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Miss Representation

By Jacoba Atlas

Mitchell:

the message and the messenger
and, increasingly, a powerful one.

Katz:

People learn more from media
than any other single source
of information,
so if we want to understand
what's going on in our society
in the 21st century,
we have to understand media.

Steyer:

media and technology,
they're delivering content
that is shaping our society.
They're shaping our politics.
They're shaping
our national discourse.
And most of all, they're shaping
our children's brains
and lives and emotions.

Mayer:

that there's somewhere north
of a billion people who use
the internet every single day.
That's just a reach
that hasn't existed before
in terms of media.

Steyer:

live on Facebook and cellphones.
The diversity of the platforms means
that those images
are impacting your kid 24/7
and whatever restrictions
existed when we were growing up
simply don't exist today.

Kilbourne:

from very early on

that what's most important
is how they look,
that their value, their worth,
depends on that.
And boys get the message
that this is what's important
about girls.
We get it from advertising.
We get it from films.
We get it from television shows,
video games, everywhere we look.
So, no matter what else a woman does,
now matter what else
her achievements,
their value still depends on
how they look.
There is no appreciation
for women intellectuals.
It's all about the body,
not about the brain.
You all saw the famous photo
from the weekend
of Hillary looking so haggard
and, what, looking like 92 years old.
Breast implants...
did you have them or not'?
Because that's all over
the internet about you
in mainstream media.
I think if you waterboarded
Nancy Pelosi,
she wouldn't admit
to plastic surgery.

Pozner:

so limiting and so derogatory
to the most powerful women
in the country,
then what does it say
about media's ability
to take any woman in america
seriously'?
The media treats women like shit,
and it's horrible, and it's, like...

I don't know how we survive it
I don't know how we rise above it.
[Metric's "Help I'm Alive" plays]
I tremble
[echoing] I tremble
They're gonna eat me alive
[echoing] Eat me alive
If I stumble
[Echoing] If I stumble
They're gonna eat me alive
[echoing] Eat me alive
Can you hear my heart
beating like a hammer?
Beating like a hammer
Help, I'm alive
My heart keeps beating
like a hammer
Hard to be soft
Tough to be tender
Come take my pulse
The pace is on a runaway train
Help, I'm alive
My heart keeps beating
like a hammer
Beating like a hammer
Beating like a hammer
Beating like a hammer
Help, I'm alive
My heart keeps beating
like a hammer
Captions by Vitac...
Captions paid for by
Discovery Communications.

Siebel Newsom:

There are moments in life
when you begin to see things
more clearly.
When I found out
I was pregnant with a girl,
everything came into focus.
But I looked around me,
and I was really frightened for her.
I couldn't imagine

that my daughter could grow up
to be emotionally healthy
and fulfilled
given our modern culture.
So I'm compelled to make sense
of all of this for her.
And I know I have to start
by looking at my own life...
the mistakes I've made
and the traps I've fallen into.
Because even though
I've had many privileges,
I haven't been immune
to the damage our culture does
to women and girls.
When I was a young girl,
I felt secure
in my place in the world.
But as with most girls,
things changed as I got older.
A few days before my 7th birthday,
my older sister Stacy died
in an accident.
I blamed myself for her death,
and out of guilt and sadness,
I tried to be two daughters
instead of one.
I channeled my pain
into excelling in sports and school.
But no matter how hard I tried
I somehow felt inadequate.
I became increasingly
susceptible to peer pressure
and the bombardment of media messages
telling me that being strong,
smart, and accomplished
was not enough.
To be a woman
meant constantly striving
for an unattainable ideal of beauty
and approval in the eyes of men.
So when a trusted peer
and, later, a coach
preyed upon my vulnerability

and violated me,
I was so frightened and ashamed
I completely shut down.
My self-worth
was at an all-time low
and I developed an eating disorder
that consumed two years of my life.
It took a lot of love and support
for me to find my strength again.
And although my experiences
are unique,
my struggle is all too common.
It's always hard
being a teenage girl,
but now the media disseminates
such limiting portrayals of women
and pervades
every aspect of our culture.
Is it any wonder teen girls feel
more powerless than ever'?
I want a different world
for my daughter and her generation.
But a lot has to change first.
We see so much in the media
that there's so much negativity
towards women
and their weight and how they look,
and it's just a representation
of the pressure we feel
to conform to man's ideals.
There's this concept
of the perfect woman
who looks this certain way,
and because women
may not look that way,
they're scrutinized.
I remember fifth grade,
I was worrying about my weight.
And now I'm in ninth grade.
I'm still worrying about my weight.
Me being a small person,
like, at my old school,
I was told to, like, go throw up
[voice breaking]

or, like, go eat a hamburger
because people thought I was
like, anorexic or something.
So I would, like, eat a lot
so that people would think
that I didn't have
an eating disorder.
I straighten my hair
just so I can fit in
when I have naturally curly hair.
I have close friends that,
like, in between break periods,
they will go to the bathroom
and put on like 10 pounds
of make-up
and, you know, comb their hair
and do all this pampering you know,
and you're at school to learn.
When is it gonna be enough'?
'Cause, you know, I have
a younger sister, and, like.
[voice breaking] She's like...
[sighs]

Kilbourne:

The ideal image of beauty
is more extreme and impossible
than ever before.
In the old days,
the perfection was achieved
through cosmetics and airbrushing,
but now it's possible
for that image to be
absolutely perfect
because of computers.
[camera shutter clicking]
You never see the photograph
of a woman considered beautiful
that hasn't been digitally altered
to make her absolutely,
inhumanly perfect.
Girls are being encouraged
to achieve that ideal
at younger and younger ages

all the time.

They end up measuring themselves against an impossible standard and feeling themselves wanting as a result of it.

Also, not surprisingly, young men who are shown lots of photographs of supermodels then judge real women much more harshly.

The most important thing to understand about all of these images and how they affect us is that the effect is primarily subconscious and that it is very harmful but that for the most part, we're not really aware of that, which is why we need to pay conscious attention to these images.

The average child develops over 18 to 24 years, and full brain development doesn't really occur until you're into your early 20s.

So the idea that kids at 8 or 10 or 15 have the same level of intellectual and emotional maturity as an adult is nuts.

They have different interpretive abilities, they have different emotional abilities, and they're a much more vulnerable class in society.

I worry about, you know, how much pressure my daughters feel in a society that features anorexic actresses and models and television stars.

We get conditioned to think

this is what women should look like,
so even people
of average weight and size
have body dysmorphic disorder.
When I did my first television
show, "All-American Girl,"
which was the first
Asian-American family show
on television,
I had a lot of problems
with the network
because they were constantly
telling me that I was too fat.
You know, I became very anorexic
trying to somehow keep this job
that I really wanted to keep,
and they ended up canceling
the television show,
and they replaced it with Drew Carey
'cause he's so thin.

An aspect
of media-literacy education
that I think
many people aren't aware of
is the whole political economy
of the media.
Most media get their revenues
from advertising, you know'?
So the non-advertising content
of these media
has to support the advertising.
Everybody needs to learn
what the media's really about.
It's really, like, about
how they want you to be
something that you're not.
A lot of advertising is based on
making people feel anxious
and feeling insecure.
For men, there's a lot of
anxiety around status and power
and wanting to look as if
you have power...
at least drive a powerful car.

For women, that you're never
beautiful enough,

Durham:

Which is why you keep seeing
these same body types
over and over and over again.
Because those are the body types
that generate the purchase
of all these beauty products
in this futile pursuit
of this idealized body.
It's a hugely profitable pursuit
for these media industries
and for all of the advertisers.
American women end up spending
much more money on beauty
and the pursuit of these ideals
and these myths
than on their own education
which, in fact, would benefit
them more in the long run.
And so, under this rhetoric
of empowerment,
it's completely disempowering women.

