

# The Empathy Gap

[Transcript]

## Introduction

### Film Clip

- Love need cause us no fear. Love need cause us no shame. Love is...good.
- [Audience murmurs]
- Love is good.

**JW Wiley:** I love a lot of people walking this earth, and I don't see why I can't say to the men in my life that I love them.

**Michael Messner:** It's like we're supposed to put that in a little bubble; inside the bubble is the people you love, outside is everything else, the people you compete with. And I think we need a more expansive sense of love.

**Jennifer Siebel Newsom:** The only way we're gonna be able to create a more equitable, just society is if we really nurture that empathy at the earliest ages.

**Tony Porter:** I wanna see you step out of these rigid definitions of manhood and step over here. I want you to do something that's courageous--you said you're courageous, I got something for you to do.

**Charlotte Watson:** It takes a willingness. It only takes a few. If you become the many, the many become the majority.

**Kevin Powell:** What we need in America--I'm convinced of it--we need a massive men's movement to redefine manhood.

**Eddie Moore, Jr.:** I mean, that's what Shakti Butler taught me--and that really challenges me all the time--is to let love be your first step.

[Title Screen]

**Narrator [Thomas Keith]:** So I was speaking at a university about men's violence against women. I rhetorically asked the men in the audience how they would feel if they had a daughter who went to a college party and men began plying her with alcohol in an attempt to have sex with her. A guy in the back of the auditorium yells out, "she's not my daughter, bro." For days I thought about this arrogant, disconnected comment, and I began to wonder: for a lot of guys, is there an empathy gap? Many men do not view women as equals. To understand why this is, we have to look at history. The history of devaluation and disrespect toward women.

## **The Credibility Gap**

### **Film Clip**

- Who among us is prepared to give negroes the vote?
- No!
- What shall follow upon that? Universal enfranchisement? Votes for women?
- No! [General shouting]

**Narrator:** But thanks to Alice Stokes Paul, Lucy Burns, and the thousands of strong, courageous women who fought for voting rights, including the Congressional Union for Women's suffrage and the American Women's Suffrage Association, pressure was placed on president Woodrow Wilson to support the 19th Amendment to the Constitution, which reads, in part: "The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex." But long before voting rights were secured, when women began to articulate the moral imperative for basic rights, another movement began that emphasized the concerns of women who were not privileged with wealth or white skin but who also longed for dignity, equality, and justice.

**Woman [reading Sojourner Truth's "Ain't I a Woman?"]:** Nobody ever helps me into carriages, or over mud puddles, or gives me any best place! And ain't I a woman? Look at me! Look at my arm! I have ploughed and planted, and gathered into barns, and ain't I a woman? I could work as much and eat as much as a man--when I could get it--and bear the lash as well! And ain't I a woman?

**Narrator:** But as with all progressive change, blowback was inevitable. Groups of men and women formed to fight against women's suffrage, with the common reasons being: most women don't want it; women should not compete with men; women were created for domestic work. But by the 1960s and 1970s, and in the face of great resistance, the stage was set and the fuse had been lit. There was no stopping the women's movement.

### **[Women's Movement montage]**

**Gloria Steinem [archive footage]:** What I've come to understand lately is that it's not always personal--it's that all women come in for this kind of stuff, because I keep meeting women who I've heard all my life are bitchy and pushy and so on and so forth, and I meet them and they're nice, compassionate people! If you don't play a role, you know, if you dare to inspire something, then you get it automatically.

### **[Women's Movement montage continues]**

**Narrator:** You have to understand, this really was a major revolution. At the time the lovable mop tops were landing on the shores of America, the women's movement was in full swing. This was a time when the majority of men thought like this:

### **Film Clip:**

- A man who will love me on equal terms... That old saying, "behind every man, there's a woman?" That's not for me. I want to stand right alongside. Is that asking too much?
- Well. No, I'm afraid you're gonna have to be satisfied with the vote right now, I don't think that that'll ever become a national movement.

**Narrator:** And boys were raised to think like this:

**TV Clip:**

- Girls have got it lucky, don't they mom?
- Why do you say that?
- Well, they don't have to be smart. They don't have to get jobs or anything. All they got to do is get married.

**Narrator:** And so unsurprisingly, the women's movement was met with great resistance, particularly from men. And by the 1970s, writer and producer Norman Lear created the TV show "All in the Family," starring Carroll O'Connor as the conservative voice of his generation, a voice that sounds amazingly contemporary.

**TV Clip:**

- You know, nowadays the government is pressuring companies into hiring more women in the executive positions.
- I know, I know, it's a crime against nature! Women was created for two things: makin' meals and babies.

**Narrator:** A common response is that "that was then and this is now," as though sexism is largely a problem of the past. But take a closer look, and see how women are treated and spoken of today.

**Rush Limbaugh:** Those guidelines, and I put them at the bottom of the stack, those guidelines that I read, what can and can't be said on the floor of the House. Due in part to all the chicks in government, a lot of what's happening in the state-controlled media is due to the "chickification" of the news.

**Interviewee:** You obviously hate women because you think that they shouldn't vote!

**Glenn Beck:** I don't hate them; they're very convenient to have around...they just shouldn't be voting. You cannot figure women out. You don't know the psychosis that is "chickdom." Guys, you can figure out: food, sex... That's it! We're simple. Women are psychos.

**Erick Erickson:** The liberals who defend this and say it's not a bad thing are very anti-science. When you look at biology, look at the natural world, the roles of a male and a female in society and other animals, the male typically is the dominant role.

