inner lives so deeply that when our children and grandchildren ask, “What did you do during the Gender Equality Revolution?” we will know what to say.
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Mail Bonding

Stop Trafficking Women

For 13 years I have been working on the problem of the trafficking of women for prostitution. I am currently working with a media team to do a documentary on how cultures prepare men and boys to buy women for sex as well as [commit] other types of violence against them. This is not a male bashing documentary. Our goal is to raise awareness about the violence in prostitution as well as interventions that might change the current attitudes in our culture(s) that say prostitution of women and young girls is okay.

I am very aware of the approach that states prostitution is a woman's choice—a job like any other that a woman would choose. I guess you can say there are different levels of prostitution (like protected escorts etc.). However, some researchers and human service personnel have a different perspective and say every act of prostitution is an act of violence against women. Any of us who have cared for adult women trying to exit prostitution certainly see the violence. If Voice Male ever published anything in relation to men and prostitution of women that might be helpful for our documentary, I'd appreciate any help you can give to us.

Sr. Teresita Hinneegan
Center for the Empowerment of Women
Philadelphia, Penn.

Feminist Reading List

If I've learned anything from interviewing many powerful men, it's that many need to hold one another accountable. Wade Davis the former NFL player turned feminist activist did men worldwide a favor, sharing the top books he recommends for male feminists. Below, you can find Davis' reading list, supplemented by books and essays recommended by Mukoma Wa Ngugi, the Cornell English professor, poet, and feminist activist. And then you'll see some recommendations of mine.

Davis' reading list:
The Origins of Others by Toni Morrison;
Invisible Man, Got the Whole World Watching, by Mychal Denzel; The Bluest Eye by Toni Morrison; The Will to Change: Men, Masculinity, and Love by bell hooks;
Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center by bell hooks

Ngugi's reading list: Women, Race, and Class by Angela Davis; Woman at Point Zero by Nawal El Saadawi

My two cents:
Beyond the brilliant texts listed above (Sister Outsider by Audre Lorde is my absolute favorite), I’d also recommend: Good and Mad: The Revolutionary Power of Women’s Anger by Rebecca Traister (note: also anything written by Traister)
So you want to talk about race? by Ijeoma Oluo; Men Explain Things to Me by Rebecca Solnit; Amateur: A True Story of What Makes a Man by Thomas Page McBee; Redefining Redness by Janet Mock; Teaching to Transgress by bell hooks; Feminism is for Everybody by bell hooks
Leah Fessler
via email

Soul Lifting

When a friend showed me the magazine, it took me less than a minute to look for the subscription information. The international contact pages alone in the Resources section are soul lifting. It’s great to be entering my sixties with the world changing this way—with so much clarity, courage, and so much better communication skills.

Marc Worthington
Santa Fe, New Mexico

Letters may be sent via email to www.voicemalemagazine.org or mailed to Editors: Voice Male, PO Box 1246, Amherst, MA 01004
Is Gillette Looking for a Few Good Men or...

Even if you don’t remember ever seeing a Gillette razor commercial, you’ve almost certainly heard or seen their iconic catchphrase, “The best a man can get.” The company flipped the script in a new ad that addresses the #MeToo movement and the role so-called toxic masculinity plays in it, asking, “Is this the best a man can get?”

Writing in Good.com, Eric Pfeiffer described the nearly two-minute digital ad that opens with a montage of news reports on bullying, #MeToo and toxic masculinity as the reversed question is asked by a narrator over images of men self-reflecting while staring into their bathroom mirrors.

“It’s been going on far too long,” the narrator continues. “We can’t laugh it off.”

A series of disturbing images play out while a literal formation of men standing in front of grills deadpan, “Boys will be boys,” until the narrator declares, “Something finally changed and there will be no going back.”

But rather than focusing exclusively on a negative, shaming note like so many other attempts at moving beyond toxic masculinity, the Gillette ad smartly transitions into framing the #MeToo movement as a chance for men to be better while still being men. As the narrator says: “Because we believe in the best of men.”

Men are encouraged to police themselves. Images play out of men intervening to discourage other men from engaging in acts of harassment or blatant sexism: “To say the right thing, to act the right way. Some already are, in ways big and small. But ‘some’ is not enough because the boys watching today will be the men of tomorrow.”

Gillette said it is establishing a fund to counter toxic masculinity, and is directing contributions to the Boys & Girls Clubs of America.

... Is Gillette Looking for Big Profits?

How deep is Gillette’s callout of toxic masculinity? That’s the question Dr. Rachael Jacobs, a lecturer in education at Australia’s Western Sydney University, asked after hearing about Gillette’s new “Is this the best a man can get?” campaign.

Despite its positive message, Prof. Jacobs says consumers may not know that Gillette has a long history of misogyny in marketing its products, beginning with persuading women they needed to shave. As far back as 1915, the company realized it could double its profits if women could be convinced that underarm hair was unseemly. Today the women’s hair-removal industry is worth billions of dollars, according to Prof. Jacobs. Coupled with its gender-based discriminatory “pink tax”—Gillette regularly charges its female customers more for what is essentially the same product it sells men—the company appears to be more interested in profits than people, despite its new masculinity campaign.

Gillette is owned by Procter & Gamble (P&G), which also makes skin whitening and lightening creams, mass marketed in Asia and the Middle East. As Prof. Jacobs notes, “These racist products celebrate whiteness, tell dark women they are not okay the way they were born and perpetuate ridiculous and homogenous beauty standards.”
Men @ Work

standards. Perhaps the most uncomfortable thing about Gillette’s new approach to masculinity is that it never seemed to care before now.”

Decades of activism for gender justice, the epidemic of domestic violence, and harrowing statistics on rape and assault had done little to prompt Gillette or P&G into action. Dr. Jacobs observed, noting, “Corporations can capitalize on social change but they cannot create it. Real change has to come from individuals and communities, in this case men, who need to stand up without the aid of a razor or a sleekly edited ad.”

Meanwhile, in the Balkans, women shared #MeToo testimonies about painful gynecological procedures and abuse by medical staff while receiving treatment.

In the US, women stood up for Lifetime after R&B singer R. Kelly threatened to sue the television network for airing its explosive six-part docuseries Surviving R. Kelly, in which alleged victims of his physical and sexual abuse came forward to denounce the 52-year-old entertainer.

Stopping Violence Against Native Women

A summit for activists, government officials, and service providers who work on behalf of Native American sexual assault survivors was scheduled to meet in New Mexico at the end of March. The sixth annual Tribal Leaders Summit is a free briefing for tribal, state and federal officials and others who work with survivors of sexual assault and domestic violence, according to the Coalition to Stop Violence Against Native Women. Organizers say the summit is also designed to provide educational opportunities for tribal leaders, including updates and briefings about provisions of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) that primarily impact native peoples. In addition, the Tribal Law and Order Act, and current jurisdictional challenges faced in New Mexico, were on the agenda for the summit. Organizers say the Tribal Law and Order Act is particularly important since it will be considered for congressional reauthorization later this year. The two-day summit was also scheduled to focus on sharing field expertise, promising best practices, and fostering conversations with the goal of increasing public safety of Native women and children. To learn more, go to www.csvanw.org.

“Dress More Appropriate”

A 30-year-old Supreme Court ruling should have protected Meagan Hunter from gender discrimination, but apparently not at Chili’s Grill & Bar in Phoenix, Arizona.

Describing her as an excellent server, her supervisors suggested Meagan apply to be a manager. After attending a company seminar dressed similarly to male managers—button-up shirt, fitted slacks, and boat shoes—her boss said, “We really want to hire you. However, we need you to dress more gender appropriate.” Incredulous, Meagan asked, “Are you telling me I need to have my breasts hanging out? Meagan turned to the American Civil Liberties Union, and the ACLU promptly filed a discrimination suit with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

In a landmark 1989 decision, the Supreme Court ruled in favor of Ann Hopkins, a woman whose promotion was held up because she’d been told to “walk more femininely, talk more femininely, wear make-up, have [your] hair styled, and wear jewelry.” The court’s decision established that employers cannot punish employees for not matching stereotypes about how women or men should look and act. Lower courts continue to agree.

Nevertheless, 30 years on and Meagan Hunter is out of a job because she didn’t fit Chili’s stereotypes about women.

Women Stand Up Week

Actions around the globe were held the last week of January and in early February to commemorate Women Stand Up week where women staged a range of actions from individuals launching letter-writing campaigns to mass demonstrations and rallies, according to journalist Meghan McCarty. Organizers said the week was designed to inspire women to take action and to see more women’s organizations take part in agitating for change.

In Australia, feminists and allies took to social media protesting the silencing of women, including: Two women in India who entered the Sabarimala temple in the southern state of Kerala, becoming the first women of menstruating age to go inside after a centuries-long ban was overturned. Kanaka Durga and Bindu Ammini made history after they entered the temple in the middle of the night escorted by police. As news of their entry spread, violent demonstrations ensued, with right-wing protesters accusing the women of “desecrating” the temple.

The Coalition to Stop Violence Against Native Women, Albuquerque, New Mexico.
Men @ Work

Is “Safe Harbor” for the Trafficked at Hand?

A new report identifies the potential impacts of reforming policies that address “the safety, health, dignity and justice for adults involved in transactional sex, including victims of trafficking, and exploitation.” Produced by the Minnesota Department of Public Health, the drily-titled “Safe Harbor for All Strategic Planning Process Report” sheds light on the intended and unintended harms—including lack of housing and police protection—to adults who are trafficked for sex or are involved in transactional sex.

The report drew on input from 294 stakeholders from across Minnesota. If the state adopts the recommendations, they would likely be adopted by other states and ultimately the federal government, according to Chuck Derry of the Minnesota-based Gender Violence Institute. “These recommendations in many ways mimic those developed in Sweden, but also for those who live with the realities of sexual harassment, sexual assault, domestic violence, and other sexist social norms,” Derry noted. “Those social norms dehumanize, subordinate, and marginalize women and children, and others not socially identified as male.”

To learn more, go to z.umn.edu/safeharborforall.

[continued on page 34]

Psychologists (Finally) Catch On: It’s Time to Redefine Masculinity

Twelve years after the American Psychological Association (APA) approved guidelines for working with women and girls, it has released a 10-point plan for working with boys and men.

While acknowledging that ideas about masculinity vary across cultures, age groups and ethnicities, the report’s authors noted common themes that cut across culture, including: “anti-femininity, achievement, eschewal of the appearance of weakness; and adventure, risk, and violence.” Despite being written in dry academic language, the guidelines went viral and drew immediate negative backlash from conservatove and men’s rights activists who saw the guidelines as an attack on conventional masculinity. “If men are struggling more the farther we move from those traditional norms, is the answer to continue denying and suppressing a boy’s essential nature?” wrote David French, a senior writer for National Review. French did not provide any data to support his claim that conventional masculinity is “essential” to a boy’s nature because none exists.

The guidelines outline many challenges experienced by men including a fear of appearing weak if they seek out help from psychologists; increased health risks; perpetrating and being victimized by violent crimes; and incarceration. “We see that men have higher suicide rates, men have more cardiovascular disease and men are lonelier as they get older. We’re trying to help men by expanding their emotional repertoire, not trying to take away the strengths that men have,” said Fredric Rabinowitz, one of the lead writers of the guide and a professor of psychology at the University of Redlands.

The guidelines acknowledge the intersectionality of gender, race, and income and how such variables impact outcomes, including the fact that “men in the United States go to jail more often than women, but men from minority ethnic groups are more likely to be incarcerated than white men, even when crime rates are the same.”

While appreciating the guidelines overall message, “they don’t explicitly recommend group therapy, psycho-educational groups or men’s circles as a means of resocialization,” noted Randy Flood, director of the Men’s Resource Center of West Michigan and coauthor of Masculopathy: Understanding and Healing the Malaise of American Manhood. “Still, the guidelines challenge psychologists to embrace a wellness paradigm where we cross-train boys into their full humanity, rather than sacrificing half of it by only prizing stoicism, aggression and competition—the triumvirate of traditional masculinity,” Flood said.

Nevertheless, he predicted more backlash from those who falsely conclude “that the standards are just another example of the war on men, rather than view it as thoughtful, well-researched and precisely constructed gender-specific guidelines to help men be better versions of themselves and ultimately more emotionally and relationally fit for the new millennium. It’s sad that, for some, identifying toxic masculinity is conflated with being anti-male rather than what it actually is—being pro-male.”