Kilbourne:

seen as objects by other people,
they learn to see themselves
as objects.

Heidman:

Psychological Association
has found in recent years
that self-objectification
has become a national epidemic,
a national problem.
The more women and girls
self-objectify,
the more likely they are
to be depressed,
to have eating disorders.
They have lower confidence.
They have lower ambition.

They have lower
cognitive functioning.
They have lower GPAs.
How does this connect
to women in leadership?
Women who are
high self-objectifiers
have lower political efficacy.
Political efficacy is the idea
that your voice matters in politics
and that you can bring about
change in politics.
So if we have a whole generation
of young people
being raised where
woman's objectification
is just par for the course,
it's normal, it's okay,
we have a whole generation of women
who are less likely to run for office
and less likely to vote.

Siebel Newsom:

This is dangerous business.
If the media
is sending girls the message
that their value lies
in their bodies,
this can only leave them
feeling disempowered
and distract them
from making a difference
and becoming leaders.

Mitchell:

this massively powerful
democratic society,
and we are not modeling
for the rest of the world
a better balance.

Newsom:

If people knew that Cuba,
China, Iraq, and Afghanistan

have more women in government
than the United States of America,
that would get some people upset.
No wonder we are in such trouble
in this country.

We've been choosing
our national leadership
from 6% of the country.

Lawless:

Without more women in politics,
we just don't really have
democratic legitimacy.
Something looks fundamentally wrong
with our political institutions.
We're shortchanging voices
that are urgently needed
in public forums
from ever getting to the table.
Washington is still pretty male,
and it was not unusual
to go into a room
and be the only woman in the room.
Sometimes, it mattered.
When there was an attempt
to change Title IX
and some pressure
from Capitol Hill about that,
I can remember Karen Hughes
and I going to the President
and saying, "You can't do that
because you don't know"
"what it was like to be a woman
in college prior to Title IX,"
when you had to ha a bake sale
"to get your sports team
to take a trip."
If you have any kind
of a decision-making board
and there are not any women
on that board,
they're going to make
the wrong decisions,
because they don't have

the woman's perspective,
the woman's insight,
the woman's experience.
It's an absolute scandal
that America's women
continue to earn just 77 cents
for every dollar men earn.
In nine states
and the District of Columbia,
women who are victims
of domestic abuse,
who've been victims
of domestic abuse,
can be denied healthcare coverage
because domestic abuse
can be considered
a pre-existing condition.
We go to the ladies room...
the Republican women
and the Democratic women...
and we just roll our eyes
at what's being said out there.
And the Republican women said,
when we were fighting over
the healthcare bill,
"if we sent the men home,
we could get this done
this week."
[laughter, cheers and applause]
The United States is the only
major industrialized nation
without paid family leave.
If women didn't speak up
on these issues
and didn't become
front-and-center
on making sure they were
on the front burner
of the legislative agenda,
they simply wouldn't happen.
I feel if it wasn't us,
who would do it?
Women have been actually creating
the best public policy in America

in every state and community
of this country.
The living-wage campaigns,
micro-enterprise, safety...
everything that needed
different thinking,
women have been doing it.
So we got to get them
in the tables of power.
Well, two things have to happen
when you talk about women
moving to the next rung
or minorities moving
to the next rung.
First, you have to have
the candidates.
You have to have people
who are in the pools
from which these positions are drawn.
But you also have to have
a kind of psychological breakthrough.
Can an American see a woman
or an African-American
in that position'?
Now, I think with women
we still have a bit to go.

Siebel Newsom:

still existed for my generation,
but I wanted to find out
if things were any better
for young women
seeking leadership positions,
so I spent time with
an exceptional young woman
named Devanshi Patel,
who aspires to have a career
in public service.
Well, welcome to bill hearing.
Tonight is the bill hearing night
for the Central Silicon Valley YMCA
Youth & Government Delegation.
So, the first time I ran
for public office

was in fourth grade.
My parents worked with me.
We made all these fliers with
all these cure little slogans,
and we campaigned
all over the school.
And I was actually the runner-up
by a handful of votes.
I think everyone is born with
something that they have to do,
and for me, this was it.
Every time
that I could run for something,
I didn't run for anything less.
I didn't run for Vice
President or Treasurer.
I ran for President.

Ranna:

I think it was in fifth grade.
I said, "Devanshi,
you always want to be a leader,"
but do you know
what a leader is?"
She says, "it's very simple, Mama.
"They are just serving the people.
Leaders are just servants
to people."

Devanshi:

the Youth & Government program.
The best way I can give back is
by running for Youth Governor.
How would you solve
the California budget crisis?
Starting with Miss Patel.
I would out unnecessary spending.
When I was running for office,
there were a lot of...
if not outward shows of sexism,
little remarks here and there,
like, "Oh, she speaks well
for a woman."
"She's smart for a woman."

There were also a couple instances
with some of my friends
when they were going to speak
in front of a large audience
and the only thing people
could focus on was their body,
what they looked like,
what they were wearing.
I thought, you know,
"We're better than this."
She said, "Mama, it looks like
I'm another Hillary Clinton."
Guys will vote for guys,
and girls will vote for guys
but some of the time,
girls have a harder time getting
the girls to vote for girls
'cause I feel like girls are
kind of harder on other girls.

Siebel Newsom:

Devanshi's story
made me think about how early
girls face a deep gender bias
and how things have not changed
as much as we'd like to think.
One of the first things I did
when I became mayor
of San Francisco is
I appointed a female Police Chief
and then a female Fire Chief.
When they both show up
at the podium in a disaster,
a lot of national media
will look there and say,
"Where's the Police Chief?"
"She's right here."
"Where's the Fire Chief, then?"
"Well, she's right here."
People thought I was trying to
make some grand statement
when, in fact,
I was actually just hiring
the most qualified two candidates.

The incredible opposition
was coming mostly from women
and those that feel it's
too much, too soon, too fast.
They never would have questioned
that had they been men.
Little boys and little girls,
when they're 7 years old,
an equal number want to be
President of the United States
when they grow up...
about 30%.

But then you ask the same
question when they're 15,
and you see
this massive gap emerging.
So we have
this gendered socialization,
where politics
is considered to be for men.
Leadership is considered to be
a masculine pursuit,
and women are discouraged from
pursuing ambitious positions.
I think what happens is that
if you do not have women there,
then girls do not see
that they can be that,
so it's really what you see
that inspires your idea
of what's possible for you
in the world.

I do disagree with Sarah Palin
on a lot of issues,
but seeing her up onstage there
with her young family
and her young baby
was just beautiful,
and I thought, "You know what'?"
Maybe I could give this a shot
as well."

Having this opportunity to see women,
to see women leadership,
to see woman's leadership

in reality and on the screen
and in the television
is huge for women... huge.
Because you don't have that many
women really in leadership,
so the way that it gets done,
to a certain extent,
and the way problems get solved
often have to do with Hollywood
and the films that get made,
the documentaries,
the television shows.
Start where people are,
and people are watching television.

Siebel Newsom:

There are some examples
of films and TV shows
that portray powerful women,
but in general, the situation
in Hollywood is pretty bleak.
I decided to pursue acting
professionally at the age of 28
and was hopeful I could find
complex roles to play.
My first reality check came
when my agent told me
to lie about my age
and remove my Stanford MBA
from my rsum
because it might be threatening.
Well, I didn't do either,
but my confidence was really shaken.
My second reality check came
when I learned that there were
very few multidimensional roles
to even audition for.
I shouldn't have been surprised
because when you really look
at Hollywood
and the films that are being made,
you see the same stereotypes
being portrayed
over and over again.

