

Good Fellows: Men's Role & Reason in the Fight for Gender Equality

Debora L. Spar

This essay attempts to make the case for including – even embracing – men in the fight for gender equality. I do not mean to argue that men should supplant women in this struggle, or that enlisting men implies dismissing or diminishing women. My aim instead is to make this fight less isolated and more practical, and to attack the so-called women's problem with a broader, blunter tool. If men believe in equality, then expanding that belief to explicitly include women is not a leap of logic or act of charity. It is instead a basic extension of a truth already deemed self-evident, and a channel through which men can begin to redefine their own identities and interests. Men have been an obstacle to women's equality for a very long time. Perhaps the moment has come to make them part of the solution as well.

In 1689, John Locke published his *First Treatise of Government*, positing, as part of a broader argument against patriarchal monarchy, that the rights of mothers should be taken as seriously as those of fathers.¹ “The Husband and Wife,” he noted, have “different understandings . . . [and] different wills.” But with regard “to the things of their common Interest and Property . . . the Wife [has] full and true possession of what by Contract is her peculiar Right, and . . . the Husband [has] no more power over her Life, than she has over his.” After an exhaustive summary of the Bible – his era’s source of all guidance – Locke concludes that, “far from Establishing the *Monarchical Power of the Father*,” the Scriptures instead “set up the *Mother* equal with him, and injoy’n’d nothing but was due in common, to both Father and Mother.”²

Locke went on, of course, to write his better-known and more radical *Second Treatise*, entire passages of which were borrowed, almost verbatim, in the Declaration of Independence.³ His theories of governance inspired the American and French revolutions; his views on property rights carved the foundation for the modern capitalist state.⁴ But his views on women and gender equality slipped largely from public discourse over the succeeding centuries, as did his intellectual connection between the public reins of power and the private realms of home. When feminist scholarship settles on Locke, it tends to do so unfavorably, reading – and painting – him as a sexist, or misogynist, or worse.⁵

So, too, with Friedrich Engels. In his 1884 treatise on *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*, Engels lays out a vast and sweeping history of the family, arguing that “the first division of labour is that between man and woman for child breeding.”⁶ In pre-industrial times, he posited, this division was a gentle one, with men doing more of the hunting and women more of the gathering, trapping, and cooking.⁷ There was no private property in the ancient past; no marriage deals or feminine submission.⁸ As societies embraced industrialization, however, women’s prescribed role as breeders forced them back into the home, tethering them increasingly to the chores that their factory-bound husbands had now left behind. “[W]hen [a woman] fulfils her duties in the private service of her family,” he explained, “she remains excluded from public production and cannot earn anything; and when she wishes to take part in public industry and earn living independently, she is not in a position to fulfil her family duties.”⁹

Like Locke, Engels is primarily known for bigger and more influential texts. His theories, comingled with those of frequent coauthor, Karl Marx, provided the intellectual foundation for an entire school of thought, and an economic vision whose goals were diametrically opposed to those of John Locke. Yet ironically perhaps, on the subject of women, Engels resuscitated a piece of the connection that Locke had proposed nearly two centuries earlier. Like Locke, Engels saw an innate and important connection between the rights of women and those afforded “mankind” more generally. Like Locke (but going considerably further in his analysis), Engels saw the family as a crucial social structure, and one whose organization revealed broader patterns of power and privilege. “The modern family,” he wrote, “contains in miniature all the contradictions which later extend throughout society and its state.”¹⁰

Scholars can argue – and almost certainly will – about the extent of both Locke’s and Engel’s concern for gender equality.¹¹ Were they really interested in, much less perturbed by, the fate of wives and mothers? Or were women just bit players in their revolutionary views, the backdrop against which the more important battles were to be waged? The texts are too ambiguous to ever yield a definitive answer.