The guidelines will expire in about 10 years to consider evolving ideas, Jacey Fortin reported in an article in the New York Times. The guidelines are primarily a resource for professional counselors, Dr. Rabinowitz noted. “Psychologists are encouraged to see men as being impacted by culture, by race and by relationships, rather than just assuming that there is one sort of standardized set of behaviors. We want people to be aware that men are complex beings.”

To read the report, go to www.apa.org/about/policy/boys-men-practice-guidelines.pdf.
Mrs. President, Ladies and Gentlemen: I come to this platform with unusual diffidence. Although I have long been identified with the Woman's Suffrage movement, and have often spoken in its favor, I am somewhat at a loss to know what to say on this really great and uncommon occasion, where so much has been said.

When I look around on this assembly, and see the many able and eloquent women, full of the subject, ready to speak, and who only need the opportunity to impress this audience with their views and thrill them with “thoughts that breathe and words that burn,” I do not feel like taking up more than a very small space of your time and attention, and shall not. I would not, even now, presume to speak, but for the circumstance of my early connection with the cause, and of having been called upon to do so by one whose voice in this Council we all gladly obey.

Men have very little business here as speakers, anyhow; and if they come here at all they should take back benches and wrap themselves in silence. For this is an international council, not of men, but of women, and woman should have all the say in it. This is her day in court. I do not mean to exalt the intellect of woman above man’s; but I have heard many men speak on this subject, some of them the most eloquent to be found anywhere in the country; and I believe no man, however gifted with thought and speech, can voice the wrongs, and present the demands of women with the skill and effect, with the power and authority of woman herself. The man struck is the man to cry out. Woman knows and feels her wrongs as man cannot know and feel them, and she also knows as well as he can know, what measures are needed to redress them. I grant all the claims at this point. She is her own best representative. We can neither speak for her, nor vote for

Frederick Douglass is well known as the escaped slave who became a leader in the abolitionist movement, as well as a prominent activist, author and public speaker. Less well known was his support for women’s suffrage. Douglass was one of the few men present at the pioneering woman’s rights convention in Seneca Falls, New York, in July 1848. His support of women’s rights never wavered, and he remained a constant champion of the right of women to vote. In April 1888, in a speech before the International Council of Women in Washington, D.C., Douglass recalled his role at the Seneca Falls convention four decades earlier, beginning by insisting that women rather than men should be the primary spokespersons for the movement. A lengthy excerpt from his speech appears below.
The universality of man's rule over woman is another factor in the resistance to the woman-suffrage movement. We are pointed to the fact that men have not only always ruled over women, but that they do so rule everywhere, and they easily think that a thing that is done everywhere must be right. Though the fallacy of this reasoning is too transparent to need refutation, it still exerts a powerful influence.

All good causes are mutually helpful. The benefits accruing from this movement for the equal rights of woman are not confined or limited to woman only. They will be shared by every effort to promote the progress and welfare of mankind everywhere and in all ages. It was an example and a prophecy of what can be accomplished against strongly opposing forces, against time-hallowed abuses, against deeply entrenched error, against worldwide usage, and against the settled judgment of mankind, by a few earnest women, clad only in the panoply of truth, and determined to live and die in what they considered a righteous cause.

The women who have thus far carried on this agitation have already embodied and illustrated Theodore Parker's three grades of human greatness. The first is greatness in executive and administrative ability; second, greatness in the ability to organize; and, thirdly, in the ability to discover truth. Wherever these elements of power are combined in any movement, there is a reasonable ground to believe in its final success; and these elements of power have been manifest in the women who have had the movement in hand from the beginning. They are seen in the order which has characterized the proceedings of this council. They are seen in the depth and are seen in the fervid eloquence and downright earnestness with which women advocate their cause. They are seen in the profound attention with which woman is heard in her own behalf. They are seen in the steady growth and onward march of the movement, and they will be seen in the final triumph of woman's cause, not only in this country, but throughout the world.

The complete speech by Frederick Douglass was published by BlackPast, https://blackpast.org/.
“Messner’s narrative points the way for other activists seeking to build popular opposition movements.”
—Kirkus Reviews

“A deeply personal, very human book. Michael Messner has brought on stage some eloquent survivors whom our politicians should listen to before they dare even consider sending young men and women out to fight yet again.”
—Adam Hochschild, author of To End All Wars: A Story of Loyalty and Rebellion, 1914-1918

“An eloquent, passionate, and moving account of how war has sometimes moved veterans towards peace.”
—Viet Thanh Nguyen, author of The Sympathizer

“Messner is our new Studs Terkel. Essential reading for those seeking to understand military veterans.”
—Hugh Gusterson, author of Drone: Remote Control Warfare

“The testimonies of these varied, thoughtful, and racially diverse veterans are at stark odds with the cinematic ads we see of government-approved pro-war imagery, and it’s important they be heard.”
—Foreword Reviews

“There is a revelation on every page of Guys Like Me. A truly humane book.”
—Cynthia Enloe, author of The Big Push: Exposing and Challenging Persistent Patriarchy

“This book tells the stories of five veterans of five U.S. wars. [Their] stories are well-told, with subtlety and complexity, not museum-like propaganda. Each person is unique, but each confronts the same monster.”
—World Beyond War

http://guyslikemebook.com
rutgersuniversitypress.org
Vets for Peace: “Thank You for Your Service”

By Michael A. Messner

The midday sun lit up the blue sky of Santa Fe, New Mexico, and three Veterans for Peace (VFP) banners whipped in a cool mid-October breeze. Cars and pickup trucks filed by, stopping and going with the traffic lights, some drivers honking and flashing the peace sign. It was a Friday, so members of the local VFP chapter stood on the state capital’s busiest corner for their weekly peace vigil from noon to 1 p.m., a commitment they’ve kept—rain, shine, or snow—since 2002, following the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan. Back then—and especially following the invasion of Iraq—the local chapter’s membership swelled, and they would often get 40, 50 or more protesters on the corner. On numerous occasions between 2016 and 2018 when I joined the vigil, there were sometimes 10 or 12, although normally five or six would show up. On this October day, I joined a thin group of three stalwarts: 80-year-old former marine Ken Mayers; Ray Masterson, a Marine Corps Force Reconnaissance veteran of the American War in Vietnam, accompanied as always by his service dog; and Army veteran of the Gulf War Daniel Craig, currently president of the chapter.

A pedestrian—a young guy with wiry red hair and a ruddy complexion, wearing an Oregon Ducks sweatshirt a size too large, paused to talk. He said that he’d seen the group there on previous Fridays, and appreciated their message of peace. And he added, “My grandfather served in Vietnam—at least that’s where I think he was.” And then, in a most earnest tone he said, “I want to thank you for your service,” adding, “I know you don’t hear that enough.” Ray Masterson stood tall—still, with no visible expression on his weathered face, the only movement his VFP flag flapping in the wind. Daniel Craig turned aside and spit out a load of sunflower seeds he’d been working on. Ken Mayers spoke without responding, at least not immediately, to the young man’s “thank you.” Instead, Mayers engaged in a brief discussion of the work of VFP, and answered the young man’s query about drone warfare.

I wondered if the three VFP demonstrators were simply going to ignore the young man’s “thank you.” I’d been following a lively discussion among VFP members, online and in their national newsletter, on the conundrum veterans face when someone says, “Thank you for your service.” For one who regrets his military actions and is critical of past and current U.S. wars, the mantra “thank you for your service” is loaded with ideological and emotional baggage.

I had asked each of my interviewees how they respond when someone thanks them for their service. World War II combat veteran Ernie Sanchez shrugged: “I tell them I am not proud of killing people, that war is wrong,” he said. It seemed to make Daniel Craig tired just to reply to my question about this: “It’s become obligatory to thank a veteran. The thing is, people have no idea what they’re talking about. They’ve been told a story about military service: duty, honor, serving your country, blah-blah-blah. When they say, ‘Thanks for your service,’ lots of times I don’t have the energy to have a dialogue.” Gregory Ross, veteran of the American War in Vietnam, said he started noticing people thanking him for his service in the 1980s, and at first he’d “get really pissy about it.” Then he shared a snarky fantasy response: ‘The people who would say ‘Thank you for your service,’ I would think, ‘Oh you’re welcome! Actually, I killed that one VC just for you!’ But I never did it. I reminded myself that they mean well. It’s a way for them to assuage their guilt, their survivor guilt. Usually they’re middle-aged women and they mean well.”

On that autumn day on the Santa Fe street corner, as the young redhead started to walk away, Ken Mayers added, casually, “Oh, you know, earlier you thanked us for our service. That was very nice of you. But you should know that the things we did when we were in the military, we did because we were told to. This work that we are doing right now—working for peace—this is our service.” The young guy nodded, perhaps taken aback by Mayers’s response, but he seemed to understand. He thanked them again, said “God bless you,” and commenced to move on. Mayers tossed a friendly rejoinder as the guy walked away, “Oh, and Go Ducks!”

Some months later, I interviewed Ken Mayers and put the big question to him—a version of the same question I asked every veteran who works for peace. You dedicate a big part of your life to public activism for peace and justice, I observed, but year after year, decade after decade, our nation continues to wage wars as it prepares for new ones. What keeps you going? What keeps you coming to this vigil, week after week, year after year? Mayers smiled, nodded, and referenced a lesson he learned years ago from lifelong pacifist and peace activist A. J. Muste, who famously said, “There is no way to peace. Peace is the way.” Every night the last couple years of his life, Muste legendarily stood vigil outside the White House holding a lit candle, protesting the escalation of the American War in Vietnam. Mayers continued: “He was asked, did he really think this was going to change the world? He says, ‘You don’t understand. I’m not doing this so that the world will be changed. I’m doing this so that the world won’t change me.’ That’s what keeps me on the corner every Friday. If I stop doing it I have lost. As long as I’m in the fight, the fight goes on.”

Michael A. Messner is professor of sociology and gender studies at the University of Southern California who serves on the Voice Male national advisory board. His teaching and research focuses on gender and sports, men and masculinities, and gender-based violence. He is the author of several books, including It’s All for the Kids: Gender, Families and Youth Sports, King of the Wild Suburb: A Memoir of Fathers, Sons and Guns, and Some Men: Feminist Allies and the Movement to End Violence Against Women. This article is excerpted from Guys Like Me: Five Wars, Five Veterans for Peace, and used with permission from Rutgers University Press, 2018.
“Many moons ago, during the middle of the 20th century—before the gender revolution and the deconstruction of the gender binary—learning to look and act like a proper young lady involved being self-effacing, self-limiting and docile,” recalls feminist artist Linda Stein. When she tells audiences today what life was like for a young woman growing up more than a half-century ago, she says the younger women “always roll their eyes in disbelief, while their elders nod at me in agreement and understanding, remembering their own all-too-similar experiences.” In the article that follows Stein shares memories and analysis of the “bad old days.”

Growing up female in the 1950s, I learned that ladylike postures, specifically with legs crossed either at the knees or ankles, and hands in lap, were mandatory for a female. But female restrictions went deeper than just posture, as we accepted the cultural norm of displaying deference to men in words and demeanor.

Showing this kind of deference was de rigueur. Girls were trained in mundane and monumental ways to take constricting, shrinking postures while boys were told to enlarge themselves and claim extra territory. This became such an unconscious, reflexive behavior for girls wanting to fit in with their peers that the cultural pull was hard to counter.

A female teacher who dared to confront this norm describes how a male photographer came to her classroom of seven-year-old students to take their class picture. He adamantly insisted, despite this teacher’s protest, that each boy should sit in the chair like a “captain,” with arms firmly set on arm rests, reaching out and forward toward the viewer, and with legs assuming the wide stance of one ankle overlapping the other knee, taking up additional horizontal space as well. The photographer instructed the girls to sit demurely with legs crossed at the ankle, and hands folded onto their laps.

It was expected that this positioning—distinguishing boys from girls—would be accepted by the class without protest. But the teacher surprised the photographer by not giving ground, despite his rising anger. It’s not unusual to see a man win an argument, or get his way, by raising his voice and getting angry. I saw it over and over as I grew to womanhood (even with my own father). Of course, that approach was played out nationally during the Supreme Court Kavanaugh/Blasey-Ford hearings. In a column last October in The Guardian, Emma Brockes expressed the point, writing:

“One of the discussion points to have come out of the Brett Kavanaugh hearings has been the question of anger and what women do with it—specifically, where and how they manage to stuff it down low so it doesn’t spill out and get them labeled as lunatics. [Republican Sen.] Lindsey Graham can go “full Foghorn Leghorn” (a Looney Tunes cartoon character based on a puffed up Southern U.S. senator); Kavanaugh can howl like a kid with his head stuck in railings. But to be heard, a woman must be demure and nonthreatening.”