**Bill O'Reilly:** Many women who get pregnant are blasted out of their minds when they have sex. They're not gonna use birth control anyway. [To Michelle Bachmann] Both you

and Sarah Palin are good-looking women, I mean, you're attractive, young--relatively young--women who other women can identify with.

**Narrator:** Yes, there's a theme here: that women are incompetent, irresponsible, and should know their place.

**[Montage of conservative media personalities discussing women]**

**Narrator:** Let's imagine the world as longed for by conservative men. A world where women have no opinions, and people who have no aspiration for leadership. What do you think this conservative world would look like?

**Male voiceover:** Your goal is to try to make sure your home is a place of peace, order, and tranquility, where your husband can renew himself in body and spirit. Let him talk first. Remember, his topics of conversation are more important than yours. Remember, a good wife always knows her place.

**Narrator:** Or perhaps these conservative men would prefer this:

**Female android:** Hello. I'm a third-generation AX-400 android. I can look after your house, do the cooking, mind the kids. I organize your appointments. I speak 300 languages and I am entirely at your disposal as a sexual partner. No need to feed me or recharge me. I'm equipped with a quantic battery that makes me autonomous for 173 years. Do you want to give me a name?

**Narrator:** And when women gain power, sexism is quick to follow.

**Heckler at Hillary Clinton rally:** Iron my shirt! Iron my shirt! Iron my shirt!

**Kevin Powell:** You know, I was socialized this way--most of us in America are socialized this way--that men are superior, males are superior to females. And I ask, "where'd you get that from?" And they don't know most of the time, and I say "well, whatever you learned about women and girls in school, from kindergarten through the 8th grade, or kindergarten to 12th grade, or kindergarten through college." And they begin to realize they haven't learned much at all, except for the images that they've been bombarded with, you know, in the mass media culture, which, as you know, oftentimes depict women and girls as sexual objects, as people who are just in support of men, very rarely in leadership positions, very rarely respected, you know, if they're in leadership positions, and more times than not some of the most destructive words and images that we've seen, I feel, in a long time. So a lot of boys have internalized, a lot of young men have internalized these notions of what women and girls are, because of that.

**Tony Porter:** What we've come to know--this is important to us--what we've come to know is that as men, we've been socialized to have a lack of interest in the experience of women, particularly outside of sexual objects. You take objectification, sexual

objectification, out of the equation, and our interest in the experience of women diminishes greatly.

**Narrator:** And media's representation of women plays right into this male objectified fantasy about women. For instance, in advertising, female models are impossibly perfect, sex-obsessed ideals of beauty. But another dimension of these caricatures is the silliness in which they are posed. It's hard to be taken seriously when you're posed like this. Or this. And yet, ad agencies continue to bombard us with a relentless stream of sexist ads that reinforce the idea that women are infantile, idiotic, mindlessly sexual, and not to be taken seriously. Imagine an ad agency doing this to men.

### **[Corny music]**

**Narrator:** We're now used to seeing the sexist Carl's Jr. Hardee ads that one-dimensionalize and sexually objectify women. But we never see men treated this way. Men are afforded dignity and strength, unless the depiction, like this, is supposed to be comedy. Take this film poster for the summer mega-hit *The Avengers*, where the male characters are posed in positions of physical strength, while the lone female character is posed with her butt protruding in an exaggerated way. One artist decided to flip the script in this comical rendition of the poster where the male characters have exaggerated butt shots, while the female character does not. Although satirical, this gender reversal reveals the deep-seated sexism that has dominated media for generations. And the take-away point, through the lens of media, is that men are strong, powerful, and demanding of respect, while women are infantile sex props used to sell product. Now, this is not a critique of sex. And both men and women care about how they look. And certainly, men have no business policing the choices women make. But media representation of women is mediated reality, so when media one-dimensionalize women as having value only in terms of physical looks and sensual appeal, and otherwise make women appear foolish and incompetent, there are consequences.

**Julia T. Wood:** This is another issue where I like to go to facts. Women still make, on average, I think 78 cents for every dollar a man makes. Women are still battered and killed much more often than men. This is not an equal society.

**Narrator:** Study after study has shown that gender bias indeed exists, and even flourishes, in our country. One notable study was conducted by researchers at the University of Wisconsin where two resumes were sent out to people in positions of hiring, with questions like, "would you hire this person?" "Does the applicant have sufficient research experience?" "If hired at what starting salary?" Now, what hiring personnel didn't know is that they were the ones being tested. What researchers had given to those in positions of hiring were two identical resumes with only one difference between them: half of the resumes had the applicant's name as "Brian Miller," while the other half had the name "Karen Miller." In case after case, hiring personnel found Brian Miller to have more experience, to be more hireable, and claimed they would start Brian at a higher salary. Interestingly, both male and female subjects are twice as likely to hire a man than they are a woman. When you expose gender bias, salary and advancement differences begin to

make sense. Look at some of the numbers. Sometimes the disproportionality has to do with the ratio of men to women at the executive level. In other cases, the pay rate is greater for men than women in the same occupation. A reason why both men and women view women as less competent is that we have, for generations, been socialized to think of women as less competent. In fact, throughout history, women have been considered less competent and less valuable. The belief was that there is something inherently feeble about women that makes them incapable of leadership. Throughout the history of Western philosophy alone, men were considered to be rational; autonomous; leaders; and strong, while women were considered to be emotional; dependent; subordinate; and weak. And when men who view themselves as powerful are challenged by women, condescension usually follows.