But what makes Locke and Engels so intriguing on the topic of equality is that they did at least mention women, and think about women, under the intellectual auspices of equality. They were (White, straight, cis, old, wealthy) male thinkers who nevertheless bridged the divide between the personal and the political, not because they were necessarily aiming to address women’s standing, but because they understood women’s standing as a necessary component of a just political order. They disagreed fundamentally on what this order would be and how it might be brought to fruition, but they understood that equality – of gender as well as class – was a crucial part of the process.¹²

Such inclusion is generally not part of the standard philosophical canon. On the contrary, the fight for gender equality has typically been waged outside the

mainstream of male-dominated thought; waged by women, overwhelmingly, and mostly from the margins of political discourse. While *equality's* supporters are legion, well-heeled, and well-positioned, advocates for gender equality – like those for racial equality – have been fewer and more segregated. Put bluntly, it has been mostly women fighting and writing for gender equality; mostly people of color advocating for racial justice. And to many in the trenches, it's better that way. Feminists, in particular, have been loath to let men into their fight, wary of ceding power, once again, in this most personal of struggles. And who can blame them? Men's voices have historically dominated every other fight, argument, and victory. Surely, women should own and dominate the pursuit of their own rights.

This essay, however, will take a different tack. I will try to make the case for including – even embracing – men in the fight for gender equality. I do not mean to argue that men should supplant women in this struggle, or that enlisting men implies dismissing or diminishing women. My aim instead is to make this fight less isolated and more practical, and to attack the so-called women's problem with a broader, blunter tool.

Men have been an obstacle to women's equality for a very long time. Perhaps the moment has come to make them part of the solution as well.

The first question a good feminist might pose on the topic of men is “why?” Why, after centuries of neglecting women's issues (at best) or deriding them (or worse), should men be given any voice or agency in the struggle for gender equality?

Let me begin with what I fundamentally believe to be the wrong answer. Men should not enter the fight for women's rights just because it's the right thing to do (even though it is). They shouldn't be cajoled or bullied into joining; they shouldn't be dragged kicking and screaming to the march. We've tried that and it doesn't work. Bullying rarely does. Guilt, as a prodder of political action, is even worse.¹³

Instead, the arguments for inclusion cluster into two broad categories: those that are focused on men's specific issues, and those that are focused more on women's. Both are crucial and relatively straightforward.

On the male side of the equation, it is useful to begin with the broadest proposition, one that men have been making, and agreeing with, since at least the time of Locke: that all people are created equal. Yes, Locke used the word “men.” Yes, he and his successors were almost certainly referring only to White men, and probably landed ones as well. But the *idea* of equality – the basic, primal preference for fairness; for a society that does not discriminate among its members; for opportunities that are widely distributed and open to all – is widespread and long-standing. If men believe in equality, then expanding that belief to explicitly include women is not a leap of logic or an act of charity. It is instead a basic extension of a truth already deemed self-evident.

Beyond the realm of theory, meanwhile, the pursuit of gender equality has measurable, tangible benefits, for men as well as women. As of 2018, women's paid labor accounted for 40 percent of total economic activity in the United States, and 37 percent in the world.¹⁴ In Japan, economists have estimated that expanding the number of women in the workplace could raise the country's GDP by up to 50 percent.¹⁵ In the corporate sector, recent studies demonstrate that firms with a greater representation of women on their boards significantly outperform the market.¹⁶ Ditto with women in the C-suite.¹⁷ On a purely economic basis, therefore, having greater economic opportunities for women creates greater prosperity for all. Equality works.

Equality is also crucial for that most basic of all human tasks: the labor of reproduction. Once upon a time, men could advance their procreative interests – and did so – by controlling women's fertility. They married virgins and demanded fidelity and ensured their genetic longevity through their offspring. Gender equality was not required; on the contrary, men furthered their reproductive interests by repressing women. But not any longer. Instead, in most parts of the world now, advances in reproductive technologies – contraception, *in vitro* fertilization, egg freezing, and the like – have freed the process of procreation from both the dictates of Mother Nature and the demands of men. Women have far greater control over their reproductive destinies than was ever the case in the past, and the once-iron bond between sex and procreation has been forever severed.¹⁸ As a result, the balance of power between the sexes has been subtly but powerfully altered. If men want children (and genetically speaking, they do), they have to offer a different bargain to women than that which prevailed in the past. They have to invest in women's happiness and prosperity, and share power with them.