Demure, nonthreatening—and deferential: That’s what I learned to be as a young girl. Boys, it seemed to me, required a great deal of ego-building. By the age of 12, when I had my first real boyfriend, I knew how to make him feel better, stronger,
I had fewer opinions and hardly ever contradicted his manly assertions.

I sat in a constrained manner, cross-legged, poised and pretty, as if waiting to be discovered. I tended to fuse with my projection of male needs and desires. (If I thought a man was seeking a sexual liaison, I would automatically become more flirtatious and seemingly available, even if I was in a monogamous relationship and not really interested.) I felt an invisible lid on my head, allowing me to go only so far and no further. I began to feel denied the freedom to hit the metaphorical ball as hard as I could, and, damn it, try to win!

Slowly, with determination and therapy, the dots began to connect and I gradually started to change my behavior. It was difficult for me to give up the status of sex object since I didn’t know what would take its place. But with effort, I stopped trying so hard to please men. It helped me to ask myself if I would talk or behave the same way with a woman. My goal was to be as equally “real” in the company of either gender.

So, now, am I totally free of MDS—Male Deference Syndrome? Am I as outspoken and confident with men as I am with women? Do I always try to win at Ping-Pong? My answer is a qualified “Yes,” though I know from reflecting on my behavior that I still have to carefully monitor my propensity to defer to men. I still struggle with my tendency to feel less important in their presence. I continue to need to remind myself to be confident and proud of my strengths and abilities.

Will relating freely and equally with men ever feel totally natural to me? These days, at least, I’m certainly hitting the ball over the net—and winning.

Feminist artist, activist, educator, performer, and writer, Linda Stein is founder of Have Art: Will Travel! Inc., a gender justice nonprofit addressing bullying and diversity. In 2018, Stein was honored as one of Women’s eNews’ 21 Leaders for the 21st Century. In 2017, Stein received the New York City Art Teachers Association/LIFT Artist of the Year award. To see a video of Stein describing the origins of her work, go to https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Ri-i-NBQs-NPVBidaW2Jdg-bz-iTAGOYY/view. A version of this article first appeared in Women’s eNews.

Do you have a related story to tell? Write Linda@lindastein.com or HAWT@haveartwilltravel.org.
The Silence Is Broken

A woman in a blue suit comes into a room.
She sits down at a table.
She has blondish hair to her shoulders.
Some of it falls in front of her face.
She brushes it back with her hand.
She is wearing glasses.
Before she speaks,
she straightens her back.
I see the whole length of her torso.
I begin to weep.
I feel the quiet of her,
the presence, the attention, the focus.
Tears are streaming down my cheeks.

She will tell us a story.
She apologizes.
She can’t remember everything.
She wants to be helpful.
She doesn’t have all the details.
She understands why. She has studied this.
She is here because she believes
it is her civic duty.
She didn’t want to come forward.
She is a private person.

This is what she knows.
She was at a small party in the evening
in a private home.
She went upstairs to the bathroom.
Two older boys followed her.
They forced her into a bedroom.
They were drunk.

They closed the door
and locked it.
They turned up the music
so no one would know.
They were laughing.
One of them pushed her
onto the bed,
ground himself into her,
tried to tear off her clothes.
She screamed.
He covered her mouth
with his hand.

The boys were laughing.
Not at me, she explained,
with each other.
They were laughing.
They locked the door,
turned up the music
so no one would know.

They all tumbled to the floor.
She got away,
hid in the bathroom.

The woman is fifteen.
She’d been swimming all day.

She was at a small party in the evening
in a private home.
She went upstairs to the bathroom.
Two older boys followed her.
They forced her into a bedroom.
They were drunk.

She didn’t want to come forward.
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They were laughing.
They locked the door,
turned up the music
so no one would know.
They all tumbled to the floor.
She got away,
hid in the bathroom
until she heard them
stumbling down the stairs.
She opened the door quietly,
came down and left the house.
She doesn’t remember
how she got home.

How are you sure it was him?
she is asked by a senator.
The same way I know I am talking
with you right now, she answers.
With what degree of certainty
do you believe it was Brett Kavanaugh
who assaulted you? asks another.
She leans toward the microphone,
with a voice steady and clear
she answers, One hundred percent.

I feel the courage of her,
the deep quiet,
the presence,
the attention,
the focus.

It fills the room,
seeps under the door
and into the halls.
It flows down the steps
of the Senate Building
of The United States of America,
and out into the streets
where the protesters are chanting.
It fills the whole city,
the country, and beyond.
It echoes throughout the world.
It cannot be erased.
She brushes her hair back from her face.

Women and men are listening.
Women and men are watching
in offices, in school yards,
in hospitals and banks,
on street corners,
in homeless shelters and parks.
Many are remembering.
Many are weeping.

* * *
A teenage girl is listening.
She has shiny brown hair
and a thin grey coat.
She is on her way home from school.
The year is 1956.
She is on the subway.
It is crowded,
body against body.
There is a man behind her,
pressing, pressing his hardness
into her.
She can feel the splitting apart
in her brain.

Is this really happening?
No, this couldn’t be happening.
Someone tell me it isn’t true.

Frozen in fear,
she cannot speak or move.

* * *

Then in the afternoon,
a man comes into the room.
The one who, if you believe her,
had covered her mouth with his hand
in order to silence her.
With seething petulance and venom,
he pushes back defiantly,
asserts his innocence,
strikes out at all who would question it.

Some at the table stand with her,
but many others counter
with fury and apology.
How could his good name
be maligned this way.
The woman was mistaken.
She didn’t know
what she knew.
A lovely woman,
but she must be confused.
They were outraged
he had had to endure this.
Several days later the president
publicly mocked her
and the crowd chanted,
Lock her up! Lock her up!

* * *

I can’t get her out of my mind now,
I need to know how she is—
at least leave a note in her mailbox.

Christine, are you OK?
Thank you for your courage.
Thank you for your truth.
The protesters who stood with you
that day have not gone home.
The “We Believe Her” signs
are still here.
Women are standing up
as never before.
The silence is broken.
Take heart!
The speaking has begun.

Poet and social activist Anne Eastman Yeomans
has been a psychotherapist and a group facilitator
for more than 40 years. Her work focuses on
the healing and empowerment of women and
the re-honoring of the feminine in all people.
RUNNING ON RATTLESNAKE GUTTER ROAD
Trotting slopes of washout gravel and stones on this lane ascending through dappled birch and pine, ledges of upper cliffs verdant with ferns and moss, I scan the crags and drink oxygen and sun as elixirs, my cells nourished by joy. My steps without effort. My sweat pure. My body lean, muscled, responsive as a Belmont racehorse to my promptings in surging uphill through the ravine. Early this morning I read of prostate surgery, how even if the surgeon's blade spares erectile nerves the penis may hang limp as a sock on a clothesline for years before it regains some firmness of purpose, and even then will spasm at sexual climax in what urologists dub a "dry orgasm," meaning no ejaculate, ever, no more gushers of come -- cock and balls depleted like a wildcat oil well gone dry and abandoned in the windswept desolation of the Texas panhandle. Musing on this prospect of mutilation I thought too of women and cancer, how its rampaging mutant cells scourge women's bodies with scars and vacancies, grievous erasures of cervix, ovaries, uterus, breasts in surgical amputations forfending physical death by hastening soul death, that dismal trade-off. Men or women, none of us spared. Bacchic temples of our flesh ransacked and desecrated, as if by crazed Visigoths. Yet now, as I trot upslope on this earthen road that welcomes light into the gorge, I feel wafted by euphoria. Life. Life. Life no matter what: these cliffs, these pines, this blue butterfly, wings edged with black sable, pausing to sample the laces of my running shoe. When I crest the summit I glimpse standing motionless atop a boulder a woman in a denim dress, hair of burnished silver. Her eyes closed. One hand rests on her heart. The other on her belly. Her stillness is the stillness that haunts the core of a summer storm.

Her focused silence. And I recognize it. Ah, I think. She's healing too.

CHINK
His inexplicable nickname. He didn't earn that racist sobriquet by looking Chinese, he looked feral, looked rabid fisher cat feral, scowling, skulking high school hallways, stalking his longhair hippie pacifist prey: me. He hailed from Beech Creek, that piss hamlet up Bald Eagle Valley. He reeked of rage. You could tell his old man horse-whipped him with a belt, he took it out on me with snarling punches, sneering fist-jabs, slams against lockers, eyes slitted in menace. Hissing get a goddamn haircut as his girlfriend -- what did she find amorous in his dogged, sullen fury when hitting a kid who pledged not to hit back? -- smirked in her cat's-eye glasses and permed bouffant. After graduation in '71 he hitched in the Marines. To kill "gooks." Saw in boot camp for the first time black men. Chink growled in the chow line I ain't eatin with no niggers. Jogging the next morning, rounding a road curve he saw looming in fog a nightmare squad of bullish black Marines: Who you callin nigger they inquired while smashing him blood-dazed and senseless in the beating I longed to give him myself but couldn't admit in those days of noble self-deceit, of pride in my public non-violence. I chuckled when I heard the story second-hand. Only now with four decades passed behind me do I not explain his pummeling by those black, tormented, and wrathful grunts as just deserts, taste of his own medicine, karma or recompense for suffering he gave to me. I see it just as suffering. The human hurt. That thing we do eternally, each to the cringing other.

What’s Wrong with this Picture
The Impact of Viewing Pornography

By: Rus Ervin Funk, MSW, CSE

Without realizing it, men who view pornography tend to internalize the messages and norms that pornography reinforces. This internalization influences how men view women and masculinity and how they engage in and experience sex. It also affects men’s response to individuals who disclose that they’ve been raped, the degree and intensity of men’s support for rape myths, and their willingness to engage as activists against rape and rape culture.

This finely-crafted volume, What’s Wrong with This Picture: The Impact of Viewing Pornography, is a curriculum for men that facilitates an eight-session program designed to encourage men to critically explore the impact of viewing of pornography, and deepen their empathy and compassion for women’s experience of pornography.

Some of the content covered includes:
• How viewing pornography tends to affect how men look at the women in their classrooms, homes, offices, neighborhoods, & places of worship;
• The influence of pornography on how men flirt, date, and negotiate sexual behavior;
• The impact of viewing pornography on men’s attitudes regarding rape, sexual assault, dating violence, and their willingness to interrupt abusive, harassing or hurtful behavior by other men; and
• Ways men can act to challenge pornography and rape culture.

Rus Funk has created a stunningly effective approach to reaching men about the impact that pornography has on the lives of women – and of men. What’s Wrong With This Picture teaches us how to engage men of all ages in a process of serious reflection and reevaluation, while also steering us away from becoming preachy or shaming. The curriculum is highly detailed, guiding any group leader in how to introduce each topic and how to create a group process that facilitates growth. The materials you need for group exercises and for handouts are all right there. If you have ever wondered, how to get men to think critically about this super-sensitive issue, Rus Funk has just handed you your answer.

-- Lundy Bancroft, author of Why Does He Do That: Inside the Minds of Angry and Controlling Men

Paperback, $24.00 (plus shipping and handling)
# 9908 (ISBN 978-1-929657-07-0)
The public world of gender relations is exploding around us. The private world of relationships, families, and sex is a minefield of power and love. There has never, ever, in the 8,000-year history of our male-dominated world, been a moment quite like this. You and I are living it. The gender equality revolution.

It's in our offices and factories in the quest for equal pay, for women's advancement, and against sexual harassment. It's on college campuses, in downtown neighborhoods, and suburban homes in the fight to end violence against women. It's the struggle by parents to redefine whose work it is to raise children and for society to provide the resources for parents to do the job well. It's the back-and-forth skirmishes to ensure that women have the unalienable right to physical autonomy, including choosing whether or not to become a parent. It's a powerful rethinking of how we raise girls and boys. It's a celebration of the right to love who we want to love and define who we want to be. It's a push for more, and more diverse, women in politics and in the boardroom. The gender equality revolution is coming on fast and coming on strong. It's time for men to join the fight for gender equality.

Participants at the United Nations' 2016 Commission on the Status of Women Youth Forum raise their hands in support of gender equality.