**Rand Paul:** Let me, let me finish, let me say! Hey, hey Kelley! Hey, shhhhh.

**Joe Scarborough:** You were giving false information to our people, and that makes us sad. That makes all of us sad.

**Mika Brzezinski:** OK, let me explain this to you--

**Joe Scarborough:** No no no, I wanna explain--

**Mika Brzezinski:** Right now, we have to report on what we know--

**Joe Scarborough:** And, exactly! And that's my point! That is my point! ...pay the extra money from now on, but this just never happened--

**Mika Brzezinski:** Can we go to news school for a second please? That's last week's question, and the theories are for later in the show, and I'll tell you why--

**[Men talking over Mika Brzezinski]**

**Mika Brzezinski:** Everyone stop for a second.

**Joe Scarborough:** You need to stop and relax. You just c'mon, I...just c'mon.

**Mika Brzezinski:** Stop for a second.

**Joe Scarborough** [speaking over Mika Brzezinski]: I'm gonna have to ask you to just bring it down and relax a little bit. I think you're a little upset. We need your voice down...shhhh...c'mon. C'mon.

**Eddie Moore, Jr.:** Oh, the fact that I'm a dude, I get a reward, I get a perk, the fact that I'm white, you mean, I'm getting a bonus, I'm getting a handout because of that? Absolutely!

**Narrator:** One of the perks of being male that Eddie mentions is found in journalistic coverage of politicians. When covering a male politician, writers refer to their "passion" or "fierceness," but the same passion and fierceness becomes "hysterics" and "shrill" if the

political figure is a woman. When I was young, I sometimes heard the old saying, "children should be seen and not heard." But through hypersexualization, or mocking women in positions of leadership, the clear message of our culture is that women should be seen and not heard.

**Derrick Jensen:** Part of the problem is that this culture is based on hierarchies, and these hierarchies are created in which others are defined as inferior, and therefore violable. And then through violating these others, one validates one's own superiority. And this is true for male supremacism, it's true for what supremacism, it's true for human supremacism.

**Narrator:** In fact, there is no philosophical difference between racism and sexism. The assumptions are basically: a theme of incompetence and inferiority.

**Blackface performer:** The man said he could give me a situation he'd have to put me through a simple surf-examinootion!

**White woman:** No, stupid, you mean a civil service examination!

**Blackface performer:** The man...sit me down, start askin' me again...

**Man:** When breaking in any new worker, and, of course, especially a woman, you've got to explain every angle of the process down to the last detail.

**Man:** You see, they're not naturally familiar with mechanical principles or machines!

**Gwendolyn Dolske:** There's a four-letter word for women such as this, which I have never been called in my life, and that stung so badly, and I'd only been here for a short time when that happened, that I even thought about not teaching anymore, it hurt so badly. It took me some time to...I felt so vulnerable in that moment, that anybody could say whatever they wanted, and it took me some time to step back and not allow a few comments to prevent me from working, but this is part of my work environment. And that's what I was thinking about. I don't experience this with the colleagues, I've never experienced it before, but I have young male students that maybe are just unaware of the fact that they are also part of my work environment. Then, as soon as I stepped into the classroom and these things started to happen, I realized that my students do not see me as a professor. They see me as the lady in front of the room who's going to talk about ethics. Having--again--having no idea, but they do not see me as one of their professors.

**Narrator:** In the 1940s, psychologists Kenneth and Mamie Clark conducted experiments using dolls to see whether racial segregation led black boys and girls to internalize inferiority to white people.

**Researcher:** Which doll is the nice doll? And which doll is the bad doll? And why is that doll pretty?

**Boy:** Because she's white and has blue eyes.

**Researcher:** And which doll is the ugly doll? Why is that doll ugly?

**Boy:** Because he's--because he's black.

**Narrator:** In 2006, filmmaker Kiri Davis replicated the study to see whether progress had been made.

**Researcher:** And can you show me the doll that is the nice doll? And why is that the nice doll?

**Boy:** She's white.

**Researcher:** And can you show me the doll that looks bad? OK. And why does it look bad?

**Girl:** Because it's black.

**Researcher:** And why do you think that's a nice doll?

**Girl:** Because she's white.

**Researcher:** And can you give me the doll that looks like you?

**Narrator:** Inspired by the Clarks' experiment, I decided to create a similar study based on gender.

**Researcher:** Which one is the girl doll, which one is the boy doll?

**Boy:** That one's a girl, that one's a boy.

**Researcher:** OK. Which one do you think is smarter?

**Boy:** The boy.

**Researcher:** Which one do you think is smarter?

**Girl:** The boy.

**Researcher:** Which of these two dolls do you think is smarter? Which one of them, is it the girl or the boy, do you think is smarter?

**Boy:** Boy.

**Researcher:**  
Which one do you think is nicer?  
She's nicer?



Which one do you think is smarter?  
He's smarter.  
Which doll do you think is smarter?

**Boy:** This one.

**Researcher:** This one, is that the boy doll?

**Boy:** Uh-huh.

**Researcher:** OK. Which one do you think is nicer?

**Girl:** This one.

**Researcher:** She's nicer. OK! And which one do you think is smarter?

**Girl:** This one.

**Researcher:** This one's smarter? Can you tell me which one is a girl doll and which is a boy?

**Boy:** This is a boy, this is a girl.

**Researcher:** OK. Which one do you think is smarter? He's smarter? Why is he smarter?

**Boy:** Because he's a boy.

**Narrator:** I didn't know what sort of responses I would get, but I wasn't surprised. Even at early ages, the credibility gap is evident. Then filmmaker Lauren Greenfield put it in perspective by showing that devaluing all things feminine is an entrenched part of our culture.