[Metric's "Gold Guns Girls" plays]
All the gold
And the guns
And the girls
Couldn't get you off
All the boys
All the choices in the world
I remember when
we were gambling to win
Everybody else said,
"Better luck next time"
I don't wanna bend
like the bad girls bend
I just wanna be your friend,
is it ever gonna be enough'?
Is it ever gonna be enough'?
Is it ever gonna be enough'?
Is it ever gonna be enough'?
Women are never the protagonists
or the ones who...
like, if they are the protagonist,
it's some, like, drama about
getting a guy or something.
It's never really about finding
your destiny or whatever,
how they say it for the guys.
Like in the "Star Trek," he's like,
"This is your destiny,"
you know, being powerful
being the captain.
But for a girl,
they wouldn't say that.
And then what's weird about it is
that it seems normal for us.
Like, we don't question it.
We don't say,
"Oh, why isn't a girl being
the protagonist for this'?
Why can't a girl be powerful?"

Davis:

I hear this all the time.
Well, things are getting better.
I mean, things are

getting better, you know'?

But they're not.

Mainstream movies are generally stories of man's lives which revolve around men, and then we have this subgenre called "chick flicks," which are stories of woman's lives which, when you look at them a little more closely, you realize that they generally revolve around man's lives, too. They revolve around trying to get a man, trying to get love, get married, get pregnant. It's my fault that I'm alone on Valentine's Day. My closest relationship is with my Blackberry.

- Right.
- Thank God it vibrates.

Between 1937 and 2005, there were only 13 female protagonists in animated movies. All of them except one had the aspiration of finding romance. As a culture, women are brought up to just be kind of fundamentally insecure and always looking for the time when that knight on a horse will come and rescue us or provide for us.

Heidman:

leaders in entertainment media, we see the bitchy boss who has sacrificed family and love to make it to where she is.

Miranda:

"Take a chance.

Hire the smart, fat girl."
The whole movie is about
bringing her down a peg,
and this is generally done
by someone who is under her,
a subordinate, typically a male,
so that image doesn't bode well
when it comes to ideas
of women in leadership.

Haggis:

interesting characters on screen
in the '20s, '30s, '40s
than we do now.
And we allowed women to really embody
all the contradictions that
make up a human being back then.
They could be the femme fatale
and then turn around
and be the mother
and then turn around and
be the seductress,
and then turn around
and be the saint,
and we accepted that.
They were complex human beings.
Now we really like to
put people in boxes.
The only two choices for women...
witch and sexy kitten.
Oh, you just said
a mouthful there, sister.
As men, we do it
because we don't understand
characters that aren't ourselves,
and we aren't willing to
put ourselves
in the skin of those characters.
And women, I think, terrify us.
We tend not to write women
as human beings.
It's cartoons we're making now.
And that's a shame.

Heidman:

of mass media there is,
we see the widespread acceptance
of women as sex objects.
In rock videos,
rap and hip-hop videos,
in all the summer blockbusters,
women are basically just body props
there for young male viewers.
I think when they do put in the part,
she's used as a sexual object
or an object of desire
toward the men,
which I think should change a lot
because there's a lot more
to a woman than just a body.

Katz:

boys to believe
that being a man means
being powerful and in control.
Ooh la la.
Being smarter than women
or better than women
or our needs get met first
in relationships with women,
that's not genetically predestined.
That's learned behaviour.
You don't think I can be a surgeon'?
I can be a surgeon.
- Surgery's hardcore.
- I'm hardcore.
You won't last the first year, babe.

Heidman:

a new incarnation of this,
where women appear to be empowered.
They are carrying the story.
They're the action hero.
But, again, when you peel back
a layer or two,
you discover that it's not
really about their agency,
and I call this archetype

"the fighting fuck toy."
Don't move, don't speak,
even whisper
That's a badass chick.

Heidman:

she is doing things
supposedly on her own terms
she very much is objectified
and exists for the male viewer.

Davis:

the female characters
are just as likely to be wearing
sexually revealing clothing
as in R-rated movies,
which is horrifying.

Fonda:

that occurs in Hollywood...
it's toxic.
There's no question.
It affects all of us,
including young girls
who are seeking an identity.

Mitchell:

women are objectified objects,
that that's their primary being,
that's a very tough
and challenging message
for young women who think
that's their path to power.

Durham:

they'll say Madonna
is tremendously empowered
or Angelina Jolie,
but they all embody that exact
same definition of sexuality.
I mean, when you really think
about it, though,
Hillary Clinton's
tremendously empowered.

She's Secretary of State, right'?

Or, you know, you think of women CEOs
or, you know, there are
women who are empowered
in lots of different kinds of ways,
but you don't see them represented.
You don't get that message
that you don't have to use
your sexuality
to attain empowerment in the world.
A male-dominant system,
a patriarchal system,
values women
as child-bearers, period.
So it limits their value
to the time that they are
sexually active,
reproductively active,
and become
much less valuable after that.

Lauzen:

in broadcast television is
that the majority
of female characters
are in their 20s and 30s.
That is just a huge
misrepresentation of reality,
and that really skews
our perceptions.
It's like when a female
reaches 39 or 40,
she simply needs to go away.
One day, I got the call that
I'd heard about others getting,
and that was this...
I had just gotten a series,
and it was presented to me
by my manager as,
"Daphne, your part is secure,
but would you consider doing
a little Botox or collagen
or something?"
Well, just like them, I didn't

know what the hell it was.
What do you mean,
"Botox or collagen or something"?
And I remember lying in this chair,
with this fat, bald man
injecting, like, needles
in my forehead, bleeding.
And I'm crying,
and I'm feeling guilty for crying.
I remember lying in that chair,
just thinking,
"There's something wrong here."
It really made me feel...
a less spiritually whole person,
less of a woman with integrity.
I felt like I was cheating and lying
with this stuff in my face.
So, maybe I'll stop working.
I don't know.
But just right now,
I have chosen not to do it again.
And my mother was furious.
Want to hear what my mother,
the hippie in Vermont, said'?
"You tell those fuckers
to get penis implants."
[laughs]
This is not new.
You know, I started out
in the business in the '50s.
My very first movie,
I played a cheerleader,
and Jack Warner was the head
of Warner Bros.
And he sent word down that
he wanted me to wear falsies
and my director, Josh Logan,
asked me to have
my back teeth pulled out.
You know, I wasn't good enough
the way I was.
I really, truly believe
that reality TV is the
contemporary cultural backlash

against woman's rights.
Miss Blondie...
I think one of the worst
stereotypes in reality TV
is this notion that women exist
to be decorative.
Women exist to be stupid.
Women are considered gold diggers.
Women are considered bitchy,
catty, manipulative, vindictive,
not to be trusted,
especially by other women.
You are a piece of [bleep]
and you're a stupid blonde.
I think you look like a ho.
[Cat yowls]
Slap me, bitch, or...
What?!
You are a fucking whore!

Pozner:

that women are natural enemies
vying for the prize of being
more beautiful than the rest
or the love of whoever
is so counter to women in real life.

Woman:

pick me, pick me.
See how beautiful I am.

Durham:

power relationship
going on there,
where it's the girls
whose bodies are on display,
and the boys get the power
to arbitrate and judge
whether their bodies are
acceptable or not acceptable,
desirable or not desirable.
So I think there's a whole lot
going on there
that actually puts girls in

a really disempowered position.

Pozner:

over the course of the last decade,
have tried to portray
a world in which
the only options available to women
mimic the 1950s model of femininity,
in which woman's only power
was her beauty,
in which women
not only had no choices
but shouldn't have even wanted any,
in which men were burdened
with the responsibility
of being the Prince Charming
who comes in
and Whisks women away
to happily ever after,
then has to provide
for their financial security.
Nobody wins in this model,
but women particularly lose
in this model
where they're expected to
look like miss U.S.A.,
have sex like Samantha
on "Sex And The City,"
and think like June Cleaver.