The passage above is how I begin my new book, The Time Has Come: Why Men Must Join the Gender Equality Revolution. I'd like to take Voice Male readers behind the scenes and tell you why I wrote this book and what I am trying to achieve.

There certainly were personal reasons for writing it. Although I'm not quite ready to retire, I've been thinking a lot about the trajectory of work over the past four decades to engage men to support women's rights and reshape what it means to be a man.

I've been thinking about the themes that a handful of fellow activists and researchers started developing in the years when disco was on its last legs and punk had just arrived—and I'm pleased to say that profeminist men's work has easily outlasted both. How do our societies construct and perpetuate men's power and privilege, and how do individual men internalize, perpetuate and, at times, resist and undermine both? What are the paradoxes and negative consequences for men and boys caused by patriarchal cultures—what I've called men's contradictory experiences of power? Strategically, what is the basis for men's embrace of femi-
nism, what role can and should men play in relation to women’s rights activism, and how can we most successfully engage men and boys? Why is fighting homophobia and heterosexism key to our work? How can we infuse our understanding and action with approaches based on the ways that sexism intersects, in male-dominated societies, with racism, class oppression, heterosexism, and other forms of oppression? What are some of the particular challenges and minefields of engaging men and boys, and how do we thoughtfully negotiate these minefields?

I’ve been thinking about what we got right, what we got wrong, and what many of us hadn’t yet thought about. I’ve also been thinking about a vastly different social landscape and changes for both good and evil.

I wanted to sum up my own role in issues and efforts that I, along with many wonderful friends and colleagues, have been devoting much of our lives to. Although I remember writing my first essay on men and feminism around 1971–72 (and participating in pro-choice marches and the occupation of a building at my university that successfully led to the creation of a permanent daycare center), my real starting point was in 1979 or 1980 at a men’s counseling group that led to my organizing men’s support groups that led to my first research and writing that led to activism.

My first independent activism (a short-lived effort in 1989 we called “Men for Women’s Choice”) formed a template for the creation of the White Ribbon Campaign in 1991, sparked ultimately by the murder of 14 women at the engineering school in Montreal two years before. As far as I can see, White Ribbon was the first attempt in the world that successfully developed a mass campaign aimed at reaching not only a handful of concerned men, but also across the political, economic and social spectrum in an attempt to reach the majority of men. We wanted to find a language and strategies that would galvanize boys and men to end our silence on men’s violence against women and to examine our own attitudes and behaviors. Whatever its limitations, White Ribbon continues to spread, to appear, disappear, and reappear again in some form in 80 or 90 countries—including a few that have a large and significant national presence. But, much more importantly, we now see thousands of different organizations and campaigns and programs around the world that take a similar, mass, big-tent approach to engage men and boys on a range of issues.

I was interested in reflecting on all this, in particular on some of the major themes that have endured: ending men’s violence against women; the transformation of fatherhood; creating gender equitable economies, equal pay, workplaces that are free of harassment; celebrating diverse experiences of men’s lives, rethinking how we raise boys to be men, and debunking our equation of sex and gender.

I wanted to explore why just talking about “gender equality” is simply not good enough and why we needed to talk about individual and social transformation and restore some of the lost sixties language of liberation.

And I wanted it to be as practical and useful as possible.

To those with thoughtful and critical social minds, it’s common to focus on the problems our world faces. Injustice and oppression are like flashing lights that rightly draw our attention. However, if we only focus on problems, we ignore the incredible victories and accomplishments by feminists and their male allies. When it comes to women’s rights, our ideals of manhood, and the lives of LGBTQ people, social movements have transformed the social-political-cultural landscape over the past five decades. Yes, there are many challenges, and many men (and some women) are attempting to roll back the clock. But if we minimize our successes then anyone can logically ask: what is the point of organizing if it hasn’t brought change? The existence of problems is not enough to mobilize most people to work for change. In fact, the existence of solutions to real-life problems still isn’t enough. What moves masses of people is the realization that change is possible and change is happening.

Compared to 20 or even 10 years ago, more and more men are consciously and publicly supporting women’s rights. More men see their role as fathers not as “helping out” but as playing an equal role as parents—and in country after country (or in the case of the US, in many companies, cities, and states) there is a
The Time Has Come

I wanted to write a book that analyzed problems and spoke passionately about the big issues, but to do so from the positive vantage point of those working for change. It’s a book that celebrates the things you and I have been fighting for, and uses those accomplishments precisely as part of the case for keeping the pedal to the metal to help get the job done.

Feminism: A Gift to Men

The Time Has Come is all about how men can join women—in part by women reaching out to men and challenging us, and in part by men reaching out to our brothers—in continuing what is the greatest revolution in human history: the work to win women's rights, gender justice, and gender equality.

And as we shall see, winning those rights and the massive changes of our era that started as a women's revolution are already bringing enormous benefits to men and to the world.

What that means, and what The Time Has Come aims to show you, is that feminism is the greatest gift that men have ever received.

However, it does not come for free. It means challenging inequality and also challenging oneself. It often requires challenging the beliefs and actions of other men around us. It means listening to the voices of women and daring to look at forms of power and privilege we have enjoyed as men that might have been invisible to us. Yet I am absolutely certain that men's commitment to a gender-equitable future will transform men's lives in positive ways.

Men's embrace of this change has certainly been sparked and encouraged by women. But ultimately we need to find effective ways to bring in men as active proponents of change.

—Michael Kaufman

Reaching a Wider Audience

In spite of all our talk, we progressive people often fear going mainstream. To us, mainstreaming gender issues, working within companies or established institutions, or working with people we don't agree with on many issues—these things all seem to involve too many compromises.

But think about it this way: You and I truly believe in women's and girls' rights, gender equality, LGBTQ rights, anti-racism and a celebration of diversity in all its forms, and healthier and gender-equitable ideals and practices of manhood. But if we truly believe in these things, shouldn't we believe that everyone should ascribe to these ideals?

We can't, however, expect people to come spontaneously to our ideas. After all, what hegemonic masculinity and our hegemonic gender ideals and relations mean is that what is established feels natural. It feels right. It feels inevitable. Furthermore, we're up against not just ideas but the ways these ideas have been institutionalized—turned into bricks and mortar and encoded into laws and traditions.

What that means is we need to find more effective ways to speak to, engage, and partner with a much broader audience. We need to find common cause but also agree to work with those we disagree with on other issues, including issues that are critical for our common future. We must do what the right has cleverly done since the 1970s: find more effective ways to engage diverse people on their own terms and to encourage them to make our issues, their issues. I don't pretend that this doesn't have challenges and drawbacks. But for those of us who aren't content to count our numbers in the thousands or even hundreds of thousands, but aspire to count the male supporters of feminism and women's rights in the hundreds of millions, it is the only path forward.

And so I decided to write a book that, I hope, doesn't compromise my ideas, but presents—in an accessible and non-academic way—ideas that you and I hold dear and work hard to realize. I also worked hard to avoid the jargon and assumptions that some of us are comfortable with but which most people don't have a clue about—and, instead, I tried to make those complex ideas and terms accessible in order to reach a wider audience. I wanted to put things in terms that wide numbers can relate to.

Despite all the advances toward gender equality for women, many men are still hesitant to reject conventional expressions of manhood, especially because they are unsure of what the alternatives look like. Many men want to support women's rights in their workplaces, communities and homes, but don't know how to take action. Many men, already outspoken and active, want to be more effective.

I wanted The Time Has Come to be a book for all these men. And a book for the women who want to reach the men in their lives: those they work or study with, those they parent and those they love.

I hope you will use The Time Has Come to help navigate your way to new approaches to a feminist, gender equitable future, the very future where women, and men, can be truly free.
Global Masculinities: Interrogations and Reconstructions is a new anthology about masculinities in the world today. It grew out of critical thinking first shared at a groundbreaking international symposium, “Men and Boys for Gender Justice”, held in New Delhi in 2014, and organized by the global Men Engage Alliance. Some 1200 people from 94 countries participated in four days of meetings, workshops and plenaries representing experiences and ideas from across the world.

“If ever an activist, organization or researcher felt they were plowing a lone furrow organizing men for gender justice, the symposium seeded hope and the reassurance of a growing sisterhood and brotherhood,” says Rimjhim Jain, associate editor of the new anthology. In this edited version of her preface, she says the book is hopeful even as it offers “a troublingly coherent vision of the many other ‘isms’ positioned against feminism.”

Gender equality cannot be dealt with in a vacuum. Problems of nationalism, militarism, casteism, racism, capitalism, fundamentalism and fascism—some of them old wine in new bottles—are shaping forms of hegemonic masculinities that are defining orders in which the curtailing of women’s rights is being felt most sharply.

In parts of South Asia for instance, major political changes this decade have brought about a systemic erosion of human rights that have promoted a form of masculine violence by the state—supported by elements in the media—in the name of protecting one’s nation, religion and community. Consider the targeting of the “other”—an enemy “dishonoring our women”—such as the so-called Love Jihad, a “campaign” where Muslim men target women belonging to non-Muslim communities for conversion to Islam by feigning love.

Globally, recent events have shown that in no part of the world can feminists (including profeminist men) sit back on the basis of perceived advances and victories; it is important for women’s rights activists to be constantly strategizing how to be on the front lines fighting against sexual violence and harassment, discrimination in the workplace, in the political sphere, and in the family and personal sphere. Like the JK Rowling creation, the shapeshifting Boggart—a creature that exists by assuming the form of one’s deepest fears—patriarchy continually emerges in different, unsuspecting forms. To remain alert against the Boggart of patriarchy it is imperative that feminist activists and scholars constantly update our understanding of gender and masculinities, identify inequalities, discover their structural, attitudinal and normative roots, and develop effective strategies to dismantle them.

Whether we have come close to getting the better of this shapeshifting phenomenon is debatable. For every step forward in achieving equal opportunities for women, there is some form of coercion and threat forcing women’s rights backward. The path that led to the big moment of catharsis on social media, #MeToo, also revealed the desperation of living in a world where violence has been completely normalized by a patriarchal society.

In parts of the world where progressive, women-supportive laws and policies have been enacted as a result of unrelenting activism, what feminists feared is also taking shape—an increasingly strident “men have rights, too” countermovement. In India, for example, the emergence of this attitude in some courts and parts of the government and citizens’ groups has led to watering down hard-won feminist gains. An insidious argument is being posited that the women’s movement is militantly beating down men in bedrooms and boardrooms to force passage of laws against marital rape and preventing sexual harassment in the workplace. “Men’s rights” activists are also behind several recent efforts to open privileged windows of opportunity for men to prove they are “innocent victims of the misuse of the law” by women on a personal gender vendetta.

It is precisely to avoid a gender war and instead promote gender-transformative behaviors that activists have organized programs, campaigns, alliances and networks like MenEngage Alliance, Forum to Engage Men, White Ribbon, MenCare father-
Learning from Young Feminists in Chile
By Pamela Saavedra Castro

Last May, young Chilean women proclaimed, “Enough is enough” and started to tell their stories of harassment at universities, including how authorities failed to act to prevent their mistreatment. Organized by Confech (the Confederation of Students of Chile), they started by demanding better conditions and protocols to ensure access to justice, and ended up questioning the entire educational system that maintains and reproduces patriarchal logic and structures. For about two months, young feminists took over more than 30 educational spaces. They marched for women’s rights; they demanded a nonsexist education; they called out not only the authorities but also their professors and classmates. And they created spaces to talk about consent, sexual health, sexual education, biases in the curriculum and inside the classroom, among other issues.

Their actions illustrated what powerful feminist mobilization looks like, as it continues to emerge in diverse contexts around the world. Chile’s huge feminist movement against sexist education and sexual harassment is changing the public narrative and challenging the establishment—not only in universities—but throughout all of Chilean society. For those working to engage men and boys in these struggles, it is crucial to take the time to listen to and learn from the young women standing up for their rights in Chile and elsewhere around the world.

For any organization working to engage men and boys in gender justice and women’s rights, it is imperative to listen to young people and learn from their experiences, including their ability to create new debate spaces outside the classroom or the conference room. One way to accomplish that aim is to invite youth activists to take part in and speak at events and discussions.

I witnessed young people speaking out late last summer when the global MenEngage Alliance was meeting in Santiago, Chile. (I serve on their board of directors.) We invited representatives of diverse youth organizations to share their experiences with the youth-led women’s movement in Chile. María Fernanda Viveros and Francisca Lagos, from the Gender Council of the Social Sciences Faculty of the University of Chile, Seba Bravo from Asamblea Antipatriarcal de Varones Santiago (the Assembly of Antipatriarchal Men/Santiago), and María José Guerrero from the Observatorio Contra el Acoso Callejero (the Observatory Against Street Harassment) shared their stories. These activists...
are bringing knowledge to the street through performances and other artistic expressions that raise awareness of women’s experiences dealing with bias and inequality in education.