**Lauren Greenfield:** Show me what it looks like to run like a girl. Show me what it looks like to fight like a girl. Now throw like a girl.

**Boy:** Aww!

**Girl:** My name is Dakota and I'm ten years old.

**Lauren Greenfield:** Show me what it looks like to run like a girl. Throw like a girl. Fight like a girl. What does it mean to you when I say "run like a girl?"

**Girl:** It means "run as fast as you can."

**Jennifer Siebel Newsom:** I see it with my four-year-old daughter, Montana. She is so confident and outspoken and strong and aspirational, and my hope is that she continues to

be that strong force. But historically, when you look back, many girls, as they near the middle school years and they become more vulnerable to patriarchy essentially, and their place in society, they start to quiet that voice, quiet that inner strength, and conform to please the male.

**Narrator:** And gender conformity still reigns in the minds of many. And this can be particularly true in certain professions.

Narrator: In the 1970s, only about five percent of musicians in major US symphonies were women. Starting in the mid-1990s, symphonies went to blind auditions. As a result, today, the percentage of female musicians is around 40%. But that doesn't mean that everyone supports gender equality. Celebrated conductor Yuri Temirkanov stated of conducting a symphony orchestra, "the essence of a conductor's profession is strength. The essence of a woman is weakness." In 2007, the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra replaced Mr. Temirkanov with Marin Alsop, one of the most accomplished female conductors in the world. But despite the best efforts of media, advertising, politicians, more politicians, male-dominated industries, workplace sexual harassment, and most of popular culture to undermine women, women are pushing through barriers, standing up against oppression, defining their own lives, and not allowing anything to hold them back. Plain and simple, the credibility gap is based on bigotry. The reality is, women are succeeding, and changing the world.

### **[Music]**

**Narrator:** At the same time, gender equality in many professions has been painfully slow. Too many men continue to view women as incompetent, or at least not as competent as men. And so the credibility gap will continue as long as boys are taught that girls have less value by being less capable, less proficient, and less qualified.

This sexist lesson becomes embedded in the rules of manhood as part of what I term "the masculine script."

### **The Masculine Script**

The American Dream. The dream of the working class. To own your own house and raise a family on a plot of land you can call your own. But America also has a masculine script, a narrative aimed at boys and young men, and part of that script states, "men need to be tough and emotionally distant, aggressive and hostile when challenged, sexually objectify women, and strive to be incredibly wealthy."

### **["C.R.E.A.M." by Wu-Tang Clan]**

**Narrator:** For generations, the masculine script handed to young men has included the message that manhood is defined in part by acquisition, wealth, and material possessions.

In recent history, some music stars conspicuously display their personal wealth. But you could say that they're simply following an American masculine script. If we had to look to one individual who best represents the American masculine script, that person would have to be Donald Trump.

**Donald Trump:** What's the difference between a wet raccoon and Donald J. Trump's hair? A wet raccoon doesn't have seven billion f\*cking dollars in the bank.

**Narrator:** Trump embodies the rules of traditional American masculinity with four central themes: amass personal fortune; meet conflict with aggression; sexually objectify women; suppress all emotion except anger. In fact, Trump himself reinforces this script with four direct quotes.

**John Boehner:** Making sure that these kids have a shot at the American Dream, [voice cracks] like I did...it's important.

**Narrator:** An American masculine script is found throughout our culture. This is the playbook. This is the expectation that boys and men are pressured to live under, and men like Trump embody this script. In Trump's world, it is dog-eat-dog, survival of the fittest, where the strong devour the weak. It's a place where men don't cry, where women are sexually objectified, and where everything can be bought and sold.

**Donald Trump:** When people gaze across a magnificent vista, they experience wonder, beauty, and awe. It's priceless, right? Wrong. Because everything has a price.

**Derrick Jensen:** It's really very simple, it's "Behavior Modification 101." That if you reward behavior that benefits the entire group, that's what people are gonna do. But unfortunately, this culture is based systematically on rewarding selfish, acquisitive, exploitative behavior.

**["Billionaire" by Travie McCoy feat. Bruno Mars]**

**Interviewer:** How in the world is it possible to make a lot of money, risk-free, especially in these crazy economic times?

**Saen Higgins:** Well using the simple strategies in my new book, it's already made me millions of dollars, it's not only possible, but it's guaranteed.

**Man in TV ad:** The words that you use are "I make a million. I make a million. I make a million." Say this over and over again until it is accepted by your superconscious mind.

**Film Clip ["Wall Street"]:** Greed, for lack of a better word, is good. Greed is right.

**[Tense orchestral music]**

**Donald Trump on The Apprentice:** Bradford, you're fired. You're fired. You're fired.

**["B.M.F. (Blowin' Money Fast) by Rick Ross]**

**Narrator:** People criticize music artists for being materialistic. In actuality, they are only following an American masculine script.

**["Got Money" by Lil Wayne feat. T-Pain]**

**Man on TV:** When the tsunami hit, I bought shares in Japan.

**Narrator:** Boys who are into sports learn early on that men's sports is serious business.

**[Instrumental rock music]**

**Narrator:** What do these same boys learn about girls and women? The same thing they learn everywhere: that women are on the sidelines to please the male gaze and to reinforce the message that a woman's role is to be sexually objectified. And when sports culture tells boys that they are more important than other boys, and far more important than women, that women are here as sexual sidekicks, what's the logical consequence?