We see elements of this shifting equilibrium already in China, where a generation of female infanticide has produced a skewed ratio of men to women, and thus a distinctly more competitive market for marriage. Men in China, and particularly those without financial resources, are being forced to import brides from abroad, are engaging in human trafficking, and, when all else fails, are simply forgoing sex and marriage.¹⁹ Taken to its extreme, women's inequality in a world of reproductive choice does not end well for men. Less dramatically, we see evidence too from Japan, where increasing numbers of young women are opting out of what have long been deeply unequal relationships. Given a choice between the country's traditional marriage compact – in which the wife stays home and the husband works – and a more independent lifestyle, women are electing to stay in their careers and out of relationships. Marriage rates are plummeting as a result and fertility has dropped well below the level of population replacement. In 2013, a survey by Japan's Family Planning Association found that 45 percent of women aged sixteen to twenty-four “were not interested in or despised sexual contact.”²⁰ “I have a great life,” reports one young working woman. “I go out with my girl-

friends – career women like me – to French and Italian restaurants. . . . I love my independence.”²¹ Increasingly, men are being cut out of women’s lives in Japan, a situation that presumably carries costs for them both.²²

Finally, and perhaps less cynically, the once-dominant White male ruling class is itself beginning to morph and evolve. Not quickly, to be sure, and not (in some quarters) without a massive fight. But evolving all the same. Twenty-three percent of men in the United States identified in 2017 as non-White.²³ Four percent were gay or queer or somewhere beyond the traditional gender binary. Thirty-one percent were disabled or unemployed.²⁴ One doesn’t have to accept the entire umbrella of intersectionality to see that some groups of men will eventually see themselves reflected in what once was the “other.” They will see their interests, not to mention their wives’ and sisters’ and mothers’ and daughters’ interests, as inextricably connected to and advanced by universal equal rights. Women’s rights really are human rights. They always have been. Only now, it may be increasingly in men’s interest to fight for those rights. Because they need them too.

Yes, I know. Letting men into the tent of gender equality just at the moment when it suits their self-interest risks obviating the struggle that women have fought, alone, for so long. It risks prioritizing their problems and preferences over women’s. I would suggest, however, that winning the war here is worth losing the battle. If men can truly embrace gender equality as human equality; if they can see the fight for human rights as a fight for *all* humans’ rights, then we should enlist them in the effort.

The final piece of the “why” is the most prosaic, and comes directly from women’s needs and interests. And unlike the arguments above, it is grounded directly in the mathematics of power. As of 2018, after more than a century of struggle; after the suffragettes and the feminists and the UN declarations and sisterhoods of all sorts and colors, women still only hold roughly 16 percent of our planet’s seats of power.²⁵ There were only twenty female heads of state in 2018, or 6.3 percent. Twenty-four Fortune 500 CEOs, just under 5 percent. Forty-eight of the past 892 Nobel Prize winners. We are, whether we like it or not, still struggling from the sidelines, marching and protesting and sighing collectively in well-meaning retreats. But we aren’t in a position to affect real change, because we don’t have the seats at the table. We can try to seize them, or squeeze our way in, but neither of those has yet proven effective. So we need to go, at least in part, to where the power lies. And that, still, is with men.

Over the past decade, I have spoken at dozens and dozens of women’s events: at corporate retreats, campus town halls, book signings, and think tank panels. I have spoken before government officials, college students, middle managers, medical residents, and law firm associates. Nearly all of these events were billed as conversations on gender in the workplace. Hardly any

were restricted to women. And yet, time and time again, there were only a tiny handful of men in the audience – usually from the organization’s human resources and audiovisual departments. I understand. These are scary rooms for the average male, full of potentially angry women talking about almost-certainly awkward topics. Harassment. Maternity leaves. Breastfeeding. But that, of course, is part of the problem. If men are ever to engage fully with the issues of gender equality, they need to be in the rooms where conversations about gender are happening. And women need to invite them in.

Once inside, men then need to understand that there are specific things they can do – particularly in the workplace – that will advance the cause of women’s rights, and of equality more generally.

First, they can and must put an end to bad behavior, both theirs and that of their colleagues and associates. Men need to learn what sexual harassment is and how to spot it. Particularly at the managerial level, they need to take responsibility for ensuring a safe and inclusive workplace, and for reporting and following up on violations that occur. Otherwise, the full burden of monitoring falls to the most vulnerable: to the people, usually women, who are being harassed or the few senior members of the group, usually women again, who are seen as innately sympathetic. Instead, the people who wield real authority in an organization must move against any form of harassment. They have to define it, speak out against it, put processes in place for both reporting and investigation, and punish those who are found to be in violation. Crucially, they can’t do these things after the fact, or when a colleague is publicly called out by the media. Instead, they need – at the very highest levels – to treat harassment as akin to embezzlement or business fraud; as behavior that must, and will, be stopped.