Observatory Against Street Harassment started as a group of feminists working to highlight the importance of speaking out against harassment. They went on to help submit a bill to the Chilean Congress that defines street harassment and gives it a legal classification as a criminal offense.

At the same time, young activists are using art and online platforms to raise awareness and create dialogue around gender issues and masculinities. The Assembly of Antipatriarchal Men publishes poems, think pieces and short stories in their fanzine to bring the perspective of young men to the conversation. Young feminist activists say that demonstrations work to bring awareness and point to one that took place last May in Santiago. Thousands of young women marched with banners and used body art to call for an end to gender violence and to condemn sexist education.

Feminist activists say it is important to invite young men into the conversation, motivate them to listen to women’s stories, and work with young feminists not just as allies but as partners. To accomplish this will mean not patronizing young women but giving them the space they have earned. It also means assisting young men to understand how being conscious of their privilege can spark a transformation of all their relationships, beginning with themselves.

It is imperative to involve young people in the movement for gender equality. Younger activists are the ones taking the lead, questioning both the personal and the political; they’re the ones demanding change. A next step in this work is for all gender equality organizations—including the global MenEngage Alliance—to strengthen their connections with young people, not only by “inviting” them to participate, but by working alongside them in their own spaces, on their own terms. To that end, advancing a global Youth Reference Group—giving space to youth leaders from all regions of the MenEngage Alliance—is an initiative the organization has begun this year.

Many organizations and campaigns rely on “adult-centered logic” where those who have a certain kind of knowledge choose when and how to share it with the rest. Young people are inviting older people to cocreate knowledge outside of traditional spaces and with nontraditional tools such as performances, flash mobs, social media, and a revival of consciousness-raising groups, among other initiatives.

Personally, I have constantly had to adapt my thoughts to adult spaces, and to adult and academic language that did not fit because I was trying to convey the message: this is what it is like to be a young woman working with young men. I have had to adapt all my experience to a language that was foreign to me and that did not represent me. I think it is time to leave behind “old” logic and dare to listen to young people in their own environments with their own language and “new” logic.

Young people have a lot to say and it’s time for them to become the protagonists of their own story and to make their own history. Doing so will be not so much about building a better future as it is about facing a present that is exploding and calling for action—now!

We have to invite young men into the conversation, motivate them to listen to women’s stories, and to work with young feminists not just as allies but as partners.

Pamela Saavedra Castro is an activist and sociology researcher on men and masculinities, specializing in young men’s socialization. Currently studying for a master’s in gender studies in Lima, Peru, she works at the Chilean nonprofit EME (Masculinities and Gender Equality). Contact her at pamela.saavedra.c@gmail.com.

Chile’s huge feminist movement is changing the public narrative and challenging the Chilean establishment.

Left sign: “Macho does not birth itself, Chilean education does. Right sign: “We are the granddaughters of the witches you could not burn.”
What’s the Best Way for Men to Be Profeminist? (For Starters, Be Vulnerable and Humble)

By Alan Berkowitz

Ultimately it is our own vulnerability upon which we depend.
—Rainer Maria Rilke

Since October 2017 when the #MeToo moment became the #MeToo movement, many men have been challenged to take a hard look at their behavior; to question not only their own actions but also those of other men. Longtime social justice educator, researcher and trainer Alan Berkowitz has been deeply considering the question of men “walking their talk” particularly as it relates to profeminist men. “Is our knowledge about gender, sexism and male privilege leading us to humility?” he asked. “Recent events suggest not in all cases.”

As awareness and attention grows regarding sexual harassment and assault, “there are profeminist men who may position themselves as ardent supporters of women’s empowerment but who have not walked their talk,” Berkowitz notes. “Their support for gender equality in public may not match their behavior in private.”

In this groundbreaking article, Berkowitz investigates how we explain this contradiction and offers recommendations for what we should do about it.

I start with the belief that most men have been raised to be men in unhealthy ways. Consequently, we need healing and transformation. And although we may have rejected our “male socialization” in our heads, some of us may not have done so in our hearts. While intellectual understanding of conventional manhood—which has led many men to support women’s empowerment—is necessary and important, it is not sufficient to ensure that men are whole. We need only look at all the so-called enlightened men who have had charges of harassment and assault leveled against them, including leading profeminist activists and scholars. This contradiction suggests not just an apparent disconnect between our knowledge and understanding, but also a lack of openness to unflinchingly engage in rigorous self-examination. To me, the latter course is the only path to fostering the wisdom and humility that can lead to inspired, enlightened action.

My experience has shown me that the willingness to be vulnerable—as difficult and painful as that may be—is critical for men’s healing. But that is just the beginning. Being vulnerable helps to ground us, awakens our intellectual understanding, and invites us to also awaken our heart’s understanding—in other words, to go deeper. Vulnerability, the willingness to feel exposed and unprotected, not only contradicts the messages men have received—be strong, tough, competent, unemotional and expert—but it also opens the door to inner transformation and growth. And through that door is the path to “be the change that we wish to see in the world.”

Being intellectually brilliant and labeling ourselves profeminist is no guarantee that we will do the inner work necessary for healing. In fact, when intellectual prowess is combined with the unequal recognition and praise that profeminist men receive (compared with women working for gender equality), it can promote narcissism and ego, obscuring even the need for healing. Too many men are unaware of that need, and that’s dangerous. It has led to men taking more credit than we deserve, to not sufficiently honoring women advocates, and to stroking our egos with the acclaim and appreciation we get simply for doing what’s right: opposing sexism.

Operating with an inflated sense of self creates the conditions for an additional danger: expressing our natural vulnerability, loneliness and emotional neediness in unhealthy ways by enacting sexism and patriarchy through abuse. There it is: a vicious cycle in which negative male socialization is reinforced, rather than being undermined and transformed. We can continue to present ourselves as advocates and allies of feminism, but who suffers? In many cases the very women we claim to be allies to, and ultimately us as well.

A 2018 article in the Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment and Trauma titled “Walking the Walk or Just Talk? A Global Examination of Men’s Intentions to Take Violence Preventative Action” illustrates this gap between intention and action. Five researchers surveyed anti-violence activists in English, French and Spanish from more than 400 organizations on five continents about their antiviolence attitudes and behaviors. Two hundred men who work as employees or volunteers responded, approximately half from North America and the rest distributed across Africa, Asia, Europe,
Latin America and the Caribbean. As one would expect, the men reported a high level of willingness to engage in a variety of bystander actions, recognized male privilege, and strongly endorsed profeminist attitudes. Of particular interest was the dramatic gap between questions about anti-violence activism and seeking help; the men scored lowest on the question of did they “seek help or guidance because of my own behavior towards women.” Perhaps the men did not imagine they needed guidance because of their “own behavior”—but this is precisely the point. As men who practice unconscious sexism, privilege and a patriarchal mindset—and we all do to some extent—we can be unaware of our behavior because it is unconscious.

What then can we do? The opposite of what these men were doing: seeking guidance “because of our own behavior towards women.” This is what is missing from our activism: allowing ourselves to be vulnerable by seeking feedback, inviting criticism, and soliciting advice from female advocates and colleagues, even—and especially—*when we think we don’t need it.* In fact, thinking that we don’t need it is one of the greatest dangers of all because it is likely a sign of egoism, self-protection and unconscious male posturing.

Thinking that men don’t need to hear criticism from female advocates is a great danger because it is likely a sign of egoism, self-protection and unconscious male posturing.

Others have pointed out that profeminist men who seek to be allies of women may end up reproducing sexism and patriarchy in the very act of offering assistance. They point out that *how* we help is just as important as *if* we help. In an illuminating study of male ally behavior titled “Comrades in the Struggle? Feminist Women Prefer Male Allies Who Offer Autonomy, Not Dependency-Oriented Help,” Shaun Wiley and Christine Dunne point out that men who offer help in the form of answers and solutions reproduce the patriarchal structure in which women must depend on men for assistance. In their study they found that feminist women reject this form of help and prefer what they call “autonomy-oriented help” in which men “take the back seat”—offering partial support without seeking to solve problems themselves. They noted that “autonomy-oriented support challenges the gender hierarchy by affirming women’s competence whereas dependency-oriented support reinforces the hierarchy by implying that women are not capable of helping themselves.”

### Are We Willing to Be Vulnerable?

Clearly, men need to make deeper changes, including cultivating an openness to the type of critical, constructive feedback women can offer that will help us to see ourselves with honesty and offer us the motivation to change.

Are we willing to be vulnerable and acknowledge our imperfections and faults and learn to be humble? Can we seek out experiences to contradict male socialization patterns that demand we be strong, in charge, and invulnerable? In my experience I have found such a change can occur in a number of ways, including:

- Joining a process-oriented men’s group that fosters honest, open communication and self-disclosure
- Being willing to be vulnerable, unguarded, and open in our personal relationships
- Engaging in healthy spiritual pursuits or a relationship with a spiritual teacher who teaches and practices humility and from whom we can learn techniques for the diluting of our egoism
- Being accountable to women, including seeking their honest feedback, advice, and impressions of us, our work, and our behavior

All of these recommendations are complemented by our aspiring to embody the characteristics of an engaged ally, including:

- Seeking out and learning from uncomfortable situations
- Finding appropriate opportunities to listen to individuals from other groups about their experiences
- Being accountable to the groups we wish to be allies to
- Doing our own personal healing work

If men can achieve these aims, it will help us to begin closing the gap between our words and our actions. In my own efforts to do this I have found it beneficial to share with women with whom I am working—at the beginning of and during our personal or professional relationship—the following:

- I know I am not perfect
- I commit to being open to your feedback and to hearing your concerns and comments about my language and behavior when you are willing to share them
- I will try to be responsible for monitoring myself and to seek feedback from others

In a similar vein, during my early work developing all-male campus rape prevention programs in the 1980s, my colleagues and I found it beneficial to present our workshop to women in the community, not only for them to observe and be aware of the work we were doing with men (which they could not otherwise attend), but also to solicit their comments and feedback. This practice invariably resulted in our receiving excellent advice that improved our presentations, as well as strengthening trust and communication with our colleagues.

—Alan Berkowitz
We may not be aware of the effects of this gap between attitude and action—both in ourselves and in others—and especially on the women whom we profess to work alongside of as equals. We also may not be aware that “There is a ton of anger out there concerning this issue” and that this anger is directed at many of us. Such backlash was expressed in a collection of public Facebook comments by female domestic violence and sexual assault prevention activists posted at the end of 2018. Here’s a sampling:

- “Some male leaders in the movement are so puffed up with ego that they have no room for vulnerability.”
- “I am tired of these men promoting the end of violence against women for their own gain.”
- “Some men are commodifying and colonizing the battered women’s movement.”
- “...[M]en making huge amounts of money and garnering power from funders is a real problem.”
- “This marginalization of and ignoring of the wishes and needs of victims and the ‘be all, know all, ‘my way is best way’ attitude of some men in this movement has undermined the inclusive, feminist processes we always worked so hard to develop and maintain.”

How can men be more fully engaged with the changes we seek inside and outside of ourselves, and be more conscious about acting out the negative aspects of male socialization? In addition to being accountable by seeking honest feedback and criticism from women allies, we also need meaningful, honest and open dialogue with other men about who we are and what we need to become. We need to have a place where we can show up just as we are—with all of our faults and foibles—and not as we wish to be seen by the world. And we need to favor collaboration over competition and to alter our role from expert to learner.

In their 2015 book Some Men: Feminist Allies and the Movement to End Violence Against Women, Michael Messner, Max Greenberg, and Tal Peretz conclude that when working together with feminist women, men should take care to listen and learn. They should make sure their voices do not drown out the voices of women in the movement. And, they should ensure that their goals and priorities do not divert resources away from feminist women. In short, profeminist men should thoughtfully consider how they are accountable to women. Male privilege and power do not disappear when men call themselves feminists or commit themselves to fighting gendered oppression. Doing the hard work of embodying feminism means men should model in their interactions with women the egalitarian society they hope to build.