**News anchor:** One of the state's finest high school athletes, 18-year-old Dominic Cizauskas, is accused of sexually assaulting a young woman while on a recruiting visit to UW Madison.

**News anchor:** Two former Vanderbilt football players accused of sexually assaulting a female student in a dorm room when she was drunk and unconscious.

**News anchor:** Two high school football players from Connecticut are facing sexual assault charges in a case that's drawn comparisons to the conviction of two football players from Steubenville, Ohio.

**News anchor:** A rape case involving two former St. Francis football players is nearing a close. Two of the three men who are accused of raping a woman in October of 2011 have pleaded guilty to lesser charges.

**News anchor:** Heather, in these documents are the shocking, gruesome details of what the victim remembers happening back in the fall of 2011, as well as her fight to break free from the sexual assault.

**News anchor:** A dorm party leads to the arrest of two Mars Hill college football player on sexual battery charges.

**News anchor:** It all sounds too familiar; a powerhouse football program coping with allegations of sex crimes tonight, and an investigation now underway.

**News anchor:** In a case that has really captured the nation's attention, two teens accused of raping a drunken 16-year-old girl during a booze-filled night of partying in August, learned their fate Sunday morning. The judge found them guilty on all counts.

**Narrator:** One of the more common observations about masculinity is that masculinity is performed in groups. Young men will act differently in groups than they do one-on-one.

**Sports fan:** [hard to hear]

**News correspondent:** Hey, hey hey! So were you guys waiting around to see if you could "F her in the p\*\*\*\*" live on TV?

**Sports fan:** Not you, but yes.

**Correspondent:** You were, seriously?

**Sports fan:** Yes.

**Correspondent:** When you talk into my microphone and say that into my camera to viewers at the station I work on, it's disrespectful and degrading.

**Sports fan:** I don't care, it's f\*\*\*ing hilarious.

**Correspondent:** OK, why is it so funny though?

**Sports fan:** It is fucking hilarious.

**Correspondent:** Why?

**Sports fan:** We're not the only people, it happened in England--

**Correspondent:** You know that it's old, that it's really not funny anymore--

**Sports fan:** It's been like a year!

**Correspondent:** It's been longer than that.

**Sports fan:** You're lucky there's not a vibrator near, like in England, 'cause it happened all the time.

**CJ Pascoe:** One of the things I've noticed in researching boys is that masculinity happens in groups. When I talk to boys one-on-one, I often hear these very tender stories about the way they haven't measured up in terms of masculinity, about being teased for not being masculine enough, about their relationships with their girlfriends, or relationships they wish they had with girls. And then I watch as they move into a group of boys, and suddenly they become part of this public display of masculinity, which is all about affirming their dominance over girls' bodies and repudiating some form of gay masculinity.

**Tony Porter:** When I'm with a group of guys and a girl is here, I'm really under the pressure to confine to these norms instead of the way I was with her yesterday. And she's looking at me like, "what happened to you?" Well what happened to me is, this collective socialization that we call manhood has got a hold of me right now and it's more important for me to respond to that than to respond to you.

**Narrator:** This fact about men in groups also helps to explain why some frat guys, male athletes, or men in workplace environments will engage in street harrassment or even gang rape, things they might not do when they're not with their friends. But when examining boys' and mens' attitudes toward women, think about the language boys and men will often use when speaking about women.

### **[Media montage]**

-Fuckin' bitch!

-Fuckin' bitch.

-Fucking ugly bitch.

-I would love to tap that ass. I would tear that ass up.

-Bro. Brah. Brah. Bro. I'm gettin' some ass toniiight.

**Daniel Tosh:** ...which is a positive joke for women, unless of course you have fake boobs, let's be honest, you're not bright enough to get that joke. How's that feel, whores? Huh? Yeah! Just keep telling yourself you did it so your shirts would fit better...you did it because you're a whore! You forgot because you're stupid.

**Nick Young:** You see what I'm going in this car with?

**Interviewer:** Yes I do, she's beautiful.

**Nick Young:** What I'mma do with this shouldn't be legal.

**Tony Porter:** For a boy to say--he might be with a group of his friends and he sees a girl walking by. It's not OK within their collective socialization for him maybe to simply say, "who is that? She's cute, I'd like to ask her out on a date!" That's too soft! That's too soft, that's too gentle, that's too kind, that's too caring, that's too loving. So instead he has to say, "hey, who's that? I'd like to hit that. Man, who's that? I'd like a piece of that. Hey, check her out. Man, I'd like to tear that shit up!" Which I suppose in some respect means, "I'm attracted to her." "Hit"--violence. "Tear"--violence. "That"--object. "Shit"--just straight up dehumanization. So, even the language, you know, the language that's used to define women by our boys, taught to them by men, you know, is devaluing them, straight up dehumanizing them, you know, objectifying them, lessening their value...when you

encapsulate all that, how can you not have, you know, men's violence against women being the number one cause of injury to women in our nation?

**Narrator:** We first heard about NFL star Ray Rice assaulting his fiancée, now wife, in May of 2014. But the story really took off in September of that year, when an elevator camera captured the sorts of things that go on behind closed doors every hour of every day in America. And sadly, one of the most common reactions when men harm women was quick to follow.