In doing so, they might borrow a page from the kind of bystander intervention that has been well-received and effective on many high school and college campuses.²⁶ The theory behind this approach is that it is men – often, the most popular and powerful men on campus – who know who the perpetrators of sexual violence are. And it is men who can most easily stop them. They have to feel empowered to do so, though; have to feel that traipsing into the always-fraught currents of sexual misbehavior is not an activity restricted to women. Everyone, meanwhile – women and men, victims and alleged perpetrators – must have processes and guidelines around them, so that the rules are clear and no one is thrust into the murky role of personal adjudication. What rules? These, too, will need to be defined and debated by the community at large. They will need to be spelled out and discussed, however painful that might be, and owned by the people at the very top. Most of whom, for the moment at least, are likely to be men.

Men in the workplace can also advance gender equality by sponsoring the women around them. “Sponsor” is a very specific term, coined by economist Sylvia Ann Hewlett in her 2013 book *Forget a Mentor, Find a Sponsor*, and it remains an

underused tool of influence.²⁷ Lots of organizations assign mentors; lots of young people think they have one. But study after study has demonstrated that mentorship, particularly for women and people of color, is weak.²⁸ What works instead, Hewlett has shown, is sponsorship: a relationship in which a senior person, male or female, takes an active role and interest in a junior person's career. Sponsors fight for their person; they give advice and honest feedback. They show up and go to bat on behalf of another person's career. Admittedly, sponsorship can get tricky across lines of sex and race and gender. It doesn't work if people sponsor only those who look like them. But some of the strongest cases I've ever seen involved men in positions of power taking a deep (nonsexual, nonromantic) interest in younger women's careers. When men invest in these colleagues, they can be a powerful force for change – not only for the women involved, but for equality of opportunity more generally. Lean In founder and Facebook COO Sheryl Sandberg, for instance, frequently describes the role economist Larry Summers played in encouraging and supporting her career. Journalist Tina Brown credits publisher S. I. Newhouse for investing in her leadership. Condoleezza Rice credits Josef Korbel, a professor and former diplomat, as “one of the most central figures in my life.”²⁹ These are hugely accomplished women, of course, who have built extraordinary careers. But the practice of sponsorship applies across class, race, and industry. It's not enough for men at the top to care about equality, or laud it in theory. They must invest in the work of advancement itself, person by person and life by life.

Finally, men in the workplace can have tremendous impact by fighting on their own behalf for rights and privileges typically seen as women's. The most important of these is parental leave, a fraught and complicated situation whose history is worth briefly recounting. Prior to the 1970s, working women who gave birth either simply stopped working (if they could afford to) or found some way to arrange for infant and child care.³⁰ In the 1970s, though, as women started to enter managerial positions in larger numbers and to fight, accordingly, for workplace rights, maternity leaves became increasingly common. The specifics varied country by country, of course, but most followed a basic format. They gave *women* time off (either paid or unpaid) to engage in a distinctly medical event: the physical birth of a child. Only women could take maternity leave, therefore, and only women were left with their subsequent and lopsided effects: as study after study has now revealed, most women never fully recover, professionally speaking, from their maternity leaves.³¹ They lose momentum at their workplace; they are perceived as less eager contributors when they return; they never fully compensate for the lost wages and missed rungs of the promotional ladder.

In an effort to redress these inequities, many countries began in the 1990s to pass more gender-neutral policies, recasting birth (and including adoption) as family matters rather than medical conditions.³² Which was clearly a step in the right

direction. The problem, though, was that the policies didn't really work. More specifically, even when fathers received incredibly generous paternity leaves – Iceland, for example offered three months plus an additional three months of shared leave – most men didn't take them. In fact, in Sweden, heralded as having among the world's most gender-equal policies, men still accounted for less than one-quarter of all parental leaves in 2018.³³

This is a bigger problem than it might seem. Because if only women (or a handful of gay dads) take parental leave, then the role of parent will remain stubbornly fixed as female. Women will bear the burden, at both workplace and home, and men will perpetuate the stereotype of fatherhood as a second-order priority.

Thankfully, though, this is one problem that is almost laughably easy to fix. MEN: TAKE PATERNITY LEAVE! Take all you can, and then take some more. Fight for more generous leaves. Lobby your employer (or union, or political representative) for family care leaves and flexible hours and part-time situations that enable all parents – all *people* – to be present for their families without compromising their wage-earning work. By defining parenthood as gender-neutral and actively affirming their own commitments as parents, men can significantly move the needle for women in the workplace. More important, they can help nudge all of us toward a more equal society, one in which no one's work or identity is restricted to the dictates of their gender.