And still, we face another danger. The guilt and shame men feel when we become aware of male privilege—along with the awareness of our transgressions and culpability in enacting sexism (to whatever degree)—can foster a need for approval from feminist women. In some cases we may seek this approval by our actions, or intellectual brilliance, or our support of their work. Paradoxically, in an example of female socialization, some women may enthusiastically express their approval, delighted to see that there are men joining the movement for gender equality, but in so doing they may feed into their own socialization as nurturers, illustrated in the following quote: “The adulation that [profeminist men] receive from some women in the movement—in particular those who are more new or who do not have a background in feminist theory—just further feeds [the men’s] ego and narcissism, embedding their bloated sense of self-importance.” Such adulation reproduces the paradigm of women nurturing men, shifting to women the burden of the work we should be doing ourselves.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, we must also hold ourselves accountable to intervene with other men when their behavior is unacceptable. In a 2015 study, “Male Privilege and Accountability in Domestic and Sexual Violence Work,” feminist sociologist Kris Macomber noted that one of the biggest problems of men promoting gender equality is their “reluctance to hold each other accountable,” resulting in “women generally carry[ing] the burden of ‘calling men out.’” If we are uncomfortable with other

**A Man Is a Good Ally When...**

- He understands that women’s need to be empowered is not a threat to his strength as a man, but rather an additional strength.
- He is a nonjudgmental partner, which implies he believes in equality and respect.
- He listens to women and has a willingness to “call out” other men on their issues.
- He is able to take the direction and leadership in violence prevention work from women.
- He does not try to confine the women he is supporting or define the problems that they share with him.
- He models behavior for his friends and other men by letting others see his example.
- He is not struggling with his own manhood and does not need to prove that he’s a man.
- He has done his personal work to become aware of his own issues relating to the issue of domestic and sexual violence.
- He is willing to hear women’s reality “full out” because he realizes that there are aspects of this reality that he will not know about.
- He listens, but he doesn’t try to “fix” the problem by himself.

*Excerpted from the Spring 2002 newsletter of the Black Church and Domestic Violence Institute (www.bcdvi.org).*
Seven Principles Men Can Follow to Advance Gender Equality

In a new book on men’s and women’s groups, profeminist activist-writer Tom Weiner describes seven principles that guided him in his writing:

• Men need to have access to a wide range of emotions and expressive skills in order to be able to articulate themselves respectfully and compassionately.

• It is incumbent upon men to treat all women as equals.

• Men need to nurture their mental, emotional, physical and psychological needs through healthy relationships with other men, women and children.

• In order to ensure that healthy masculinity includes the nurturance of children, men need to take an active role in raising (or mentoring/coaching) children.

• It is essential that men be allies in the various struggles waged by women, LGBTQ+ people, people of color and other groups fighting for their rights.

• Men need to recognize their privilege in society and actively work to support women seeking equality—from reproductive rights to equal pay for equal work; from affordable childcare to family leave policies, since these rights will accrue to the benefit of our society.

• Men need to speak out and actively organize against men’s violence and abuse of women and children.

—Tom Weiner

From the preface to Intimate Stories: Reflections from Four Men’s and Women’s Support Groups by Tom Weiner © 2019. tweiner909@comcast.net

men’s words or behavior and do nothing—or passively wait for women to address the problem—we have failed to live up to our responsibility.

Our failure can be seen in published responses to accusations against prominent male colleagues, with some men active in the pro-feminist men’s movement reminding that they “were not surprised.” Such an admission implicates us as bystanders who have chosen to overlook rather than to intervene. If we did or said nothing after witnessing grandstanding, microaggressions, self-promotion, and privilege and/or power-abusing behaviors—then it’s on us to admit our deficiencies and to acknowledge that we should have taken action. Our silence becomes a form of complicity. So it is us men who are accountable for not subverting the culture that allows these behaviors to flourish.

Once at lunch during a conference I attended that included a group of male antiviolence activists, I suggested we share our greatest challenges doing this work. By far the majority of responses were about the difficulty and fear we felt to hold other men accountable, especially when they were colleagues, family, or old friends. Although the fear of a negative response and of harming a relationship was certainly warranted, by not intervening we not only became part of the problem, but we also carried the guilt of knowing that we didn’t live up to our ideals. However, there may be a middle path between seeing our choices as either inaction or direct confrontation: intervening in an indirect, non-confrontational way that addresses the behavior but may preserve the relationship. While some situations may clearly require a more active, confrontational approach, intervening indirectly can also be effective. (I wrote about these approaches in the Summer 2016 issue of Voice Male.)

The iconic 1960s activist slogan “You’re either part of the solution or part of the problem” has been updated: “You can’t be part of the solution until you understand how you are part of the problem.” Despite how far men have come on our journey of self-awareness about gender inequality, we’re not there yet—as long as our actions have the unintended effect of reinforcing the problem we are trying to solve.

The #MeToo movement, through the many uncomfortable wounds it has uncovered, offers men an opportunity to look more deeply inside ourselves, to ask for more open and honest reflections personally and from others, to identify what we need to change, and to take the risk of holding ourselves and other men accountable. And we can do this with an empowered awareness and understanding rather than with crippling guilt. By being willing to see how we are part of the problem we will begin to become more effective as part of the solution. By practicing humility, we will be on the path that can lead us not just to healing but to wisdom.

Alan Berkowitz is a social justice activist, educator, trainer and scholar known for his work on men’s responsibility to end violence against women, bystander behavior and the social norms approach, and for developing effective programs to reduce men’s violence against women (www.alanberkowitz.com). The author expresses heartfelt thanks for the wisdom and feedback provided by Victoria Banyard, Erin Casey, Chip Capraro and Rich Tolman and especially thanks Julie Owens for her inspiration and guidance. “All of their generous support made this article much more than it could have been had I not received their help.”

Resources consulted in the writing of this article:

“Men and Rape: Theory, Research and Prevention Programs in Higher Education” by Alan Berkowitz (1994) New Directions for Student Services #65, Chapter 3(Jossey Bass).


Men view pornography. Experience and evidence suggest that viewing pornography is almost a universally accepted practice by men. A majority of men view pornography, and most do so on a regular basis. Increasingly, adolescent boys are using on-line pornography as a way to supplement the sexuality education they are receiving at home and in school, as researchers Mary Crabbe and Michael Flood noted in a 2017 report on pornography's influence on young people.

As with any media, the images, words and depictions of pornography convey more than just the “story” of nudity and graphic sex. Embedded within pornography are a host of values and norms that may well conflict with the values and norms of the men viewing pornography. Because these values and norms are embedded and not explicitly expressed, when men consume pornography, they also consume these norms and values. Further, because men most often are masturbating while consuming pornography, the values and norms they are consuming are being directly connected to the pleasure centers of the brain. The result? These norms and values are much more deeply integrated and internalized than other information that men who view pornography are taking in.

Because men rarely, if ever, pay attention to these embedded values and norms (and if they do don’t look at them critically), they are in effect internalizing values and norms about women, men and masculinity, sex and sexuality, racism, objectification, harm, and violence, among others, that if they were paying attention they would actually find deplorable.

I grew up in a “sex positive” household in the 1970s and ’80s in south Texas. My parents were sexuality educators and along with the first editions of Our Bodies Ourselves we had my dad’s Playboy and Penthouse magazines—all on our living room bookshelf. I grew up viewing pornography.

When I attended college in the mid-eighties and first became aware and educated about rape, domestic violence and other forms of gender-based violence, I was also exposed to a feminist critique of pornography. I was forced to reflect on my patterns of viewing pornography and the impact it had, as well as observing the pornography viewing patterns of the men in dorms I lived in. One of my reflections was how much my own flirting was based on sexualizing and objectifying the women I flirted with. As I started to better understand the harm that women experience as a result of men's sexualized objectification, I realized I wanted to change how I flirted. But I had so deeply integrated what I had learned from viewing pornography (likely magnified by the absence of any other information about how to flirt) that I didn't have any idea how to flirt without sexualizing or objectifying. I realized that I needed to take a hiatus from flirting and dating until I could get my mind right. (It is worth noting that as I started to figure out how to flirt without sexualizing or objectifying, I came to realize that I am attracted to people—sometimes female, sometimes male.)

What I saw from my male peers in college and since—coupled with what I have learned from men as I work to prevent all forms of gender-based violence—suggests that my experience is not unique.
These factors laid the foundation for creating a program for men to critically examine the impact of pornography. What’s Wrong with this Picture™ is designed to support and encourage men to seriously investigate the impact viewing pornography has on men. There are several aspects to the program, but the main feature is an eight-session curriculum with critical reflection at its core.

Based loosely on the concept of media literacy, the curriculum is an activity-rich initiative that supports men to identify some of the values and norms inherent in pornography. It asks them to examine the degree to which the values and norms central to the pornography they are consuming align with their own values and norms.

What’s Wrong with this Picture is not value neutral. It is informed by the wealth of data that demonstrates that viewing pornography is harmful to men and is detrimental to efforts to achieve gender equality and women’s human rights. The messages, norms and values inherent in pornography are irreconcilable with the messages, norms and values of gender equality and sexual liberation. Nevertheless, the program welcomes men into an environment that does not judge them for their experiences of viewing pornography.

Viewing pornography—while nearly universal and no real secret—is something many men feel ambivalent about. Engaging them to critically reflect on their pornography consumption often initially generates defensiveness; many men have experienced being shamed about masturbation and viewing pornography. By being nonjudgmental, men are encouraged to soften their defenses (which allows them to more fully participate) and have opportunities to acknowledge their experiences of shaming.

What’s Wrong with this Picture supports men to examine the impact of viewing pornography by addressing among other topics:

- men’s views of masculinity
- their attitudes about women and femininity
- men’s experience of sex and sexuality
- their practices of flirting, dating and negotiating sex
- racism

One early activity, for example, invites men to place different depictions within pornography, and experiences within pornography, on a continuum of harm. They are asked to “rate” the degree to which depictions and experiences are harmful, such as: viewing depictions of anal sex; watching pornography without their partner’s knowledge; viewing pornography with their 17-year-old son; viewing pornography with their 15-year-old daughter, among other examples.

By placing these depictions and experiences on a continuum of harm, participants observe the strong differences of opinion that exist among men. For many men, the exercise is their first experience considering these differences. Most men assume that since pornography use is normal, then their experience of viewing pornography is normal. Through the exercise, they are confronted with some men—their peers—who consider what they are doing to be harmful. They also are hearing directly from other men, resulting in their beginning to reconsider the level of harm that they are condoning or contributing to by the kinds of pornography they’re consuming. The last two sessions invite men to plan how they might become more active in efforts to prevent gender-based violence and/or promote gender equality.

Designed using an “emergent curriculum” model, What’s Wrong with this Picture was the first of several loosely outlined iterations. Early participants were invited to help design the curriculum, and as a result much of the content—including the way the program is presented and the activities described—was influenced by the men who participated. This philosophy is built into the curriculum now. Facilitators are encouraged to make the process as emergent as possible, allowing for a richness and depth in the group process that is often lacking in more traditional educational curriculum.

What’s Wrong with this Picture is the only curriculum currently available in the US designed to engage adult men in examining their use of pornography. It is part of a larger, more comprehensive project that continues to grow, with tools, resources and materials designed to help expose and explain the harm caused by viewing pornography. For example, some tools include campus resources for encouraging conversations with and among college students, materials for parents to use in talking with their sons, among other aids.

Not all men who go through this program are going to stop viewing pornography. But the vast majority will likely rethink how they use pornography and pay different kinds of attention to how it affects them. I wish I had had the opportunity to engage in a process like this with other men when I was struggling with my own pornography viewing. Rather than being—and feeling—isolated on my college campus, I would have found a community.

Rus Ervin Funk is a consultant and activist based in Louisville, Ky. He currently serves on the steering committee of North American MenEngage Network (namen.menengage.org), is secretary of the National Center on Domestic and Sexual Violence (www.ncdsv.org), and is a member of the board of the global MenEngage Alliance (menengage.org). To order a copy of the curriculum, go to rusfunk.me/shop. A version of the workbook is being developed to use with adolescent men. For more information, go to rusfunk.me/WWWT.
I simultaneously dream of and dread working with men and boys. It is absolutely, unquestionably, one of my deepest desires. I want to let men and boys know that it is okay to be wounded. I want to encourage them to touch their brokenness rather than hide it, as hiding it makes men dangerous to themselves and to the world. Yet I also hate this work and hold back, actively, because it demands that I be in touch with my wounds, with my own inner turmoil. I need to know myself so I can show up naked, unguarded and vulnerable but still able to provide space and attention for others. Doing so allows me to serve, whether I’m noticed or not.