Siebel Newsom:

And here's something
I find even more disheartening...
watching the news.
So many female journalists
are objectified or sexualized.
[theme music plays]

Cronkite:

Evening News with Katie Couric."
Hi, everyone.
I'm very happy
to be with you tonight.

Jenkins:

the very first national
experience we had all together,
viewing a woman
who was not entertaining us
but whose presence
and presentation was vital
for getting us
the information we needed.
The three major evening newscasts
had been dominated by white males.
They had very similar faces
and very similar backgrounds
for the most part.
I thought, "This is an opportunity
to mix it up a little bit."
I also thought it was
an important message
that a women could be
as competent as a man
in an important, powerful role.
And I remember in the early days
when I would get calls
from reporters about,
"Ah, we have our first woman anchor.
What do you think about that?"
inevitably, the questions
that they would ask first were.
"What about those legs'?"
Do you think
she was showing too much leg?"
Or, "What about that winter white'?"
Wasn't that a big mistake?"
They were all observations that
had to do with her physicality
and not really about
the content at all.
But, again, it's because,
as I've always said,
we are a nation of teenage boys.
We don't know
what to make of this woman
sitting in front of us,
and so, you know, we look at

her legs, her boobs, her hair,
her whatever, you know
and then maybe way down the line
we'll get to listening
to what she's saying.

Ever since I've been in media at all,
even since, you know, the first
morning show that I was on
in Holyoke, Massachusetts,
as the sidekick news girl,
there's been a really consistent
proportion of...

I don't even know
if you could call it criticism.
Essentially, it's hate mail.

As I've become
sort of better-known
and I get more feedback,
the amount of
"I hate you," homophobic,
"I hate what you look like,"
"I'm gonna kill you,"
threatening mail stuff,
it's like the proportion
has stayed exactly the same.

[chuckling] It's like
it's always 14% of the feedback.
And almost all of the hate mail
is about gender and sexuality.

I mean, who has the time'?
If that's really what you think
and you really are
that bad a speller,
like, you really are
still gonna take this time
to let me know what you "thunk"
[laughs] about what I look like'?

It's the scrutinization
that women get
that far surpasses
the scrutinization that men get.

I don't ever see
gossip columns or tabloids
reporting on Brian Williams'

personal life,
yet Katie Couric
and what she is wearing
or who she's dating is headline news.

Couric:

whenever there are two women
who are working
in similar professions,
it's automatically positioned
as a cat fight.
Diane Sawyer and I
were pitted against each other
as if, you know, we were gonna be
in a mud-wrestling competition
on the weekend, so...
and you never saw that
with, say, Tom Brokaw
and Peter Jennings.
Take it away with the red-hat
boys in blue, would you'?'
- I got this one down.
- Okay. Good.

Couric:

on the cable news channels.
I see women wearing very low-out
shirts and lots of make-up,
and, you know, their hair
is kind of tousled,
and they look like they're
working as cocktail waitresses
instead of newscasters.
It's just a very mixed message.
Folks, we're gonna play a game.
I'm gonna show you
a photo of a woman.
You have to guess whether
she is a professional newscaster
or a Hooters waitress.
Are you ready'?'
Here we go.

Pozner:

anchorships look like,
you know, somebody's grandfather
and his second wife.

Couric:

visual medium, obviously,
and it's kind of
how do you walk the fine line
of looking pleasing and attractive
but also looking professional'?
I look back
on my "Today" show interviews,
and I think,
"Geez, my skirt is way too short."
I sometimes worry
that I started this thing
with my legs and everything,
that I have sort of started this trend
of trying to look, you know...
I don't know.
There is so much pressure
to look a certain way.
When I'm on television,
I never try
and explicitly dress sexy.
I don't want to distract from
the stories that I'm telling.
I want you to focus on
what I'm saying.
There's a lot of words in my show,
and I work really hard on
getting them in the right order.
For some people I will always be
too hideous a creature
to be on television.
That's fine.
But if you can get over that
on day one,
it's gonna stay the same
for the whole time
that I'm on the air.
I think it's really hard
for women today.

Siebel Newsom:

on woman's appearance
affects more
than just women on screen.
It's affecting woman's ability
to participate
in the political process.
Ironically,
the more power women gain,
the stronger the backlash
against them.
And this phenomenon is most evident
in the way the media disrespects
our female leaders.
She's irresistibly cute,
let's put it that way,
in the way she presents herself.
Obviously,
she's attractive and all that.

Beck:

looks really hot in that hat.
She just said that
she doesn't know how oars work.
Oh, that's crazy.
You seen the hat on her'?'
Both you and Sarah Palin
are good-looking women.
I mean, you're attractive, young...
relatively young...
women.

Savage:

on the U.S. Supreme court'?'
Is there such a thing about
the aesthetics of the appointee'?'
Let's put it to you this way...
she's not the type of face
you'd want to see on a \$5 bill
I think I'm gonna send
Sotomayor and her club
a bunch of vacuum cleaners
to help them clean up
after their meetings.

Cynthia McKinney, the former
Congresswoman from Georgia,
was another angry black women.

Rodgers:

Look at these ugly skanks
who make up the female leadership
of the Democratic party.
You know that ugly hag,
Madeleine Albright?
Remember her'?
A psycho.
She was the Secretary of State
under Clinton.
Remember her'?
Like a fat moron'?
And now we have
the Wicked Witch of the West,
you know, Nancy Pelosi
I think if Speaker Pelosi
were still capable
of human facial expression,
we'd see she'd be embarrassed

Baker:

hey, get another facelift, lady.
Another reason why it's very rare
to find a woman worthy
of serving in political office.
Ding dong! The wicked witch
is dead

Limbaugh:

And it's bye-bye, Pelosi!

Levin:

her "Thighness,"
is no better than Dumbo
with the big ears.
When she raises her voice,
and when a lot of women do,
you know, as I say,
it reaches a point where
every husband in America...

You know what'?
Has heard it one time or another.
You get a woman in the Oval Office,
most powerful person in the world.
What's the downside'?
You mean besides the PMS
and the mood swings'?
There's probably
no more powerful influence
in the way we view power
than the way media treats power.
And media treats power
as defined by men
because it has been,
throughout our generation
and the ones before,
generally defined that way.

Falk:

of women who are,
you know, running for
the highest office in the land
are focusing, for example
on how women look
instead of what they've done
or their issue positions,
that's got to impact the audience
in terms of how they evaluate
and judge those women.
One of the things it does is
it trivializes them.
It makes women seem less powerful.

Pozner:

National Convention in '84,
when Geraldine Ferraro was running,
she was introduced
on national television
as the first female
Vice Presidential candidate,
size 6.
So this is not new.

Walsh:

My colleague did a study
looking at Elizabeth Dole
and her race for president.
She was coming in second in Iowa
at the time after George Bush,
and there was much more coverage
of her appearance
than there was of the substance
of what she was talking about.

Lawless:

When I ran for Congress,
I was campaigning at grocery stores,
and a women came up to me,
and she put her arms around me,
and she whispered, "Don't worry."
You don't look nearly as fat
in real life as you do on TV."
The week before the election,
a man came up to me,
and he said,
You know, you seem great,
"but I don't feel like I could
vote for you for Congress.
I feel like I should hire you
as a babysitter."
When I first ran for public office,
which is now over 20 years ago,
although my youngest was
a senior in high school,
the question I was
most frequently asked was.
"Who's gonna be taking care
of your children?"
And, of course,
it's one of those questions
that I don't think
a man has ever been asked
when he has run for office.
If you look at the women who ran
who had honorary titles,
like Senator Clinton,
if the press drops that title
and instead refers to them

as "Mrs. Clinton,"
this is a way to kind of diminish
some of her accomplishments.