Meanwhile, of course, and aside from their behavior in the workplace, men have significant roles to play in advancing gender equality at home and in society. In the early days of feminism, it was enough, perhaps, for men to support their wives' causes; to “let” their wives work and suppress their own anger if the meatloaf was late to the table. Not any longer. Now, supporting true gender equality means enlisting men to reshape gender norms more generally: not just those of their wives, but of their daughters, their sons, their mothers, and themselves.

Historically, we know that every generation mimics the one before it, albeit with the twists of technology and teenage rebellion. Children absorb societal norms at a very young age, and replicate the world they see around them. Give a boy a truck and he will learn to love it. Tell him not to cry and he won't. If we want these norms to change at a societal level – and true gender equality demands they do – then men need to play a crucial role, along with women, in rethinking and reshaping their most basic forms of interaction. The words they use. The games they play. The way they raise their children. Women simply can't make these changes themselves. Instead, men need to be part of the process, adapting and embracing it as their own. What does this mean in practice? It means raising girl children to be as strong – intellectually, athletically, emotionally – as boys, and allowing boy children to escape from the traditional constraints of masculinity. It means redivvying chores along gender-neutral lines: let the women in town coach the soccer games, perhaps, and have the men bake brownies. Let dad remember to make the

dental appointments while mom works late. These things may sound trivial, but they are the patterns, writ large, that determine and divide our lives. If men want to advance women's equality, they need to adjust their own behavior, not simply rely on women to adjust theirs. Some of that adjustment, as mentioned above, will come from not doing the bad things: harassment, discrimination, catcalls, and mansplaining. And some will come from the harder but ultimately more important work of shifting roles and norms and responsibilities. Let a man brag about how much his wife earns or how hard she works. Let a boy cry.

Which leads to my final point. Ultimately, working for gender equality isn't only about helping women, or even addressing a centuries' old imbalance. It's much bigger, which is why men's inclusion is so vital. Too often, we see the gender struggle as just that: a zero-sum game in which any gains for women must come at the expense of men. Or even, more generously, as a pie in need of expanding before any set of players can grab a bigger slice. I am arguing for a more radical reformulation. Rather than rebalancing our current set of gender relations, we need to reconceive them, transforming not only women's roles, but men's as well. We need to understand, and then transform, masculinity as profoundly as feminists have already transformed traditional notions of femininity. And we can't do that without men.

If you walk through the hallways of just about any major university these days, you are bound to encounter a department of gender studies.³⁴ Or gender and sexuality studies. Or something with a vaguely similar name that didn't exist sixty years ago, back when anything related to gender or sexuality was either relegated to biology or not discussed at all.³⁵ As feminism entered the cultural mainstream in the 1970s, though, and young women across the world started streaming into universities that were once reserved for men, growing bands of scholars began to specialize in women's issues: women's history, women's literature, women in media or politics.³⁶ Over time, these disciplines grew larger and more robust, tackling female-focused topics that ranged across an interdisciplinary spectrum.

Beyond academia, meanwhile, feminism itself has gone mainstream – even if, occasionally, under less politically loaded labels like “women's leadership” or “girl power.” There are powerful advocates for what is (sometimes derisively) called “corporate feminism” and adamant, persistent cries for gender pay equity.³⁷ There are well-funded campaigns against female genital mutilation and forced marriages; mainstream energies devoted to increasing women's presence on corporate boards and in the media. Which isn't to say, of course, that the fight for gender equality is anywhere close to complete. But at least we now understand the challenges and constraints that women face. At least we recognize, both individually and as societies, that women's roles are changing, and that change is hard. We have put a name to Betty Friedan's “problem that has no name.” And we have started – slowly, painfully, in frustrating stops and starts – to solve it.

By contrast, we know comparatively little about the issues men face, and about how their identities and roles are changing as a result of both technological and social change. We don't know, because we haven't really probed yet, how men's work can adapt to a world of working women. We don't know how best to reconfigure both home and workplace for a postindustrial, gender-neutral age. These are serious questions and ones that can only be addressed through the prisms of both men's and women's lives. Or to put it more bluntly: we can't achieve gender equality for women without reconfiguring men's roles as well.