After decades of inner work I am still so broken that I usually don’t show up very much at all, and when I do, I tend to bulldoze over others. I’ve been hiding backstage for half a lifetime and, if I take the stage at all, I want applause! Now is the time that my captive audience should be in awe. And when I am not sure that they are, I secretly armor up, puff up, lose touch with what I feel, and simply talk my head off. The bitter result is that people are at best half-heartedly connected and impressed. Even if they congratulate and praise me, I know I was a fraud once again.

Being of service demands that I hide nothing, yet push nothing either. The first decades of my life I specialized in hiding, while in the most recent decade I have trained in pushing. I know it is possible to drop both at once, and I know that it feels fresh and good when you accidentally “just do it.” After moments when I don’t second-guess myself, I often think, “Ooh, that was spot on—actually quite nice.” Yet from where I stand today it just feels freakishly scary. Why? Because it is scary. There’s no guarantee that I’ll click with a group of young people when I show up to do a workshop with no agenda, or even an opening line. I’m by no means as cool as they are, or have learned to look like. It’s safe to assume that they’re just as scared and sweet inside as I am, but merely that knowledge doesn’t create miracles.

Believe me, I tried it on my two kids and failed. By “it” I mean being completely vulnerable—so totally real and spot-on that everybody loves and admires you. I tried and failed and ended up violating and scarring our children. And that brings me to one of my primary wounds, inflicted by my deep and sincere desire to be there for my children as an awake and vulnerable but brave father—the father I missed.

I know! Teenagers are learning to put on masks and armor that I’ve been trying to peel off for decades! They’re not waiting to see their daddy’s tears—least in front of their peers. I should have sensed and respected that, and yet I also needed to rumble, stumble, and try to do the work. If I ever wanted to be real, I had to let go of the wish of being the tough strong daddy most teenagers dream of. I had to experiment and accept looking awkward; one day being too strict, another too loose.

A big opportunity arose when, after my wife and I divorced, our two children came to live with me. I wanted to be there for them, and, if asked, share my part of the story of our divorce, without embellishment or excuse. I wanted to be there with presence, love, insight, humility and honesty—all qualities I had needed from my father. But rather than being more attuned, I was more forceful than he was. Rather than leaving more space for interpretation and disagreement, I overwhelmed my kids with my intensity. It’s puzzling; I see how daunting and intrusive my attempts were, even as I also recognize how honorable my intentions were.

Early on in our marriage, I had to acknowledge I was not the dream hubby and daddy I wanted to be—and, to be honest, expected myself to be. I could be moody and fickle, slow to set boundaries, sometimes resentful or suddenly strict. I would drive too fast and ignore the signs of discomfort on my children’s faces (as well as their gentle attempts to slow me down). I could miss their needs at home as my mind was stressed with work or had escaped into meditation. Sometimes seeing fear, confusion, dismay, hurt and resignation in my family’s eyes, I was forced to admit that passing on karmic shit did not end with me.

When we were just married, my ex and I committed to not go to sleep until we had restored true peace between us. It was a brave and beautiful goal. But over time peace-before-sleep became a long-ago dream, even though it is still my ideal.

A major source of pain in our marriage was my lack of commitment, including my infatuation with other women, which my wife sensed perfectly, though my diversions were mostly only with words and dreams. However, with one person I did have an affair. I was not crystal clear even to myself about what I wanted and did, or how I felt about it morally (in fact it felt good and right, but I did not have the guts to say so out loud). I was fearful and evasive in what I told my wife, leaving her the dirty and uncomfortable job of...
Fundamentally, I trust that the four of us deeply and genuinely love each other, but at this point our connections are tentative and fragile. Just as I did decades earlier, the children may be wondering what to make of the man who left them by leaving their mother. I have violated and scarred them with my own struggle. Could I help make life a little lighter for them, or at least for somebody else?

My current job as a father, I believe, is to bear witness—to accept and support our children develop their own understanding and opinions. I must transform my own distress and resentment, and genuinely respect my ex and her choices, whether we are on speaking terms or not. At this point our children are close to her and my contact with them is clean but limited. (For some teenagers having a dad is a slightly embarrassing given—and I seem to be that kind of dad.)

Some friends say, “You should reach out more!” Others say, “They’ll return to you!” I reject the view that I should do more—chances are too big that I would slip back into over-bearing-daddy-mode. As for the meant-to-be reassuring message, “They’ll return,” I think, “Why would they?” Many people die with unresolved parent-child issues. What would make me so lucky or deserving? Let me just do my job—bearing witness—and leave the rest to the universe.

Of course my relation with my own dad comes to mind, which is somewhat comfortable and friendly. I share issues close to my heart and seek his understanding, such as with my struggle with love, lust and monogamy. Growing up he was sickle; I couldn’t count on him for support. I am guarded; I still seem to follow a childlike, “Diedi will do it alone” and an adolescent, “You never truly understand me anyway.” We meet up, but don’t die for each other’s blessing. Slightly sad, but again I try to bear witness rather than push myself to a level of heroism that isn’t genuine.

The last months before my son and daughter left home to join an international traveling school (how cool and crazy is that—a traveling school?) were super intense. At the beginning of the previous school year they moved from where they were living with their mom to live with me in the Netherlands. I believed I would have a couple of years with them, whether they “ignored or explored” me. Through simply serving dinner, I trusted they would come to trust my dependability and care. I thought: We’ll take it slowly; for the first time since the divorce they’re living with me. I pledged to not impose myself with jokes and forced intimacy.

I wanted to be there for my children as an awake and vulnerable but brave father—as the father I missed.

Then I stopped talking. I placed my ex (represented by a pillow) in front of me, and my anger and despair behind me. I placed my resentment out of sight, hiding it out of shame and fear. But it was better when I took my bitter anger in my arms—the pillow—so I did that. Hugging it gave me strength and peace. Later, my friend took my ex’s place. It was a powerful, emotionally wrenching piece of inner work. I reflected how my ex had wanted the certainty that I would keep holding her even when she pushed me away. That was our deal when we first married: “Stay, even as I push you away.” I had done that, but had wanted the same mirrored back to me, and never felt I’d had it—until I’d done this exercise.

It is in my brokenness that I long to reach and serve others. Otherwise, what’s the fucking point? Do I need to repeat that I know that if I am merely seeking an audience I am not a healer? I know that, and I know that I have that tendency, and yet I die to move forward! It’s about time, isn’t it? I want to affirm for a boy who almost knows that lust and love are really, really okay. I want to help a pervert or perpetrator see that he can experience so much deeper fulfillment in life—an antidote to loneliness—that he could ever get from taking advantage of a woman’s body. I want to stand with men who scarred their kids and lovers, and still refuse to give up on themselves. I want to let the tears flow, knowing that we wanted it differently, and will do it differently, but first we have to take ourselves as we are: broken and heart-breaking.

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Dutch-born Diederik Prakke facilitates trainings for personal, organizational, and societal transformation so that men and boys, and women and girls may be free and caring. An author, trainer, coach, Buddhist, and father of two, he has worked in more than 30 countries in Europe, Asia and Africa, including time living in Bhutan, Nepal, Albania, Vietnam and, most recently, Egypt. He can be reached at diederikprakke@hotmail.com.
RESOURCES FOR CHANGING MEN

A wide-ranging (but by no means exhaustive) listing of organizations engaged in profeminist men’s work. Know of an organization that should be listed here? E-mail relevant information to us at info@voicemalemagazine.org.

For Young Men

Advocates for Youth
Helps young people make informed and responsible decisions about their reproductive and sexual health www.advocatesforyouth.org

Amplify Your Voice
A youth-driven community working for social change. www.amplifyyourvoice.org

Boys to Men
Initiation weekends and follow-up mentoring for boys 12-17 to guide them on their journey to manhood www.boys2men.org

The Brotherhood/Sister Sol
Provides comprehensive, holistic and long-term support and rites of passage programming to youth ages 8-22 www.brotherhood-sistersol.org

Men As Peacemakers
Engages individuals/community in strategies to prevent violence against women and children. menaspeacemakers.org

YCteen Magazine
A magazine written by New York City teens that helps marginalized youth reach their full potential through reading and writing www.ycteenmag.org

On Masculinity

A Men’s Project
Extensive database of resources related to Men and Boys in N. America seeking gender justice and a more just world. www.amensproject.com/

American Men’s Studies Association
Advancing the critical study of men and masculinities www.mensstudies.org

Mankind Project
New Warrior training weekends www.mkp.org

Masculinidades
Pro-feminist blog about the anthropology of masculinity. In Spanish masculinidades.wordpress.com

The Men’s Story Project
Resources for creating public dialogue about masculinities through local storytelling and arts www.mensstoryproject.org

Menstuff: The National Men’s Resource
National clearinghouse of information and resources for men www.menstuff.org

XY
www.xonline.net
Profeminist men’s web links (over 500 links): www.xonline.net/links.shtml
Profeminist men’s politics, frequently asked questions: www.xonline.net/misc/piffaq.html
Profeminist e-mail list www.xonline.net/misc/profem.html
Homophobia and masculinities among young men: www.xonline.net/misc/homophobia.html

For Men of Color
100 Black Men of America, Inc.
Chapters around the U.S. working on youth development and economic empowerment in the African American community www.100blackmen.org

Concerned Black Men
A national organization providing mentors and programs that fill the void of positive black role models and provide opportunities for academic and career enrichment www.cbmnational.org

Institute on Domestic Violence in the African American Community
Working to enhance society’s understanding of and ability to end violence in the African-American community www.idvaac.org

National Compadres Network
Reinforcing the positive involvement of Latino males in their lives, families, communities, and society www.nationalcompadresnetwork.com

National Latin@ Network for Healthy Families and Communities
A project of Casa de Esperanza and a national institute on domestic violence focusing on Latin communities www.nationallatinonetwork.org

For Fathers
Collaborative Divorce
www.collaborativealternatives.com
www.collaborativedivorce.com
www.collaborativepractice.com
www.nocontactdivorce.com

Dad Man
Consulting, training, speaking about fathers and father figures as a vital family resource www.thedadman.com

Dads and Daughters
A blog of thoughts and reflections on father-daughter relationships by Joe Kelly dadsanddaughters.blogspot.com

Feminist Fathers
Resources for dads seeking to raise fully realized human beings aware of how gender socialization affects parenting and children www.feministfatherhood.com

National Fatherhood Initiative
Organization improve the well-being of children through the promotion of responsible, engaged fatherhood www.fatherhood.org

National Latino Fatherhood & Family Institute
Addresses the needs of Latino communities by focusing on positive Latino identity while addressing issues faced by Latino fathers, families, and communities www.nlff.org

Men’s Health
American Journal of Men’s Health
A peer-reviewed quarterly resource for information regarding men’s health and illness jhm.sagepub.com

International Society for Men’s Health
Prevention campaigns and health initiatives promoting men’s health www.ismh.org

Malecare
Volunteer men’s cancer support group and advocacy national nonprofit organization providing resources in multiple languages malecare.org

Men’s Health Network
National organization promoting men’s health www.menshealthnetwork.org

Prostate Health Guide
Offers a guide to the prostate and various conditions that can affect men’s health www.prostatehealthguide.com

World Health Organization
HIV/AIDS
Provides evidence-based, technical support for comprehensive and sustainable responses to HIV/AIDS www.who.int/hiv/en/

Male Survivors of Sexual Assault
1in6
Provides resources for male sexual abuse survivors and their family members, friends, and partners 1in6.org

Black Sexual Abuse Survivors
A national online support system for African-Americans www.blacksurvivors.org/home.html

MaleSurvivor
National organization overcoming sexual victimization of boys and men www.malesurvivor.org

Men Thriving
A peer-resource offered to male survivors by male survivors. www.menthriving.org/forum

Overcoming Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault
1in4: The Men’s Program
Offers workshops that educate men in women’s recovery and lowers men’s rape myth acceptance and self-reported likelihood of raping www.oneinfourusa.org/themensprogram.php

A Call to Men
Trainings and conferences on ending violence against women www.acalltomen.org

CONNECT
Works with New York City communities to prevent interpersonal violence and promote gender justice. www.connectnyc.org/

EMERGE
Counseling and education to stop domestic violence; comprehensive batterers’ services www.emergedv.com

Futures Without Violence
Working to end violence against women globally; programs for boys, men and fathers - www.futureswithoutviolence.org