**News anchor:** But what I've tried to implore the female members of my family, some of who you all met and talked to and what have you, is that, again--and this is what, I've done this all my life--let's make sure we don't do anything to provoke wrong actions.

**Narrator:** And so men are taught to blame women when men act out violently toward women. This is all part of the masculine script. And who teaches boys these lessons? Usually it's men. Men they look up to. Men like coaches.

And there are great coaches who are also inspirational role models. And then there are coaches like Bob Knight. Knight is a legendary NCAA men's basketball coach, famous for his on-court temper tantrums and media meltdowns. Knight is also famous for his cavalier use of the word "rape."

These are the very men who have such a tremendous influence on the lives of boys and young men.

**Wally Backman:** Take your report and shove it up your f\*\*\*in' ass! You fuckin'--that's some bullshit! You know, the last guy who bought that, I'd knock you on you're fuckin' ass! Put down your fuckin' report, you little fuckin' pipsqueak!

**Narrator:** And the Mike Rice scandal at Rutgers University spotlighted a national problem that was all too problem in coaching.

**Interviewer:** When and how did you become aware of his coaching style?

**Athlete:** Uh, once he got the job, there was a camp, and, you know, a bunch of 10-year-olds, 11-year-old, 12-year-old kids, and, you know, three kids, they come in walking to the camp late. So now he feels he has a need to embarrass these kids in front of other campers. And then he noticed that they have on flip-flops. And so he looks down, you know, he says, "flip-flops are for faggots. Flip-flops are for faggots!" I mean, in front of, you know, ten-year-old kids!

**News anchor:** Murdoch says Rice used that same homophobic slur in practices!

**Kevin Powell:** We were yelled at, you know, so it's not uncommon, like the stuff I saw at my university, Rutgers University, where you see the basketball coach, you know, infamously throwing the ball at players on ESPN. I mean, that's what a lot of us experience!

**Narrator:** Coaches cursing, screaming, using homophobic and sexist slurs, influence their players, but also the many boys watching the game in the stands and on television.

**Kevin Powell:** If you model destructive behavior, reactionary behavior, nine times out of ten those boys are gonna become what you're modeling.

**Tony Porter:** You have a responsibility way beyond the Xs and Os. You have a captive audience of boys hanging on to your every word. And when they're around you in that circle on one knee, 30 or 40 of them at the end of a game or practice, and they're all looking up to you, and you're standing in the middle of the circle? At that moment, you're more important than their mothers, you're more important than their fathers--just at that moment--you're more important than their God! At that moment. What a wonderful time to talk about something other than football.

**Greg Kamansky:** We have it every year with twelve to fifteen young men, that they're with me, or with one of our coaches, every single day. And knowing that, and knowing how important athletics are to that person's life and how athletics can affect their life, and being a student at a college campus, how it affects their life, I mean we're always dealing with their, you know, problems, family problems, you know, problems on campus, or whatever it may be, we're the ones always dealing with it, it's not, you know, the administrator, or it's usually not the parents because they've moved away, it's...we're the parents. And so we have a huge effect on the development, I think, of a young man.

**Narrator:** And yet some, mainly white, conservative, heterosexual men, are in hysterics, claiming that we have become soft, that we need to become tougher, more aggressive, and more hostile.

**News commentator:** We are wimping down. We're wussifying American men, and it has to stop.

-We wear bike helmets and knee pads, we're afraid of everything, we are spineless, gutless little babies, afraid and terrified of everything!

-It's the wussification of America that's getting us!

**[Audience cheers]**

-No more wusses!

**Narrator:** So at a time when these men believe masculinity is getting soft, this is considered entertainment.

**[Cage fighting montage]**

And turning muscularity and physical strength into a political issue.



**Bill O'Reilly:** Men who are strong, strong men, more likely to be conservative, while men who are weak, more likely to go left.

**Greg Gutfield:** Can I just say, this is extremely obvious, athletes, almost all professional athletes are conservatives.

**Panelist:** Listen, exhibit A in all this, Bill, are the whiny, pencil-neck wimps on MSNBC. They all look like the characters, the dweebs on that show *The Big Bang Theory*.

**Narrator:** Even though these men appear to be middle-aged adults, for them, masculinity is a proverbial adolescent war between jocks and nerds, where physical power is superior to mental prowess.

-What are you gonna do?

-Reload.

**Narrator:** But it isn't just muscularity that these men believe make you a man. It's also the ability to endure injury without showing pain.

**FOX News commentator:** If you had an eight-year-old kid now, would you tell him you want him to play football?

-I wouldn't, would you?

-Nope. That's sad. I wouldn't, and my whole life was football. Uh...I think the risk is worse than the reward, I really do.

**Commentator:** You're afraid of the game. Don't be a wussy, Iron Mike!

**Narrator:** Attempting to turn athletes into warriors in a bid to retain violent, hegemonic masculinity as an American norm, while men in suits sit in front of a camera and encourage more violence.

**News commentator:** One town wants helmets on the soccerfield! Is this a good idea? They're making some kids wear it! Or, have we become a bunch of wussies in this country and we're not open to a good old head injury like we used to?

**Commentator:** This morning, there are questions about what may have led to the tragic death of a beloved athlete. Junior Seau was found dead in a Southern California home of an apparent suicide.

**Tyler Seau:** We got really close, and, you know, I feel like it's turning around. OK, he wants to be part of my life. And then all of a sudden I wouldn't hear from him. Sorry.