Feminism's grand project has been underway now for over a century. Its battles have been legendary and its victories instrumental in transforming many of society's most deeply held beliefs about women's rights, roles, and liberties. But completing the project for gender equality means rewriting the book on men as well. Not just forcing men to comply with women's demands, but freeing them to redefine what manhood means in a world of gender equity.

Some of this rethinking has already begun.³⁸ But, sadly, much of the emerging work on masculinity has been dominated by its angriest fringe: by men who are primarily responding to what they see as feminism's attack on their turf and identity.³⁹ We need to do better than this. To be sure, there will always be disagreements among the champions of each gender, and a wide spectrum of opinion and belief across the intimate landscapes of sex and change and power. Yet, clearly, there must be room in equality's tent to include people of all genders and sexes. Isn't that, in fact, precisely what an intellectual agenda of gender equality demands?

Writing in 1884, Engels predicted that "the necessity of creating real social equality" between men and women "will only be seen in the clear light of day when both possess legally complete equality of rights."⁴⁰ Human equality, in other words, depends upon gender equality, which makes men – whether they like it or not – both participants and victors in the fight for women's rights.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Debora L. Spar, a Fellow of the American Academy since 2011, is the MBA Class of 1952 Professor at Harvard Business School and President Emerita of Barnard College. She is the author of *Wonder Women: Sex, Power, and the Quest for Perfection* (2013), *The Baby Business: How Money, Science, and Politics Drive the Commerce of Conception* (2006), and *Ruling the Waves: From the Compass to the Internet, a History of Business and Politics along the Technological Frontier* (2003).

ENDNOTES

- ¹ Jeremy Waldron, "The Mother Too Hath Her Title," NYU School of Law Public Research Paper No. 10-74 (New York: NYU School of Law, 2010), <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.1687776>.
- ² John Locke, *Two Treatises of Government*, book 1, section 61, quoted in *ibid.*, 16. Italics in original.
- ³ As noted in Corydon Ireland, "Locke: More Enlightened Than We Thought," *The Harvard Gazette*, April 30, 2009.
- ⁴ See, for example, Jeremy Waldron, *The Right to Private Property* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988); C. B. MacPherson, *The Political Theory of Possessive Individualism: Hobbes to Locke* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962); and Daniel M. Layman, "Sufficiency and Freedom in Locke's Theory of Property," *European Journal of Political Theory* 17 (2) (2018): 152–173.
- ⁵ The key piece of evidence for the antifeminist view comes from the *Second Treatise*, in which Locke concedes that if "rule belongs anywhere in a marriage it naturally falls to the man's share, as the abler and the stronger." For arguments along these lines, see Carole Pateman, *The Sexual Contract* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1988); and Lorene M. G. Clark, "Women and John Locke," *Canadian Journal of Philosophy* 7 (4) (1977): 699–724. For other, more generally feminist approaches, see Nancy J. Hirschmann and Kirstie M. McClure, eds., *Feminist Interpretations of John Locke* (University Park: Penn State University Press, 2007). For a critique of these views, see Waldron "The Mother Too Hath Her Title."
- ⁶ See Friedrich Engels, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* (Chicago: C. H. Kerr & Company, 1902), 79; and Karl Marx, *The German Ideology* (New York: International Publishers, 1972), 51.
- ⁷ Engels, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*.
- ⁸ One doesn't want to romanticize the era, of course, or impose our twenty-first-century politics upon it, but the evidence to support Engels's basic argument is convincing. See, for example, Mark Dyble, Gul Deniz Salali, Nikhil Chaudhary, et al., "Sex Equality Can Explain the Unique Social Structure of Hunter-Gatherer Bands," *Science* 348 (6236) (2015): 796–798; Michael Gurven, "To Give or Not to Give: An Evolutionary Ecology of Human Food Transfers," *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* 27 (2004): 543–583; Paula K. Ivey, "Cooperative Reproduction in Ituri Forest Hunter-Gatherers: Who Cares for Efe Infants," *Current Anthropology* 41 (2000): 856–866; and Courtney L. Meehan, Robert Quinlan, and Courtney D. Malcom, "Cooperative Breeding and Maternal Energy Expenditure Among Aka Foragers," *American Journal of Human Biology* 25 (1) (2013): 42–57. More generally, see also Margaret Mead, *Male and Female: A Study of the Sexes in a Changing World* (New York: W. Morrow, 1949), esp. 189–190.
- ⁹ Engels, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State*, quoted in *The Marx-Engels Reader*, 2nd ed., ed. Robert C. Tucker (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1978), 744.
- ¹⁰ Engels, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State*, 121–122.
- ¹¹ There is a voluminous literature on Engel's concern (or lack thereof) for women. See, for example, Stephanie Coontz and Peta Henderson, eds., *Women's Work, Men's Property: The Origins of Gender and Class* (London: Verso, 1986); Catharine A. MacKinnon, *Toward a Feminist Theory of the State* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1989); and