Healthy Dating
Sexual Assault Prevention www.canikissyou.com

Hollaback
A movement to end street harassment powered by a network of local activists around the world. Uses smartphones to document, map and share incidents of street harassment www.hollaback.org

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

Men Against Violence
Yahoo email list http://groups.yahoo.com/group/me-nagainstviolence
Men Can Stop Rape
Washington, D.C.-based national advocacy and training organization mobilizing male youth to prevent violence against women
www.mencanstoprape.org

Mending the Sacred Hoop
Works to end violence against Native American women and to strengthen the voice and vision of Native peoples
www.mshoop.com

MenEngage Alliance
An international alliance promoting boys’ and men’s support for gender equality
www.menengage.org

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

Men’s Nonviolence Project
Texas Council on Family Violence
http://www.tcfv.org/education/mnp.html

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

MVP Strategies
Gender violence prevention education and training
www.mvpstrat.com

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

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

National Sexual Violence Resource Center (NSVRC)
A national information and resource hub relating to all aspects of sexual violence
www.nsvrc.org

PreventConnect
Uses online media to build community among people engaged in efforts to prevent sexual assault and relationship violence
http://preventconnect.org/

Promundo
Brazilian NGO seeking to promote gender equality and end violence against women, children, and youth
www.promundo.org.br/en/

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

Sexual Violence Research Initiative
Works to raise awareness of sexual violence and promotes research on sexual violence as a public health issue
http://www.svrn.org/about.htm

Stop Porn Culture
A group for those willing to question and fight against pornography and porn culture
stoppornculture/home/

Students Active For Ending Rape
Organization dedicated to fighting sexual violence and rape culture by empowering student-led campaigns to reform college sexual assault policies
www.safecampus.org

V Day
Global movement to end violence against women and girls, including V-men, male activists in the movement
www.vday.org

White Ribbon Campaign
International men’s campaign decrying violence against women
www.whiteribbon.ca

LGBTQIA Resources

Ambiente Joven
An advocacy project and LGBTQ community for Spanish-speaking LGBTQ youth
www.ambientejoven.org

Beyond Masculinity
Collection of essays by queer men on gender and politics
http://beyondmasculinity.com

COLAGE
National movement of people with one or more lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer parent working toward social justice through youth empowerment, leadership development, education, and advocacy
www.colage.org

Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD)
Works to combat homophobia and discrimination in television, film, music and all media outlets
www.glaad.org

GLBTQ Domestic Violence Project
Resources for gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and queer men and women who are survivors of sexual or domestic violence through direct services, education, and advocacy.
http://www.glbtqdvp.org

Hear My Voice
Educates and engages young people in the LGBTQ community to create safe and healthy relationships, and connect victims of dating abuse to help and legal services.
hearmyvoice.breakthecycle.org

Human Rights Campaign
Largest GLBT political group in the country
www.hrc.org

Interpride
Clearinghouse for information on pride events worldwide
www.interpride.net

National Gay and Lesbian Task Force
National progressive political and advocacy group
www.ngltf.org

National Resource Center on LGBT Aging
Resource center aimed at improving the quality of service and supports offered to LGBT older adults
www.lgbtagcingcenter.org

Oasis Magazine
A writing community for queer and questioning youth
www.oasisjournals.com/magazine

Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays
Promotes the health and wellbeing of LGBTQ persons and their parents, friends, and families
www.pflag.org

Straight Spouse Network
Provides resources for men seeking to fill the need for men to come together in community healing
www.straightspouse.org/home.php

Survivor Project
A non-profit organization dedicated to addressing the needs of intersex and trans* survivors of domestic and sexual violence
www.survivproject.org

Transgender Resources
Dedicated to educating those unfamiliar with or curious to learn more about the transgender community
www.glaad.org/transgender

Men’s Centers
Austin Men’s Center – Austin, TX
Provides counseling, psychotherapy, and classes helping men with their lives, relationships, health, and careers
austinmenscenter.com

Males Advocating for Change – Worcester, MA
Center with groups and services supporting men and challenging men’s violence
http://www.malesadvocatingchange.org/

Men’s Resource Center of Philadelphia
Workshops to help men address anger management, domestic violence, and intimacy issues.
http://www.themensresourcecenter.org

Men’s Resource Center of West Michigan – West Michigan Consultations and training in helping men develop their full humanity, create respectful and loving relationships, and caring and safe communities
www.menscenter.org

MERGE for Equality (Men Embracing their Role in Gender Equality) – Northampton, MA
Advances the beliefs, thoughts, and behaviors that allow men and boys to be their authentic selves and embrace their role in ensuring gender equality. Works with individuals, groups, and communities across the globe in alliance with girls, women, and all marginalized people
www.mergetequality.org

National Organization of Men Against Sexism (NOMAS)
Pro-feminist, gay-affirmative, anti-racist activist organization supporting positive changes for men
www.nomas.org

Portland Men’s Resource Center – Portland, OR
Counseling for men, women, teens, couples and families on domestic violence and anger management, and explorations of gender and sexism.
http://www.portlandmrc.com

Redwood Men’s Center – Santa Rosa, CA
A mythopoetic gathering dedicated to filling the need for men to come together in community healing
redwoodmen.org

Saskatoon Men’s Center – Saskatoon, Saskatchewan
Pro-feminist, male-positive, gay-affirmative center dedicated to offering a safe environment where men may explore their true natures and improve their health
www.saskatoonmenscenter.com

Twin Cities Men’s Center – Minneapolis, MN
Provides resources for men seeking to grow in body, mind, and spirit and advocates for healthy family and community relationships
www.tcmen.org
Capturing the Boggart
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hood campaign, India’s Ek Saath campaign involving men in changing gender social norms, and One Billion Rising, the global movement to prevent violence against women. They are working toward changing cultures of masculinities, building peace and bringing about equitable relationships. While laws are a deterrent, it is necessary to change existing gendered social norms to increase women's autonomy and reduce their vulnerability by changing the social context. Tools and resources are being developed to positively engage men to reflect on the asymmetries of gender power, to contextualize that power and to be accountable. Strategies are also being developed to deconstruct the social systems that promote patriarchy individually and structurally and that cause gender-based violence against women.

Developing approaches to engage men and examine the domains of patriarchy were critically assessed at the global symposium, and the 13 papers in Global Masculinities reflect some of its sharpest analysis. They look at how a web of intersecting norms is embedded within social interactions, structures and institutions and derives power from them, and they review how to influence attitudes, behaviors, practices and structural factors. As Raewyn Connell, professor emerita, University of Sydney, Australia, writes in the foreword, “The collection is part of a recent upsurge of interest in global research on masculinity, closely linked with the spread of activism for gender reform. It brings together a very wide range of experiences including communities and groups from Africa, south and southeast Asia, South America, southern and northern Europe.” As Dr. Mangesh Kulkarni, the book’s editor, says: Global Masculinities calls on readers “to build their capacity to understand and dismantle patriarchy to create a gender-just world.”

Rimjhim Jain is a gender rights activist at the New Delhi–based Centre for Health and Social Justice working on a range of campaigns to engage men and boys in gender justice. This article is an edited version of her preface to Global Masculinities: Interrogations and Reconstructions, edited by Mangesh Kulkarni and Rimjhim Jain, associate editor (Milton Park, NY, and New Delhi: Routledge, 2019). Published with permission from Routledge, Taylor and Francis.

Men@Work
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When Young Men Speak Out

If you’ve ever wondered what it would be like to listen in as young men open up about pressing issues of the day, now you can stop wondering.

In mid-winter, “Voices of Male Youth” was released, a gripping video series of unfettered and unscripted conversations among male youth exploring the beliefs and feelings they’re grappling with, including mental health, health care, norms of masculinity and consent.

Produced by the Partnership for Male Youth, a Washington, DC-based advocacy organization, the series was developed to encourage young males and others in their lives to challenge traditional or uninformed views and to spark conversations about pressing issues impacting young men’s lives. The Partnership for Male Youth, a national non-profit released the video series on their YouTube channel (www.youtube.com/channel/UC5TdFX8NaGzUypvQBDdT). The men, all in their early twenties, are from a number of racial and ethnic backgrounds. Filming took place in November 2018 in New York City.

“Today, discussions about masculinity and what it means to be a young male often leave out the voices of young males themselves,” said David Bell, MD, MPH, chair of the Partnership board. “It is the goal of this series to encourage other young males to speak about issues which are often sensitive, while at the same time educating those they interact with about the complexities of being a young male today,” he said.

The video series is part of the Partnership’s “Campaign for Male Youth,” a movement of more than 50 organizations working to highlight health and well-being challenges facing young adult males today.

Founded in 2013, the Partnership describes itself as the only national organization whose sole focus is to address the health and wellbeing of males between the ages of 10 and 27. To learn more, go to www.partnershipformaleyouth.org.
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
“An inspiring book loaded with wisdom and pragmatism. I strongly recommend it!” Ziauddin Yousafzai, father of Nobel Prize winner Malala Yousafzai, U.N. Special Adviser on Global Education

“Critically important for our time and required reading for us all. I had a hard time putting it down—it’s a great book.” Rosanna Arquette, Emmy-nominated actor

“The struggle for the rights of women & girls is equally men’s business and stops being such a struggle when it’s seen that way.” Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, UN Under-Secretary-General & Executive Director of UN Women


“The Time Has Come is world-changing and life-changing for women and for the men who make a stand.” Gary Barker, Promundo

“Just as I expected, a thought-provoking book from Michael Kaufman. He is SO right that the time has truly come for men to step it up for a gender equal world.” Katja Iversen, President/CEO, Women Deliver

“Compelling... With humor, heart, and research, Kaufman provides a relatable blueprint for men who want to embark on this important journey.” Matt McGorry, actor and activist, Orange is the New Black

“With a combination of compelling stories and facts, Michael Kaufman offers a timely and important case for engaging men in the ongoing fight for gender equality.” Deborah Gillis, Former President and CEO, Catalyst

“Being a male feminist isn’t an option. It’s a requirement, a duty, and a calling. This is not a book about history. This is a book about the future, and a guide on how to get there. We owe a debt of gratitude to Michael.” Andy Dunn, Co-founder of Banobas men’s stores

“Michael’s book is a must-read!” Madeline Di Nonno, CEO, Geena Davis Institute on Gender in Media

“The Time Has Come
Why Men Must Join the Gender Equality Revolution

MICHAEL KAUFMAN

Counterpoint Press
House of Anansi Press (Canada)
Brilliance Audio

Available at bookstores and online

“Kaufman has nailed it... [P]ositive, affirming, inclusive.” The Globe and Mail

“A timely, informative, thought-provoking, and practical approach to a necessary social reform. Recommended for both men and women.” Booklist

“Timely and refreshing...incredibly touching...A reassuring, empowering guide for men who want to be on the right side of history and welcome a feminist, gender-equal future.” Foreword Reviews

“A rousing vision...inclusive and timely arguments.” Kirkus Reviews

“Timely, incisive and accessible. One of the things I’m asked most commonly is: Where is the book that will speak to men about this topic? Well they don’t need to wait any longer. That book is here. It is vital reading for men everywhere.” Laura Bates, Writer and Founder of Everyday Sexism

“Like the father I played in Bend It Like Beckham, the time has come for men to open our hearts and minds to the aspirations of the girls and women around us. An essential book for our time.” Anupam Kher, Actor and Chair of Film & Television Institute of India

“This is THE global guidebook for all men, particularly our young men, to reflect & reconcile the global struggle and aspiration to redefine our lives as men.” David L. Bell, MD, Medical Director, The Young Men’s Clinic, Columbia University Medical Center

“From a long career at the forefront of the movement for gender justice, Michael Kaufman offers a beautifully written, compelling vision for how men’s lives can improve.” Michael C. Reichert, the Center for the Study of Boys’ and Girls’ Lives, Univ. of PA

“A personal & instructive appeal for men to take the journey from self-reflection to allyship to advocacy around gender equality.” Wade Davis, former NFL player, writer & educator

“A perfect primer for men who care about women and girls, men who want richer lives for boys and men.” Michael Flood, author of “Engaging Men and Boys in Violence Prevention”

“A compelling case for why ‘women’s issues,’ are everyone’s issues and for the role men play in challenging misogyny and creating more just societies.” Sarnya Chemaly, writer and director, Women’s Media Center Speech Project

“One of the first men to stand up publicly against violence against women, Michael Kaufman has written a comprehensive and popular call to men to join the battle for gender equality. Give it to every man you know.” Judy Reback, activist & author