-He's truly a legend and he will be with us forever.

**Narrator:** The final diagnosis in Seau's case was national news. He had CTE.

**Speaker:** The founding fathers were men, not wussies! It's the wussification of America! It's killin' us!

**Jennifer Siebel Newsom:** We're in the business of raising human beings, not gender stereotypes that are extremes. So we need to be raising future generations to be empathic, compassionate, loving, caring, nurturing...strong! Doesn't have to be physical, physically domineering, but have internal strength. Dignity, nobility, courage. Those are all wonderful, wonderful traits. They're not limited to one gender or the other.

**Kevin Powell:** I think that older men have to understand that being a man is not yelling and screaming and, you know, belittling, using homophobic slurs to describe, you know, what a male is doing, or, you know, sexist slurs to describe what they're doing. It's backwards, it's archaic, you know? And what I say to older men all the time, it's like, "you also have to be willing to grow and evolve into a different kind of man, and a different kind of human being."

**Narrator:** And once again, what we are told is ruining men is feminism.

**Commentator:** What feminism has delivered is angry women and feminine men, and it emerges from this mindset that a lot of women have unfortunately bought into, this destructive idea that men prevent them from being able to achieve their goals!

**Narrator:** Wait a minute. Precisely what goals can't you achieve because of feminism?

Seriously, precisely what is feminism preventing you from doing?

Let me introduce you to Terry Crews. Apparently, he's one of the wussified men FOX News pundits refer to. After playing for the NFL, you may know Terry from his acting work, although there's more to the story.

**Terry Crews:** Old Spice body spray will make you feel so powerful it'll blow your mind right in front of your face!

[Singing]: And I need you. And I miss you. And now I wonder if I could fall into the sky...

-As most guys are, you know, NFL, the whole thing, the manly man, you're tough, you don't show, you don't--"boys don't cry"--we don't, you know, we're hardcore... But the problem is, the Marlboro man always ends up alone, and his wife can't talk to him, kids can't talk to him, and he's somewhere in a woodshed, bawling his eyes out because nobody visits him. And my thing was, I was like, "whoa, I have to soften and experience empathy!" And I just had to see myself through my wife's eyes, and through my kids' eyes. And that changed everything.

**Larry King:** So you're a feminist.

**Terry Crews:** I am a total feminist.

**Larry King:** Me too.

**Narrator:** These men are not wusses. They're ordinary guys who have figured out that we as men are better off being thoughtful, kind, and caring about equal treatment for women. Look, boys and men are not the problem. The masculine script is the problem. This cultural script that tells boys and men to be tough, to be aggressive, to sexually exploit women, and to repress all of our natural human emotions. We need a different way to define ourselves as men.

## **Empathy and the Ethics of Love**

### **Film Clip ["The Green Mile"]**

- Mostly, I'm tired of people being ugly to each other. I'm tired of all the pain I'm feeling here in the world every day. There's too much of it. It's like pieces of glass in my head all the time. Can you understand?

- Yes, John, I think I can.

**Narrator:** Empathy is the ability to understand and share the feelings of another. But there's a bit more to it.

Researcher Brené Brown lays out the path to creating empathy.

**Narrator:** Dr. Brown argues that empathy is a connection, and an empathic connection takes love, and love requires vulnerability, and vulnerability takes courage.

To get men to care enough, to take the first step, will take more than appealing to their good will. For men to get past this damaging cultural message, it will take empathy and humanizing women.

However, statistics alone are not very motivating. We need to see people and hear their stories. The key lies in what author Roman Krznaric terms, "humanizing the other."

**Roman Krznaric:** Certainly it's the case that abstract statistics are not very good at generating empathy. The classic argument against empathy is that it doesn't work well at a distance. We empathize more with our near and dear, but those faraway people who are statistics about people dying in sub-Saharan Africa or in an earthquake in China, we glaze over, we keep eating our toast in the morning when we see the news reports, because we're not looking at them eye-to-eye, we haven't heard their personal story. Now I think

the problem is not distance, because we know that you can walk past a homeless guy on your street just as you can empathically feel for someone at a distance. If you hear their personal story, see their face on a TV news report, it can, you know, bring tears to your eyes. So the question really is, how do we humanize other people? Think of a film like Schindler's List. What happens in that film? A Nazi sympathizer, a German businessman, Oskar Schindler, who's using Jewish factory workers in collaboration with the SS, makes friends with an individual, his Jewish accountant, Itzhak Stern, played by Ben Kingsley in the film.

-I could have got more out. I could have got more. If I just--I could have got more.

-Oskar, there are 1,100 people are alive because of you, look at them.

-If I just--

-There will be generations because of what you did.

-I didn't do enough.

-You did so much.

**Roman Kznaric:** But that one face that he connects with and he empathizes with, he can then extend that to all his Jewish workers, because then they become human, through that one individual. And I think that, for a lot of us, is the route to humanizing the other.

**Narrator:** In her book Dehumanizing Women, philosopher Linda LeMoncheck argues that men need to view women empathically. She writes, "a feminist ethics of care is based on a recognition of the connectedness of persons. It is first and foremost an ethic of empathy. An ethics of care requires of moral agents that they take up the perspective of others. It is an ethic that asks of any man considering treating a woman as a sex object that he first try to imagine what it would be like to be this woman treated this way in this context.

**Linda LeMoncheck:** We're not saying that there's a limited quantity of things that only men have, and we want some of those so that you can have less. I think the whole idea is that there's so much more qualitative analysis that needs to be done here, it's not just quantitative. You have something that I want, so it's either you have it or I have it.