Feinstein:

as a media bias.

For example, media will write

in the same way

about a man and a woman.

Senator X, who is a woman,

"Complained that..."

And in the same thing,

Senator Y "Stated that..."

So the man will get a stated

and the woman will get

the negative verb "complained."

Women were twice as likely

to be described emotionally

as were men,

and by painting women

as more emotional than men,

we perpetuate the stereotype

that women are emotional,

therefore they're irrational,

therefore they can't handle a crisis,

therefore they should not be

in leadership positions.

I remember so many times during

the campaign, people asking,

"Well, is she tough enough

to be Commander In Chief?"

[chuckling] Well,

I've known plenty of men

who aren't tough enough

to be Commander In Chief,

and nobody asked that question.

[voice breaking] Making sure

that these kids have a shot

at the American Dream

[sobs] like I did...

is important.

Gosh, what do you think they

would have done to Nancy Pelosi

if she had gotten all worked up'?

They would've said that
she's unstable, couldn't do the job.
Ooh. Yes.
Welcome to America.
A woman in power is often seen
as a negative thing.
We associate all the worst
aspects of power,
and we translate those
to a woman seeking to achieve power.

Heidman:

in which media played a role
in the primary
was to talk about
Hillary Clinton's ambition
as though it were a bad thing.
When Barack Obama speaks,
men hear,
"Take off for the future."
And when Hillary Clinton speaks,
men hear,
[high-pitched]
"Take out the garbage."
When she reacts
the way she reacts to Obama
with just the look...
the look toward him,
looking like everyone's first wife
standing outside of probate court.
I don't know what
they're getting at here, Tucker.
What do you think
they're saying about Hillary'?
I don't know, but that is so perfect
[chuckling] I have often said
when she comes on television,
I involuntarily cross my legs.
I know you do.

Heidman:

had hecklers following her,
saying, "Iron my shirt."

Man:

- Some people think...
- Iron my shirt!
- ...We bring about change by.
- Iron my shirt!

Heidman:

a bitch in mainstream media.

Beck:

She's a stereotypical bitch.
You know what I mean'?
Obama did great in February,
and that's because
that was Black History Month.
And now Hillary's doing much better
'cause it's White Bitch Month, right'?
If she knew how it made her look...
alternately sappy and bitchy...
she'd stop it,
but she can't help herself, can she'?
Her credentials
were constantly questioned.
Let's not forget...
and I'll be brutal...
the reason she's a U.S. Senator,
the reason she's a candidate
for President,
the reason she may be
a front-runner
- is her husband messed around.

- Woman:

That's how she got to be Senator
We keep forgetting it.
She didn't win there on her merit.

Heidman:

a very different image.
She is the first national,
high-profile, female candidate
who presented herself
in very feminine terms...
as a "real woman."

She's the American Dream.
Women want to be her.
Men want to mate with her
I want her laying next to me in bed.
There were pictures shot
between her legs
of folks at the
Republican National Convention.
In a nutshell,
she was pornified and ditzified.
I don't want to say she's a ditz,
but [chuckles] last night,
my stripper's fake name
was Sarah Palin.
Yo, let me tell you something
about Sarah Palin, man.
[laughter]
She's good masturbation material.
- Oh!
- Oh!

Heidman:

So, Hillary Clinton
tried to be properly masculine
and properly feminine,
and she lost.
Sarah Palin puts out
this different image
of, shall we say, hyper-femininity,
and she gets beaten up in
really degrading, gendered ways.
[laughter]
But tonight,
we are crossing party lines
to address the now very ugly role
that sexism is playing
in the campaign.
An issue which I am frankly surprised
to hear people suddenly care about.
[laughter]
Reporters and commentators,
stop using words that diminish us,
like "pretty,"
"attractive," "beautiful."

"Harpy," "shrew"...

[laughter]

"Boner-shrinker."

[laughter, applause]

My worry is now that
there were millions of people
watching Sarah Palin,
Hillary Clinton.

I could talk about a lot of women
that are in New Jersey politics.
There were millions
of young women watching this,
and the messages that they're getting
are just not conducive
to encouraging them
to put up with this kind of abuse.

When you're not treated the same,
you are dehumanized.

When you're not given
the same opportunity,
you're dehumanized.

When people look at you differently
because you happen to be a woman
and you happen to be
in a position of some influence
that someone who is a man
would naturally be in
based on tradition or history
and people question
your qualifications,
that's dehumanizing.

Empowered women in general
threaten men

because they feel
that an empowered woman
is just putting down a man
as opposed to trying to
sort of raise herself.

As women have been challenging
man's power in business,
in the professions,
in education, in politics,
and other areas of social life,
the images of women that have

been flooding the culture
have been showing women
as taking up less space.
They're less threatening,
they're highly sexualized,
and, therefore,
a certain kind of power
has been taken away from them,
which is the power
of being a whole person.
And I don't think
those things are coincidental.
I think that the way that the
symbolic realm has been acting
is to take power away from women
while women have been
challenging man's power
in the concrete realm.

Siebel Newsom:

It seems we've become numb
to the insidious ways
the media holds women back
when it misrepresents them.
I can't help but wonder...
who are the people behind the scenes,
making these crucial decisions
about what we see'?'
And what are the consequences
for my daughter and her generation'?'
The media has always been
overwhelmingly in the hands of men.

Pozner:

As you go up the ranks in media,
fewer and fewer women
and people of colour exist
at every rung of the ladder.

Jenkins:

of everything you know
about yourself and about
your country and your world
comes from the male perspective.

It doesn't mean that it's wrong.
It just means that in a democracy
where you talk about equality
and full participation,
you've got half of the population...
more than half of the population...
not participating.
Many years ago, I said,
"Why don't we just create
our own network
rather than continuing to
try and get our stories told
by other people's networks?"
So we put together an idea.
We went to various distributors,
including the broadcast networks,
the cable companies, et cetera,
pitched the idea.
And one person said to me,
"Why do we need
another woman's network?"
We already have one.
We have Lifetime."
There's a fairly pervasive
sense of denial
about the status of women
working in both television and film.
Peter Bart wrote a column in Variety,
talking about the glass ceiling
and how it no longer exists.
Putting that kind of information
out there is really troublesome.
For so long, it has been an industry
dominated by men
who just don't leave.
People who employ other people
tend to hire people who are
a reflection of themselves.
This impacts hiring.
It impacts the news directors,
the journalists,
the people
who are gonna cover the news
and, of course, who reports the news

very much is the factor in
what kind of news is reported.
When any group
is not featured in the media,
they have to wonder,
"Well, what part do I play
in this culture?"
There's actually
an academic term for that.
It's called
"symbolic annihilation."
All of Hollywood is run
on one assumption...
that women will watch stories
about men,
but men won't watch stories
about women.
And all the decisions are made
based on this concrete fact,
and nobody's ever really proved
that that's true.
I think it's a horrible
indictment of our society
if we assume that
one half of the population
is just not interested
in the other half.
The first couple of scripts
that I wrote,
of course, had a female,
you know, as the lead character.
And people were like,
"Well, there's hardly
any bankable actresses,
"so they can't carry a film,
"so it has to be
super low-budget
"or we wouldn't bankroll it.
And no one's gonna show up
in the theaters."
And I finally wrote
the lowest-budget movie
I could ever write.
I co-wrote "Thirteen"

with a 13-year-old girl,
and it was about
people of lower income.
They could wear my clothes.
We could shoot in my house.
We could use my car.
We made the movie,
and it went on to Sundance,
and it went on to win awards
and get international distribution.
And I think it was
the same with "Twilight."
Two major studios turned it down.
Finally, a new upstart company
showed me the project,
and it turned into,
obviously, a phenomenon,
making over half a billion
dollars so far.
So it disproved the theory
that girls and women
wouldn't go to see a movie.
That they did go see the movie
in droves
and over and over and over
and bought the DVD
and even bought pillow cases.
But there's a flip side to that,
which is kind of astonishing to me.
On the next two "Twilights,"
they've hired guys.
They did not seek out
a female director.
And on the same side,
I've gone after some jobs
that I've been told flat-out
to myself and my agent,
"Oh, no. We think a guy
should direct this."
And to me, I think, "Okay."
Why can a man direct
"Sex And The City,"
"Sisterhood Of The Traveling Pants,"
a Miley Cyrus movie.