- Janet Sayers, Mary Evans, and Nanneke Redclift, eds., *Engels Revisited: New Feminist Essays* (London: Tavistock Publications, 1987).
- ¹² Race, sadly, for both men, was not. See, for example, John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (London: T. Tegg and Son, 1836); and Diane Paul, "In the Interests of Civilization: Marxist View of Race and Culture in the Nineteenth Century," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 42 (1) (1981): 115–138.
- ¹³ As a parenting tool, the jury is still out.
- ¹⁴ Data from Statista, "Percentage of GDP Contributed by Female Workers, as of 2015, by Region," <https://www.statista.com/statistics/523838/women-share-of-gdp-region/>. More generally, see McKinsey Global Institute, *The Power of Parity: How Advancing Women's Equality Can Add \$12 Trillion to Global Growth* (New York: McKinsey Global Institute, 2015); and Catalyst, "The Ripple Effect: Working Women Grow Economies," August 25, 2017, <https://www.catalyst.org/research/the-ripple-effect-working-women-grow-economies/>.
- ¹⁵ Assuming that Japan's female employment rate were to equal that of Japan's male rate. See Kathy Matsui, Hiromi Suzuki, Christopher Eoyang, et al., *Womenomics 3.0: The Time is Now, Japan Portfolio Strategy* (New York: Goldman Sachs Group, Inc., 2010), 27.
- ¹⁶ Nancy M. Carter and Harvey M. Wagner, "The Bottom Line: Corporate Performance and Women's Representation on Boards (2004–2008)," Catalyst, March 1, 2011, <http://www.catalyst.org/knowledge/bottom-line-corporate-performance-and-womens-representation-boards-20042008>; and Julia Dawson, Richard Kersley, and Stefano Natella, "The CS Gender 3000: The Rewards for Change," Credit Suisse, September 2016, <https://glg.it/assets/docs/csri-gender-3000.pdf>.
- ¹⁷ Marcus Noland, Tyler Moran, and Barbara Kotschwar, "Is Gender Diversity Profitable? Evidence from a Global Survey," The Peterson Institute for International Economics Working Paper 16-3 (Washington, D.C.: Peterson Institute for International Economics, 2016), <https://piie.com/system/files/documents/wp16-3.pdf>.
- ¹⁸ I have written about this extensively elsewhere. See Debora L. Spar, *The Baby Business: How Money, Science, and Politics Drive the Commerce of Conception* (Boston: Harvard Business School Press 2006); and Debora L. Spar, *The Virgin and the Plow: How Technology Shapes How We Live and Love* (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2019).
- ¹⁹ See Desmond Ng and Tan Jia Ning, "These Are the 'Leftover' Men of China, Who Just Want to Get Married," CNA Insider, June 30, 2018.
- ²⁰ Abigail Haworth, "Why Have Young People in Japan Stopped Having Sex?" *The Guardian*, October 20, 2013, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/oct/20/young-people-japan-stopped-having-sex>.
- ²¹ Ibid.
- ²² According to a 2011 survey, 61 percent of unmarried men aged eighteen to thirty-four were not in any kind of romantic relationship. Ibid.
- ²³ United States Census Bureau, "Annual Estimates of the Resident Population by Sex, Race, and Hispanic Origin for the United States, States, and Counties: April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2017," <https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=bkmk>.