**Narrator:** Showing men that treating women as authentic equals is not a zero-sum game is an important part of convincing men that gender equality is in their interest.

**CJ Pascoe:** So this is something I think about a lot, right? How do we get young men to change? How do we develop empathy in young men? How do we get to see, how do we get young men to see that gay rights, that women's rights, that all of these are human rights that affect them as well? I think something else that we need to do is to get guys to see what they have invested in equality for gay men and for women, right? How does moving to a less sexist and a less homophobic society benefit young men? Well, it benefits them in

many, many ways, right? That if we reframe this as a problem of masculinity, not as a problem of men, we can get them to see how they have been constrained by masculinity.

**Narrator:** Actor Emma Watson nailed it when she said, "we don't often talk about men being imprisoned by gender stereotypes. But they are. Both men and women should feel free to be sensitive and strong." We do damage to men when we instruct men to avoid compassion, empathy, and love.

**JW Wiley:** I love a lot of people walking this earth, and I don't see why I can't say to the men in my life that I love them, even if it startles them and throws them off rhythm, the way I do to the women in my life. I think they need to hear that. And modeling is not just for our children, modeling is for our crew. And so my buddies, who may be a little less apt to communicate along those lines, hearing me say it to them might allow them to relax a little bit and open up to it, and go there.

**Narrator:** With the present masculine script, and within the larger context of capitalism, love is seen as vulnerability, and therefore weakness. Sex is seen as acquisition, and therefore power, and as insulation from your feelings, which leads some men to believe:

**Man:** Love is for pussies.

**Narrator:** And thus, the masculine script essentially substitutes external wealth for internal health by instructing us that, as men, we are not supposed to have those feelings that all human beings possess, and this instruction does damage. As men, where do we turn when we feel sad, hurt, self-doubt, fear, humiliation, or just alone?

If we can eliminate the rule that tells us not to show our feelings, or even have feelings, we can live healthier and happier lives.

**JW Wiley:** My father was murdered when I was 15. And uh, he left my life was I was nine. And I think I had a lot of anger when he finally died, so I didn't cry when he died. And I don't recall tears from 15 to 26, except for one or two major instances in my life, you know, a major death, something like that.

**Narrator:** everyone carries emotional scars, and sometimes tapping into the pain you have experienced can help you understand and feel for others.

**Tayo Banjo:** If you can identify with that in some way, this guy was talking about bullying and there was a young boy who was short. He's a high school student and he was telling his story, and he began, he started off with humor. His name was Joey, probably, and he's like, "yeah, my name is Joey, you guys know me, I'm the funny kid," and he's being funny, "and everybody makes fun of me because I'm short," and he was being funny, and then he just started erupting in tears. Then he says, "and it hurts, man. You know?" And he talks about how he had to become funny to cope with being picked on for being short.

**Narrator:** In addition to opening up emotionally...

We must humanize women, which means we must view women as people who have the same dreams, goals, abilities, aspirations, as you and I.

And this means we must also reject the virgin/whore complex that tells us we can respect some women while treating others as sexual things who have no agency. But disrupting this dichotomy between woman as human and woman as object can be difficult when heterosexual men are instructed to view women as objects of lust throughout popular culture.

**Michael Messner:** Capitalism encourages us to really narrowly think of love as something commodified and purchased. I think we've taught boys to suppress their relational capacities to the point where they come to think of love as just about sex.

**Narrator:** And this is precisely the problem. When men are instructed to view women as objects, one cannot feel empathy toward objects.

To get men to care about women as more than sexual beings is not easy. Everything in popular culture tells men that women are strictly sexual things.

**Charlotte Watson:** Why would men want to engage in this process of learning about their privilege and trying to encourage other men to learn about theirs and actually to give it up? What would they gain from that, and what would they lose? I think the answer is, men would gain a certain level of intimacy that's not otherwise possible.

**Narrator:** When speaking to other men around the country, I hear them say that they realize the present masculine script tells them to avoid love, caring and intimacy. At the same time, love is something they very much want in their lives, but they think this makes them weak. Yet becoming empathic does not mean that one loses a sense of adventure and exploration. It does not entail that one ceases to be bold, but it does mean that men become less violent and controlling. Empathy liberates men by being emotionally connected to others and being a complete human being.

The masculine script tells us to avoid our feelings. And this has done great damage to women and to men.

**Kevin Powell:** Pop culture's gonna be what it is. There was times, Tom, when I used to-- I've worked at MTV, I've worked at BET--I was like, "this is an enormous giant that we're going up against." But now, the way I look at it is like, "you know what? Small victories." If we can reach as many young men as possible out there around the country and let them know that there's a different way of defining manhood, maybe some of them will put their guns down, maybe some of them will never put their hands on a woman, maybe some of them will stop one of their peers from ever striking a female.

**Narrator:** But it is challenging, and we have a lot of work to do.

Honestly, we're better than this.

**News anchor:** And around 6:15, the girl was found. Police say two boys on bikes helped find her.

-Police tonight say they have a sexual assailant behind bars, and it's all thanks to that man, Dale Green.

**Dale Green:** I wouldn't consider myself a hero, I just figured I'm one person here trying to make a difference.

**Narrator:** There is nothing stopping us from becoming better men, living more emotionally connected lives, from viewing other men and women as friends and allies, redefining the masculine script, and as finding the courage to embrace love and empathy.

[END]