Nobody ever questions that.
But I, a very successful
female director,
cannot direct a movie that
"should be done by a man."
Nobody says, I'm not gonna hire
a female director."
They just... on their list,
there's just 25 names,
and none of them are women.
What happens is these studio chiefs
or people like myself, you know...
writer/preduere or directors...
we see the world in a certain way,
and we don't really challenge
that often.
And so we just replicate
the world that we grew up in
without really asking
why we're doing it.
What is the first thing
that they tell people
when they're, you know
in screenwriting class'?'
"Create what you know."
When you have greater diversity
behind the scenes,
not only do you get more
female characters on screen,
but you get a different kind
of female character.
You get a more powerful
and multidimensional
female character.
You should have seen the way
those men looked at me.
But then they discovered
I was fearless!

Dawson:

it's extremely important
for women to be writing
their own stories,
truly crafting those stories,

writing them down directing them,
and giving them to people
to really emotionally
become impacted by.
Because when my mom tells me a story
or my grandmother tells me
a story, I'm riveted.
[laughs]

Davis:

None of us had any idea
what the response was gonna be
to "Thelma & Louise."
One time, I was at a red light,
and heard this honking,
and I looked next to me,
and there's a car full of women
who are popping out of
all the windows and the sunroof
and going, "Whoo-hoo-hoo!"
[laughs]

And I'm like,
"Well, this has certainly never been
the reaction
to any of my other movies."
Then the very next movie I made
was "A League Of Their Own,"
where I had 13- or 15-year-old
girls coming up to me
with the same kind of reaction.
"Oh, my God. You have no idea.
That movie changed my life.
I play sports
because of that movie."
And it really struck me
how few opportunities we give women
to have that kind of experience
watching a movie.
The media can be
an instrument of change.
It can maintain the status quo
and reflect the views of the society,
or it can hopefully
awaken people and change minds.

I think it depends on
who's piloting the plane.

Siebel Newsom:

I don't want to undervalue
the tremendous progress
women have made in America.
But if we look closely
at the way our history
has been recorded,
we start to understand
the crucial role media has played
in defining who we are.

Berg:

America's default setting,
where men hold the positions
of privilege and power
and where women, very often,
are treated
as second-class citizens.
It's always been problematic
in American society
when women have gained power.
[big-band music plays]
During World War II,
6 million women were pulled in
to take care of the factories
in the absence of the men.
But the time the war
was coming to a close
80% wanted to stay at their jobs.
When the returning GIs came home,
within two days of victory
in the Pacific,
800,000 women were fired
from the aircraft industry,
and other companies
began to follow suit.
We needed a huge media campaign
to get these women back
into the home.
One of the most effective ways
to do this

was through television,
so the television was part
of the re-domestication.
We had television shows
sponsored by numerous commodities,
the gleaming appliances
that June Cleaver would use
in the kitchen.
These commodities were being
linked to the good life.
Women rushed to their
new shopping centers
in their brand-new cars
and loaded up.
They didn't realize that
they were actually doing this
in the service of a strong
governmental imperative.
The notion of the commodity boom
was linked to capitalism,
which our government was supporting,
vis--vis the threat
of communism.
So you really see the linkage
of advertising on TV,
the pushing of capitalism,
and then our government
pushing capitalism, too.
[Jules Larson's
"I Want It All" plays]
Now fast-forward
to the woman's movement.
Well, I can't help myself r.
I want it all
And I start to fall
I can't think at all
'Cause I want you, want you
want it all
And I'm standing tall
So don't make me crawl
I just want you, want you
want it all

Berg:

from being barred access
to the institutions
of higher learning,
not allowed to participate
in most of
the well-known professions.
Within less than a decade,
women gained tremendous,
tremendous power.

I want it all
And I start to fall
I can't think at all
'Cause I want you, want you
want it all
I want it all
And I'm standing tall
Don't make me crawl
I just want you, want you
want it all

Berg:

reality check of the 1980s.
There was a huge,
well-funded message machine
of conservative anchors
and the demonization
of the word "liberal."
If you took an oppositional view
you were almost un-American.
And who were the great targets
of this media machine'?

The woman's movement and feminists
because we were seen
as posing the greatest threat
to the social order of America
at that time.

Any time you move forward
in a culture,
there's gonna be a backlash
that's gonna try to move backwards
or stop the progress.

And so there's a constant tension
between trying to move forward
and advance the project

of human happiness
and equality and justice
and everything else
and, at the same time,
the attempt to maintain
the existing power structures,
and that tension
is a constant tension.

Steyer:

really under President Reagan,
we started deregulating
the media industry
in the United States.
And the same people
who hung their hat
on the mantel of family values
were the same people who
deregulated the media industry.
The Chairman of the FCC,
Mark Fowler in those days,
referred to the television set
as just another piece of hardware,
and therefore, it should be
regulated or not regulated
in the same way that toasters
are or washing machines.
But you're talking about
images and messages
that shape our entire society,
our culture.
And to out back
on the regulatory structure
that oversees that
led to a lot of
unforeseen consequences
when it came to messages
and images for young people,
particularly for girls
and young women.
What you saw
was more and more content
fewer and fewer limits
on that content,

and a lessening of standards.
By the time you got
to the Telecom Act of 1996,
you had a chance to potentially
re-regulate, if you will,
the media industry.
But, in fact, that did not happen.

Berg:

corporate conglomerations
controlling television, radio, cable,
newspapers, movie theaters,
theme parks,
huge amount of power in this country.
And most of these conglomerates
really operate
with an eye focused on
the bottom line,
not on fair and balanced reporting.

Pozner:

and Bill O'Reilly
developing an entire strategy
to corner the market
in sensationalistic news
just to sell ads,
get eyeballs, et cetera,
and then all the other major
news outlets on cable
trying to compete,
so that who gets to shout the loudest
becomes a standard for news practice.
I could be delivering the same script
with the same graphics
in the same studio,
wearing the same thing,
but on two different days,
I could be delivering it like this,
[loudly] or I could be
delivering it like this!
And if I'm delivering it like this,
I'm gonna get double the rating.
[normal voice]
So that's why people yell.

I know that's a sexist comment!

- It totally is.

- But there's truth to it!

Greene:

The rise of punditry in America
is greatly adding to sexism
and bias in the media
and also confusing what is fact
and what is opinion.

Pozner:

You have less and less minutes
devoted to the pursuit of strong,
independent, long-term
investigative journalism,
more minutes devoted every year
to celebrity news, to gossip.

Why'? 'Cause it's cheap.

Fifteen years ago,

it would have been unthinkable
for Britney Spears' panties to
be a breaking headline on CNN.

I want to lead

with the Paris Hilton story.

No. And you know what'?

So does my producer.

Andy Jones is not listening to me.

He's put it as the lead.

Listen... I just don't believe

in covering that story,

especially not as the lead story

in a newscast

when you have a day like today.

Can we show some footage of Paris'?

- Do we have Paris...

- No. No, we can't.

Joe. No.

I'm gonna do the news now.

I haven't thrown it...

There she is.