- ²⁴ See United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, “76.9 Percent of Hispanic Men Employed, January 2018,” TED: The Economics Daily, February 7, 2018, <https://www.bls.gov/pub/ted/2018/76-point-9-percent-of-hispanic-men-employed-january-2018.htm>.
- ²⁵ I refer to this elsewhere as the “16 percent delusion.” See Debora L. Spar, *Wonder Women: Sex, Power, and the Quest for Perfection* (New York: Sarah Crichton Books, 2013), 177–181.
- ²⁶ See, for example, Tyler Kingkade, “This Is Why Every College is Talking about Bystander Intervention,” HuffPost, February 8, 2016.
- ²⁷ Sylvia Ann Hewlett, *Forget a Mentor, Find a Sponsor: The New Way to Fast-Track Your Career* (Boston: Harvard Business Review Press, 2013).
- ²⁸ See Raymond A. Noe, “Women and Mentoring: A Review and Research Agenda,” *Academy of Management Review* 13 (1) (1988): 65–78.
- ²⁹ It is almost certainly not a coincidence that Korbel was also the father of another female American diplomat: Secretary of State Madeleine Albright. See Mike Bergelson, “How Madeleine Albright’s Father Mentored Condoleezza Rice,” *Modern Workforce* by EVERWISE, April 23, 2014, <https://www.geteverwise.com/mentoring/how-madeleine-albrights-father-mentored-condoleezza-rice/>.
- ³⁰ Many of these cases were tragic, including generations of poor women forced to give their children up or bring them to the factory floor.
- ³¹ See Pamela Stone and Meg Lovejoy, “Fast-Track Women and the ‘Choice’ to Stay Home,” *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 596 (2004); and Elizabeth Ty Wilde, Lily Batchelder, and David T. Ellwood, “The Mommy Track Divides: The Impact of Childbearing of Wages of Women of Differing Skill Levels,” NBER Working Paper No. 16582 (Cambridge, Mass.: National Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2010).
- ³² The U.S. Congress passed the Family and Medical Leave Act in 1993, requiring employers to extend unpaid family leave to mothers and fathers of new babies, newly adopted children, and newly placed foster children. See National Partnership for Women & Families, *Guide to the Family and Medical Leave Act*, 8th ed. (Washington, D.C.: National Partnership for Women & Families, 2016), <http://www.nationalpartnership.org/research-library/work-family/fmla/guide-to-fmla.pdf>. Japan and Sweden similarly revised their policies in 1991 and 1995, respectively.
- ³³ See Sweden, “10 Things that Make Sweden Family-Friendly,” <https://sweden.se/society/10-things-that-make-sweden-family-friendly/>.
- ³⁴ The next few paragraphs borrow heavily from *The Virgin and the Plow*.
- ³⁵ For a history of the development of gender studies, see Cordelia Fine, *Delusions of Gender: How Our Minds, Society, and Neurosexism Create Difference* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2010); and Anne Fausto-Sterling, *Sexing the Body: Gender, Politics and the Construction of Sexuality* (New York: Basic Books, 2000).
- ³⁶ While most public universities in the United States had been open to women since their inception, many of the most elite private universities only started admitting women to their undergraduate colleges after 1969. Prior to that point, women who sought to be educated at these schools were directed instead to their “sisters”: all-women’s colleges like Radcliffe, Smith, and Barnard. Similarly, Oxford and Cambridge had begun accepting women as early as 1920, but only to a handful of female colleges.
- ³⁷ See, for instance, Sheryl Sandberg, *Lean In* (New York: Knopf, 2013), arguably the most well-known (and controversial) voice for corporate feminism. Anne-Marie Slaughter,

Unfinished Business (New York: Random House, 2016) focuses much more on issues of pay equity and the burden of what she calls care work, although Slaughter is generally also referred to by critics as a corporate feminist. For more on the issues of pay and gender equity, see Heather Boushey, *Finding Time: The Economics of Work-Life Conflict* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2016).

- ³⁸ There is admittedly a small and growing literature. For a review of what has been called “hegemonic masculinity,” see R. W. Connell and James W. Messerschmidt, “Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept,” *Gender and Society* 19 (6) (2005): 829–859. For a more mainstream account of shifting perspectives, see Marc Tracy, “Here Come the Daddy Wars,” *The New Republic*, June 14, 2013, <https://newrepublic.com/article/113490/daddy-wars-will-be-mommy-wars-men>.
- ³⁹ Some of the most popular arguments along these lines come from Jordan Peterson, a Canadian philosopher who has argued, in part, that feminism has created an assault upon the “masculine spirit.” See Nellie Bowles, “Jordan Peterson, Custodian of the Patriarchy,” *The New York Times*, May 18, 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/05/18/style/jordan-peterson-12-rules-for-life.html>. Far more radical, and dangerous, attacks come from the alt-right, and sites such as avoiceformen.com.
- ⁴⁰ Engels, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*, 137.