Oh. Look at that strut.

Oh, look at that.

She's so humble.

- That's a reformed woman.
- Yeah, she is reformed.
She's shy.
- All right. To the news now.
- Think she found Jesus.
Just months after Telecom '96 passed,
"Access Hollywood" debuted
and "E! News" debuted.
These are two of
the most sort of fat-shaming,
infotainment outlets we have today,
where they follow around
women who have eaten a muffin
and then circle their stomachs
with graphics
and point to them and say,
"Baby bump'? Are they pregnant?"
Oh, no, sorry.
She just ate a bagel.

Woman:

After photos of the singer
performing in her trademark
Daisy Duke jean shorts
showed off an unflattering
belly bulge,
Jess' reps were forced
to publicly state,
"She is not pregnant."
This notion
that these media companies
are just giving us
what the public wants...
No. They're giving us
what the media companies want.
They're giving us
what the advertisers want.
And they're packaging it
in such a way
as to make it sound like
it's our fault, and it's not.
This is the first time
in human history
that marketers have dictated

our cultural norms and values.
And this is made possible
by the relaxation of rules
on advertising
in the 1970s and '80s...
and then an amplified
relaxation starting in the '90s.
This is all about capitalism.
The television industry
targets men 18 to 34
because it's harder to get men
to watch television.
Women watch television.
So the advertisers encourage
the networks
to come up with programming
for men 18 to 34
so they can sell
their products to them.
Great taste.
Less filling.
Great taste!
The exploitation of woman's bodies
sells products, magazines, et cetera.
Can you open this'?
[gasping]
Isn't it wonderful'?

Dekoven:

There has been some discussion
that advertisers are themselves
men who are 18 to 34.
They are saying,
"This is the kind
of programing we want."
If you show a woman scantily clad,
maybe that's an opportunity
to get more viewers to your show.
And right now advertisements
are really the best way
to support a business
on the internet.
Click on me and let the show begin.
Sometimes, what will draw

the most eyeballs,
at least in the voyeuristic sense,
is something that, you know
might be more salacious.

[woman moaning]

In the old days,
there used to be a thing
called "The Family Hour,"
which was a voluntary agreement
of the three broadcast networks.
Remember those days'?
When you couldn't air
anything inappropriate
for children and families

before 9:

Where in return
for the free airwaves,
they felt that they had
a very major
public-interest commitment.
It's actually enforced
by the Federal Communications
Commission... the FCC.
That is gone today, period,
end of story.
Today, it is the wild, wild west.
It is a free-for-all,
and there's no sense
among folks who run the media
and tech industries,
perhaps with the exception
of older broadcasters
who remember the good old days,
that they have an obligation
to public interest.
It's a myth
that we live in and under
and with a democratic media.
We don't.
When it comes to
the politics of all this,
in the last 25 years,
our lawmakers have

essentially been absent,
out of the picture.
You've had a situation
where the lawmakers
who you would hope would represent
the broader public interest
are in a sense...
I hate to overstate it...
but are largely in the pocket
of the media industry
because their fortunes as politicians
are dependent upon the media coverage
as well as their ability to buy time
on those media stations
when they're running for office.
Media has not been held accountable
by our elected representatives,
and it's not a liberal
or conservative issue...
it's an american issue
and an American problem.
Without a media system
that's publicly accountable,
what you have is not only
widespread content bias,
but what you have is
a completely inaccessible
public conversation.
For years,
the media industry hid behind
the label of censorship.
It's not censorship
to say to a media company
that's producing an image
or a website,
"That's really offensive
and really inappropriate."
That's the essence of free speech.
But in a world of a million
channels like we have today,
people try to do more shocking
and shocking things
to break through the clutter.
And oftentimes,

they resort to violent images
or sexually offensive images
or demeaning images
'cause they know
it will get attention.
The problem is
kids are exposed to that
with very little or no mediation.

Kilbourne:

of a cultural climate
in which women are seen
as things, as objects,
and turning a human being into a thing
is almost always the first step
toward justifying violence
against that person.

Siebel Newsom:

are so heavily stacked against
young women,
how are they supposed to
achieve their potential
and become leaders'?

We can't turn a blind eye
to how the media impacts our culture
and harms both our daughters
and our sons.

We have to help our boys
when they're really young, 5 or 6,
when they're just entering
formal schooling,
help them not bifurcate
their head from their heart,
not become emotionally illiterate
and feel that
they can't show emotion,
that they're sissies if they cry,
that they can't be expressing love.

If a man is taught
that he's supposed to be
smarter than women,
he's supposed to
make more money than women,

he's supposed to have
more respect than women
yet it's not true in real life...
you know, his boss might be a woman
his doctor might be a woman,
a woman might be making
more money than him,
the girl next to him in class is
smarter than him, et cetera...
what does it mean to be a man'?
If guys don't show
this, like, masculine side,
then they're criticized for it,
and they're kind of...
I don't know.
They're looked upon
as, like, less of a man.
Now, how do we expect our sons
to be men of integrity
and of conscience
and to be
social-justice advocates
and to treat women with respect
and to speak up
when they see women
being treated with disrespect
if they don't see
their fathers doing it,
if they don't see men
in the public culture doing it'?
It's not fair to put the burdens
on the shoulders of boys
or even young men.
Even though
they're part of the solution...
there's no question...
this is about adult men.
I definitely am not one to conform
to the "we need to be
hyper-masculine,"
and we need to be misogynistic"
stereotypes.
And it really puts
a lot of pressure on me

when I have relatives
who have grown up
with this phenomenon,
who attempt to put me on that path,
but I'm not ready for it.
I remember sitting down
having this conversation
with a woman far wiser than me
and starting to talk about,
oh, how bad it is
for women in America.
And she just looked at me
and listened to me for a while,
and she said,
"Well, I have to tell you, Cory,
I actually think it's really bad
for men in America."
And I go, "What do you mean?"
She started talking to me
and really putting the spotlight
on me and talking about
how emotionally constipated men
are taught to be very early on,
how we don't have...
haven't learned how to express
ourselves in healthy ways.
It often does manifest itself
in such awful and violent ways
but she talked about
a spiritual healing
that was needed for guys.

Siebel Newsom:

to imagine a better world
for my daughter's generation,
and I'm beginning to get some ideas.
The numbers of women
in leadership positions
in our country are still very low.

Siebel Newsom:

a way to change this culture.
We need to shift our focus
from the bottom line

to one of social responsibility.
We need to challenge
the media conglomerates
to value women
for more than their youth,
beauty, and sexuality,
and we must hold
these companies accountable.
We need to encourage women
to discover their true power
so they can become leaders,
and we must support them
on their journey.
And ultimately, we need to
live our own vision
of what a woman can be.
We make a mistake when we say
you have to find role models
who look like you.
If Sally Ride, my dear friend,
the first female astronaut,
had been waiting for
a female astronaut role model,
she would never have done it.
And so I'm a big believer
in finding your role models
wherever you can find them,
in people who inspire
and stimulate you
for whatever reason.
Growing up, there was nobody who
looked like me on television,
so I never dreamed
that I could be on television.
I would love to say,
"Yeah, there was great women
role models back then."
Actually, there were none.
Years later, Connie Chung
went on television
to report on Watergate,
and I'd say to her,
"Connie, you're my role model."
And she would say to me,

"Jan, but I'm not that old."
And I'd say, "Yeah, you're a
year older than I am, Connie,"
and that's good enough for me."
In terms of my role models
in television news,
of course Barbara Walters,
Lesley Stahl,
and, believe it or not,
Mary Tyler Moore.
I grew up watching that show
and the notion of a woman
making it on her own
and working at that TV station,
I think, was very, very influential.
One of the things
that really surprised me
was the number of women in
positions of power in television
who reached out to me and said,
"Can I take you out to breakfast'?"
"Can I take you out to lunch'?"
"Can I make sure
that you have my phone number
or my e-mail address so that
if anything comes up..."
And it definitely wasn't like
the gender Mafia going on
in the media.
But there was an overt effort
to both welcome me
and make me know that women
who had gone before me,
who had fought to get where they were
were both happy that I was there
and wanted to be resources to me,
and there's an expectation
that I will be
a resource to other women.

Siebel Newsom:

When women mentor each other,
it can be incredibly powerful.
I got to know

a talented young journalist
named Jessica Shambora.
Jessica was covering a story
for Fortune magazine
about mentorship
that really proves the point.
I just wanted to introduce
myself to you guys.
I'm Jessica Shambora.
I'm with Fortune,
and so I'm gonna be covering
the event tonight.
Minute mentoring is a program
that a couple of the women from
Fortune's Most Powerful Women Summit
came up with.
In order to reach
a larger group of young women
who really had this desire
to be mentored
and get advice from successful,
professional women,
they would have sort of
like a speed-dating night,
except for substitute mentoring
for the dating.

Meyers:

that should drive decisions,
especially when you're young,
is what really gets your heart
pitter-pattering.
In the end, here's the deal.
You want to be so good at what you do
that they can't ignore you.

Perino:

and read.
One hour of reality TV can be fun.
Four hours is, like, destructive.
[laughter]
To thine own self be true.
Know who you are.
Know what is best about you.

Have confidence in yourself,
and don't try and be anybody else.
On Tony Snow's last day,
when he was leaving the White House
and I was taking over officially
as the White House Press Secretary,
he came into my office, and he said,
"You are better at this
than you think you are."

Molinari:

I hope you will remember
that you will help that
next generation of women along.
It is far overdue that we women
stop criticizing each other,
the decisions and
the life decisions that we make,
and instead say, "Alleluia, sister.
Whatever gets you through.
I'm there to support you."

[applause]

You know, if women
don't stand up for each other,
then no one else will.
No one's gonna look out
for the interests of women
except other women.
If women spent more time
helping a sick neighbour
or volunteering
at a homeless shelter,
focusing on how to use
all their energy
to solve some
of the worlds problems...
if they spent a tenth of the
time thinking about those things
that they do
thinking about their weight,
I mean, I think we'd solve
all the world's problems
in a matter of months.
We're here for an instant

in an eternity,
and all that really matters
is what we do with that time.
We have enormous power.
86% of the purchasing power
in this country
is in the pockets of women.
Well, let's use it.
I mean, let's use it not to buy
those tabloid magazines
and not to support
the tabloid television shows.
A consumer's voice
is maybe the most important,
powerful voice we have
other than as a citizen
and using our vote.

Pelosi:

will be more encouraged
if they can see young women
who share their experience,
raising a young family,
speaking for them,
identifying with their aspirations.
We're creating new leaders,
and they're going to not look
like how they always did...
an older, white male.
They're gonna look like a woman,
and they're gonna look like
people of colour,
and that is the true reflection
of this country
and of this world.

Wilson:

this little letter one day.
"Ms. Wilson, Do you realize
there has never been
a woman president?"
And then she said,
I will make a great president.
"I'm practicing my piano,

I'm doing my maths,
and my name is Alexandra,
which means 'leader of men.''

Look at those eyes.

Oh, honey.

- Oh!

- Hello.

Hello.

- Oh, she's smiling.

- She's smiling.

Siebel Newsom:

On september18, 2009,
a began myjourney into motherhood.

My husband and I have
the same wishes for Montana
that any parents have
for their child.

We want her to pursue her
purpose and passions in life
and to understand

that what's really important
is who she is on the inside.

And it's critical to us
that all girls grow up in a world
where their voice counts,
where our culture embraces them
in all of their diversity,
and where they're afforded
equal opportunities
to succeed in life.

I keep coming back to my early years.

Too often, we girls and women
don't recognize

our own internal strength

I now know that we can't let
anyone or anything

take our power away from us.

What do you think, Montana'?

Are you ready'?

If you really want things

to change around you,

here's what you can do.

Measure yourself

by your accomplishments
and not by how you look.
If you and I,
every time we pass a mirror,
downgrade on how we look
or complain about our looks
if we remember
that a girl is watching us
and that's what she's learning.
Reflect on the ways
you might contribute to sexism.
I include myself in this.
We scrutinize the woman.
God, look how old she s gott
Look how Grey she's gotten.
"What is she wearing?"
I think that as women,
we need to stop
that destructive behaviour
that we inflict upon each other
and, ultimately, onto ourselves.
Support media that champions
accomplished women.
We need strong women role models
who are in the media
because they did something,
because they're doing great work,
not because they have
the most bangin' body
and they're
the Sexiest Woman of 2010.
They're the best philanthropist.
They're the best
in the medical field.
And it's not about the way they look.
It's about who they are inside.
Boycott magazines,
TV shows, and movies
that objectify and degrade women.
Speaking your mind
and criticizing media companies
when you think they're doing things
that are inappropriate
to your children

is not just your God-given right
as an American, as a parent,
but it's also entirely consistent
with the First Amendment.
Go see movies
written and directed by women.
And it's important
to go on opening weekend,
and Friday is best
because these are the numbers
that Hollywood tracks.
Write your own stories
and create your own media
about powerful women
in non-traditional roles.
My daughter, when she was 9,
she wrote this little screenplay,
and she shot a movie, you know
with our little video camera,
casting her friends.
It was just so much fun for her.
And it teaches them that
the media are a construction.
And they start to understand
that these are stories
that people are telling them,
and they can come up with
their own stories to tell back
and very often, they can be, you know
subversive stories, resistance stories.
Teach those around you
to look at the media critically.
Well, one thing
that I do with my kids is
I watch these shows with them.
I say, "Hey, did you notice"
there's only one female
in that group?"
And, "What if that character
had been a girl instead?"
And, "Why is she wearing that"
when she's trying to
rescue somebody?"
Ask your school to start

a media-literacy course
focused on gender issues.
We need media literacy
as much, I think,
as we need to learn to read.
Our responses should be,
"Whose perspectives
are framing this story?"
There are always more
than two sides to every story.
Are we being sold here'?
Don't be afraid
to challenge your friends
if you hear them saying
derogatory things about women.
King said it very eloquently.
"The problem today
is not the vitriolic words
"and the evil actions
of the bad people.
It's the appalling silence
and inaction of the good people."
Find healthy role models
and be a mentor to others.
Encourage women to become leaders.
And support them in the process.
If we see women
who we think would be excellent
at any political job,
whether it's dogcatcher,
school-board member,
or member of Congress,
we need to make that known.
"Whatever women do,
"they must do twice as well as a man
"to be thought of as half as good.
Luckily, that's not too difficult."
Woke up today
I looked around
And I had to smile
cause I understood
That my whole life's ahead of me
Don't know what'll happen,
but it's all good

'Cause no one can break me
They can't retain me
Don't matter if they try to
push me around
I ain't goin' down
'Cause this is my life
I'm feelin' all right
I'm gonna keep livin'
the way I like
No bringin' me down
Can't stand in my way
They can't change me
'cause I won't change
I got my dancin' shoes on
I think I'm gonna
wear 'em every day
Hey, hey, yeah
I think I'm gonna fly
through the galaxy
Explore the Milky Way
Hey, hey, he)
Maybe I'll be president
Maybe I'll be queen
Maybe I'll be doing things
the world has never seen
This is my life
Yeah, this my life
This is my life
This is my life
'Cause this is my life
I'm feelin' all right
I'm gonna keep livin'
the way I like
No bringin' me down
Can't stand in my way
They can't change me
'cause I won't change
This is my life